

JIM LARKIN: IRISH REVOLUTIONIST . . . By JAMES T. FARRELL

The New
INTERNATIONAL

MARCH • 1947

Max Shachtman:

**THE NATURE
OF THE
STALINIST PARTIES**

What Are Their Social Roots?

What Is Their Political Role?

What Is Their Basic Aim?

SINGLE COPY 25c

ONE YEAR \$2.00

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

Vol. XIII, No. 3

Whole No. 115

Published monthly, except June and July, by the New International Publishing Co., at 114 West 14th Street, New York 11, N. Y. Telephone: CHelsea 2-9681. General Offices: 4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, N. Y. Telephone: IRonsides 6-5117. Subscription rates: \$2.00 per year; bundles, 15c for five copies and up. Canada and foreign, \$2.25 per year; bundles, 20c for five and up. Re-entered as second class matter August 25, 1945, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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A NOTE TO OUR READERS:

Beginning with this issue, THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is devoting an increasing amount of its space to the problems currently being discussed in the Fourth Internationalist movement, both here and abroad. Max Shachtman's article, "The Nature of the Stalinist Parties," is a contribution to one of the most burning problems confronting the revolutionary Marxist parties. It is equally important in the domain of Marxist theory and in the field of practical politics. Shachtman's article consists of a chapter from a forthcoming book, devoted to the major programmatic questions that have arisen in the Trotskyist movement since the outbreak of World War II. The book is scheduled for publication in the latter part of the year.

Another chapter from the above-mentioned book will appear as our leading article in the April issue. It is devoted to an examination of the "Russian Question," that is, the dispute in the ranks of the Marxists as to the class character of the Russian state. Shachtman's presentation is a polemical exposition of the point of view of the Workers Party that Russia represents a new exploitive society with a new exploiting class.

The April issue will also carry a reply to the attack upon the political line of the Workers Party contained in a recent article in the *Fourth International* by Ernest Germain.

Also scheduled for appearance in our forthcoming issues are two articles by James T. Farrell. One is a discussion of Isaac Rosenfeld's novel, *Passage From Home*. The other is an analysis of the "literary left" during the Popular Front period.

An article by Irving Howe replying to the editors of *Partisan Review* on their espousal of a frankly pro-American imperialist line against Russia was reluctantly omitted from this issue, due to space limitations. It will appear next month.

THE EDITORS.

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WORKERS PARTY PUBLICATIONS

4 Court Square

Long Island City 1, N. Y.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

VOL. XIII

MARCH, 1947

NO. 3

A Contribution to an International Discussion:

The Nature of the Stalinist Parties

Their Class Roots, Political Role and Basic Aims

The "Russian question" is not merely a Russian question. It is directly and inextricably related to the question of the Stalinist parties throughout the capitalist world. A false theory on Stalinist *Russia* is, of course, a very serious matter. But the Fourth International no longer has any cadres in Russia; it has no movement there. Whatever practical actions we engage in on the basis of our respective theories cannot as yet have a *direct* and *immediate* effect upon the development of the class struggle in Russia. In many of the *capitalist* countries, the Fourth International does have a movement and cadres, even if weak ones. In these countries the practical actions in which it engages can have an effect upon the course of the class struggle. Without setting up an insurmountable wall between the problem of Stalinist Russia and the problem of the Stalinist parties abroad, it is nevertheless a fact that our policy with regard to the Stalinist parties abroad can and does have a more direct and immediate effect. A mistaken policy in this regard, especially when based on a mistake in theory (that is, on a mistake in basic generalization) can be disastrous, and that within a very short space of time.

The authors of the Socialist Workers Party Statement go out of their way to exaggerate the differences between their party and ours in a whole series of questions. To read their document in full and to believe it can easily produce the absurd impression that there is not one point of political similarity of any consequence between the two parties. In some cases the most trifling tactical differences, perfectly normal and multitudinous in any living revolutionary organization, are inflated all out of proportion to their importance in order to strengthen "the case" that the Cannonites seek to make out for an utter incompatibility between the two organizations in every conceivable field of party thought and party action. It is their method. And it would be futile to legislate or exhort against it.

There is one point of difference, however, whose magnitude and depth they do not exaggerate. It is the point that comes under the heading, "Our Divergent Evaluations of the Stalinist Parties." The point is not a small one and the difference is not a small one. Let us say at the very outset that it is still possible to reconcile the differences in the form of *practical agreements* in the struggle against Stalinism in one field or another. But it is no longer possible to reconcile the divergent evaluations of the Stalinist parties. If this is true, it follows that the area in which even practical agreements in the struggle against Stalinism can be made will continue to narrow as the divergence on the fundamental evaluation grows

deeper. No attempt should be made to reconcile these evaluations! Every Marxist must choose between the fundamental line developed by the SWP and the fundamental line developed by us.

A Disastrous Evaluation

What *is* the Cannonite evaluation of Stalinism in the capitalist countries, of the Stalinist parties? We quote it exactly and in full: "We evaluate the Stalinist parties in capitalist countries as working class parties led by treacherous leaders, similar to the Social-Democratic traitors. We understand, of course, that the Social-Democrats are agents of their respective native capitalisms, whereas the Stalinist bureaucrats are agents of the Kremlin oligarchy. But they have this in common: they cannot fight for workers' power, nor do they wish to take power except as agencies of capitalism and usually in coalition with its direct representatives."

That is the whole of the evaluation. Almost every single word in it is wrong or misleading. It constitutes a theoretical disaster guaranteed to produce only political disasters. At best, it can only nullify any attempt to carry on a serious struggle against Stalinism. At worst, it condemns the revolutionary movement to the fatal role of a shapeless tail of Stalinism. That is our charge and we will seek to demonstrate it.

With what do the Cannonites charge us in turn? They write: "The Workers Party, however, has embraced the Burnhamistic thesis that the Stalinists can lead the working masses to power in the capitalist countries—in order to do what? Establish a Stalinist totalitarian state, a replica of the USSR."

Let us not dwell upon the falsification which is customary in this case and which is as usual compounded of equal parts of ignorance and malice. The "Burnhamistic thesis" is precisely that the Stalinists can *not* lead the working masses to power in the capitalist countries, and in this respect we unhesitatingly express complete agreement with Burnham—and with the Socialist Workers Party. The "Burnhamistic thesis" is ridiculous, not because of this contention but because of its argument that Stalinism or fascism leads the new "managerial class" to power. But let us leave the unfortunate Burnham, whom the Cannonites introduce into every discussion out of habit, and proceed to examine the real differences.

Position of the Workers Party

The evaluation of the Cannonites has already been quoted in full. We will counterpose to it the evaluation developed by the Workers Party. The first rounded presentation of its position, developed from the traditional view of the Trotskyist

movement, is contained in our party's 1942 resolution on the national question in Europe. It is preceded by an emphasis on the need "to combat mercilessly" the imperialists and their agents inside the ranks of the underground national revolutionary movements in Europe. This section is concluded with the emphatic statement that "the struggle against the imperialists and their ideologists is a *sine qua non* to the healthy and progressive development of the national movements in Europe." Then follows the section on "The Threat of Stalinism." The Socialist Workers Party Statement quotes from this section at some length. We hope the reader will bear with us if we quote it in full:

"The seizure of control of these movements by the organized Stalinists—not the sacrificing rank-and-file militant, but the organized bureaucratic clique—can be no less disastrous for the future of the struggle for national and socialist freedom. A victory over the German oppressor which brought the Stalinist bureaucracy to power would open up the road to a new totalitarian slavery for the just-liberated people. To realize this truth it is only necessary to look at the national oppression and disfranchisement suffered by numerous non-Russian peoples under the totalitarian rule of the Great-Russian autocracy. The revolutionary Marxists must be tireless in their explanations to the workers of the real significance of Stalinism. The idea that because the Stalinists are strong and influential, and not yet completely discredited among the workers, it is correct revolutionary policy to raise the slogan of 'Let the Communist Party take power,' is based on a complete misunderstanding of what appears to be a similar slogan raised by the Bolsheviks in Russia in the middle of 1917. When the Bolsheviks called for a Menshevik-Social Revolutionary government (by their slogan of 'Down with the Ten Capitalist Ministers'), it was on the basis of the belief that such a government would be a *democratic* (i.e., a bourgeois-democratic) government, which would allow such democratic political rights to the workers and all other parties, the Bolsheviks included, that the Bolsheviks could sincerely pledge themselves not to resort to violence against that government but confine themselves to persuading the masses propagandistically, utilizing their normal democratic rights. To supply such a tactic to the Stalinists would be absurd. A social-reformist régime is a bourgeois-democratic régime, more or less. A Stalinist régime, call it 'proletarian' or anything else, is unmistakably a *totalitarian*, anti-democratic régime. From *all* experience, the conclusion flows with unquestionable certainty that whatever such a régime may hold in store for the bourgeoisie, its *first* action would be the utilization of state power for the promptest possible physical extirpation of the revolutionary proletarian elements, to be followed immediately, if not accompanied, by the destruction of all democratic and independent working class organizations and institutions. The revolutionary Marxists must seek to organize the firmest and bitterest proletarian resistance to the seizure of power by the Stalinists in the present national movements as well as to the seizure of state power by Stalinist reaction. The triumph of Stalinism can only result in the gutting of the movement for national freedom or proletarian socialism.

"It is not enough, however, to resist the deleterious and reactionary tendencies represented by imperialism, social-imperialism and Stalinism. The revolutionary Marxists must elaborate their own positive program in the ranks of the nationalist movement." (THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, Feb., 1943, pp. 41f.)

On the Nature of Social Democracy

The Statement of the Socialist Workers Party does not even pretend to give any arguments against the validity of what is set forth in this section. It does not bother to disprove our contention or to confirm its own. It labels our point of view "Burnhamistic" and party members are expected to ask no further questions. To this "argument" it adds something, to be sure. But what it adds is not an argument, only an abusive and disloyal commentary of the type which has become so depressingly familiar in the polemical literature issued against us by the Stalinists. It is worth quoting as a typical example of the polemical level to which the Socialist Workers Party leadership has sunk:

"Note, also, how in common with all vulgar anti-Stalinists, the Workers Party in its resolution idealizes, in a manner completely foreign to our tradition and practice, the Social-Democratic scoundrels—how in its lyricism about the 'democracy' of the Social-Democrats, it forgets the bloody deeds and hangman's work of Noske and Scheidemann, Kerensky, or the Spanish Social-Democratic People's Fronters. 'Democracy' is here torn out of its historic context and its connection with the development of class relations and the class struggle, and is presented as some sort of supra-historical factor existing in time and space, standing above the class struggle."

Can you imagine a more compact mixture of the pathetic, the demagogic, and the vicious, all neatly jammed into two sentences? What is "completely foreign to our tradition and practice" and altogether native to the tradition and practice of "Third Period" Stalinism is this wretched, ignorant demagoguery.

The Social-Democrats are not real democrats. Make a note of that and don't forget it! In it there have been a hundred Noskes and Scheidemanns guilty of bloody deeds and hangman's work. Make a note of that and don't forget it! Very well, we have made a note and we solemnly swear not to forget. May we now be permitted—we ask the Socialist Workers Party, as we asked Manuilsky and the other Comintern theorists of "Social-Fascism" in 1931 and 1932—to pose these questions:

Does Social-Democracy, including its treacherous bureaucratic leadership (to be repeated ten times just to prove how radical you are) strive to establish a totalitarian régime? Is the existence of the Social-Democracy, of social reformism, including its bureaucratic and treacherous leadership (repeat ten more times so as to leave no doubt of your radicalism in the minds of the phrasemongers) compatible or incompatible with a totalitarian régime? Is it not ABC for every Marxist and, in general, for every serious person except the insane theorists of "Social-Fascism" that Social-Democracy rests upon and can exist only under the conditions of bourgeois democracy? Is it not ABC for every Marxist that "a social-reformist régime is a bourgeois *democratic* régime, more or less," including "the bloody deeds and hangman's work" which are a characteristic of bourgeois-democratic régimes but which does not prevent Marxists—in contrast to "Third-Period" Stalinists (and other phrasemongers) from making the fundamental *political* distinction between bourgeois democracy and bourgeois totalitarianism? And is it not ABC for Marxists that they are able to propose and even to realize a united front with the Social-Democrats, including their ten-times-accursed and treacherous leaders, *only* because the Social-Democracy can be compelled to fight for bourgeois democracy and all that that implies for the working class, even though they fight for it in their own lamentable, social-reformist and ineffectual way?

And, finally, is it not a little disgraceful to hear self-styled Marxists refer to a simple summary of these ABC ideas in the style of the Third Period as "lyricism about the 'democracy' of the Social-Democrats"?

As for the second sentence in the commentary, you can only shrug your shoulders. It could have been written only by people convinced to their bones that the reader is an incurable numbskull who cannot remember what was written in the paragraph that preceded it. We write repeatedly about a *bourgeois* democratic government, about a *bourgeois* democratic régime. This is quoted very faithfully. What is the comment made? That "'democracy' here is torn out of its historical context and its connection with the development of class relations," that democracy "is presented as some sort of supra-historical factor existing in time and space, standing above the class struggle." What can you do? It is their method.

But let us go back to the question itself and continue with the presentation of our own viewpoint. The Statesment quotes from our editorial in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL of August, 1945 (p. 136), which states even more specifically our evaluation of the Stalinist parties which was finally incorporated, in greater detail in the Political Resolution adopted by the May 1946 convention of our party. We requote it at somewhat fuller length:

"The Stalinist Party in a country like the United States seeks to enslave the labor movement and the working class under a totalitarian régime, of which its own structure and procedure offers us a preview-model. It is not a socialist party. Yet, it is not a capitalist party, either. Its declarations in favor of capitalism have about as much meaning as Hitler's declarations in favor of socialism. It is ready under certain conditions to *hire itself out* to capitalism, but only as agent of the totalitarian bureaucracy in Russia.

"However, it is increasingly clear that the Stalinists are not *merely* the agents of the bureaucratic ruling class of Russia. That conception is proving to be too narrow. The Stalinist bureaucracy in the capitalist countries has ambitions of its own. It dreams of one day taking power, and establishing itself as ruler of subalternally the same bureaucratic despotism that its Russian colleagues enjoy. Wherever conditions are favorable, it does not hesitate to exploit the anti-capitalist sentiments of the masses—sentiments which are growing throughout the world—and to emphasize the superiority of collectivism over the anarchy of capitalist production. All this provided these anti-capitalist sentiments are not expressed in the independent class action of the proletariat aiming at socialist power, only if they can be subverted, distorted and frustrated under the domination of Stalinist reaction."

The practical conclusions for revolutionary party policy that flow from this evaluation will be dealt with further on. For the moment, let us stick to the question of the evaluation. The view which is set forth in the question from our written position seems to us to be self-evident. World political developments confirm it anew every single day.

The Social-Democracy is a bourgeois (or, more accurately, a petty bourgeois) party of social reform. It is based upon the preservation of capitalist democracy. This is not because some capitalists have paid the party leadership to take this position. It is because, among other reasons, it holds to the view that bourgeois democracy can gradually evolve into social democracy. Hence, on the one side, it seeks in its own way to defend bourgeois democracy from fascist totalitarianism; thus, it is objectively bourgeois-democratic. Hence, on the other side, it defends bourgeois democracy from the revolutionary assaults

of a socialist proletariat; thus, it is objectively counter-revolutionary. This is our Marxist theory. It is a justified generalization from a mountain of empirical evidence, and evidence continues to accumulate to confirm this generalization over and over again.

The Stalinist Parties in Capitalist Countries

This theory cannot be applied to the Stalinist parties in the capitalist countries. The Stalinist parties are indeed agents of the Kremlin oligarchy, no matter what country they function in. The interests and the fate of these Stalinist parties are inseparably intertwined with the interests and fate of the Russian bureaucracy. The Stalinist parties are everywhere based upon the power of the Russian bureaucracy, they serve this power, they are dependent upon it, and they cannot live without it.

With this charge the Cannonites are compelled to agree. But let us go further. The power of the Russian bureaucracy is based upon the continued existence of nationalized property in Russia. This basis brings the bureaucracy in fundamental opposition to the bourgeoisie all over the world, regardless of all temporary agreements, regardless even of their common antagonism to the *socialist* revolution. This was emphasized a thousand times by Trotsky and we continue to believe that it is entirely correct. But by the same token, the Stalinist parties in the capitalist countries, because they are agents of the Kremlin oligarchy, are likewise in fundamental opposition to capitalism and the capitalist state. The fact of this fundamental opposition is not cancelled out but is in a sense underlined by what we have written, namely, that the Stalinist party "is ready under certain conditions to *hire itself out* to capitalism, but *only* as agent of the totalitarian bureaucracy in Russia."

Here is where the significant and decisive difference begins between Social-Democracy and Stalinism. We refer to the Social-Democracy as the "labor lieutenants of capitalism," as the "agents of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the working class." Understood scientifically, and not in a vulgar sense, these characterizations are absolutely correct. But they cannot be applied to the Stalinist parties. They are agents, inside the working class *and* inside the bourgeois governments, of the Russian social group (call it caste, call it class—for the moment it is beside the point) which *is not* capitalist and which *does not* rest on a capitalist foundation. As agents of this grouping and in the interests of preserving its power, the Stalinist parties can be and are "hired out" to the capitalist class. In payment, the Stalinists received government positions from which they can strengthen the international political power of the Russian bureaucracy and the Kremlin itself directly receives a "pro-Russian" or a "more pro-Russian" political orientation of the capitalist class or government in question. For this fair day's pay, the Stalinists do a fair day's work. We have a thousand examples in all countries of how, under these conditions, the Stalinists feverishly and cynically trample upon the interests of the working class and subject it to the arbitrary rule of the capitalist class. But above all, it is imperative to understand that this service to the capitalist class of a given country is only a function of their basic service to the Kremlin bureaucracy—only that and nothing more. They do not "give away" what they manage to gain control of; what they control is absolutely controlled and only "rented out" for specific price paid them, in return, by the bourgeoisie. They do not *capitulate* to the bourgeoisie; they *trade* with it. Social-Democracy is *fundamentally* based upon preserving capitalist society (in its democratic

form, to be sure). Stalinism is not *fundamentally* based upon preserving capitalist society but upon preserving Stalinist society. Hence, the *fundamental* antagonism between Stalinism and Social Democracy.

This fundamental antagonism between the two, reflecting the fundamental antagonism between Stalinist and capitalist societies, was pointed out by Trotsky years and years ago:

"... It may be objected: If the present leading tendency in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is Centrism, how can one explain the present sharp attitude against the Left social democracy which is itself nothing but centrism? This is no serious argument. Our Right (Bukharin, etc.) also, which, according to the opinion of the Centrists, is following the road to the restoration of capitalism, proclaims itself the irreconcilable enemy of the social democracy. Opportunism is always ready, when conditions demand it, to establish its reputation on a clamorous radicalism to be used in other countries. Naturally, this exporation of radicalism consists for the most part of words.

"But the hostility of our Centrists and Right against the European social democracy is not entirely composed of words. We must not lose sight of the whole international situation and above all of the huge objective contradictions between the capitalist countries and the workers' states. The international social democracy supports the existing capitalist régime. Our internal opportunism, which grew up on the basis of the proletarian dictatorship, can only evolve on the side of capitalist relations. Despite the elements of dual power in the country and the Thermidorian tendencies in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the antagonism between the Soviet power and the bourgeois world remains a fact which can be denied or neglected only by 'Left' sectarians, by anarchists and their like. The international social democracy, by its whole policy, is obliged to support the designs of their bourgeoisie against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This alone creates the basis of a real, and not merely a verbal, hostility, despite the rapprochement of the political line." ("Crisis in the Right-Center Bloc," *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL*, December, 1941, pp. 315, 316; written by L. Trotsky in Alma Ata, November, 1928.)

What Trotsky wrote then is ten times more correct today, even if in the different context of present social relations. It is true that the Social-Democratic leaders betray and that the Stalinist leaders betray. But it is not this commonplace which is in question or which requires primary emphasis here. What is important is that the Social Democracy betrays the proletariat in one way and for one basic reason, and that the Stalinist parties betray the proletariat in quite a different way and for quite a different basic reason. The two movements which Trotsky described as dissimilar as far back as 1928; the two movements which we characterize as dissimilar today; the two movements which the whole politically intelligent world sees as dissimilar every single day—the Cannonites call similar. Lack of understanding and blind factional passion can take you far off the road.

On the Workers' Parties Taking Power

The Cannonites, after quoting from our position, pretend a great horror (their horror at our "revisionism" is always nine-tenths pretense). They write: "Here we notice not only a rejection of our transitional slogan, 'Let the Workers' Parties Take Power,' worked out by Lenin in 1917 and vindicated in the revolutionary struggle; but, as is usual with the Workers Party, a break with half a dozen other major programmatic positions or evaluations." Only one sentence on this point, and

yet what a terrific body blow! Let us see on whom the blow has landed.

As is clear from the quoted section of our 1942 resolution, we reject the analogy between the Menshevik and Social Revolutionary parties in Russia in 1917 and the Social Democratic and Stalinist parties of today. The Cannonites presumably make the analogy, and if words mean anything, propose to follow the same policy toward the Social Democracy *and* the Stalinist parties today that Lenin advocated toward the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries in 1917. By and large the official Fourth International today holds the same view on this question as the Cannonites. Tragic superficiality! Tragic thoughtlessness!

The social-reformist parties of Russia in 1917, standing on the basis of the preservation of capitalist democracy (as usual, in their own way) were in a coalition government with the bourgeois parties and politicians. The reformist parties had the majority in the workers' and peasants' Soviets. At one stage of the struggle the Bolsheviks raised the slogan, "Down with the ten capitalist ministers!" By means of this slogan the Bolsheviks sought to mobilize the masses for the purpose of driving the reformist leaders out of the coalition with the bourgeoisie or of forcing the bourgeoisie out of the coalition, thus placing the political power in the hands of the reformist parties. If the reformists refused to break with the bourgeoisie and take the responsibility for political power, this would have the effect of dispelling the illusions of the masses and of rallying them to the banner of the Bolsheviks. This is what actually happened. If, however, the reformists *had* broken the coalition with the bourgeoisie, the Bolsheviks would have been able to say: "Take full power! Replace all the bourgeois politicians in all the political institutions! While we have our own program, we are still a minority. Therefore, we demand that you carry out in the fullest and most radical way the program you yourselves have promised the masses you would put into effect if you were free from the veto of the bourgeoisie in a coalition government." And so on and so forth. The Bolsheviks were profoundly convinced, and rightly so, that the reformists would not even carry out their own program, that they were so strongly wedded to bourgeois democracy they would not make any serious encroachments upon the economic and political power of the bourgeoisie. For that reason, the Bolsheviks were likewise deeply convinced that they could effectively show this to the masses on the basis of their own living experiences and thereby speed the movement to Bolshevism.

Now, if the Stalinist parties are *similar* to the Mensheviks, it would seem, would it not, that the revolutionary Marxists should apply to the former the same tactic today as the Bolsheviks applied in 1917, should raise the same slogan. But right at this point, where courage or consistency should be most evidenced, it is glaringly absent.

The Specific Examples

Example: After the liberation of Yugoslavia from German domination, a Tito-Subasitch government was established, that is, a coalition between the Stalinist party and the representatives of what remained of the bourgeois parties. *Nowhere* in the Cannonite press or in the press of the Fourth International in general did we read one word to suggest that the slogan of the Fourth Internationalists for Yugoslavia, addressed to the Stalinist party and its followers, was: "Down with the ten [or five or two or one or whatever there were] capitalist ministers!" If the Stalinist party is a "workers' party" or one "similar" to the Social-Democracy, why was not the slogan,

"worked out by Lenin in 1917 and vindicated in the revolutionary struggle," applied to Yugoslavia in 1945 or even suggested by the Cannonites? Nobody knows the answer to this question, least of all the Cannonites. A little later, without any suggestion whatsoever from the Cannonites, Tito, that is, the Stalinist party, did break the "coalition" with the bourgeoisie. Subasitch and his bourgeois friends were driven out of the government; some of them were driven out of the country itself; and many were driven out of mortal existence. The Stalinists in Yugoslavia, like Noske and Scheidemann, committed bloody deeds and hangman's work—to the n-th power. But unlike the Social-Democrats, the Stalinists have practically destroyed all of the economic and political power of the bourgeoisie, destroyed also bourgeois democracy in any form, and have established what even a man with one eye in his head can recognize as a totalitarian régime. With the humility that is mandatory upon us when we face these masters of Leninist theory and tactics, we now ask the Cannonites: What is the Leninist slogan to raise in Tito Yugoslavia today? Since Stalinism is "similar" to Social-Democracy, what slogans would be raised in Yugoslavia under the Stalinist government that are "similar" to the slogans raised by us in England under the Labour Government? It is a pity, but answers to these questions we will not get. That we know.

Example: After the Germans were driven out of Poland, a "coalition" government was established in that country between the Stalinist party, the pseudo-parties led and dominated by the Stalinist parties and Mikolajczyk's Peasant Party. We do not know what slogans the Cannonites raised with regard to this "coalition" government. They did not tell us, and they told nobody else. On Poland they have maintained a silence which, if it is not a model of revolutionary politics, is a model of discretion. If no slogan was raised by the Cannonites, we must ask what slogan should have been raised for Poland or by Fourth Internationalists whom the Russian and Polish GPU neglected to murder? "Drive Mikolajczyk and company and all the other capitalist ministers out of the government?" Or some other slogan "similar" to the one "worked out by Lenin in 1917 and vindicated in the revolutionary struggle"? We have scrutinized the Fourth International press, the Cannonite press included, with the most fruitless care. To make sure, we read it all over again. But no such slogan was to be found and there was not even a suggestion of it. The absence of the slogan is bewildering and incomprehensible only for a moment, then everything becomes clear. The power of thought is greater than the power of words. So mighty is the thought of the Cannonite-Leninists that it communicated itself to the Polish Stalinists across thousands of miles of land and sea. Without hearing the slogan or seeing it on the banners of the Fourth International, the Stalinists have carried it out in life. They have broken the coalition with the bourgeois party. They have driven it out of one political institution after another and, in general, deprived it of all political power. For everyone they killed, they put ten in prison. They expropriated the landowners. They nationalized the property of the bourgeoisie. At the same time, to confirm the theory that they are an authentic although somewhat degenerated "workers' party," they destroyed every independent workers' organization, every independent peasants' organization and destroyed or rendered farcical every serious trace of a democratic right. As this is written, the gun-filled fist of the Russo-Polish GPU has just about achieved supreme power.

The Cannonites assure us that the Stalinist parties do not

"wish to take power except as agencies of capitalism and usually in coalition with its direct representatives." This is the last and *only* consolation left to the Polish bourgeoisie. It is a poor one, it is not their own, but it is better than nothing. The Polish Stalinists who, you see, have taken power only as "agencies of capitalism," turned out to be less merciful enemies of the capitalists whose agents they are than the Cannonites. For from these Stalinists the capitalists have received not so much as a literary consolation.

What is all this about Poland? Bah! After all, it is nothing but the facts. If we must choose between the facts and our theory, we are, everybody should know, unterrified Marxists and we choose theory. We do not have our "evaluation" for nothing!

Example: The coalition government of the Stalinists in Bulgaria—apply everything that was said in the preceding example. The coalition government of the Stalinists in Rumania—apply everything that was said in the preceding example. The coalition government of the Stalinists in Hungary—apply everything that was said in the preceding example.

The political courage of the Cannonites has leaked right out of their "evaluation." Not surprising! Their evaluation of the Stalinist parties is a cask without a bottom.

The courage they do not show in putting their evaluation into political practice in a whole series of "similar" cases is evidently reserved for charging us with an inconsistency. "For some unexplained reason," they write, we "reversed" our position and accepted the "slogan of a Socialist-Communist—but not a Communist—government." Charity dictates an acknowledgment that the explanation for our position in favor of the slogan for a Socialist-Communist government in France was not good enough for the Cannonites. With hopes for greater success, we will try again.

The Slogan of "CP-SP-CGT to Power!"

Our statement in support of the slogan of a "Socialist Party-Communist Party-CGT Government in France" was drawn up in January, 1946. The French government of the time was based upon a coalition of the conservative bourgeois party (MRP), the Socialist party and the Stalinist party. The bourgeois party represented a minority of the people as a whole and an infinitesimal minority of the decisive class in France, the proletariat. Between them, the Social-Democracy and the Stalinists not only had the overwhelming support of the proletariat but had even received a majority of the votes in the nation.

"The Social-Democrats," said our resolution, "keep the proletariat tied to the bourgeoisie out of fear that a break with the latter would thrust them into an unwanted alliance with the Stalinists. The Stalinists keep the proletariat tied to the bourgeoisie out of an unwillingness to take power into their own hands even though they have the great majority of the proletariat behind them—an unwillingness dictated by the present interests of the Kremlin's foreign policy and by the unfavorable relationship of forces which faces them in France and Europe in general; and by an inability to oust de Gaulle [read: the politically organized bourgeoisie] from control by means of a coalition with the reluctant Social-Democracy alone.

"The first big step forward toward restoring the class independence of the French proletariat requires a radical break with the bourgeoisie and its political representatives, de Gaulle and MRP. This demands first of all, at the present time, the breaking of the existing coalition and the ousting of the de Gaulle government. Together, the Socialist party and the Stal-

inist party represent a majority not only of the proletariat but of the people as a whole. No other central political slogan is possible for the revolutionary Marxists, and none corresponds better to the needs of the situation than the slogan of a 'Government of the Socialist Party-Communist Party-CGT.' "

However, our resolution continues, support of this slogan without an understanding of what is involved and of how the slogan itself is to be employed, "would be worse than useless... it would be a dangerous trap for the working class as a whole and for the Fourth Internationalists in particular. This slogan can and must be advanced by our party in France, but only if it is inseparably linked with and subordinated to a detailed and clearly explained program of transitional demands." As examples of the demands which such a program should "prominently include" and around which our main agitation and propaganda must be centered, the resolution notes: nationalization "under the most democratic workers' control of production"; the demand for the most democratic constitution for the Constituent Assembly, with special emphasis upon unrestricted guarantees of all democratic rights; a democratic people's militia to replace an immediately demobilized army and all the special police and government spy services; the withdrawal of all French occupation forces from conquered territories, an immediate democratic peace and no indemnities or tribute burden; and other demands of the same order. Even after listing these demands, the resolution still found it necessary to emphasize that the slogan "undoubtedly carries with it grave risks," to which the Fourth International cannot be blind and which it must not conceal or gloss over—that is, precisely those grave risks which the French Trotskyists, if they are not blind to them, nevertheless do conceal and gloss over.

"... The slogan is not the same, adapted to French conditions, as that put forward by the Bolsheviks in Russia in 1917 in advocating a coalition government of the Menshevik and Social Revolutionary parties. It is not the same, adapted to French conditions, as that put forward, originally by the Communist International and in our time by the Fourth International, in advocating a Labour Party government in England. In those cases, there were involved bourgeois or petty bourgeois democratic reformist workers' (or workers' and peasants) parties. In France today, there is involved, so far as the Stalinist party is concerned, not a democratic but a totalitarian party operating as an instrument of the Kremlin and the GPU. Hence, we oppose any slogan which means lifting this counter-revolutionary totalitarian instrument into the position of state power in any country, or into the position where there is a clear threat of its use of the state police power for the extermination of the independent working class and revolutionary movements, as in Russia, as in Poland, as in Yugoslavia, etc."

In the face of this analysis, which, it is perfectly obvious, is not at all the "reversal" of our evaluation of Stalinism which the Cannonites ascribe to us, how was it possible to advocate this slogan? This was the question posed by many of the leaders and members of our party. If the revolutionary Marxists must resist every attempt of Stalinism to come to power in the capitalist countries, how is this to be squared with support of a slogan which calls for them to establish a government together with the Social-Democracy? In reply to this question, our resolution pointed out that

"... a concrete and objective examination of the political situation and the relationship of forces in France today,

and in Europe and the world in general, indicates that the totalitarian Stalinist party cannot and will not and does not seek to take state power in France in any way comparable to its seizure of power in Poland and Yugoslavia; and indicates further that in a coalition government with the Socialist Party and the CGT, the Stalinists could not and would not proceed, either in the field of economic life or of political power, in any way comparable to their procedure in Poland and Yugoslavia, inasmuch as such a course, extended to France, would not only precipitate civil war in the country but would bring infinitely closer the outbreak of the Third World War, both of which it is clearly the Kremlin's policy to avert, at least in the next period."

To us it seems that the subsequent developments in France have served to confirm this analysis, and to dispel the by no means unjustified doubts expressed by many of the opponents of the slogan in our party. To these comrades, we said at the time that it was only necessary for them to show by "a concrete and objective examination of the political situation and the relationship of forces in France today, and in Europe and the world in general" that support of the slogan signified that Stalinism would be brought to power in France in any way comparable to the power it was acquiring in Yugoslavia and Poland. If that had been demonstrated, there is no doubt that the overwhelming majority of our party would have rejected the slogan. If, instead, it supported the slogan, it was only upon the conviction that its proper use by the French Trotskyists would facilitate the disclosure to the French masses of the real, that is, the reactionary nature of Stalinism and thus help to loosen its hold upon the French masses. In other words, what was primarily involved in the discussion in our party over this slogan was not so much a dispute over the character of the Stalinist parties, as over the concrete analysis of the political situation in France and of the specific prospects of Stalinism. This is not to deny that in the discussion, as is usually the case in questions of this sort, there were no further implications that could be drawn from the respective positions. But that is another matter. It has no direct relation to the matter at hand—and that is the setting forth of the reasons why, given our evaluations of Stalinism, it was nevertheless possible for us to support the slogan of a Socialist Party-Communist Party-CGT government in France.

But suppose the concrete analysis sketched in our resolution proved to be incorrect? In that case, we would not have hesitated to say that our support of the slogan was a grave mistake. We would have had to say much more. The resolution itself posed that question and provided a tentative answer:

"If, contrary to this analysis, the Stalinists should now be on the verge of taking state power in France in their own name, or in the name of a coalition with the Socialist Party which would, along with the French bourgeoisie, which is in turn backed by Anglo-American imperialism, prove to be as impotent to prevent the consolidation of Stalinist state power as their equivalents have proved to be in Poland and Yugoslavia, then an altogether different conclusion would be dictated to the Fourth International. Then it would no longer be a question of raising or abandoning the slogan of a 'Socialist Party-Communist Party-CGT Government.' The Fourth International would then have to reconsider and revise fundamentally not only its whole European and international perspective, but also its whole concept of the character of our epoch. Nothing less than such a reconsideration would be mandatory to the Fourth International if it were confronted

by the reality of the consolidation of Stalinist power on the European Atlantic, which would mean nothing else but the complete domination of Europe and Asia, at least most of Asia, by Stalinism.

There are, however, altogether insufficient grounds for any such analysis and conclusion. Stalinism has not only not triumphed over Europe, but there are ample indications that its power and influence are receding from the immediate post-war peak and that the popular resistance to it is increasing. This is evident, in different degrees, not only in France and Italy, in Austria and Hungary, but even in occupied countries like Poland and Rumania."

Our position on the use of the slogan in France thus in no wise contradicts our evaluation of the Stalinist parties. In any case, the use of that slogan in France was a purely tactical and incidental question. Let us repeat: It would only be necessary really to *demonstrate* that it *is* in conflict with our evaluation of the Stalinist parties for us to abandon it without hesitation.

The Programmatic Criteria of the Cannonites

At the conclusion of their Statement, the Cannonites set up three "rock-bottom programmatic criteria operating today to demarcate the revolutionary tendency from all forms and varieties of opportunism." For the Cannonites these "new criteria" are the knife with which the Fourth International is to be cut in two, thus effectively eliminating it as the revolutionary International and transforming it into a mere international Cannonite faction. As the corollary to their first criterion which deals with the evaluation of Russia, they list the evaluation of the Stalinist parties in the capitalist countries and the attitude toward these parties. What they mean by this should be clearly understood and properly appraised by revolutionary Marxists everywhere. It is, as they so correctly say, no minor question.

In their chapter on the Stalinist parties, this is how they characterize our position. What they place between parentheses is quoted from one or another document written by us.

"1. Trotsky's evaluation of the Stalinist movement must be rejected. ("The theory that the Stalinist parties like the traditional reformist organizations are agents of the capitalist class, that they "capitulate to the bourgeoisie," is fundamentally false.)

"2. The Stalinist parties seek state power in order to form Stalinist states, akin to the Soviet Union. ("Stalinism is not merely the servant of Russian imperialism. . . . It seeks to establish in every capitalist country in which it functions the same social and political régime as prevails in Russia today.")

"3. The Stalinist party is similar to the Nazi party. (. . . Fascism and Stalinism, while not identical, are symmetrical phenomena.)

"4. Hence our established tactical approach to the Stalinists is no good and must be rejected. ("The traditional policy of the revolutionary vanguard toward the labor-reformist movements [or bureaucracies] does not, therefore, apply to the Stalinist movements.")

Although not exact, this is nevertheless a good enough statement of our point of view. By clear implication, this point of view is rejected and the contrary point of view is maintained by the Cannonites. If the Fourth International persists in the Cannonite point of view on the Stalinist parties, its suicide is guaranteed. There is no need whatsoever to court this fate. We repeat that the Cannonite standpoint is based on a misunderstood "traditional policy," upon ignorance of Trotsky's real position, upon a gross failure to appraise correctly

the evolution of Stalinist Russia and of the Stalinist parties in the capitalist countries, and not least of all upon factional malice and blindness which has caused them literally to *forget themselves*. Unlike the Cannonites, we will not confine ourselves to mere assertion. We will *demonstrate* this, point by point, and demonstrate it to the hilt.

1. and 2. The Cannonites write that we reject Trotsky's evaluation of the Stalinist movement. Strictly speaking, this is not correct. The Cannonite view must indeed be rejected, from start to finish. Trotsky's view must be extended, amplified in the light of the recent real evolution, and deepened. We have already quoted what Trotsky wrote years ago in "The Crisis of the Right-Center Bloc" about the fundamental antagonism between Social-Democracy and the Stalinist parties. This basically correct view we have sought to develop in accordance with the development of the living forces. Any theory which holds that Stalinism "capitulates to the bourgeoisie" in the same sense as the Social-Democracy is false to the very bottom and can only disorient the Fourth International and those workers who follow it. It can only raise still higher the barrier that separates us from those workers who support the Stalinist parties and thereby only increase the numerous difficulties that already exist for our work of winning these workers away from Stalinism.

The Cannonites indignantly reject our view that Stalinism "seeks to establish in every capitalist country in which it functions the same social and political régime as prevails in Russia today" (and note that we say "seeks to establish," and not "will succeed in establishing"). The Cannonites simply do not understand Trotsky's point of view, let alone our own; they do not even *know* Trotsky's point of view. Read carefully the following words:

"The predominating type among the present 'Communist' bureaucrats is the political careerist, and in consequence the polar opposite of the revolutionist. *Their ideal is to attain in their own country the same position that the Kremlin oligarchy gained in the USSR.* They are not the revolutionary leaders of the proletariat but *aspirants to totalitarian rule. They dream of gaining success with the aid of this same Soviet bureaucracy and its GPU.* They view with admiration and envy the invasion of Poland, Finland, the Baltic states, Bessarabia by the Red Army because these invasions *immediately bring about the transfer of power into the hands of the local Stalinist candidates for totalitarian rule.*" (My emphasis—M. S.)

Who is guilty of uttering this gross Burnhamite-Shachtmanite-Satanic anti-Trotskyist blasphemy? Who is the author of these views which are almost word for word, and certainly thought for thought, the views of our party? Leon Trotsky! Not only was this written by Trotsky, but it may even be considered his final political testament, so far as the Stalinist parties in the capitalist countries are concerned. It was not written as an accidental phrase out of harmony with the text that surrounds it. It is contained in what is not only a lengthy but an obviously well-thought-out and weightily considered last judgment on the Stalinist parties. It is contained in the very last political article written by Trotsky before his assassination—it is dated August 17, 1940. There is no good excuse for not knowing this decisively significant passage. It is not in an unpublished manuscript. It was not only published but—it is hard to believe and yet it is true—published in the theoretical organ of the Socialist Workers Party, *The Fourth International*, November, 1940, where it can be found on page 149.

When we accept or reject Trotsky's point of view on any

question, we make at least a serious effort to find out what that point of view is. Is it not plain that the Cannonites have been talking all this time about "Trotsky's evaluation of the Stalinist movement" without even knowing what Trotsky's evaluation was? That they have charged us with rejecting an evaluation which is our own, and which they—and which only they—actually reject? Can you imagine a more humiliating position for the avowed followers—no, the only real followers!—of Trotsky to have placed themselves in by their aggressive ignorance and factional malice? We could continue with this by the page, but it is not necessary. All you need to do is to read over again our evaluation, the abuse and ridicule the Cannonites heap upon us, and then check the two against the last evaluation of the Stalinist parties made by Trotsky.

3. The Cannonites quote from one of our documents where we write that "fascism and Stalinism, while not identical, are symmetrical phenomena." They do not comment on this sentence. Why not? Obviously because for them the mere reproduction of this thought is sufficient to revile and condemn it as a monstrosity which is made up of equal parts of Burnhamism, Shachtmanism and in general the work of the devil; and, as every genuine, undiluted Trotskyist knows, it has nothing—but absolutely nothing—in common with Trotskyism. Repetition is tedious but we have no choice. We must repeat what we said before. The Cannonites do not understand Trotsky's point of view, let alone our own; they do not even *know* Trotsky's point of view. Read carefully the following words:

"Stalinism and fascism, in spite of a deep difference in social functions, are symmetrical phenomena. In many of their features they show a deadly similarity."

Where is the difference between these words and the thoughts contained so clearly in them, and the words quoted from our documents (and quoted with such disdain and contempt) by the Cannonites? There is none! Who is the author of these words? Leon Trotsky. Written in some unavailable manuscript? No, it appears in his great work, *The Revolution Betrayed*, and is to be found on page 278. Bitter joke: the Cannonites have published their own edition of *The Revolution Betrayed*. They try to sell it everywhere. They recommend it highly. But their leaders obviously have not read it.

4. The final point in the pitifully ignorant indictment of us points out that we say, as indeed we do, that the traditional policy of the revolutionary vanguard toward the reformist movements and even the reformist bureaucracies does *not* apply to the Stalinist movements. On the basis not of a haphazard, hand-to-mouth, empirical approach but on the basis of a thought-out and fundamental analysis of the Stalinist movement, our party has drawn a basic distinction between the Stalinist bureaucracy and the reformist bureaucracy. Our practical policy, above all in the trade unions, has been guided by this fundamental analysis. We have not hesitated, as our general rule, to make blocs with the progressive reformists in the unions against the Stalinists, and not only with the progressive but even with the conservative bureaucrats. (We are speaking, of course, of all those cases where it was impossible for the revolutionists in the union to present their own independent candidates against both the Stalinists and the reformists.) We have set forth this policy, and the basic reasons for it, time and again in our press. For it, we have received only the malignant and contemptuous epithets of the Cannonites. In contrast, the latter have vacillated between one policy and another, because in reality their "evaluation" is as solid as a sucked-out egg. In the last few years in particular, the Cannon-

ites (and this, unfortunately, is also true of the rest of the Fourth International) have been a ship without a rudder, sails or chart in the practical political struggle against Stalinism.

Now, impelled by factional animus against us, and in practice by a growing affinity, let it be said, for the Stalinists, they attack us for holding the position we have quoted. But we have not always been alone in holding this position. Read carefully the following words:

"... We must be very careful. If we allow ourselves to become confused and mixed up with the Stalinists, we will cut off our road of approach to the rank and file of the trade union movement, the anti-Stalinist rank and file, which, in my opinion, is a more important reservoir of the revolution than the Stalinist rank and file...."

"We must classify the Stalinists and the reactionary and 'progressive' patriotic labor fakers as simply two different varieties of enemies of the working class employing different methods because they have different bases under their feet. It brings us into a complicated problem in the trade union movement. It has been our general practice to combine in day-to-day trade union work with the progressives and even the conservative labor fakers against the Stalinists. We have been correct from this point of view, that while the conservatives and traditional labor skates are no better than the Stalinists, are no less betrayers in the long run, they have different bases of existence. The Stalinist base is the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union. They are perfectly willing to disrupt a trade union in defense of the foreign policy of Stalin. The traditional labor fakers have no roots in Russia nor any support in its powerful bureaucracy. Their only base of existence is the trade union; if the union is not preserved they have no further existence as trade union leaders. That tends to make them, from self-interest, a little more loyal to the unions than the Stalinists. That is why we have been correct in most cases in combining with them as against the Stalinists in purely union affairs."

We do not think that this analysis is as thoroughgoing as it might be; and even the conclusions are unnecessarily restricted. But the line it indicates, the orientation which it seeks to give the party—that is indubitably correct and for our purposes adequate. Who is the author of these words? Some member of the Workers Party, perhaps? It might well be, but in this case it is not. We have quoted from a speech delivered at the 1940 Chicago conference of the Socialist Workers Party by no less authoritative a party leader than James P. Cannon. The speech is not contained in a secret, unavailable manuscript. The stenographic record of the speech appears in the weekly organ of the Socialist Workers Party, *The Socialist Appeal*, of October 19, 1940. The Russian proverb reads, "Do not spit in the well from which you may have to drink." The Cannonites need another version of this proverb: "Do not spit into the good clean well from which you once drank and from which you may find it necessary to drink again."

They will *have* to drink from it again. The Fourth International as a whole will have to drink from it again and to understand why, and to understand thoroughly. Have to? Yes, if the Fourth International is to survive and grow as a genuinely Marxist international, if it is to escape the otherwise inescapable fate of a sickly shadow helplessly in the tow of Stalinism, the entire Fourth International must reconsider its evaluation not only of Stalinist Russia, but of the Stalinist parties in the capitalist countries. It must reorient itself and reorient every militant in the working class within reach of its voice.

MAX SHACHTMAN.

Third-Party Trends

Liberal-Labor Coalition Versus Labor Party

The trend toward a third party has taken on a new life in American politics such as it has not had for nearly a quarter of a century. To be exact, since the elder Robert La Follette polled five million votes against Calvin Coolidge and John W. Davis in 1924.

This term "third party" is used here with its generally understood sense in liberal, radical and also Marxist circles: a third party with some pretension to liberalism or progressivism within the framework of capitalist ideology—a liberal third capitalist party.

Third-party talk today has attained the status of a recognized realistic factor in discussions of immediate political perspectives. Over a year ago, the *Wall Street Journal* front-paged a story which saw a third party in the 1948 elections (but, it said, no possibility of national victory before 1952!). The dates are previous, but the fact of such a prediction is itself interesting. Naturally most of the speculation centers about the future of the PAC. But, outside the framework of the PAC, two forces have already organized to push a third party. First, a capsule sketch of these.

The Third-Party Advocates

One is the Communist Party and the periphery in the labor movement which it influences. It is all-out for a third party. A year ago, its No. 2 man, Eugene Dennis, set the time for organizational realization as "some time early in '47." But the Conference of Progressives held in Chicago (PAC, Wallace, etc.) refused to split with the Democrats as yet. The Stalinists have therefore set a new goal: a third party by the time of the Democratic nominating convention of 1948. An editorial in the December *Political Affairs* concedes that "it can come into being only when the forces represented at the Chicago Conference of Progressives, or at least a majority of those represented there, become convinced of its necessity and are ready to build it." Another article speaks of realizing the perspective "at the earliest possible date." The CP is interested in seeing a third party in actual existence by convention time mainly in order to hold it as a club over the Democratic nominators.

While the Stalinists speak of a "broad third party" and specifically have in mind the coalition of liberals, "progressive" politicians and labor leaders which came together at the Chicago conference, they are not behind-hand in emphasizing the role of labor in this coalition. Foster's pamphlet, *Problems of Organized Labor Today*, reiterates that this broad "people's party" must be "based on the trade unions. . . . The new party must have the trade unions as its decisive, leading force." But this formula, "a third party based on the trade unions," is *not* the same as a labor party. What it does mean we shall see later. As Foster himself puts the question:

The times are too urgent to embark upon a slow, many years long, brick by brick process of party building, such as was used to organize the British Labor Party. . . . Thus, imperatively, in forming the new party ways must be found to maintain the closest working together of all progressive forces in the old parties, including those not yet convinced of the necessity or possibility of building such a party.

It is the same as the formula put forward by Harold J. Laski in *The Nation*: to "make organized labor the core of a

progressive alliance round which can gather all" who oppose "a retreat from the plane to which Mr. Roosevelt had raised the issues" (Nov. 23, 1946).

The other force is an aggregation with some important labor backing, formed last April under the name of the National Educational Committee for a New Party. It is the anti-Stalinist wing of the active third-partyites. It is headed by A. Philip Randolph, president of the Sleeping Car Porters. Tied in with it are: President David Dubinsky of the Ladies' Garment Workers; the CIO-UAW's Walter Reuther; the Liberal Party of New York State; leaders of the Michigan Commonwealth Federation, like Hammond; whatever the old Socialist Party has in the labor movement; and such individuals as John Dewey, who is honorary chairman, and Lewis Corey, who is research director.

Its declaration of principles clearly enough indicates its aim as a third party of liberal capitalism, which will seek to preserve the "liberal democratic way of life" through a limited amount of government operation aimed at monopoly, in the interests of "all useful functional groups," under which heading labor is included; and about ten times as much space is used in stressing the defense of "free private enterprise" and the revitalization of "small business man" as is devoted to the sub-section dealing with labor's interests. Its foreign policy is also crystal-clear: only praise, without a syllable of criticism, of the international role and policy of America and the British Empire, with even a laudatory word thrown in for French and Dutch imperialism. "But while capitalist imperialism is being liquidated, a new imperialism is being forged by Russian expansionism. . ." etc.—that is, thoroughly unqualified ideological preparation for support of the next war by western imperialism against Stalinist imperialism. All clinched by the final peroration to "Men and women of good will everywhere!" to recapture the American dream.

The PAC-Progressive Coalition

Both the CIO-PAC and the National Citizens' PAC have thus far carefully denied any intention "at this time" to form a third party. The qualification "at this time" is Philip Murray's. Frank Kingdon, chairman of the NCPAC, expressed the official view over a year ago as follows: "Don't go dreaming about a third party that can't be organized right now. In twenty states we couldn't organize at all. We may move toward a third party, but what we have to do now is organize independent voters."

Outside labor's ranks, the Wallace-Pepper wing of the Democrats declare their determination to "reform" the party and reject any thought of a split (at this time). They talk in terms of uniting New Deal Democrats and liberal Republicans in a reshuffling of forces within the two-party system. But since the capture of the Truman-Bilbo-Hague machine by the Little Pink Ridinghoods is recognized by most observers as only slightly less difficult than overthrowing capitalism, the question of what the Wallaces will find themselves doing in '48, '50 or '52 is not downed.

The most serious incubator of the potential third-party coalition is the Progressive Conference already referred to. Its composition includes: the CIO-PAC; the NCPAC; the Inde-

pendent Citizens' Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions—most Stalinized outfit of the lot and recently merged with the NCPAC to form the Progressive Citizens of America; the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, represented by Walter White; the National Farmers Union, by James Patton; and a brace of New Dealers—Wallace, Pepper, Morgenthau, ex-Gov. Elmer Benson, La Guardia, etc.

Thus far, of course, the line of the conference has been its least common denominator: the perspective of organizing progressive caucuses in both parties on a general New Deal program. But the door was carefully left open for third-party action in the future. This is due only partly to Stalinist influence. Two other effective factors were: the possible value of such ambiguity for blackmail purposes against the Democratic leaders; and certainly also, simply the realities of the political situation which soon or eventually may make third-party action the only alternative to complete capitulation by the self-styled progressives in the Democratic blind alley.

If we put together the elements so far enumerated (throw in some others like Stalinist-influenced AFL locals and the American Labor Party), we get a fairly formidable combination which seems to be heading in the direction of an eventual third-party movement.

There are two things which should be noted first about this phenomenon.

The Ebb of Labor-Partyism

While the trend toward a third party of liberal capitalism is at a new peak inside and outside labor's ranks, *labor-party* talk is at a new low ebb. We will consider later the present meaning of the traditional dichotomy between these two labels; but as far as the naked eye can see, the above statement is an indisputable but interesting accompaniment of the one which opened this article.

An obvious caution is in order here. It is illustrated by the speech which David Dubinsky made in the middle of last year to a trade union convention, calling for a new party. In so doing, he used the words "a national labor party," and this phrase even got into some of the newspaper heads topping the reported item. It sounded to the read-and-run scanner as if the president of a great international were calling for a labor party. Very laudably, *Labor Action* was careful to correct this misunderstanding. Dubinsky used "third party" quite interchangeably and more often in the same speech; and, as *Labor Action* pointed out, the party which he heads (the Liberal Party) is the kind of party he means by both labels: a third *capitalist* party.

The same point is illustrated by some of the leaders of the Michigan Commonwealth Federation who, at least in the recent past if not more currently, did not let the terminological combination "labor party" stick in their throats while they went ahead to build the MCF as a third capitalist party, statewide model.

There is, in fact, not a single influential labor figure or trade union body in this country that is for a labor party, in any sense wherein it differs from a third capitalist party. Of course, it is perfectly true that the tops of the labor movement are not necessarily faithful reflection of rank-and-file sentiment, and also true that *rank-and-file* sentiment will grow in favor of breaking with capitalist politics in one form or another. But *today* with the floodtide of third-partyism running, labor-partyism is at low.

This ought to be understood by comparison with what

happened in 1924, which, we said, was the previous high point of the third-party movement. It was also and equally a high point of the labor-party movement, headed by the top leaders of the Chicago trade unions. What happened was that this labor-party surge was derailed, captured and taken in tow by the third-party movement behind La Follette. The whole point is that at the present juncture, there is no labor-party movement even to be derailed by the third-partyites.

The picture is further pointed up by the situation in the radical sector of labor. While the Communist Party itself is neither socialist nor working class in character, its policies have a big effect upon the orientation and action of the largest bloc of radical workers; and we have already pointed out that this weight is being swung in favor of a third party and against a labor party. This leaves the Socialist Party, and it is worth a quick glance. Not because its policies have any important effect on what is happening or will happen, but precisely for the opposite reason: because it is a wisp of straw in the wind, and there is a wind blowing.

The SP has been in favor of a labor party since 1922, but at its last national convention, even it abandoned the labor-party standard to plump for a third party—or, in its phraseology, "a new mass party" based on "a coalition of popular forces." The resolution embodying this turn is an amazing one even for the muddleheads in Norman Thomas' entourage. With the exception of a parenthetical clause in a sentence recalling that since 1922 they have been "committed to electoral support of a labor or farmer party in America," the text of this document performs the truly difficult feat of discussing the question without a single word of reference, direct or indirect, to the existence of the labor movement in the United States, to the PAC, the CIO, trade unions, the working class, or any reasonable facsimile thereof. Indeed, the pre-convention spokesman for their document rather expressed the FEAR that the new party might fall under the control of its "trade union and farm organization affiliates." It would be entertaining but digressive to discuss this SP mishmash further: we are interested here in one fact which emerges.

This fact is that, not only in the labor movement but also in the radical movement, the only organized force of *any* size in favor of a labor party is the Trotskyists—that is, those who look upon it as a step toward the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. By those who choose to do so, this *may* be interpreted from the silver-lining angle as a position of honor to be cherished; but we are concerned at the moment only with the fact that it is unprecedented in extent—and completely unexpected by the Trotskyist movement itself. In fact, it is downright disconcerting to read, in the resolution adopted by the majority of the 1944 convention of the Workers Party, that: "while the danger of 'third-partyism' undoubtedly threatens the incipient labor party, it has neither the strength nor the prospects it had twenty years ago."

Is a Third Party Viable Today?

What does this unprecedented and unexpected (unexpected by the majority of the Trotskyist movement) phenomenon mean? To answer this question, we must examine the second notable feature of the current third-party trend.

There have, of course, been quite a number of third-party movements in the history of American politics. Naturally, therefore, the present resurgence of third-party talk has been accompanied by a good deal of delving into political history for the lessons to be drawn regarding present perspectives. There is the long line of precedents—Populism, Bull Moose,

the Farmer-Labor parties of the midwest states, the Wisconsin Progressive Party, the experiences of the Non-Partisan League, and so on. And from it all, the "progressive" politicians and labor leaders of the PAC have come up with an historical conclusion. It is: *Third parties have always failed.*

Writing in last May's *Scholastic*, the reputable historian Henry Steele Commager brings out the same distillation from his vast store of erudition as do Wallace and Murray: "Perhaps the most interesting thing about the American party system is that there has never been a successful third party. Or, we might say, no third party has ever been successful at the polls." The only sense in which a third party has ever been successful is by forcing one of the old parties to adopt its program in order to defeat it. In this sense, "The success of the third party leads to political suicide."

Whereupon the advocates of third-partyism argue: How about the Republican Party? Didn't it first arise as a third party? And we are coming to the same kind of period of disintegration and reshuffling of party lines that characterized the 1850s and produced the matrix in which a new major party was born.

It would not be unrewarding to follow this argument through, although not merely in order to discover an historical precedent. But it is much more important to point immediately to the basic difference between all these third parties (which, truly enough, have failed and disappeared since the Civil War) and the third party which is in the egg today. For there is a basic difference, which has to be the starting point for any serious thought about the third-party and laborite politics of the present. The third party which looms for us is a *new type* of third party.

The central difference lies in that which comes first to the mind of both the practical politician and the social analyst: *its mass base.*

Ever since the Civil War up to recently, the mass base of every third party or third-party movement of any significance has been *predominantly* agrarian and middle-class. Its support came largely from the farm areas of the Midwest. The labor movement was more backward, numerically and ideologically, and its social weight in the country far less than it is today. This is most obvious with respect to the Greenbacker, Granger and Populist movements of the end of the 19th century. It was also true of the Farmer-Labor Party and the Non-Partisan League, which were strong especially in the Dakotas, Minnesota, Idaho and Montana from 1915 to 1923. While it is still true in the 1922-24 flare-up of labor-progressive political action, the transition is visible. Here for the first and last time in its history, even the Executive Council of the AFL endorsed the La Follette-Wheeler ticket, and a respectable list of trade unions either participated in the convention which nominated La Follette or endorsed him. But in the movement itself the labor organizations tail-ended; and in the voting, the bulk of La Follette's strength came from the same largely agrarian states which the Non-Partisan League had cultivated. He carried only Wisconsin and ran second in states like Minnesota, the Dakotas, Idaho, Iowa, Montana and five others—not one industrial state. But, again symptomatic of the transition, he did poll a good vote in some large cities.

The present third-party movement, potential and actual, is a social animal of a different species. Its heart and most of its limbs are in the organized labor movement. Without the CIO and its PAC, it would be nothing, would not indeed exist. Its mass base is working class, urban, industrial.

Even its main non-labor periphery—the NCPAC—was created by the CIO. The other wing of the third-party movement, the Randolph-Dubinsky NECNP, is equally labor in complexion. We repeat that we are here talking about the mass base of the movement. The role of the Wallaces and Peppers is thereby underlined. Not only are they generals without an army—there is not a La Follette nor even an A. C. Townley among them—but the only numbers they can hope to organize as a force behind them, whether inside or outside the Democratic Party, are the numbers of organized labor. They know this better than anyone else.

The Laborite Third Party of Today

If this is not understood, then the fate of La Follette's Wisconsin Progressive Party only last March would be a mystery. For here, in a period when third-partyism is booming, the last flicker of the old third-party movement gives up the ghost! In convention assembled, the La Follette party voted to disband amid an atmosphere of gloom, and the bulk of it went home to the GOP (to build a "left wing," of course, à la Stassen). It was completely played out. Outside of a few die-hards who wanted to keep going as is, the main alternative voted on was—to join the Democrats instead. Truly, *this old type* third party "has neither the strength nor the prospects it had twenty years ago." But to apply this summary to the *real* third-partyism of today shows unawareness of what goes on.

To see what is happening, all we have to do is glance across the lake from Wisconsin to Michigan. In the former state a third party died. In the latter state a third party arose while the other disintegrated—the Michigan Commonwealth Federation, based on the masses of organized labor, especially the UAW. The viability of the present MCF even as a third party is not material; that it points to the only viable trend is unmistakable. The difference between the MCF and the Wisconsin PP is the difference between the old and the new third party. A corollary is that those who hailed the MCF as the harbinger of a revived Independent Labor Party movement have been doomed to as cruel disappointment as the few die-hards in the Wisconsin PP who thought the old road was still passable. Both have not read the signs.

Far from having neither strength nor prospects, the new *laborite* third-party movement need not be overwhelmed by the dire predictions of professors and progressive politicians that third-partyism is doomed to failure. The historical precedents which Commager pointed to since the Civil War were the political efforts of class strata (middle class) which were being ground away between the upper and nether millstones of capital and labor. These class strata were indeed doomed to failure—that is, their social weight in the country and therefore in politics was indeed fated to fall away. The new third-party movement based on the urban, industrial population—and in class terms, on the voting strength of the working class—has a future.

We have pointed out that those Marxists who discounted the prospects of third-partyism have been as far off the beam as those others, like Professor Commager, who regard the existing two-party system as eternal. For the latter, third parties are counted out by the strength of the two-party system. For the former, they are counted out by the "inevitable" trend toward an independent labor party. Our point has been so far that both have viewed today's third-partyism as a mere repetition rather than as a new phenomenon. Let us now take another look at this new type of laborite third party, par-

ticularly as it impinges on the expected inevitability of an independent labor party.

In the dynamic class context of American capitalist society today, both of these traditional categories [third party and labor party] are pushed in each other's direction, and tend to be telescoped into a fused political form.

No serious liberal-capitalist third party can arise in this country today without a heavy labor base and decisive labor alliances. The important third-party movements of the era now gone arose on the basis of the farmers and lower middle-class predominantly. Today, with the vastly increased social weight of the working class, it can arise only with the labor-liberals standing in their shoes.

Conversely, in the 19th century, when an independent labor fight to wrest reforms from a lustier capitalism was possible without calling into question the very stability of capitalism itself, reformist labor leaders could aim at organizing labor's independent strength without running headlong against their own basic capitalistic convictions. Not so today, when the greater explosiveness of labor class-consciousness and the more delicate equilibrium of capitalism make really independent class organization too greatly fraught with implications from which they must turn back.

Thus the concept "third party" and "labor party," each from its own internal compulsions under the conditions of contemporary capitalism, have converged into a third party of a modified type. It might be called a 'labor third party.' It is the liberal third party of today. It is the labor party of today.

Although the above was written in 1944 (by the present writer), it already indicates the essential character of what has now become more clearly visible to the naked eye. It may be summarized in the form of three propositions:

(1) A third party which arises under today's conditions cannot be the same as a third party of the past—it must be based on the trade unions, if it is to be a serious movement.

(2) A labor party which arises under today's conditions cannot be the same as the British Labor Party in its heyday—it cannot play an independent class role in politics.

(3) These two political forms, traditionally counterposed to each other, today are synthesized into a new unity—the laborite third party, which living reality displays to us in the process of becoming.

Third-Party Variants

A discussion of new social phenomena always runs the risk of terminological difficulties. (Terminology is like leadership: you can't do without it, but it is advisable to keep a sharp eye out.) The very terms "third party" and "labor party" were invented for other circumstances. One may say, for example: "If this budding third party must be based on labor, then to all intents and purposes it is—or will be—a labor party, and there is no use quibbling over the term."

Quite permissible indeed, terminologically speaking. What is in question is not the permissibility of the term but the applicability of its historical connotations. Our purpose is not at all to categorically interdict this label for the new party formation if and when it comes. The purpose is rather to point out precisely its newness as a type of political formation. Which means that the Marxist analyst is thereby requested to question the fixed idea that anything resembling a labor party in this country will be the analogue, this side of the ocean, of the British Labor Party in its progressive days—that is, that such a party based on the trade unions as can come into being here will necessarily do for American labor what the BLP once did for British labor.

Let us take three variant possibilities for the future development of the present third-party movement.

(1) The PAC decides to turn itself into an independent party—unites with Wallace, Pepper et al, the next day or the

next month, on a liberal-New Deal program—and runs a few independent candidates for offices like city council and state legislature while it supports "progressive" capitalist politicians (who may or may not be also adherents of this PAC party) for most higher offices. . . . What do we have?

(2) Wallace, Pepper (the names are symbols) split off from the Democratic machine, and form a new party—which the PAC thereupon supports in the same way as it supports the existing parties now, and inevitably even gains a certain amount of influence in the councils of said party as well as the nomination of certain labor leaders as candidates. . . . What do we have?

(3) At another Conference of Progressives, with the coalition already noted present, the new party is launched by the assembled delegates and/or organizations. . . . What do we have?

Now it is one thing to state (as the majority of the Trotskyist movement enthusiastically does) that the formation of an independent labor party in this country—even with the present program of the PAC, even with the present leadership of labor at its head, etc.—would be a "progressive step forward" of epochal significance for labor and class-consciousness; and another to solemnly warn at the same time (as the majority of the Trotskyist movement does equally solemnly) that if a third party heads off this incipient labor party, it would be a great setback for labor and class-consciousness. But—which of the above three variants would be the epochal step forward, and which would be the setback?

Whether the new party comes into being by the initiative of (1) the PAC, (2) the progressives outside the labor movement, or (3) a coalition of the two in conference gathered—the last being by far the likeliest—it is most improbable that there would be any consequent difference in the most decisive respects. These are:

- (1) Mass base;
- (2) Program and policy;
- (3) Character of candidate supported or independently run;
- (4) The name assumed by the new outfit;
- (5) Degree of control over the policies of the new party exercised by the rank and file of labor or even by the local organization of labor which are most susceptible to rank-and-file influence. The present character of PAC as a thoroughly bureaucratized top structure would not be lessened but accentuated by its transformation into an independent party and even more by its tie-up with a progressivist split from the old parties.

There are three possible differences which might result from the concreteness of its mode of formation:

- (1) In personnel of officers and staff;
- (2) In organizational form—that is, under the best variant, there is a possibility that the affiliation of trade unions *en bloc* will be permitted, though it is quite excluded that the new party would organize *solely* on the basis of organization affiliations after the model of the early British Labor Party; and
- (3) In the extent of the initial illusions in the ranks of labor regarding the new outfit being *their* class party.

For a Positive Approach to Third-Partyism

On this basis, it is important to point out a practical conclusion which flows from this discussion.

That is: a change from the completely negative approach

traditionally taken by the revolutionary movement toward the third-party question.

By a completely negative approach, we mean that the movement has felt that it need not concern itself with third-partyism any more than with any other capitalist party. A labor party? Yes, we had to react, even if we had opposed its formation; but a third party was a capitalist party and *ipso facto* outside the purview of our interests.

For example, before the Trotskyist movement in 1938 adopted the line of *advocating* a labor party, while it still held that the formation of a reformist party of labor could only be an obstacle to the radicalization of workers, it still was on record as favoring the *critical participation of revolutionists in such a movement once it was in existence*. Even if we felt that the new party formation was a mistake, still it was our job to be there where the masses were moving and to exert a revolutionary pressure against the strangulation of working-class militancy by a political labor bureaucracy super-added to the trade union bureaucracy.

If this applied to a labor party when we were against the formation of a labor party, it certainly applies to the third party which is a-borning, even though we are against the formation of any third party. It is one thing to advise against the creation of a third-party machine even if it is based on labor;

it is quite another matter to stand aside from it if and when it takes on life.

As it is, our movement has never considered our attitude toward and relations with a third party (or third-party movement, except to condemn it root and branch. But since the actual third-party movement is the laborite third party here analyzed, we may soon have to do so. And while it remains a liberal third party of capitalism, not the classical labor party of our wishes, its concrete characteristics and probable composition will demand a more positive approach than we have yet bestowed on anything which we decline to denominate a labor party.

Certainly we will not *advocate* the formation of such a party—indeed, for what it is worth, the majority of the movement may likely continue to counterpose the advocacy of an “independent, class, labor party” as a matter of propaganda—but we must be thoroughly prepared for critical participation as revolutionists in an organizationally-realized third-party movement based on the trade unions.

For this, not the classical labor-party pattern, is the road ahead through which the political development of the American working class will pass, and American Marxists may as well get used to the idea.

HAL DRAPER.

The Fate of the Sudeten Germans

The Destruction of a People

The first time the Sudeten Germans achieved world-wide publicity was in 1938, when Hitler used their existence as a German-speaking minority in Czechoslovakia as an excuse to wage a “war of liberation” in their behalf.

Today the Sudeten Germans are again in the news. The occasion this time concerns the end of their existence as a distinct group—the government of Czechoslovakia has decided to carry out a policy of deporting the German nationality from its territory. Before the war, Germans had numbered approximately three and a half millions in the Czechoslovak Republic. Today, with the deportation program completed, there are at most 200,000 left. Of the rest, about one and a half million are in the American zone of Germany, about a million in the Russian zone, and many others in forced labor battalions in Czechoslovakia and in other countries more directly under the Kremlin’s iron heel.

The idea of expelling the Sudeten Germans was originally worked out by the government-in-exile of the Czechoslovak Republic in London during the war. According to Dr. Prokop Drtina, head of the Chancellery of the Czechoslovak government, the Soviet government promised full support to this plan when Benes went to Moscow in 1943. At the Potsdam Conference, all the Allies openly and officially endorsed the idea, stipulating only that the expulsions are to be carried out “humanely.”

How any mass expulsions can be humane is one of those riddles which imperialist diplomats never attempt to explain. Since none of the signatories of the Potsdam agreement protested against the manner in which the Czechs carried out the expulsions, we assume that it met their standards for “humane”

conduct. What they looked like in practice can be seen from the following excerpts from eye-witness accounts:

By the end of August a transport of Sudeten Germans arrived in Berlin. It came from Troppau in Czech Silesia, and was 18 days on the way. Four thousand two hundred women, children and aged people were counted before the transport departed from Troppau. One thousand three hundred and fifty were left when the transport arrived in Berlin.—A Sudeten clergyman now in Berlin.

I have seen a large proportion of these people (Sudeten deportees), numbering nearly a million, who are literally starving on the road. I saw children and babies lying dead in the ditch by the roadside, dead of hunger and disease, their arms and legs often not thicker than a man’s thumb.—A Dutch observer writing from Saxony.¹

By a decree passed by the Czech government on June 21, 1945, agricultural property owned by persons of “German race” (sic!) was confiscated without compensation and, according to a report published in the *New York Times* on December 1, 1946, the Sudeten Germans were allowed to take with them no more than 500 marks (roughly, \$50) and a maximum of 300 kilograms of luggage. The report goes on to say that “anything else they (i.e., the Sudeten Germans) owned remained in Czechoslovakia, no matter who they were.”

Of special interest is the particularly reactionary role played by the Czech Stalinists, who, though this was extremely difficult, excelled even the professional Czech chauvinists in the manufacture of an anti-German lynch spirit among the Czech population. Thus, the following remarks were made by Kopecky, the Stalinist Minister of Propaganda in the

1. *Tragedy of a People—Racism in Czechoslovakia*, American Friends of Democratic Sudetens, New York, 1946.

Czech cabinet, in a speech at Reichenberg (Liberec, as the Czechs call it) on July 25, 1945:²

Liberec will never again be Reichenberg. We will clear Liberec of the German enemies, and we will do it so thoroughly that not the smallest place will remain where the German seed could grow once more. We shall expel all the Germans, we shall confiscate their property, we shall de-nationalize not only the town but the whole area... so that the victorious spirit of Slavdom shall permeate the country from the frontier range to the interior... The government is determined to settle the question of the Germans uncompromisingly and unflinchingly... We are aware that, in the West, various reactionary protectors of the Germans are at work. But the government will not be misled or softened by any pressure, any campaigns, any libellous attacks. It is for us a decisive and encouraging fact that the Soviet Union stands by us in the question of transferring the Germans, and that Marshal Stalin himself has the greatest possible understanding for our endeavors to get rid of the Germans. We will not allow even some hundreds of thousands of Germans to remain in this country... We do not want any Germans along our north-western frontier, we want Czechoslovakia to form one integrally Slav territory with Poland and the Soviet Union.

Here we have a Stalinist presentation of the Czech chauvinist views on the Sudeten Germans, views that have now become the official policy of the Prague government and are endorsed by the Russo-Anglo-American imperialist alliance.

In order to measure the full scope of the injustice and the real dimensions of the barbarity involved, one must be acquainted with the history of the Sudeten Germans and the background of the political questions at stake.

The term "Sudeten Germans," applied to the German-speaking populations of Bohemia,³ Moravia and southern Silesia, is derived from the Sudetens, the range of mountains that separates Bohemia from Germany and Austria. The three provinces, part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy before the First World War, and, together with Slovakia, known as the Czechoslovak Republic since then, have historically been the scene of the most monstrous nationalist antagonisms, national oppressions, chauvinist exaggerations, and bloody fratricidal warfare. Yet, though still largely divided by language barriers, the population had evolved into a well-workable, multi-national unit at the time of the pre-war functioning of the Czechoslovak Republic. This functioning had constantly become reinforced by the economic necessity of living together: the industrial regions of German Bohemia are practically sealed off by substantial mountain ranges from the economic life of the German Reich, whose Prussian rulers, in addition, seemed more estranged to many German Bohemians than did their Czech neighbors.

Early History

The first known inhabitants of Bohemia were Celtic and Germanic tribes. It is true that from the sixth to the twelfth century the inhabitants of the province were almost entirely Slavonic, but beginning with the twelfth century, Germans and Czechs have lived together in a single state without interruption. Chauvinist historians on both sides quarrel on whether there was a continuity in the German settlements between the sixth and the twelfth centuries. However, for the purpose of this article it is enough to establish the fact both sides readily concede: sizable German minorities have lived in Bohemia for at least *eight hundred years*. This, by the way, is more than can be said for the white man in America, not to speak of the Jewish minority in Palestine, whose right to

2. "Deportation Drama in Czechoslovakia—The Case of a Dying People," special edition of *Der Sozialdemokrat*, London, October, 1945.

3. The term "Bohemia," especially when used in connection with the Germans, is often understood to include the smaller provinces of Moravia and southern Silesia, and it is in this sense that I shall use it in this article.

live in that country (leaving aside, in this discussion, the question of further immigration) is not challenged, even by the Arabs.

Since 1528, when the Bohemian Diet elected Ferdinand of Habsburg to be King, Bohemia remained under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, with only episodic interruptions, until the fall of that régime at the end of the First World War. This rule meant, on the whole, the systematic attempt to eradicate the Czech language and culture and the Germanization of the official and economic life of the province. As a result, the Czech bourgeoisie, while developing a possibly more radical and democratic-revolutionary history, has never reached the economic strength of its Bohemian-German counterpart. Thus it is estimated that in 1927, long after the break of the German political subjugation of the province, and with a German minority representing only 22.3 per cent of the total population of the Czechoslovak Republic, the relative strength of the Czech and German sections of the bourgeoisie in the Republic was approximately as follows:⁴

Industry	Percentage in	
	Czech	German
	Hands	
Coal	34	66
Machinery	60	40
Iron foundries	30	70
Textiles	13	74
Artificial silk	100
Glass and porcelain	7	93

These figures are fairly representative for all the major industries of the Republic. It is only in the field of banking, i.e., that of administrative capital, in which the Czech bourgeoisie held a position proportionate to Czech population percentages.

It should be emphasized here that the Habsburg policy of national oppression, while strongly supported by the Bohemian-German bourgeoisie (which derived its privileged position from this policy), was repudiated by the Bohemian-German working class. Though the Austrian Social-Democratic Party suffered from a false position on the national question, seeing its solution in cultural autonomy, it rallied behind it not only Austrian workers but Czech, Slovak and Polish workers as well. It was in the vanguard of the fight against the Habsburg policy of Germanization. German Socialists were opposed to the privileged position of the German language and of German culture in the monarchy, and Czech as well as German workers who functioned together in their proletarian organizations were constantly accused of national treachery by their respective bourgeoisies.

Birth of Czechoslovak Republic

The national oppression of the Czechs reached a height in the course of the First World War. The Czechs showed little enthusiasm to fight for a monarchy in which they had known only national subjugation, and the Habsburg régime retaliated with numerous arrests, executions and the strictest police terror. *The Good Soldier Schweik*, written by the Czech novelist, Jaroslav Hasek, has, among many others, the virtue of being a vivid document of that period of Czech-German relations.

When the Habsburg monarchy collapsed at the end of World War I, the Sudeten Germans instituted their own local

4. *Oppressed Minority?*, by Frank Koegler, Hutchinson & Co., London, 1943.

governments. These were known under the collective name of Sudetenland, and desired a union with Austria. They lasted for about six weeks; by Christmas of the year 1918, Czech troops had occupied all of these areas. There was no resistance to the Czech occupation. Germans in Bohemia, conforming to the European pattern of this period, showed by this time greater concern over class issues, specifically the socialist revolution, than they did about the national form of a bourgeois state. The program and the reputation of the Czech liberal democrats at the head of the newly established Czechoslovak Republic seemed to insure a fair treatment of the German minority and apparently most of the Germans in Bohemia were ready to accept the idea of living in a republic with a Czech majority. Thus the local elections of June, 1919, centered exclusively around the issue of socialism. The same can be said of the parliamentary elections of April, 1920, in which German as well as Czech Socialists received a huge vote. In 1921, the Czechoslovak Communist Party was established, which united the revolutionary workers, Czech as well as German, in a single organization. By 1925, even the bourgeois German parties had fully reconciled themselves to a common life with the Czechs and, for the first time in the history of the young Czechoslovak Republic, German Sudeten ministers sat in the Prague cabinet.

The National Question in the Republic

That national problems remained in the Czechoslovak Republic is beyond doubt. When the claims of extremists on both sides are stripped of their chauvinist exaggerations, there still remain grave injustices done to the German minority on such matters as the administration of laws regarding German schools, the appointment of German officials, etc. Yet it is correct to say that in the period from the end of the First World War until the establishment of the Hitler régime in Germany, the German-speaking people of Bohemia, Moravia, southern Silesia and Slovakia considered their *prime problems* to be the same as those facing the peoples of all other countries: problems of unemployment, of currency stabilization, of political struggles born of class antagonisms. The latter transcended national differences and overshadowed all else. When compared to what took place under Hitler in Europe, or to what is going on in the occupied countries today, it is certainly correct to say that the national antagonisms in the Czechoslovak Republic had to a great extent been relegated to a minor place among the political issues in the late Twenties.⁵

The recurrence of these problems, first under the impetus of the Nazi régime and now under the fierce revival of Czech chauvinism, must be regarded as a retrogression of historical development. (It is interesting, in this connection, to contemplate the enormous difference between the conditions under which the Czechoslovak Republic was originally established, when it was heralded as a symbol of the democratic equality of nations, and the conditions under which it is now being re-established, conditions which involve the expulsion of whole nationalities.)

We now come to the rise of the various types of ultra-

5. An indication of the extent to which the German and Czech cultures had been amalgamated in Prague and other urban centers can be gathered from the following report in the New York Times of November 4, 1946, which states under the heading "Czechs Lift Moral Ban on Speaking in German" that "... now that the Sudeten Germans have officially gone... a great majority of the city dwellers know German and only a limited minority get along well in any other western language."

nationalist and *Anschluss* (i.e., "accession" of the Sudeten areas to Germany) movements among the Germans in Bohemia.

The economic depression of the Thirties hit the Sudeten Germans harder than it did any other nationality in the Republic, as hard, perhaps, as it did any group anywhere in Europe.

The main industries of the Sudeten districts, besides the mining of coal, are the manufacture of textiles, various glass and porcelain products and luxury buttons used for women's garments. Thus, in addition to the reason that the Sudeten districts were more highly industrialized than the other districts of the Republic, the fact that the industries were so predominantly luxury-producing made the Sudetenland especially vulnerable to the economic miseries of capitalism. Of the 60,000 German glass workers who were employed in Bohemia in the early post-war years, only about 30,000⁶ were employed in 1933; whereas 22,600,000 tons of coal were produced in 1929, only 15,226,000 were produced in 1935.⁷ Between 1929 and 1937, a total of 166 textile manufacturing establishments, employing 26,179 workers, had closed down. Of these, only thirty-four were given even the slightest hope of reopening.⁸

Some insight into the relative economic plight of Czech and German workers in the Thirties is provided by the fact that in October, 1936, for every hundred unemployed workers in those districts of the Republic where the Czechs formed more than 80 per cent of the population, there were 379 unemployed workers in the districts where the Germans held this majority. In mixed districts (i.e., between 20 and 80 per cent Germans) this figure of unemployment was 219.⁹

Those who are old enough will remember that figures of this type can never suffice to describe what a depression really means. To say that the output of coal was reduced by one-half in a period of six years does not explain the effects the closing of even a single mine has on the life of a community that had depended on it. It does not explain the effect a jobless father has on a home where there are children; nor does it serve to illuminate the state of mind of the older unemployed worker who has no prospect of ever finding a job again. . . .

And if to these factors you add the fact that in 1933 Hitler had come to power in adjoining Germany, that the effects of his war economy had almost totally eliminated unemployment there, that the Sudeten German, though he had never experienced the police terror and destruction of his economic organizations by fascist bands, could see what to him must have looked like prosperity in the Third Reich, and if you add, further, the fact that the union of all German-speaking peoples into a single state was the first plank of the program of the Nazi Party, you have something of a background against which you can examine the rise of the Nazi movement among the Sudeten Germans.

Rise of Sudeten Nazis

In 1933 the Nazi Party in the Sudetenland was illegalized. It was an insignificant movement and had never attracted more than 10 per cent of the German vote in the Czechoslovak Republic. At the same time, Konrad Henlein, a bombastic and confused demagogue, was organizing a movement called

6. *Czechs and Germans*, by Elizabeth Wiskemann. Oxford University Press, London, 1938.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*

Sudetendeutsche Heimatsfront (Sudeten German Home Front), a name that was later changed to *Sudetendeutsche Partei* (Sudeten German Party), or "SdP" for short. It was this organization the Nazis entered and, by making deals with Henlein and the other leaders of the organization, they managed to dictate its policies to a considerable extent. Henlein remained the leader, however, and it should be emphasized that he was not, at least not until much later, a full Nazi. He was an extremely skillful demagogue who knew how to play with all political elements. Henlein would repeatedly proclaim his loyalty to the Republic and his eagerness to collaborate with the other nationalities that were represented in it. In a speech in 1934 at Bohmisch-Leipa he went as far as to say that "We shall never abandon liberalism, i.e., the unconditional respect for individual rights as a fundamental principle in determining human relations in general and the relations between the citizen and official authority in particular."

On the other hand, it cannot, of course, be said that the SdP was non-Nazi. In order to characterize it correctly, it must be described as a coalition between the Nazis and the conservative bourgeois elements. The further history of the SdP was a history of its further Nazification, a process which was only briefly disturbed by a short-lived open break between Henlein and the Nazis early in 1938, simultaneous with the purge of conservatives in Germany proper.

The two elections in which the SdP participated were the parliamentary elections of 1935 and the municipal elections in 1938.

In 1935, Henlein received approximately 62 per cent of the Sudeten German vote. This figure is used often by the Czech expulsionists to prove their point that "all Germans are Nazis." What was said above about the relative economic positions of the Sudetenland and of Germany and about the political complexion of the SdP at the time is sufficient comment on this point.

The elections of 1938, on the other hand, need further explanation. Henlein, according to official reports, received somewhere near 90 per cent of the Sudeten German vote at that time. However, various factors must be taken into consideration here for a full understanding of what was involved.

The elections took place, first of all, under conditions that can be described as anything but free. The Germans had already invaded Austria and it was hardly necessary to have unusual prophetic talents in order to foretell that Bohemia would be next. All the bourgeois German parties, i.e., all parties among the German population except the Communists and the Social-Democrats, supported the Henlein tickets. The elections were looked upon more like a physical battle than like a peaceful contest of any sort. The breath of the German military monster could be felt by every German voter on the back of his neck. He did not have to look at the violent police terror in Austria in order to be intimidated; violence was practiced daily by the henchmen of Henlein on the soil of the Czechoslovak Republic. What is surprising, under these circumstances, is the fact that there were the 10 per cent who had the extraordinary courage to vote Social-Democratic or Communist.

The year 1938 introduces a new chapter into the history of bi-national Bohemia. Germans and Czechs were equally suppressed by the Prussian master. Both peoples produced heroes in the resistance movement against fascism; both have their dead martyrs who fell at the hands of the Gestapo. And both peoples, too, have had their Quislings and collaborators.

The Expulsions

Today, the German fascists have lost a war and Hitler is dead. But the chapter Hitler started to write is still being written. The terror Hitler introduced into the peaceful provinces of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia has never left. Today, the Germans of Bohemia are uprooted from their homes, herded into concentration camps, made to perform forced labor and, if they survive, dumped into a strange and hostile country where they only add to the misery which exists there already.

According to the policy of the Czechoslovak government, those Germans who can "prove" that they were anti-Nazi during the war are to be exempt from the deportation program. This concept of "exemption" is interesting in itself, reversing the concept to which civilized people generally hold, namely that innocence is assumed until guilt can be proved.¹⁰ But actually, the Germans are being deported without selection and on a wholesale basis. Among them, according to reports published by *Der Sozialdemokrat*, the organ of the Sudeten Social-Democracy in London, are many Jews (you see, they couldn't "prove" that they were anti-Hitler), and people who have spent their lives in the Social-Democratic and Communist movements.

There are many indications that the Czechs are having difficulties managing the industries in the Sudeten districts without the Germans. Skilled workers are at a premium and a major industrial crisis seems to be the result. But here I am getting off the subject. This is a discussion of the history of the Germans in Bohemia, and that history has come to an end.

* * *

A few general remarks remain to be made. The story of the uprooted people of Bohemia is a case history that illustrates a modern trend. It finds its counterparts in the story of the Hungarians who have been robbed of their homes in Slovakia, of the workers from Germany who have been kidnapped into Russia—of all those for whom the destruction of Hitler has meant little more than a change in the political complexion and the nationality of their tormentors.

Of all the indications of the moral bleakness of our world today, the most symbolic are the attitudes taken by the traditional parties of the European Left toward these expulsions. And I am not even speaking of the Stalinist parties, which are no longer considered working class parties, in the ordinary sense of that term, by revolutionary socialists. But the complete failure of the international labor movement to fulfill one of the most elementary democratic functions in protesting against this neo-Hitlerism was less expected. Neither Czech Social-Democrats nor British Laborites nor American trade unionists show the slightest concern over the continuation of Hitler's race theory and practice in the heart of Europe.

We must recognize that these national expulsions are not only additional proof of the validity of our internationalist stand in the war, when we declared that the victory of neither side would open up a path for humanity to continue to progress, but they are also evidence of the frightful moral decay of the labor movement accelerated by its cynical support of an imperialist camp in the war. The outrage committed against the Sudeten Germans should bring every honest demo-

10. It is in matters of this type that Russian influence shows itself most clearly in the newly re-established republic. The Stalin government, long ago having mastered the art of wholesale uprootings of peasant populations, has, by its own admission, also transferred whole nationalities during the war as punishment for "treachery," or, as in the case of the German Volga Soviet Socialist Republic, to preclude "treachery."

crat to his feet in indignant protest. But it is a sign of our times that aside from a small handful of individuals in this country and England, the only movement that is prepared to

pledge its solidarity to the Sudetens is the Fourth Internationalist movement.

ARTHUR STEIN.

The Role of Centrism in France-II

The Record of the Socialist Party "Left"

In the first article in this study we traced the evolution of those groups in France before the war that we designate as centrist, that is, standing between the ideas of reformism and those of revolutionary Marxism. This tendency, which arose with the leftward swing of many Social-Democratic workers after the first victories of fascism, reached its apex with the great struggles of June, 1936, declined during the gradual demoralization of the French workers under the People's Front, and finally disappeared as an organized force, when its leaders capitulated and dissolved their organization at the beginning of World War II in September, 1939.

Since the ousting of the Nazis, France has had only two years of legal working class activity, yet already the political trends within the working class show all too ominously a repetition of the same disastrous pattern as in the Thirties. This repetition occurs despite many surface differences, and it will therefore be necessary to describe in some detail what changes have taken place, organizationally and in the consciousness of the workers.

The first and most obvious contrast between the post-war and pre-war periods is in the strength of the Stalinists. During the heyday of the People's Front, 1936-37, the Socialist Party received more votes than the Stalinists, had approximately the same size membership, and, in collaboration with the reformist syndicalist leaders, like Jouhaux, Belin and Dumoulin, enjoyed a two-to-one majority over the Stalinists in the CGT (General Confederation of Labor). In view of the fact that a substantial section of this Socialist Party was more or less "left," by comparison with both the Stalinists and right-wing socialists, it is easily understandable that the left wing could constitute a considerable pole of attraction to workers looking for revolutionary action.

Today and ever since the Liberation in August, 1944, the situation has changed radically in this respect. The Communist Party has three times the membership of the Socialists. It received 5,000,000 votes to the Socialists' 3,000,000 in the last election. And, most important of all, at the recent CGT congress, it received over 8,000 mandates to the reformists' 2,000—a crushing four-to-one majority. In every basic industry, the Stalinists control the national union federation.

This change began during the underground days. The Stalinists, with their rigorous discipline, built up an effective and all-sided resistance movement of their own, which constituted the only serious resistance grouping in the proletarian centers. The Socialists, on the other hand, loose and undisciplined to begin with, were split down the middle, since a big section of the leadership, led by Spinasse, supported the Petain Vichy régime. Only gradually, and in a more or less uncoordinated fashion, did Socialists enter effectively into the underground struggle—and in most cases through participation in all-inclusive non-party resistance groups.

The next noteworthy fact is the great increase registered in total strength of the working class movement as against pre-war days. The CGT counts today 6,000,000 adherents. In January, 1936, it had a million, and while in June, 1936, it soared to 5,000,000, decline almost immediately set in, and the membership was down to 2,000,000 at the end of 1938. Furthermore, the combined Socialist-Communist vote in every election since the Liberation has been substantially larger than the working class itself, which remains a minority of the population in France today! Unlike England, Germany, the United States, Belgium, etc., the peasants and urban petty bourgeois are the majority in France.

When we digest these facts we begin to understand where the SP got its 3,000,000 votes, since it approached the Stalinists much more closely in voting strength than in the CGT. The answer is that today the Socialist Party of France has gained petty bourgeois support while losing proletarian support. This fact is basic in attempting to understand what possibilities there are of any leftward development inside it. It is a fact that can be easily overlooked by those who proceed from the generalization that the working class is the traditional social base of the reformists.

Professional men, civil service employees, shopkeepers, peasants—these, not industrial workers—constitute today the majority of Socialist Party supporters. To what extent this shift is reflected among the party activists and members generally cannot be ascertained exactly. We can say unhesitatingly that any centrist "left" tendency that arises in the French Socialist Party today has far more limited possibilities of development than it had in the Thirties. This difference in the relationship of forces within the working class has had considerable effect on the orientation of the Trotskyist movement in France. While our own programmatic position on the nature of Stalinism is sharply different from that of our French comrades, we can still only consider it natural in the present situation in France that the bulk of the new adherents to their party—nine out of every ten, in fact—come from the French Communist Party. Our party represents in the minds of a substantial section of advanced French workers, the Internationalist Communists as against the Russified "Communists."

Ferment in Socialist Party

All the more interesting, then, as a measure of the depth of French social unrest, is the recent rebellion in the French Socialist Party. Disillusioned with the fruits of the three-party coalition—Catholic, Socialist, Communist—some middle class supporters of the Socialists have already reverted to the bourgeois parties—the MRP or the Radicals—or to apathy. On the other hand, pressure has come from the worker elements in the party for a more leftist course. Faced with the fact that the party's losses in the past years have been greatest among the workers, many of the parliamentary and secondary leaders

of the party have sought recently a policy which would be at least superficially more attractive to revolutionary workers, without actually endangering the comfortable government jobs of the party wheelhorses. These elements are interested primarily in taking advantage of the rank and file revolt within the Socialist Party for the purpose of furthering their own ambitions for leadership, and in order to put through policies which they think will be more successful in wooing votes in the elections.

Thus, in examining the growth of a new "left" wing in the French Socialist Party, we will first find rumblings of deep discontent in the ranks, then the adoption of "left" resolutions on policy in a number of provincial party federations, then the climbing on to the rebel bandwagon of all sorts of hopelessly careerist leaders, and finally the victory of the rebels at the party convention on the basis of a compromise program, a considerably watered-down version of the resolutions adopted in many local federations led by left wingers. Let us add, as a post-convention *dénouement*, there will take place a touching reconciliation between the new leaders and the old—the unshakable unity of the great Socialist Party has been preserved.

Let us examine in detail the political position of the left wing Socialists, starting with the most advanced resolutions before the recent convention. In these resolutions, adopted by several departmental federations, plus a number of local sections in other departments, the central demand put forward is for an end to *tripartism*, i.e., the collaboration of the Socialists and Stalinists with the Catholic MRP of Bidault. Supplementing this demand for Socialist independence in the Assembly is the demand for extension of the powers of factory councils, so that they will share in production management, inspection of company accounts by workers, and finally, opposition to the wage freeze and a demand for the application of the sliding scale of wages and prices. The resolutions emphasize the need for reliance on direct action by the workers for the achievement of their demands, and demand that the party orient itself in the future according to the needs of the class struggle, and not the needs of parliamentary maneuvering. All these demands indicate that a healthy proletarian strata remains in the SP or that at least sections of the party are sensitive to the needs of the workers.

Break the coalition with the bourgeois MRP, mass action for the sliding scale, open the books to the factory councils—what is all this but the program of action advanced week in and week out in the paper of the French Trotskyists? True, it is not accompanied in the case of these left Socialists by resolutions demonstrating a revolutionary internationalist position on war and foreign policy, or by recognition of the need and role of a revolutionary party and International. Nevertheless, these slogans, raised for the first time in many years, by a substantial section of the Socialist Party, represent what these advanced workers have learned from two years of disillusionment with the class collaborationist policies of the party leadership.

Record of Left Wing at Congress

Now left us see how the "left" parliamentarians proceeded to emasculate this program. They began, on the first day of the Socialist Party Congress (August, 1946) by taking a superficially radical step; this consisted of voting against the *rapport moral*. This report is a general political-organizational report on the state of the party and the stewardship of its leaders in the preceding period. Generally, factions with politi-

cal disagreements on specific points only, vote for the *rapport moral*. In fact, in twenty-five years the report has never been voted down. Superficially viewed, opposition to the report would indicate irreconcilability, and when the report was voted down by two-to-one, journalists hastened to report that a great revolt had taken place in the organization and that the Socialist Party was on the verge of a split.

If the rank-and-file left wingers thought so also, they were rudely awakened the next day, when political discussion began in earnest. One by one, the leaders of the left wing, Jean Rous, Leon Boutbien, Yves Dechezelles, took the floor—not to emphasize differences with the Blum leadership—but to minimize them! The policy of coalitionism was endorsed by each, together with vague phrases about the necessity for a certain militant approach on the part of the Socialist ministers, since they were not for *tripartism* at all costs. We will see later how untrue even these statements were.

Finally, Guy Mollet, leader of the left wing, took the floor. His speech was characterized by brave calls to action outside the halls of the Chamber of Deputies, by emphasizing, for example, that "it is more valuable to gain a post of secretary of a local union or departmental federation of the CGT than to elect another mayor or deputy." Should the party, therefore, call the masses to struggle against the government to gain their demands? God forbid! Mollet came out for *tripartism* 100 per cent. Here is a typical selection from his speech:

Speaking to us of participation in power in a capitalist régime, Blum told us that our men in the government must be the honest and loyal directors of the affairs of capitalism.

It is not a question here of discussing the individual honesty and loyalty of our men in the government. We know that everywhere and always they have sought to be the best.

No doubt Mollet is referring here to people like Moutet, Socialist Minister of Colonies, who has energetically undertaken the bloody oppression of colonial peoples in Indo-China, North Africa and Madagascar. Mollet then proceeded to distinguish between efficiency and honesty in office on the one hand, and the necessity of using office to defend the interests of the workers, on the other. Finally he arrived at the truly astounding conclusion that "participation in the government is a form of class struggle." In reality, all Mollet and the other "leftists" are doing is aping the Stalinist leaders, who have been more skillful in combining governmental sell-outs with radical demagogy. They want to compete with the Stalinists, not realizing that since the Stalinists have the tradition of the Russian Revolution and of Communism behind them, the only successful competition by the Socialists can be on the basis of a *truly* revolutionary program that exposes the Stalinists, and not by revolutionary verbiage combined with reactionary practice.

In terms of electing a majority on the National Committee, the "left" won at the Socialist Congress, but not until it had thrown overboard all revolutionary pretensions by reaching an agreement with the right wing on a common political resolution. The extent to which the left wing disintegrated can be judged by comparing the action on the *rapport moral* with the acceptance of the following touching motion:

The Congress addresses to our comrade-ministers the expression of its gratitude for the energetic action that they carry on in the government and assures them of its affectionate confidence.

The next week Leon Blum was reappointed political director of the party organ by the new National Committee. All was peaceful once more. The party had a new left wing general secretary, Guy Mollet; a new assistant secretary, Yves

Dechezelles; but its political line was changed by not so much as a hair!

A brief summary of the party's role since the August congress demonstrates the emptiness of the left's promises about vigorous action. The party, under its new leadership, continued the coalition with the MRP, not on the basis of its programmatic demands, but on the basis of yielding to the MRP's demands for changes in the Constitution. The document finally submitted to the voters in October was a long step backward from the proposed constitution of April. Is it any wonder that in the November elections a million of its voters, unimpressed by the total lack of initiative from the Socialists, moved in the direction of the Stalinists or the bourgeois center?

Perhaps the shabbiest performance of the Malletist "left wing" came with the outbreak of full scale war in Indo-China in December. When Marius Montet, Socialist Colonial Minister, went to Indo-China, he was accompanied by Léon Boutbien, left wing member of the party executive. Boutbien's reputation was better than that of most of the Malletists. Indeed, a year ago, when there was no Mallet faction, Boutbien, in a speech at the Socialist Congress, sharply demarcated himself from the rest of the party, declaring that there could be no choice between Anglo-American and Russian imperialism, that socialism could not be national, but must strike out on an internationalist path. Even the Trotskyists had illusions about him, referring to him early in December as the "anti-colonialist Socialist, Boutbien."

What our comrades failed to keep in mind was that centrist leaders take seriously only their responsibilities to their reformist colleagues. A year ago our sterling Léon was a private citizen in his party. But now he was the party's official representative and his "comrades" were officially in charge of the Colonial Ministry. Boutbien returned from his mission with the message that the hostilities in Indo-China were due to the extremists on both sides! I will not duplicate here the wealth of material we have published in our press on the French war against the Viet Nameese people. But no condemnation can properly characterize the treachery toward the colonial masses contained in this statement of Boutbien. Suffice it to say that no appeal from the Trotskyists for united action against the war has met with response from the leaders of the Socialist "left." The "left" has not come out for independence for the Viet Nameese. Again what a shameful contrast with even the centrists of ten years ago (for example, during the years that Daniel Guerin was a leader of the centrist Pivert faction of the Socialist Party he earned an enviable reputation among French colonial revolutionists because of his consistent public championing of total, unconditional independence for the colonies). Once again, what was almost taken for granted in circles outside those of the hardened reformists, is now advocated only by the Trotskyists.

Here we begin to see the repetition of the pattern of the Thirties, when the workers first rushed into "their" parties, only to be betrayed and to pass finally into demoralization and apathy. The fact that Stalinism is so much stronger today than ten years ago does not fundamentally change the situation. The Stalinists are not exempt from the operation of the same social and political trends. Today the Stalinists continue to hold posts in the French cabinet that are concerned with production. They have publicly opposed all strikes that have broken out thus far and in general repudiate the strike as "the arm of the trusts in the present period." More and more

frequently does the rank and file in the unions get "out of control." In certain districts it becomes increasingly difficult to prevent fraternization with the Trotskyists.

The danger inherent in the present situation is the fact that the gap between the objective requirements of the situation and the subjective state of organization and political leadership of the workers is greater than ever before. In this sense, the absence of any large centrist tendency has a positive and a negative side. Its negative side consists of the fact that it is not only a sign of the extreme corruption and senility of the Socialist Party, but also evidence of the generally lowered political level of the French working class. Its positive side is the fact that the way is clear for the Trotskyists to raise their banner as the only revolutionary party in France, to attract into their ranks the thousands of advanced workers disillusioned with Social-Democracy and Stalinism, so that they can assemble in time a solid vanguard party, rooted among the masses, capable of leading the struggle for socialism when the period of lull gives way to a revolutionary crisis.

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Jim Larkin: Irish Revolutionist

Fighter for Freedom and Socialism

Jim Larkin died in Dublin on January 30 at the age of 69. Along with his associate, James Connolly, he was one of the outstanding leaders of the Irish working class in the early years of this century. He and Connolly played major roles in the organization and development of the Irish trade union movement. He reached the peak of his career in the great Dublin transport strike of 1913 and in the lockout which followed it.* Then, as now, thousands of Irish workers lived in misery and squalor, scarcely different from the conditions of life of the workers during the time of Marx and Engels. Larkin was intimately associated with the militant struggles to better the workers' lot. With the aid of his inspiration and example they lifted their heads, and they set out to act like men rather than slaves. Under his leadership, the militant Irish Transport and General Workers Union became a menace to the Dublin employers. The year 1913 was a period of labor unrest all over Europe. In Dublin there were at least thirty strikes from January to August, 1913. The climax of labor militancy and unrest was reached in August, 1913.

William Murphy, head of the Dublin employers group, and the bitterest enemy of Jim Larkin, informed dispatch workers of *The Irish Independent* that they must choose between Larkin, "the strike organizer," and their jobs. A similar ultimatum was given to the tramway workers. During Horse Show Week in August—the time when the biggest social events of Dublin are held—the tramway workers went out on strike. The employers began a war of extermination against the unions, and against Larkin. The most bloody and bitter class warfare in the history of modern Ireland broke out. Connolly came down from Belfast to participate in the leadership of the strike. On August 29 a big mass meeting was held—in Dublin. Larkin was one of the speakers. He burned a proclamation which forbade a meeting, planned for the coming Sunday, and at which he was to speak. He talked, and he sang to the workers. He declared that if Carson in the North could organize volunteers,

then also, Irish workers could organize their own army for self defense. This was one of the first public calls for the organization of a workers army in Ireland. During the strike, the Irish citizens army was organized by Connolly, Larkin and others. Jim Larkin was the first leader of this organization, the first army of the working class in the twentieth century. In this same speech Larkin also promised that if force were used against labor, labor would reply by force. He declared that if he were alive on the following Sunday, he would speak, regardless of the police order prohibiting a meeting.

Dublin's Bloody Sunday

Larkin hid out at the home of the Countess Markievicz. She reserved a room at the best hotel in Dublin for her country cousin who was, presumably, a parson. This hotel was owned by William Martin Murphy. On Sunday, August 31, the workers and their wives poured into O'Connell Street. A large force of Peelers was on hand. Larkin, disguised and wearing a false mustache, passed through the police lines unnoticed. Suddenly and dramatically, he appeared at one of the windows of the hotel, and pulling off his false mustache, he began to speak. The Peelers charged the workers with batons. There were at least five hundred casualties in Dublin. This day has been commemorated as Bloody Sunday in modern Irish history.

Larkin was arrested but soon released. Murphy and the other employers took the offensive against the workers. The Federated Employers issued a document which they demanded that the employees of 404 firms sign. It read:

I hereby undertake to carry out all instructions given to me by or on behalf of my employers and, further, I agree to immediately resign my membership of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (if a member), and I further undertake that I will not join or in any way support this union.

The Irish workers refused to sign this document. Many who were unaffiliated with the union, who were not even interested in the union, came to the defense of their union brothers. The Great Dublin Lockout began. William Martin Murphy and other Dublin employers set

out deliberately and cynically to starve a hundred thousand workers with their wives and children into submission. And they called this lockout "The Larkin Conspiracy." Thirty-seven Dublin unions supported Larkin. The heroism of the Dublin workers and their wives during this lockout constitutes one of the noblest chapters in the story of the world working class of this century. Half-starved, without funds, they held out for eight months. They asserted their manhood and their womanhood at a terrible personal cost. They pawned everything they owned for food. They stood on the streets and the corners of Dublin, pasty faced, hungry, miserable, wretched and shivering. They waited day after day for a settlement. But the employers remained adamant. When representatives of the British labor unions attempted to negotiate a settlement, the employers broke off negotiations. Similarly, the efforts of an Archbishop were in vain. But the Dublin workers stood firm. Those workers who joined the Irish Citizens Army, at this time, marched and drilled on half-starved stomachs, and with broomsticks and hurley sticks. The literary men of Ireland rallied to the support of the workers. Meetings were held in England, and both Connolly and Larkin appealed to British labor for aid. They secured help from British labor in the form of food ships, but the sympathetic strikes which they wanted and needed didn't materialize. Only sympathetic strikes in England could have secured the victory of the Irish workers. Larkin campaigned up and down England in the interest of the strikers. His speeches were acidulous and violent, but justice was on his side. In December, 1913, a Special Trade Union Congress was called in England in order to deal with the demands that the British workers come to the support of their class brothers by strikes and/or by a blockade of Dublin. The officials of the British trade unions turned this Congress into an effort to defeat Jim Larkin. Smarting under the lash of his tongue, speaker after speaker rose and denounced him as a disruptionist. He replied with equal fire. He rose to answer the attacks on him, and began: "Mr. Chairman, and human beings." He delivered a scorching speech. At one point, there

*I have drawn on R. M. Fox's book, *James Connolly—The Forerunner*, Tralee, 1946, for some of the facts cited here.

was a shout from the floor. "You said we were human beings."

"Yes, but you don't give much evidence of it," Larkin answered.

James Connolly also spoke. He declared that the conference was called to help Dublin. He said: "Remember the workers of Dublin have been locked out for months. They are hungry and desperate."

A hostile delegate jeered at Connolly, telling him that he should have thought of all this before the Dublin workers had been driven to such a plight. Connolly answered by declaring: "If you think we are ready to withdraw a single word of criticism of your inaction, you are wrong. We will raise this at the proper time and place. We want you to concentrate on helping Dublin." He stood with Larkin.

The workers lost; they were driven back to their jobs by hunger. They were laughed at, scorned. But the victory of the employers was not complete. The union was not broken. However, the Irish workers have never, to this day, fully recovered from the effects of this struggle. The story of the Easter Rebellion in 1916 would have been much different, but for this defeat.

Larkin in America

Larkin came to America in 1914. He was associated with the I.W.W. He was active in strikes in America, and he was one of the founders of the American Communist Party. Along with Gitlow, he was sentenced to Ossining on charges of criminal syndicalism. He was subsequently pardoned by the late Governor Al Smith, and was deported to Ireland. He returned to Ireland about 1924. Since that time, he did not play the same role as he had in his younger days. He could not regain control of Liberty Hall and of the Transport Workers Union. The Irish union movement had slid into the same pattern as that of the British. Larkin was a great agitator. But he was not the type of leader to be at the head of a movement in retreat. He was still feared and hated in Dublin, and I am sure that when he drew his last breath, he was, equally, the object of this fear and hate. He was head of some unions, among them, clerks, butchers, abattoir and hospital workers.

II

I saw Jim Larkin in Dublin in August of 1938. At that time he was sixty-two or sixty-three. Jim was a broad-shouldered giant. When I first went to his union headquarters, the building was being remodelled. Inside of it there were stone

pillars. Work was going on. As I entered, I saw a huge gray-haired man in a spotted unkempt blue suit, swinging a sledge hammer. It was Jim. He used the sledge hammer with more force and power than many a younger man could.

He was very cordial and hospitable. He wanted to know what he could do for me, what he could show me. It has often been remarked that Dublin is a whispering gallery. It is. Jim knew that I was in Dublin. He knew something about me. He knew that I was an anti-Stalinist, and we had only talked for a few moments when he called me a Trotskyist. Subsequently he introduced me to his son: he told him that he wanted to introduce his friend, Farrell, but that he should beware of him because he was a Trotskyist. He expressed disappointment that I had not come to see him sooner. He offered to take me around and show me various features of Dublin. We left his office, and entered his car. He asked me if I wanted to see the monument to the Invincibles. (The Invincibles were a group of Irish terrorists, mainly working men, active during the time of Parnell. They assassinated a British official, and most of them died on the gallows, isolated and scorned. Their memory is held sacred by Irish patriots.) Jim's chauffeur drove us out to Phoenix Park. I imagined that I was going to see a statue, but this did seem passingly curious. The idea that there would be a monument commemorating the Invincibles in Dublin didn't make sense. We stopped in Phoenix Park, just opposite the archbishop's palace. This had, in the eyes of Parnell, been the headquarters of the British rulers of Ireland. We got out. Jim walked along a path, looking down at the grass. I was bewildered. Jim became nervous, and he started on the ground with some concern. Then he pointed. There it was. I saw a little hole where grass had been torn up. A cross had been scratched in the earth with a stick. I gathered that many Dubliners did not know of this. Jim's boys always went out to Phoenix Park, and marked this cross in the earth in memory of the Invincibles. No matter how often grass was planted over it, it was torn up. The cross was marked in the earth.

Larkin Disillusioned

He drove me around Dublin, and out to Howth, the sight of the famous gun running episode in 1914. His home was near Howth. We went there, and Jim cooked lunch, scrambling eggs and frying bacon. He talked continuously, in-

cessantly. His conversation was chaotic, rambling. Flashes of the Jim Larkin of his earlier days would constantly enliven this old man's talk. He would suddenly burst out in sudden indignations and denunciations, describing his adversaries and his enemies as "twisters." This was the splendid style of his past. Jim seemed bitter and disillusioned. He had stood for the Dail, and he had not been elected. He felt that he had been let down by the Irish workers. He said that they didn't remember their own. He was interested in housing. He drove me about and showed me the new houses that were being built in the slums of Dublin. I had wandered the streets of these slums fairly frequently during my stay in Dublin, and I had visited some of the rotting old houses, and had talked with those who lived in them. They were beaten and cowed people.* Jim spoke at length of the new houses, of his hopes that they would do some good. He showed me various ones which were in the process of being built. He knew that these would not at all be adequate, but he was very proud of them. I also met him at a hospital where members of his union worked. He was having difficulties, and he spoke of those with whom he was dealing as "his lunatics." He described the hospital as a lunatic asylum. There was some trouble concerning a girl. It seemed that she was having a child out of wedlock, and an effort had been made to discharge her. Jim prevented it. He had mingled humor, argument, threat and castigation in his successful defense of the girl. He introduced me to various people at the hospital, but always in the same way. "I want you to meet my friend, Farrell. He has written great psychological novels, but you dare not read them for fear of losing your immortal soul." (He had not, of course, read my books.)

As we walked around, Jim was recognized by almost every one we saw. Now and then, he would nudge me, and he would tell me to look at some one. He would make some remark such as, "Now, there's a twister." And he would launch forth. And then, he would ramble on. He said that he had never smoked nor drank, and he attributed his health and strength to this. He, at one minute, lamented the condition of Ireland, and the next, he spoke hopefully, with pride. I spoke of the Moscow trials. He didn't

*When *Boyhood Dreams Come True*, New York, 1946, I have tried to describe the conditions of life in the slums of Dublin. These suggest the conditions of life for the workers of Dublin in the days when Larkin and Connolly led them in great strikes.

commit himself, other than to say: "The trouble with Trotsky is that he doesn't know how to work with anyone." This criticism was often and justly made of Larkin, himself. He spoke warmly of Bukharin, and remarked that he had told Bukharin once that Trotsky was unable to work with any one. This was just about the substance of what he had to say of international affairs or politics.

He spoke of the Corporation of Dublin with irony. He liked to needle the city officials. In fact, he didn't fancy the Corporation at all. Jim was a Catholic, and he was proud that Ireland had a Christian civilization. The world needed (he said) a Christian civilization, based on the sanctity of the family. He spoke with pride of his own family life. He had almost no respect for the literary men and the Abbey crowd in 1938. He asked me about some of those whom I had seen, and when I mentioned them, he was sharp and ironical. Of the I.R.A. (Irish Republican Army), he was somewhat ironical, also, but he seemed to have admired them. But he remarked that they had done little for labor. At the hospital, we ran into a doctor who had been one of the I.R.A. diehards in the days of "the Troubles." I had met him and some of his old comrades-in-arms. I observed that he and this doctor greeted one another coolly.

When he took me to the abattoir, he explained the work there in detail. In fact, he described it with some pride. An air gun was used to kill the sheep. It permitted humane slaughter, and this was what struck Jim. With all of his fire, his wild angers and indignations, his bitter struggles, he was warm-hearted to the point even of sentimentality.

The last time I saw him, we spent a number of hours together. We went to his sister's home in Dublin. No one was home. He scrambled eggs and made tea for our meal. He wanted to give me some of the James Connolly papers. Many of his books and papers were kept at his sister's house. After eating, Jim spent an hour looking for papers of Connolly and for some Irish books. One of them was *The Labour Leader*, by Daniel Corkerry. Jim is the hero of this play. The books were in dusty cabinets along the floor. He bent down on his knees, and grumbling and muttering to himself, he kept pulling out books and spreading them all over the floor. Nothing was in order. He found everything but what he wanted to find. He flung out piles of books. One's throat became dry and one almost

choked because of the dust in the room. And Jim kept looking, wondering where he had put Connolly's papers, and where he had put the Corkerry play, and some plays of Boyle which he also wanted to give me. This seemed to go on endlessly. Finally, he grunted with pleasure. He had found the books. He gave them to me to take back to America. But he couldn't find Connolly's papers.

When we shook hands in farewell, he told me that he would always like to hear from me. He said:

"Write to me, Jim Larkin, Dublin. Everybody knows me."

Legendary Figure

Jim Larkin became a legendary figure in his own lifetime. Stories and anecdotes about him are endless. Many of them are true. At Ossining, he was popular with both the guards and the prisoners. One of the stories about Jim at Ossining was told to me by a class war prisoner who served time at a later date. Most of the guards (called hackies) were Irish. On St. Patrick's Day, they asked Jim to make a speech, and he got up on a table. Jim's speech began: "St. Patrick drove the snakes out of Ireland. They all came to America and they became hackies and warders. . . ." This was the beginning and the end of Jim's St. Patrick's Day speech in Ossining.

An anecdote told of him in Dublin may or may not be true. But it suggests the contradictions in his character. Jim was once on the way to an important meeting. He noticed a bird trapped in some telephone wires. He was moved by the plight of the bird, and he became indignant with the Corporation. He telephoned immediately, said that it was Jim Larkin speaking, and that a bird was trapped in some electric wires, and that it might be electrocuted unless it were quickly rescued. He demanded that men be dispatched immediately to save the bird. Jim kept calling back, demanding, expressing indignation, threatening. He waited on the spot until men did come and saved the bird. In the meantime, his important meeting was delayed.

Another anecdote concerns the time when he returned from America. He went to Liberty Hall, and esconsed himself. He had been leader of the Irish Transport Workers Union. He was back. He took over. His adversary, O'Brien, went to court. During the court case, Jim had a quarrel with his lawyer. He fired him and then appealed for a delay. The court ruled against Jim, remarking that it was not responsible for the defendant's

difficulties with his solicitor. Jim declared that he would defend himself. And he did. He put his adversary on the stand and asked all kinds of questions. He was very dramatic, and his gestures were magnificent. He would point a wagging and accusing forefinger at his adversary and ask him, with a glint in his eyes, if it were or were not true that the defendant had been guilty of peculations when he was in (let us say) the milk wagon drivers union? This went on for several days. There was a fine and a very appreciative gallery. But Jim lost his case.

Michael Gold used to tell a story about Jim in America. A unity meeting was called among various of the Irish in New York. Jim brought Michael Gold to the meeting. (I might add that he was very fond of Gold, and called him Mickey. While he spoke sharply concerning many of those whom he'd known in America, he talked most warmly of Mike Gold.) Jim started to deliver his "unity" speech. As he got warmed up he began pointing around the room, telling those in the audience that so-and-so who was sitting in this or that place was a "twister," and a double-crosser, and not to be trusted, telling someone else what Jim Larkin thought of him, and that this went on until the unity meeting agreed on one proposition: it was a good idea to have a riot. Heads were cracked, blows exchanged, chairs broken. Thus ended the unity meeting at which Jim spoke.

In one of his flaming speeches during his stormiest days in Dublin, he bared his chest to the Peelers, and challenged them to shoot him, then and there.

Stories and anecdotes about Jim could be recounted endlessly. The ones which I have given are typical.

Larkin and Connolly

Larkin was almost the polar opposite of his associate, James Connolly. Connolly was precise, methodical. He thought and planned ceaselessly. He tried to take everything into account in advance. He studied the revolutions of the past in order to draw lessons which he might apply in the Irish struggles which he anticipated. He had deep indignations, but he was usually controlled. Larkin was emotional, impetuous, violent, extravagant. In his speeches and in his actions, he was an improviser. He did not stop to reason or to plan. He spoke with a rapid flow, with sweeping gestures. His speeches were filled with hyperbole, with castigation, with acidity, with sentimentality, and with rousing appeals. In one speech he declaimed that it was his di-

vine mission to preach subversion and discontent to the working classes. This more than suggests his style. He was brave to the point of foolhardiness, and he was self-sacrificing. Again and again, he was ready and willing to give up his life and to be a martyr of the working class. In his great days as an organizer and an agitator, he lived a life of danger. He flung challenges into the teeth of the police of the British Crown. He flung bold and insolent challenges into the face of Martin Murphy and the other employers of Dublin. He gave his services to the struggle for the emancipation of the working class of the world: at the same time, he refused to appear on the same platform with an American Socialist of international repute because this man was divorced! In a period when the most depressed sections of the Irish working

class was militant, he was peculiarly fitted to play the role of agitator. His ability to lash their enemies, and to rouse and stir them enabled him to appeal to their manhood, to the will to freedom which slept within their hearts. He added his own daring example to the appeal of his words. And when he led these workers in strikes he was adamant, uncompromising, and in the forefront where danger lurked. His bravery and daring was as extravagant as his foibles. But in a period of let-down, of retreat, of the sodden rule of the middle classes and the clergymen in Ireland, he was like a lost child. In the slums of Dublin after "the Troubles," he could not repeat what he had done in this same area in the early days of this century. This was apparent when I saw him in Dublin in 1938. He was embittered.

Now this man is no more. When Larkin's associate, the wounded Connolly was carried in a chair to face the guns of his executioners, he was asked if he wished to say a prayer. He answered: "I will say a prayer for all brave men who do their duty." We, who do not pray, might alter this fine statement. We will pay our last respects to all such brave men. And Jim Larkin was such a brave man. He was a brave soldier of the working class. He was a great agitator. He gave his spirit, and the best years of his life in their service. Karl Marx spoke of the great heart of the proletariat in his pamphlet on the Civil War in France. Jim Larkin came from this great heart. Now that he is no more, let us bow our heads in the memory of this Irish leader.

JAMES T. FARRELL.

Four Recent Books on Palestine

An Omnibus Review

The quartet of books* under review are among the latest of a stream of writing which has poured out from the pens of tourists, reporters, officials and commissions concerning that small country which is exploding with great violence and threats of civil and racial war. The books selected cover every conflicting side of the Palestine question. *The Arab Island* is an authentic voice of British imperialism and, to a lesser degree, of the Arab ruling class; *To Whom Palestine?* reflects present-day liberal-Zionist opinions; *The Case for a Bi-National Palestine* is the program of the self-proclaimed "revolutionary" workers' party, *Hashomer Hatzair*; *Palestine: Problem and Promise* is a lengthy, factual, mainly economic study.

Despite the varying viewpoints, these books have certain common characteristics. Firstly, the Palestine problem is finally viewed within the context of political and economic relationships in the entire Middle East. This is no small departure. For years, one of the chauvin-

istic trademarks of Zionism was its view that Palestine was a matter of an exclusive Jewish state. Secondly, all the books have to some degree already been outdated by the rapid developments in the Middle East. Thirdly, none of these books displays a real conception of the gathering of forces for the coming struggles or a real solution to the Palestine question. This will be proved in some detail.

* * *

Palestine: Problem and Promise is divided into two parts, the first dealing with a thorough analysis of Palestinian economy and its problems, while the second puts forward a highly detailed plan for the post-war expansion of the economy. This plan has no relevancy whatsoever to the situation in Palestine since it is completely detached from the colonial and class relationships in Palestine which have brought the people of that country to their present violent impasse. However, the first half of the book is a veritable treasure of facts necessary for an understanding of the Palestine problem.

The Rule of British Imperialism

The book provides example after example of the effects of imperialist rule upon Palestinian economy. While Britain's imperialist interest in Palestine is

mainly strategic—as a bastion of the Eastern Mediterranean—the highly experienced colonial rulers have succeeded here as elsewhere in throttling any growth of the economy while extracting its material and financial resources. Palestine has lent England \$440,000,000 or \$250 for every man, woman and child in the country." Though Palestine has been a country of capital scarcity and high interest rates, the Palestine Currency Board has been an institution for capital exports. The pounds sterling turned over to the Board in exchange for Palestinian currency have been invested almost entirely in British and Empire securities. Palestine has therefore supplied other British countries with capital. "This 88,000,000 pounds (increase in currency) is not an exhaustive total of the resources made available by Palestine during the war to Great Britain. . . . Even this 88,000,000 pounds, however, is already an impressive total—being on the same order of magnitude as Palestine's total national income in 1943."(1)

Palestine is the location of one of the world's most important oil pipelines, as well as refineries. Yet oil prices there are 40 per cent higher than in the United States, thanks to the British oil monopolies. The British-controlled Palestine Electric Corporation maintains exorbitant rates for use of electric power, re-

* *Palestine: Problem and Promise*, an economic study by Robert R. Nathan, Oscar Gass and Daniel Creamer. Public Affairs Press, 1946.

The Arab Island, by Freya Stark. Knopf, 1945.

To Whom Palestine? by Frank Gervasi. D. Appleton-Century, 1946.

The Case for a Bi-National Palestine. Published by the Hashomer Hatzair Workers Party of Palestine.

sulting in steadily advancing profits for the corporation. The electric and oil companies, in co-operation with the government, have prevented any irrigation and electrification through development of natural resources of power like water. The resultant effects upon the nascent and puny Palestinian industry are easily imaginable.

To those apologists for imperialism who portray the colonial system as a heavy economic burden upon the imperialist rulers, the book provides the following information: "Apart from its guarantee of the 1927 loan and the 1942 refunding which have cost the British Treasury nothing, Britain's financial assistance to Palestinian development has been negligible." "The extent of government initiative in land development and agricultural improvements has also been very small." "Government sponsored agricultural credit has been conspicuous by its absence." Messrs. Nathan, Gass and Creamer, treading so cautiously lest they step on the toes of the imperialist parasites, sum up: "It cannot, in all candor, be said that the government of Palestine has been imbued with more than the faintest conception of the large and bold innovations in domestic and international economic policy that will be required if rapid economic growth is to be assured."

Industry and Manufacture

One of the important aspects of Zionist propaganda has been to present the Jewish economy in Palestine as prosperous, thriving and expanding, with the hopes of attracting private capital to make possible the rapid industrial development required by large-scale immigration into Palestine. Actually, as the book shows, the economy is wracked by crises and contradictions. Foremost among these has been the shortage of capital. "New enterprises in Palestine have required higher investment per unit of product than similar enterprises in older industrialized countries." Interest rates on loans were 8 per cent and higher. Palestinian trade was highly unbalanced before the war. The infant industries, unprotected by any tariff walls, were the victims of unrestricted dumping of cheaper goods upon the Palestinian market produced in industrially advanced countries.

The Jewish bourgeoisie reacted to its difficulties in the same manner as does the ruling class of other countries in similar circumstances. "Palestinian manufacturers were also anxious to control

the play of market forces in other ways. In fact, they were seriously infected with the restrictionist philosophy of trade associations and cartels." "Immigration brought with it an 'excess competition' in the form of machinery and other capital equipment. Local production soon increased beyond the needs of the local market. Thus a variety of projects for regulating output and new investment were enunciated by manufacturers, all designed to ensure the profits of the firms already in existence." One of the greatest criminal follies of political Zionism is its constant attempts to blur and obscure the differences between the Palestinian Jewish worker or Jewish displaced person in Europe with the cartel-minded Jewish bourgeoisie!

The gearing of Palestinian industry to needs of a six-year war has undoubtedly led to an unforeseen and unprecedented expansion of manufacture. Politically speaking, the most important aspect of this development is the increased *concentration* of industry. "In 1937 only sixteen Jewish owned firms employed more than a hundred persons and these firms accounted for about 16 per cent of the total employment. In 1942 there were fifty such enterprises, accounting for 30 per cent of total employment." The reverse side of the concentration of industry is the concentration of the workers as a class and their intensified struggles as a class. This becomes apparent, in part, when we examine the strike statistics later on.

What are the prospects for post-war Palestinian industry? The book notes that "this expansion of output (of manufactures) was not accompanied by an extraordinary volume of investment in new plant and equipment." The chapter on manufactures concludes with "Palestine's very marked industrial expansion has yet to meet the test of Western competition." The difficulties in capital accumulation, the low level of technology and productivity will leave the Jewish capitalist defenseless in any competition with the capitalists of the industrially advanced countries of the world.

Agriculture—Jewish and Arab

The largest pre-war commercial agricultural crop, under Jewish control, was citrus. It represented 74 per cent of Palestine's total exports. However, since Britain maintains the most stringent controls over market relations in the Empire, Palestine could not make any import-export arrangements beneficial

to itself. As a result, its citrus products were pushed off the market or suffered a general price decline. The Arab grove-owners, due to their lower costs of cultivation, were better able to withstand the declining prices. The tightened shipping situation brought on by the war had a devastating effect on citriculture. Over fifty thousand *dunams* of orange groves were given up and most are still in disuse. Here also, the Arab groves are in a relatively better situation.

The price of land in Palestine is today thirty times higher than it was a quarter of a century ago. A comparable acre of land in Iowa costs \$100; in Palestine the price is \$1,000. The inflated prices paid by the Jews only helps enrich the absentee feudal landlords, who comprise less than four-tenths of one per cent of the Arab agricultural population but own between twenty and twenty-five per cent of the land. The average *fellaheen* earned thirty-five pounds in a peacetime year, from which fifteen pounds is deducted for rent and five to ten pounds for indebtedness, leaving the peasant family with an income of sixty dollars a year for its existence!

Between 1939 and 1943, farm prices rose five and one-half times. Actual output increased by only fifteen per cent. However, the temporary profitability of commercial agriculture did not lead to any appreciable increase in the use of agricultural machinery which is the only possible method of intensified productivity. The book comments: "Only a revolution in the Arab economy, a major increase in irrigation, much more farm capital, more intensified farming methods... can guarantee a major sustained rise in the standard of living of the Arab farmer." Such a "revolution" will not be forthcoming from the advanced British imperialism or from the backward feudal lords.

The "Labor Economy"

One of the widely spread myths of those Zionists who profess to be socialists is that Palestine is little less than the socialist commonwealth. What Stalin could not possibly achieve over one-sixth of the globe, the Zionists claim to have succeeded in doing in a country smaller than the state of New Jersey. This myth has no basis in fact. After more than a quarter of a century of the building of a "national homeland," the *Histadruth* (trade union) enterprises account for only six to seven per cent of total manufactured products. We also learn the following: "Contrary to ex-

pectations, consumer co-operatives have played a very minor role in retail trade. . . . In the areas where they had to compete with private retailers, they scarcely made an impression." How fares this "socialist" economy? "The real income of the Palestinian community is enhanced by the willingness of these enterprises to accept a slow return for their entrepreneurship." Which means simply that these enterprises suffer the same, if not worse, contradictions and limitations as does private Jewish capital in Palestine.

Trade Unions and Strikes

The *Histadruth*, the Jewish Federation of Labor in Palestine, is, in proportion to the population, one of the largest trade union organizations in the world. This is to a large degree due to the fact that at least half of its members are not wage workers at all, being members of co-operative settlements or of the wage workers' families. Unfortunately, the *Histadruth* has been one more arm of Zionist policy and its numerical strength cannot obscure its weaknesses as a working class organization. Thus "in spite of the universality of trade union organization in Jewish industry . . . 1935 to 1939 witnessed a general decline in wage rates." If wage rates were declining before the war, they trailed far behind the skyrocketing prices during the war. The cost-of-living index shows a rise of 247 points. In the same period wage raises averaged 78 per cent. Another glaring weakness of the *Histadruth* was revealed by a survey in 1943, that showed 29 per cent of all Jewish workers were not covered by any agreement with the employer, while 24 per cent had only an oral agreement.

By far the greatest blot on the leadership of the *Histadruth* is the policy of the employment and organization of Jewish labor exclusively and a total exclusion of Arab workers from Jewish industry and from organization into the *Histadruth*. The self-proclaimed "socialists" are only aping the most reactionary sections of the American Federation of Labor which do not organize the Negro workers or which shunt them off into auxiliaries. This policy "has no doubt increased the absorption of Jews in Palestine in the short run, but it has also been a very important factor in maintaining the barrier between the Jewish and Arab peoples. Jewish labor proposes to continue to maintain this barrier until the Arab sectors of the economy have developed to the point where

Arabs work for approximately the same wage as Jews." What has been the result of this devious logic? In 1939 there were approximately 5,000 Arab workers organized, 2,000 of whom were members of the *Histadruth* auxiliary. Today there are 16,500 Arab workers organized, but little more than 2,000 belong to the *Histadruth* auxiliary. Thousands of Arab workers are being left to the political agents of the Arab *effendis*, who are conciliatory in trade union matters, but fanatically chauvinistic in the racial war against the Jews. The importance of the class relations between the Jewish and Arab workers is apparent to the British colonial office. They have continuously obstructed, impeded and interfered with the *Histadruth* auxiliary, finally confiscating its offices at the beginning of the war. Despite the labor chauvinists among the Jews and Arabs and the bitter opposition of the colonial rulers, the sharpening class struggles have involved ever greater numbers of workers among *both* peoples. In the years 1940-41, 5,639 Jews and 385 Arabs were involved in strikes. But in 1943-44, 21,362 Jewish and 5,024 Arab workers went out on strike. The recent strike involving over 50,000 Jewish and Arab workers occurred after the publication of the book under review.

From the small amount of factual material presented here it is clearly visible that even from the purely economic viewpoint, the "Jewish homeland" is in a state of continuous crisis. The elaborate economic blueprint of Nathan, Creamer and Gass proposes to overcome the crisis merely by substituting the wish for the reality. Under the impact of such "scientific economic analysis," Britain's simultaneous strangulation and exploitation of the Palestinian economy turns into far-sighted philanthropy and generosity; the acute shortage of capital is transformed into a plethora of capital by virtue of international loans, German reparations and the return of sterling balances to Palestinian Jewry; a contracting world market becomes an expanding world market; imperialist rivalries dissolve into a world community of nations and so on along this line. It is particularly ironical to read that "among the great powers there appears to be an inclination to accept a solution nearer to that demanded by Zionism than by Arab nationalism. . . . For these reasons we have felt that it is most valuable to base our analysis on the potentialities of economic development in the next decade on the assumption that there will

be no political limits on Jewish immigration or land purchase." Not long after these words were written, leaders of the Jewish Agency were arrested, whole villages were devastated, and tear gas, water hoses and rifle butts were used to drive Jewish immigrants onto ships which would bring them to detention camps on Cyprus. These events are adequate comment on the political assumptions upon which rests the lengthy economic blueprint. Such blueprints remain deeply buried in file-boxes.

Program of Hashomer Hatzair

Since the official social-democratic party, *Mapai*, suffers from internal dissension and desertion, the leftward movement of the Jewish working class has temporarily polarized itself about the *Hashomer Hatzair*. The latter was at one time unofficially affiliated to the London bureau of the centrist working class parties. Since that time it has veered steadily toward Stalinism, maintaining itself at the same time within the framework of world Zionism. Among all the Zionist parties, *Hashomer Hatzair* has been most insistent for a conciliatory attitude toward the Arab inhabitants of Palestine. But the most cursory reading of the *Hashomer Hatzair* program will expose its thorough fallaciousness, its "socialist" pretensions combined with practical support to Zionist chauvinism and alien imperialist rule.

We are informed at the outset that the program's authors do not intend to engage in debating at length and in great detail Jewish rights to Palestine on legal grounds. "In our opinion, the provisions of the Mandate are clear. . . ." British armed seizure of Palestine during the first World War becomes the "legal grounds" for a Jewish state! Although the bourgeois Zionist leadership has often resented *Hashomer Hatzair's* weakening of the solid front of Zionist chauvinism, *Hashomer Hatzair* apologizes at great length for the program of an exclusively Jewish state. "It is a democratic Palestinian Commonwealth, with a Jewish majority that they have in mind." How this commonwealth could be democratic if it is based *in advance* upon the realization of a Jewish majority is entirely beyond comprehension.

This explaining away of Zionist chauvinism dominates *Hashomer Hatzair's* interpretation of the division and antagonism between the Jewish and Arab communities in Palestine. "The Arabs were not interested in co-operation. They were bent on wrecking co-opera-

tion... in contrast with the Jews and their policies." While the role of Great Britain in fomenting provocations between the Jewish and Arab masses is so well known, the program states: "We do not insist that the greatest part of the responsibility of this failure (of Jewish-Arab co-operation) should fall on the Palestine Administration..." Finally, Zionist chauvinism is emphatically restated: "We hold it to lie very much in the interests of Zionism to win Arab consent to our plans and aspirations. This should not, however, imply that we are prepared to make... the realization of Zionism generally subject to or contingent upon the consent of the Arabs." What then is the realization of Zionism subject to or contingent upon? "In 1923, negotiations on Arab-Jewish agreement were begun between Emir Abdullah and Dr. Weitzman. One of Dr. Weitzman's conditions to the adoption of a settlement was Great Britain's approval. But once more the government vetoed further negotiations." (My emphasis—W. G.) The primary qualification for Zionist leadership seems to be a complete slavishness to imperialist rule!

What is the specific perspective and program of *Hashomer Hatzair*? Political parity between Jews and Arabs, the principle of non-domination of one people over the other, and the establishment of constitutional guarantees to that effect. Before we examine this any further, we note the same contradiction as previously. "The non-domination principle would lose its meaning if the position of each community were made to depend on its number." Why, then, the insistence on a Jewish majority? Further, *Hashomer Hatzair's* plan does not envision the independence of Palestine but only its further subjugation to imperialism: "We propose that for the next twenty or twenty five years Palestine should be placed under the administration of a Special Development Authority," "a permanent supervisory commission of the three Great Powers." "The gradual development of the legislative and constitutional machinery should proceed in five stages." No less! The only, and very doubtful, virtue of this program is that it anticipated Molotov's proposal for a Palestine trusteeship by six months. The net effect of such a proposal would be to give Russian imperialism a foothold in Palestine or at least an opportunity to embarrass its imperialist rivals in that trouble spot.

Finally, let us examine the bi-national Constitution with its guarantees of non-domination. Among the Jews and Arabs, the proponents of domination of one people by another are essentially the Jewish bourgeoisie and the Arab feudal lords. The Jewish bourgeoisie insists upon unhampered Jewish immigration to achieve a Jewish majority while the Arab ruling class resists such immigration in order to maintain the present Arab majority. Non-domination of one people by another in Palestine cannot be guaranteed by constitution. The solidarity of the Jewish and Arab masses on the basis of day-to-day struggles against the British imperialists and their Jewish and Arab agents will wipe away all antagonisms and threats of national domination. *Hashomer Hatzair dabbles with schematic constitutional guarantees precisely because it does not and cannot provide a program of struggle around which could be rallied the broad Jewish and Arab masses.* For while the *Hashomer Hatzair* has a vague, condescending attitude of conciliation toward the Arabs, its practical conciliatory efforts are directed toward the Jewish bourgeoisie and their imperialist masters.

Thus we stumble upon the following: ". . . we believe that co-operation between Jewish and Arab labor constitutes the cornerstone of the whole future of both races in Palestine" (their italics). No sooner is this bold generality thrown to the wind then we are confronted by the following: "In the field of private enterprise . . . every effort would be made to promote joint companies and corporations." If the British government discards the present Arab leadership, it will ". . . from the purely British point of view secure an even better market for its goods and services." The expansion of capitalist production and the imperialist market, is the acme of this "socialist" program. Led by parties which profess socialism all the better to betray, violate and emasculate it, the Jewish workers can only succumb to the terror which a desperate, sinking imperialist power has inflicted upon Palestine.

A Reporter's View

The political opinions found in Frank Gervasi's *To Whom Palestine?* are almost interchangeable with those of *Hashomer Hatzair*. The Arabs are objects of oppression, but as a people inferior to the Jews and must, therefore, wait upon Jewish benevolence. Threats of Arab violence are nonsense but threats of Jewish violence must be taken seri-

ously, i.e., the granting of Zionist demands.

Gervasi makes a great deal out of Palestine Jewry's voluntary blood-letting for the Second World War. The Jewish Transportation Corps in North Africa was told by Churchill "You are unloading history." But Britain's most talented demagogue identifies history with the maintenance of the Empire. Therefore, Jews died in European concentration camps or drowned in the Mediterranean. No immigration visas to Palestine were to be had. The uselessness of Jewish support to the recent imperialist conflict is undoubtedly apparent to a great many people and will become even more so with the progression of events in Palestine.

The book does provide us with some interesting information about the terrorist groups in Palestine. Stern was a former admirer of Mussolini. The *Irgun* supported Britain during the war and had a working arrangement with the right-wing anti-Moscow Polish army which was stationed in Palestine. The political supporters of these terrorist groups are the quasi-Fascist, Zionist-Revisionists whose program, until very recently, consisted of strike-breaking and a proposal for the deportation of the Arabs from Palestine. The reactionary political background of these terrorist groups should not be a great surprise. Since, the Jewish labor movement is limited by the Zionist leadership to non-violent protestations against Britain, and since artificially imposed divisions separate the Jewish and Arab workers, effective mass action against imperialist rule is frustrated. Individual acts of terror by students or returned soldiers becomes the only possible substitute for the absence of revolutionary activity by the masses. Acutely aware of the role played by Weitzman and his ilk, the British Colonial Office attempts to use the official underground movement *Haganah* as a weapon against the extremist groups with the promise of some vague concessions to Zionism if the extremist groups are destroyed. The ensuing weakness and confusion of the Jews as they carry on a military struggle among themselves would enable British imperialism to maintain itself in Palestine. While the Zionist leaders may be willing to assume the task of exterminating the terrorists, the Jewish masses would be unwilling. That is the impasse in which the Palestinian Jews find themselves today. Neither individual terror against British po-

lice and army nor the continued loyalty to British rule offers any way out.

However, the continuation of Jewish terrorism is important as an indication of the revolutionary crisis and of the temper of the Jewish masses. "Everyone of the Jews who fought in North Africa, Italy, and elsewhere in Europe is now a potential revolutionary. . . ." ". . . as with the increasing adamancy of the British leaseholders, it became clear that *evolutionary* strategy and tactics were futile, the *revolutionary* movement has grown." These are perhaps the most valuable sentences in an otherwise quite valueless book.

From the Horse's Mouth

Freya Stark's *The Arab Island* is not so much a contribution to the understanding of the Middle East as it is a contribution to our understanding of British Colonial officials. During the war the author's task was to propagandize for Britain among the indifferent and hostile masses and more particularly to woo the Arab ruling class to support Britain at a time when the Empire was rocking in the face of Nazi-Italian military power. She organized the "Brotherhood of Freedom" as a means of saving Egypt's intelligentsia from the telling effects of the enemy's propaganda. Her exaggerations of Arab loyalty to Great Britain, at the time, prove that even the most universally known facts about the Middle East are incapable of penetrating the mind of the colonial official.

Whatever changes, the British Colonial service remains the same. The first chapter begins with a poem by Kipling. The book is chatty and gossipy throughout. The Arab feudal lords enchant her. "Sheikh Mahmud is delightful." Lunch with Emir Abdullah is "one of the pleasantest luncheon parties I can remember." She remembers to add that these feudal lords are innately democratic, but confesses at one point, "I myself am happiest when dealing with the medieval side of things." Lest this be considered an aberration peculiar to her alone, she adds, "What the outraged and reforming reporter so often forgets is the fact that the colonial official is fond of his people as they are." That is, hungry, poverty-stricken, ignorant and exploited.

The central and revealing idea of the book is that ". . . the most important factor in the modern Arab world is the ascension of the middle class." Britain's imperial rule can no longer be maintained by simply purchasing, for politi-

cal use, some desert chieftain or local *effendi*. The economic development in the Middle East has given birth to a new native ruling class based on commerce and manufacture. This class will demand and in some cases receive all the formal appearances of self-government and control of civil service. But economic and in-emergencies-military control will remain in Britain's hands. Freya Stark rises to the defense of the wealthy, parasitic Pashas of Egypt. "The people in Egypt who belong to the old ruling class and are willing to step from that superannuated enclosure and take a hand in the new business of the country are doing a useful service." We are very grateful, indeed. There is only one reference to the working class in the entire book, but it is quite sufficient to reveal the perception of the colonial official to the extraordinary dangers facing the status quo. "The workers as they grow in importance, will gather themselves together in Egypt as in other lands and much depends on who leads them by the hand before they come to their strength. The Pasha will do well to think of it while he still has the power to give."

The colonial official suggests that the Pasha should lead the workers by the hand. *Hashomer Hatzair* with somewhat larger social vision suggests that the United Nations should do the same for the Palestinian masses. The professorial study by Creamer, Nathan and Gass finds the Arabs so poor and ignorant that their political action can only be "superficial and impulsive." Their liberation rests with neither the poor nor

ignorant masses. Byrnes, Bevin and Molotov. Against the 200,000 troops, the battleships and airplanes that Britain has concentrated in Palestine, the Zionists are heavily armed—with economic and constitutional blueprints.

The solution lies in completely the opposite direction. The extreme poles which separate the Arab exploited from his exploiter, the accumulated rage and bitterness of Palestinian Jewry, the system of usury which grinds the Arab *fellaheen* into the dust, the total absence of democracy in most of the Middle Eastern countries—all this makes the situation inherently revolutionary. The repeated general strikes by Egyptian workers and students followed by the arrests of tens of thousands of the participants; the spontaneous action of tens of thousands of Jewish and Arab workers who went out together in the largest strike in Palestine's history are but small indications of the revolutionary potential of the masses. Imperialism is gripped by a similar crisis everywhere. It becomes obvious that one mass action of Arab and Jewish workers deals a more devastating blow against imperialism than does all the pleading and whining by Dr. Weitzman—or all the long-windedness which fills the chambers of the UN on this subject. The movement toward social revolution by the apparently ignorant and uncultured, but profoundly restless masses of the Middle East will teach a great deal of politics, economics and history to the professional politicians, economists and historians.

WILLIAM GORMAN.

Korea Under Occupation

Ever since Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910, the Korean people have been struggling for national liberation. Convinced that the recent war offered a means of achieving their freedom, Korean nationalist organizations, both in this country and in China, urged full support of the "anti-Japanese" war being conducted by the Allied powers.

Their efforts have been crowned with success. The staunch Korean nationalists who spent many long years fighting side by side with the Manchurian partisans against the Japanese troops; the "radical" students who were delighted with Russia's declaration of war. . . "a guarantee of Korea's freedom" (!!); Korean-Americans looking forward to the

re-establishment of a free Korea; all of them thrilled to the fulfillment of their fondest hopes—the smashing of Japan's war machine.

But what are the results? What has happened to that free and independent Korea about which so much has been said? Why are the troops of America and Russia still firmly settled on Korean soil more than seventeen months after the Japanese surrender? Is it possible that the victor nations fought this war for somewhat more practical ends than the ones indicated in their propaganda releases? How long do the armies of occupation intend to remain on the soil of this "liberated" colony?

An evaluation of Russian and American designs upon Korea must take into

account the strategic importance of Korea against the background of present-day political realities. Korea has a common border with Russia, the boundary of which is distressingly close to the key Russian port of Vladivostok. Fusan, in South Korea, is less than a hundred miles from the Japanese mainland. The eventual conflict, for which Russian and American imperialisms are today preparing, will find Korea in a position of geographical importance. This in itself would tend to focus the attention of the great powers upon Korea, but it is only one of the attractions of this important peninsula.

Korea has an area of some eight-five thousand square miles, and a population in excess of twenty-five million persons. The population density thus approximates that of New York State (including New York City) and this in a preponderantly agricultural country.

Unlike most of China, the Korean terrain is mountainous, making maximum agricultural productivity difficult and uncertain. Nevertheless, this country has been a chief source of Japan's rice supply for many years. To accomplish this modern miracle, the Japanese encouraged and supported the backward, semi-feudal landlord-tenant relationships which existed there. Under this system the landlord collected from the tenant, in kind, an enormous share of the rice, cotton or millet in payment of rent. This left the tenant with just enough grain to eke out a minimum existence... and forced him to borrow sufficient seed each spring to plant his next crop. As can be imagined, interest rates were exorbitant, as were rentals and taxes.

But if the peasant had little or no rice to eat—the landlord now had a greater amount to sell... and the Japanese industrialists were only too eager to buy all available rice for resale in Japan... at the usual rate of profit. Not only did this policy help to keep alive the nationalism of Korea's peasants, but it placed the Korean bourgeoisie in a position of increasing dependence upon Japanese guns... a situation which was exploited to the utmost degree.

Northern Korea is endowed with a goodly share of natural resources. During the early 1930's, Japan saw the inevitability of a long war and undertook the industrialization of this area as a means of building up and supplying her vast war machine. Although the known coal reserves were in themselves inadequate to build up a self-sufficient indus-

try, these shortages were mitigated by the use of Korea's vast water-power supply, quickly harnessed to run the many modern factories which were built. New hydro-electric plants located along the streams and rivers of Northern Korea have turned this area into a beehive of mining and industry. From this area Japan was able to obtain iron ore, aluminum, magnesium and lithium, as well as a variety of manufactured goods.

The Russian Zone

The Southern and agricultural portion of Korea is now under American occupation, while the Northern industrial area, bordering on the Soviet Union, plays host to the armies of Stalin. Reports received from the Southern portion of Korea indicate no betterment in the conditions of the tenant farmers under American occupation. Not even the most elementary peasant reforms have been put into effect, and Korean landlords still operate as before... not with Japanese, but through American and Chinese intermediaries. A surprisingly large amount of Korean rice, badly needed at home, continues to find its way to the black markets of Japan's large cities and China's coastal area, while Korea's poorer peasants must still resort to millet as their staple diet... the cost of rice being beyond the reach of their pocket-books.

News from Northern Korea occasionally filters in through the double wall of silence surrounding the two occupied areas. A "conducted tour" through the Russian zone recently convinced Ed Pauley, American representative, that the factories of Northern Korea had not been stripped, but were still operating at full speed, as were Korea's mines. Although information reaching correspondents in the Southern zone indicates that other factories (in areas through which Pauley had not been conducted) had received somewhat different treatment, it is nevertheless true that a large percentage of Korea's factories and mines continue full-scale operations, unhampered by the removal of their basic component parts to the Soviet Union.

The reason for this preferred treatment, however, is not due to the "progressive" role played by Korea's nationalists in support of the war. Nor is it due to the kindness and consideration with which the Russian bureaucracy treats a long-oppressed colonial ally. Not once again purely material considerations are involved; for the key to Russia's action lies in the fact that the untouched fac-

ories operate by means of water power.

To tear down a plant and export the machinery is easily done. Unfortunately for the Stalinists, however, no method has as yet been devised for the transfer of rivers and dams, tunnels used for turning the course of rivers, and tide waters... It is cheaper and better to run these plants at their present locations, and this is exactly what the Russians are doing.

The light metals mined in this area are of importance to Russia's aircraft industry. The coal, iron ore and manufactured goods are shipped to Russia as quickly as they can be produced, and this state of affairs will continue just so long as Russia maintains her army of occupation in Korea. The seventeen months' occupation will become seventy if it is decided by the Russians.

Stalin's apologists... of all shades... continue to deny the imperialist nature of Russian policies. The stripping of German and Japanese factories is a justifiable part of Russia's war spoils and reparation demands; Manchuria and Poland somehow fall into this same category. In Korea, however, the nakedness of Russia's tactics makes it considerably more difficult to wrap them in the sanctimonious garments of Stalinist apologia.

Every element of imperialism seems here to be present and in its proper place; the control of factories and other capital-goods equipment by the foreign power, the use of these factories to exploit native labor, the export of the realized surplus produce to the mother country, the military and political control of the colony... all for the alleged purpose of helping to free Korea from Japanese domination!

Before Korea can become truly free and independent, it is necessary that her working class recognize the imperialist character of both the occupying powers. Korea cannot afford to yield her sovereignty either to the American or Russian armies of occupation. What, then, can she do?

Trotsky has already traced for us the role which will be played by a native colonial bourgeoisie in this era of imperialism. One of the verifications of the correctness of his thesis can be found in Korean history itself.

Historical Background

In 1894, the Korean bourgeoisie were unable to obtain, from their own monarch, a series of much-needed reforms which would have enabled them to offer some sort of competition to the over-

whelmingly superior productive capabilities of the Western world. They turned to Japan for aid, and Japan's ruling class willingly obliged. Unfortunately, however, they had some interesting plans of their own. The end of the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-95 thus found Korea strongly under the influence of Japan.

The Korean bourgeoisie now attempted to play the policy of the lesser of two evils, and turned to Russia for support. Japan's 1905 victory ended any speculation as to the benevolence of Czarist Russia's would-be policy toward Korea . . . and the war's end placed Korea firmly in Japanese hands. Formal annexation took place in 1910

Under conditions now existing in Korea, only mass action on the part of Korea's working class can free her from the yoke of imperialist domination. For the Korean bourgeoisie to harness this pro-

letarian colossus to their own frail chariot, however, is a dangerous task . . . to be avoided lest the workers take the bit of power into their teeth and use it to their own advantage. Here, then, is why the Korean ruling class limits its activities to a playing-off of Russian versus American interests. If another tragic era of imperialist domination is to be avoided, the Korean revolutionists must prepare to arouse and organize the militancy of the masses. The Korean proletariat must carry on the struggle for Korean freedom independently of the Korean bourgeoisie. They must prepare, not for the limited aims of their ruling classes—today impossible of realization—but for the rule of the workers at the head of the peasant masses, a rule which combines social with national emancipation.

A. KIMBAY.

are not the limitations of talent but of immaturity, and, in our opinion, Miss Clark possesses the ability to overcome them in her second novel.

RICHARD STOKER.

DISCOVERY OF EUROPE, edited by Philip Rahv. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$5.00

Since the future of the world is certain to be international if it is not barbaric, Americans will be the solvent or insolvent heirs of the culture of ages. If, however, it is in the tradition of the Twentieth Century American bourgeoisie to be solvent in business, it is also in the tradition of American life to be bankrupt in culture. Modern European economy must be oiled with a stream of American credits; the American culture must be nourished on the stimulation of European art and writing. There is little more bleak than the credit outlook of a French bank or a purely American style in art.

If there are relatively few Americans who are aware of this today, there were even fewer Americans who were aware of this a century ago. The greatest forward spurt in the conscious American quest for the experience of European life and living occurred, if we are to accept the emphasis in Philip Rahv's recently published anthology, immediately after the First World War, when, as Malcolm Cowley phrased it, "young American writers were drifting everywhere in West Europe and Middle Europe; they waved to each other from the windows of passing trains."

It is not completely true, however, that the discovery of Europe by American writers and artists was completely alien to the tradition of American bourgeois society. The visits of J. P. Morgan to the London branch of the family bank and the absurd expedition of Henry Ford's peace ship are indications that nothing could completely break the ties between Europe and America, especially in periods of great stress such as occur during financial panics and world wars. The Puritan tradition in American culture, however, rejected not only the values of J. P. Morgan but the values of the European artists as well.

There were, of course, harbingers of the trend among the American artists; one of these was Henry Adams, who first went to live in Paris in 1860 and returned to Paris in 1898. He discovered in himself the Parisian attitude of mind. He applied a word to himself from which the more timorous men of today recoil in horror. "Decadent," he called himself and asked "Why can we decadents never take the comfort and satisfaction of our decadence?" His attitude resulted from a conviction that he was seeing "the downfall of our whole nineteenth century world, and its economical religion." And he could foresee no way out for the world, not even Socialism. "My life," he said, "can at the utmost only reach into the collapse. I have lived through most of one Utopian life, and Socialism has no claim for me."

Randolph Bourne was another harbinger of the trend; but Bourne was a Socialist. He went to Europe in 1913 to attend a congress of the Second International. While there he

Book Reviews . . .

THE BITTER BOX, by Eleanor Clark. 280 pp. \$2.50. Doubleday & Co., Inc. 1946.

Miss Clark's novel represents high achievement expressing unique purpose. Alone among contemporary novelists, she has taken membership in the Communist Party for her theme. Other writers have written about the Communist Party, but none has made it central to his purpose.

This is not, despite its theme, a tendentious novel. It is not a political novel in the sense that we have come to understand that ambiguous literary form. It is not the work of a journalist using the novel to report, it is the work of an artist who uses an art form to penetrate. It is not an item clipped from the newspaper and enshrouded in fictional pretense or sweetened in fictional saccharine to make the better-selling fiction list. Miss Clark does not employ the Socratic dialogues and she makes no effort to impress us with her dialectical powers. Despite the absence of political exegesis, despite the fact that the book does not mention the theories of social fascism and popular front, contains no allusions to socialism in one country, and does not refer to Stalin or Molotov, the reality is that the Communist Party emerges more clearly than in any other novel I have read.

Miss Clark is concerned with morality and its development in character. She takes a bank clerk, John Temple, an insignificant human datum, an unrealized personality, and sends him into the Communist Party. His impulse is essentially personal, and Miss Clark has sedulously and, to my mind, commendably avoided a facile economic determinism to dispose of his motivation. She takes this constricted, almost lifeless character, bound by the inflexible confines of

one system represented by the bank, and carefully places him in another equally rigid structure represented by the Communist Party. This new life is distinguished not so much by its values as by its activities: leaflet distribution, party organizational drives, demonstrations. Ultimately, freedom for this clerk cannot be found in the Communist Party because it demands unthinking acquiescence and regimented submission.

But while the individual must repudiate both systems in the interests of freedom, not everybody achieves it. This is one of the tragedies of our time—the disintegrating effect on the personality of membership in the Communist Party. Brand, who inducts Temple into the party, finally repudiates it, but he has become an unintegrated personality, inhabiting a no-man's land, and his solution is death. Others, like Rose and Hilda, find their solutions in the pursuit of the traditional values represented by marriage and motherhood. And Temple, in an inconclusive and not altogether satisfying final scene, affirms the value of personality.

There are memorable characters: the cashier who is completely integrated into the banking structure and yet curiously retains an inviolate core of personality; the old man, a fusion of senility and religiosity; the party secretary, dull, degenerate, Stalinist bureaucrat; Jackie and Bo, mindless, silly yet engaging lesbian comrades. And all these characters function in the huge city, which is experienced and felt rather than mechanically described.

Unfortunately, the novel suffers from too many sudden and jarring transitions and too many unmotivated actions to make it a wholly satisfactory work of art. But these

caught the fever. "Paris," he wrote, "is a great spiritual relief after London, in whose atmosphere I began to feel suffocated. The impersonality, the deeply ingrained caste-system, the incorrigible moral optimism, the unproductive intellectualism, the lack of emotion or sensuousness, the barbarity of the outer aspects of English living, the insensitiveness to art. . . . Paris, democratic, artistic, social, sensuous, beautiful, represents almost the complete reversal of everything English. And the French writing, so personal and so human; intellectualistic, but with concepts that light up vistas of experience and do not confuse them, as most English thought does. The irony and vivacity of the French temperament delight me; their total absence in England made it seem the most alien of all the countries I had seen."

In the Twenties, however, came the flood. The war experience had discovered and opened France to the American multitudes. Writers and painters came first as ambulance drivers and soldiers; later as intellectuals to discover the experience of the continental mode of life. The experience of Paris was repeated and confirmed.

The war opened another vista for the writers—revolutionary Russia—which John Reed, Lincoln Steffens, Vincent Sheehan and

other journalists rushed to look at and to report to a goggling world: "I have seen the future and it works. . . ." If the inspiration for this cry has turned sour, the cry itself may yet be heard again. But the sound of this cry for the first time with all of its freshness and vigor was the harbinger of a new burst of freedom; the opulent, gay and expansive Twenties.

Rahv's anthology is a well-selected and stimulating array of letters and essays by Americans on the experience of Europe. His comments are brief and to the point. His sense of literary values has led him to the best bits of writing on these themes. The one criticism which might be made of his selection is that if it is representative, it is also overly-inclusive.

As for Henry Steele Commager's remarks that American business men who visited Europe are more capable of defending American culture against Europe than the intellectuals whom Rahv selects for his anthology, one can only say that those who have travelled to Europe to watch the eastward flow of the American dollar and to guard American culture from the European way of life, deserve to be included only in the passenger lists.

AVEL VICTOR.

national society, let alone to the possibility of Jewish "majorization." On the other hand continued Jewish immigration without consent or against the will of the Arabs would violate their right of self-determination. Since we cannot grant both rights simultaneously, we must decide which we want to violate.

2) We do not support mechanically any democratic right at any time. It was, for instance, undoubtedly the democratic right of Danzig or Austria to join their German nationals. But we resisted, of course, the realization of this right when it meant a greater Nazi-Germany. For an analogous reason we must now resist the realization of the democratic right of the Jews to immigrate to Palestine. For the overwhelming majority of them want to immigrate there with a clear, chauvinist aim: to conquer it for their nation and, at any rate, to *infringe upon the rights* of the Arabs. This is regrettable, but a fact.

3) Since the Jews are economically superior to the Arabs and have a more advanced civilization, the former will *necessarily* dominate the Arabs who must *necessarily* be turned into a second class nation within Palestine.

4) The position of the Jews in Western and Central Europe in the past—we omit Eastern Europe for reasons of simplification—and that of the Jews in Palestine in the present and future is *not* the same. The Western European Jews were a part of the societies and nations within which they lived and they had adopted the languages and cultures of the latter. They differed from the people among whom they lived merely by their *race*. The latter term is by no means synonymous with *nation*. The main criterion of a nation is a language of its own. The American Negroes are a race, but they belong to the American nation. The Jews, however, come to Palestine by no means in order to become a part of the Arab nation but in order to constitute there a new nation. This aim of Jewish immigration has *plenty* to do with the rights of the Arabs! Even in the optimal case, this immigration brings about at least one change for the Arabs: they will live in the future in a bi-lingual (bi-cultural) instead of in a mono-lingual society. This means a lot of difference! I think, that for instance the inhabitants of, let us say, the department Isère in France should be asked for their consent before we support the right of Serbs, Spaniards, Arabs, Jews, etc., to immigrate into this mono-lingual French department with the *expressed aim* not to be assimilated but to constitute their own nation there. Maybe we would call the negative reaction of the French natives nationalistic. But, I think, we would have to support it.

5) The editorial explains perfectly the Jewish *psychology* and its underlying facts which are the causes of their aims to infringe upon the Arabs' rights. But it does not consider the *political* facts of these aims of virtually all prospective Jewish immigrants.

W. BROOKS.

Correspondence . . .

Editor:

... "those of the bureaucratic collectivists who argued."

In the great controversy between Max Shachtman and Ted Grant (see THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, Feb. 1947) as to whom the above clause refers to, I want to be recorded as voting for Comrade Grant.

It should be clear to everybody that the word "those" singles out a group of bureaucratic collectivists and indicates that not all of the proponents of the theory of bureaucratic collectivism have the same arguments. The past tense of the word "argue" indicates that the argument occurred in the past.

If Comrade Grant's sentence is not clear to some people it should certainly be clear to those who followed closely the 1940 controversy. When I read the sentence I unhesitatingly took it for granted that Grant referred to Trotsky's comment on Bruno R. It never occurred to me that he referred to Shachtman.

The fact that Bruno R. is a mysterious person is completely immaterial. By the way, his book, if I am not mistaken, can be obtained at the New York Public Library. The fact that "those" is plural is also immaterial since Grant has the right to assume that Bruno R. had at least one follower.

There is nothing for Max Shachtman to do except to admit having made a mistake—in fact two mistakes: one in his original comment and one in the rebuttal.

And please do not permit him to make the same mistake for a third time.

Comradely,
ALBERT GOLDMAN.

Editor:

I want to make a few remarks on your editorial in your November issue regarding the Jews and Palestine.

The editorial states that the realization of the Jewish national aims in Palestine does not necessarily conflict with the rights of the Arabs. "The mere immigration of Jews to Palestine no more deprives Arabs of their rights than the continued residence of the Jews in Germany . . . deprives Germans . . . of their rights. The Arabs' rights would be jeopardized only if a Jewish State in Palestine were the only possible result of Jewish immigration. An infringement of the Arabs' rights is no more implicit in the fact of immigration itself than is abuse of a Jewish minority implicit in the fact of an independent Palestine under Arab majority. . . . To deny the right of the Jews today to immigrate to Palestine on the grounds of POSSIBLE consequences it will have on the Arabs is to deny them the right to go anywhere."

I consider this statement incorrect for many reasons. Among them are the following ones.

1) We stand for the democratic right of free immigration of any people to any country. We stand also for the democratic right of self-determination of any nation. Unfortunately both of these democratic rights exclude each other in the given case. If we grant self-determination to the Arabs we will violate the right of free immigration, for an Arab Palestine will use the former right to resist any further attempt to be changed from a mono-national into a bi-