

# Fourth International

## American Labor After the Taft-Hartley Act

*By the Editors*



LEON TROTSKY  
1879-1940

**LEON TROTSKY—**  
The Man and His Work

*By Ernest Germain*

- **The Marshall Plan**
- **The British Crisis**

July-August 1947 \_\_\_\_\_ 25 Cents

## Manager's Column

Due to our strained financial situation at this time, caused by the steep rise in paper costs, printing costs, etc., we find it necessary to change the frequency of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL from a monthly to a bi-monthly—for the immediate period ahead.

The current issue is dated July-August. The following issues of the magazine will be dated September-October, November-December, and so on.

The domestic subscription rate will be changed to \$1 for six issues of the magazine (one year). The price of a single copy will remain at 25c. Domestic bundle rates will remain the same as at present.

The foreign subscription rate will be changed to \$1.50 for six issues (one year) and foreign bundle rates will remain the same.

Present subscribers will receive the full number of issues for which they paid. For instance, if a subscriber paid \$1 for a six-month subscription, he will receive six numbers of the magazine. If he paid \$2 for a one-year subscription, he will receive twelve issues of the magazine.

We sincerely hope that the financial picture will soon improve and that we will be able to return to a monthly in the not too distant future.

\* \* \*

We quote excerpts from a letter sent us by *Mrs. A. C. of Bismarck, N. D.*: "Thanks for publishing my letter in the May FOURTH INTERNATIONAL. That encourages me to accept your kind invitation to write from time to time concerning

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my reaction to the various articles in your paper, THE MILITANT, and the F.I. I'm writing as a mother, being I raised a family of eight children 'the hard way.' For over fifteen years it has been a fight, and here's an organization fighting for the same principles I have been fighting for. From now on I'm taking great interest in your good work. I'm doing what I can, only how

much more I could do working with a strong organization. . . . In July 1943 I went to Seattle to work in the shipyards as a sheet metal worker. One picture sticks in my mind with this verse, 'You build the ships and furnish the dough, and we'll put our boys into Tokyo.' I added, 'Yes, listen to the promises of the war-mad bosses, they'll put them there under a row of crosses.'"

If the subscription number on the wrapper of the issue you have just received is NO. 7 (WHOLE NO. 80) then your subscription has expired. Please renew your subscription at once to avoid missing an issue.

*E. M. of Vancouver, Canada*, writes: "I want to make arrangements for a bundle order of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL to put on the stand with LABOR CHALLENGE (Canadian Trotskyist paper). We are doing better on the stands here and I believe we can use the F.I. to advantage. . . . We feel it is very important at this time to have a correct theoretical presentation of current events. Germain's articles are very interesting to all here and we should have this material available to the public."

\* \* \*

*M. L.*, a subscriber in *Youngstown, Ohio*, comments briefly: "The analysis of Burnham and his book was magnificent." *M. L.* refers to an article by Joseph Hansen in the June 1947 issue of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL. This article entitled, "A Wall Street Drummer Boy," is on Burnham's latest book.

\* \* \*

A reader in *England* pleads for more material on the Soviet Union: "Needless to say, I am always glad to get the F.I. I think you are maintaining the standard very well. I am glad you are publishing old documents of the Fourth International, but I should also like to see you do the same for early Congresses of the Third International, as detailed, yes, and the controversies therein."

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# FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME 8

JULY - AUGUST 1947

NUMBER 7

## American Labor After the Taft-Hartley Act

*By The Editors*

### LABOR DEALT BODY BLOW

The monied plutocracy has succeeded in dealing labor a body blow with the passage of the Taft-Hartley Slave Labor Law. After almost two years of attacking, retreating, maneuvering, tacking, changes of pace, etc., the Big Boys over in Wall Street perfected their technique; mounted an offensive in the press, radio and legislative halls which had the trade union leaders groggy and terrified, maintained their offensive in the face of resistance, and finally, at the climactic moment, sank the knife into labor's flesh. This legislative assault has hurled labor back on the defensive and has kept it in retreat for almost six months. Make no mistake about it: the industrialists have won an important engagement and labor has suffered an important setback. This towering fact should not be lost sight of because of the first-class agreement which Lewis has just recently been able to squeeze out of the mine operators, and the press campaign that it has inspired of pooh-poohing the Taft-Hartley Act.

The various provisions of this law and their meaning have been analyzed many times by the CIO and AFL legal staffs, and it is unnecessary to repeat them here. Suffice it to say that the law is so draconian, that if the various provisions would be literally observed and scrupulously administered, the law could spell the death knell of free unionism in America.

Before attempting to assay the law's various effects in the American scene, let us ask: How did the plutocracy get away with it? How could it put across, with such relative ease, a law so savage, so punitive, so menacing, not only to the rights of the working men but also to the privileges and careers of the labor bureaucrats? The United States, after all, is still operating under conditions of a free capitalist democracy. The trade union movement is very strong. It possesses a huge apparatus in the form of buildings, staffs, newspapers, money. It employs vast influence. It has not suffered any major defeat. Its fighting powers remain unimpaired. Why couldn't it stop this legislative attack? But a year and a half ago 2 million workers manned the picket lines, shut down the country's main industries, halted the union-busting efforts of the industrialists, forced through wage concessions, and had the plutocracy stunned by its exhibition of sheer power. Why is this same union movement so helpless today? What has changed?

### PURE-AND-SIMPLE TRADE UNIONISM

Paradoxical though it may seem, the very victory of the 1945-46 strikes laid the groundwork for the present defeat. Despite its superb display of strength, the labor movement did not go beyond the

limits of pure-and-simple trade unionism in its strike aims. It is true that Walter Reuther, head of the General Motors strike in 1946, voiced several far-reaching social slogans in the course of the battle, but even these were conceived of as little more than incidental propagandistic devices to help win public support for the strike. Reuther later told reporters that these slogans were merely "stunts" to help put the GM corporation "over a barrel." Murray denounced President Truman over the radio during the General Motors strike. But he, likewise, didn't mean to have his denunciation taken too seriously. Murray wasn't breaking with capitalist politics. He was merely bringing "pressure to bear." Thus the gigantic post-war strike wave—matchless in its show of solidarity, dazzling in its capacities for large-scale offensive warfare—was never permitted by its leaders to move beyond the limits of the mine-run economic strike. Right in the midst of the strike wave, it was already obvious to us Marxists that the limited trade union aims and narrow economic program of the CIO were inadequate, not only to improve labor's standard of living, but even to maintain it.

The American trade union movement has grown so big and strong, it is such a power, it commands such resources and mass backing, that it cannot venture on any large-scale undertaking or action without shaking the whole economic edifice to its foundation and inspiring the latent social revolt of the underprivileged and downtrodden. The attempt to limit this labor giant to the hit-and-run methods and narrow economic goals of the old craft unions—striking against a corner grocery or a small building contractor—that is unrealistic and cannot be indefinitely maintained. The capitalists understand this very well. Unfortunately, this truth is not yet appreciated by the serried millions in the union ranks, and is resisted and denied, with a zeal bordering on the fanatical, by the trade union bureaucrats.

### REASON FOR THE LAG

There is a reason for this lag in the thinking of the American workers, even the mass production workers of the CIO. For the first six years of the existence of the CIO, these workers registered uninterrupted gains: Wages were improved, the unorganized were organized, shop steward systems were established, and shop conditions were literally revolutionized. The CIO program of industrial unionism, organization of the basic industries, trade union democracy, shop steward representation, mass action, militant conduct of strikes, solidarity in strike struggles—this, the essential program of the CIO in its crusading days, produced resplendent victories that brought the haughty industrial magnates to their knees; and even later,

assured continued progress and improvement. The war years—what with Roosevelt's organizational concessions to the trade union leaders; and the sharp rise in weekly wages, due to overtime work and the shortage of labor—served to obscure the fact that the original program of the CIO was played out and no longer adequate to solve the tasks at hand.

A great American sociologist demonstrated many years ago that human thinking lags behind its experience. That is why the CIO workers—even the best, most experienced layers—are still sick with the illusion of trade union reformism. As for their leaders, the men who 10 years ago came out of the shops as militant trade unionists, aggressive picket captains, zealous fighters—they have for the most part settled down to the respectable and not unprofitable profession of "labor faking." They have emerged as a new bureaucracy parallel to its older counterpart of the AFL. Its individuals are younger, more aggressive, more socially minded—that is, they tend toward social democracy in their thinking rather than syndicalism; but nonetheless, they are indubitable members of the "profession." Ten years was sufficient for American imperialism to tame and corrupt the leaders of the new industrial union movement.

### CIO WITHOUT A PROGRAM

The very victory of the CIO unions in 1946 brought home with redoubled force the fact that the CIO no longer had a program, that trade unionism alone, even militant industrial unionism, could not cope with the tasks of this epoch, even in the United States; could not improve or maintain labor's standard of living; could not gain economic security for the working class.

No sooner did the auto, steel, electrical unions, etc., win their 18½ cent hourly wage increases than their victory turned to ashes. Because the capitalists, using their monopoly of the levers of government, proceeded with the war's end to smash all price controls. Given the desperate shortages both at home and abroad, and the monstrous expansion of money deriving from the \$260 billion governmental debt, prices began zooming. The 18½ cent increase was quickly wiped out and soon the workers were taking one concealed wage cut after another.

At this point, had the union leaders been awake to their responsibilities and the facts of life, they could have mobilized the masses for a class attack against the plutocracy. The whole course of the class struggle cried aloud for a break with the two parties who had unloosed the plague of inflation upon the people. A climactic moment had arrived for the launching of a new party of the working people to halt the barefaced thievery, the conscienceless profiteering, the criminal misrule of the privileged few. If in addition, an extraordinary conference of labor had been convened in the face of this emergency, and had this conference declared all union contracts abrogated and demanded the insertion of an escalator clause in every new contract—then the battle would have been joined on new higher ground. The labor ranks, seeing the inescapable logic of the whole struggle, and the efficacy of this new program, would have plunged into the fight with fervor and determination. Labor's forces were still fresh and unspent. But in the face of these new more complicated social and political tasks, Murray, Reuther, the Stalinists were as pitiful, as bewildered, as helpless, as old Lady Green was a decade ago in the face of the brutal might of the steel and auto barons.

### LABOR LEADERS BANKRUPT

Meeting in the fall of 1946 in the midst of the worst inflationary spiral since the war, the CIO Executive Board could propose nothing better than "buyers'

strikes," and plaintively called upon Truman to "hold the line" on prices. Even this "program" sounded a bit too radical to the mossbacks of the AFL Council. The AFL spokesmen decided to ignore the government. They addressed themselves directly to the workers to fight inflation—by "increasing production now!"

Isn't this a most eloquent testimonial that simple trade unionism is helpless before the new tasks confronting the American working class?

The strategists of the American bourgeoisie were quick to seize upon this bewilderment and lack of counter-offensive in the labor ranks, and turn it to their own advantage. With diabolical ingenuity they connected up two completely separate things—the wage increases, and the inflationary spiral; and demagogically pretended that the former was the cause of the latter. Then presto! The campaign was unloosed on a helpless people, a campaign more terrifying than was ever a Hitler blitz. Learned economists came forward with yards of statistics; pious clerics quoted the Bible; eminent historians recalled the past; psychologists pointed to human nature. The newspapers poured it on. The radio blared away. And it all added up to the same thing: Wage increases were responsible for the inflation!

Any detective trained in the practice of the "third degree" upon his helpless victims can tell you: There is just so much punishment the human animal can take and no more. Besides, big masses cannot be educated by means of occasional editorials, but by their experience, by action. This is all the more true, as the capitalists have a monopoly of the press. The big trade unions do not own so much as one single *daily* paper; all they possess are tiny house organs. So, in the absence of a counter-program and a counter-campaign from labor's side, the workman grew increasingly depressed by his declining standard of living, and finally big labor sections even came to the conclusion that where there was so much smoke, maybe there was some fire; that possibly wage increases were not the answer, as they only set off new spirals of price increases! The fake capitalist propaganda had struck home.

In retrospect one can see that despite the union's spectacular successes on the strike fronts in 1946, they were not able to even maintain labor's living standards; that real wages continued dropping, while real profits continued going up. The division of the national income was altering—in favor of the rich! That is how the very victories of the unions became a source of demoralization. The workers became terrified at the thought of long, drawn-out, costly strikes—for what? They could not see that the sacrifices would be justified.

### REASON FOR PRESENT MOOD

Thus was engendered the present mood of sulkiness and bewilderment. It was the inflation and the absence of a clear program to combat it that drained the energies of the workers, dampened their will to fight and prepared the ground for the present legislative assault upon labor. It was this instinctive feeling that the labor movement was without a perspective, that accounted for the workers' fear of strikes and their readiness to accept the recent 11½ cent wage increases—which do not even begin to make up for the price rises of the past year. And that is why the capitalist masters felt that the workers were sufficiently softened up for the grand assault that is the Taft-Hartley Act. What they could not find the courage to push through a year ago after the railroad strike, they finally decided they could safely do now. Labor, they figured, had been sufficiently demoralized. The failure of the

union leadership to fight the inflation produced, as we see, results no less disastrous than if they had failed to fight for the integrity of their organizations and their wage standards after V-J Day.

What lies ahead for labor now? How will the Taft-Hartley Law affect the relationship of capital and labor? Some labor writers think the new law will have an effect in the United States similar to the Taff Vale decision in England, when in 1901 the Railway Servants Union was fined over \$200,000 for the cost of a strike. Soon afterwards 29 labor candidates and 14 miner MP's were elected to the British Parliament, and the British labor movement began concentrating its efforts on legal reforms; so that by 1906 the Taff Vale judgment was reversed by Parliament and the Trade Union Disputes Act was passed.

Actually, there are so many telling differences between American conditions today and British conditions in 1901, that the analogy is a far from perfect one.

### MEANING OF THE LAW

First, no man alive can tell precisely what the new law will mean in practice, how it will actually affect the functioning of the unions. The Slave Labor Law is such an exhaustive compendium of all the anti-labor techniques and union-busting methods of the last half century, that were it scrupulously observed and enforced, it would, without a peradventure of a doubt, cut the trade unions to ribbons. It is unthinkable, however, that this huge, self-confident, undefeated movement will permit that—without waging the most ferocious battles in its self defense. This is all the more assured because the new law, *breaking sharply with the guiding Rooseveltian policy* of granting concessions to the trade union bureaucracy, strikes as savagely at the latter and its positions and privileges, as it does at the rights of the rank and file worker.

It is equally sure, however, that the crew of monied pirates who rule the destinies of this land, did not pass this law without meaning to use it. It would be the greatest error to imagine that Lewis' victory establishes the pattern, and that the industrialists will collapse under the threat of a strike. On the contrary, a more correct impression of the industrialists' designs can be gotten from a study of the tragic Allis-Chambers' strike and the recent refusal of the East Coast shipyards to grant the 11½ cent pattern won in the other basic industries. The precise meaning of the new law and how it will be enforced will be decided, not by the interpretations of constitutional lawyers, but in the struggle.

Let us recall at this point the globe-encircling aspirations of the American plutocracy; the disintegration of the whole system of capitalism; the \$260 billion internal U.S. debt; the plans of the masters to drastically lower the American workers' standard of living and to chop up their organizations to the point where they are weak, puny and ineffectual. Let us add to this the fact that the American workers are only temporarily stunned, but have not been defeated in any big engagement; that their organizations are intact; that their ability to wage warfare has not diminished; and that their morale can rise at a moment's notice, given the leadership, or the issue, or sufficient provocation from the enemy quarters. Add all this up and it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the coming stage, especially if an economic depression intervenes, will witness a flurry of furiously-fought defensive battles, which, sooner or later can turn into a new major test of strength.

This is one important difference with the British situation of 1901.

### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TWO

Will the trade union bureaucracy take the road of independent labor political action, as did their British counterparts at the turn of the century? Here again the differences between the two situations are even more important than the similarities. It was possible and relatively easy for the British trade union bureaucrats to organize at the turn of the century an independent political party on the basis of modest advances and small concessions; without breaking with capitalism, and within the fold of respectability. The American trade union bureaucracy confronts enormous difficulties along this path.

We are not speaking here of the technical difficulties usually mentioned by the capitalist or trade union journalists, such as the difficulty in getting on the ballot in many of the states, the huge numbers of signatures required, etc., etc. The electoral laws in the United States are scandalously undemocratic and place every possible obstacle in the way of a new party. But these technical difficulties have been exaggerated out of all proportion, and employed as a bugaboo to scare off workers from thinking in terms of a new political party. A truly mass movement can hurdle all these obstacles without too much trouble.

The real difficulty, so far as the labor bureaucrats are concerned, is that the emergence today of a new labor-backed political party would have earth-shattering effects on the political and social scene in America. The bureaucrats fear—and with reason—that they could not effectively control such a mass movement and would be more its prisoners than its directors. Lacking all ambition of becoming rebels, but seeking rather to demonstrate their "statesmanship" and "broad gauge" attitude to the powers-that-be, the trade union bureaucrats are shying away in fright from launching a new political party. The whole venture appears to them as fraught with more risk and danger than the organization of the mass production workers did to Tobin, Green, Frey, Hutcheson and Co. twelve years ago.

### MEANING OF WALLACE TOUR

Wallace's semi-break with the Democratic Party leadership highlights how hopelessly entangled is the labor bureaucracy in the web of the capitalist status-quo. Wallace's recent national tour was a sensationally successful one. Huge crowds came to listen to him and purchased high-priced tickets for this dubious privilege. The tour's success exceeded all previous expectations and frightened out of their wits the top Democratic leaders. The response to Wallace, taken in conjunction with other recent developments, unquestionably demonstrates that the time is rotten ripe for the launching of a new political party; that such a movement can revolutionize politics and transform the face of America more profoundly than did the crusade for industrial unionism in 1936-37. Yet the bulk of the trade union bureaucracy—outside of the Stalinists and those who cooperate with them—has fled from Wallace. Why? These bureaucrats agree with Wallace 100 per cent on his domestic program. His windy, fuzzy, gutless philosophy of mild social reform is the same as theirs. He was the darling of all CIO leaders during Roosevelt's lifetime. Why is there such a lack of sympathy between them today? In 1935, at least a section of the old AFL bureaucracy broke with the parent organization and went over to head and capture the industrial union movement. Why no similar development today on the political front?

The factor which has split down the middle the trade union movement, as well as the ranks of the liberals, is also respon-

sible for the labor bureaucrats' break with Wallace and the consequent styming of Wallace's third party movement. That factor is the government's foreign policy: its offensive against Russia; and the corollary of this—the drive at home to wipe out the Communist Party. The sharp split inside the CIO and the liberal organizations has nothing to do with trade union matters or policies at home. It is based exclusively on one proposition: are you for the Truman Doctrine? And if you are, will you refuse to work, cooperate or have any truck with the members, sympathizers or fellow travelers of the Communist Party? Murray, Reuther and the other "responsible leaders" of the CIO, not to mention the whole AFL hierarchy, have all passed this examination of the U.S. State Department. They have given satisfactory affirmative replies. Wallace has flunked this examination. Hence the break between the two. That is why the Wallace third party movement remains in a state of suspended animation. That is why its immediate future is highly doubtful. And that is also the reason why Reuther and some of the other of the most vigorous and energetic of the CIO bureaucrats have grown so thoroughly soured on the question of a new political party. As a matter of fact one would not be far wrong in saying that the present third party movement has foundered on the rock of the Truman Doctrine.

#### LABOR PARTY TIED TO LEFT WING

It is difficult to see how the present split in the ranks of the liberals and the CIO can be healed in the face of the sharpening relations between the United States and Russia and the ever more belligerent line of the State Department. Does this signify that no labor party will emerge in the United States? No. But it does mean that the fate of the labor party movement is very intimately tied up with the growth of a sturdy left wing inside the trade unions. The building of a left wing—in other words, the creation of a new leadership basing itself on a left wing program, whose foremost plank will be the labor party—that involves a drawn-out, complicated, difficult process. Even the best militants in the leading union shops and the militant local union

officers have not yet bridged the gap in their thinking between the present bankrupt policies and the tasks imposed by the historical circumstances. Even where individual militants and local union officers have learned the necessity for a new left wing program and approach, their actions still do not go beyond the passage of good resolutions or the adoption of strong protests. But a real left wing can emerge and grow strong only as it aggressively puts forward its own left wing program in opposition to the official program, and as it challenges for leadership the present encrusted bureaucracy.

The American workers had to go through the horrors of the 1929 economic crisis, and then the repeated sell-outs of the AFL bureaucrats in textiles, auto, steel, rubber, etc. during the NRA period, before they could harden, train and thrust out of their midst a new leadership capable of challenging not only America's industrial barons, but also the AFL bureaucracy, which labored with might and main to obstruct, sabotage and destroy the nascent industrial union movement. It is therefore not surprising that it is taking time and painful effort, and entails much trial and error, to organize a new left wing that can overcome the inertia and conservatism of the CIO bureaucracy and challenge the capitalist masters on the decisive political front.

#### THE PROCESS HAS BEGUN

But the process has obviously begun. We see it in innumerable signs: the staging of local political demonstrations; the local labor electoral campaigns (Oakland, California, etc.); the passage by the unions of many left wing resolutions; general strikes in localities against police brutality and strike-breaking, etc., etc. The passage of the Taft-Hartley Act, and the new higher struggles that it is sure to engender, will provide the American workers with a liberal college education in class struggle politics. Often before deciding to leap over a wide chasm, a man will step back in hesitation and fear, seeking to find the internal fortitude to make the jump. That is the picture of American labor today. It is building up its strength and courage and training its cadres for the big leap ahead.

## The Marshall Plan

The Marshall Plan represents the most finished and thought-out scheme of American imperialism to bend ruined and prostrate Europe to its needs, to exert further economic and political pressure to hem in Russia, and to realize hegemony of the continent. The Marshall Plan bases itself on the new relationship of forces and the new facts that have now come into sharp relief two years after the war: Not only America's military and industrial superiority *vis-a-vis* Russia, but the incurable disintegration of the British Empire and its inability to maintain the pretensions of a first-rate power; the helplessness of the European capitalist classes; the out-and-out bankruptcy of Europe; and the utopian character of the Potsdam agreement.

Just as the Potsdam agreement represented the high point of collaboration between Washington and Moscow, so the Marshall Plan represents a high point of the break between these two world powers, and the scrapping of all the former pacts, in the first instance, the Potsdam agreement.

The Potsdam agreement along with the previous agreements at Teheran and Yalta, was an attempt to divide up in a business-like manner the spoils of war between the three major

powers, the United States, England and Russia, and to parcel out the European continent along the same lines. The United States and England would run Western Europe through traditional economic penetration and imperialist methods of control. Eastern Europe would fall into the Kremlin's "sphere of influence." And Germany would be run as a joint military enterprise of the three powers, with a minor cut provided for the country cousin, France.

This outrageous conqueror's "peace" was based further on the infamy called the Morgenthau Plan, which envisaged reducing Germany's industrial potential to pitiable levels and converting this industrial center of Europe—the heart and hub of its pre-war economy—into a "pastoral state." The United States was still obsessed with its self-made propaganda of the "German danger" and that the "mistake" of permitting the rebuilding of Germany after the last war was not to be repeated again. Europe would be stabilized—she thought—by reasonable loans. England and France, as the strongest friendly powers, would be helped to rehabilitate their economies, and as subordinate partners of American imperialism, would stabi-

lize the European economy under American overlordship. Thus Europe would be neatly fitted into America's master plan for reorganizing and running the whole world.

Everything went wrong with this strategy from the economic standpoint.

The attempt to rehabilitate the economies of England and France has failed. The huge \$4 billion loan to England will be used up by the end of the year. Loans totalling almost \$2 billion to France have likewise melted away. And instead of their economies showing improvement, they are both in acute crisis. They cannot revamp their internal economies, their colonial empires are in open revolt. Far from being able to take the lead in reorganizing and stabilizing capitalism in Europe, they have become the prime sources of its disorganization and disintegration. Hopelessly bankrupt France greedily sucks every possible ounce of blood out of the Saar and its "colony on the Rhine," and bickers with England over its share of the plunder of Ruhr coal. England, in control of the Ruhr, has kept this greatest industrial concentration of Europe in a state of economic anarchy. Ruhr coal production averages no more than half the pre-war level. Now England finds itself in such a bankrupt state that it cannot pay out any longer the necessary sums to maintain its military establishment in Germany.

The Kremlin's political methods are different, but its aims are identical with those of France and England—to plunder Germany. First, it proceeded to dismantle the plants in its zone and ship them bodily to Russia. This vampire policy was abandoned, not out of humanitarian considerations, but because it proved unprofitable. The machinery arrived damaged, or with essential parts missing, or Russia found it lacked the necessary skilled labor or personnel. Now it keeps the plants in its zone running full blast, but confiscates 50 to 70 per cent of all production and ships it to Russia—as reparations. Thus Germany, its living flesh torn from all sides by four ravenous wolves, is literally bleeding to death; and its death threatens to drag the rest of Europe down into the abyss, and endanger the existence of capitalism, on a world scale.

The Potsdam agreement stands as a real monument to the abysmal ignorance of the capitalist statesmen who would rule the world. Hundreds of American experts, economists, and engineers studied the German situation. Dozens of governmental reports, studies, and memoranda were drawn up and submitted. The Potsdam plan was the consummation, the ripe fruit of all this heavy "thinking" and "planning." Actually these ignoramuses thought they could stabilize capitalism in Europe, and make a profit on it, and reestablish a world economy—by destroying Germany as a great industrial power and reducing it to a nation of shepherders! Now after two years of the Potsdam agreement, Wall Street's chickens have come home to roost. The criminally insane policy of "de-industrializing" and plundering Germany has led not only to the reduction of the Germany peoples to a state of colonialism—but is dragging down the rest of Europe in its wake, and threatens to become an endless drain on American finances. Two years after the signing of the Potsdam agreement, the United States finds itself further from its objective than it was after the war—of stabilizing European capitalism, converting it into a profitable preserve of American imperialism, and incorporating it into its assigned place in the projected American Empire. In addition, half of Europe, including half of Germany, is in the grip of the Kremlin. The Stalinist oligarchs have closed this vast region to Western capital, have aligned by main force all of the economies

therein with their own and have first call on all its resources and raw materials.

The United States has already sunk over \$21 billion into Europe through governmental loans, property credits, World Bank and International Monetary loans, plus relief. As mentioned before, England and France have all but used up their huge loans with no noticeable improvement in their positions. They again stand on the verge of a catastrophic crisis. Italy's position is even more desperate. As for Germany, it is worse off today than at the war's end. So phenomenally successful have the Allies been in their policies of "de-industrialization" and destruction, that they are now even forced to import food into Germany at their own expense, to prevent the whole structure from collapsing underneath them. Under American tutelage, Western Europe is in such a state of disorganization, demoralization and decay, and such a source of losses rather than profits, that cynical Congressmen have dubbed the whole affair as "Operation Rathole."

Under the whip of stern necessity, the gang of arrogant generals and cocky industrialists who have undertaken to teach the Europeans "our way of life," have been forced to take stock and seriously ask themselves the question: Where do we go from here? Two years sufficed to teach *even them*, that saber-rattling, threats, denunciation of Russia was insufficient to guarantee their hegemony. Despite the big loans, Europe was in danger of collapsing, with all the incalculable political consequences that that would involve.

Face to face with this mounting threat to its rule—not only in Europe but also in Asia!—the American masters sat down to appraise the situation and attempt to think, for a change. The result is—the Marshall Plan.

The Marshall Plan recognizes in effect the new reality; that Europe is partitioned in two with the eastern half withdrawn from the capitalist world market. There is no way, right now, for the United States to breach this iron curtain, short of war. Secondly, the plan to restore Europe through the instrumentality of Britain and France, and on the basis of a crushed Germany, has failed. Therefore the whole old policy is to be scrapped and all the old estimates must be revamped. The Potsdam scheme is to be junked, in toto. Wall Street now proposes to rebuild Germany. The financial magazines talk of rebuilding it to 75 per cent of its pre-war level. They plan to send their engineers, financial experts, and production planners into Western Germany, provide it with capital loans, machinery, raw materials, food and credit; raise coal production to its pre-war level, rebuild partially its steel industry, and get the productive machinery moving again. A revived Western Germany can then proceed to pump life blood into the sclerotic veins of the rest of Europe. By means of this sharp reorientation, American imperialism hopes to eventually see daylight ahead and convert Europe into a profitable undertaking for the Wall Street banks. This is the whole sum and substance of the Marshall Plan, from its economic side. Everything else said about it falls into the domain of technique, diplomatic bunk and window-dressing.

Can Wall Street put the plan across? After all, this very same question of Germany has divided the powers for three decades. For the past two years, France and England have been unable to reach an agreement on the far more modest plan to restore the Ruhr coal mines. But the very weakness of these two powers and their pathetic dependence upon the colossus across the sea—the only solvent imperialist power in the world—means that finally Wall Street will have its way and will push through the plan. France will have to give up

its dream of being first claimant in robbing Germany's coal and uniting it with the iron ore of Lorraine to build up French steel as the center of the new European economy. England will be forced to cede its exclusive control over the Ruhr to the Wall Street banks, and content itself with a more modest role in the projected new Germany. John Bull's hope at the war's end to rebuild the Ruhr under its own hegemony, with France in the position of a junior partner, has gone up in smoke. Both "allies" are being unceremoniously elbowed aside by the American overlords. All England and France can now hope to do is blackmail Wall Street to give them additional loans and other concessions and emoluments, in return for faithfully carrying through the terms of the Marshall Plan.

The Marshall Plan again resurrects the ghost of a unified European economy—a United States of Europe. Like Banquo's ghost, this will not be downed. Time and again, immutable economic needs have demanded the unification of the lacerated and forcibly-balkanized continental economy. Twice in the space of a quarter of a century, German capitalism tried to unify Europe, first under the imperial banner of the Hohenzollerns, and the second time under the Swastika. German imperialism was crushed by its rivals in both attempts, the second time even more decisively than the first. As a matter of fact, so definite has been Germany's last defeat, and so powerless is the rest of European capitalism, so completely has it fallen under American sway, that the Wall Street colossus is now hopeful that it can promote an imperialist-prison unification under its own banner, using a submissive, semi-colonial Germany as its central point.

## Logical Plan

It is apparent that the Marshall Plan is the most logical and sensible plan of action yet devised by American imperialism to realize its imperial aims. Not only that; but the plan was launched with a diabolical disingenuousness. Big hearted Uncle Sam, full of good will and humanitarian sentiments towards his less fortunate kin folk, came forward and said simply: "Stop fighting, boys. Get together. Figure out how you can pool your resources and what you can do to help yourselves. I will undertake to make up the difference and help you out with some loans. Let's all put our shoulders to the wheel, go to work and give the people some security." What could be more altruistic and sensible than that?

West-European capitalism is so insolvent and helpless that no sooner was Marshall's speech delivered, then Bevin, like a gang foreman, lined up in single file all of the European statesmen with their food bowls extended. The London *Economist* observed wryly that "Western Europe now has what is virtually a standing economic committee for answering and briefing Mr. Marshall." The organ of the British banks speaks of the 16 countries participating in the Paris Conference as the "Marshall countries." Grasping, greedy, perfidious Uncle Shylock was thus permitted to step out on the European stage donned in the trappings of a kindly, down-to-earth gentleman attempting to bring a semblance of order and sanity into Europe's shattered, crazy-quilt economy; to unify its efforts, and supplement the lacks with goods and loans. It is not too difficult to imagine that this project must have aroused considerable hope amongst the European peoples. "Possibly this offers a way out of the blind alley," must have reasoned the weary, hungry Europeans.

The Kremlin bureaucracy is so bereft of any program for Europe that the mere announcement of the Marshall Plan was sufficient to drive it into a corner. What a commentary on the

black reactionary character of the Stalinist regime, and its lack of all perspective, that it flatfootedly put itself in opposition to any attempt to unify the European economy. As against Wall Street's plan to organize Europe under its hegemony and for its benefits, the Kremlin proposed—what? Nothing! No plan, no perspective, no hope for the peoples of Europe. Nothing. At this stage of human history, Molotov draped himself in the tattered raiment of Woodrow Wilson and—without even blushing—began spouting about "national sovereignty." Thus in the eyes of the masses, the Kremlin could be viewed only as an obstructionist to the attempts towards unifying and reviving Europe's economy.

Russia's withdrawal from the Paris Conference and its denunciation of the Marshall Plan likewise produced consternation in the governmental circles of East-Europe. For these states, it meant that the door was slammed tight, for the present, towards any possibility of securing loans and credits from America. Consequently, the reconstruction of their own battered economies would have to proceed very slowly. Particularly for Poland and Czechoslovakia, who hope to take the place of pre-war Germany as the industrial supplier of the Balkan and Danubian countries, this was a cruel blow.

What are the prospects for the Marshall Plan? Once the Wall Street tycoons overcome the opposition of the European capitalists, blackjack Congress to vote the necessary funds, and the plan actually gets into operation, its initial success is entirely possible within certain strictly defined limits. By pouring several billion dollars into Western Germany, and abrogating the Potsdam rules, the Ruhr can be partially revived; with coal, steel, machinery, railroad equipment, etc. again provided Western Europe. If nothing more, at least a semblance of international exchange can be restored, and the living standards of the masses raised to levels, which while remaining very low as compared even with pre-war days, would nevertheless be an improvement over the present.

In contrast, there is little prospect for significant growth of East-Europe's industries or impressive revival of its agriculture, and the betterment of its standard of living. Despite the wholesale looting and exaction of reparations from Eastern Europe, Russia's Five Year Plan is progressing poorly. Industrial areas that were occupied by the Nazi armies are producing less than 50 per cent of pre-war levels, and the targets in the main sectors are not being attained. For many, many years, Russia will be unable to supply the countries under its domination with their main needs: machinery, manufactured goods, farming equipment, fertilizer, credits and loans. Even Eastern Germany, whose industries—in contrast to the enforced idleness of Western Germany—are going full blast, faces a dismal future. Not only because Russia steals the greater part of the production, but because the stockpiles of existing raw materials are disappearing and Russia lacks a surplus of raw materials which it can ship in sufficient quantities into Germany.

It is clear that even a mildly revived Western Europe will exert a murderous economic pressure upon Stalin's European domain. The East-European peoples will blame Stalin and his bloody regime for depriving them of preferred Western loans, the possibility of integrating their primarily agricultural economies with the industries of the West, and thus bettering their living standards. The strong urge of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Finland to attend the "Marshall Plan" conference at Paris will be increased tenfold. If the Marshall Plan gets going, it will prove a far more potent weapon against the Kremlin than either the Greek or Turkish loans or both.



What is Russia's perspective in the face of this ominous turn of events? The Molotov Plan? That is just sound and fury signifying nothing. The trade agreements recently concluded in Eastern Europe change nothing and add nothing to the dire economic prospects of this area. In reality, the Kremlin, like Micawber, is hoping something will turn up and help it out of its difficulties; that *something* being an economic crisis in the United States, which will force American Big Business to turn its main attentions to home. But even this hope is not soundly based. Precisely in a period of economic crisis, America's preponderance will assert itself in even sharper and more pronounced manner in European, as well as world affairs. Meanwhile, the Kremlin is holding firm to its "policy" of military and political domination of its "sphere" and milking dry the "ex-enemy" countries. The brilliant strategists of the Kremlin have finally worked themselves into a pocket where Wall Street can pose as the unifier and constructive force in Europe, whereas the Kremlin appears as a savagely vengeful plunderer and conqueror intent upon fleecing its victims without mercy or limit, caring nothing about the welfare of the peoples.

Can the Marshall Plan afford Europe a new period of stabilization, and therefore a mitigation of the class conflicts

which are again on the rise in France and Italy? The very opposite results are far more likely. Even before the Marshall Plan is a going proposition, the Wall Street bourbons have forced the Communist parties out of the Italian and French cabinets. One can imagine how ruthlessly they will wield the dollars in an attempt to blackmail the masses and force them behind authoritarian governments. But the European masses, who have demonstrated so unmistakably that they wish to rid themselves of the scourge of capitalism, will resist, we may be sure, both the mailed fist and the blandishments of dollar diplomacy.

There is another important aspect to this question. Even if the Marshall Plan achieves its most optimistic goals, it cannot and will not even begin to attain the 1936-38 standards, or the restoration of a world market. The partial revival, taking place on *extremely low levels*, rather than darapening the struggle, can have the effect of reviving the confidence of the masses—especially of Germany—and encouraging bolder and more sweeping actions to free Europe from the dead hands of the tyrants across the Atlantic. The revival of the West-German working class, in and of itself, will be a powerful catalyst in spurring the struggles of the European masses working for liberation.

# The Crisis of British Imperialism

By DORIC DE SOUZA

## 1. Economic Impasse

Britain is facing a fast maturing crisis which threatens her whole imperialist structure, as well as her position as a ratable world power. The economy of the British Empire, its military and political might, and finally its colonies as a rich field of exploitation, are equally involved. British imperialism is actually in a struggle for its very existence.

We may take the economic question first. Britain was the first of the great Imperialisms to emerge as a world economic power, drawing immense reserve from her ready made empire, which she used not only as a source of plunder and loot, but also as a source of raw materials for her industries, as a market for her industrial goods, and as a field for the investment of profit-bringing capital. Her national economy was based on a vast export-import trade, backed up by the returns of her capital investments. Being first in the field brought immense advantages. But it had disadvantages too as will be seen. When Britain was faced with the competition of young and healthy rival Imperialisms—Germany, the U.S.A. and Japan—who exercised the "privilege of backwardness" in organizing their industries more rationally, on a more modern basis, Britain did not seek to meet this competition by renovating her own industrial organization which "just grew" on *laissez faire* principles, and was relatively inefficient. She took refuge and strength from a renewed *export of capital*, the proceeds of which compensated for her loss of markets in the face of rival industrial competition. As a result, British economy became more one-sided than ever, and took on a parasitic character. We may illustrate this briefly: Before 1914, Britain had the lion's share of the Eastern and Far Eastern market,

supplying between 40 and 50 per cent of the goods imported by India and China. Between the two world wars, however, Britain lost her footing in these markets. By 1939 she had only 10 to 20 per cent of the import trade of these countries. She was exporting less and less, and her imports, to maintain her *luxury* standards at home, grew greater and greater. She met her import bills more and more from the returns on her capital investments abroad, which rose to the tune of £4000 millions before World War II.

A good picture of the parasitic state to which Britain was reduced was given by the British themselves when they begged for the American loan. It was then pointed out that Britain imported goods to the tune of £800 odd millions annually, including basic necessities like food, as well as every luxury. But she exported only £400 odd million worth of goods to meet the bill! Where did the balance come from? A small part came from "services" such as shipping, insurance, financial commissions. But the largest part came from *dividends on her investments*. That was the real essence of British Imperialism.

Let us sum up. Britain's industry was old fashioned and poorly organized. Her trade was heavily lopsided. She was a parasitic country propped up by her investment returns. *But today this prop is gone or going!* That is the hub of the economic question for Britain, as she herself pointed out in requesting the American Loan. She has sold these investments and is bound to sell more. That was the price of the war. So how is she to survive?

She can survive if she raises her exports to far above their 1938 standard, nearly to double, and/or reduce imports. But

can she do this? As for imports, to reduce them means to lower the standard of living in Britain, and though this is happening, the British masses will not easily put up with this. The attempt to "grow more food" and thus reduce imports has been just as successful as in India, which is not saying much. As for exports, to increase these, means a thorough-going reorganization and modernization of British industry.

Now this latter is a Herculean task, far too great for the decadent British capitalists. In the hope that the Labor Party could do something to put Britain's economic house in order, by means of nationalization, by ousting parasitic privilege and anarchic private enterprise from its grip on British industry, and by modernizing industry, the British people swept Labor into power in 1945. The people were under the illusion *first* that the Labor Party was a real working class Party, hostile to capitalism; and *secondly* that a mere Parliamentary majority would suffice to ensure the success of Labor's allegedly "socialist program." They will have to learn bitterly from experience that these are hopeless illusions. The first lessons, in the shape of economic crisis, cannot long be delayed.

The Labor Party, despite its vast proletarian base, is essentially a bourgeois Party, wedded to the same Imperialist system as its conservative predecessors. Only it is a party *adapted* to the pressure of the British working class, in fact a party designed for wholesale *class collaboration*. For this there was plenty of room in Britain in the past, due to the super-profits drawn from the colonies, a part of which went to bribe the upper privileged layers of the working class.

In the face of popular hostility to capitalism in Britain, and popular disgust with the old "muddling" policies of the Conservatives, so openly designed to protect vested interests, the British capitalist class had no alternative but to let the Labor Party hold the baby, certain that while this party was able to deceive and soothe the masses by its "socialist program" it would do nothing to jeopardize the fundamental interests of British capitalism. This is indeed the kernel of its policy. But the bankruptcy of this policy itself, will not long be *concealed from the world*.

Let us see how the Labor Party met the threat of the economic crisis. It scratched at the surface of the problem of decaying British industry, and made a pretence of ousting parasitic privilege by its policy of nationalization, which was extended to the coal industry, the transport system, and the Bank of England. But can this make a vital difference? In the first place mere nationalization is no cure-all. Secondly, the policy of nationalization was permitted by the British capitalists *only* to the extent that it did not endanger their basic interests, but on the contrary served to stabilize private enterprise and profits. The most "difficult," least profitable, and most "dangerous" sectors of the economy, and these alone, were permitted to be nationalized. The coal industry, for example was despaired of by the capitalists themselves, it had reached such a stage of chaos. It was to the interest of the bourgeoisie to permit the nationalization of this industry, (a) because it left the nation to bear the debts and burdens of this industry; (b) it left capital free to exploit the more profitable sectors of the economy and (c) the difficulties met with in reorganizing this industry might well prejudice the public against nationalization itself. The nationalization of the Bank of England and Transport similarly, do not really prejudice capitalist interests, but safeguard them to a certain extent.

On the other hand, a thorough reorganization of British industry demands not scratching at the surface, but the whole-

sale expropriation of private enterprise, which the British bourgeoisie *will not permit, and the Labor Party has no intention of attempting*.

It is easy to prove that the half-hearted policies of the Labor Party will not take Britain anywhere, but will merely help to bring the economic crisis to a head. The huge American Loan of almost 4 billion dollars, would have been a tremendous point of support in reorganizing industry, *if this had been at all possible* within the framework of capitalism in Britain. But what has happened to this loan? How much of it could be utilized to reorganize industry? Nothing at all, practically. The loan is already running out. British industry is as far away from reorganization as ever. In this colossal fact, that this astronomical loan has served no useful purpose, lies adequate evidence of the bankruptcy of the Labor Government (i.e. of the British capitalist class), in the face of the economic crisis.

But are the facts really as dismal as we make out? Are we not exaggerating? The basic fact of the frittering away of the loan is sufficient to prove the case outlined. But it must be explained why, *as yet, there have been no serious manifestations of the crisis*.

## Only a Breathing Space

The explanation lies in two facts: (a) American support, economic and political; and (b) the temporary boom conditions immediately following the war, due to a world shortage of consumer's goods. We may give these their due weight.

1. The United States, despite her colossally increased economic bargaining power (her productive capacity *doubled* during the war), despite her capacity to straddle the whole world, is not *for the moment* pressing her advantage, as against Britain. This is due to political reasons. Just as the U.S. is freely throwing money to Turkey and Greece, so also is she forced to bolster up Britain in the game of power politics, against the threats "from the U.S.S.R." (really the threat of revolution). She cannot at the moment allow Britain to perish on the rocks. Hence she replaced Lend Lease by the Big Loan. Hence also, though in giving the Big Loan, she could have insisted on Britain throwing open the Empire to her goods, she was content with only partial concessions. Of course the astute Britisher takes full advantage of this even to the extent of blackmailing America with her own weakness, as was done in the appeal for the loan. Thus the artificial shock absorbers provided by America have muffled, up to now, the rumblings of the threatening catastrophe for Britain. But these shock absorbers have only temporary value. *In the long run*, Dollar Imperialism has other fish to fry than to dry-nurse an aged and crippled British Imperialism. Of course, so long as American aid comes along, and the tobacco and tea comes along too, the British public may not awaken to the fact that it is sitting on a volcano. But the fact (we stress it again) that this American support cannot be utilized for long term reorganization, and only serves to *postpone* the real show down—that is what is ominous.

2. As we mentioned above, the crisis in Britain may be delayed somewhat by the fact that due to a world shortage of consumer's goods, there is still some resiliency in the world market and the competition among sellers (i.e. with the U.S.) is not acute. But these boom conditions are clearly going to be short-lived, since the purchasing power of the masses on a world scale has far from increased. When these boom conditions disappear, *then* the economic problems of America her-

self will be so acute, she will be forced to clear away the goods produced by her mammoth industries, and will not be able to afford any more charity towards her economic rivals. She will be forced to stave off her own crisis by dumping her goods everywhere, regardless of the political consequences. Thus time is doubly against the British capitalists.

These are the basic reasons why the manifestation of crisis may be postponed for a short time in Britain. But if anyone wants to believe that it is postponed indefinitely, he will have

to conjure away the solid facts cited above.

The Labor Party in Britain, far from grappling with the economic crisis, has postponed it by playing with the American Loan. Lacking the power or the will to interfere with British capital interests, they are playing for time. But time will soon be up. The only positive long-term planning being done by the British Government (intended in the long run to rehabilitate the economy of the Empire) is in the field of colonial policy.

## 2. Crisis in World Relations

Politically and militarily, the basic rivalry in the world today is that between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Both in Europe and Asia, Britain's military might is overshadowed, and she can do little more than to maneuver between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. In Europe, for example, her finger in the pie is a very small finger. Russia threatens to swallow the whole Eastern half, and the U.S. has intervened decisively in Germany, as well as in Southern Europe, in Greece and Turkey. Incidentally, the U.S. has become a Mediterranean power, straddling the lifeline of the British Empire, and dislodging Britain from her dominant position.

This political and military weakness has also its economic consequences. Quite apart from Britain's own economic weakness, the consequences of her deterioration as a great power effectively block her out of the world market. Thus she can play only a small part in the "reconstruction" of Europe. She cannot tie Europe to herself economically. One part of Europe will be geared to the U.S.S.R., and the other is America's playground. In the Middle East fight for oil, and the general development of these regions, Britain is similarly left out in the cold. Certainly in the Far East she has to reconcile herself to America taking the economic spoils of victory, for America and not Britain won the Pacific war. South America also is definitely an American preserve. If Britain has any leeway at all to maneuver (and this is doubtful), it must lie *within her Empire*. That is why it is natural that the British Government, in the face of its crisis, is turning its main attentions to and pinning its only long-term hope of recovery on the Empire.

The Empire itself is threatened in three ways, however. Firstly, there is the threat of colonial revolts, and these have already reached such dimensions that Britain cannot hope to hold them down indefinitely by force alone. Secondly, there is the threat of American economic penetration within the Empire, a threat which, as we have seen, although not unpostponable for a short time, is a very real threat. Thirdly, there is the threat of Russian expansionism, and the whole problem of the Middle East, which threatens to become a terrible battle ground in the not distant future.

As stated above, if the British Government has a single constructive policy of a long-term character, this policy turns on the question of consolidating the Empire. In this Empire, of course, the chief problems lie not in the Dominions, where a fairly sound basis of partnership (even at the cost of great concessions) has already been set up by Britain. It may be possible, without very great difficulty to persuade Australia, Canada and South Africa to line up with Britain in some form of Imperial preference. But the colonies, especially India, present a much more thorny problem. Hence it is to these

that the British Government, in one last great effort to stave off collapse, must turn.

Let us look very carefully, therefore, at Britain's new colonial policy. In the first place, it is a new policy, breaking substantially and radically with the traditions of the past. Some well meaning leftists, in their anxiety to demonstrate that British Imperialism is not being liquidated, make the mistake of acting as if nothing had changed in Britain's colonial policy, and thus make it easier for those interested in supporting the present British policy (like Gandhi) to pretend that "Britain has suffered a change of heart," "she is sincere," and "intends to give freedom to the colonies" etc. Neither of the above estimates is correct. Britain has suffered no change of heart. Perfidious Albion, capable of every hypocrisy and moral cant, remains true to her material interests. Attlee, like Churchill, has not become the King's first minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire. He is trying precisely to save it—but by a radically *new* policy. Let the Labor Party speak for itself, through the mouth of Patrick Gyrdon Walker, Secretary to Herbert Morrison: "The aim of the Labor Government is to *save* the Empire. This will be accomplished by giving India, Burma and Ceylon self-governing status, and seeking to keep them within the Empire. The Empire will be very powerful indeed if that comes off."

We must grasp the full meaning of this statement, since it represents *the basic maneuver* of British Imperialism in the face of its deteriorating international position.

Until recently, Britain ruled her colonies politically with an iron hand, while economically she fleeced them left and right. That was Imperialism as Curzon and the old breed of Imperialists understood it. But the structure reared by the old Empire builders, though adequate for its time, was not built to last. Its chief defect was that it gave the colonial regime no substantial base within the colonial population itself. Hitherto, the only colonial class on which Britain relied was the feudal class of Princes and landlords. But in recent times the specific gravity (economically and politically) of these feudal elements became heavily reduced, and with it their capacity to speak for the colonial people as a whole.

The alliance with the native feudalists exclusively further committed British Imperialism to a thoroughly reactionary policy in the agrarian field, a factor adding tremendously to the drive of the colonial revolts. Because of the agrarian problem, the support of the hundreds of millions of India's peasants is guaranteed to any class that boldly assaults Imperialism.

The extreme poverty and therefore lack of purchasing power of the mass of the population, and British hostility to industrial expansion, complete the picture of the arrested

development of the colonies, while they were plundered one way or another by British finance-capital.

Apart from this, the sweep and rise of colonial revolts in Asia have convinced the British that they cannot hold down the colonies by force alone, and have to mix fraud with force, at the least. The August upsurge, followed by the I.N.A. demonstrations and the Naval Mutiny in India, the resistance to the reoccupation of Burma, the chaos in Malaya, all proved this to the hilt.

This need to thoroughly reorganize the colonial regime, if it is to be maintained at all, was doubled and trebled for the British by her economic crisis. If her economy is to revive at all from the stunning blows of the war period, then the only economic reserves she can mobilize are those of the Empire.

### 3. New Turn in Colonial Policy

The new colonial policy has three main aims, which we may list in order of importance. They are 1) to stave off the imminent colonial revolts by securing a broader base for the Imperialist regime; 2) to use this broader-based regime as a point of support for rehabilitating the colonial and therefore the Imperialist economy, making possible more solid resistance to penetration by the U.S.; and 3) to strengthen resistance against Russian expansionism, through this same political stabilization.

These are the aims of the new colonial policy. Its substance can be stated more simply: to make stable alliances with the colonial bourgeoisie, hitherto in semi-opposition to Imperialism and never fully supporting the imperialist regime. Hitherto Britain used its political and economic power to stunt and frustrate the expansion of the colonial bourgeoisie. Nevertheless they have grown with the capitalist development of the colonies and today represent, in India, a far more important force, socially and politically, than the feudalists. They, in order to secure a better bargain from Imperialism, have put themselves at the head of mass movements against the British regime. Of course since they fear revolution, and its threat to capitalism, as much as the imperialists, they only *divert* the mass movement to gain their own ends. But the opposition of the bourgeoisie, however non-revolutionary and anti-revolutionary, gives a broader sweep to the mass struggle and weakens the imperialists. The British realize that agreement with the colonial bourgeoisie cannot be postponed.

Economically, the British desperately pin their faith to the idea of joint exploitation of the colonies in partnership with the colonial bourgeoisie. *Alliance with the colonial bourgeoisie*: this is an "algebraic formula" with a general meaning as follows—(a) loosening of political ties giving the national bourgeoisie a greater share in the government of the colonies and full responsibility for the regime; (b) the winning away of the bourgeoisie from the national movement against Imperialism; and (c) the fostering, by the consent of the native bourgeoisie, of closer politico-economic ties with Britain, and the joint exploitation of the colonial market. In short, it is a scheme, as the Labor Press puts it, of "Empire by consent" rather than "Empire by force." The consent, of course, is that of the native bourgeoisie, not of the colonial masses.

The arithmetical values in the algebraic formula, i.e. the actual degree of loosening of political domination, the actual

Political stabilization, in the form outlined below becomes absolutely essential if Britain is to take economic refuge in her Empire resources, and develop some form of self-sufficiency and resistance to U.S. penetration.

The political weakness of the colonial system built up by the Imperialists was demonstrated during the war when at the first threat of external attack the whole edifice in Asia threatened to collapse. Collapse actually took place in Malaya and Burma. No substantial section of the colonial population was ready to raise a finger in defence of the British Empire in the face of Japanese attack. When this was realized in Britain it provoked a great shock, and made the Imperialists understand that the Empire could no longer be run in the old ways.

Hence a new colonial policy was adopted.

terms of the partnership, must in the nature of things vary from colony to colony, according to the actual relationship of forces. Thus in Ceylon, the tame aspirations of the native bourgeoisie are satisfied with "self-government within the Empire," which means only a variant of *direct rule* by Whitehall with the local administration transferred to native hands. In Egypt, where the feudal elements are still very powerful, and the capitalist development backward, the alliance is on a share-and-share basis with the old feudal and new bourgeois allies. In Burma, the situation was complicated by the Japanese invasion and the wholesale breakdown of British rule. Hence the concessions are wider in that colony. In India the situation is met by a *qualitative* change in the regime, i.e. *from direct to indirect rule*. The whole responsibility for government will lie in Indian hands. On the other hand, in India the feudal allies are not to be jettisoned entirely. The division of India, the decentralization of rule, and the propping up of the native Princes and the concession of Pakistan in some form mean that Britain wants to retain a more direct base in India.

It must only be emphasized that *in no case* does the loosening of political ties mean the liquidation of British Imperialism, or the freedom of the colonies. The whole scheme is designed to protect and preserve British imperialism, and there will be adequate safe-guards, both in the finance-capitalist dominance of Britain and in the field of political and military arrangements, to preserve the substance, if not the form of Imperial power.

This is the great long-term plan of British Imperialism to save itself from destruction. Needless to say, it is a thoroughly reactionary plan. Firstly, Imperialism under any disguise, cannot solve any of the urgent problems of the colonial masses. Secondly, economically speaking, it is now one world and it is no longer possible to liberate the productive forces within any artificially sheltered limits, such as Imperial preference would impose.

It is more to the point to ask: Will the whole scheme pay? This is, unfortunately for the British imperialists, very, very problematic. In the first place, it is a relatively long-term policy. But the crisis to be faced cannot be postponed to the Greek Kalends. Can the economic problems at home be solved, or their solution indefinitely postponed? We think not. Will America continue her present policy of bolstering Britain politically and economically for long enough to permit the latter to rally and stand on her own feet? Very doubtful, and

in this instance time is not a favorable but an adverse factor, since the post-war consumers' boom threatens at any moment to dissolve, forcing America to go all out to plunder the world market in order to postpone her own home crisis of over-production. Finally, will the colonial revolts conveniently postpone themselves till a relative stabilization is achieved? This

is least likely. That is why this article began by saying that Britain is face to face with a terrible crisis, greater in some respects even than the crisis of the war. The entangled knot can be cut through successfully only in one way: If the British working class chooses the revolutionary road out of the impasse.

# Leon Trotsky—The Man and His Work

By E. GERMAIN

"Lenin is the reflection, the image of the (Russian) working class, not only in its proletarian present, but also in its still more recent proletarian past . . . He absorbed from the national *milieu* all that he needed for accomplishing the greatest revolutionary action in all history . . ." Thus Trotsky characterized the founder of Bolshevism, and it is thus that Lenin appears today. Lenin and Bolshevism could not have been born except as an outgrowth of the whole of Russia's ancient past. An imperialism that combined the defects of autocracy with its own special defects, developed so as not to breed the illusion of pacifist evolution, which gripped the workers' aristocracy of the Western countries. There wasn't a trace of fatalistic passivity in Lenin, and it could not have been otherwise; the leader of the Russian revolution from his youth was oriented toward action. In fact, Lenin's life is a most striking example of the concentration of all the forces of a personality toward the realization of the historical objective of the class. The leaders of the Western working class movement were unable to view Lenin before 1914 as anything but an incomprehensible trouble-maker; after 1914, for the most part, they hated him as an implacable enemy.

Trotsky was different. In spite of a childhood spent on a farm, he was influenced not so much from the peasant forces of his people as from the living forces of the imperialist world's great capitals to which his first two emigrations took him: London, Berlin, Vienna, Paris, Madrid, New York. Of all the great Russian revolutionists he was without doubt the most "European," the one who absorbed Western civilization most thoroughly, who impregnated it with that revolutionary dynamism which existed intact within the Russian working class; and thus succeeded in giving it its highest expression in this century.

With Lenin, action is the natural expression of his being and, starting from the concrete, inscribes itself on a body of ideas from which it remains inseparable. With Trotsky, action is the natural fulfillment of thought which seizes the concrete on the wing without ever letting it go. There is here only a shade of difference but it is this nuance which gives a finished maturity to their collaboration beginning with 1917.

These two giants did not live the simple life of legendary heroes. "Only incurable philistines imagine Lenin as a saint who never made a mistake," said Trotsky on this subject. Their faults and errors are closely linked with their profound natures. There is in Lenin, in his writings of 1905, in his ideas before 1917 on the nature of the Russian revolution, a reticence to leave the realm of the immediate, to push to its end the concept of the proletariat as the motivating force of the revolution. Not to exclude in advance the possibility of a revolutionary alliance between the proletarian party and an eventual party

resting on the peasantry, meant for Lenin not to eliminate in advance the most immediate, direct, and least hazardous way of achieving the overthrow of the autocracy. This error, however, remains at all times within the framework of his revolutionary temperament. He could not have anything in common with Menshevism, which likewise characterizing the Russian revolution as being confined at first to the boundaries of the bourgeois revolution, surrendered to the "liberal" bourgeoisie (non-existent, said Trotsky, and events proved him to be right!)—the leadership of the historic process. His will, rigorously turned toward the solution of every "theoretical" problem was still too hidebound to be able to conceive of the immediate conquest of power by the proletariat. Twelve years later, when Trotsky's theory was realized, thanks to the leadership of Lenin, he did not hesitate for a single instant to make the necessary turn in ideas as in action, but did he not say at the decisive moment that "this gave him vertigo?"

Trotsky, for his part, standing politically at the opposite pole from Menshevism, was for a long time led astray by a too great confidence in the possibilities of uniting divergent political currents by purely intellectual persuasion. It is true that with a stroke of genius, he formulated, while still very young, his concept of the Permanent Revolution, which served as a key to an understanding of most of the revolutions of the twentieth century, thus distinguishing himself not only from the Russian revolutionists, but also from those of all Europe. Nevertheless, he remained too attached to the "traditional" and inadequate organizational forms of Western social democracy to understand the necessity for the split which appeared so brutal in the eyes of the European leaders of the workers' movement. The application of Bolshevik organizational methods was needed for all Europe; even Lenin himself had not yet grasped this. Trotsky, who all his life had a horror of fatalism, and could not rest content with the empty hopes of the German leaders that the process of "evolution" would "automatically" eliminate the "extravagances" of Lenin, nevertheless struggled in practice for organizational reconciliation. That is why he permitted himself to embark on the notorious "August bloc," which was entirely hostile to his political concepts. This is the explanation for the paradox that Lenin, guided by his fierce will to achieve his goal, for a long time remained an admirer of Kautsky, although the first in his own party to break sharply with the organizational concepts of centrism. While Trotsky, whose more profound knowledge of the European working class movement enabled him to understand long before Lenin the bankruptcy of Kautskyan ideology, remained for many years the defender of centrist organizational principles in Russia.

But what is characteristic of truly great men is that quality

which permits them at decisive moments to go beyond their own particular limitations, raise themselves to the height of the tasks which history in a burning fashion presents to their class. This transformation was brought about "naturally," without any clashes or internal conflicts, both in Lenin and Trotsky in 1917. The same Lenin who all his life clung with superhuman obstinacy to a once-adopted position on principles, abandoned from the first day of the Russian revolution his formula of the "democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants," which was "by-passed by events," as he said, and became the fiercest partisan of the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Trotsky, the "conciliator," understood at the same moment and with the same quickness, that "unity" between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks "was no longer possible" (Irony of history, it was Stalin who drove him to that) and thus became, in Lenin's own words, "the best Bolshevik." Only the revolution could bring about this two-fold transformation with a minimum of difficulty, because both of them, true revolutionists that they were, felt and understood that the revolution was necessary to open the way to the victory of their class.

Trotsky has often been accused of having been too ambitious, too "personal" in his attitude toward the party, too haughty in his attitude toward the comrades. These accusations are absurd. Lenin, who possessed a psychological insight of rare quality, saw much more clearly when he revealed the weakness as a "too pronounced attraction" on Trotsky's part "toward the administrative side of things." But even the elderly Angelica Balabanov, who too often simply takes tidbits of corridor gossip and transforms them into the motive forces of history, made this penetrating remark: During the Revolution, at the very moment when the crowd was bearing him on their shoulders, Trotsky was able to efface more than ever before the pronounced "personal" traits of his character. Never was the arrogance of the "leader" more foreign to him than when all the threads for unleashing the revolution were gathered together in his hands. "With his natural tact," said Angelica, he knew how to impose the severest self-criticism when that was most necessary, and when it is nevertheless most difficult for the majority of mortals. It is here that we see the real strength of character which is at the base of every great action.

There was nothing in Trotsky of that vulgar "Marxism" which thinks it can read the historical process in statistics just as the palm-reader reads the future in the lines of the hand. Going far beyond "economics" or "sociology" as separate studies, he sought to capture *human reality* in all its aspects. That is why he was without question one of the greatest historians who have ever lived, the one who succeeded more than any other in that "integrated resurrection of the past," which has been only dreamed of since the time of Michelet. With his penetrating eye he encompasses, in a moment, the great movements of the masses and the personalities of the political leaders, the price of bread and the tone of the literary gazettes, the movements on the stock exchange, as well as piquant anecdotes overheard in the salons. His powerful brain is like an immense crucible in which are remoulded once again all the constituent elements of history. The subjects treated in his works range from philosophy, through political economy, applied economics, sociology, political polemics, history, biography, military technique, to journalistic essay and art criticism. How sum up a work so vast? Is it simply political journalism? Or is it "applied Marxism?" It is that, but it is much more besides. It is a tremendous and continuous effort to understand and interpret man in his entirety, in order to be able to preside over his transformation. It is an unceasing effort to subject all phases of

human activity to conscious criticism, so that they may be transformed under the direction of man's critical consciousness.

## Universal Interests

Although he had universal interests, Trotsky was at the opposite pole from dilettantism and eclecticism. This universality of interests, in order to be real and effective, requires their fundamental unity, their integration in a concept of the world which never stops "becoming," but which remains no less a unity, and which at the same time possesses precise outlines. More preoccupied than any other contemporary thinker with the many-sidedness of human reality, Trotsky is precise and careful in his documentation to the point of pedantry, and at the same time broad in his perspectives, capable of breaking away from the immediate in order to grasp the fundamental direction of events. Starting from the reality of the thousand and one aspects of human activity which are observed directly, he traces with the hands of a magician-sculptor a majestic panorama in which the essential outlines stand out with perfect clearness.

The "leitmotif" which links all his works is the materialist conception of history. This "leitmotif" he employs with a mastery that is unequalled; sometimes going from the "essential reality" which is the class struggle, to the most "far-removed" manifestations of intellectual life; sometimes digging the soil, with a science confident of itself, in order to probe the profound class roots of political and ideological phenomena. To each of these tasks he brought too much passion to be able to tolerate a negligent, superficial, or *blasé* attitude toward Marxist theory. It was for him an indispensable key to the understanding of history. Thanks to this key he always made history live for us in his works. He was at one and the same time its severest critic and its most eloquent herald. But he was able to be both of these only because he understood history so well.

There is in Trotsky a complete unity of theory and practice, of thought and action. Lenin poured on the renegade Kautsky the indignation of the proletariat toward one who is a traitor to their interests and their struggle for emancipation. Trotsky castigated with his contempt and bitter irony Kautsky's thinking which was in decay because divorced from action, a practice which was truly corrupt because divorced from principle. This unity between his own thought and action was most clearly revealed in revolutionary strategy and attains its highest form in the *military* strategy of the victorious proletariat. The revolutionary leader shoulders an overwhelming responsibility when he finds himself at the head of the masses; the military chief has the same responsibility, plus the added responsibility for the very short lives of the thousands of soldiers who battle under him. Apart from the cynics, the morally deranged, or the luminaries, who are mentally deranged, men, in the face of such responsibilities, remain for the most part exposed to their doubts, their convictions, their wills, their capacity for making decisions. Trotsky, the outstanding military leader, possessed the additional resources of Trotsky, the revolutionary leader of the proletariat. Just as he understood how to feel the pulse of history, so with a penetrating glance he could take up a military map and determine the decisive place where all efforts should be concentrated. The resolution, the power, the steel-sharpness of his actions, spring from a clear understanding and an unshakeable conviction in the justice of the cause of the proletariat. Addressing the Red Army soldiers was for him the same as speaking on September 1917 in the *Cirque Moderne* in Petro-

grad. Directing the work of the staff office of the Southeastern front was only the logical continuation of his direction of the Revolutionary Military Committee; and this, in turn, logically flowed from his work on the Central Committee of the Party.

One would seek in vain in his speeches to the Army, or in his attitude at the front, for a trace of the arrogance of the saberrattler, or of that sinister "military spirit" which betrays an absurd discipline, a sterile routine and a bureaucratic approach, the whole combined with a "strategy" which makes sport of men as it does of the cheapest material. As against all the usual generals—Stalin's present Marshals included—who see no other means of preserving the cohesion of their troops than by appealing to their lowest instincts and by the threat of the knout, Trotsky never ceased to appeal to the revolutionary consciousness of the oppressed. To pseudo-revolutionary romanticism, with its opposition to centralized coordination in battle—only the counter-balance to bourgeois discipline—he counterposed the conscious and voluntary discipline of the proletariat. On this subject he declared twenty years later: "Even during the civil war I tried within the army—even in the midst of campaigns—to give full opportunity to the Communists to discuss all military decisions. I have even discussed these decisions with the soldiers and, as I have explained in my autobiography, even with deserters." Who could reproach him for not always being able to realize this completely, since it was necessary to improvise everything in the midst of a world of enemies, and so many enemies even that he had to utilize? The essential consideration is that unity of thought and action involves a *comprehension* of that dialectical interaction between the means and the end which guides every true revolutionist in his acts, by his desire above all to achieve the raising of the consciousness of his own class.

## Soldier of Revolution

This soldier of the Revolution differed very much from the image drawn of him not only by his enemies, but also by not a few of his admirers. The Hungarian White Guards in a celebrated caricature have represented him as a Red Lion, seated on a gigantic pyramid of skulls. On the other side, Karl Mayer tells us that at bottom he had in him a certain gentleness whose origin undoubtedly was an intelligence which seemed capable of understanding everything. This gentleness is seen again in his last words where, after expressing his confidence in the victory of our movement, he adds that all his life he has struggled for a society which would be free of all violence.

And how could it be otherwise? In the heart of every true Marxist is a belief in man, without which all revolutionary activity is devoid of meaning. Throughout the last 20 years of his life, years of battling in retreat, of struggle against infamy, calumny, the growing degradation of humanity, he maintained that unshaken faith, without being ensnared by illusions, and retaining to the end his magnificent clear-sightedness. He liked to repeat that man's climb from the semi-ape stage has been long and arduous but that nevertheless no little progress has been achieved. And how well he knew how to scorn professional pessimists who are always trying to avenge themselves on humanity for their own illusions. All life ends in death, he said, but nevertheless statistics are constantly proving that men do not for this reason stop coming into the world. . . .

At the foundation of all human activity there is, in reality, an indestructible optimism which is only another expression of the instinct of preservation. Marx's favorite adage was the Latin

one: "Nil humani a me alienum puto" (Nothing human can be alien to me). Trotsky understood that a revolutionary leader must be a man among men, and through his best works there runs the thread of this optimism, which is only an attachment to life, and which will always constitute a supplementary attractive force for all healthy men: "To love life with open eyes, with a critical spirit which never surrenders, without illusions, never embellishing it, but always taking it as it is, for whatever it may have to offer us and even more for what it may sometime become—that is an achievement of the highest order!" This achievement he realized better than any other.

But his faith in man has nothing in it of the mystic or irrational, it is only the highest form of consciousness. To love man is to grasp the alienation in one's own nature; it means to rebel against the social inequality which has produced this frustration; it means to struggle for man's integration into a classless society. In Trotsky there is not only complete unity of thought and action, but also of thought and feeling. The sharp sword of aggressive reasoning is animated by the fire of artistic sensibility; and this formidable combination imparts to his speeches and writings, at one and the same time, that majestic cadence and that menacing spirit of warning which characterizes the multitudes in their march toward the revolution! The workers who heard him immediately felt his complete communion with them, and they instinctively put confidence in him because they felt that he not only defended their interests but also that he hated, loved, struggled, suffered, and rejoiced with them. Trotsky did not idealize the proletariat, but he understood it perfectly, for he knew that none can lead the workers to victory without understanding them, and that no one will ever completely understand them without truly uniting with them.

His whole past and his whole character thus predestined him to become the standard-bearer of the opposition against the nascent bureaucracy in the USSR. Even when he was living at the Kremlin, the thick stone walls never separated him from the life of the masses. Even while in power, his ear was attuned to all the expressions of humor, criticism, and dissatisfaction of the workers. With that conspicuous gift for generalization characteristic of him, he was able, beginning with 1923, to discern underneath that murmur of dissatisfaction, the beginning of a gigantic realignment of historic forces. In this realignment of forces, his place was predestined in advance. How he must have scorned those who ceased to be conscious builders of history in order to become transmission belts for hostile social forces. And how pitiful must have appeared to him the conservatism of those who satisfied their ambitions by driving to their offices in a limousine! His own "ambition" embraced a vaster purpose: The revolutionary emancipation of the world proletariat! When the political orientation of the Kremlin began to deviate from that aim, he parted company with it in the same natural manner with which all his life he has known how to attune his actions to his convictions. "The error" with which so many superficial critics reproached him, of having "hesitated" to "struggle for power" in 1923, is in reality an additional expression of that inherent quality; never to act contrary to his convictions. The usurpation of power by the bureaucracy was by itself an indication for the Left Opposition of the ebbing forces of the Revolution. To struggle "for power" in a period of the passivity of the masses, is the work of adventurers and standard-bearers of reaction; even if these people occasionally hide themselves in the folds of a revolutionary flag of the past. For those who conceive of "power" only as deriving from the revolutionary assault of the *masses*, the tasks in the period of reaction were

determined as those of preserving the revolutionary traditions, of maintaining contact among the advanced elements of the party, of analyzing the developments of Thermidor and thus preparing the future revolutionary wave on the world arena as well as in the USSR. These are the tasks which the Left Opposition, and the world cadres of the Fourth International which have sprung from it, have without respite tried to accomplish under Trotsky's leadership.

Thus was Trotsky: every one of his acts was completely conscious! Replying to a question of the French novelist Tatayans who was questioning him regarding his "idea on happiness," Trotsky replied: To think—to write—to realize one's ideas—. It is thus that he lived in his hotel rooms in Paris, in the salons of the Kremlin, in the semi-prisons of his third emigration, and in that sunny field where death finally felled him. Indifferent to the vicissitudes of the material conditions of life, his genius ripened, his thought clarified, his style was enriched and simplified along a straight line. His life in itself is thus a monument of conscience, a monument to the future man, the man who will be set completely free of material servitude, and who will no longer live alienated from his own nature.

## Authentic Marxism

Marx denied that he was a "Marxist" and Lenin scorned the word "Leninist." He merely considered himself a "consistent revolutionary Marxist." In his turn, Trotsky in his works has carefully placed the term "Trotskyism" between quotation marks and for years characterized this term as the designation on the part of Stalinist bureaucrats for Bolshevism. As one cannot doubt the authentic Marxist character of Leninism, so little can one doubt, after an objective examination, the authentic Leninist character of Trotskyism. Moreover, just as Leninism possesses no less its own physiognomy and constitutes a definite stage in the development and enrichment of Marxism, so Trotskyism appears today with its own specific traits, as a broadening of the teaching of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. Trotskyism is the *Marxism of our epoch*, and that in the profoundest sense of the word.

The chief merit of Trotsky from the point of view of the history of ideas consists in this: He has literally preserved Marxism in the midst of a general recession in the workers' movement and of a complete degeneration of the traditional parties and ideologies. Without yielding an inch, he has preserved the Leninist heritage, on the theoretical as well as the tactical plane, against the enveloping movements of the epigones of Lenin and the scribes of Stalin. With the same tenacity, he defended this heritage against the feeble yet incessant frontal attacks of reformism and centrism.

The ideological decline of the great traditional movements was much more rapid and profound than their organizational decomposition. In its turn the actual break in *practice* with class politics on the part of European social democracy had in 1914 preceded its complete *theoretical* rupture with revolutionary Marxism. German Social Democracy adopted a party program that was officially "reformist" only in 1921 (program of Gorlitz) and definitively so only in 1925 (Heidelberg program). But one can state without exaggeration that beginning with 1914, the Social Democracy ceased paying any attention to theory. The rare "theoretical" writings which appeared after this date consist entirely of empirical rationalizations of successive phases of party "tactics." "The ideological efforts" of the degenerated Social Democracy consisted of an occasional attempt to "justify" theoretically the criminal passivity of their

leaders confronted with the decay of capitalism, their cynical rejection of all revolutionary activity, their avowed incorporation into bourgeois "democracy," their cowardice before the attacks of the bourgeoisie, and their bad conscience with regard to the rebels in their own ranks. The result was a mixture of mechanistic fatalism and evolutionary cretinism. Hilferding "foresaw" several months before the outbreak of the 1929 crisis a "long period" of soaring capitalist prosperity!—which left the reader only the choice between ennui and pity.

The ideological decay of the Stalinist bureaucracy came about with still more overwhelming rapidity. "Theory" became the abject servant of a "tactic" which was inspired by the appetites of the bureaucrats, just as in the Middle Ages philosophy was the servant of theology, a necessary covering for the temporal power of the Church. Never had it fallen so low, from the height of Lenin's genius, down to the heavy feet of the professional apologists of the Great Leader. The servility of the Stalinist "theoreticians," whose only function consisted of garnishing with "classical" quotations the spicy dishes which the too-famous cook prepared for the proletariat of Russia and the entire world, robs them of all esteem, even that of their own masters. But this complete ideological impotence is armed with the most powerful material apparatus that history has ever known, and the mass of inept and lying books, manufactured in chain fashion, combined with opportune raids by the GPU, is a social reality which has proven devastatingly strong. Theory becomes a power when it takes hold of the masses, Marx said. The lie has been proven a no less terrible power in the hands of an unscrupulous apparatus, so long as the masses do not surge back upon the political arena.

One trembles at the thought of what would have happened had Trotsky died in 1923. Of course, Marxism, the expression of contemporary social reality and its internal dynamics, would have been preserved by others. Tens, later hundreds and thousands of young theoreticians and tacticians of five continents, would have striven to arrive by common effort at a Marxist conception of actual events. But the balance of these efforts, in proportion to the positive results attained, would have witnessed a striking amount of wasted effort and lost time. Within his own person, Trotsky filled the gap created in the history of the working class movement by the disappearance of one whole generation, which was corrupted and physically broken by Stalinism, demoralized by the dismal succession of defeats, and annihilated by the mounting waves of reaction and fascism. The polemical works of those who had materially "vanquished" Trotskyism have passed into oblivion. Was it not because the authors themselves were for the most part executed as "Trotskyists?" But the works of Trotsky dating from this period continue to be studied by thousands of young workers and intellectuals throughout the world, because these works alone represent the Marxist tradition in this black period in the history of humanity. The education of new revolutionary Marxist cadres is possible only thanks to the works of Trotsky. In preserving Marxism during the years of retreat and reaction, he has built the springboard for the ascending period which is just beginning. In the face of Stalinist victories, Trotsky used to rely upon the verdict of history. Seven years after his death, this verdict is already clear in the sphere of ideas—as Trotsky never doubted that it would be!

Like any method of investigation and systemization of the facts of experience, Marxism can be maintained only on condition that it be continually *enriched*. Any attempt to fall back defensively on "tradition," without any effort to encompass the new developments which are continually taking place through



the sieve of the materialist dialectic, is certain to bring about a fatal ossification of the theory and to end in its certain death. Trotsky's represents the only serious effort to interpret in the light of Marxism those disconcerting phenomena of the last three decades, namely: The development of fascism, the usurpation of power in the USSR by the bureaucracy, the zig-zag evolution of soviet economy, the monstrously accelerated decay of the capitalist world, and the general crisis in the revolutionary leadership of the proletariat. Lenin had advanced and enriched the heritage of Marx by his study of imperialism, of the world war, and of the first revolutionary wave. His work is Marxism in the epoch of the rise of imperialism and of the October revolution. On Trotsky has fallen the heavy task of enriching the heritage of Marx and Lenin in the epoch of reaction and triumphant counter-revolution. He has thus continued the tradition with the same implacable clarity, the same breadth of vision, the same sharpness of analysis possessed by those who preceded him.

The instinct to preserve privileges, except in the case of individuals who consciously break with this, imparts to thought a narrow and insurmountable framework, against which every effort at "objective" social study comes to grief. The dynamism of revolutionary proletarian thought lies precisely in its "emancipation" from every social privilege; its "material interests" coincide with a "disinterestedness" from the social point of view. But the workers' bureaucracies, both reformist and Stalinist, have in their turn become privileged and conservative social forces in contemporary society. Just as they have debased ideology in general to the level of serving their material greeds, so have they rendered their own thought sterile and impotent for the new investigations which history is constantly demanding. The betrayals of the traditional leaderships during the Spanish Civil War, which were historic expressions of their own material interests as opposed to those of the world proletariat, took the form of a total incapacity to *understand* the significance of fascism, the decay of capitalism, and the revolutionary strategy of the proletariat that could vanquish these additional obstacles. It is not by chance then that for two decades not a single work has appeared by a Stalinist or reformist "theoretician," except as an isolated or secondary phenomenon. All the enrichments of Marxism in the field of history, sociology, the study of art, literature, or psychology, are in works by the disciples of Trotsky, or by those who have been educated in his spirit. Certainly, the period of reaction, which has barely ended, is not favorable for the flowering of a large generation of Marxists. This generation is only beginning to knock at the door. Nevertheless, the interest in theory which is to be found in the ranks of the sympathizers or partisans of the Fourth International, their efforts to study the most pressing ideological problems—the materialist conception of important aspects of history not yet clarified; the relationship between Marxism and psychology; the investigation of the subjective factor in history; the study of the materialist dialectic; the attempt to elaborate a materialist conception of art and literary criticism—all these efforts, begun by young theoreticians in France and China, in India and the United States, in Argentina and Palestine, have been done under the sign of the works of Leon Trotsky. In these works themselves is to be found an endless treasure of fertile ideas and outlines of new methods of investigation. An entire generation will be required to elaborate on the suggestions interspersed through his works. This generation will work and succeed only thanks to the school which was built by his efforts.

But the preservation of Marxism and its enrichment through the study of the new phenomena of our epoch—that alone does

not demarcate the place which Trotsky occupies in the development of Marxist thought. There is an essential part of Marxism which could not have been systematized before his time.

Marx's work in its entirety is only the scientific interpretation of the world and of the tendencies inherent in its transformation. As for the conscious realization of this transformation, and the actual proletarian revolution, of that he was able to leave us only general considerations and numerous isolated remarks, but no systematic study. On the contrary, the tenacity with which he resisted the elaboration of any "advance plan," the formulation of any "general rule," arose precisely from his clear understanding that the detailed study of proletarian strategy and tactics for the conquest of power must be based on a broad *revolutionary experience*. He lived to see only the initial effort of the Paris Commune in this scheme of ideas. That is why he had to leave to his successors the task of completing Marxism, in this sense.

Lenin, for his part, made a tremendous effort to state precisely and demarcate the role of the *subjective factor*: the importance of the party, the formation of the vanguard, its relationship with the class. These efforts, combined with a precise and systematic *tactic of struggle*, which was principled, realistic, and revolutionary, are considered by us today, and deservedly, to have a universal application; Lenin, however, at least up to 1914, limited his vision to the Russian Social Democracy. Beginning with the downfall of the Second International, however, his field of action rapidly broadened. He became the educator of the whole world proletariat. His writings on the strategy of *revolutionary defeatism*, on the building of revolutionary parties, on the tactics of the united front, on national and colonial questions, as well as the whole of his practical activity during and after the Russian Revolution, constitute the most precious teaching that the proletariat possesses for the elaboration of a revolutionary policy. Nevertheless, Lenin's experience was limited to the Russian revolution and to the first stage of the German revolution. Subsequent experience has shown that the general study of the subjective factor, of the role and policy of the revolutionary party—which constitutes Lenin's contribution to contemporary Marxism—has to be completed by a special study of the *internal laws of the development of the proletarian revolution*, of the mechanism of revolution, and of the tactic of the revolutionary party with a view to the conquest of power. This indispensable complement to Marxism, this "science of revolution" in the double sense of the word, could be systematically elaborated only on the basis of a wider revolutionary experience than that of 1917. Trotsky made a brilliant beginning in *Lessons of October* and *The Communist International after Lenin*. He has more precisely elaborated it to the point where it now exists in exact outline form, in his *Permanent Revolution*, his *History of the Russian Revolution* and his writings on the subject of Germany, France, and Spain between 1930 and 1938. The substance of this historically important work is to be found in the programmatic writings of the Fourth International. Thus these represent not only the heritage of Marx and Lenin, the teachings of the *Communist Manifesto*, of *Capital*, of *What is to be Done?*, *Imperialism* and the *First Four Congresses of the Communist International*, but also of 30 years of proletarian victories and defeats in an epoch when the world was constantly swinging between revolution and counter-revolution.

Lenin educated three generations of Russian worker-militants in the art of building the revolutionary party and the principled development of its political tactics. But only in 1917 did he arrive at a clear understanding of the dictatorship of the

proletariat. Most of the leaders of the Bolshevik Party were unable for their part to assimilate the lessons of October 1917. No more did the revolutionary militants who came to the Comintern in 1919 have an understanding of these lessons on the basis of their own individual development, heavily handicapped as they were by the "peaceful" development of the pre-war years, their isolation during the hostilities, the too rapid and tumultuous unfoldment of the post-war revolutionary wave. The subsequent development of this vanguard was completely blocked by the degeneration of the Third International beginning with 1923—the most nefarious crime of Stalinism against the world proletariat. In place of a selection of a revolutionary leadership on the basis of its political maturity, there occurred a reverse selection, on the basis of servility and obedience to the Kremlin. When the Trotskyists were excluded from the C. I., everything had to be started all over again. The building of a new revolutionary vanguard was begun, one that was capable of acting in accordance with the lessons of the October victory and the subsequent defeats. It was to this task that Trotsky devoted most of his time. It is the accomplishment of this task which will have the greatest influence on the future course of history.

This building of a new revolutionary vanguard was undertaken under the most difficult conditions, at a time when the world working class movement was dragged into a long series of defeats. Thus of necessity, it was a movement "against the current." Around the *living Marxism*, personified by Trotsky, were gathered above all those elements who had not been discouraged by the defeats. These were always the most fearless, but were not always the best. Those, who because of their more intimate ties with the proletariat, reflected the illusions and discouragements of the class, did not enter our ranks. Those who never succeeded in integrating themselves in the mass movement came with less hesitation to the small handful of outcasts. The education of this vanguard too often took the form of a literary and academic exercise, for the only real school of revolutionary strategy is in active participation in the *revolutionary* movement of the *masses*. The vanguard, due to its isolation, developed a number of defects, characteristic of a whole period of recession: excessive factionalism, sectarianism, the presumptuousness of the intellectual with its inevitable corollary, professional proletarianism. Work was directed inward and political discussions, indispensable to any healthy organization, took on a too abstract character, rarely consisting of a critical review of tactical concepts in the light of their *concrete* application to the workers' struggle. Moreover, in Europe as well as in the USSR and the Far East, Fascist, Stalinist, and Imperialist terror implacably mowed down the most courageous and capable of our cadres, thus destroying at each turn the *continuity* in education and experience of this new vanguard. All these factors which expressed themselves differently in different countries, can be summed up thus: *Since a genuine revolutionary vanguard can be built only in close contact with the activity of the class, and a genuine revolutionary policy can only be elaborated in contact and under the critical eye of the masses, we possessed in most countries at the close of the period of recession only groups of cadres, only skeleton organizations. But the first test, that of the war, has shown how effective was this necessary preparation. Some people may have deserted; here and there human material may have shown itself to be too weak; new groups of revolutionists have had to take up the torch in not a few countries, but everywhere the basic policy was formulated, a common line was elaborated, the same method of organization was applied,*

thanks to the program, tradition, and the cadres which Trotsky had created in the years before the war. On the basis of the program he elaborated are gathered together all those who desire to build genuine revolutionary parties. The tradition which he first began in the history of the working class movement is that of a genuine world leadership which is more than merely the sum total of the national leaderships, or the authority of one organization leading in its wake all the others. Thereby, one of the essential causes of early Comintern weakness might have been avoided and supplementary guarantees provided for the harmonious development of our movement.

At the time that the Fourth International was founded, Trotsky predicted that it would count millions of partisans within ten years. Sarcastic critics maliciously enjoy citing this prognosis and asking where these millions are. But historic predictions are not payable on a certain date like bills. The historic process has developed more slowly than Trotsky anticipated but it has developed along the same line. In countries like France, India, United States, Bolivia, we count tens of thousands of workers and poor peasants who sympathize with our ideas, and on the world arena, there are already, without doubt, several hundreds of thousands. They are still few enough compared with the forces necessary to bring our work to fruition; but it is even now an impressive army compared to our feeble forces of 1938. The first important wave of worker's struggles in France was sufficient for organs as diverse, but equally hostile to our movement, as the Stalinist *L'Humanite* and Henry Luce's *Time* magazine, to discover "Trotsky's shadow" projecting itself upon events. This alone is sufficient to imbue us with confidence.

We very strongly doubt that we shall meet our critics again in the next stage!

## Slower Tempo

All of us have erred in our immediate perspectives; in drawing too-mechanical analogies with 1918. We were not sufficiently impregnated with Trotsky's fundamental concept that we had to "prepare for long years, if not decades, of wars, uprisings, brief interludes of peace, new wars and new insurrections." It is now clear, however, that we are not passing through a brief period, analogous to that of 1918-1923, in which the revolutionary energy of the proletariat was rapidly exhausted by the extreme violence and the rapid succession of decisive struggles. Such a period can no longer be repeated in Europe because the bourgeoisie is incomparably weaker and its economy incomparably more shaken; and decisive decisions on the part of the proletariat have been impossible because it started from a much lower level of consciousness and organization than that of 1918; it did not have behind it 30 years of progress, making it confident of its own forces, but instead 25 years of continual defeats, which have left a dangerous heritage of skepticism and discouragement. This paradox must be understood, that the rhythm will be slower in the stage of the atomic bomb than in that of the first bombing planes. But it will be precisely this slower rhythm of development which "will provide the young revolutionary party with opportunities of testing itself, of accumulating experience and of maturing." We no longer have the living brain of Trotsky, who with his incomparable clarity of thought, would have made easier the task of discovering under the surface of an apparently little disturbed sea, the powerful currents which are already proclaiming the next tempest. But we have his method as a guide and his teachings on the subject

of the nature of our epoch which permit us to confidently repeat today what he himself said in the past:

"History is a powerful machine in the service of our ideas. It works with merciless deliberation and insensibility, but it

does work! We believe in it. It is only in those instants when its greedy mechanism absorbs the very hot blood of our hearts that we have the urge to cry out: 'This thing you are doing, do it more quickly!'"

# Trotskyism in China

## *A Report*

Our organization in China was put to the serious test of a long war for the first time since its formation. When several old comrades were released from Nanking prisons and arrived at Shanghai at the end of August 1937, they found that the organization was plunged in chaos. Our organization had been isolated from the masses for too long a time and, what is more, it suffered heavily under the terrorism of the Kuomintang. Almost the whole old generation of Trotskyists were in prisons. So it was not surprising that the handful of inexperienced comrades that remained did not know how to meet the war. Only after the comrades who returned from the Nanking prisons provided the organization with a new impetus, only after a serious ideological re-education, was the movement put in order. We convoked a conference of the Shanghai organization at the end of 1937, where we unanimously adopted our guiding political resolution. It can be stated without any exaggeration that our League was rebuilt only after the 1937 Conference, that only on the sound basis of our political resolution were we able to combat all the ideological deviations.

We have gone through two big ideological struggles under the pressure of war.

### 1. The Struggle with Chen Du Hsu

The defensive war against Japanese imperialism began with the inauguration of the New Koumintang-Stalinist bloc. It was an ill omen for the Chinese workers and peasants. But, in the absence of a genuine revolutionary party, the petty bourgeoisie and even the workers pinned their hopes on the new bloc. They had suffocated in the big concentration camp of the Koumintang's terrorist rule too long and they were longing for a new turn. The radical intellectuals controlled and collectively reflected the public opinion of the petty bourgeoisie. They sang the new chorus of Mao Tze Tung's opportunism. They misrepresented the shameful capitulation of the Communist Party as a big leap in human history. They flew to Yanan as the Moscow of China. Their optimism was unlimited. It was from the almost uncontrollable delirium of the petty bourgeoisie that Chen Du Hsu's opportunism emerged. It was the echo of the Stalinist Chorus. We want to point out that Chen Du Hsu's degeneration is not accidental. He turned his back upon our League almost immediately after he left prison. He completely isolated himself from the proletarian environment and dissolved himself in the vulgar atmosphere of the petty bourgeois politicians. We tried to help him out by every possible means, but he lost his head and went so far as to declare in a letter to one of our old comrades in Shanghai that he decided to combat damned Bolshevism to the very end of his life! His degeneration was not a personal matter. It was a question of the complete retreat and disillusionment of the old Bolsheviks. Because almost all the comrades who belonged to the 1925-27 generation were grouped around

him, Chen's retreat exercised a decisive influence over them. That was the main reason why we had to conduct a stubborn, uncompromising struggle against this "old man." Thus we hoped to save as many of our old co-thinkers as possible and, furthermore to give our young comrades a thorough education. We did succeed in the second instance although we could not collect too much fruit on the first.

### 2. The Struggle with Sectarianism

Trotsky often said that sectarianism is a big obstacle in our ranks. It existed too in the movement of Chinese Trotskyism. Almost at the same time that Trotsky was relentlessly denouncing the absurd politics of the Mexican ultra-leftists, Comrade C, one of our old comrades, put forward the same infantile theory that the Sino-Japanese war was merely a war between Chiang Kai Shek and the Mikado. On the basis of this naive conception, he preached defeatism in the defensive war of China, even at its very beginning. But his politics were too far out of line with his surroundings. At that time, the strong opportunist illusion nourished by the delirious petty bourgeoisie proved fertile only for the growth of Stalinist and Chen Du Hsu's thoughts.

Because his line called forth no response, C retired to a small town for a long time. Only after the world war broke out in Europe, did he return here. The outburst of the world war coincided with a great military debacle on all Chinese fronts. Wuhan was occupied after an ineffective resistance. Canton was shamefully betrayed by the impotent and corrupt Kuomintang officials and generals. The Kuomintang leadership, the Koumintang-Stalinist bloc and the war itself appeared hopeless. The dark clouds gathered on the horizon once again. Disappointment, disillusionment and demoralization gradually spread among the masses, especially the intellectuals, who just yesterday proclaimed themselves the pioneers of the "new era." The general mood of the Chinese petty bourgeoisie changed rapidly from extreme optimism to extreme pessimism. And this petty bourgeois pessimism coincided with the Stalinists' new turn.

In view of the coming Japan-Russian Pact, the Chinese Stalinists cynically played a new tune: "China should take a neutral position in the coming imperialist war between America and Japan," "if our war against Japan be mixed up with the imperialist war, its character will change from progressive to reactionary," and so on and so forth. That is the original of the theory of the "changing character of the war." The influence of petty bourgeois pessimism and Stalinist demagoguery found an echo in our ranks too. Not long ago when we had to conduct a fight against Chen Du Hsu's opportunism, we had come up against a harmful eclectic tendency that obstructed our way. This tendency was represented by some old comrades who tried to bridge over the wide abyss between

Chen Du Hsu and us by means of rotten compromise. Now, after 24 hours, the same eclectic tendency represented by the same comrades suddenly moved from right to left. They simply repeated the Stalinist line, because they preached the same theory of the "changing character of the war," and furthermore, they drew the logical conclusion of "defeatism" from Stalinist "neutrality." The eclecticism in our ranks was a reflection of the petty bourgeois mood. Only thus can we understand these seemingly absurd swings. Just as they clung to Chen Du Hsu yesterday, so now they found their ideal leader in C. This time, they tried to bridge over the abyss between sectarianism and Marxism. Encouraged by our eclectics, C, the hitherto isolated defeatist, bravely took the road of rebellion against us. He openly attacked our Transitional Program. He stated that under present Twentieth Century conditions, we had only the alternative of Imperialism or Socialism. He denounced the movement of colonial emancipation as reactionary and consequently he adopted a neutral or defeatist position in the Chinese war. He proposed that the colonial program of the Fourth International be revised. We gnashed our teeth upon learning of this light-minded and absurd revisionist argument. The shameful capitulation of the eclectics caused much anger in our ranks. Only a short time ago, when they chased after Chen Du Hsu's shadow, these people labelled us as "hopeless sectarians" or "ultra-leftists." Now, they themselves capitulated before the genuine ultra-leftist, C, and called us "hopeless opportunists!" We had to wage a new battle in defense of our Marxist program. After a thorough discussion lasting six months, we defeated and isolated them completely. We convoked a national convention to decide the issue on the eve of the Pacific War. The convention of 1941 condemned the ultra-leftist politics and adopted a political resolution to meet the coming Pacific War. The new resolution not only reaffirmed our political line adopted in 1937 at the beginning of the Chinese war, but also fully harmonized with the spirit of the International resolution adopted in 1941.

Our struggle was obviously the continuation of the struggle of the American Party in 1940. Our victory was so complete that the minority was reduced to a tiny group of four generals without soldiers.

### 3. Chinese Trotskyism in the War

In the first four years of the Chinese war, almost a whole generation of the old Bolsheviks left us. Headed by Chen Du Hsu, they abandoned our small organization with an air of contempt. Now, with the outburst of the Pacific war, came the split of the minority led by C. We stubbornly pointed out from the first that under cover of their radical phrases, the minority only represented a petty bourgeois tendency of pessimism and desertion. Our minority had the same class basis as the Shachtmanites. They deserted our ranks under the pressure and threat of the same imperialist war, and what was more significant, they unexpectedly met in a same political camp—the well-known "third camp"—as soon as the Pacific war broke out. (Now we know that the Shachtmanites held the same theory of the "changing character of the Chinese war." What a coincidence!) It is therefore not surprising that they drew the same conclusion on the plane of organization. They simply trampled under foot the principle of democratic centralism, and virtually under the same pretexts. The only difference between them was this: The Chinese minority was a miniature of the Shachtmanites.

The split was no fatal blow to our movement. We had to meet the more serious blows of the war. The year after the

historic attack on Pearl Harbor, our organization was cut to pieces. Every local unit had to rely on its own initiative and courage to meet the emergencies. Only common ideas and traditions continued to bind us together. No news, no communications could be exchanged. Even after the war, we had to wait another one and half years to get a complete picture of our organization on a national scale. Wherever we had a group of comrades or a unit, we had a glorious epic to record. We say that without any unnecessary exaggeration. Let us give you some brief sketches.

1) Our comrades in Shanghai maintained the official organ, *Tao Tsing Pao* ("Struggle") even under the most difficult conditions. They continued revolutionary activities among workers and students. Our young student comrades went to work in the factories. They successfully penetrated into the ranks of the Communist Party and won over some militants. One of our comrades led numerous strikes in the textile factories and was finally put under arrest by Japanese policemen. A girl student comrade paid a careless visit to the prisoner and was taken into custody at once. Completely terrorized by the brutal torture, she went mad and betrayed everything she knew. A group of young comrades were immediately arrested. Comrade L, who just left the hospital after a serious operation, had a narrow escape. Comrade P also escaped from the dead hands of the Japanese butchers. We have to make a deep reverence to this old Bolshevik who not only showed his great abilities and courage in the face of emergencies, but went hand in hand with us even under the most dangerous wartime conditions.

In spite of the fact that our enemies knew his name very well, he bravely lectured in two universities under a pseudonym and converted a group of Stalinist students to our cause. After the wholesale arrests and raids, our Shanghai organization almost broke down. Other responsible comrades were forced to hide and Comrade L was paralyzed in his sick bed again. Yet Comrade P boldly and calmly continued to fight. Not long before the Mikado's surrender, our comrades in prison were set free. They went through a heroic struggle in the iron grip of Japanese policemen. They could and did stand up under the cruelest torture. Without their heroism and self-sacrifices, we could not even dream of the revival of the Trotskyist movement in post-war China.

2) Our comrades in Shantung Province became the best fighters in the guerrilla war. Some comrades fought in the Stalinist Eighth Route Army. But as soon as they were discovered, they were shamefully shot, one after another. One of our young comrades died a very heroic death. Before the first Stalinist bullet killed his voice, he made a revolutionary speech attacking Stalinism among his fellow fighters and cried out the revolutionary slogans to his last breath. How many comrades lost their lives at the criminal bloody hands of the Stalinist murderers? We cannot yet give an exact account.

We met the same fate in Kuomintang-controlled area. For instance, Comrade Cheong Tzi Ching, one of our leading comrades in North China, was brutally killed by the Kuomintang. Comrade Cheong formed a guerrilla detachment in his native country in Shantung immediately after he was released from Nanking prison in August 1937. But the guerrilla detachment was no sooner formed than it was disarmed and imprisoned wholesale in a special concentration camp. Cheong tried to escape, but was unfortunately recaptured and shot. He also "drank the bullets with a smile."

Another group of Shantung comrades, headed by a brave young comrade Cheong Li Ming, set up a small guerrilla de-

tachment on the border of Kiangshu and Anwei. They had to conduct their guerrilla war not only against the Japanese armies, but also resisting the murderous attacks of the Kuomintang and Stalinist armies. They, however, successfully overcame all obstacles and slipped through to eastern Chekiang. There their small detachment rapidly swelled to an army of two thousand fighters. Comrade Cheong Li Ming was elected commander. Even the native Stalinists held a mass meeting to welcome "the most loyal anti-Japanese fighter—Commander Cheong." Comrade Cheong's army attacked the Japanese armies frequently. Its dynamic quality made a deep impression on the peasants. And its popularity was the cause of great envy in the top Stalinist ranks. Only their weakness held back their murderous hands. When Cheong's guerrilla army suffered a bad defeat in the battle of Tzin Hwa, the Stalinists grasped their golden opportunity. Comrade Cheong and his wife were captured in the Stalinist-controlled zone. Together with them, a wife and a small son of another comrade, a Formosan revolutionist, who was just converted to Trotskyism, and several women, were all placed under arrest. At first, the Stalinists tried to get a denunciation of Trotskyism out of Cheong. When they found that it was impossible to bend his will, they mercilessly beheaded him. His wife and all other captives were shot. Even the six-year-old innocent boy was not spared by the Stalinist beasts. He was thrown into the sea and drowned! Comrades! We, Chinese Trotskyists—our knowledge of Stalinism has nothing abstract in it.

3) In Southern China, our comrades stubbornly maintained the party nuclei in the Japanese-controlled factories and docks. They worked hard and led a "life even worse than that of an ox or a horse" in Hong Kong and Canton. It is with pride that we point to the fact that our Canton foundation was established only after the beginning of the Pacific War. And the emergence of our organization in Canton meant that the Communist movement began to take root again in the traditional revolutionary soil, after a lapse of fifteen years, since the Canton *putch*. We are indebted for this significant initiative to Comrade Fun, one of our leading comrades in Southern China, who unfortunately was killed by an American bomb on his way from Hong Kong to Shanghai.

Comrade S, a leading member of the Southern organization, carried on courageous work among his fellow workers. Once he led a strike in defiance of the Japanese authority. A Japanese agent threatened him in such a terrible manner that he had to choose either death or signing an order to stop the strike. Some friendly workers advised him to give in. But Comrade S said calmly before the strikers and the Japanese agent: "I prefer death to an order of surrender." All the strikers admired and supported him. The enemy was dumbfounded by this proletarian heroism, and finally conceded. From then Comrade S won great popularity among the workers of Canton and Hong Kong. It should not be forgotten that our comrades were working under the most brutal rule of the Japanese occupation army. Only Trotskyists could stand it.

In Southwestern China, especially in Chungking, the stronghold of "free China," our comrades suffered no less persecution under Chiang's regime, because they alone had the courage to conduct strikes and criticize the treacherous policy of the Kuomintang government. There were raids and arrests several times. A great number of our comrades in the interior went through hardship in concentration or hard labor camps. Even now, we still have several comrades in the camps.

This is the true picture of the movement of Chinese Trotsky-

ism during the war. Numerically, it seemed small. But a group of tested cadres emerged from it. That was the most valuable and significant thing in our eyes. And that is enough for unlimited optimism. In post-war China our movement was actually revived by their efforts. And a new party will surely emerge from this foundation.

#### 4. The Present Situation

With the war, ended the iron discipline of war-time. All conflicts and contradictions accumulated in the process of the war were let loose. The Kuomintang regime discredited itself completely not only in "free China," but rapidly evoked bitter hostility and disappointment among the people of the "recovered area." Chiang's regime had never been so helpless and isolated. On the other hand, the Stalinists militarily controlled North China and enjoyed an incontestable prestige and popularity among the masses. In the great industrial centres, the working class plunged into a rising tide of strikes, and won the "rising scale of wages." The general strike of Kwunming students inspired the entire nation. The bourgeoisie and its government lost self-confidence and had to make a number of concessions. All looked to Yen-an. The Stalinists held the key. It was an unmistakable pre-revolutionary situation. What was lacking was a revolutionary party. Therein lay the tragedy of the Chinese revolution. Instead of an audacious political offensive, came the rotten compromise of Mao Tzi Tung. The prolonged negotiations served only as a smoke screen covering the military maneuver of the Kuomintang. Stalinists lost one position after another, and gradually Chiang's regime recovered a partial equilibrium, at least on the military side. A series of defeats suffered by the Stalinists were crowned with the abandonment of Yen-an. The strike wave of the workers and students ebbed, demoralization and confusion once again seized hold of the Chinese masses. They became skeptical and were disappointed. They hated the Kuomintang bitterly, but they also began to mistrust the Stalinists. A strong tendency of groping for a "third road" arose out of the chaos.

All our work in the past one and half years was based on a correct diagnosis of the evolution of the above-described situation. Taking the place of Japan, Yankee imperialism with its Kuomintang agent, became our main enemy. Down with American imperialism and the Kuomintang! The entire Transitional program and tactical tasks had to be readjusted around this main task. We actively participated and set up united fronts in all mass movements against our main enemy. We showed deepest sympathy to the war conducted by the Stalinist peasant armies, although we never ceased to point out that their defeat was, is, and will be caused by the treacherous policies of their party and the Kremlin. We also took a more careful, yet realistic and bold attitude toward the anti-Kremlin demonstrations. We did not consider that they were merely an expression of the reactionary anti-Soviet sentiment of the Chinese ruling class and its master. The extremely isolated Kuomintang regime could not and never had conducted a serious mass movement. If it did now, the mass movement itself necessarily reflected some profound mood of the masses. We opposed the arch-reactionary leadership of the Kuomintang, yet it was our duty to pay closer attention to the justified dissatisfaction and revulsion of the Chinese people toward the Kremlin bureaucracy. In this sense, it was not wise to take an abstentionist attitude toward this movement. On the contrary, we boldly plunged into it to expose all the evil intentions of the Kuomintang, expand and deepen it, and try finally to convert its leadership.

Only Trotskyist leadership can give full and correct expression to the feelings and needs of the Chinese masses. The Stalinists, as you would expect, cynically denounced the anti-Kremlin mass movement as a reactionary trick of the Kuomintang, and consequently boycotted it.

In the past one and half years, we concentrated our efforts on three big organizational tasks: (1) to make use of the concessions of the ruling class as much as possible; (2) to make contact with the rank and file Stalinists and canalize the movement into the riverbed of genuine Marxism, and (3) to revive our organizational work on a national scale.

We began our works in Shanghai with bare hands. The great current of the war carried away many from our ranks. Only a handful of cadres with super-human will remained to swim against the current. Yet, with the help of our sympathizers, we were able to publish two periodicals. One is a big theoretical magazine, and the other is a semi-monthly organ whose purpose is to popularize our program among the youth and women. The Kuomintang was obliged to register our periodicals along with other "democratic" publications. We possessed two periodicals for the first time. We knew very well that it was the mass pressure that made the rulers yield a bit. Without any illusions, we grasped the golden opportunity afforded us. The distribution of our periodicals gained steadily. They could be bought in all the big industrial and cultural centers. We received an enthusiastic response from even the remotest parts of the country. Everywhere that we have a traditional influence and an organizational unit, our magazines have won a wide circulation. Our literary efforts produced two valuable results. Firstly, through them we made contact again with the comrades who for a long time had lost track of us. Secondly, we successfully drove an ideological wedge into the rank and file Stalinists. For instance, in Wen Chow (a commercial centre of eastern Chekiang), the radical students were for long under strong Stalinist influence. But after our publications arrived in this city, the authority of Stalinism rapidly broke down. Our slogan "For a national assembly elected by universal suffrage" was carried into the street for the first time.

In Nanking and Canton, our publications also produced great ferment among the rank and file Stalinists. A group of Stalinist students passed to our side in Nanking. Among the workers of Shanghai and Hong Kong, our publications received a no less enthusiastic response.

As a result of these activities we have made significant progress among the workers and students, and have built up effective groups in the main industrial centers. Indeed, we did not come out of the war with empty hands. We have created a skeleton of a proletarian party with a true Marxist tradition.

The objective conditions are very favorable for the growth of our movement. We clearly see unlimited possibilities for our expansion in the further political and economical development. It seems that the Kuomintang has gradually regained an equilibrium by military means in the past year. But after the unlimited destruction of eight years of war, and the threat of an unceasing guerrilla war by the Stalinists, the material basis of the Chinese ruling class is so weakened that the whole upper structure of its rule is tottering. Even a slight push can send it down. The Chinese bourgeoisie had never been so nervous and isolated. It lost confidence and split into several groups, each savagely fighting the other. Its future is dark. It is significant that this February, when Chiang Kai Shek celebrated his military victory over the Stalinist armies, the gold market crashed—symbolizing the incurable social and

economic bankruptcy—and a general uprising of the Formosan people mercilessly exposed the true nature and instability of his regime. Chiang dreams of surviving by a series of emergency decrees and brutal military suppressions. He is wrong!

The final suppression of the rising peasant movement could not save the feudal ruling class of the Ching Dynasty from the revolutionary tide of 1911. The bourgeois rule represented by Chiang will be even more helpless to withstand a great shock even if it successfully downs the Stalinist peasant armies. Under Chiang's dictatorship, the conditions of the Chinese people can only go from bad to worse. He is doomed. But he will never go down automatically. Only the perfidious Stalinists still believe that through a peaceful democratic process, a new Peoples Front will be able to reform the bureaucratic rule of the Nanking government. They attempted this many times. Yet Chiang had never been and never will be reformed or removed in this way. We firmly believe that pre-revolutionary conditions will not be absent. What we lack is a revolutionary party, without which, Chiang's dead hands will not be removed. We have a long revolutionary period before us. We take it as a starting point of our struggle.

## 5. The "New Flag" Group

After the split, the minority headed by C simply retreated into their small room instead of keeping their promise to go directly to the masses over our head. They deserted our ranks and nothing more. After Chen Chi Cheong, a minorityite, was arrested by the Japanese police, they actually severed all relations with us. As to Chen Chi Cheong's death, it naturally caused deep mourning in our ranks, yet it did not cancel our right of criticism. On the contrary, Chen Chi Cheong's case should serve as an object lesson for the unprincipled hairsplitters. He secretly served in an underground radio station of the Chungking government in Shanghai purely for personal purposes. This job was not only dangerous and harmful for our work, but politically inconsistent with his "defeatism"—"our main enemy—Chiang Kai Shek!" Yet he risked his head for his "main enemy," and, what is more, he kept this matter secret even from his political friends.

The latter issued several issues of the so-called "Internationalists" to preach their "defeatism" during the war. After the war, when they saw our work rapidly reviving, they awoke from their long sleep, and published a small periodical called *New Flag*. We thought that perhaps they wanted to do some serious work now. We tried to re-contact them and proposed united action as the first step towards unity. But their attitude was disloyal. While we distributed their publications, they simply kept ours in the drawers of their desks. What is most intolerable is their incurable infantile disease. While we put forth our democratic slogans and demanded the immediate realization of all basic transitional demands, they openly attacked us because we were allegedly forgetting the proletarian revolution. While we preached the elementary ideas of the Permanent Revolution, as a revolution starting from the democratic struggle to the goal of socialism, they condemned us as opportunists, because, according to their conceptions, the Chinese revolution will be a Socialist revolution from the very beginning. "Either Socialism or imperialism," they proclaimed. Yesterday in a colonial war resisting imperialism, they took the position of defeatism—because the war was under the leadership of the Kuomintang. Today when the Chinese people are only beginning to fight for elementary democratic demands, they take a passive position—nothing less than social-

ism! As if the promised socialism would drop from the sky and does not grow out of the dirty ground of daily struggles. Everything is over-simplified and transformed into a lifeless abstraction.

On the plane of tactic, the gap between us and the radical phrase-mongers is even wider. While we attempted to accelerate the progressive ferment of the masses by a systematic criticism of Stalinist policy, they misrepresented our position as "neutral!" While we audaciously took a part in the anti-Kremlin mass demonstration for the purpose of exposing the reactionary motives of Chiang's regime and to redirect the movement into a revolutionary struggle against imperialism—while we did this, they condemned us as "a tail of the Kuomintang," and they, in turn, took a position of neutrality and abstentionism. They yield to the pressure of Stalinist-controlled public opinion to such a degree that they portray some pro-Stalinist petty bourgeois politicians as genuine revolutionists. Abstentionism and opportunism are organically linked with sectarianism.

As for their work, we cannot expect much from these phrase-mongers. They do not want to find a way to the masses. They only want to write as they please. We tried to get them out of their small room, but in vain! For instance, last year when we invited them to attend a Trotsky memorial meeting, they rejected the invitation without any explanation. They are con-

tented with their small *New Flag*, which has a very poor circulation. They do not represent a serious and responsible faction. They represent the past of our movement. They have not enough courage to break with the bad traditions of a small propaganda circle. That is the reason why they isolate themselves completely, not only from the masses, but from our ranks, as well. It is very significant that all they could recruit from our ranks was a handful of intellectuals who lost mental equilibrium, and morally completely discredited themselves in our ranks long ago. Anyone who wants to do something serious, goes hand in hand with us.

Our comrades have a strong argument: They want to wind up every kind of childish trick of split and unity. They want to have a completely new type of leader who possesses not only a fluent pen, but, what is much more important, a capacity for conducting small and big struggles, and of organizing the masses.

We had never resorted to expulsions or splits because of political differences; yet the minority split in contempt of the tradition of Bolshevik organization, because of political differences. Now, since the political differences still exist and even deepen, we have decided that, until the *New Flag* group gives an unambiguous explanation of their split during the war, we would not consider their proposal of unity as serious and loyal. No democratic centralism—no unity.

## From the Arsenal of Marxism

### *Is It Possible to Fix a Definite Schedule for a Counter-Revolution or a Revolution?*

By LEON TROTSKY

In 1923 Germany was ripe for the proletarian revolution. The majority of the German working class was behind the Communist Party. But the Brandler leadership vacillated. There was no strong guiding hand in the Communist International. Zinoviev, the then Chairman of the Comintern, was hesitant. Bukharin, the theoretical leader of the Right Wing in the Russian party, was opposed to the seizure of power in Germany. Stalin, behind the scenes, supported the opponents of the German revolution. Lenin was lying on his sick-bed, which was shortly to prove his death-bed.

It was under these circumstances that Leon Trotsky published his famous article on the need of consciously preparing for the seizure of power when all the circumstances for it were propitious.

This article, which we published below, first appeared in *Pravda*, on September 23, 1923.

With the exception of references to the October Revolution and other obviously historical references, the examples cited in the text refer to contemporary events. Thus, the Bulgarian reactionary coup was staged in the summer of 1923. The reference to Spain covers the coup engineered by the Spanish officer caste under Primo de Rivera, who was later installed as dictator, in the same year 1923.

Previous English translations of this article appeared in the *Inprecorr*, the then organ of the Communist International. This is a new translation prepared by John W. Wright.—Ed.

"Of course it is not possible. Only trains travel on schedule, and even they don't always arrive on time. . . ."

Precision of thought is necessary in everything, and in questions of revolutionary strategy more than anywhere else. But since revolutions do not occur so very often, revolutionary concepts and ideas become encrusted with fat, become vague, the questions are raised in outline, in a slipshod way, and are solved in the same manner.

Mussolini made his "revolution" (that is, his counter-revolution) according to a schedule made publicly known beforehand. He was able to do so successfully because the Socialists failed to make the revolution, when the time for it came. The Bulgarian fascists accomplished their "revolution" through a military conspiracy, all the dates being fixed and the roles assigned. The Spanish officer caste did exactly the same thing. Counter-revolutionary overturns are almost always carried out along this pattern. They are usually synchronized with the moment when the disillusion of the masses in revolution or in democracy has taken the form of apathy and a favorable political situation has thus been created for an organized and technically prepared military coup, the date of which is defi-

nately fixed beforehand. Obviously, it is not possible to artificially create a political situation favorable for a reactionary coup, much less to bring it off at a fixed date. But when the basic elements of such a situation are at hand, then the leading party does, as we have seen, choose beforehand a favorable moment, synchronizes in accordance its political, organizational, and technical forces, and—if it has not miscalculated—deals the victorious blow.

The bourgeoisie has not always made counter-revolutions. In the past it also had occasion to make revolutions. Did it fix any definite time for them? It would be quite interesting and in many respects instructive to investigate from this standpoint the development of the classic as well as of the epigone bourgeois revolutions (here is a topic for our young Marxist scholars!). But even without such a detailed investigation it is possible to establish the following fundamentals involved in this question:

The propertied and educated bourgeoisie, that is, precisely that section of the "people" which took power, did not make the revolution but waited until it was made. When the movement of the lower layers overflowed and the old social order or political regime were overthrown, then power dropped almost automatically into the hands of the liberal bourgeoisie. The liberal scholars proclaimed such a revolution as "natural" and ineluctable and they compiled vast platitudes which were passed off as historical laws: revolution and counter-revolution (action and reaction—according to Kareyev\* of blessed memory) were declared to be the natural products of historical evolution, and consequently beyond the power of men to produce arbitrarily, or arrange according to the calendar, and so forth. These laws have never yet prevented well prepared counter-revolutionary coups from being carried out. By way of compensation the nebulosity of bourgeois-liberal thought finds its way not infrequently into the heads of revolutionists causing great havoc there and leading to injurious practices...

But even bourgeois revolutions have by no means invariably developed at every stage in accordance with the "natural" laws of the liberal professors. Whenever petty-bourgeois, plebeian democracy overthrew liberalism, it did so by means of conspiracy and organized uprisings, fixed beforehand for definite dates. This was done by the Jacobins, the extreme left wing in the Great French Revolution. This is perfectly comprehensible. The liberal bourgeoisie (the French in 1789, the Russian in February 1917) can content itself with waiting for the mighty elemental movement and then at the last moment throw its wealth, its education, its connections with the state apparatus into the scales and in this way to seize the helm. Petty-bourgeois democracy, under similar circumstances has to act differently: it possesses neither wealth, nor social influence, nor connections. It finds itself compelled to replace these by a carefully thought-out and minutely prepared plan for a revolutionary overturn. But a plan presupposes a definite orientation in point of time, and therefore also the fixing of dates.

This applies all the more to the proletarian revolution. The Communist Party cannot adopt a waiting attitude in the face of the growing revolutionary movement of the proletariat. To do so is to adopt essentially the point of view of Menshevism: They try to clamp a brake on the revolution so long as it is in process of development; they exploit its successes as soon as it is in any degree victorious, and they strive with might and main to keep it from being completed. The Communist Party cannot seize power by utilizing the revolutionary movement

from the sidelines but only by means of a direct and immediate political, organizational and military-technical leadership of the revolutionary masses, both in the period of slow preparation as well as at the decisive moment of the overturn. Precisely for this reason the Communist Party has absolutely no use for the great liberal law according to which the revolutions happen but are not made and therefore cannot be fixed for a specific date. From the standpoint of a spectator this law is correct, but from the standpoint of the leader this is a platitude and a vulgarity.

Let us imagine a country where the political conditions for the proletarian revolution are either completely mature or are obviously and distinctly maturing day by day. In such circumstances what should be the attitude of the Communist Party to the question of uprising and of setting a date for it?

If the country is passing through a profound social crisis, when the contradictions are aggravated to the extreme, when the toiling masses are in constant ferment, when the Party is obviously supported by an unquestionable majority of the toilers and, in consequence, by all the most active, class-conscious, and self-sacrificing elements of the proletariat, then the task confronting the Party—its only possible task under the circumstances—is to fix a definite time in the immediate future, a time in the course of which the favorable revolutionary situation cannot abruptly react against us, and then to concentrate every effort on the preparation of the blow, to subordinate the entire policy and organization to the military object in view, so that this blow is dealt with maximum power.

To consider not merely an imaginary country, let us take our own October Revolution as an example. The country was in the throes of a great crisis, internal and international. The state apparatus was paralyzed. The toilers streamed in ever greater numbers to the banners of our Party. From the moment when the Bolsheviks were in the majority in the Petrograd Soviet, and afterwards in the Moscow Soviet, the Party was faced with the question—not of the struggle for power in general but of preparing for the seizure of power according to a definite plan, and at a fixed date. The chosen day, as is well known, was the day upon which the All-Russian Congress of the Soviets was to convene. Some members of our Central Committee were from the first of the opinion that the moment of the actual blow should be synchronized with the political moment of the Soviet Congress. Other members of the Central Committee feared that the bourgeoisie would have time to make its preparations by then and would be able to disperse the Congress; they wanted the blow delivered at an earlier date. The Central Committee fixed the date of the armed uprising for October 15, at the latest. This decision was carried out with a deliberate delay of ten days because the course of agitational and organizational preparations showed that an uprising independent of the Soviet Congress would have sown confusion among considerable layers of the working class who connected the idea of the seizure of power with the Soviets, and not with the Party and its secret organizations. On the other hand, it was perfectly clear that the bourgeoisie was already too much demoralized to be able to organize any serious resistance in the space of two or three weeks.

Thus, after the Party had won the majority in the leading Soviets, and had in this way secured the basic political premise for the seizure of power, we were faced with the stark necessity of fixing a calendar date for the decision of the military question. Before we had the majority, the organizational-technical plan was bound of course to be more or less provisional and elastic. For us the gauge of our revolutionary influence was the

\*A Russian liberal under Czarism.



Soviets which had been created by the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists at the beginning of the revolution. And the Soviets, on the other hand, furnished us with a political cover for our conspiratorial work and afterwards the Soviets served as the organs of power after it had been actually seized.

What would our strategy have been if there had been no Soviets? In that case, we obviously should have had to turn to other gauges of our revolutionary influence: The trade unions, the strikes, the street demonstrations, democratic elections of all kinds, and so forth. Although the Soviets are the most accurate gauge of the actual activity of the masses during a revolutionary epoch, still without the existence of the Soviets we would have been fully able to ascertain the precise moment at which the actual majority of the working class and of the toilers as a whole was on our side. Naturally at this moment we should have had to issue the slogan of the formation of Soviets to the masses. But by doing so, we would have already transferred the whole question to the plane of military clashes, and consequently before we issued the slogan of forming Soviets we should have had a thoroughly worked-out plan for an armed uprising at a fixed date.

Once the majority of the toilers is on our side, or at least the majority in the decisive centers and provinces, the formation of Soviets would be sure to follow our summons. The more backward cities and provinces would emulate the leading centers with more or less delay. We should then be faced with the political task of convening the Soviet Congress, and with the military task of ensuring the transfer of power to this Congress. Quite obviously these are only two aspects of one and the same problem.

Let us now imagine that our Central Committee, in the above-described situation, that is, in the absence of Soviets, had met for a decisive session in the period when the masses had already begun to move spontaneously to our side but had not yet insured us a clear and overwhelming majority. How should we then have laid out our plan of action? Would we schedule an uprising?

The answer to this may be adduced from the above. We should have said to ourselves: At the present moment we still do not possess a clear and undisputed majority; but the swing among the masses is so great that the decisive and militant majority necessary for us is merely a matter of the next few weeks. Let us assume it will take approximately a month to win over the majority of the workers in Petrograd, in Moscow and in the Donetz basin; let us set ourselves this task and concentrate the necessary forces in these centers. As soon as the majority has been gained—and we shall ascertain in action if this be the case after a month has elapsed—we shall summon the toilers to form Soviets. For this Petrograd, Moscow and the Donetz basin would not require more than a week or two; it may be calculated with certainty that the remaining cities and provinces will follow the example of the main centers within the next two or three weeks. Thus the creation of a network of Soviets would require about a month. After Soviets have been formed in the important provinces, in which we have of course the majority, we shall convene an all-Russian Soviet Congress. We shall require an additional two weeks to assemble the Congress. We have, therefore, two and a half months at our disposal before the Congress. In the course of this time the seizure of power must not only be prepared, but actually accomplished. We should accordingly place before our military organization a program allowing it two months, at most two and a half, for the preparation of the uprising in Petrograd, in Moscow, on the railways, and so on. I use here the conditional tense (we

should have decided, or should have done this and that), because in reality, although our operations were by no means unskillful, still they were by no means so systematic, not because we were in any way disturbed by "historic laws" but because we were carrying out the proletarian uprising for the first time.

But are not miscalculations likely to occur by this method? Seizure of power means war, and in war there can be defeats as well as victories. But the systematic course here described is the best and most direct road to the goal, that is, it enhances the chances of victory to the maximum. Thus, for instance, should it have turned out, a month after the decisive Central Committee session in our above adduced example that we had not yet the majority of the toilers on our side, then we would, of course, not have issued the slogan calling for the formation of Soviets, for in this case the slogan would have miscarried (in our example we assume that the Social Revolutionists and the Mensheviks are against the Soviets). And had the reverse been the case, and we had found a decisive and militant majority on our side within two weeks, then this would have abridged our plan and moved up the decisive moment of the uprising. The very same thing applies to the second and third stages of our plan: The formation of Soviets and to the convocation of the Soviet Congress. We should not have issued the slogan of the Soviet Congress until we had secured, as I have said, the actual formation of Soviets in the most important centers. In this way the realization of each successive stage in our plan is prepared and secured by the fulfillment of antecedent stages. The work of military preparation proceeds parallel with all the other work according to a rigid schedule. There-with the Party retains throughout absolute control of its military apparatus. To be sure, there is always a great deal that is entirely unforeseen, unexpected and spontaneous in the revolution; and we must of course make allowances for the occurrence of all these "accidents" and adjust ourselves to them; but we can do this with the greater success and certainty if our conspiratorial plan is thoroughly worked out.

Revolution possesses a mighty power of improvisation, but it never improvises anything good for fatalists, by-standers, and fools. Victory comes from the correct political evaluation, from correct organization and from the will to deal the decisive blow.

# FASCISM

- WHAT IT IS
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*A Compilation*

By **LEON TROTSKY**

*With An Introduction*

By **E. R. Frank**

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# Recent Developments in Austria

By BINDER

Although Austria's wealth is insignificant, since nothing is plentiful except for the salt in Salzburg and the water of the Danube, Austria's geographic position—it is a link with the Balkans on the one side and Central and Western Europe on the other—places it in a position of great political importance. Austria may become either a channel or a barrier for the revolutionary wave from the East and the West.

The mass working class party of Austria, the Social Democrats, played an important role in the Second International. This party provided some of Social Democracy's outstanding theoreticians: Otto Bauer, Victor Adler and Max Adler, and created a theoretical school of its own, Austro-Marxism. "Red Vienna" became the model of reformist achievement.

In 1933, one of the best organized Social Democratic parties capitulated to a handful of fascist gangsters. The party rank and file felt in their bones the great strength of the party and were looking forward to a showdown with the fascists. After a series of provocations, the rank and file became fed up with the policy of retreat and several hundred members of the Social Democratic Schutzbund struck back when the fascist Heimwehr tried to disarm them. This was the spark that set off the heroic fight in February 1934.

The working class of Austria felt very clearly that they had not been defeated in straight class fight, but that they had been betrayed by their own party leadership. They knew that not even one-tenth of the energy of the working class had been mobilized to defeat fascism and establish a socialist regime. Only this explains why the working class did not fall into apathy, as usually happens after a heavy defeat, but instead drew the conclusion that it was not the strength of reaction, but the weakness of their own party that was responsible for the defeat. A wholesale flight from reformism followed. Entire districts of Social Democrats joined the Communist Party, which in their minds, was the sole revolutionary alternative to reformism.

The mass flight in 1934 from the Social Democracy to the Communist Party was, in the minds of the masses, a step from reformism to revolution. By then the Third International had already entered its People's Front period; but this line was difficult to apply to Austria. Hitler was supposed to be the only working class enemy, but the Austrian working class was suffering under the terror of their own fascist regime. For the Austrian C.P. refugees in Paris it was of course very easy to follow the People's Front policy. They sent an invitation to the Social Democrats in Paris to participate in a Dollfuss memorial meeting. But in Austria it was not so easy. It was this treacherous People's Front policy that made it possible for the left Social Democratic party, the *Revolutionaere Sozialisten*, (R.S.)

under the leadership of Otto Bauer, to make headway. The People's Front line of the C.P. laid the foundation for nationalistic propaganda that surpassed even the worst excesses of the Second International.

With the outbreak of the war the Stalinists fostered an Austrian nationalism comparable only to Ehrenburgism. There was nobody they were not prepared to join with in the fight against "the Germans." (In England the Stalinist cover organizations, the Austrian Center, was run by Austrian Stalinists and Royalists.) The only thing lacking was an anthem such as "Osterreich, Osterreich uber alles."

When the war reached its climax, the Stalinists already had less influence in Austria than the R.S. A resistance movement called '05' developed in the course of the war, which represented all the "democratic" forces: R.S., C.P., Catholics, (today the People's Party), Democratic Block (representatives of industry, finance and the free professions). The R.S. was unquestionably the strongest force. The R.S. resistance units based themselves on cells in factories, which inevitably gave a class character to their actions. To indicate the activity of the Austrian resistance, we shall quote from *London Information*, the official paper of the Austrian Socialist Democrats and R.S. in London:

"February 24, 1945: A demonstration of about 8,000 Viennese, (mostly women) in front of the Ankerbrotfabrik, (a large bakery). German troops fire into the crowd. Members of the Resistance return the fire. 41 demonstrators and 11 German soldiers were killed."

"January 27, 1945: Shooting in the street of D'Orsaygasse in Vienna, when a Resistance group was rounded up by the Gestapo. 17 men of the Gestapo and SS killed. 4 members of the Resistance killed and 3 missing."

With the progress of the war, the exploited people of Austria looked to the Red Army as their future liberator. A week before Stalin announced the "liberation" of Vienna on April 13, 1945, the Moscow radio broadcast: "Unlike the Germans in Germany, the Austrian population resisted the evacuation orders given by the Germans, remained on the spot, and hospitably met the Red Army as liberators of Austria from the Hitler yoke" (*Radio Moscow*, April 8, 1945). "Every report from Austria confirms that the people welcome the Red Army joyfully as liberators" (*Radio Moscow*, April 13, 1945).

One week after the "liberation," Renner arrived in Vienna with the consent of the Red Army. He described the situation as follows: "I found in Vienna the foundation of a new democratic city government already laid, and the only task remaining was the establishment of a central government for the whole country. All progress since then achieved is due to the concrete

action by the democratic parties." (*London Times*, August 6, 1945).

Concerning the period between the breakdown of the Nazi defense in Vienna and its occupation by the Red Army, Leonid Pyervomaisky, in a dispatch to *Pravda*, gives the following picture:

The events of the last days have confirmed the reports that the population of Vienna actively resisted the German occupants who wanted to evacuate the population to Germany, to transfer the factories and to transform Vienna itself into a fortress—that is, to condemn her to certain destruction. But the Austrians do not want to resist the Red Army. They greet us with joyful cordiality. Flags are flying in the streets. At street crossings Austrian patriots are on traffic duty with rifles, which they have captured from the Germans. (*London Information*, April 22, 1945).

Renner's reference to "the foundation of a new democratic city government already laid," and the *Pravda* dispatch constitute evidence that the workers of Vienna immediately snatched the initiative from the Nazis in order to establish their own city administration. The Red Army used Renner to curb the initiative of the Viennese, and to put the administration into the hands of a government of National Unity (3 Social Democrats, 3 People's Party, 2 Communist Party, and 2 "non-Party").

## The Communist Party

The wholesale looting, raping and removal of industrial plants did not contribute to the popularity of the Red Army. It was the Red Army's victory occupation of Austria that led to the rebirth of Austro-Marxism. "The Red Army has defeated the Austrian Communist Party," they now say in Vienna.

The Austrian Communist Party had all possible means at its disposal to become a mass party. The Communist shop stewards had more rations for their workers than the Social Democratic shop stewards. They had priority in housing for their party headquarters, plenty of money, etc. But all this was not decisive. What proved decisive was the attitude toward the occupation armies, and to the reconstruction of the country.

The *Sozialistische Partei* (Socialist Party) has been reconstituted by the reunited Austrian Social Democrats who had split in 1934 into the R.S. (Otto Bauer) and the old right wing Social Democrats. This party was the only alternative that the workers saw to the Communist Party.

As already indicated, the C.P. had two tasks to fulfill: First, to defend and justify the Red

Army unconditionally; and secondly, to promote Stalin's policy of "National Unity."

The *Propeller Kommunisten* (this is the name the Viennese give to the Communists who were flown from Moscow to Vienna) were well prepared for the tasks ahead. Thus, "Propeller Kommunist," Erwin Zucker, known on the Moscow radio as Franz Schilling, "answered" the complaints of the Viennese that the Red Army was denuding the country, in the following manner: "It is the old story of the boy who shows his frost-bitten hands on a cold winter's day and says: 'Serves my father right that my fingers are frozen; why did he not buy me any gloves?' Is it not exactly the same thing if people, instead of pulling on their socks and working, prefer rather to count the cattle which are being delivered to the Russians, and get impatient if the fat allocation sometimes has to be postponed a few days?" (*London Information*, August 1, 1945).

To grasp the cynicism of this speech, we have only to cite a report on living conditions in Austria. "Too weak to work—workers in the big Berndorf engineering works are collapsing at their machines and are no longer capable of carrying out their heavy work, a delegation from Lower Austria told the Provincial Government." (*London Information*, November 15, 1945.)

It was on the basis of this betrayal that the S.P. has been able to pose with considerable success as the only socialist alternative to the C.P. In their propaganda the S.P. leans completely on the pre-1934 tradition. A socialist poster in Vienna reads: "*Wir haben Wien schon gemacht. Wohnbauten. Fursorge. Mistabfuhr.*" ("We have made Vienna beautiful. Houses, Social Welfare, Garbage Collecting.") All the S.P. periphery organizations have been revived. The party pledges itself to pursue a social and economic policy: heavy taxation of the rich, social welfare, houses, education. It is significant that the leading personnel of today were leaders before 1934. All of them remained in Austria over the last twelve years, in contradistinction to the whole C.P. leadership, which has returned after twelve years in Moscow.

The S.P. leadership promises to rebuild Austria without the "use of violence." Since only the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system can free the tremendous energy of the masses for the rebuilding of Austria and Europe, and since the S.P. has pledged itself not to "use violence," there is no other course for the S.P. leadership than to crawl before the big capitalist countries. Despite the fact that the S.P. is being used as the tool of Western imperialism, the majority of the S.P. membership believes in socialism as the only alternative to rotting capitalism. This finds its reflection in some of the articles and speeches of leading Social Democrats.

The May Day appeal of the Social Democrats reads: "(We must) . . . again resume the struggle for the realization of socialism with all the fervor and devotion of which we are capable." This appeal ends by expressing "the feeling of profound solidarity with the working people of

all lands and all nations" (*London Information*, July 15, 1945).

Renner, who it must be remembered, is the representative of the right wing, stated in his address to the Socialist conference on October 26, 1945: "Today socialism is no longer the matter of a country. Today it is the one really effective program in the whole world. We have entered the epoch of the realization of socialism.

. . . We are not over-aged. Socialism is young, socialism is only now coming into its own. . . . Ours is the watchword: 'No more wars!'" This part of the speech was intended for the internal consumption of the young revolutionary elements in the party.

The developing left wing is cause for alarm among the Social Democratic leadership and the capitalist class.

## International Notes

### The 2nd International

Zurich—The conference of 19 European "socialist" parties which met here in June took up: 1) consideration of the splits in various parties (Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, etc.); 2) conflicts reflecting the division of Europe into Western and Eastern blocs; 3) The failure of the reconstituted German Social Democratic party to be admitted as a full participant, which resulted mainly from the opposition of the parties in the Eastern bloc (Poland, Hungary, etc.) who are under Soviet occupation; 4) Failure to agree on any form of reconstituting the Second International, due mainly to the opposition of the British Labor Party, which merely wants to utilize the other "socialist" parties for its foreign policy in the London government, but doesn't wish to be "compromised" before its own capitalists by too much "internationalism."

In a speech pleading for admission, the German leader Schumacher declared that, while he can conceive of Europe being in the Soviet orbit and cannot see a "socialist" Europe without Russian participation, his party can never cooperate with the German "communists." This gesture to the Eastern bloc proved of no avail. A motion by the French and Belgian parties to reconstitute the Second International was referred to a commission for "examination." On a motion from the British Labor Party, a commission was set up to maintain relations with the German party, after the latter had failed to obtain admission by one vote. The Italian party of Nenni was recognized, while that of Sarragat was excluded from the conference. All other splits were referred to commissions for study.

The Second International is one political ghost that is not due to be resurrected.

### Italy

As a result of the present government crisis in Italy we will probably have a new party in the cabinet; the PSLI (the Socialist Party of Italian workers), which was born out of the recent split in the old Socialist Party (PSIUP). What is this party, how and by what forces was it formed and what role can it play on the Italian political scene?

At last year's convention of the PSIUP, in Florence, it was already clear that the corridor compromise between the different tendencies to "save the unity of the party" could not last very

long. Five months ago, at the eve of the Rome convention, there were three solidly organized factions, each with its own newspaper or magazine, and each determined to fight. The "fusionists," led by Nenni and Basso, were partisans of close collaboration with the Stalinists. The "Critica Sociale" faction, led by Sarragat and Simonini, and supported by the entire old reformist crowd, Modigliani, Balabanov and D'Aragona, represents in Italy the ultra-reformist tendency similar to that of the British Laborite leaders and the French Blums. Finally, the "Inizeativa Socialista" faction led by young Matteoti and Zagari, and including practically the entire Socialist Youth, represents an extremely confused and ineffective "left wing." Even before the opening of that Convention, it was clear that there was no possibility of the three factions continuing to live in one party. However, the split did not take place on the basis of clear political positions but rather on organizational questions, and on the question of a united action pact and fusion with the Stalinist Party.

The fact that the split did not have a more precise political character partially explains why we find the "right" and "left" wings of the old party gathered in the new PSLI. On the other hand the absence of a leadership with clear and precise political aims—particularly concerning the problems of the construction of a revolutionary party—has led to the formation of a hybrid party, where the actual political leadership has from the beginning, and to an ever increasing extent, been in the hands of the reformist tendency which is richer in cadres, experience and financial means.

Born under these conditions, the primary activity of the PSLI has been the struggle against "communism." This struggle has been a confused one due to the fact that the rightists carry it out in a fundamentally anti-communist fashion, while the Youth use an anti-Stalinist line. The PSLI, being outside the Gasperi government, as it was reorganized after the old S.P. split, and after the voyage to the U. S. of the Democratic-Christian leaders, was able to increase its influence thanks to its violent opposition to the incapacity of the tri-partite government. It is evident, however, that the reason for existence of the PSLI lies in its struggle against Communism in general. This is true despite the presence in its ranks of the leftist youth—a presence which is becoming ever less capable of hiding the reformist character of Sarragat's party.

The PSLI has not yet held a Convention and

therefore has no clearly-defined program. The highly important differences within its ranks have been cleverly camouflaged and also submerged by the common struggle against the government policies and the Stalinists. But it is not at all impossible that the present government crisis will clarify the political situation both within the PSLI and in the country as a whole. In the PSLI paper *LUMANITA*, Giuliano Varsalli writes on May 18 that the party secretariat receives "resolutions very frequently from its sections in all parts of Italy urging it not to participate in the government about to be formed as a result of this crisis"—but he concludes from this that such participation is possible.

Actually what succeeds the PSLI was able to obtain in the recent election of delegations to the National Convention of the CGIL (Italian General Federation of Labor) were due mostly to the party's critical attitude towards and non-participation in, the De Gasperi governments. Its going into a coalition Government will reveal it in its true light as a "legal" party participating on the Italian political scene in the manner of traditional reformist Socialists. It could not be otherwise; that is the logical conclusion of the evolution of the PSLI since the split. The Young Socialists, who left the old PSIUP in the serious belief that they would build a revolutionary party, accepted the "collaboration" of Sarragat, considering it an inevitable, temporary "lesser evil." Now they again find themselves before the dilemma of submitting to a clearly reformist and anti-working class policy, or of again getting out of the party to help build up a real revolutionary leadership for the Italian working class.

## The POUM in Spain

The executive committee of the POUM has just published a long manifesto in which it attempts to outline "in all clarity and without equivocation" its position on the political problems of Spain. This manifesto is intended as the official and authentic expression of the party "which has not emigrated" and of the Spanish people who have not emigrated either.

"Socialists," we read, "we have fixed as our ardently desired goal: Socialism. Democrats, we propose to restore Democracy in our country, or rather to install it. Because it is the form of government from which all powers, without exception, stem from the will of the people, we prefer a Republic. As Spaniards, we will grant no respite until we see the chains break asunder of the bloody tyranny which oppresses Spain. This is our desire."

The manifesto goes on to ask "what can we do?" It is not permissible to hope that liberation will come by a miracle. No totalitarian regime has disappeared by the action of the oppressed people alone. Italian Fascism and German Nazism were not overthrown by the peoples' rebellion but by the military action of the Allied armies. Thus, the only solution for overthrowing the Franco regime is to engage in a coordinated action between the Spanish people and the democratic governments and peoples outside of Spain.

However, the Movement must give these gov-

ernments, whose support is indispensable, the certain guarantee that the fall of Franco will not mean a descent into chaos for Spain. Enough of civil war, enough of suffering, mourning and tears. The Executive Committee of the POUM "rejects with horror" the perspective of a new civil war even if the restoration of Republican legality depended on it.

The manifesto aligns Spain as a "Western country" in the western block of Europe along with the United States in order to prevent Spain from becoming a Soviet bridgehead in the Mediterranean where it would be easy to cut the lifeline of the British Empire. Spain has "no interest in cutting this lifeline."

The Executive Committee calls for the constitution of a provisional government and a plebescite. In this government all tendencies opposed to the present regime as well as the trade unions should be represented. Such a government must restore liberty and grant the Spanish people the right to decide its own destiny. It must give up Franco criminals to the judgment of tribunals independent of the political parties, and the government. It must regard civil rights and liberties, while maintaining public order and security. And last, it must establish a plebescite in which the people may decide upon the form of government it desires, always respecting democratic forms whatever the form of government decided upon. The people must be permitted to express its desires without any sort of restraint along the terms of the motion approved by the Assembly of the United Nations. At the time of such a plebescite, the POUM will call for a Republic.

In any case, the regime that is to succeed the Franco tyranny, should not have a vengeful spirit nor attempt to exclude from the Spanish community "those who during the struggle were not on our side." It is necessary to reestablish peaceful relations among Spaniards. Political struggles should be transferred to a climate of liberty and respect for the rights of opponents. Therefore, these struggles must be removed from the terrain of armed struggle and violent imposition into a framework of polemic and confrontation of programs and activities. It is thus through the free play of democratic institutions that a majority and power will be conquered.

"A firm decision to struggle against the Franco tyranny, consistent loyalty to agreed compromises; a respectful and cordial attitude towards other allied forces, with a goal of total subordination of personal interest to the supreme interest of democracy and the Spanish people—this is the line to follow today. Tomorrow, when Spain has come out of this long and atrocious night of bad dreams, then, we will carry new tasks towards the new day."

The Manifesto ends with the following paragraph: "Let us raise the red flag which symbolizes the ideal for which so many of our brothers have fallen on the battlefield or before the firing squad, we shall continue the struggle for liberty and socialism on any grounds the enemy chooses."

\* \* \*

This Manifesto has been a great disappointment in the ranks of emigre Poumists in France.

Many responsible elements are not hesitating to characterize this document as "capitulationist."

## Egypt

The Revolutionary Communist Group of Egypt (Fourth International) has just published, under the signature of Comrades Anwar Kamel and Loutfallah Soliman, its first Manifesto since the re-organization of the group.

Noting the long drawn out Anglo-Egyptian negotiations and the government's decision to submit the whole problem of British troops to the UN (with the support of all the Egyptian bourgeois parties and the Stalinists), the Manifesto denounces the government for its long game with the British. The government wants to get the British out of Egypt and out of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan as well, but at the same time is afraid of the new force on the scene: The Egyptian proletariat.

Most of Egyptian industry is very artificial. It can be maintained only by increasing the purchasing power of the masses at the expense of the capitalist and feudal lords—or else by finding some closed foreign market for their goods. The end of the war-time inflated demand for Egyptian goods—with Allied soldiers as customers and lack of competition—turned Egyptian capitalist eyes towards the Sudanese market. Increasing the purchase power of the masses, carrying out the bourgeois democratic revolution which would enlarge its internal possibilities—these are tasks from which the Egyptian bourgeois turn away with fear; both menace a strengthening of their enemy, the proletariat, grown from 412,000 in 1937 to 1,500,000 in 1946. They prefer by far to try their luck at an imperialist exploitation of the Sudan, linking it in to their fiscal and customs system.

All the religious, linguistic and racial arguments about the Sudan are thus pure bluff to bolster an economic and political penetration. The Egyptian Trotskyists, while denouncing British imperialist occupation also denounce the Egyptian bourgeoisie's attempt to do the same to the Sudan. They demand: Immediate and unconditional evacuation of British troops from Egypt and the Sudan, and the right of the Sudanese people to political and social self-determination.

The R.C.G. Manifesto ends with these words: "We must struggle against British imperialism. We must struggle against budding Egyptian imperialism. We must struggle against imperialism wherever we find it. That is why we call for active solidarity with all the peoples who are fighting for their liberty."

## India

The first full Delegates' Convention of the Bolshevik Leninist Party of India, held and concluded in Bombay last month, signaled the determination of the party to intervene directly in Indian politics during the fateful period ahead. The period of the infancy of the party ended with the holding of this Convention, where the mapping out of political and organizational perspectives, and the democratic decisions on all controversial issues, equipped the party for its main job today—to become the mass party of the Indian working class.

The foundations of the BLPI were laid in 1942, during the darkest days of the war, and precisely at the time when the Stalinists' role in India was becoming thoroughly exposed by their opposition to the national struggle. The new party threw itself at once and wholeheartedly into the August struggle seeking to strengthen its ranks in the storm and stress of the upsurge. Its organization was repeatedly battered by police repression; its leaders rotted in jails; Himalayan obstacles stood in the way of the progress of the tiny party. Nevertheless, it proved viable, and grew despite every setback. Its program boldly posed the fundamental needs of India, the overthrow of British Imperialism and the carrying through of a thoroughgoing agrarian revolution. It showed that only a revolutionary worker-peasant alliance, independent of and in opposition to the native capitalists, could fulfil this program. Hence arose the need to build a revolutionary working class party in India, free from all bourgeois (Congress) influence, and free also from the infection of that stinking corpse, the Comintern.

Five years of patient unspectacular work have already yielded their fruit. The fact that the Convention was attended by delegates from Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Cawnpore, Madura, and Ceylon, where substantial units of the party exist, was itself evidence of this. All these units are no longer isolated propaganda circles. They have gone through their baptism of fire in police repression; and have engaged in mass action, notably in Madras, in Madura, in Ceylon, and to a lesser extent in Calcutta and Bombay as well. The open emergence of the party with the temporary relaxation of repression after the war made this convention doubly necessary, and gave it a special significance.

The main political decisions of the convention centered around the much vaunted transfer of "power" that is scheduled to take place in 1948. The Political Resolution adopted by the Convention contains the following main features. It states 1. British Imperialism has turned from direct to indirect rule in India, making the native propertied classes (capitalist and feudal) entirely responsible for the government of the country. 2. This does not mean either India's freedom, or the end of British Imperialism. 3. Actually the change of policy on the part of Britain is a maneuver to stabilize the British Empire by an alliance with the colonial bourgeoisie and feudalists. 4. Britain's domination will be preserved in India, and can only be ended by revolutionary action. 5. The partition of India is about to be carried out by the British. This has resulted from the incapacity of the Congress bourgeoisie to answer for the whole of India in making their alliance with the British Imperialists. This in turn reflects the low level of capitalist development in India. The feudal Moslem League has succeeded in trapping and harnessing the dissatisfaction of the Moslems, obtaining the support of the majority in Moslem majority provinces.

6. But the partition of India is a thoroughly reactionary step, and we give it no political support whatever. Because, while we stand fully

for the rights of secession of any nationality in India, we emphasize that such rights can only be exercised when Imperialism is overthrown. The free will of the masses in regard to partition has not been expressed and cannot be until British Imperialism is overthrown. The vicious attempt to carve up the living bodies of nationalities like the Punjabis and the Bengalis is the most reactionary feature of the contemplated partition. Finally British Imperialism will surely utilize the partition of India, in whatever form it is realized, to better impose her domination over India.

7. The switch over from direct to indirect rule by Britain is camouflaged as a transfer of "power," by the deception of setting up (one or more) Constituent Assemblies. But these Assemblies are farcical caricatures. They have no power drawn from the people. They are unrepresentative, except for the propertied inter-

ests. Most ludicrous of all, they only register decisions taken elsewhere in the confabulations of the "leaders." To expose this farce the party calls on the masses to struggle for the convocation of their own "Revolutionary Constituent Assembly."

8. The Congress in office has now in thoroughgoing fashion donned the mantle of Imperialism in the matter of repression. The party will lead the fight against the class oppression of Congress in power, as its militants have already done in Madras, Bombay, etc.

9. The greatest need of the moment is to expose the Congress for what it is, the classic agency of the Indian bourgeoisie, and to expose the support given to this bourgeois leadership by the socialists. This will pave the way for the honest militants hitherto in the Congress fold to come over to the revolutionary working class party.

## TROTSKY'S FAITH

*Concluding remarks to Dewey Commission, April 17, 1937, at Coyoacan, Mexico.*

The first great breach in this Tower of Babel will necessarily cause it to collapse entirely, and bury beneath its debris the authority of the Thermidorian chiefs. That is why it is for Stalin a life-and-death question to kill the Fourth International while it is still in embryo! Now, as we are here examining the Moscow trials, the Executive Committee of the Comintern, according to information in the press, is sitting in Moscow. Its agenda is: *The struggle against world Trotskyism*. The session of the Executive Committee of the Comintern is not only a link in the long chain of the Moscow frame-ups, but also the projection of the latter on the world arena. Tomorrow we shall hear about new misdeeds of the Trotskyites in Spain, of their direct or indirect support of the fascists. Echoes of this base calumny, indeed, have already been heard in this room. Tomorrow we shall hear how the Trotskyites in the United States are preparing railroad wrecks and the obstruction of the Panama Canal, in the interests of Japan. We shall hear the day after tomorrow how the Trotskyites in Mexico are preparing measures for the restoration of Porfirio Diaz. You say Diaz died a long time ago? The Moscow creators of amalgams do not stop before such trifles. They stop before nothing—nothing at all. Politically and morally, it is a question of life and death for them. Emissaries of the GPU are prowling in all countries of the Old and the New World. They do not lack money. What does it mean to the [Stalinist] ruling clique to spend twenty or fifty millions of dollars more or less, to sustain its authority and its power? These gentlemen buy human consciences like sacks of potatoes. We shall see this in many instances.

Fortunately, not everybody can be bought. Otherwise humanity would have rotted away a long time ago. Here, in the person of the Commission, we have a precious cell of unmarketable public conscience. All those who thirst for purification of the social atmosphere will turn instinctively toward the Commission. In spite of intrigues, bribes, and calumny, it will be rapidly protected by the armor of the sympathy of broad, popular masses.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Commission! Already for five years—I repeat, five years!—I have incessantly demanded the creation of an international commission of inquiry. The day I received the telegram about the creation of your sub-commission was a great holiday in my life. Some friends anxiously asked me: Will not the Stalinists penetrate into the Commission, as they first penetrated into the Committee for the Defense of Trotsky? I answered: Dragged into the light of day, the Stalinists are not fearsome. On the contrary, I will welcome the most venomous questions from the Stalinists; to break them down I have only to tell what actually happened. The world press will give the necessary publicity to my replies. I knew in advance that the GPU would bribe individual journalists and whole newspapers. But I did not doubt for one moment that the conscience of the world cannot be bribed and that it will score, in this case as well, one of its most splendid victories.

Esteemed Commissioners! The experience of my life, in which there has been no lack of successes or of failures, has not only not destroyed my faith in the clear, bright future of mankind, but on the contrary, has given it an indestructible temper. This faith in reason, in truth, in human solidarity, which at the age of eighteen I took with me into the workers' quarters of the provincial Russian town of Nikolaiev—this faith I have preserved fully and completely. It has become more mature, but not less ardent. In the very fact of your Commission's formation—in the fact that, at its head, is a man of unshakable moral authority, a man who by virtue of his age should have the right to remain outside of the skirmishes in the political arena—in this fact I see a new and truly magnificent reinforcement of the revolutionary optimism which constitutes the fundamental element of my life.

# The Conference of Bankrupts

By H. VALLIN

Two international conferences recently took place at London; one of the Liberal parties and another convoked by the Independent Labor Party of Great Britain. An international conference of Social Democratic organizations is scheduled to take place shortly at Zurich. The most striking fact to be noted is that of these three conferences, only the Liberal conclave had on its agenda the creation of an international organization. The two other organizations have postponed this question to a later conference. Nothing indicates more graphically the degree of degeneration of the traditional workers organizations than this fact that bourgeois organizations are more cognizant than they are of the necessity for international unification at a moment when the world bourgeoisie is profoundly convinced that we live in "one world."

The conference convoked by the ILP was a striking demonstration of the decrepitude and disintegration of the "old" centrist movements. The ILP was the lone organization present, the others were there purely in an individual capacity, for example, Marceau Pivert, and the leader of the Socialist Youth of Hamburg.

The "work" of the conference consisted of oratorical fireworks by various "leaders" on the subject of the United Socialist States of Europe; each orator presenting his special attitude on how to lead the struggle for this slogan. The precise steps and attitudes to be taken are usually left to "secretarians," in this case represented by two delegates of the Revolutionary Communist Party, British Section of the Fourth International. During the final public session the delegates of the RCP proposed an amendment to the resolution adopted by the conference, demanding that the fight for the United Socialist States of Europe be organized on the basis of a revolutionary Marxist program within the framework of the struggle for the proletarian revolution. As was to be expected, this amendment was rejected.

Another characteristic of this conference was the manifestation of confirmed libertarian tendencies. To the extent that the Centrist organizations succumb, the weight of the pacifist, anarchist, and libertarian elements becomes correspondingly heavier and serves to further reduce the character of the centrist organization to that of a propaganda sect. This evolution has already taken place within the ILP. The POUM delegate to the conference, Gironella, insisted on the necessity of finding common grounds for agreement with the libertarians and accordingly proposed replacing the slogan of "United Socialist States of Europe" by that of the "Federation of Socialist Peoples of Europe." In addition, the German delegate made a speech which was markedly libertarian.

The trend of "old centrist" tendencies toward anarchism leaves place for the development of new centrist tendencies emanating from the Social Democracy. Outside of the Socialist Youth, the Socialist Left has not known a serious and coherent development in any country. The Socialist Left of the SFIO after a series of lamentable capitulations, notably on the question of Indo-China, finds itself on the eve of its complete rout, at the national convention of the party in August. The left wing of the Labor Party because of its heterogeneous character, has not attempted to arrive at an organized form. In Italy and

Poland where tendencies have recently made their appearance within the Social-Democratic organizations, the character of these tendencies is not marked by programmatic differences but solely by differences over the question of unity of action with the Stalinists. The same holds true for the splits which recently occurred in the Socialist parties of Rumania and Bulgaria.

Most of these problems will, without doubt, neither be discussed nor resolved at the coming Socialist conference at Zurich, which will, above all, seek to arrive at an agreement acceptable to all the participants. The predominant influence which the British Labor Party exercises within the Social Democratic International, since the end of the war, will force a more right-wing character to the "unanimous" resolutions, than was the case in pre-war days. The Belgian delegation will propose the formal reconstitution of the International to this conference; it will, undoubtedly be supported by the Austrian delegation and the majority of the German delegation. But as long as the British Laborites are not in agreement, nothing concrete will be undertaken.

The only "real" problem which will face the conference is the admission of the German Social Democracy headed by Schumacher. It is probable that within the framework of the German policy of the English bourgeoisie and its Laborite Government, the British delegation will allow this gesture, which lacks any concrete meaning, and the French, Polish, English "Socialist" etc., will continue to defend their own bourgeoisie with regard to the German question. Only the reformist parties of Eastern Europe, particularly those of Poland which are strongly "Stalinized" will be opposed to the admission.

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# The Future of Man

**Trotsky's concluding remarks of Speech on Russian Revolution delivered at Copenhagen, November 1932**

Between nature and the State stands economic life. Technical science liberated man from the tyranny of the old elements—earth, water, fire and air—only to subject him to its own tyranny. Man ceased to be a slave to nature, to become a slave to the machine, and still worse, a slave to supply and demand. The present world crisis testifies in especially tragic fashion how man, who dives to the bottom of the ocean, who rises up to the stratosphere, who converses on invisible waves with the Antipodes, how this proud and daring ruler of nature remains a slave to the blind forces of his own economy. The historical task of our epoch consists in replacing the uncontrolled play of the market by reasonable planning, in disciplining the forces of production, compelling them to work together in harmony and obediently serve the needs of mankind. Only on this new social basis will man be able to stretch his weary limbs and—every man and every woman, not only a selected few—become a citizen with full power in the realm of thought.

But this is not yet the end of the road. No, it is only the beginning. Man calls himself the crown of creation. He has a right to that claim. But who has asserted that present-day man is the last and highest representative of the species *Homo sapiens*? No, physically as well as spiritually he is very far from perfection, prematurely born biologically, with feeble thought and has not produced any new organic equilibrium.

It is true that humanity has more than once brought forth giants of thought and action, who tower over their contemporaries like summits in a chain of mountains. The human race has a right to be proud of its Aristotle, Shakespeare, Darwin, Beethoven, Goethe, Marx, Edison, and Lenin. But why are

they so rare? Above all, because almost without exception, they came out of the upper and middle classes. Apart from rare exceptions, the sparks of genius in the suppressed depths of the people are choked before they can burst into flame. But also because the processes of creating, developing and educating a human being have been and remain essentially a matter of chance, not illuminated by theory and practice, not subjected to consciousness and will.

Anthropology, biology, physiology and psychology have accumulated mountains of material to raise up before mankind in their full scope the tasks of perfecting and developing body and spirit. Psycho-analysis, with the inspired hand of Sigmund Freud, has lifted the cover of the well which is poetically called the "soul." And what has been revealed? Our conscious thought is only a small part of the work of the dark psychic forces. Learned divers descend to the bottom of the ocean and there take photographs of mysterious fishes. Human thought, descending to the bottom of its own psychic sources, must shed light on the most mysterious driving forces of the soul and subject them to reason and to will.

Once he has done with the anarchic forces of his own society man will set to work on himself, in the pestle and the retort of the chemist. For the first time mankind will regard itself as raw material, or at best as a physical and psychic semi-finished product. Socialism will mean a leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom in this sense also, that the man of today, with all his contradictions and lack of harmony, will open the road for a new and happier race.

*(Great applause.)*

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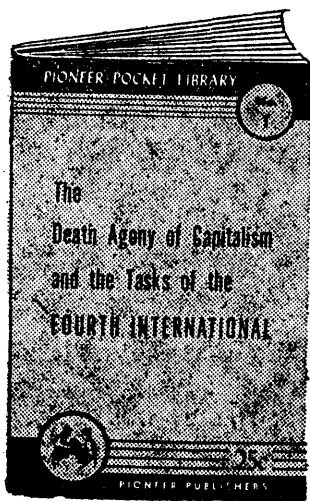
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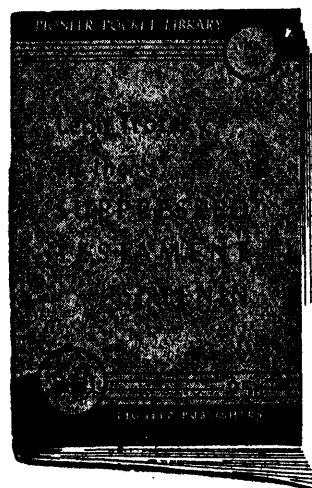


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