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May 1942

# Fourth International

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## Labor's Fight Against Inflation

The Government's False Definition - How It Encouraged  
Rising Prices -- There Is No Universal Price Ceiling  
Capitalist Anarchy and the Workers' Answer

## Roosevelt and the Negroes

*The Balance Sheet Since Randolph Canceled the March on Washington*

*By Albert Parker*

The Program for Peace . . . . . *by Leon Trotsky*  
Washington in Latin America . . . *by Terence Phelan*  
The Assassination of Bob Harte . . *by Walter Rourke*  
The Crisis in Agriculture . . . . . *by C. Charles*  
On the War Fronts - . . . . . *by Joseph Hansen*

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Twenty Cents

## Manager's Column

Few letters have been received from other countries during the month, but *Australia* managed to send us word that **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** has not been received through the mails for some months and is greatly missed. We are checking with the postal authorities to discover what is wrong.

From *Havana* comes the request for 1940-41 bound volumes of **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** and the plea that some copies of the magazine be sent airmail each month.

\* \* \*

Letters from our readers and agents at home show an increase in activity—payments on account, improved sales, and subscriptions:

*M. B. of Cleveland*: "Will you please send us 25 F. I. subscription blanks?"

Any other agent who needs subscription blanks should follow *M. B.*'s example. No doubt he will set an example for all of us by returning those sub blanks filled out in time for our next report.

*O. B. of Minneapolis*: "We would like to have you send us a batch of **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** subscription blanks as our supply has been completely exhausted."

We sent *Minneapolis* a big "batch" of sub blanks and hope they snow us under returning them.

*B. R. of Chicago*: "First of all, I would greatly appreciate your sending me a complete list of all current subscribers to the F.I. in the Chicago area. We have an idea that there are a lot of people close to the organization here who are not subscribers and want to confirm that idea."

*B. R.* is our new literature agent in Chicago and already has proved herself to be a live wire. In this same letter she sent in a six-month sub, a one-year sub, and a one-year combination. We took the liberty of also sending a list of the unexpired subs in the Chicago area to *B. R.* We don't think we are wrong in assuming that she will follow each one through to a renewal.

*E. T. of Cleveland*: "Please increase our bundle order of F.I.'s to 20 per month."

Our faithful correspondent, *J. B. of Montana*, sends his welcome letter again this month: "P. O. money order for April F.I. and it was very good. I will try and send for the 1940-41 F. I.

# FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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Editor FELIX MORROW

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Manager's Column Inside Front Cover

bound volume as soon as I can, as time is getting short for the revolutionary papers to keep coming out, the way I see."

*H. M. of Detroit*: "Enclosed money for April F. I. and bound volume of F. I. (1940-41). I think that squares our account to date

and if we can catch our breath from those big bundles we've been receiving we will continue our good record of paying bills promptly."

*R. T. of San Francisco*: "We are making every attempt to budget ourselves so as to make

it possible to take care of both our current bundle order as well as our indebtedness on the F. I., and we hope to clear up the debt completely before many more weeks go by."

*L. T. of Buffalo* sent his usual terse and to-the-point note: "Enclosed is money order—F. I. bound volumes \$6.00; the rest is for our bill."

\* \* \*

The subscription field has become really lively. Last month we could report only two contenders—Chicago (in the lead) and Minneapolis. This month Minneapolis, St. Paul, and New York tied for first place, with Chicago filling second, followed by Boston and St. Louis. Six other agents are likewise getting results from sub activity. Perhaps next month—surely next month, the other agents will become sub-conscious.

Getting a subscription is a detail, but that detail becomes a major problem which results in the dwindling of our circulation if not gone about in a systematic and conscientious manner.

On the honor roll for payments this month we place the following agents whose accounts are paid in full: Buffalo, Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis, Quakertown, St. Louis, New York, and Montana.

"Payments on account" have increased during the month as a whole—larger payments from more agents. There are only four agents, as a matter of fact, who again appear on our "slow-or-worse" list: Indianapolis, San Diego, San Francisco, and Texas.

## Next Month

Beginning with our June issue, we shall have a new department: **INTERNATIONAL NOTES**. The war has of course seriously interfered with our contacts with the rest of the world. But, as our **February**, **March** and **April** issues demonstrated, our contact have been renewed to a considerable degree. More than sufficient, indeed to dictate a special department for shorter notes on news of the international workers' movement.

The U. S.-Nazi patent pools will be given the extended analysis it deserves.

After a long lapse, a batch of *Pravda* has arrived in this country enabling John G. Wright to contribute another analysis of the situation in the Soviet Union since the war began.

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## Editorial Comment:

### The Government's False Definition of Inflation — How It Encouraged Rising Prices — There Is No Universal Price Ceiling — Capitalist Anarchy in All Spheres of Production — The Workers' Answer to Inflation

In the period of World War I the people of America hardly felt the consequences of the imperialist catastrophe. Neither our casualty lists nor the rise in the cost of living were comparable to those of Europe. Of the 300 billions which the war cost, nine-tenths were paid by Europe. The ruinous inflation after the war, which engulfed both "victors" and conquered—Germany and Austria, Poland, France and Belgium—was primarily felt here in the form of being able to purchase at absurdly cheap prices the luxury goods of France, the optical and leather goods of Germany, etc. Those were for Americans the halcyon years of travel abroad on dollars which exchanged for thousands of francs and millions of marks, while the great masses of Europe slaved and hungered and their children tried to grow without food.

Inflation now again envelops Europe, this time including England—and the whole world. No longer is America a miraculous exception. America has joined the comity of nations and shares with them the full consequences of imperialism and its wars. For declining world capitalism is almost three decades older and more degenerate than in 1914 and has no room for exceptions.

This is the meaning of the "anti-inflation" legislation, the "price fixing," priorities and rationing. Far from being ways and means to avoid the catastrophes which engulfed Europe, they express the fact that America has now fallen heir to all the evils of the imperialist epoch. The "Europeanization" of America was already indicated by the mass unemployment of the 1930's; but that only began the process. Seeking to fix the date when this process matured, historians will probably fix it by Roosevelt's message to Congress of April 28, 1942 and OPA Administrator Henderson's price-fixing order of the following day.

The lengthy Henderson document is undoubtedly the most important U. S. state paper of the war. More than any other, it mirrors the capitalist anarchy of the United States, the devastation wrought by the monopolies, the fundamental conflict between the interests of the ruling class and the life-and-death needs of the masses of the people. This mirror is, however, besmeared with half-truths and verbiage which must be cleared away before the horrible visage of capitalist destruction can be seen accurately.

What is inflation? Henderson tells us it is already here: "The rapid, erratic increases in prices we call inflation is no longer a threat; to a painfully substantial degree it is a fact." But precisely what is inflation? Henderson does not say. The best he gives us is this half-truth: "If unchecked, inflation will launch a race between the wages of the stronger bargain-

ing groups and the cost of living." As for Roosevelt, he is not superstitious like Hitler who believes in intuition, but he believes in word-magic; he exorcised inflation at one blow by not permitting the word into his message to Congress on the question!

### For the Rising Scale of Wages

Henderson's half-truth that inflation is a "race" between wages and prices conceals the truth that inflation is the victory of prices in that race. Inflation is a condition where prices rise while wages lag behind. In itself the rise of prices is not inflation. If wages were pegged to prices, so that any rise in prices would automatically be accompanied by an equal rise in wages, there would then be no inflation for the great masses of the people who live on wages (including salaries of white collar workers and government employees and the pay of the men in the armed forces). A sliding or rising scale of wages geared to the price index is the mechanism which would avoid the ruinous consequences of inflation. Then the quantities in which wages and prices would be computed would be merely a matter of national bookkeeping; it would not matter whether wages and prices were computed in units of \$1 or \$10 or \$100 or \$1000, in each case the real value of wages would be the same and the actual quantities of commodities purchasable by the worker would be the same. It does not matter whether we pay 10 cents or \$1 for a loaf of bread if our wages are originally geared to the price of 10 cents and rise automatically as the price of bread rises. *Inflation is not the rise of prices but the lag of wages.* Every worker must grasp this important truth, for it is a major weapon today in the struggle for a decent living against capitalist greed and its political agents. *For the automatically rising scale of wages as the price index rises!* That must be the working-class answer.

Roosevelt has now shown himself openly as the enemy of that working-class answer to inflation. The shipyard workers, both AFL and CIO, have a nation-wide contract embodying the principle of the rising scale of wages; during the negotiating of the contract a year ago the workers were persuaded to give up many of their demands in return for a guarantee of an automatic wage rise during every six-month period in which the cost-of-living price index rises five per cent. Such a wage rise is now due. Yet on May 4—violating his seven-day-old promise in his message to Congress that "Existing contracts between employers and employees must in all fairness be carried out to the expiration date"—Roose-

velt telegraphed the shipyard workers-employers conference that such a wage rise is "irreconcilable with the national policy to control the cost of living." To freeze wages while prices have risen is *inflation*. But, in Roosevelt's word-magic, freezing wages becomes anti-inflation. The workers, however, cannot afford the luxury of such magic. Not only must the shipyard workers defend their contract, but the entire working class must battle for contracts providing the rising scale of wages and for the extension of this principle to all wage- and salary-workers, including government employees and the men in the armed forces.

## Why Does Price Fixing Come Now?

Keeping firmly in mind that inflation is the reduction of the buying value of wages, let us carefully analyze Henderson's document. We shall see that, far from being anti-inflationary, the government policy has *encouraged* inflation up to now and the measures it is now taking are not primarily designed to halt inflation and will not halt it.

Henderson's order now formally fixes prices of cost-of-living commodities (with certain exceptions). Recently price controls were also established on other commodities. Why didn't the government fix all prices in September 1939 when the war began and prices began rising, or at least when the United States entered the war five months ago? In his message, Roosevelt explained that, thanks to the experience of the last war, he knew that prices would rise unless checked. "Because rises in the cost of living which came with the last war were not checked in the beginning," said Roosevelt, "people in this country paid more than twice as much for the same things in 1920 as they did in 1914." Everybody understood this process would come this time with tenfold more force than in 1914. Why, then, was it "not checked in the beginning"?

Certainly Roosevelt could scarcely claim that his message and Henderson's order came "in the beginning." Henderson gives some figures which show how far along inflation is:

"The increasing momentum of this over-all price advance is shown by the following comparisons: since the outbreak of the war in September, 1939, the prices of basic raw materials have risen by 66 per cent. One-half of this increase has occurred during the past twelve months. Wholesale prices since September, 1939, have increased by 31 per cent. Two-thirds of this increase has occurred during the past twelve months. Retail prices of foods, clothing and housefurnishings have risen since September, 1939, by 25 per cent. More than three-fourths of this increase has taken place during the past twelve months."

Why, then, if the government really wanted to keep prices in line with wages, didn't Roosevelt fix prices twelve months ago and prevent the bulk of price increases? While prices were thus rising, wages were lagging far behind, partially frozen throughout 1941 by government pressure against strikes, almost entirely frozen since December 8, 1941 by surrender of the strike weapon. That the no-strike system froze wages because thereby there was no longer pressure on employers to give wage increases, Roosevelt knows very well. As he said in his message:

"Organized labor has voluntarily given up its right to strike during the war. Therefore all stabilization or adjustment of wages will be settled by the War Labor Board machinery . . ." (Our italics.)

Roosevelt also knows very well that the War Labor Board has granted very few increases and to a tiny portion of the working population, that the overwhelming majority of wage- and salary-workers were not permitted by the law to even

resort to the War Labor Board for increases, and that, therefore, wages as a whole were practically frozen while prices were skyrocketing. Why, then, did price fixing come so late?

*Because the government deliberately sought to have prices rise while wages stood still. The government wanted this inflationary development.* Henderson's document says so plainly, even though in discreet language.

## Why Roosevelt Wanted Rising Prices

Here is what Henderson says, in his "statement of considerations involved," at the conclusion of his order:

"Until six months ago, the main pressure on the price system was wartime demand or wartime shortage of a relatively small number of commodities. Among those were metals, chemicals, sugar and lumber. Prices for many of these commodities quickly rose to levels higher than were required to bring out available production. These price rises could be checked, and were checked, by individual ceilings.

*"For other commodities, price control was not then desirable. In fact, full use of productive facilities and labor, and the transfer for less essential [to war] to more essential employments, was aided by flexibility in the price structure."* (Our italics.)

Realize, workers, what Henderson is saying! The all-powerful government of the United States, which can stop strikes and freeze wages, by the use of troops if necessary, has no such coercive power over capitalist enterprise. Capitalists have to be cajoled "by flexibility in the price structure," i.e., by skyrocketing prices, to turn to "more essential"—war—production. Only by encouraging prices to rise could the government assure itself of expansion of war production. That is to say, only by yielding to the prices demanded by the capitalist owners of industry. Who is master in the house? Not Labor which is chained to frozen wages. Not the government which has chained Labor. The owners of the private property whom the government cajoles—they are master in the house, even in wartime when ostensibly the fate of the nation is taking precedence over private privilege. This is what is so glaringly revealed by Henderson's admission that war production could be expanded at the expense of consumer production only by permitting skyrocketing prices in war materials. The 66 per cent increase in basic raw materials prices while consumers goods rose 25 per cent expresses the price mechanism by means of which—and only by this means—the government could get the private owners of industry to shift from civilian to war production.

However, this was only one aim of the government, and if it had been the only aim, it could have been achieved by leaving prices of war materials uncontrolled but fixing the prices of cost-of-living commodities. This is what would have been done—had the government wanted to prevent inflation, to prevent the 25 per cent rise in the price of food, clothing and housefurnishings. But the *second* aim of government policy was precisely a moderate inflation: rises in prices which would cut down the amount of cost-of-living commodities which the masses would be able to purchase with their lagging wages.

To slash the purchasing power of the masses is always the capitalist method of financing war production. That has already been partially achieved by the inflationary development in prices of cost-of-living commodities. Roosevelt's message proposes additional methods for slashing purchasing power: "broad" taxation (of the masses) and increased "voluntary" purchases of war bonds. Compulsory "savings"—deductions from wages for war bonds—is already operating in

England and Germany and Roosevelt is preparing for it here. Taxation, "borrowing" from current frozen wages, and "moderate" inflation—this trinity of methods of financing the war at the expense of the great masses is common to Hitler, Churchill and Roosevelt. Fascist, Tory and "liberal" capitalism are sisters under the skin.

## The Real Aim of Price Fixing

Completely imbued with this outlook, the Henderson document has as its basic assumption the idea that hereafter the result of inflation—the sharp curtailment of the purchasing power of the masses—should be achieved by the other means: taxation, "borrowing" by the government from current wages, and preventing any rise in wages. Henderson says:

"Left to itself, the process [of rising prices] has no definite end. It can be stopped only by measures which will eliminate the occasion for increased income payments on the one hand, and narrow the gap by withdrawing excess purchasing power on the other. The alternative is inflation." (Our italics.)

This is like offering a man the "alternative" of being shot instead of hanged. Either frozen wages, compulsory savings, heavy taxation will slash your standard of living. Or it will be slashed by inflation. Such are the "alternatives" offered by Roosevelt and Henderson.

Since the inflationary rise in cost-of-living prices has been effectively slashing the standard of living of the masses, why did the government now resort to price fixing? One reason was the angry demands, arising everywhere, for higher wages; price fixing is given the masses as *ersatz*-wages. However, there was another urgent reason for price fixing.

The government's aim in permitting prices of war materials to rise was to curtail production for the consumer in favor of war production. However, at a certain stage this process leads to skyrocketing prices of consumers goods, for two reasons: (1) It is an economic law that price rises in one field in the end lead to over-all price rises, hence skyrocketing prices in war materials tend to be reflected in similar price rises in consumers goods. (2) This rise in consumers prices is tremendously speeded up by the curtailment of consumers production which, creating scarcities of consumers goods, leads to higher consumers prices independently of the general rise in prices. At this point, which has now been reached in the United States, the rising prices of consumers goods tempt entrepreneurs to produce more for the consumers market.

To prevent any expansion of production for the consumer, and to still further curtail production of cost-of-living commodities is one of the main aims of Henderson's order. He says so quite clearly:

"To control the price of more essential products [i.e., war materials] and leave the price of less essential products [i.e., food, clothing, shelter, etc.] uncontrolled at best involves arbitrary distinctions. More important, it prevents labor and materials from being used in more essential uses . . .

"If a price is fixed on an essential item, and non-essentials remain uncontrolled, manufacturers will switch from the [war] essential to the [consumers] nonessential. The transfer may be easier in some instances than others, but the tendency is plain." (Our italics.)

Here, then, is the basic aim of Henderson's order—the curtailment of consumers' production and the maximum expansion of production of war materials. He is not so much concerned with keeping down the prices of cost-of-living commodities but of making it less profitable to produce those than to produce war materials. Which means less and less

production of the cost-of-living commodities, less and less decent living available for the great masses. But this government policy creates a vicious circle. Growing scarcity of consumers goods means an irresistible rise in the cost of living—either openly or through "disappearance" of available goods from legal channels and their sale on the illegal Black Market. Far from being an anti-inflationary move, Henderson's order means more and more inflation. It is designed not to safeguard the cost of living but to assure maximum expansion of war production at the expense of the standard of living.

## There Is No Universal Price Ceiling

But, the reader may ask at this point, aren't all prices fixed, not only consumers goods but also practically all other commodities? And doesn't this universal price ceiling assure a relative stability of the amount of consumers goods produced and the prices we will have to pay for them?

The answer to these questions will illumine for us the state of capitalist anarchy in which we live.

As Henderson correctly points out, only a universal price ceiling can conceivably provide control of prices of any one group of prices, for the prices of all commodities are now extremely interdependent. He says: "There are inflationary pressures on prices everywhere. And so everywhere that prices exist there must be controls to prevent them from rising any further . . . The interdependence of prices, when prices are rising generally, prohibits any possibility of piecemeal control." But precisely this is the question: Has the government really instituted, can it really institute, a universal price ceiling? The answer is no.

Ostensibly prices of all commodities are fixed with few exceptions. However, one of those exceptions now amounts to 50 per cent of the national income: what the government buys for war. It is true that the prices of steel, rubber, aluminum, etc. are officially fixed, but the prices of tanks, guns and bombers are not fixed and this fact negates the fixed prices of the materials that enter into the tanks, guns and bombers. A few typical examples will suffice to make this clear.

President Murray of the CIO charged some time ago that there was a conspiracy to curtail steel scrap collection in order to boost the price. He was never refuted. After a while the OPA fixed ceilings for steel scrap of various categories. The result was not fixed prices but a dozen ways of charging more than the ceiling prices. *Time* magazine reports: "No. 1 bootleg method is to 'upgrade' a load of low-grade scrap with a thin top layer of good scrap, selling the whole thing at the top limit for good stuff, exchange winks with the buyer." The buyer is not in the position of the worker paying a higher price for a loaf of bread; the buyer does not shoulder the burden of the "illegal" higher price of the steel scrap, but adds it to the price he charges the government for the finished war product. It is impossible for the government to police its price-fixing regulations in this realm; moreover, it wants to increase war production at all costs and, as Henderson's document makes clear, it can do so only through the mechanism of more profitable prices for war production than for consumers goods. As War Production Board Director Nelson told an appreciative audience of monopolists on January 29: "To hell with stopping to count the cost. Start turning out the stuff and we can argue the terms at our leisure. Turn it out by inefficient methods if necessary and figure out better ones as you go along—but get the stuff moving, whatever happens" (*N. Y. Herald Tribune*, Jan. 30). That is the only "goad" the government has—higher prices and still

higher prices for war materials. Hence not only the buyer and seller of that steel scrap wink at each other, but the government officials wink with them too.

The example of "illegal" prices for steel scrap is striking, because it is so flagrant a disruption of the universal price ceiling. Far more important, however, are the disruptions which do not technically violate the law. Ford, for instance, produces much of the iron, steel, rubber, plastics, paints, etc. he is using. What meaning is there to fixed prices for these materials, when Ford does not sell them but builds from them tanks and bombers which he sells to the government under negotiated (non-competitive) contracts?

The disruption in the universal price ceiling takes place not only at the stage of the finished war product; it also appears at the stage of the "fixed-price" item. What, for example, is the real price of a given unit of steel? Let us assume the fixed price is \$1. But if simultaneously the government gives the steel company another 50 cents per unit, then the fact that the steel company sells the unit to a tank manufacturer at \$1 does not mean that that is the real price; in terms of the national economy the price is \$1.50. If at the same time the government is giving another steel company 60 cents per unit, the real price of its steel is \$1.60. Thus there would be a double disruption of the price ceiling: first by government subventions; second by varying subventions to different companies. Exactly this is happening now.

The equivalent to our example of government subventions at 50 cents per unit is U. S. Steel Corporation's subsidiary, Carnegie-Illinois, which has been given \$117 millions of government money with which to build a new plant. This government-financed plant ostensibly remains government property but with options for "purchase" by the operating company; and, as the Senate Truman Committee pointed out, "In the event of inflation the companies having such options may be enabled to purchase the facilities constructed with government funds at a fraction of their true value." Furthermore, the \$117 million plant consists of "scrambled" facilities, i.e., it is so mixed in with Carnegie-Illinois' own plants that it could not be operated alone by any other purchaser. In short, at least a large part of the \$117 million is a government subvention to Carnegie-Illinois and must be added to the "fixed price" of its steel to determine its real price.

Since that subvention to Carnegie-Illinois, however, an even greater subvention—greater per unit of steel—has been given to Bethlehem Steel Corporation—the equivalent of our example of a 60 cents per unit subvention. Readers of the February *Fourth International* will recall that Felix Morrow's article, "The Effects of Monopoly on War Production," described a contract for a government-financed plant proposed by Bethlehem. The Bethlehem proposal of a \$50 million plant provided for a "lease" of the plant for 35 years—a great steel plant provided by the government for 35 years free of charge to Bethlehem. The government counsel considered this so outrageous that he recommended rejection of the proposed contract, saying: "In times of emergency it would be fatal for the government to concede that it is weaker than any of its corporations and that it must accede to their demands, however outrageous, in order to obtain arms and supplies with which to defend itself." Nevertheless, the author of the *Fourth International* article was able to predict then: "Fatal it may be, nevertheless Bethlehem Steel is sitting tight, certain that the government must consent to this contract. As a matter of fact the contract would probably have been signed already except for the publicity created by the Truman Committee investigation of it." And so it came to pass! The New York newspaper,

*PM*, announced on March 19 that the government Defense Plant Corporation had *secretly* signed this contract! We can expect that the next contract signed with a U. S. Steel subsidiary will make up for the advantages given to Bethlehem. And so the disruption of the "fixed price" and the ascending spiral of *real* prices will continue.

These examples demonstrate that there is no universal price ceiling actually existing. And since, as Henderson concedes, price rises in one field affect all prices, the cost of living will continue to rise while wages remain frozen. And that is inflation.

## Planning Is Impossible Under Capitalism

In order to get the masses to endure the suffering arising from the war economy, the government must pretend that its curtailment of consumers production, freezing of wages, "borrowing" from wages, and taxation of the masses, constitute one aspect of an all-sided plan of wartime production. Ostensible strict mathematical computation dictates the attack on our living standards as one component of a grandiose plan. Actually, however, there is no plan, and there cannot be, under capitalism. As we have seen from Henderson's document, the only mechanism of capitalist government "planning" is higher prices for war production, making it more profitable than consumers production. But even this mechanism is not fully available to the government: between this mechanism and government "planning" stands *monopoly* capitalism. The mechanism of higher prices sets the wheels of monopoly factories turning; but the monopolies prevent that mechanism from setting into motion the wheels of non-monopoly factories and using all available productive facilities. *Thus war production itself becomes a monopoly.* The last official figures were those of the special Small Business Committee of the Senate (Senator Murray, chairman) which on February 5 reported that 56 corporations have over 75 per cent of all war contracts, while thousands of smaller plants are shutting down. If this is planning, then it is planned anarchy.

If the capitalist regime cannot plan in the realm of war production, still less can it plan for consumers production. Henderson tells us in very precise figures that "during 1942 the supply of goods and services available for civilian use will total \$69 billion" and that "demand in 1942, unless limited, will exceed supply by \$17 billion." That is, demand will exceed supply by 20 per cent. Henderson says this very glibly; nonetheless his is merely a guess that demand will thus exceed supply of consumers goods by 20 per cent; it may turn out to be 30 per cent, and that difference may be the difference between subsistence and near-starvation for millions. Henderson does not know and cannot know. The government "plans" to make war production more profitable than consumers production and knows in a general way that this will mean considerable curtailment of food, clothing, house-furnishings, etc. But *how much* less, the government has no way of knowing. Under this "system" of capitalist anarchy, if dietitians computed that below a certain quantity of food millions would be in danger of dying from starvation, the government would have no way of knowing how close to that quantity next year's food production will be. In encouraging war production at the expense of the goods and services which make up our living standards the government, which can encourage this only through the anarchic mechanism of prices, has set forces in motion over which it has little control.

If the items which Henderson's order lists as "cost-of-living commodities" were only usable for civilian consumption, then the government might roughly compute what we

shall have to live on during the coming year. But practically all the commodities constituting our living standard are *also* usable in war production, including much of our food. Today, thanks to the development of industrial chemistry, agricultural raw materials have far more uses in industry than they had during World War I. How much of agricultural produce will go to the war industries and how much will go to the masses for consumption? Henderson does not know and cannot know.

## Consumers Goods Are Also War Goods

Can Henderson tell us how much corn we shall have available to eat during the coming year, including hogs fed on corn? If he claims to know, he is lying. As we have seen, prices of war products in reality have no ceiling. Assuming cost-of-living commodities remain near the price ceiling, at what point will it become more profitable to use corn to make alcohol for use in industry and explosives than to feed it to hogs and human beings? Henderson cannot know but he *does* know that already the corn bins of Iowa are emptying at an unprecedented rate—how much for hogs and how much for alcohol nobody knows.

The farmer is told by Henderson that the price of fertilizer is fixed. But how much of it will be available to the farmer to raise food with, and how much of nitrates and other fertilizers will, instead, be attracted by the profit advantages in war production, go into explosives? That will be determined not by government planning but the anarchic forces let loose by the government in favor of war production.

Even during the last war the poor and the workers froze because it was more profitable to sell coal and petroleum to war industries than to consumers; now the same thing will be repeated in even worse form.

Will we have shoes if it is more profitable for leather manufacturers to turn their product over to the war industries? Of course we won't have shoes then.

Cotton is an important ingredient in explosives and other war materials; ergo through the mechanism of favorable prices it will go there, and government figures for "allocation" of cotton goods to consumers will prove to be a fraud since price and not planning determines.

Hardware of various kinds is solemnly listed by Henderson as a cost-of-living commodity, which it is, particularly for the farmer—including dirt shovels, axes, claw hammers, hand-saws, etc.—but the same manufacturer will obviously get more for these scarce tools from the war industries than from the farmer.

Metal and glass containers are vital for the enormous portion of our food which we buy in cans; but metal and glass are equally vital for war materials, and far beyond priorities and allocations it will be the favorable prices in war industries which will cut down the amount of metal and glass containers available for food.

And so on. We could continue for pages the "cost-of-living" commodities which are also war materials and which will therefore by the anarchic price system tend to go to war industries rather than to the consumer. Add to this that it is more profitable for a cannery to can bully beef for war orders than roast beef for the consumer. It is more profitable for a processing plant to make powdered eggs, dried milk and cheese under government contract for Lend-Lease shipments to Britain.

Add to all this that the only government "planning" in the field of consumers goods today is—in the midst of total war!—the *internationalization* of AAA "ploughing under."

Using its growing power in Latin America, the government Commodity Credit Corporation has just bought 200,000 bales of Peruvian cotton, which will remain in Peru and the purchase is on condition that Peru will reduce its cotton acreage; similar deals have been made with Haiti, Nicaragua and Paraguay, and Brazil is shortly to be drawn in. This curtailment of cotton production is costing the government tens of millions without providing any addition to war materials. It is *bravely* a measure for a post-war world which Roosevelt assumes will be, like the pre-war world, a world of ploughing under. Can Roosevelt be certain that the Americas now have enough cotton for the needs of this unpredictable war *and* for the consumers? Of course not. Meanwhile, however, the philosophy of ploughing under prevails, because the United States now has the upper hand in Latin America and can enforce it, while it may not have it after the war!

Add to all this that, while meat prices have skyrocketed and meat products have been Lend-Leased abroad, Washington is punishing "disobedient" Argentina by withdrawing cargo ships so that Argentine beef products are piled everywhere on docks and warehouses. The same ships that are carrying U. S. meats and dairy products to Britain and elsewhere could be, instead, transporting the rotting Argentine surpluses to the same destinations. The same is true of other items in the surpluses in which Latin America is now being crushed into line by Washington, as Terence Phelan reports in his article in this issue.

In short, the only government "planning" in the realm of cost-of-living commodities is in setting forces into motion which will cut down those commodities in favor of war production—how much cutting will be decided only by the "impersonal" profit motive galvanized by favorable prices for war materials.

This scarcity, in turn, will set irresistible forces in motion within the field of cost-of-living commodities to raise their prices—either by the "legal" method of abandoning the present ceilings or by the "illegal" method of the Black Market.

"It is the immediate purpose of this Regulation to guarantee to the American people that their living costs will remain stable," says the Henderson order. Another paragraph later, however, he says: "This Regulation does not insure that the standard of living of any individual or group or of the Nation as a whole will remain unimpaired. The loss of overseas supplies and the conversion of domestic man power and facilities to war production make this impossible. The material standard of living of the American people will fall." Both propositions cannot be true! If the regulation guarantees a "stable" living cost, how can the standard of living also fall? The truth of the matter is that Henderson's assurance of a stable living cost, like similar statements of Roosevelt, is merely the logically necessary formula with which to justify the wage-freezing situation. Roosevelt and Henderson know very well that, since they are curtailing cost-of-living commodities by the use of such an uncontrollable instrument as higher prices for war materials, "the standard of living will fall" through rising prices of cost-of-living commodities.

As a matter of fact, while publicizing the impression that the government has solemnly pledged to move heaven and earth to keep cost-of-living prices at the March level, Henderson slips in a hint of what is coming:

"Price regulations must not only be promulgated; they must be accepted and where necessary enforced. *The full pressure of excess purchasing power would insure the disregard of law.*"

When the Black Market flourishes and prices skyrocket,

Henderson will remind us that he promised to keep prices down only on condition that we on our part surrendered that \$17 billions of "excess" purchasing power in taxes and loans to the government!

## Bureaucratic Policing of Prices Is Futile

When Henderson was issuing his order, he insisted on being photographed throughout the press interview side by side with a horse-faced gentleman from Canada, chairman of its Wartime Prices and Trade Board. Seeing the two faces together in the newspapers, the gullible reader was to understand that Canada had successfully fixed prices and by heck we could do what Canada did. That Canada is a country as large as the United States, but with one-twelfth of the population, *predominantly agricultural*, and expending per capita on the war much less than the United States—of this not a word. Above all, not a word about the much more comparable example of Britain, where two and a half years of price fixing and rationing have resulted in the most extensive Black Market in all history.

While the gentleman from Canada was sharing the photographs with Henderson, government spokesmen hastily informed the press that in one crucial aspect Canada's example would *not* be followed. The Canadian price-control policing system is quasi-democratic in form; eighteen national women's organizations have their members as the nuclei of the regional and local price councils while the members of the organizations have the right to observe prices, question merchants suspected of raising prices and Black Market activities, etc. The Canadian government chanced this "mass consumer participation" method for two reasons: the trade union movement there is very weak in numbers and could not easily, therefore, demand the right to name the members of the local price councils; and, as we have already said, the predominantly agrarian economy and the small war expenditures mean far less inflationary pressure in Canada than here.

No women's organizations exist in this country which could pretend to be as representative of the mass population as are the trade unions; to talk here of "mass consumer participation" by organizations would mean the workers' organizations. Local price committees manned by the unions would tend to become proletarian forums voicing the class anger of the masses against the scarcity of food and clothing, rising prices and the Black Market. Hence at this point Henderson abandons his much-touted analogy with Canada:

"It has been learned authoritatively that civilians—even organized women's groups representing a large share of the retail buying public—will not be asked to 'watch' prices for the government.

"... Such a system, it is declared, is not feasible in the United States because the price control order is necessarily much more complex because of varied climatic conditions and because the population is twelve times greater than Canada's." (*New York Times*, April 28, 1942.)

The "explanation" for not emulating Canada is patently fraudulent: "varied climatic conditions" also exist in the great area of Canada and the greater extent of our population would merely require more committees. The real explanation is the government's well founded fear that the ten million organized workers, directly representing families constituting nearly 50 million people, would become the militant leaders of price committees if they are drawn from the general population.

The air raid warden setup is relatively democratic in the neighborhoods, with popular and representative people being chosen as the house and street wardens. But the government

and the capitalist class dare not permit even a semblance of democracy in the price control system. Prices will be policed by a new Retail Trade and Services Division, Henderson announced on April 28. "The new set-up will use the existing OPA field organizations, and will consist of regional, state, district and local boards. Mr. Henderson said members of the local boards, to be drawn from the present rationing boards and civilian defense councils, would continue to work on a voluntary basis." In short, a completely bureaucratic setup, dominated by paid government officials, supplemented by hand-picked local businessmen. Note, furthermore, that the new setup is a *retail* division. That is, such price control pressure will be exerted on the local storekeepers. Who and what organization will see to it that the great food packing, canning and processing monopolies maintain fixed prices, distribute the ever scarcer items equally to all storekeepers, do not divert big stocks to Black Market enterprises, do not hoard for higher prices? On this question the government is silent.

The bureaucratic price fixing system dooms in advance any perspective of adequate policing. That price fixing must be policed, Henderson admits in his order, saying: "Price regulations must not only be promulgated; they must be accepted and where necessary enforced." But in announcing the formation of the Retail Trade and Services Division, Henderson blandly denies the decisive problem of policing! The press reports him as saying:

"In emphasizing that the new retail organization would be largely administrative in character, Mr. Henderson said that little time was spent by the experts who devised the order in 'figuring out means for putting people in the hoosegow.'

"The idea that we will have a whole army of people searching for violations will not be an important part of the picture,' he asserted. He said he did not believe that squadrons of price policemen would be necessary *if* every one in the country, consumers, retailers, wholesalers and manufacturers would realize that price control had been introduced for their benefit and would cooperate accordingly to make the program work." (*New York Times*, April 28, 1942, *Our italics.*)

Does Henderson believe this pious clap-trap? How can he, in the face of what has happened in England? There, big wholesalers and manufacturers don't think that rationing and price-control "had been introduced for their benefit." They divert huge quantities of the dwindling consumers goods to Black Market enterprises and to favored storekeepers. One consequence is indicated by British official figures this March that, in the typical city of Glasgow, 25 per cent of the small non-food shops have closed their doors. The goods diverted to the Black Market are of course largely beyond the pocketbooks of the poorer workers. Recently airplane workers in England petitioned for a seven-day work-week—not out of patriotism but because they cannot feed their families on a six-day work-week. And these are among the higher paid workers! The main cause of this situation is, of course, the diversion of labor and commodities to war production and the capitalist anarchy of production. But bureaucratic policing—more accurately, failure to police—is an important factor in accelerating inflation.

## For Real Committees on Prices!

Democratic *committees on prices and rationing* are needed by the masses in their fight against inflation. Delegates from the factories, the trade unions, neighborhood block-meetings, housewives' groups, should be the members of these



committees. A network of such committees should cover every city and town, connected by city-wide and regional committees. Into these committees should be drawn the farmers and small merchants who, in their capacity of consumers, are vitally concerned with lower prices and equal rationing. These committees would have among their tasks not merely that of seeing that the miserable local storekeeper observes the fixed prices. Far more important, they would proceed to control the wholesalers and manufacturers, ferreting out goods hoarded in the warehouses, the surreptitious diverting of goods to the Black Market, the favoritism of the wholesaler and manufacturer toward the big department stores and chain-stores.

Not the least important of the achievements of these committees would be in erasing the dangerously growing hostility between farmer and worker. As Henderson says: "Suspicion of undue advantage and profiteering has already been engendered between farmer and worker . . ." Committees on prices and rationing, joining together worker and farmer, would end that suspicion, which is exacerbated by unscrupulous capitalist propaganda which tells the farmer that the goods he buys are costing him more because of higher wages. Farmer and worker together, to the capitalist's lamentations about costs of production, must answer: "Show us your books; we demand control over the fixing of prices." By this means the workers will be able to prove to the farmers that the real reason for high prices is not high wages but the exorbitant profits of the capitalists, the diversion to war production, and the overhead expenses of capitalist anarchy.

The existence of such committees, genuinely representa-

tive of the mass of consumers, would inevitably raise the question of *planning of production for the consumer*. When examination of the books and warehouses of the sugar dealer shows that, in addition to profiteering, scarcity is the result of diversion of sugar to manufacturing alcohol for war purposes without consideration for the minimum needs of the masses, the committees will become schools teaching the necessity for planned economy. When the masses discover that the diversion of their food and other necessities to war production is galvanized by profiteering while idle plants and unemployed workers stagnate, they will understand the burning need for expropriation of all war profits and nationalization of the war industries under workers' control.

These are life-and-death questions for the working class, not theoretical abstractions. The four horsemen of hunger and disease, inflation and death, are plunging into our midst. Every Marxist must transform himself into a tribune of the people, summoning them to battle for their lives and the future of their children. We must close the gap between the imperative socialist tasks and the present political outlook of the great masses, who still half-hope that the past is not irremediably gone. That transition from today to the socialist tomorrow requires that we arouse the American proletarian giant for these pressing tasks:

*For the automatically rising scale of wages as prices rise!*

*For democratic committees on prices and rationing!*

*For the nationalization of the war industries under workers' control!*

# Washington's Offensive in Latin America

By **TERENCE PHELAN**

Washington is winning battles at least on one front: Latin America. Under the hypocritical mask of "hemisphere solidarity," it is solidifying its conquest of Latin America in a ruthless undeclared war against not only the semi-colonial peoples there but also its weakening British imperialist rival.

The tactic is part economic strangulation, part military penetration.

Economically, Latin America has always been dependent on foreign shipping. Removal of half the Anglo-U. S. controlled tonnage for war purposes gives U. S. imperialism a plausible pretext behind which it whips Latin-American countries into submission by throttling their essential imports and exports, thus throwing their economies into catastrophic crisis. On Santos' docks Brazil's coffee piles in mountains while all Brazilian railroads except those carrying war ores must try to burn wood or stop running. Argentine industry is starvily rationed, street lighting reduced, and all transport threatened while unexportable surpluses pile threateningly higher. Chile's cost of living is skyrocketing. Even as the United States prepares sugar rationing, a sugar-glut racks Cuban economy. Panama has a food shortage. In every Latin-American country, unemployment, financial crisis, and vertically rising living costs spread disruption and misery. But suffering, if general, is not equal: U. S. exporters reveal that Argentina, the stubbornest hold-out at the Rio Conference, is almost completely embargoed under cover of the export-priority system. Meanwhile, by skillfully whipping up a scandal about England's sending the equivalent of Lend-Lease

goods to South America, the Yankees have begun to drive British imperialism out of that market.

This could be the moment of opportunity for the semi-colonial countries to liberate themselves from dependence on the industrial imperialisms by self-industrialization; but Yankee imperialism refuses to sell them the necessary heavy machinery.

As for military penetration, anyone who wants to collect all the tiny bottom-of-the-page items from the U. S. press and lay them side by side will realize that U. S. troops, under one pretext or another, are now in at least 11, possibly 17, of the 21 American republics. Some are very few in number: but in such a country as Ecuador, the number is such that the Ecuadorian army would be powerless before them, and any regime that Washington wants in Ecuador will gain or remain in power, whatever the Ecuadorian people may want. Moreover, the Yankee-inspired *coup* in Panama that brought the present president to power is demonstration that, even without troops, Wall Street can control. Naval and air bases, conceded by lackey governments, dominate the territories of other countries who have so far held out against the Colossus of the North. Argentina, refused promised arms by Washington, can see across the Plata Estuary heavy Lend-Lease material unloading in Yankee-stooge Uruguay; and big bombers, freshly painted with Brazilian insignia, suggestively drop in on Buenos Aires' El Palomar airfield, on their West Coast circle route from California factories, before taking off for their new bases in the North. Furthermore, in the name of

"Pan-Americanism" those countries which have already lined up with Washington are prepared to act as Judas-goats toward those that still resist, covering the indecent exposure of Yankee armed force with the hypocritical rags of "joint Pan-American action."

The degree of resistance to the Yankee whip at the Rio Conference was in direct proportion to each country's degree of industrial advancement. The pathetic one-crop countries, with inadequate industrial potential, collapsed at once. Borderline Brazil demanded a high price for a collaboration whose loyalty has not yet passed a final test. But Argentina and Chile still resist.

## Argentina

It is not generally realized in the United States just how advanced Argentina is. "In 1933," notes the authoritative Preston James in his scholarly *Latin America*, "of the 5,018,000 people gainfully employed in Argentina, 43%, or more than 2,000,000 (2,157,740), were employed in industry. Only 22.6%, or a little over 1,000,000 (1,134,068), were engaged in agriculture and stock-raising." Of these 2,157,740 people engaged in industry, other authorities estimate that approximately 1,000,000 are in the strictest sense industrial proletariat. And of the 1,134,068 engaged in agriculture, a large number are rural proletariat working on the highly mechanized factory-farms.

It is this degree of industrial development and national unification, and not "Argentine pride," as the bourgeois press prattles, which has led the Argentine bourgeoisie to resist Yankee pressure, profiting by the temporary conjuncture to balance between the warring imperialist blocs. But despite its comparatively high degree of industrialization and almost entirely white population, despite the fact that its agrarian problem is tending to be relatively secondary, Argentina remains a semi-colonial country by reason of the immense amounts of British and U. S. capital invested in it. Its typically semi-colonial bourgeoisie can profitably balance for the moment between the imperialisms, but it cannot, within the framework of capitalism, liberate itself from imperialism in general. Only a proletarian revolution can expropriate the imperialists and complete the remaining tasks of the bourgeois revolution while beginning those of the socialist revolution.

At the present juncture, the Argentine government is controlled by the "Concordancia," a political bloc representing principally that sector of the bourgeoisie which is predominantly anti-Yankee. The pro-Anglo-U. S. sector, despairing of the internally split and collapsing Radical Party, is preparing to get behind the ex-President-Dictator General Augustin P. Justo. If the Castillo regime continues to resist U. S. pressure, there is far from excluded a *coup*, backed by Yankee imperialism, to put Justo in power and swing Argentina into the U. S. war orbit. In terms of internal policy, there is no essential difference between Justo and Castillo. Yet the Argentine people's determination not to be sucked into the imperialist war was clearly indicated in the recent elections by a swing to support Castillo's Concordancia, their desire to back his neutral foreign policy overcoming their well-founded hatred of his reactionary labor-baiting internal policy. Without falling into a mere tail-ending policy of launching "Neutrality!" as our slogan, there is a magnificent opportunity for the Argentine Fourth Internationalists to utilize this passive anti-war sentiment as a point of departure, converting it into an active revolutionary anti-war movement.

The Radical Party, roughly equivalent to the U. S.

Democratic Party, and numerically the largest in the Argentine, is in constant and growing crisis, which may well lead to a split. Even if some compromise is reached, its internal contradictions are such that a compromise will mean only that the more polar Conservative and Socialist Parties will begin to break off large sectors from the Radicals' extreme edges. The Socialist Party bureaucrats, though by "socialistic" demagoguery they managed to win the Federal Capital elections, are, like the Radical leadership, distrusted for their pro-war policies by their own base. The Stalinist bonzes, since their latest pro-imperialist sell-out, are equally distrusted; but the Communist Party is still held together by its demagogic campaign for aid to the Soviet Union. Argentine fascism, still split into numerous warring sectors, nevertheless threatens, if the Left fails the increasingly radicalized petty-bourgeoisie, to begin a rapid mass growth.

Amid these circumstances, the Argentine Fourth Internationalists have in the last year made encouraging progress. Long held back by the fact that they were not united in a single party, now all groups except one (the Liga Obrera Revolucionaria) have united to form the growing Partido Obrero de la Revolucion Socialista; and renewed negotiations give hope that the last remaining division may be solved within a few months. The L.O.R. publishes *Lucha Obrera*, a large-format 4-to-6 page monthly; the P.O.R.S. issues *Frente Obrero*, a large-format 4-page fortnightly, which will convert to a weekly on June 1st. Both groups plan large special issues for May Day, that of *Frente Obrero* being a 10-page number in an edition of 12,500 copies. In both groups there is a proletarian majority, and work is concentrated in the trade unions.

## Chile

Chile, though less developed than Argentina, is a relatively advanced country, with a large and militant proletariat, well unionized, though in several rival federations. Unlike that of Argentina, its agrarian problem is important, since instead of Argentina's characteristic factory-farms, it still has predominantly family owned latifundias, almost semi-feudally exploited. As in Argentina, the bourgeoisie is divided on the war; but unlike the Argentine case, no sector quite dares to hold power alone, partly because of the complexity of the division, partly because of its fear of the labor movement. For a temporary solution, the Chilean bourgeoisie chose a government of "centre concentration," under a personalist strongman mediator, Rios, who balances himself on the rival bourgeois sectors. The division is profound. The powerful latifundists, plagued by agricultural surpluses, fear to offend an Axis which may control their post-war European markets; terrified of pressing agrarian reform, they equally fear the agricultural policies of the pro-U. S. Socialist and Communist Parties. A large sector of the commercial and professional bourgeoisie who are agents of U. S. imperialism, especially in copper and nitrates, try to drag Chile into the war on the side of the United States. The still growing industrial bourgeoisie, united against the exporting latifundists and anxious to use the import crisis to expand their national manufactures, is split on foreign policy, while on internal policy they range from a small "New Deal" wing who want to increase the internal market by increasing the internal purchasing power, to those whose ideas are limited to the idea of reducing their manufacturing costs by smashing the unions. To attempt to smash Chilean labor by sudden all-out frontal attack, as defeated presidential candidate Carlos Ibanez would have done,

would bring revolutionary resistance. Rios, shrewder but no less tough, will proceed cautiously, whittling away labor's gains little by little, but the end-product sought is the same. Meanwhile, carefully watching the course of the imperialist war, the Chilean bourgeoisie will try to find some sort of patched-up solution for its internal contradictions such as will permit a unified foreign policy.

After the disillusioning experience of the Popular Front (which elected Rios), the Chilean proletariat has been recently passing through a period of discouragement and apathy. Nevertheless, the ranks of the unions are determined to preserve their gains, and the anti-labor offensive of Rios will be met by militant strikes, in which our comrades have the opportunity of intervening powerfully, stripping the hypocritical mask from the Stalinist and Socialist misleaders. That the vanguard is already seeking a class-conscious way out of the morass was demonstrated by its response to the independent presidential candidacy launched by the Partido Obrero Revolucionario (Chilean Section of the Fourth International). Despite the POR's terribly limited material means for carrying its message to the workers and a mere three weeks in which to make the campaign, Trotskyist candidate Humberto Valenzuela polled approximately 2,000 votes out of the approximately 250,000 votes cast. Particularly striking was the favorable response from industrial centers where the party had no branch to make electioneering propaganda, and the workers heard of the candidacy only through the jokes about it in the bourgeois press.

### Solidarity

In this epoch of agonizing imperialism and world-wide war, the liberation of Latin-American countries from the imperialist yoke cannot be an isolated action, but forms an inte-

gral part of the world-wide strategy of proletarian revolution. This does not mean that the oppressed semi-colonial peoples of South and Central America must wait for others to save them: they will be led by the proletariats of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba and Mexico. But they do look to the U. S. proletariat as their principal ally—look to it for comprehension, solidarity, and active aid. As Yankee imperialism pushes out its British rival, it becomes the common enemy of U. S. workers and of all the super-exploited colonial peoples of Yanquilandia's semi-colonies. With every suicidal class collaborationist action by U. S. workers' organizations the semi-colonial peoples feel their chains weigh a little heavier. Every militant action by U. S. workers against the common enemy is reflected by a warm burst of increased hope.

Militant U. S. labor needs no censored dispatches to know that on this May Day in all Latin America, under police repression, despite nationalist demagoguery, militant labor is demonstrating. Despite mounted-police charges, despite arrests, our Argentine Fourth Internationalist comrades are in the streets, with their newspapers and slogans, their solidarity with their co-thinkers in the United States and the whole world. In Chile, as Rios snipes away at legality, the comrades of the POR will militantly parade and demonstrate against war and imperialism. Bourgeois frontiers may close, censorship silence, and Gestapo and FBI multiply; but workers' solidarity transcends them. Against the treachery of the Second and Third Internationals, against artificial nationalist compartmentation, the workers of the world *are* uniting, under the banner of the Fourth International that will lead them to international victory. In Latin America, U. S. imperialism may be winning the first battles, but the war will be won by the workers of all the Americas.

*Santiago-de-Chile*  
April 1942.

# The Murder of Robert Sheldon Harte

## *The Aftermath of the GPU Machine-Gun Attack on Trotsky*

By WALTER ROURKE

Two years ago, on May 24, 1940, Stalin's GPU sent a machine-gun band to kill Trotsky. By miraculous chance, Trotsky was not killed in this attack—three months later came the assassination—but the machine-gunners did not leave empty-handed. Robert Sheldon Harte was kidnapped and shortly thereafter killed—the first American Trotskyist to fall victim to Stalin.

Bob first came in contact with the Socialist Workers Party when it led the famous Madison Square Garden counter-demonstration against the Bundists and Coughlinites in February 1939. He had planned to be a writer, a playwright. Although he came from a wealthy family, he was deeply conscious of the crisis confronting modern society. He recognized the correctness of Trotskyism, joined its ranks, became one of its best soldiers and . . . first martyrs. He was only 24 years old at his death. His short period in Coyoacan—a mere two months passed from the time he arrived to serve as a secretary-guard, until he was killed—speaks only in his favor. So completely did he throw himself into his new work, and adjust himself to his new surroundings that Trotsky was able to refute with conviction the foul Stalinist slander that Bob

had disappeared because he was an accomplice in the attack. When a month later, on June 25th, Bob's lime-covered body was found in a shallow grave, Trotsky wrote in the Mexican press: "The corpse of Bob Sheldon Harte is a tragic refutation of all the slanders and false denunciations made against him."

But such is the justice of capitalist society that, though they are known, his murderers have gone free; Bob's bullet-riddled body is covered with something more effective than lime—a successful conspiracy to free the guilty agents of the Kremlin.

The May 24th attack, the Mexican authorities established, was organized by David Alfaro Siqueiros, "former" member of the Communist Party of Mexico, GPU agent in Spain during the Civil War. For several months preceding the attack, he organized spying on the Trotsky house by sending two women, Julia Barrandas de Serrano and Ana Lopez, who seduced the police guard and closely watched the routine of the occupants of the house. These spies visited the house a couple of hours before the attack took place to make sure that nothing was suspected. Then Siqueiros and a band of

twenty-odd men staged their blitzkrieg, armed with automatics, machine guns, incendiary bombs and destructive bombs, scaling ladders, electric saws, disguised in police and army uniforms and in possession of complete plans of the house and the location of its occupants. For several minutes they riddled Trotsky's bedroom with machine-gun bullets and then sent one assailant into the bedroom to deliver a *coup-de-grace* into each of the beds where Trotsky and Natalia had been sleeping. After throwing a couple of incendiary bombs in an attempt to burn Trotsky's archives, the GPU gang left, carrying Bob away with them.

During the days immediately following the attack, the Stalinists tried to turn the investigation away from themselves by taking advantage of Bob's kidnapping and of the fact that the assailants failed to kill Trotsky. They concocted the "self-assault" theory, saying that Trotsky himself arranged the attack in order to embarrass Mexico. Trotsky, however, soon gave the investigation a steer in the right direction by publicly declaring that Siqueiros and Bassols, prominent "non-party" Stalinists, had much to say.

The unsolved question of the attack has been how the gang gained entrance to the house. Apparently Bob, who was on duty at the time, opened the door for them; in order to do this, he must have been approached by someone in the gang whom he did not suspect. Undoubtedly it was precisely for this reason that it was necessary to kill him—to protect the gang member who deceived him. Believing his body to be safely buried, the Stalinists spread stories to the effect that he had gone to New York, that he was an accomplice of the assailants, that he was an accomplice of Trotsky in planning the "self-assault," etc., etc. Later, when the body was found, the GPU suggested that Trotsky had ordered him killed. But the story of these slanders is well known by now.

Before his capture, Siqueiros, in hiding, wrote two letters to the chief of police of Mexico City as well as articles that were published in *Hoy*, a weekly. In these letters and articles, he promised that at the proper moment he would clarify "the very justified assault on Trotsky's house, showing the grave political responsibilities that made it possible and inevitable."

After his capture, he struck the pose of a persecuted revolutionist, insisting that "this crime is of a political order and not a common one." *El Popular* reported Siqueiros as saying that "the assault of the 24th of May on Trotsky's house was a revolutionary crime against the general headquarters of reactionaries."

In the early days of the investigation both *El Popular* and the Communist Party organ *La Voz de Mexico*, condemned the assault and asked for the punishment of its perpetrators. A few months later, however, the Toledano-Stalinist machine (which runs *El Popular*) pushed a resolution through the CTM (Mexican Labor Federation) congress of March 1941 in defense of Siqueiros: "The Congress pronounced itself also in favor of liberty for the revolutionary painter, David Alfaro Siqueiros" (*El Popular*, March 2, 1941). At the same time a committee of Stalinist agents in the CTM was formed to aid in achieving his release.

Two weeks earlier on February 14th, *El Popular* had published an appeal headlined "Independent Intellectuals and Artists Ask the President That David Alfaro Siqueiros Be Dealt with Justly." Nicely avoiding the question of Siqueiros' crime, these Stalinized artists and dupes recalled at great length "the artistic antecedents and the transcendency for Mexican culture of this great painter." They asked that he

be judged remembering that "the artists and the men of science are considered as the bulwarks of culture and progress." A GPU murderer—bulwark of culture!

### Judges in Stalin's Service

Siqueiros refused to make any statements in court until he had read all the preceding testimony by the other assailants who had been captured. This right was granted him. It was then that he developed the theory of being merely chief of "exterior operations." He tried to disclaim all responsibility for what happened during the actual attack. That he directed the preliminary spying together with his brother, Jesus Alfaro Siqueiros, David Serrano and Antonio Pujol, was established beyond denial. Siqueiros, however, was too anxious to disprove his responsibility—he also stated that he had given the order not to shoot to kill! He was then echoed by other defendants concerning this "order." It is clear, however, that if Siqueiros was in a position to give the order "not to shoot to kill," he was chief of more than the "exterior operations" and bear responsibility for the entire attack.

Nevertheless, Siqueiros' release was secured. There is a Mexican legal instrument known as "amparo" which means protection or prohibition by a judge against unjustified prosecution for certain crimes. Siqueiros obtained two "amparos": one by appealing to a higher court and a second granted by a trial judge; both were directed against an earlier decision of Judge Raul Carranca Trujillo—the judge who was originally in charge of the case.

Siqueiros was accused on several counts in addition to those of homicide and attempted homicide. District Judge Gonzalez Bustamante freed him from the attempted homicide charge as well as from the charges of use of firearms, usurpation of official functions (of police officers) and criminal association.

The trial judge, Emilio Cesar, freed him of the charge of homicide of Harte and agreed with the superior judge's decision on criminal association and usurpation of official functions.

By means of these two decisions, the judges reduced the machine-gun attack of May 24th to a question of housebreaking, unlawful use of uniforms, robbery (of the two cars in the house to prevent pursuit) and damaging another's property (with machine-gun volleys!).

The sleight-of-hand used by the court to reach these decisions is truly unbelievable. More than 300 shots were fired within the house—riddling the bedrooms and beds of Trotsky. For what purpose? For "psychological purposes" answered the judges. Therefore there was no attempted homicide. Yet Siqueiros' chauffeur testified that when they heard that Trotsky had lived through the hail of machine gun bullets, Siqueiros exclaimed: "All the work in vain."

And the murder of Robert Sheldon Harte? Harte's body was found buried beside a house that Siqueiros himself had visited. His wife Angelica Arenal had bought a cot and other furniture found in the house. The man guarding the house—Mariano Herrera Vazquez—testified that he was paid to act under the orders of Siqueiros, and that Siqueiros and his wife had come to the house on various occasions; while drunk. Herrera Vazquez told his girl friend that he was "guarding a gringo for Siqueiros." All this would certainly seem to demand some pretty conclusive disproving of Siqueiros' responsibility in the Harte murder. But not for these judges. The same Herrera Vazquez also said that the last persons he saw with Harte were Leopoldo and Luis Arenal, brothers of Siqueiros' wife. Both, of course, had long since disappeared—

according to rumor they were in the United States. With all blame for Harte's murder placed on their shoulders, it can be assumed that they are safely out of the way. Considering this testimony plus the "judicial confessions" (sic) of the other accused and of Siqueiros himself that they knew nothing of Harte's murder, the judges blandly concluded that he had nothing to do with the murder.

On the day of his client's release, Federico Sodi (Siqueiros' lawyer) made a statement which only an understanding of the GPU's contempt toward bought justice can explain. He said that there were three possible explanations for Harte's murder. 1. He was murdered in order to rob him. This, he observed, was the most "simple" explanation. 2. That Bob was an accomplice of the assailants and they killed him to still his tongue. 3. That Trotsky—who was "author of many deaths during his period of power in Russia"—had organized a "Fifth Column" to track down and kill Harte for vengeance. Such a statement completely characterizes the court in which it was made.

The question of criminal association was closely linked with the homicide since it is clear that all members of a criminal band are responsible for acts carried out in common. But the courts decided that a gang of GPU assassins is not a criminal association. Why? Because interpreting the law in a "technical and doctrinaire way" the band must be organized to commit crimes "in general terms." That is, it must be characterized by its "organization, stability, and above all permanency" to cause a "public unrest" and not just be directed against "one person or family." It must commit several crimes, not just one. If in all the world there is a band that can be justly called a "criminal association," it is the GPU. But for the servile judges this band is not permanent enough in its activities and does not commit enough crimes to be so classified!

Another example of the judges' logic is their explanation of why unlawful impersonation of a police officer is not unlawful impersonation of a police officer. It is true, they say, that the assailants disguised themselves as police and army officers. But: "It is not to be deduced or proven that the assailants of Trotsky's house *had exercised or tried to exercise some one of the corresponding functions of a public officer without being one*, but rather that they simply [!] presented themselves for the assault using uniforms of the Army or of the Police, for whose use they had no right." (Underlined in the original—W.R.) They were disguised as officers, but not with any intent of impersonation. Now you see it, now you don't!

Then, since housebreaking and damaging another's property are not serious enough crimes to reject an appeal for liberty on bail, the judges granted Siqueiros' application. In less than a month after being freed, he skipped bail. The intervening weeks were necessary to arrange his documents which were all in perfect order when he left Mexico. The Secretariat of Gobernacion (State Department) pretended not to know that he was under bail and therefore forbidden to even leave the Federal District, much less Mexico. Through the kind intervention of the Chilean Consul (a Stalinist), he was admitted to that country where he has been residing ever since, busy on some murals for a school that the Mexican Government is constructing there!

Due to some error of the Chilean police who had read that he was legally a fugitive from Mexican justice, he was arrested shortly after his arrival in Chile. However, the Mexican Ambassador proffered his services and obtained his im-

mediate release. On that occasion, Siqueiros stated that he had been cleared of all charges in connection with the May assault. To refute this point it suffices to quote the words of the District Attorney in his conclusions, presented, of course, long after Siqueiros was safely out of Mexico, and by a different District Attorney from the one who agreed to his release: "From the record it appears that the accused David Alfaro Siqueiros has withdrawn from the action of justice, leaving the country by taking advantage of the freedom under bail which he enjoyed. For the foregoing reason, this trial should remain open until the reappearance of the aforementioned David Alfaro Siqueiros." Legally then, as well as morally, Siqueiros is a fugitive from justice and is still to answer for his crimes.

### Stalinist Guilt Proved—But Unpunished

Not only does Siqueiros stand condemned, but so also stands the Communist Party and its international chieftain—Stalin. The day following the attack, the Communist Party said: "The assault on Trotsky's house has been organized and executed by provocateur elements disguised as police and army officials." On June 20, 1940, after the GPU's and Siqueiros' role had been proven, the Communist Party declared: "The Communist Party of Mexico categorically declares that none of the participants in the provocation is a member of the Party; that all of them are uncontrollable elements and agents provocateurs; that an act like that realized on Trotsky's house, contrary to the genuine forms of proletarian struggle, has nothing to do with us." But these words apply to Siqueiros' accomplices, the Stalinists Serrano, Martinez, etc., of whom the conclusions of the District Attorney, now forming part of the official court record, have this to say: "David Serrano in the period of the crimes referred to in this trial against the person of Leon Trotsky and his associates had the character of General Secretary of the Communist Party of Mexico. It has been proven perfectly in the court record that the totality of persons who intervened in the commission of the aforementioned crimes are or have been active members of said Communist Party, according to what they have confessed in their respective statements." The District Attorney refers also to the fact that Serrano was in Spain during the Civil War as was Siqueiros and that it was there that it was first decided necessary to "eliminate by any means 'the headquarters of the reaction that Trotsky had in this capital.'"

Again in the case of Mateos Martinez, the District Attorney says: "In the period in which took place the attempt against Leon Trotsky, Luis Mateos Martinez was an important member of the Communist Party having . . . an intimate friendship with David Serrano, a person for whom in addition he had special esteem."

Mateos Martinez defends himself by denying that the uniforms he procured during the week preceding the attack were intended for this occasion. Rather the Communist Party needed them for a raid on a center of Almazanistas, says Martinez. (Trotsky was also called a supporter of the reactionary Almazan by the Stalinists.)

Formally, Siqueiros and his brother are being "hunted" by the police; likewise in the case of Leopoldo and Luis Arenal—blamed by the judge and by the testimony of other defendants as the ones last seen with Harte and therefore wanted as his murderers.

All the guilty members of the gang and the women spies have gone free. It is true, of course, that the trial remains open against them. But since the original order for prosecution

handed down by Judge Trujillo has been revoked, a new order must be formulated by the present trial judge, Emilo Cesar. The quotations cited above concerning criminal association and usurpation of official functions are typical of his point of view and indicate that nothing better can be expected in the future.

It is interesting to note that two prominent Stalinists involved in the May assault and its legal defense have since been "expelled" from the Communist Party. Rafael Carrillo was the Communist Party leader charged with representing the party's central committee in the Siqueiros band. He now works under Toledano in the CTM. Needless to add that he follows the Stalinist line and orders in doing so.

Pavon Flores was the lawyer who defended Serrano and Mateos Martinez. He was a member of the Communist Party Central Committee at the time and came as the official representative of the Communist Party in the trial. Trotsky characterized him as the "GPU's lawyer." He continues to serve in his professional capacity for various unions that the Stal-

inists control. Although formally "expelled" he also has not broken with Stalinism.

After the case left the hands of Judge Raul Carranca Trujillo of Coyoacan, no further effort was made to investigate the connection of Siqueiros with Stalinism; no attempt to discover the GPU source of the funds which financed the expensive assault. The statement by Siqueiros that he financed it himself by selling his paintings at 2,000 pesos apiece was never questioned by the court. The connection between Siqueiros and Jacson who killed Trotsky three months later was ignored although they both had offices in the same "Ermita" building.

"Justice" has shut its eyes to these details—following the exigencies of the "democratic" cause with which Stalin is allied. It remains for a different justice in the future to call the arch-assassins of the GPU to account. In honoring the memory of Robert Sheldon Harte we pledge ourselves that the day of this accounting to the working class will come.

*Mexico, D. F.*  
April 25, 1942.

# The Crisis in American Agriculture

## I. The Concentration of Capital on the Land

By C. CHARLES

An article of faith of American social thought, ever since the Revolutionary War and persisting until today is that farming in America is not an industry as other industries, but a calling, a sanctified and exalted "way of life." In the words of Thomas Jefferson, leader of the agrarian wing of the American revolution:

"Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people . . . Corruption is the mark set on those, who, not looking up to Heaven, to their own soil and industry, as does the husbandman, for their subsistence, depend for it on the casualties and caprice of the customer. Dependence begets subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition . . ."

In the paragraph that follows is represented an ideal that even when written was well along the path of disintegration as farming was being drawn into the "vortex" of industrialism and commercialism. But in the words we can get a sense of the period when all foods except certain luxury items, all the power, light, fuel, shelter and most of the clothing were produced on the farm. The quotation is from the *Union Agriculturist and Western Prairie Farmer* of August 1841:

"The farmer is the most noble and independent man in society . . . He is not placed in the station which requires him ever to be scheming or courting popular favor, bowing and bowing to this or that man to gain their favor; but he looks upon the earth and the indulgent smile of Heaven to crown his efforts, resting with the full assurance that 'seed time and harvest' shall ever continue through all coming time."

The advice given in the *Cultivator* in May 1838 is rather poignant in the light of the facts of a century later. It counseled:

"A farmer should shun the doors of a bank as he would the approach of the plague or cholera; bankers are for traders and men of speculation and theirs is a business with which farmers should have little to do."

One of the avowed causes for the Civil War was the

opposition between slave labor—plantation, highly commercialized farming and the family-sized farm as a "way of life." This was expressed by Congressman Holman in 1862 in these words:

"Instead of baronial possessions, let us facilitate the increase of independent homesteads. Let us keep the plow in the hand of the owner. Every new home that is established, the independent possessor of which cultivates his own freehold, adds a new and strong pillar to the edifice of the state."

What has happened to farming as a "way of life"? Are "independent homesteads" the mark of modern American agriculture? Does the plow and land belong to the toiler? Under what conditions does the sower and harvester now work and live?

It is to answer these questions that Carey McWilliams of California has written his book, "Ill Fares the Land."\*

It is quite natural that the most important studies on modern American agriculture should be written by Californians. The development of agriculture has reached its highest point there. But California merely leads the parade. The rest of the country is in line.

The figures of the 1940 census, the hearings of the LaFollette and Tolan Committees and this latest book by Mr. McWilliams all notify the country that the Grapes of Wrath are growing in all sections, climates and soils of the United States.

Agriculture is becoming more and more marked by huge concentrations of the fundamental form of agricultural capital: the land.

The size of the average farm increased from 148 acres in 1920 to 156 acres in 1930 and to 174 acres in 1940.

The number of farms under 20 acres increased 41 per cent between 1930 and 1940. This increase is found mainly

\*ILL FARES THE LAND, by Carey McWilliams. Little, Brown, Boston, 1942. 419 pages. \$3.00.

in those industrial and mining sections where, thanks to modern transportation, farm and non-farm employment can be combined.

The middle-sized farm, the farm supplying the only occupation to its owner or the tenant upon it, the farm from 20 to 175 acres, decreased in number by 8.8 per cent in this last decade.

In the meantime the large-scale farm increased in number and value of products. The percentage increase in farms of 1,000 acres or more was 24.7. Those farmers who produced goods to the value of \$10,000 or more per year amounted to approximately 1.3 per cent of all farms. In the year 1939 such farms accounted for a total of \$2,136,093,905 in farm products. Farms whose total output is below \$750 a year were 63.3 per cent of the total number of farmers. Yet this group of farmers produced a total of \$1,988,213,283, far less than produced by the 1.3 per cent of farms which form the large-farm group.

In the wheat-producing states the number of wheat factories between 1,000 and 4,999 acres increased in the decade ending 1939 from 20,322 to 24,585; the number of wheat enterprises above 5,000 acres in area jumped from 1,015 to 1,708. To accomplish this more than 25,000 farmers had to leave the land in Kansas.

In the cotton states of Texas and Oklahoma the number of farms above 5,000 acres increased from 2,980 to 3,590 in this ten-year period, while the farms between one and five thousand acres, which numbered 10,729 in 1930 grew to 14,402 in 1940. In Texas 60,000 sharecroppers were driven off the land in this process. In the five years ending 1940 Oklahoma lost 33,270 farms, which were merged to form large holdings.

Although not as far advanced in other sections of the country, this process toward centralization is found operative everywhere. In the corn belt (comprising Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio) in the five-year period ending 1940, a total of 70,000 farm units were forced out of existence and the land consolidated into fewer but larger units.

Thus we see a great and growing number of large farms and the decrease of the independent farmer, the representative of farming as a "way of life."

In these figures we find the judgment that history has given on a great controversy.

In 1928, Werner Sombart, the famous German economist, in his attempted refutation of Marxian economics declared: "Karl Marx prophesied general 'concentration,' with the disappearance of the class of artisans and peasants . . . Nothing of the kind has come to pass." Richard T. Ely, in his *Outline of Economics* (1923), the intellectual sawdust on which class after class of college and high school students have been nurtured in economic "science," asserts: "There is little tendency for farming to become large scale industry." As the same processes which operate in industry become apparent in agriculture we can see who understood more and saw further into the future: Marx in 1867 or Sombart and Ely in the 1920's.

## Factories in the Field: Examples

Let us give a few examples, quoted from Mr. McWilliams' book, of the modern field factory:

"The Earl Fruit Company of California operates under a centralized management and as one unit, 27 farm properties in California and leases 11 additional properties. It purchases, moreover, a considerable amount of fresh

fruits grown by small orchardists. It owns 11 packing houses in California and packs and markets, for other growers, about a thousand cars of fruit each year . . . It has reached out to control related lines of business. It owns a 95 per cent stock interest in the Klamath Lumber & Box Company so that it does not have to pay a profit on the boxes and crates used in packing fruit. It controls two wineries in California, one of which is the largest in the United States. The parent company, moreover, owns a 37½ per cent stock interest in the huge Italian-Swiss Colony (one of the largest combination vineyards and wineries in California) . . . The Earl Fruit Company also owns the Baltimore Fruit Exchange and has important holdings in fruit auction houses in Chicago, New York, Cincinnati and Pittsburg . . . The company has employed an average of 2,887 agricultural workers, it has an annual payroll of \$2,400,000 . . . A company town of 350 dwellings has been established with bunkhouse accommodations for 2,500 additional employees. Through still another subsidiary the company owns 13,833 acres of orchard lands in other states. In 1938 the book value of the land and improvements was \$10,855,418.84; and it made annual sales of about seven million dollars."

The large scale farm is not found only in California. In Arizona, for example, according to *Arizona; A State Guide*:

"In the newer irrigation districts where the bulk of Arizona cotton is grown, large-scale, highly mechanized operations prevail. Two growers operate approximately half of the cotton acreage in Pima County. One of these growers is operating what was once a whole development district of small farms which went bankrupt during the depression. A single corporation controls 19,000 irrigated acres in Maricopa County. In the Roosevelt and Beardsley projects, 20 miles west of Phoenix, a handful of growers operate an entire district of 55,000 acres. According to local estimates, close to half of the 1937 Arizona cotton acreage was operated by a few growers, each controlling upward of 1,000 acres."

In Kansas and Montana there are huge wheat factories. The Wheat Farming Company of Kansas, incorporated in 1927, by 1933 was operating 64,000 acres scattered through 10 Kansas counties. Its capitalization in 1933 was \$2,000,000. It owned equipment worth a quarter of a million dollars, maintaining a complete equipment and repair division.

In Montana, one operator, Campbell, by 1930 was producing a half million bushels of wheat a year on 95,000 highly mechanized areas.

In Florida, the United States Sugar Corporation employs 2,500 workers throughout the year and double that number at the height of the harvest on its 25,000-acre plantation. Scattered through its holding are 11 company towns. The chain of retail stores owned by this company to do business with its workers takes in \$750,000 a year.

Two thousand employees live on the premises, punch time-clocks and work in the fields of the 6,000-acre Seabrook Farms near Bridgeton, New Jersey. This farm contains 30 miles of improved roads on its property, has its own railroad loading facilities, a packing plant, a cannery that serves 32,000 acres of surrounding truck and fruit farms, two airplanes to spray the fields, a large overhead irrigation system, a chain of hothouses and a fleet of custom built trucks.

Mr. Fred Vahlsing is a grower-shipper who owns a 10,000-acre vegetable garden in southern Texas. During the winter season 3,000 agricultural employees work on his land. The farm he owns is almost as completely mechanized as the Seabrook Farms.

In the State of Connecticut, 73 large-scale farms each average \$67,000 on their crops. Two typical concerns are the

American Sumatra Tobacco and the Consolidated Cigar Corporation, both of which not only grow the plants but also process, sell and manufacture cigars. The Sumatra produces a fifth of the tobacco crop of Connecticut besides possessing farms in Massachusetts, Florida and Georgia. The Consolidated operates 11 farms in New England. Most of the tobacco grown by the "independents" is under contract to be sold to these two companies.

As the various forms of processing agricultural products, such as canning and freezing, grow in importance, there is a constantly increasing tendency for the processing industrial plant to become the owner of the land which produces the raw material. In this development of "verticalization" California also leads the way.

The California Packing Corporation is the largest packing and processing concern of its kind in the world. It operates 50 packing plants in California, the Middle West, Utah, Oregon, Washington, Florida, New York, Minnesota, Illinois and the Hawaiian and Philippine Islands. It is found not only in fruit and vegetables but also packs coffee and cans fish—one of its subsidiaries is the Alaska Packers Association. It is capitalized at \$65,000,000 and annually grosses about 660 million dollars in sales. Besides purchasing the crops of 4,713 growers in California it directly owns 21,000 acres in that state. It also possesses rich farm land in the Middle West, Hawaii and the Philippines. It employs nearly 5,000 agricultural workers.

Fourteen canning, shipping and sugar companies in California own 106,900 acres of land and lease nearly 25,000 acres more. Among them are the Hunt Bros. Packing Co., with farm properties valued at over half a million dollars and the Anderson Orchard Company with farm properties worth \$235,953.

A canning company (Stokely) owns 7,547 acres in Tennessee. It operates 27 plants in eight states. The Applecrest Orchards of Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, with its own packing plant, last year produced 70,000 bushels of apples.

Nourse, in *Agriculture and the National Economy*, cites as examples a canning company in New York that raises the vegetables it cans on 1,000 acres of its own land; a prominent rubber company that secures its tire cloth and belt fabrics from 1,100 acres of cotton land it owns in Arizona, and a marketing concern which owns 1,300 acres of Wisconsin potato land.

The Ford Motor Company has its own farms to raise the soya beans used in the manufacture of enamel, oil and plastics for its automobile. Procter & Gamble Co. (soaps, etc.) owns a large farm in Ohio.

## Bank Ownership of Farms

Up to recently, finance capital loaned money to the working farmer. The latest tendency is for the financial institutions to directly own and operate farm land.

Between 1910 and 1930 farm mortgages increased from \$3,559,000,000 to \$9,631,000,000. By 1940 this figure had dropped to \$6,909,794,000. The drop in indebtedness is due above all to foreclosures and tax delinquencies. Many farmers are no longer in debt—they are no longer farmers, just as a sick patient who dies is no longer ill.

As a result, by the end of 1938 the 21 most important insurance companies owned \$795,000,000 worth of farm real estate primarily as a result of foreclosures.

In California, the Bank of America through its subsidiary California Lands, Inc., by 1936, owned 600,000 acres

of land valued at \$25,000,000. The Bank of America owns mortgages on 7,398 farms totalling over a million acres, representing a total indebtedness of \$40,450,000.

In the northern Great Plains States, one insurance company owns 800 farms involving a grand total of 200,000 acres of land.

Where the banks do not care to work the land they own, they, as well as the insurance companies and tax commissioners, prefer as tenants large-scale operators well equipped with machinery and hiring large numbers of workers, rather than the small tenants.

Ownership of farms by banks, industrial enterprises, shippers, absentee owners, and corporations creates a situation where the owner of the land not only does not live on the farm but is also completely innocent of any knowledge of farming.

Under such circumstances the actual management of the farm is severed from farm ownership. This evolution was described by Lenin in connection with industry in his *Imperialism*. Now it has extended its reign into agriculture. To supply the technical service for the farm owners the new profession of farm management has developed.

This modern calling came into its own with the depression of 1929, when lending agencies came into possession of thousands of foreclosed farms. The new owners turned to a farm management company or formed a department to handle farm operations.

An example of the latter is California Lands, Inc., which maintains a central office in charge of accounting sales, leases and operation. To carry out "operation" the state is divided into districts, each under the supervision of a district manager, who in turn has supervisors under him. Each supervisor manages 40 to 50 farms.

The first exclusively farm management company was the Farmers National Company of Omaha, which manages 700 farms, over a quarter of a million acres, in seven Middle Western states; 103 farms that it manages belong to one company. Other management companies soon made their appearance to remove from the stockholders and finance companies the burden of supervision. Among them are the Doane Agricultural Service of St. Louis which manages 200,000 acres of land; the Decatur Farm Management Company of Decatur, Illinois, which manages some 17,000 acres; and the Farm Management Company, Inc. of Ohio, which manages 22,000 acres on 80 farms.

The farm managers have a professional organization, the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers, which publishes its own professional journal.

To add a touch of irony to the tragedy it must be mentioned that, in various Middle Western cities, business men who own farms have formed farmers' luncheon clubs to sit around over their coffee and discuss their farming problems.

The distance from the independent farmer, the ideal of Jefferson and the theme of song and fable, to the farms given above as examples is nearly as great as between the crossroads blacksmith shop and United States Steel Corporation; between the neighborhood grocer and the A & P. There is no turning back. The small farmer has no more chance of escaping his fate under capitalism than the textile artisan and hand loom had in 1800. The hundreds of thousands who have departed from their own land are merely the advance guard of other millions of farmers still "independent." Large-scale farming is the future form of agriculture.

(A second article in this series on American agriculture will appear next month.)



# Roosevelt and the Negroes

## *The Balance Sheet Since Randolph Canceled the March on Washington*

By ALBERT PARKER

A year has passed since the Negro March on Washington was called off and the growing mass movement around it was smashed. It should now be possible, therefore, by examining what has happened since then to the Negro struggle, to draw the necessary conclusions about the experiences of the March-on-Washington movement, and particularly about the policies of its leadership.

This movement was in existence for only a few months, it failed to achieve the purposes for which it was created, and it disintegrated in a few days. Nevertheless it was the most significant mass movement of Negroes in many years.

It was significant because it showed that the Negro masses had lost confidence in the old movements and methods offered for achieving the abolition of racial discrimination in industry, in government jobs and in the armed forces. Hitherto they had followed the leadership of the professional hat-in-handers, who told them that their salvation lay in acting "respectable" and voting for the "right man"—the right man being the capitalist politician who threw the misleaders of the Negro people a few crumbs every now and then.

The masses observed the approach of full United States participation in the war, they saw the war boom of industry all around them, and they were inspired by the successful organization campaigns of the trade union movement in industries where no headway had ever been made before. At the same time they were painfully aware that Negroes were still segregated in the Army, assigned to kitchen duty in the Navy and barred from the Marine Corps; they saw the total number of unemployed workers decreasing while the number of Negro unemployed remained stationary; they knew prices were going up, relief was being cut, and they were still barred from the overwhelming majority of jobs that paid half-way decent wages.

The conditions for a Negro mass movement were thus created. A. Philip Randolph and the others at the head of the March-on-Washington movement were able to assume its leadership only by speaking the language of militancy, by telling the masses that they had the power to improve their conditions if they would organize themselves and exert their mass pressure on Washington. The enthusiastic response of the masses, the swift wave of fighting optimism and the willingness to sacrifice for the struggle that swept the Negro population were evidence that the Randolphs had not created the movement—they were only capitalizing on the already existing sentiments of the masses. When Randolph first wrote about the march in January 1941, he said he thought it might be possible to have 10,000 Negroes marching down Pennsylvania Avenue; in two or three months, despite extremely poor organizational work, Randolph could predict 50,000 marchers, and before the march was called off at the end of June, he could claim to speak for 100,000 people preparing to march to Washington.

Another very significant thing about this movement was that it was not administered a direct defeat in action by its open enemies. Two weeks before the date set for the march a barrage was opened by the administration; every kind of attempt was made to have it called off; so-called "friends" of

the Negro people such as Mrs. Roosevelt and LaGuardia appealed in the name of patriotism, and threatened that the march would "set back the progress which is being made"; Roosevelt himself took the unprecedented step of issuing a proclamation asking all employers to examine whether or not their employment policies made provision for the utilization of available and competent Negro workers. But none of this had the effect desired. The local march committees meeting that week refused to be taken in and they insistently let the Randolph leadership know that they wanted the march to go through unless they were actually granted what they had demanded.

A week later, Randolph and Co. "persuaded" Roosevelt to issue his Executive Order 8802, and then Randolph bureaucratically called off the march in a radio speech hailing the executive order as a second Emancipation Proclamation. Thus Randolph did what neither administration threats nor promises had been able to do. The movement melted away in short order as its members began to understand how they had been sold down the river. But the masses did not walk out because they felt defeated, or because they thought that their fight could not be won. They had not lost confidence in themselves or their ability to win the fight against Jim Crow—only in the Randolphs and their policies. When Negro misleaders and government agents deplore and grumble about "poor Negro morale," they may not know it but they are really talking about the determination of the Negro masses to continue the struggle for equal rights, war or no war.

To see why the Negro ranks want to continue that struggle, despite the unhappy experience of the march and the pressure of the war regime, it is necessary only to examine the terms of Roosevelt's executive order and to sum up the present state of Negro rights and conditions.

Randolph's avowed aim for the march was an executive order decreeing the abolition of discrimination in the Army, Navy, Air Corps, Marines and on all war production. Despite his praise for Order 8802, not even Randolph was able to pretend that Roosevelt had granted what the Negro ranks wanted.

### What Roosevelt Gave the Negroes

In the first place, the order concerned only discrimination by employers in "defense industries." The order did *not* abolish discrimination in industry. It stated that all contracting agencies of the government would "include in all defense contracts hereafter negotiated by them a provision obligating the contractor not to discriminate against any worker because of race, creed, color or national origin." But what would happen to employers who violated such contracts? Randolph and the Negro press had been demanding that Roosevelt put "some teeth" into the order—that such employers be fined and their contracts withdrawn. Roosevelt's order included no measures for punishing violators, which could be and was interpreted by the capitalists generally to mean that there would be no crackdown for violations.

Instead of putting teeth into his order, Roosevelt created a Committee on Fair Employment Practices which was to "re-

ceive and investigate complaints of discrimination in violation of the provisions of this order" and "to take appropriate steps to redress grievances which it finds to be valid." But what effective steps could it take when it didn't have the power to fine employers or revoke contracts? The committee has proved able only to hold local public hearings at which representatives of employers and workers speak about the situation in particular factories. Such publicity and private discussions with some employers who openly disregarded the no-discrimination provisions have resulted in a few Negroes being employed in plants where none had been employed before. But these are what the president of the New Jersey CIO has aptly described as "token employment." Many employers have hired a half-dozen Negroes and point to them as proof that they do not discriminate. The committee is unable to do anything in these cases but "urge" that the employers comply with the spirit as well as the word of the executive order:

A recent press report demonstrates how weak and ineffective the committee has been. On April 12, more than nine months after the executive order, the committee issued a statement calling on ten industrial concerns "holding millions of dollars in war contracts" in the Chicago and Milwaukee areas to stop discrimination in employment. The companies include a General Motors Buick plant, a Studebaker branch factory, the Stewart-Warner Corporation, Allis-Chalmers and the Heil Company which is owned by the governor of Wisconsin. They are accused of giving orders to private and public employment agencies to submit employment applications of only white and Gentile workers; of advertising in newspapers only for whites, Gentiles and Protestants; and of having refused "to give workers of specified races or creeds opportunities for promotion in keeping with their qualifications." Open violations of this kind indicate in what contempt the monopolies hold the executive order and the president's committee. To finish the picture, it should be stated that this is the first time in its existence that the committee has taken so drastic a step as to name violators; it probably was done only after the committee had pleaded piteously with the employers involved to mend their ways. The only answer of the companies has been denials that they are guilty of discrimination. And there the matter rests.

It would be incorrect to conclude from this that additional Negro workers have not secured employment since the order was issued. Although there are no official figures on the question, occasional reports in the Negro press would indicate that several thousand Negroes have secured jobs in industry since last June. There is the "token employment" referred to above. In the second place, government agencies have been able to secure a few thousand jobs for Negroes from employers who are so busy piling profits into the bank that they are not concerned with what they consider to be secondary matters, or from employers who felt for local reasons that they had nothing to gain from discrimination. In the third place, Negroes have been able to get some jobs in a number of non-war industries as white workers leave, attracted by the generally higher pay and steadier work of the war industries.

More important, there has been a growing recognition inside even that minority of the trade union movement which barred Negroes from membership that a Jim Crow policy helps only the employers; in recent months there have been encouraging reports about AFL unions threatening to strike unless Negroes were hired by the companies with which they held contracts and about AFL local unions voting, despite the

discriminating constitutions of their international organizations, to open their books to Negro workers. In the CIO, where the formal bans against racial discrimination have generally been respected, there are inspiring reports of white workers paying more than lip service to the struggle for Negro equality, winning jobs and promotions for their colored brothers despite the discriminating practices of the employers.

Finally, and this is by far the most important factor, a shortage of skilled and even unskilled labor is beginning to make itself felt; and employers who used to pretend that they could not hire Negroes because it would create resentment and "labor difficulties" among their white employees, have not hesitated where they could not get white workers to employ Negroes in the unskilled and lower paid positions. This process has been halted somewhat by the layoffs due to conversion of plants to war production and the increasing employment of women workers; but undoubtedly within the next year it will be resumed.

Thus most of the jobs the Negro people have received in the last year or will receive in the next are the result of the needs of the war machine, not of a successful struggle to abolish discrimination. This means that when the war is over the Negro worker will again be the first to be fired—except in those cases where he belongs to a strong trade union which is willing and able to protect his seniority rights; and even this will not be very much protection because the Negro is still the last one being hired in the war industries.

## Roosevelt's Jim Crow Armed Forces

While Roosevelt has recognized *on paper* the right of the Negroes to equal treatment in industry, he has never recognized their right to equal treatment by the government in the armed forces. Here the needs and aspirations of the Negro people run smack into the opposition not of an individual employer or corporation, but the government itself.

By conscription the government has already provided the mechanism for drawing into the military struggle as many Negro soldiers as it will require. The administration does not object to using the Negroes in the armed forces any more than it objects to having the employers use Negroes to turn out the materials of war. And perhaps Roosevelt as an individual might have no objections to granting the Negro people the right to serve in the armed forces on the same basis as anyone else.

But Roosevelt is not in Washington as an individual—he is there as the leader of the Democratic Party, and by the grace of the viciously anti-Negro leaders of the Democratic Party of the South. Oppression of the Negro people is not an exclusive product of the South; the mob violence to prevent Negroes from moving into the Sojourner Truth federal housing project in Detroit on February 28 is proof of that. Nevertheless the oppression of the Negro plays a special role in the South; indeed, this oppression is at the foundation of all the power and profits of the Southern ruling class. The Bourbons know that they remain in power only through the super-exploitation of the Negro; when the "representatives" of the South in Congress rant about what they would do if "radicals" try to organize the Negro and restore their right to vote, they mean what they say, they would not hesitate to drown in blood any attempt to abolish the Jim Crow system.

These Southern Congressmen wield—through the poll tax and similar devices—a disproportionate influence not only in Congress, but also in the Democratic Party; without their support Roosevelt would not have been elected in 1940. Hence

Roosevelt's silence on anti-lynch legislation in the most liberal days of his New Deal. Roosevelt may have his differences on some questions with his Southern colleagues, but he does not dare to offend them or to cross them on what they call the color question.

The Jim Crow elements of the South dislike the use of the Negro in the armed forces; their resentment at seeing a Negro in uniform is at the bottom of most of the violence against Negro troops in the South. But war is war, and the more far-sighted of these elements realize that if Negroes are required to save what Congressman John E. Rankin of Mississippi calls "our way of life and our sacred institutions so that the white man's civilization may not perish from the earth," then Negroes will just have to be used in the armed forces.

*But not as equals!* The Southern ruling class will not have them get any uppity ideas about "being as good as a white man," as so many Negroes did when they returned from the first "war for democracy." The Southern ruling class lynched the Negroes wearing uniforms on the street after 1918 to teach the Negro people that they had not been fighting for democracy for themselves. It wants to make sure that the Negroes will not have any illusions about this war too; hence in the armed forces they are to be branded as second-class citizens. For, as the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party put it almost two years ago, the Southern Bourbons "fear that no Negro trained to handle a gun would peacefully go back to the old life of discrimination, segregation, disfranchisement and insult, after training in an army where he was treated as an equal with white soldiers."

### Roosevelt's Alibi—and the Reality

So Roosevelt, despite the pleas of Randolph and Co., made no concessions in this field when he wrote his executive order last year; in fact, he did not even mention the armed forces in the order. It was not until April 5 of this year that he had anything to say about it. In a letter to the Fraternal Council of Negro Churches on that date, he summed up the administration's policy as follows:

"At my direction, the armed services have taken numerous steps to open opportunities for Negroes in the armed forces of our country, and they are giving active consideration to other plans which will increase that participation."

In other words, there are more Negroes in the armed forces than there were a year ago, and they have been given the opportunity to serve in a few more branches of the service. *But segregation continues untouched!* Negroes must still serve in separate regiments. These separate regiments are now being gathered together into divisions—as separate all-Negro divisions (all-Negro, that is, except for white officers). Negroes must still eat separately, sleep separately, march separately, pray separately, watch a movie separately, in this army ostensibly warring for democracy.

Segregation of this kind is hateful not only because it is a violation of the most elementary principles of equality and democracy and a token of the treatment the Negro will get after the war. It also lays the basis for the kind of discrimination that often makes the difference between life and death. It is much easier for Jim Crow elements in the General Staff to pick part of a Negro regiment as a "suicide squad" than it would be to pick the same number of individual Negro soldiers out of mixed regiments for the same job. This happened in the last war, and it happened in France in this war

when the lives of thousands of Negro colonial soldiers were thrown away simply on the basis that they were considered "inferior," and could easily be assigned to the suicide work because they were in segregated regiments.

Roosevelt talks about the opportunities being opened—but the chief opportunity the Negro sees is to be killed or beaten by Jim Crow elements in the Army and out of it, long before he is even sent overseas. No amount of honeyed words can make Negroes forget how they are humiliated by the Southern police and mobs; how Ned Turman was shot to death in Fort Bragg last summer because he protested against M.P. brutality and resisted it with the cry, "I'm going to break up you M.P.'s beating us colored soldiers!"; how scores of Negro troops were shot and beaten by M.P.'s and state troopers in Alexandria, La., last January, because some of them objected to M.P. brutality; how in the last two months five Negro soldiers have been shot dead in New Jersey, Arkansas, Texas, and Virginia, and countless Negro soldiers attacked in these and other states.

Symbolic, too, of the opportunities offered the Negro soldiers is their first overseas assignment—Australia, where Negro immigration is forbidden by law and where the natives who inhabited the country before the whites came are segregated on reserves or on islands off the continent. And even there, where the very existence of Australian "democracy" is in danger, the United States Negro troops have been sent not as fighters, but as labor battalions.

The "other plans" which Roosevelt referred to on April 5 were the new regulations for Negro service in the Navy announced by Secretary Knox on April 7. These regulations were finally put into effect because of the national wave of protest against Navy segregation of Negroes that arose when the country learned the story of Dorie Miller, a Negro mess attendant on the U.S.S. Arizona at Pearl Harbor.

Miller, like all other Negroes in the Navy, was down in the kitchen when the war began. Twenty years ago, after the first "war for democracy" had been won, the Navy decreed that Negroes would hereafter be accepted only as flunkies. Negroes had kept winning promotions and becoming officers and the Navy found it difficult to give them assignments "where the rated Negroes exercised little or no military command."

Protests against this ruling had little effect. Fifteen sailors on the U.S.S. Philadelphia, stationed at Pearl Harbor in the winter of 1940-41, had been discharged from the Navy for writing a letter to a Negro newspaper protesting against their Jim Crow conditions.

But when the bombs began to fall around the ship, Miller came to the deck, seized a machine gun and manned it until it ran out of ammunition, despite the fact that because of his color he had never been taught how to handle such guns; then, as the ship was sinking, he helped rescue a wounded officer. The cry that went up everywhere against the Jim Crow ruling over this succeeded in getting some action out of Roosevelt's Knox—action which was intended to silence the criticism and yet at the same time continue to deny the Negro sailors the right to serve on the basis of equality with whites.

This writer pointed out a year ago: "Negroes long clamored for admission into the Air Corps; finally they got—a segregated all-Negro squadron. Negro doctors asked for admission into the Army; they were admitted—but limited to attend to Negro troops. Other branches of the service, such as the Marines and Coast Guard, are still closed to the Negro. If the government should open them, it would be on the same

Jim Crow basis as the others." Knox's April 7 order bore out this prediction—what he set up was a separate, Jim Crow section of the Navy, Marines and Coast Guard.

According to this plan, Negroes will be accepted in the "reserve components" of these branches of the service, where they will not be mixed with whites, although serving under white officers; they will be eligible to become petty (non-commissioned) officers, but not commissioned officers. All Negro crews will be assigned to small craft and to serve around shore establishments and in navy yards; skilled workers among them will be gathered together into labor battalions and may eventually be sent to build bases outside of U.S. continental limits. The plan will begin as soon as Jim Crow training stations can be secured.

This is such an obvious evasion of the demand for Negro equality in the Navy, Marines and Coast Guard that even Randolph attacked it on the ground that "it accepts and extends and consolidates the policy of Jim Crowism in the Navy." He also said that Negroes should "resent the stigma of inferiority and the status of vassals which Secretary Knox has affixed to them." Randolph apparently does not realize that he is also condemning himself—for it was his own rotten policy that made possible the extension and consolidation of Jim Crowism by the government.

## Toward a New Negro Leadership

The conditions of the Negro people are fully as bad as they were a year ago, and the Negro masses are fully aware of the fact. They are ready to take up the militant struggle where it was discontinued last year. Their eagerness for action, indeed, is so great that the Negro misleaders dare not openly counsel them to give up the struggle for equal rights, but must repeat the refrain that "winning the war must come first, and we must not do anything to interfere with the prosecution of the war." The Negro masses are not interested in interfering with the prosecution of the war, but for them winning the struggle against Jim Crowism comes "first" because they know what is going to be their lot if the war against the Axis is won while the war against Jim Crowism is lost.

The conditions that lead to a renewed struggle, and the sentiments for conducting that struggle, both exist; the only thing lacking is a leadership with a militant program whom the masses would trust and follow. Where are they to find that leadership?

Again Randolph this spring is talking about militant action against discrimination sometime this summer. But this year he will find it much harder to sell himself as the Moses of the Negro people. Randolph won the Springarn medal for outstanding service to the Negro people in 1941—but the decision to hand him a medal was made by people who shared his policies, not by the Negro masses who were so disgusted by his capitulation to Roosevelt; what they would have voted to give him he wouldn't have been able to wear. It would be putting it mildly to say that the advanced Negro workers do not trust Randolph and his type. They saw that he made many speeches about how necessary it was to win the "war for democracy"—but was not disposed to grant them any democracy in the movement which they were building at great expense and sacrifice. They've heard him make militant speeches before—and they've seen him crawl before the Jim Crow forces only a few days later. An index to Randolph's popularity among the Negro masses can be found in what happened after

he called off the march; in the same speech announcing the granting of the "second Emancipation Proclamation," he pleaded with the Negro masses to remain in their local committees and to build them; but the masses paid no attention to him—they walked out of the organization the same night they heard about the calling off of the march.

In an interview with the press early this April, Randolph declared that in view of "the continued discriminations against colored Americans in the Army, Navy, U. S. Marine and Air Corps, *as well as defense industries*" [what an admission about the executive order for which Randolph called off the march!—A.P.], it is necessary that "free, independent and courageous Negro leaders have a frank, candid and plain talk with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt about the whole situation." Only one short year ago Randolph committed himself in print to the following statements: "Evidently, the regular, normal and respectable method of conferences and petitions, while proper and ought to be continued as conditions warrant, certainly don't work. They don't do the job." "Negroes cannot stop discrimination . . . with conferences of leaders and the intelligentsia alone. While conferences have merit, they won't get the desired results by themselves." "Power and pressure do not reside in the few, the intelligentsia, they lie in and flow from the masses." Whom shall the Negro masses believe—the Randolph of 1941 or the Randolph of 1942? Will they accept his story that what is now needed is a frank talk with Roosevelt, when he told them a year ago that such talks could accomplish nothing? Will they believe that their salvation now lies in the local mass meetings he now advocates, at which the part played by them will be limited to listening to Randolph explain about the need for a candid conversation with the president, when he told them a year ago that they had to put up a militant fight if they wanted to get *anything*, when he told them even after the march was called off that they had secured the executive order only by the threat of the march?

When we speak about Randolph's policies merging with those of the old-line fakers, we are speaking also of at least 99 per cent of the present leaders of the Negro people—for Randolph still speaks more militantly than most of them.

The Negro masses cannot turn to them for leadership in the coming struggle, nor can they turn to the Communist Party, which has followed a policy since the march was called off fully as treacherous as Randolph and Co. Up until a week before the march was called off, the Stalinists had nothing but criticism for the Randolph leadership because its program did not go far enough, because it did not oppose the war. Then, three days before the executive order was signed, Hitler's armies invaded the Soviet Union, and the Stalinist policies in the United States underwent a rapid flip-flop. They hailed the executive order as a step forward, although it had, they admitted, some loopholes, and they made no criticism of Randolph for calling off the march. Since then the Stalinists have gone much further along their treacherous road. In February of this year James W. Ford wrote a pamphlet entitled "The War and the Negro People," in which he tries to justify the Stalinist policy by saying: "Four hundred years of Negro slavery are nothing besides Nazi persecution of Jewish peoples, peoples of the occupied countries, and 'races' of so-called 'inferior' status." In March, Eugene Gordon of the *Daily Worker* editorial staff came out at a symposium in opposition to the Double V slogan of the *Pittsburgh Courier* ("double victory for democracy at home and abroad") because, said the Stalinist, "Hitler is the main enemy" and the

"foes of Negro rights in this country should be considered as secondary." In April, the Stalinist-controlled National Negro Congress was the most enthusiastic congratulator of Knox for his "bold, patriotic action in smashing age-old restrictions" in the Navy. Fortunately, the Stalinists are discredited among Negroes. The *Chicago Defender*, a Negro paper which had always sympathized with the Stalinist-led Congress, harshly denounced its statement on the Navy Jim Crow setup, saying that its leaders had broken faith with those "who looked to them as among our leaders" and that "they have destroyed their own influence and the influence of the organizations they represent."

An end to the Negro worker's acceptance of leadership from outside his own class! In the factories, thanks to the rise of the CIO, are Negro workers trained to represent their fellow-workers. Negroes are serving as grievance committeemen, shop stewards and local union officials, and are in the

lead of the struggle in the shops to wipe out Jim Crowism. These Negro trade unionists, thanks to unionism, have developed from their experience the authority of confidence necessary to leaders. From the class struggle in the factories, as well as from their experience of Jim Crowism, they have learned that only the most resolute struggle will win for their people economic, political and social equality. They have helped mightily to build the trade unions and know that the unions are the strongest allies of the Negro struggle. They know that black and white must unite because the white and Negro workers have common problems and a common enemy and must join their forces in common struggle. These Negro proletarian leaders—they are the ones to lead the Negro struggle. When their leadership is recognized and accepted by the great Negro masses—that will be the terrible day of judgment for the Southern Bourbons and their political agents!

## On The War Fronts

By JOSEPH HANSEN

In the first great stage of the second World War, the German military machine uncoiled like a huge spring, crushing and driving out the armed forces of the "democracies" from the satellite nations which constituted the Allied outposts on the European continent. The spectacular speed with which this phase of the German drive for world power was accomplished resulted not only from the careful preparation of the German militarists, the superiority of their military machine and the advantage of operating from inside lines, but from the internal decay of the Allied powers. By June 1941 the only bastions remaining in the hands of the Allied camp were Great Britain-Iceland on one flank of Europe, North Africa-Middle East on the other. Conquering either of these outposts would have given Germany an immensely strengthened military position. However, separated by barriers of water from the continent, with Britain unprepared to launch an offensive, neither outpost constituted an immediate threat to intrenched Germany. German imperialism was faced, on the other hand, with the pressing necessity of securing a vast granary to feed subjected Europe and oil fields to supply its industrial and military machine. In the absence of sea power with which to break through the Allied blockade, the German armies were forced to turn eastward. In addition was the threat of socialist revolution—if suppressed temporarily inside Germany through the instrumentality of fascism, still present externally in the shape of the Soviet Union. If the Nazis succeeded in conquering this great fortress of the proletariat with its vast natural resources, they would thereby strike a terrible blow against the threat of socialist revolution, break the Allied blockade, succeed in joining forces with Japan and thus attain a pre-eminent world position. The military challenge of America through Great Britain and the Middle East area could be met from enormously strengthened vantage points.

The second great stage of the conflict began with the German attack upon the Soviet Union.

In the third stage of the war, which brought in the United States and Japan as active military participants, the Japanese military machine in a series of operations paralleling those of Germany expanded with explosive speed. The same

general factors which gave Germany military superiority in the west likewise gave Japan military superiority in the Orient, the previous German victories constituting an additional advantage. The "democracies" were driven from their strongholds in the Far East. Only the outposts of Australia, New Zealand, and India remain to them on the periphery of the new Japanese empire. The much more threatening outpost of eastern Siberia is held by the Soviet Union.

Throughout the war the "democracies" have been forced to remain on the defensive in the military field. The Axis powers are on the offensive. They are still expanding upon advantageous internal lines of attack.

If we grant an indefinitely prolonged world imperialist struggle uninterrupted by uprisings of the oppressed (a possibility that exists only in the abstract), and grant that in such a struggle the American colossus should secure the time to achieve ultimate superiority because of its great productive capacity, it is clear that on the military side such a victory could be attained only at the cost of unimaginable suffering and bloodshed. The Anglo-American powers must launch their offensive in both Europe and East Asia from difficult and costly outside lines in contradistinction to the inside lines from which the Axis powers operate. They must cross oceans to reach even the periphery of the Axis circles. They must land on distant coasts that will undoubtedly be desperately defended, recapture their lost outposts, and then step by step compress the expanded opposing military machines until they are driven back and finally shattered in the industrial centers from which they uncoiled. A clearer idea of exactly what such plans of the imperialist strategists will mean in misery and death to the workers can be obtained from a more detailed examination of the various war fronts.

### In the Pacific

What will it take to conquer Japan? Economically Japan was, next to Italy, formerly the poorest great power. Yet this weak power crushed the remnants of the Dutch empire, smashed the British strongholds, defeated the American forces in the Philippines, and is now intrenching herself in one of the richest colonial areas of the world. She has knocked

aside the Allied bayonets and placed her own bayonet at the throats of more than 137,000,000 people inhabiting approximately 1,385,000 square miles of territory. This does not take into account her seizures in the richest prize of all, China, which has yet to be conquered, although all the supply routes except the one through Mongolia are now in the hands of Japan.

Tokyo has conquered virtual monopoly of the world's supply of rubber, tin, quinine, manila (used in the manufacture of rope). She has secured oil fields more than sufficient for her needs and along with it important ores such as bauxite from which aluminum is derived. The immediate booty which can be shipped to Japan includes rice, cattle, hides, tobacco, spices, etc. The March 7 issue of the *Army and Navy Journal* declared Japan now "virtually self-sufficient in her war economy."

Writing in April *Foreign Affairs*, the military expert Hanson Baldwin in an article "America at War: Three Bad Months":

"The history of our first three months at war must be painted in somber colors. The United States Navy suffered the worst losses in its history . . . As this was written the surging tide of conquest was imperilling India . . . menacing Australia . . . ship sinkings were increasing to totals which approximated those of the war's worst months and freight storage yards were clogged . . . awaiting merchant shipping . . . Thus in less than 90 days the strategic picture of the war had been considerably altered. The United Nations had suffered their worst defeats since the fall of France. As spring approached, the short-range prospects were grim . . ."

Such enormous military forces will be required to dislodge Japan, such a titanic navy and air fleet, such colossal armies, such slaughter of troops, that American economy and the American people must be strained to the breaking point.

The truth about the propaganda that Japan is "weakening herself" was refuted by none other than Admiral Hart in the Hearst press of April 5. When asked the question, "Aren't the Japs spreading themselves pretty thin, exposing their long lines of communication to attack?" the Admiral replied: "Our position is essentially the same. We, too, have long lines of communication not only in the Pacific but in the Atlantic. We too are vulnerable." Hanson Baldwin adds that America has "convoy routes half as long as the circumference of the globe and three to twelve times as long as the Japanese communications."

For years American imperialists talked of the Achilles heel of Japan, her lack of oil, while they supplied her with oil until she had stored enough, according to some estimates, to last for two years of all-out war. In the battles it turned out that the Dutch fleet itself was caught short of oil, although it was guarding the oil fields of the East Indies.

What is the truth about Japan's alleged "weakness in oil"? Not only does she still have the greater part of her war reserves; but, if we are to believe the February *Fortune* magazine, Dr. Fritz Fetzer, a high German naval official, after a trip to Tokyo reported to Berlin as long ago as 1935, "that Japan . . . depended on foreign crude oil reached only by sea, but conquerable; that therefore she was building not only extensive refineries but a large fleet of some of the fastest tankers in the world . . . By 1941 Japan's plants could refine about three-fourths of all her oil requirements." Apparently Hanson Baldwin would agree with this estimate, for in the January 19 *New York Times* he pointed out that on "Tarak, the oil-rich island off the northeastern coast of Borneo,

the oil is so pure that it can be pumped directly into a ship's tanks without refining." In his column of February 20 he declared that "Japan has now obtained access to great stocks of oil and raw materials in the Southwestern Pacific and is probably indefinitely blockade-proof." In his article in *Foreign Affairs* he goes even further, pointing out that in the battle area it is the Japanese who are rich in oil, the Allies who are poor: "Now that the Japanese are in possession of Malaya and the Indies, their need for oil and other materials is largely met, whereas we must transport most of our oil supplies to Australia."

Victories are likewise mapped in the bourgeois press, showing how it is possible to sweep across the Pacific from Hawaii and Alaska in a pincers movement for direct attack upon the Japanese islands. The slogan generally attached to these maps is "Bomb Tokyo!" The truth is, such slogans only cover up preparations for the most terrible slaughter of Allied armed forces. We see very easily the difficulties Hitler faces in making a ground assault across 20 odd miles of English Channel. But the distance from Pearl Harbor to Yokohama is 3,394 miles; from Dutch Harbor, 2,928. The decisive factor, air power, is not even mentioned in these newspaper plans except possibly in connection with agitation to use Vladivostok as the base for bombing Tokyo. Yet it was air power which enabled the Japanese to drive the American fleet away from the Philippines, to wipe out the battleships *Repulse* and *Prince of Wales* which sealed the fate of Singapore, and finally, as the *Army and Navy Journal* of March 21 puts it, "destroy" the United Nations' fleet at Java.

The United States is manufacturing planes at many times the rate of Japan. However, it is not possible to manufacture in American plants bases for the use of these planes in the Far East. Where can these planes find a base well supplied with gasoline, armaments, food, replacements, etc.? The ports of China are held by Japan. The Burma road has been closed by Japan. All the islands down to Australia are held by Japan. Long range bombers can be knocked off with relative ease if they conduct sustained bombings, unless protected by fighter planes. Airplane carriers to transport such planes, and tankers to supply the accompanying vessels are among the most vulnerable of naval craft.

Rather than easy victory, the March 7 London *Economist* sees the situation due to become worse, visualizing that Japan can advance still farther, raiding the coast of India as she did China and penetrating toward the interior; the review believes that Japanese control of the Indian Ocean looms. As for India resisting Japanese aggression, the *Economist* is not too confident:

"India is large enough to swallow the invader—particularly an invader thousands of miles from his main base. Another aspect, of course, is not so hopeful—the Indian people do not feel for the British *raj* what the Chinese feel for Free China."

Yet in the face of this grim reality the bourgeois press announces with appropriate fanfare that MacArthur is preparing to use Australia as the springboard for an offensive that will not stop until "total victory" is gained over Japan. If we leave out the alternative of revolution and colonial uprisings—a specter which Wall Street fears above all else—this means taking and holding Java, Celebes, Sumatra, Borneo and the lesser neighboring islands, advancing into the blazing muzzles of the giant guns on Singapore (which is now being repaired and improved by the Japanese), advancing through the jungles of the Malay peninsula, taking Thailand, Burma, Indo-China, advancing along the coast of China,

retaking Hong Kong, Canton, Shanghai, etc., recapturing the Philippines, and then landing on the Japanese islands themselves. If this project is ever carried out, the western waters of the Pacific will be dyed crimson with the blood of the opposing forces.

## The Battle of the Atlantic

The defeat of the Allied fleet in the Pacific, which necessarily resulted in greater dispersion of the naval craft patrolling the rest of the sea lanes, has enabled the Axis to wage large-scale submarine warfare on the Atlantic coast. Apparently about two merchant vessels a day are being sunk; that is, twice as many as are being launched, according to official reports.

The continued sinkings have seriously cut down on America's ability to send war supplies to the battle areas. Docks and warehouses are jammed with goods awaiting ships. The enormous war production of the factories pours to the coastlines and there piles up in huge reserves separated by wide oceans from the battlefields. Tanker sinkings, for instance, have resulted in a growing oil shortage on the eastern seaboard since 95 per cent of petroleum products required there are normally transported by tankers. In the Gulf area, storage tanks are filled to capacity and refineries have been compelled to curtail operations by approximately 25 per cent because of the shipping bottleneck. According to Arthur Krock in the *New York Times* of April 8, "the truth is that the United States has well under 50 per cent of the bottoms required to carry out its full commitments and the needs of general war. The further truth is that shipping production figures do not yet justify the belief that construction will fill this gap and that caused by submarine sinkings, any time soon."

The situation in the Atlantic was indicated when, from under the very noses of the British, the German war vessels trapped at Brest, the *Scharnhorst*, the *Gneisenau*, and *Prinz Eugen*, managed to make the perilous run through the English Channel and escape to Germany. Admiral Hart remarked dryly about this reverse: "You noticed that the *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* left Brest at the moment the Germans decided for their departure. And British air fields were only 130 miles away."

In his funeral oration over this defeat, Churchill expressed "relief" that these vessels were no longer in a French port from which they could threaten Allied shipping. However, as the *Army and Navy Journal* of February 21 sarcastically points out: "He failed to remind Parliament that when the vessels are repaired, they, in conjunction with the battleships *Tirpitz*, *Suetzow* and *Scheer* will make a powerful fleet, which this summer can operate against the Russian naval forces in the Baltic Sea, and move to interrupt Lend-Lease material proceeding from the United States to Murmansk." The German fleet may also attempt to effect a junction with the remnants of the French and Italian fleets in the Mediterranean.

The European fleets of the Axis might also attempt to join the still largely intact Japanese fleet in the Indian Ocean, thus creating a formidable force that could be challenged only at the cost of untold slaughter. British occupation of Madagascar was to forestall a juncture of Germany and Japan at this strategic spot.

The *Army and Navy Journal* of March 7 pointed out:

"Hugh Dalton, president of the British Board of Trade, pointed out this week that the Tokyo government now has a great surplus of many vital war materials which

Germany lacks, and there is a definite danger that those two allies will make every effort to join their trade routes. Herein lies the importance of Madagascar to the totalitarian governments, for, in their possession, that island would serve as a base for the transfer of goods, as well as for submarine operations against the ships of the United Nations carrying supplies to Libya, the Near East and India. At present the exchange of rubber, tin, etc., by the Japanese for German machine tools, instruments, etc., would be limited to blockade runners, but if a juncture should be effected by the Japanese Navy with the German battleships, and the French and Italian Fleets, the trickle that is likely would become a stream."

The long tradition of American and British naval superiority still blinds people to the fact that the Axis is now close to turning the tables on the high seas. On April 17 Hanson Baldwin disclosed in his column: "The tenuous naval superiority that the United Nations enjoyed last December has now been whittled down by losses and damages to a serious extent . . . the margin of our present naval superiority is small . . ." The loss of another naval battle could mean a shift in the balance of sea power in favor of the Axis.

The conquest of Singapore has not only given Tokyo the possibility of offensive operations in the Indian Ocean but has greatly increased the danger to China. Besides the direct military threat there is the possibility that Chiang Kai-shek will doublecross London and Washington. His price as ally of the United Nations has already gone up.

Chiang Kai-shek, however, will not find it easy to shift into the camp of Japan, should he actually be considering such an alternative. The prestige of the Allied powers, dealt a terrible blow in the Far East debacle, has not thereby automatically been transferred to Japanese imperialism. Throughout the Orient the colonial movement has received a tremendous impetus. The Chinese people can see for themselves that the allies of Chiang Kai-shek were not so powerful as tradition and propaganda had made them out to be, and are speaking with a new note of self-confidence. The slogan "arm the people" will gain in popularity throughout China as the realization sweeps the land that they must depend upon their own forces for victory. Chiang Kai-shek's bureaucratic conduct of the war has resulted in the slaughter of millions of people without dislodging the Japanese forces. An armed populace, inspired by an agrarian revolution in China, would consume the Japanese forces in short order and free China. Such an event could electrify the oppressed of the entire earth.

## The Danger to the Soviet Union

The class-conscious workers are defending the Soviet Union as a mighty fortress of the proletariat. A Soviet victory over Hitler's armies would mean the opening of a new dynamic stage of the world socialist revolution. To the danger from the Nazis has now been added a new and imminent peril in Siberia.

Strategicus, whose opinion seems to hold considerable weight with the American staff as well as the British, stated in the *Army and Navy Journal* for January 3:

"The Soviet Army in Siberia has been greatly weakened in recent months by the transfer to Europe of most of its tank brigades, a number of infantry divisions, and a large part of its air-forces. Japan, therefore, possesses for the time being military superiority along the Manchurian-Siberian front . . . it may be predicted that active hostilities between Japan and Russia will break out as soon as Spring weather permits large-scale military operations. Indeed . . . unless the Malaysian offensive con-

sumes too much of Japan's military strength, it will be Japan which will take the offensive and invade Siberia; and this offensive will be launched in conjunction with a German assault in European Russia."

Washington speaks of an offensive against Japan. It is possible, as hinted in Chiang Kai-shek's paper, that the plans envisage the launching of this offensive not only from Australia but from Siberia.

The winter campaign of the Red Army does not seem to have greatly impressed the strategists who control the armed forces of the Allies. The *Army and Navy Journal* of January 10, for instance, expresses this attitude succinctly:

"What the Russian soldiers are doing in the defense of their homeland is the envy and pride of all fighting men . . . There are still experts who fail to get enthusiastic over the Russian progress, who point out that the retreats of the Germans have been from their advance salients and have had the result, probably planned, they say, of straightening out the German line. There has been no break through, they point, nor have any great bodies of German troops been cut off."

Strategicus likewise declares:

"Despite recent successes in the Moscow and Rostov sectors, Russia will probably continue to be hard pressed by Germany. A revival of the Nazi offensive should occur in April or May, when winter has passed, and mechanized armies can operate once more. This offensive will almost certainly be just as violent and just as widespread as the attack of last June."

Hanson Baldwin on March 16 declared that although the German losses had been heavy during the winter, they had given up only about one-fifth of the conquered territory. Moreover:

"The Germans have clung tenaciously—and on the whole, successfully—to key strong points which, because they control important communication networks in Western Russia, the Nazis hope to use as springboards for a summer offensive . . . The Germans have waged during the winter a campaign of careful and calculated defense: They still have what is probably the world's strongest military machine. They will strike with relentless and increased power against a Russia that, like her enemy, has suffered from attrition."

The offensive power of the Red Army lies primarily in revolutionary warfare, which Stalin has abjured, and not in restricting the struggle to the military arena. Has Stalin, in his desperation and his fear of conducting revolutionary warfare against German imperialism, vainly squandered on the winter snows of these vast and desolated plains the blood of hundreds of thousands of Soviet youth? Such conduct would be quite in accordance with the previous career of this betrayer of Bolshevism who has brought the Soviet Union to the very brink of the abyss.

Japan is attempting to induce Stalin to make peace with Hitler, says the *Army and Navy Journal* of April 11:

"Arriving simultaneously at Kuibyshev . . . were Admiral Standley, American Ambassador, and Japanese special envoy Sato. They will be opponents in a diplomatic game of vital importance to the result of the war. The Admiral is charged with the duty of keeping Russia on the battle line . . . Sato . . . will re-enforce German efforts to induce Stalin to make peace with Hitler, and in the background of his representations will be the threat that his government will order its strengthened divisions to march from Manchukuo into Siberia . . . Sato may tell the Soviet Government that if the United States and Great Britain attempt to establish a second front in France, Italy or Norway, Tokyo will be required to act against it."

The reactionary politics of Stalin has brought the Soviet Union into a desperate situation. Stalin paved the way for Hitler's bayonet thrusts at the throat of the workers' state. Stalin has given Japan the opportunity to bring down her raised dagger in a stab in the back. With imperialist cannon bombarding the workers' state from all sides Stalinism is again demonstrating itself to be a terrible obstacle in the successful defense of the Soviet Union.

## A Planet Writhing in Agony

The bourgeoisie has no other perspective but intensification of the slaughter. Millions of men have already been slain in the uttermost corners of the earth. Tens of millions more are now being prepared to follow them in the coming installments of the second World War. The bourgeoisie in the period of the death agony of capitalism is raising up all the forces of destruction. To maintain and extend their positions of privilege the capitalists are hurling all the acquisitions of mankind along with man himself into the inferno of war. The standard of living of the masses is being driven down to starvation levels in even the most productive nations. Mushrooming military dictatorships are tightening the straitjacket of internal passports, identification cards, regimentation of the entire population. Civil liberties are threatened with extinction. Labor organizations are faced with destruction and the loss of all the gains of centuries of struggle. If the bourgeoisie continues to have its way a new dark age will cover the face of the earth.

With each day of the second imperialist world war it becomes increasingly clear that there is no way out except that of socialist revolution. If the hundreds of millions of oppressed in the colonial areas, China, India, Malaysia, Africa and elsewhere were to rise up they could end the slaughter overnight. Likewise a successful socialist revolution in any one of the highly developed imperialist nations—the United States, England, France, Germany, Italy or Japan—could so inspire the hundreds of millions of oppressed throughout the entire world as to usher in a socialist peace.

The second World War is but the continuation of the first World War. All the festering issues and irreconcilable contradictions of imperialism that brought about the first World War are again projected in military struggle but upon a far more violent and bloody plane. The same forces, however, that ended the first World War will likewise end the second World War. The October revolution that flamed like a bright dawn over the battlefields of Europe in 1917, inspiring the oppressed of all nations with hope, will flame again, but far brighter and more brilliant than in its first flush. All the forces of destruction raised up by the bourgeoisie will end by turning upon the bourgeoisie itself as a class.

The final act of destruction will be the removal of this last obstacle to the establishment of a world society based on the brotherhood of man. The very violence of the present conflict is a gauge of the depth and thoroughness with which the coming socialist revolution will perform its task. Already the old society is bursting at every seam—in India, Burma, the Middle East and Africa the masses are seething; in the old capitalist nations the people are filled with a deep uneasiness that can at any moment turn toward political channels. The day is fast approaching when imperialist war will be forever ended, and its horrible instruments of destruction, like the capitalist society which produced them, will find their place in the museums of the future as savage relics of the barbarous beginnings of civilizations.



# From the Arsenal of Marxism

## *The Program for Peace*

By LEON TROTSKY

EDITOR'S NOTE: "The Program for Peace" was originally written as a series of articles by Trotsky in 1915-1916 in the internationalist newspaper which he edited in Paris, *Nashe Slovo*. In revised form the articles were published in the Bolshevik press in Russia during June 1917, and issued as a pamphlet. It first appeared in abridged form in English in the volume "The Proletarian Revolution in Russia, by Lenin and Trotsky," published here in 1929 under the editorship of Louis C. Fraina. The present translation, likewise abridged, has been carefully revised and is based on the final Soviet edition of Trotsky's writings of that period.

### What Is a Peace Program?

What is a peace program? From the viewpoint of the ruling classes or of the parties subservient to them, it is the totality of the demands, the ultimate realization of which must be ensured by the power of militarism. Hence, for the realization of Miliukov's "peace program" Constantinople must be conquered by force of arms. Vandervelde's "peace program" requires the expulsion of the Germans from Belgium as an antecedent condition. Bethmann-Holweg's plans were founded on the geographical warmap. From this standpoint the peace clauses reflect but the advantages achieved by force of arms. In other words, the *peace* program is the war program.

Such is the case prior to the intervention of *the third power*, the Socialist International. For the revolutionary proletariat, the peace program does not mean the demands which national militarism must fulfill, but those demands which the international proletariat intends to enforce by dint of its revolutionary fight against militarism in all countries. The more the international revolutionary movement expands, the less will the peace questions depend on the purely military position of the antagonists.

This is rendered most clear to us by the question of the fate of small nations and weak states.

The war began with a devastating invasion of Belgium and Luxemburg by the German armies. In the echo created by the violation of the small country, beside the false and egotistic anger of the ruling classes of the enemy, there reverberated also the genuine indignation of the common masses whose sympathy was attracted by the fate of a small people, crushed only because they happened to lie between two warring giants.

At that first stage of the war the fate of Belgium attracted attention and sympathy, owing to its extraordinarily tragic nature. But thirty-four months of warfare have proved that the Belgian episode constituted only the first step towards the solution of the fundamental problem of the imperialist war, namely, *the suppression of the weak by the strong*.

Capitalism in its international relations pursues the same

methods applied by it in "regulating" the internal economic life of the nations. Competition is the means of systematically annihilating the small and medium-sized enterprises and of achieving the supremacy of Big Capital. World competition of the capitalist forces means the systematic subjection of the small, medium-sized and backward nations by the great and the greatest capitalist powers. The more developed the technique of capitalism, the greater the role played by finance capital, and the higher the demands of militarism, all the more grows the dependency of the small states on the Great Powers. This process, forming as it does an integral element of imperialist mechanics, flourishes undisturbed also in times of peace by means of state loans, railway and other concessions, military-diplomatic agreements, etc. The war uncovered and accelerated this process by introducing the factor of open violence. The war destroys the last shreds of the "independence" of small states, quite apart from the military outcome of the conflict between the two basic enemy camps.

*Belgium* still groans under the yoke of German militarism. This, however, is but the visible and dramatic expression of the collapse of her independence. The "deliverance" of Belgium does not at all constitute the fundamental aim of the Allied governments. Both in the further progress of the war and after its conclusion, Belgium will become but a pawn in the great game of the capitalist giants. Failing the intervention of the third power, *Revolution*, Belgium may as a result of the war either remain in German bondage, or fall under the yoke of Great Britain, or be divided between the powerful robbers of the two coalitions.

The same applies to *Serbia*, whose national energy served as a weight in the imperialist world scales whose fluctuations to one side or the other are least of all influenced by the independent interests of the Serbian people.

The Central Powers drew Turkey and Bulgaria into the whirlpool of the war. Whether both these countries will remain as the southeastern organ of the Austro-German imperialist bloc ("Central Europe") or will serve as small change when the balance sheet is drawn up, the fact remains that the war is writing a final chapter of the history of their independence.

Before the Russian revolution, the independence of *Persia* was most obviously liquidated as a direct result of the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907.

*Rumania* and *Greece* furnish us with a sufficiently clear example of how limited a "freedom of choice" is given to small-state firms by the struggle of the imperialist trust companies. Rumania preferred the gesture of an apparently free choice, when she sacrificed her neutrality. Greece tried by means of passive opposition to "remain at home." Just as if to show most tangibly the futility of the whole "neutralist" struggle for self-preservation, the whole European war, rep-

resented by the armies of Bulgaria, Turkey, France, England, Russia and Italy, shifted on to Greek territory. Freedom of choice is at best reflected in the form of self-suppression. In the end, both Rumania and Greece will share the same fate: they will be the stakes in the hands of the great gamblers.

At the other end of Europe, little *Portugal* deemed it necessary to enter the war on the side of the Allies. Such a decision might remain inexplicable if, in the question of participation in the dog fight, Portugal, which is under English protection, had had greater freedom than the government of Tver or Ireland.

The capitalist captains of *Holland* and of the three *Scandinavian* countries are accumulating mountains of gold, thanks to the war. However, these four neutral states of northwestern Europe are the more aware of the illusory character of their "sovereignty," which, even if it survives the war, will nevertheless be subject to the settlement of the bills advanced by the peace conditions of the Great Powers.

"Independent" *Poland* will be able, in the midst of imperialist Europe, to keep a semblance of independence only by submitting to a slavish financial and military dependence on one of the great groups of the ruling powers.

The extent of the independence of *Switzerland* clearly appeared in the compulsory and restrictive measures adopted regulating her imports and exports. The representatives of this small federative republic who, cap in hand, go begging at the entrances of the two warring camps, can well understand the limited measure of independence and neutrality possible for a nation which cannot command some millions of bayonets.

If the war becomes an indeterminate equation in consequence of the ever increasing number of combatants and of fronts, thus rendering it impossible for the different governments to formulate the so-called "war aims," then the small states still have the doubtful advantage that their historical fate may be reckoned as predetermined. No matter which side proves victorious, and however far-reaching the influence of such a victory may be, the fact remains that there can no longer be a return to independence for the small states. Whether Germany or England wins—in either case the question to be determined is *who* will be the direct master over the small nations. Only charlatans or hopeless simpletons can believe that the freedom of the small nations can be secured by the victory of one side or the other.

A like result would follow the third solution of the war, viz., its ending in a draw. The absence of pronounced preponderance of one of the combatants over the other will only set off all the more clearly both the dominance of the strong over the weak within either one of the camps, and the preponderance of both over the "neutral" victims of imperialism. The issue of the war without conquerors or conquered is no guarantee for anybody: all small and weak states will none the less be *conquered*, and the same applies to those who bled to death on the battlefield as to those who tried to escape that fate by hiding in the shadows of neutrality.

The independence of the Belgians, Serbians, Poles, Armenians and others is regarded by us not as part of the Allied war program (as treated by Guesde, Plekhanov, Vandervelde, Henderson and others), but belongs to the program of the fight of the international proletariat against imperialism.

But the question is: Can the proletariat under the present circumstances advance an independent "peace program," i.e., solutions of the problems which caused the war of today or which have in the course of this war been brought to light?

It has been intimated that the proletariat does not now command sufficient forces to bring about the realization of such a program. Utopian is the hope that the proletariat could carry out its own peace program as to the issue of the present war. What alternative is there save the struggle for the cessation of the war and for a peace without annexations, i.e., a return to the *status quo ante bellum*, to the state of affairs prior to the war? This, we are told, is by far the more realistic program. In what sense, however, may the term realistic be applied to the fight for the close of the war by means of a peace without annexation? Under what circumstances, we ask, can the end of the war be brought about? Theoretically, three typical possibilities may here be considered: (1) a decisive victory of one of the parties; (2) a general exhaustion of the opponents without decisive sway of one over the other; (3) the intervention of the revolutionary proletariat, which interrupts the "normal" development of military events.

### Status Quo Ante Bellum

It is quite obvious that in the first case, if the war is ended by a decisive victory of one side, it would be naive to dream of a peace without annexations. If the Scheidemanns and Landsbergs, the staunch supporters of the work of their militarism, insist in parliament upon an "annexationless" peace, it is only with the firmest conviction that such protests can hinder no "useful" annexation. On the other hand, one of our former Czarist commanders-in-chief, General Alexeiev, who dubbed the annexationless peace as "a utopian phrase," thought quite correctly that the offensive is the chief thing, and that in case of successful war operations everything else would come of itself. In order to wrest annexations from the hands of the victorious party, which is armed to the teeth, the proletariat would naturally, regardless of its desires, be in need of a revolutionary force, which it will have to be ready to use openly. In any case, it possesses no other more "economical" means to compel the victorious party to renounce the advantage of the victory gained.

The second possible issue of the war, on which those who seek to promote the narrow program "annexationless peace and nothing more" principally depend, presupposes that the war, exhausting as it does all the resources of the warring nations will, without the revolutionary intervention of the third power, end in general exhaustion without conquerors or conquered. To this very situation, where militarism is too weak for effecting conquests, and the proletariat for making a revolution, the passive internationalists [of the Kautsky type] adopted their lame program of "annexationless peace," which they frequently denote as a return to the *status quo ante bellum*, i.e., the order of things prior to the war. Here, however, this pseudo-realism lays bare its Achilles heel, for actually an undecided issue of the war, as already shown, does not at all exclude annexations, but on the contrary *presupposes them*. That neither of the two powerful groups wins, does not mean that Serbia, Greece, Belgium, Poland, Persia, Syria, Armenia and others would be left intact. On the contrary, it is precisely at the expense of these third and weakest parties that annexations will in this case be carried out. In order to prevent these reciprocal "compensations" the international proletariat must needs set afoot a direct revolutionary uprising against the ruling classes. Newspaper articles, convention resolutions, parliamentary protests and even public demonstrations have never prevented the rulers from acquiring territories or from oppressing the weak peoples either by way of victory or by means of diplomatic agreements.

As regards the third possible issue of the war, it seems to be the clearest. It presupposes that while the war is still on, the international proletariat rises with a force sufficient to paralyze and finally to stop the war from below. Obviously, in this most favorable case, the proletariat, having been powerful enough to stop the war, would not be likely to limit itself to that purely conservative program which goes no further than the renunciation of annexations.

A powerful movement of the proletariat is thus in each case a necessary prerequisite of the actual realization of an annexationless peace. But again, if we assume such a movement, the foregoing program remains quite inadequate in that it acquiesces in the restoration of the order which prevailed prior to the war and which gave birth to the war. The European *status quo ante bellum*, a resultant of wars, robbery, violation, red tape, diplomatic stupidity and weakness of peoples, remains as the only positive content of the slogan "without annexations."

In its fight against imperialism, the proletariat cannot set up as its political aim the return to the old European map; it must set up *its own program of state and national relations*, harmonizing with the fundamental tendency of economic development, with the revolutionary character of the epoch and with the socialist interests of the proletariat.

By itself the slogan "without annexations" gives no criterion for a political orientation in the several problems brought forth during the course of the war. Assuming that France later on occupies Alsace-Lorraine, is the German Social Democracy together with Scheidemann bound to demand the return of these provinces to Germany? Shall we demand the restitution of the kingdom of Poland to Russia? Shall we insist upon Japan's giving Chio-Chau back to Germany? Or that Italy yield back to its owners that part of Trentino now occupied by her? That would be nonsense. We should be fanatic of legitimacy, i.e., defenders of dynastic and "historic" rights in the spirit of the most reactionary diplomacy. Besides, this "program" also demands a revolution for its fulfillment. In all these enumerated and in other similar cases we, confronted with the concrete reality, shall naturally advance only one principle, viz., *consultation of the peoples interested*. This is certainly no absolute criterion. The French "Socialists" of the majority reduce the consultation of the population of Alsace-Lorraine to a shameful comedy: first occupying (that is, acquisition by force of arms) and then asking the population's consent to be annexed. It is quite clear that a real consultation presupposes a state of revolution whereby the population can give their reply without being threatened by a revolver, be it German or French.

The only acceptable content of the slogan "without annexations" is a protest against new *violent acquisitions*, which only amounts to the negation of *the rights of nations to self-determination*. But we have seen that this democratically unquestionable "right" is being and will necessarily be transformed into the right of strong nations to make acquisitions and impose oppression, whereas for the weak nations it will mean an impotent wish or a "scrap of paper." Such will be the case as long as the political map of Europe forces nations and their fractions within the framework of states separated by tariff barriers and continually impinging upon one another in their imperialist fights.

It is possible to overcome this regime only by means of a proletarian revolution. *Thus, the center of gravity lies in the union of the peace program of the proletariat with that of the social revolution.*

## The Right of Self-Determination

We saw above that socialism, in the solution of concrete questions in the field of national state groups, can make no step without the principle of national self-determination, which latter in its last instance appears as the recognition of the right of every national group to decide its national fate, hence as the right of peoples to sever themselves from a given state (as for instance from Russia or Austria). The only democratic way of getting to know the "will" of a nation is the referendum. This democratic obligatory reply will, however, in the manner described, remain purely formal. It does not enlighten us with regard to the real possibilities, ways and means of national self-determination under the present conditions of capitalist economy; and yet the crux of the matter lies in this.

For many, if not for the majority of the oppressed nations, national groups and factions, the meaning of self-determination is the cancellation of the existing borders and the dismemberment of present states. In particular, this democratic principle leads to the deliverance of the colonies. Yet the whole policy of imperialism aims at the *extension* of state borders regardless of the national principle, of the compulsory incorporation of weak states within the customs border, and the acquisition of new colonies. Imperialism is by its very nature both expansive and aggressive and it is this qualification that characterizes imperialism, and not the changeable maneuvers of diplomacy.

From which flows the perennial conflict between the principle of national self-determination, which in many cases leads to state and economic decentralization, and the powerful efforts at centralization on the part of imperialism which has at its disposal the state organization and the military power. True, the national-separatist movement very often finds support in the imperialist intrigue of *the neighboring state*. This support, however, becomes decisive only in the application of war might. As soon as there is an armed conflict between two imperialist organizations, the *new* state boundaries will not be decided on the ground of the national principle, but on the basis of the relative military forces. To compel a victorious state to refrain from annexing newly conquered lands is as difficult as to force it to grant the freedom of self-determination to previously acquired provinces. Lastly, even if by a miracle Europe were divided by force of arms into fixed national states and small states, the national question would not thereby be in the least decided and, the very next day after the righteous national redistributions, capitalist expansion would resume its work. Conflicts would arise, wars and new acquisitions, in complete violation of the national principle in all cases where its preservation cannot be maintained by a sufficient number of bayonets. It would all give the impression of gamblers being forced to divide the gold justly among themselves in the middle of the game, in order to start the same game all over again with double rage.

From the might of the centralist tendency of imperialism, it does not at all follow that we are obliged passively to submit to it. National unity is a living hearth of culture, as the national language is its living organ, and these will still retain their meaning through indefinitely long historical periods. Socialism will and must safeguard to the national unity its freedom of development (or dissolution) in the interest of material and spiritual culture. It is in this sense that it took over from the revolutionary bourgeoisie the demo-

cratic principle of national self-determination as a political obligation.

The right of national self-determination cannot be excluded from the proletarian peace program; neither can it claim absolute importance. On the contrary, it is, in our view, limited by deep, progressive, criss-crossing tendencies of historical development. If this "right" is by means of revolutionary power, set over against the imperialist methods of centralization which place weak and backward peoples under the yoke and crush national culture, then on the other hand the proletariat cannot allow the "national principle" to get in the way of the inevitable and deeply progressive tendencies of the present industrial order towards a planned organization throughout our continent, and further, all over the globe.

Imperialism is the capitalist-thievish expression of this tendency of modern economy to tear itself completely away from the stupidity of national narrowness, as it did previously with regard to local and provincial confinement. While fighting against the imperialist form of economic centralization, socialism does not at all take a stand against the particular tendency as such but, on the contrary, makes the tendency its guiding principle.

From the standpoint of historical development as well as from the point of view of the problems of socialism, the centralist tendency of modern economy is *fundamental*, and it must be guaranteed the amplest possibility of executing its real historical deliverance mission, to construct the *united world economy*, independent of national frames, state and tariff barriers, subject only to the peculiarities of the soil and its interior, to climate and the requirements of division of labor. Poles, Alsations, Dalmatians, Belgians, Serbians and other small weak European nations may be reinstated or set up in the national borders towards which they strive, only in the case that they, remaining in these boundaries and able to freely develop their cultural existence as national groups, will cease to be economic groupings, will not be bound by state borders, will not be separated from or opposed to one another economically. In other words, in order that Poland, Serbia, Rumania and others be able actually to form national units, it is necessary that the state boundaries now splitting them up into parts be cancelled, that the frames of the *state be enlarged as an economic but not as a national organization*, until it envelops the whole of capitalist Europe, which is now divided by tariffs and borders and torn by war. *The state unification of Europe* is clearly a prerequisite of self-determination of great and small nations of Europe. A national culture existence, free of national economic antagonism and based on real self-determination, is possible only under the roof of a democratically united Europe freed from state and tariff barriers.

This direct and immediate dependence of national self-determination of weak peoples upon the collective European regime excludes the possibility of the proletariat's placing questions like the independence of Poland or the uniting of all Serbs *outside the European revolution*. On the other hand, this signifies that the right of self-determination, as a part of the proletarian peace program, possesses not a "utopian" but rather a revolutionary character.

## **The United States of Europe**

We tried to prove in the foregoing that the economic and political union of Europe is the necessary prerequisite for the very possibility of national self-determination. As the slogan of *national independence* of Serbs, Bulgarians, Greeks and

others remains an empty abstraction without the supplementary slogan "Federative Balkan Republic," which plays such an important role in the whole policy of the Balkan Social Democracy; so on the grand European scale the principle of the "right" to self-determination can be effectively realized only under the conditions of a European Federative Republic.

But if on the Balkan peninsula the slogan of a democratic federation has become purely proletarian, then this applies all the more to Europe with her incomparably deeper capitalist antagonisms.

To bourgeois politics the destruction of inner European customs houses appears to be an insurmountable difficulty; but without this the inter-state courts of arbitration and international law codes will have no firmer duration than, for instance, Belgian neutrality. The urge toward unifying the European market which, like the effort towards the acquisition of non-European backward lands, is caused by the development of capitalism, conflicts with the powerful opposition of the landed and capitalist gentry, in whose hands the tariff apparatus joined with that of militarism constitutes an indispensable weapon for exploitation and enrichment.

The Hungarian financial and industrial bourgeoisie is hostile to economic unification with capitalistically more developed Austria. The Austro-Hungarian bourgeoisie is hostile to the idea of a tariff union with more powerful Germany. On the other hand, the German landowners will never willingly consent to the cancellation of grain duties. Furthermore, the economic interests of the propertied classes of the Central Empires cannot be so easily made to coincide with the interests of the English, French, Russian capitalists and landed gentry. The present war speaks eloquently enough on this score. Lastly, the disharmony and irreconcilability of capitalist interests between the Allies themselves is still more visible than in the Central States. Under these circumstances, a half-way complete and consistent economic union of Europe *coming from the top* by means of an agreement of the capitalist governments is sheer utopia. Here the matter can go no further than partial compromises and half-measures. Hence it is that *the economic union of Europe*, which offers colossal advantages to producer and consumer alike, and in general to the whole cultural development, becomes the revolutionary task of the European proletariat in its fight against imperialist protectionism and its instrument—militarism.

*The United States of Europe—without monarchies, standing armies and secret diplomacy*—is therefore the most important integral part of the proletarian peace program.

The ideologists and politicians of German imperialism frequently came forward, especially at the beginning of the war, with *their program* of a European or at least a Central European United States (without France, England and Russia). The program of a violent unification of Europe is just as characteristic of the tendencies of German imperialism as is the tendency of French imperialism whose program is the forcible dismemberment of Germany.

If the German armies achieved the decisive victory reckoned upon in Germany at the outset of the war, then German imperialism would doubtless make the gigantic attempt of a compulsory war tariff union of European states, which would be constructed completely of preferences, compromises, etc., which would reduce to a minimum the progressive meaning of the unification of the European market. Needless to say, under such circumstances no talk would be possible of an autonomy of the nations, thus forcibly joined together as the caricature of the European United States. Let us for a mom-

ent admit that German militarism succeeds in actually carrying out the compulsory half-union of Europe, just as Prussian militarism once achieved the half-union of Germany, what would then be the central slogan of the European proletariat? Would it be the dissolution of the forced European coalition and the return of all peoples under the roof of isolated national states? Or the restoration of tariffs, "national" coinage, "national" social legislation, and so forth? Certainly not. The program of the European revolutionary movement would then be: The destruction of the compulsory anti-democratic form of the coalition, with the preservation and furtherance of its foundations, in the form of complete annihilation of tariff barriers, the unification of legislation, above all of labor laws, etc. In other words, the slogan of the United States of Europe—*without monarchy and standing armies*—would under the foregoing circumstances become the unifying and guiding slogan of the European revolution.

Let us assume the second possibility, namely, an "undecided" issue of the war. At the very beginning of the war, the well-known professor Liszt, an advocate of "United Europe," proved that should the Germans fail to conquer their opponents, the European Union would nevertheless be accomplished, and in Liszt's opinion it would be even more complete than in the case of a German victory. By the ever growing want for expansion, the European states, hostile against one another but unable to cope with one another, would continue to hinder one another in the execution of their "mission" in the Near East, Africa and Asia, and they would everywhere be forced back by the United States of North America and by Japan. In the case of an "undecided" issue of the war, Liszt thinks the indispensability of an economic and military understanding of the European Great Powers would come to the fore against weak and backward peoples, but above all, of course, against their own working masses. We pointed out above the colossal hindrances that lie in the way of realizing this program. The even partial overcoming of these hindrances would mean the establishment of an imperialist Trust of European States, a predatory share-holding association. The proletariat will in this case have to fight not for the return to "autonomous" national states, but for the conversion of the imperialist state trust into a Republican European Federation.

However, the further the war progresses and reveals the absolute incapacity of militarism to cope with the question brought forward by the war, the less is spoken about these great plans for the uniting of Europe *at the top*. The question of the imperialist "United States of Europe" has given way to the plans, on the one side, of an economic union of Austria-Germany and on the other side of the quadruple alliance with its war tariffs and duties supplemented with militarism directed against one another. After the foregoing it is needless to enlarge on the great importance which, in the execution of these plans, the policy of the proletariat of both state trusts will assume in fighting against the established tariff and military-diplomatic fortifications and for the economic union of Europe.

Now after the so very promising beginning of the Russian revolution, we have every reason to hope that during the course of this present war a powerful revolutionary movement will be launched all over Europe. It is clear that such a movement can succeed and develop and gain victory only *as a general European one*. Isolated within national borders, it would be doomed to disaster. Our social-patriots point to the danger which threatens the Russian revolution from the side

of German militarism. This danger is indubitable, but it is not the only one. English, French, Italian militarism is no less a dreadful enemy of the Russian revolution than the war machine of the Hohenzollerns. The salvation of the Russian revolution lies in its propagation all over Europe. Should the revolutionary movement unroll itself in Germany, the German proletariat would look for and find a revolutionary echo in the "hostile" lands of the west, and if in one of the European countries the proletariat should snatch the power out of the hands of the bourgeoisie, it would be bound, be it only to retain the power, to place it at once at the service of the revolutionary movement in other lands. In other words, the founding of a stable regime of proletarian dictatorship would only be conceivable throughout Europe in the form of a European Republican Federation. The unification of the states of Europe, to be achieved neither by force of arms nor by industrial and diplomatic agreements, would then be the next unpostponable task of the triumphant revolutionary proletariat.

*The United States of Europe* is the slogan of the revolutionary epoch into which we have entered. Whatever turn the war operations may take later on, whatever balance-sheet diplomacy may draw out of the present war, and at whatever tempo the revolutionary movement will progress in the near future, the slogan of the United States of Europe will in all cases retain a colossal meaning as the political formula of the struggle of the European proletariat for power. In this program is expressed the fact that the national state has outlived itself—as a framework for the development of the productive forces, as a basis for the class struggle, and thereby also as a state form of proletarian dictatorship. Over against the conservative defense of the antiquated national fatherland we place the progressive task, namely the creation of a new, higher "fatherland" of the revolution, of republican Europe, whence the proletariat alone will be enabled to revolutionize and to reorganize the whole world.

Of course, the United States of Europe will be only one of the two axes of the "world reorganization" of industry. The United States of America will constitute the other.

To view the perspectives of the social revolution within national bounds means to succumb to the same national narrowness that forms the content of social-patriotism. Vaillant, until the close of his life, regarded France as the chosen country of the social revolution, and precisely in this sense he insisted upon its defense to the end. Lentsch and others, some hypocritically, others sincerely, believed that the defeat of Germany means above all the destruction of the very foundation of the social revolution. Lastly, our Tseretellis and Chernovs who, in our national conditions, have repeated the very sad experiment of French ministerialism, swear that their policy serves the purpose of the revolution and therefore has nothing in common with the policy of Guesde and Sembat. Generally speaking, it must not be forgotten that in social-patriotism there is active, besides the most vulgar reformism, a national revolutionary messianism, which regards its national state as chosen for introducing to humanity "socialism" or "democracy," be it on the ground of its industrial or of its democratic form and revolutionary conquests. Defending the national basis of the revolution with such methods as damage the international connections of the proletariat, really amounts to undermining the revolution, which cannot begin otherwise than on the national basis, but which cannot be completed on that basis in view of the present economic and military-political interdependence of the European states, which has never been so graphically revealed as in this very war. The slogan,

the United States of Europe, gives expression to this interdependence, which will directly and immediately determine the concerted action of the European proletariat in the revolution.

Social-patriotism which is in principle, if not always in fact, the execution of social-reformism to the utmost extent and its adaptation to the imperialist epoch, proposes to us in the present world catastrophe to direct the policy of the proletariat along the lines of the "lesser evil" by joining one of the two warring groups. We reject this method. We say that the war, prepared by antecedent evolution, has on the whole placed point-blank the *fundamental problems* of the present capitalist development as a whole; furthermore, that the line of direction to be followed by the international proletariat and its national detachments must not be determined by secondary political and national features nor by problematical advantages of militaristic preponderance of one side over the other

(whereby these problematical advantages must be paid for in advance with absolute renunciation of the independent policy of the proletariat), but by the fundamental antagonism existing between the international proletariat and the capitalist regime as a whole.

The democratic, republican union of Europe, a union really capable of guaranteeing the freedom of national development, is possible only on the road of a revolutionary struggle against militarist, imperialist, dynastic centralism, by means of revolts in individual countries, with the subsequent confluence of these upheavals into a general European revolution. The victorious European revolution, however, no matter how its course in the sundry countries may be fashioned can, in consequence of the absence of other revolutionary classes, transfer the power only to the proletariat. Thus the United States of Europe represents the only conceivable form of the dictatorship of the European proletariat.

## The Role of Burnham and the Apology of Shachtman

(A Statement of Facts and a Footnote on "Slander")

In our March and April issues we published sections of documents just received from the Ceylon Socialist Party and the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India. In introducing them to our readers we noted that the documents "make unambiguously clear their agreement on the Russian and all other questions with the Fourth International against the Burnham-Shachtman petty-bourgeois opposition." We noted also that the Shachtmanites had been "spreading false stories about the position of our Indian and Ceylonese comrades."

Shachtman could not deny that, with the receipt of these documents all the ranks of the Fourth International are accounted for, and *all* stand with us against the petty-bourgeois opposition. Seeking to evade these facts, which are so devastating to Shachtman and others, who tried to split the Fourth International, Shachtman tries to shift the issue. He complains: we have slandered him. On two counts especially:

1. "The editor (of Fourth International) charges that the Workers Party 'has been spreading false stories about the position of the Indian and Ceylonese comrades.' We stare at this almost in disbelief of what our eyes reveal. Where did this man acquire such cool effrontery. What 'false stories' have we spread about the Indian and Ceylonese comrades? Perhaps the editor will condescend to name one—not many, just one." Thus Shachtman.

We shall name not one but two. The "Workers Party" issued a bulletin written by Sherman Stanley, dated October 1940. Here is what it said.

*In India:* "On the question of Russia's participation in the world war, *all* of them were and remain in absolute agreement with

our position. They had come to these conclusions long before my arrival and—although acquainted with Trotsky's attitude from the public press—could not understand or approve it for a moment. Their political statements are in accordance with our policy."

*On Ceylon:* "On the political issues of the American factional dispute, namely, the question of Russia's participation in the war, the entire leadership was and remains in accord with our views on the matter. Specifically, as between the Minority and Majority resolutions on the Soviet-Finnish war—both of which they have studied—they openly support ours. Because of circumstances no formal declaration has been made, but I am authorized to state that they do not support the position advocated by Trotsky and the SWP."

I called the Shachtmanite statements false stories spread by them. What else are they?

2. We learned from these documents that the Indian and Ceylonese parties stood with us against the Burnham-Shachtman splitters. In answer, Shachtman asks: "What honorable or 'educational' purpose is served by linking Burnham and Shachtman today . . . The former is an avowed enemy of socialism and has been for two years; the latter remains a revolutionary socialist."

We can well understand that Shachtman wants to forget that his closest associate in the fight against Trotsky was Burnham. It is not a very honorable memory. He complains that we refer to Burnham-Shachtman a year and nine months after Burnham resigned from the Workers Party the two had set up; whereas Shachtman the other day achieved the signal feat of writing a historical article entitled "Two Years of

the Workers Party," much of it complaining about how ruthlessly they had been expelled from the Socialist Workers Party—but with not a single reference to Burnham who had co-led that split and the founding of the "Workers" Party! What kind of history is this?

What was Burnham's role in the split? The record is clear. Burnham was the ideological leader of the petty-bourgeois opposition, the one who had firm views on the basic questions in dispute, and wrote or co-authored the principal documents of the Burnham-Shachtman group in the fight. Burnham, more energetic than Dwight Macdonald (who followed him out at a slower pace) and more logical than Shachtman, two months later drew the final conclusions from the ideology which he had employed in the split. On May 21, 1940, he stated those conclusions in a letter resigning from the Workers Party. We published that letter in the August 1940 *Fourth International* and analyzed its ideas and implications. *Shachtman never published it, much less analyzed it.* No wonder, for that letter is a deadly commentary on the anti-Trotsky fight which Burnham-Shachtman led.

We said at the beginning of that fight that Burnham's ideas were alien to the workers' movement and predicted that he was on the way out. In the letter, expressing his repudiation of socialism, Burnham admitted that he had held his anti-Marxist views for a long while:

"I disagree flatly and entirely, as Cannon has understood for a long while, with the Leninist conception of a party . . . The 'transition program' document seems to me—as it pretty much did when first presented—more or less arrant nonsense . . . These beliefs, insofar as they involve disagreement with Marxism, are not at all 'sudden' or episodic, nor are they products merely of the recent faction struggle. Several I have always held. Many others I have held for some years. Others have, during the past year or two, changed from doubt and uncertainty into conviction. The faction fight has only served to compel me to make

them explicit and to consider them more or less in their entirety . . . *I should properly have left the party some while ago. On the grounds of beliefs and interests I have for several years had no real place in a Marxist party.*"

With this outlook Burnham became the ideological leader of the Burnham-Shachtman group, wrote its documents, was its Reporter on the Russian question at the party convention, assured its split from the Trot-

skyist movement, founded the Workers Party. He left it two months later. Why? Because he had drawn the consequences of his ideology further than had Shachtman. The pre-fascist but thoroughly anti-Marxist stage of Burnham's ideology remains indelibly impressed upon the group he founded with Shachtman. This is not a slander; it is an elementary political truth.

F. M.

## Underground Austria's Attitude to The Soviet Union

An extremely interesting description and analysis of the underground movement in Austria has appeared in the April 1942 issue of *Left*, the centrist British monthly. The entire 32-page issue is devoted to this article by Karl Czernetz.

Unlike so much that has appeared on the "underground" in Europe, Czernetz' account makes no sensational claims but is, rather, a sober analysis of the extreme limits of underground work.

The principal movement in Austria is that of the organization which calls itself the Revolutionary Socialists. Czernetz appears to have "diplomatic" reasons for not discussing the exact relationship between the RS and the Social Democratic Party of legal days, but his account makes clear that the Social Democratic leaders who fled abroad and who have been claiming to speak for the RS have little right to do so.

Perhaps the most significant differences between the old ideology of Austro-Marxism, which is still held by the leaders abroad, and the ideas of the RS, are on the inter-related questions of the character of the Austrian revolution of 1918, the October revolution in Russia of 1917, and the character and causes of Stalin's bureaucratic regime. On these key questions, Czernetz' account makes clear, the Revolutionary Socialists of Austria are tending to the Trotskyist program and are poles apart from the Social Democratic and Stalinist lines. In reading the following quotations from Czernetz, one should keep in mind his "diplomatic" attitude toward the Social Democratic leaders (and the British Labor Party) which tends to blur the precise differences:

"The underground workers are still busy studying the problems of the incomplete, unsuccessful revolution of 1918. They know that the half-measures of that revolution following the World War proved to be one of the decisive and fundamental causes of the Fascists' rise to power. They have been taught by experience that a Government majority and the administration of a State or a Municipality does not in itself represent actual, substantial power either in the political or in the economic sense of the word.

They have experienced the transformation of the economic and spiritual power wielded by the old ruling classes into a system of brutal compulsion. In February 1934, they saw with horror a great model organization, a strong local majority in the Austrian capital, a unique achievement of social reform, destroyed by a *coup d'etat* within a few hours. They have perceived that it is not enough to be ready to defend one's freedom; that the offensive is not only the best but the only successful form of resistance . . .

"That is the conclusion which the Social Democratic workers of Austria were compelled to draw from their experiences with their own peaceful, democratic, constructive work. They have learnt their lesson and become Revolutionary Socialists . . .

"The Austrian Socialists have never ceased to observe the course of the Russian Revolution and of the great Socialist experiment in the Soviet Union with the warmest feelings of sympathy and solidarity. They have, therefore, been the more grievously afflicted by the bureaucratic and authoritarian development of proletarian dictatorship in Russia. *They know, however, that the international isolation of the Russian Revolution was the chief cause of its dangerous developments. They are also aware of the fact that their own failure in Central Europe in 1918 was one of the primary causes of this isolation and of the subsequent deterioration of the Russian Revolution.*" (Our italics.)

These significant formulations are completely alien to Social Democracy, which rather seeks the cause of Stalinist degeneration within the very concept of proletarian dictatorship. On the other hand the Revolutionary Socialists of Austria have adhered to the conception of proletarian dictatorship as a question of principle for several years.

Holding these essentially internationalist views what, then, is the attitude of the Revolutionary Socialists toward the second imperialist World War? On this question Czernetz is decidedly evasive. He reports that the Revolutionary Socialists are, of course, partisans of the Soviet Union against German imperialism. But what their atti-

tude toward the capitalist "democracies" is he does not directly say.

At one point he writes: "The outbreak of war was welcomed in Socialist circles; it was hailed as the first prospect of a Nazi defeat! But the declaration of war was overshadowed by the Russo-German pact. At that time many workers said: 'How can we persevere in our faith if such things happen!' A report dated February 1941, still underlines this feeling. The workers and the underground militants have felt themselves let down by Democrats (i.e., the imperialist powers) and Communist (Stalinists) alike."

This does make clear one thing: that the universal working class resentment against Stalin's pact with Hitler was also felt among the "beneficiaries" in Austria. It was a particularly deadly blow to the Communist Party cadres in Austria among whom, writes Czernetz, "The Russo-German Pact increased the confusion and intensified the disorganization. One of our reports informed us about the terrible reaction of Communist prisoners in the Vienna Police jail."

Fortunately, the resentment against Stalin's pact did not turn permanently into hostility or indifference toward the Soviet Union. "The heroic resistance of the Russians, the heavy German reverses, have completely altered the outlook. Enthusiasm for Russia is high. The Russian advance of recent months will certainly have brought about a further intensification of pro-Russian sympathies."

While Czernetz is evasive about the general attitude toward the war, it is significant that he notes enthusiasm for the Soviet Union, but makes no note of any enthusiasm for Britain or the United States, Czernetz himself appears to be a supporter of the "democracies." All the more notable therefore is his report that, while the Vienna masses openly show their sympathy for the Jews and behave decently and kindly to the prisoners of war, they fear the consequences of a German defeat at the hands of the "democracies."

One of those consequences will be the dismemberment of Greater Germany. Czernetz quotes a report from Austria: "In spite of their dislike for the 'Prussians' the Austrian workers appreciate the fact that they have ceased to be hemmed in and impeded by unnatural frontiers, which have robbed them of the very possibility of existence. Now, at last, it is no longer possible for a Dutch Mayor to decide questions of vital interest for the Austrian people.' This refers to the League of Nations Commissioner for Austria, Dr. Zimmermann, Mayor of Rotterdam. He was intensely hated by the workers and the people in general, principally because of his hostile attitude toward the constructive work of the Vienna Socialist Municipality."

It is clear that the Austrian workers do not identify their support of the Soviet Union with their attitude toward the powers of the League of Nations!

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