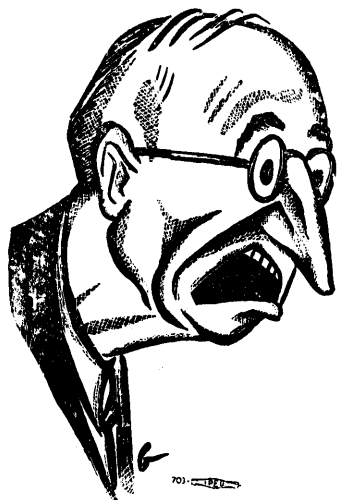


Fourth International

Marxism vs. American Social Democracy

Text of Speech Delivered by Farrell Dobbs in the Debate with Norman Thomas,
New York, October 17, 1948

Editorials



TRUMAN

The Truman Landslide

•

**Military Phase of the
Marshall "Aid" Plan**

•

Articles on Yugoslavia, The Negro Question

December 1948

25c

Manager's Column

SUBS FROM CEYLON, INDIA AND IRELAND

From Ceylon comes another combination subscription to *Fourth International* and *The Militant* for a year, besides a back issue and some pamphlets.

"Our party (Ceylon unit, Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India) has nominated Comrade Bernard Soysa to contest the Colombo South by-elections," writes the new subscriber.

A Bombay reader writes: "Undoubtedly your magazine has added much to the estate of the *Fourth International*. Let us hope that these pages will continue to speak and fight for the interests of the common-man, of whom much is spoken but for whom little is done.

"Thanks to your publication, let the power of the working class improve and show the right deal for the much-wished socialist victory. With best wishes for your magazine."

Pittsburgh branch ordered "10 more copies of the last issue, and from now on double the size of our regular bundle."

A Dublin (Ireland) group ordered bundles of both *Fourth International* and *The Militant*, "to distribute among our fellow workers."

SUGGESTIONS FROM A NEW YORK YOUTH

"I have been reading *Fourth International* for a long time now, and one thing I miss especially in it is a letter to the editor page. I think that the addition of such a feature would be very valuable, as it would stimulate the readers to a more careful and critical study of the articles in the magazine.

"Also, I would like to suggest that more book reviews be put in. And how about

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Managing Editor: E. R. FRANK

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changing the masthead. The one in current use is archaic, and should be changed to something more modern and attractive.

"The September issue was excellent in all respects. I en-

joyed and learned a lot from Freddie Forest's article on the newest Stalinist revisions of Marxism."

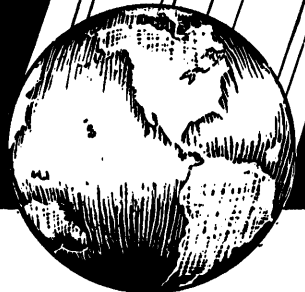
Bob Tracy
 Internationalist Socialist Youth, New York

World Events in the Light of Marxist Analysis

Fourth International
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Statement of the Ownership, Management, Circulation, etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912 as amended by the Acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 of Fourth International, published monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1948.

State of New York, County of New York. Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Jeff Thorne, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Mgr. of Fourth International and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if, a daily, weekly, semiweekly or triweekly newspaper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations), printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails, or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the twelve months preceding the date shown above is— (This information is required from daily, weekly, semiweekly and triweekly newspapers only.)

Jeff Thorne, business manager. Sworn to and subscribed before me this 15th day of September, 1948.

REBA G. HANSEN

(Seal)

(My commission expires March 30, 1950.)

Notice to Readers

Owing to financial difficulties we have been compelled to skip the October and November issues of our magazines. All subscriptions will be extended two additional issues.

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME 9

DECEMBER

NUMBER 8

WORLD IN REVIEW

What the 1948 Presidential Elections Have Revealed — Masses Refuse to Accept Open Monopoly Rule — The Military Marshall Plan

The Truman Landslide and the Tasks of the Socialist Workers Party

The national election results mark a sharp political turn on the part of the masses. This turn not only modifies but actually upsets the relationship of forces on the political field which has existed since the termination of the war. The initial postwar period witnessed a steady drift to the right. Among other things, this manifested itself in the temporary revival of the Republican Party and most crassly in the composition and reactionary legislation of the 79th and 80th Congresses.

The landslide has swept Truman and the Truman Democrats from what appeared to be hopeless defeat to a stunning victory throughout most of the country. The most conservative capitalist newspapers have been obliged to admit that the Truman victory unquestionably represents a complete repudiation of the 80th Congress. What they carefully avoid mentioning is that it constitutes at the same time an overwhelming repudiation of the Republican Party itself and the monopoly rule which it represents in the eyes of the masses.

The Republican Party, above all its brain-trusters, mistook their temporary resurgence in the last few years for a complete consolidation of their own power on a national scale. They interpreted their partial victories as a mounting wave of reaction they were destined to ride much in the same manner as they did following World War I. They took it for granted that the good old days had returned and acted accordingly.

This was the reason for their indecent haste in deciding to cash in their chips before they really had the winning cards in their hands. Intoxicated by the fumes of a decisive victory, which had still to be won, they nakedly and brazenly revealed their reactionary visage.

The National Association of Manufacturers obviously believed that its campaign of "free enterprise" lies, under the cover of which they succeeded in smashing all price controls, would pass scot-free. In their utter contempt for the masses the monopolists likewise believed they could with impunity slash living standards, profiteer and gouge in all fields, disregard the elementary needs of the

masses—of veterans in particular—for a housing program, for social legislation, for eradication of Jim Crow and the like. And on top of all this, they were sure the hour was ripe for strong-arm methods to destroy organized labor, and, as a good beginning on this road, they passed the Taft-Hartley Law.

The full meaning of this Slave Labor Act, which at the outset was clear to revolutionists and union militants, became quickly obvious to the mass of the workers through its operations over a period of more than a year prior to the presidential elections.

The Republicans owed their 1946 victory to a combination of circumstances. Far from being a victory for the Republicans among the working class, the 1946 result was due to the fact that a section of the middle classes, given no independent program or leadership by the labor movement, swung to the Republicans as a means of casting a protest vote. Among the workers there was a smaller vote than usual, owing in the first instance to the fact that the Republicans and Democrats appeared indistinguishable in their eyes. The Republicans, who were thus enabled to score a close victory, mistook the drop in the labor vote for a shift in the moods of the whole working class. There was no rightward shift in the political thinking of the working class, as we pointed out at the time in predicting that the workers were still capable of powerful resistance to the reactionaries.

In 1948, so far as the farmers were concerned, the downward slide of the agricultural price structure, which set in early this year, sufficed to reverse their swing toward the Republicans back again toward the Democrats.

Among the workers, on the other hand, under the impact of domestic and world developments, a process of political groping and radicalization was taking place all the while beneath the surface.

This process of mass politicalization assumed a peculiar form—the rise of the Trumanite power—precisely because there seemed to be no other channel for the practical organization or expression of the new mass moods and needs.

The rise of the Wallace splinter party was one expression of this postwar mass ferment.

But there was another and far more important development. This occurred inside the Democratic Party which was compelled by the logic of the situation to play the role of an opposition party and required a social-demagogic program in order to survive. Mere attempts to introduce such a program inside the Democratic Party (the "social equality plank," etc.) led to a split of the extreme right wing—the Dixiecrats.

In the eyes of the masses the split itself endowed Truman's party with a liberal coloration. This in turn gave the Democratic Party an impulsion to the "left."

At the same time, the desperate and futile search of the labor bureaucrats for some other less compromised candidate than Truman (Eisenhower, Douglas and the rest) drove Truman himself to play more and more with the colors of social reformism (as witness the program enunciated by him, especially toward the close of the campaign). The mass of the people took all this seriously. They believed Truman and rallied to his program.

The more astute trade-union bureaucrats inside both the CIO and AFL, even more desperate than Truman, found themselves compelled to promise a third party and even a "labor party" by 1952 as bait to the masses for supporting the Truman Democrats.

Outside of Truman himself, it was primarily the CIO-AFL bureaucracy that did yeoman service in preparing the landslide.

In this way the mass ferment which had been building up was channelized in a desperate last-minute effort in support of Truman, as the "lesser evil."

This combination of the trade union bureaucracy, the remnants of the "New Deal" liberals and Trumanites pushed the Wallace movement aside.

In domestic policies, which concerned the masses the most, there were no serious differences between them. And on foreign policy, Wallace failed to demonstrate that he held the key to peace, as he claimed.

Wallace's alliance with the utterly discredited Stalinists and his covering up for the bestial Kremlin regime tended to alienate many of his own followers.

Generally speaking, the Wallace movement appeared as a caricature People's Front movement in a competition with a far larger and imposing combination operating with essentially the same ideas and on the same basis of class-collaboration.

The election results have fully disclosed how still-born this Wallaceite movement really was.

The debacle of the Wallace party is irrefutable proof that the need of the times is not another capitalist party, and that the key to the struggle for political power rests in the hands of the organized labor movement.

The Truman party that has emerged from the 1948 victory is not a simple revival or continuation of the Rooseveltian "New Deal" set-up. Its right wing (the Dixiecrats) and its "left" wing (the Wallaceites) have been clipped. In the next period these two formations have no perspective other than to capitulate or eke out a miserable "independent" existence.

Far more important, the specific weight of the trade union bureaucracy in the Truman party is far greater

than it ever was in the Rooseveltian era. The organized labor movement is far stronger now than in the "New Deal" days. If under Roosevelt this bureaucracy felt indebted to him, then today it is Truman who finds himself indebted to them.

The masses especially in the unions will press more and more insistently for the fulfillment of their demands (and Truman's campaign promises). Every delay will make them all the more restive, all the more impatient. At the same time the forces of naked reaction will be compelled to retreat and bide a more favorable opportunity. Truman will thus have to carry the ball for them out in the open in the next period.

The crushing defeat of the Republican reactionaries and the Dixiecrat counterparts will not moderate the mass ferment. On the contrary, the process of politicalization and a further leftward swing of the masses must find its sharpest expression in the days ahead.

How will this new People's Front — the coalition of the Trumanites and the official labor bureaucracy—stand up under the stresses of the sharpening class struggle?

The Truman administration, as the executor of Wall Street's foreign policy, is committed to the war program. These commitments are bound to collide more and more with the mass desires for sweeping social reforms at home. Huge burdens already exist in the shape of the arms program, growing militarization, expenditures for propping up crumbling capitalist regimes abroad, and so on. All these are costly and will increase, not decrease. Additional intolerable burdens will be imposed because of the unsolved internal economic difficulties at home.

Victorious Truman and his allies, after a honeymoon period, will find themselves confronted with insoluble contradictions. This refurbished Trumanite People's Front will prove no more stable or lasting than did its European counterparts, organized under Stalinist auspices in pre-war Europe. The new electoral combination which grew out of the crisis of the two-party system can serve only to pave the way for new and graver crises.

In the face of this new situation what are the tasks of the Socialist Workers Party? In essence, they are the same tasks which we undertook in our presidential campaign. What has to be modified, or more accurately adjusted to the new elements in the situation, is not the *content* but the *form* of our activity.

In our campaign we took advantage of an exceptional opportunity in order to drive through our class line to the American workers, above all, to raise the political consciousness of the largest possible layers we could reach. This remains our main task today.

Our struggle to transform the SWP from a propaganda group into a party of mass action made a giant leap forward in the course of the election campaign. New and even greater opportunities are now afforded to the party.

We enter this incipient phase of labor radicalization with the party, its program and its spokesmen already known to large sections of the people. The same program and spokesmen should enable our party to intervene actively in the unfolding developments, provided we do in the next period what we did during the elections, namely,

couple our general agitation for the socialist solution with a concrete program of action; advance at each stage the suitable transitional demands in terms of specific actions.

Most important of all, the party in the next period must be in the forefront of the struggle to abrogate the Taft-Hartley Law; safeguard, restore and extend civil rights, realize the urgent social measures such as adequate housing, medical care, social security, minimum wages, etc.

The Trumanite coalition has made campaign promises. These played a key role in the elections and will continue to play a major role throughout the life of the 81st Congress. A rude surprise is in store for those capitalist politicians who may toy with the idea that campaign promises can be dismissed as lightly in our day as they have been in the past. Social demagoguery proved highly successful in winning the elections; but social demagoguery will prove of no avail in the face of unfulfilled pledges and the pressing needs of the masses.

Truman's campaign promises won the votes. These millions are prepared to struggle for what was promised them. When they discover that very little or nothing will be handed them on a silver platter, their initial disappointment will give way to a determination to fight all the harder. The SWP must intervene in guiding the masses in this struggle to make every one of these campaign promises a reality.

No other party can provide a program of action for this struggle. If we do so, we shall have an exceptional opportunity for guiding the workers in a series of actions, in the course of which they will learn through their own experiences how urgently needed is a break with pro-war politics, as well as a break with capitalist politics in general. In the course of these actions the workers will be able to grasp the meaning and necessity of such slogans as the Congress of Labor, the Workers and Farmers Government and all the other planks of our Election Platform.

Above all, we shall take another long stride on the road of converting the SWP into the instrument whereby the American workers shall learn to accept Marxism as their guide to action.

Marshall "Aid" Program Aims To Convert Western Europe Into an Armed Camp

The main resolution adopted by the Thirteenth National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party last July predicted that "the Marshall Military Program for rearming Western Europe . . . most presently supplement the Marshall 'Aid' Program."

How squarely this prediction hit the bull's eye can be judged from the announcements which have appeared in the capitalist press the past few weeks. The Sept. 30 *New York Times* declared: "A plan for military aid to Western Europe, patterned on the Marshall Plan, will be submitted early in the next session of Congress, Washington dispatches reported. . ."

This mouthpiece of Big Business revealed that "some experts" say "Congress next spring may be more interested in arming Europe than in restoring its peaceful economy.

If so, they believe, a new Lend-Lease plan to equip the defense forces and to stimulate Europe's war production may supplant the Marshall Plan. . ."

Confirmation of this report on the decision to launch a huge arms program for Western Europe appeared in the October 1 *Foreign Policy Bulletin*, an influential circular on foreign affairs; "One result the United States might hope to achieve during this period would be consolidation of the Western European nations into a closely knit political, military and economic unit which today is still in the blueprint stage." The bulletin explains why little publicity has been given as yet to the projected arming of Western Europe: "Although the issue has been developing since last winter, the Administration has put off until after election day open presentation to the public of the question whether we should assume responsibility for supplying arms to Western Europe."

The bipartisan coalition of Democrats and Republicans did not care to discuss such an explosive issue as this before election day: "Until June President Truman hesitated to discuss the problem because Congress had not taken final action on the bills putting into effect the Marshall Plan and the new draft law. Since the conclusion of the Republican National Convention in June, the President has avoided public consideration of the issue from fear of starting a vehement national controversy which, in spite of the sincere efforts of both the Republican and Democratic parties to maintain a united front on foreign affairs, might foment intense partisan debate during the Presidential campaign."

While the Republicans and Democrats shadow-boxed through their election campaigns, skillfully avoiding debate on the real issues confronting the American people, the rulers behind the scenes continued methodically to shift the axis of the Marshall Plan from *economic* to *military* aid for Western Europe. "Since neither Britain nor the other Western European countries possess the industrial capacity to manufacture all their estimated armament requirements," declares the *Foreign Policy Bulletin*, "they have been discreetly sounding out the Truman administration on the possibility of obtaining new weapons here, perhaps through a modified lend-lease arrangement."

Sir Stafford Cripps, British Chancellor of the Exchequer, is mentioned as among those visiting the United States to explore this question with American officials.

Not all these military moves have remained on the "discreet" level. On September 28 an official announcement was made that five Western European nations, France, Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, had formed a permanent common military organization. Present at the two-day meeting of the National Defense Ministers of these countries were Maj. Gen. A. Franklin Kibler of the U. S. Adjutant General's office and observers of the U. S. military attache's office in Paris.

The dominant role of American imperialism in this military move is obvious. "The reports of the American and Canadian observers probably will determine the extent to which the United States and Canada will seek to arm and supplement this Western European military effort,"

said the September 29 *New York Times*. "One result of the conference, it is understood, will be to halt demobilization in the Western countries and set plans for progressive training and rearmament programs of the five nations."

Hanson W. Baldwin, military expert of *The New York Times* who is kept well informed on the Pentagon's viewpoint, summarized the move as follows: "The alliance among Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg can have little meaning without United States armament, United States military aid and a United States security guarantee. We have gone far along this road; the Vandenberg resolution was, in effect, a commitment of aid, and the participation of American observers in the London military staff conferences has made our alliance with the countries of the Western Union virtually a de facto, if not a de jure one."

The British general Viscount Montgomery was named permanent military chairman of the new military organization, the French general Jean de Lattre de Tassigny was made Commander-in-Chief of the ground forces, a British marshal was placed at the head of the air forces, a French vice-admiral was named naval representative and other appointments promised for high ranking Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourg officers. Thus Anglo-American imperialism took another ominous step in preparation for the projected war on the Soviet Union — setting up the general staff whose immediate duties will be to implement the military phase of the Marshall Plan. The "cold war" is proceeding step by step toward armed conflict.

As the military buds of the Marshall Plan swelled to the bursting point under the ministrations of the Brass Hats and political strategists of Big Business, liberal opinion suffered a severe shock. Since the final aim of the plan is to strengthen reaction throughout Europe and provide a firm economic and military foundation for American imperialism preliminary to launching the attack on the Soviet Union, it is to be expected that every foul dictator and blood-smeared fascist of importance will be brought under the provisions of the Marshall Plan sooner or later.

However, the liberal supporters of the Marshall Plan have attempted to draw an air-tight line between its economic and military aspects. They support economic aid for Western Europe but not the obverse side of the imperialist coin. Thus a great outcry occurred when the Brass Hats in Washington, adhering to their imperialist policy, pushed the rehabilitation of condemned Nazis and extended the olive branch to General Franco of Spain. They appeared outraged that Ilse Koch the "Beast of Buchenwald" could receive clemency from an American Military Government and that both a prominent Republican spokesman, Senator Chan Gurney, and a prominent Democratic spokesman, James A. Farley, as well as Secretary of State Marshall could openly press for inclusion of Franco in the Marshall Plan and the United Nations.

For the political education of these disquieted liberals, Hanson W. Baldwin, explained October 10: "The United States' frontier is on the Rhine, but to keep it there sooner or later it shall probably have to utilize Spanish and German manpower." To the Pentagon this naturally means

accepting fascists as allies and doing everything possible to bolster and strengthen them. "The mystery behind what is becoming to most Americans the 'puzzling dualism' of the Administration's Spanish policy, and for that matter of its German policy, can, therefore, be explained in one word — security. It is the lack of security — military security — that is the nightmare of Western Europe these days, and attempts to achieve strategic security for Western Europe are driving us to attempts to reconcile the irreconcilable, to align Franco Spain with the Western democracies."

Actually there is nothing new in Washington's beginning the Marshall Plan with shipments of powdered milk, cereals and welfare workers and then shifting over to rifles, tanks, bombers and military advisers. This was the pattern in Greece. As the Socialist Workers Party has pointed out again and again, the events in Greece have given us a preview — a dress rehearsal — of what the Marshall Plan will mean for all of Western Europe.

In Greece, it will be recalled, the Marshall Plan was advanced as the only economic salvation of that war-ravaged land. All the publicity hand-outs emphasized the "humanitarian" aims of the Marshall Plan, and the spotlight was placed on the sacks of grain and cement, the medical goods, the clothing and food that would go to Greece. Then it became necessary, somehow, to support the moth-eaten Glucksburg dynasty and to back hated reactionaries who had served under the Metaxas dictatorship and under the Nazis. Presently to "save" the country from "communism" shipments of arms were stepped up and eventually dollars earmarked for economic aid were diverted to the purchase of arms.

Since that time Greece has been racked by civil war and endless bloodshed under the guidance of American officers.

In view of this record why should anyone feel surprise at a similar development of the Marshall Plan in Western Europe? Or surprise at Farley's demand to seal a pact with Spanish fascism even though Farley advances precisely the opposite argument used in the case of Greece; namely, guns must be sent to Franco because "Spain has no communism and there is no danger of Communist inroads here."

As the full reactionary aims of the Marshall Plan unfold, its sinister implications for the American labor movement will become increasingly clear. Those heads of the trade union bureaucracy who backed the Marshall Plan, thinking that whatever evils might arise from it abroad could not affect the unions here at home are due for a sharp lesson on the indivisibility of foreign and domestic politics. The shift of emphasis to the military side of the Marshall Plan will further speed the shift in industrial production from peacetime to war goods. Among other consequences, such as hastening the outbreak of war, we can expect accelerated extension of Brass Hat control in the plants and factories with their military rules and regulations regarding personnel, unions and "security." What this means to militant unionism is already foreshadowed in the firing of workers at the instigation of the

military authorities and refusal to deal with certain unions in plants subject to government control.

In addition a more direct repercussion is forecast. The next Congress is to be asked not only to pass a military supplement or extension of the Marshall Plan, it is scheduled to decide on a blueprint for mobilization that "has been masterminded with the aid of the military services," according to Hanson W. Baldwin. This "Emergency Powers Act. . . frankly recognizes the necessity of 'total mobilization of effort, of persons and of property' for modern war, and therefore provides a series of emergency mobilization and control measures much more sweeping than those used in the last war, which could come into effect upon Presidential authorization in time of war or at such other times as the Congress might decide."

The Nazi concept of "total mobilization" in time of peace for the "total war" to come has thus become the inspiration of American Big Business and the laws it is readying for passage. No good unionism can come from this.

The war-makers are already stockpiling strategic raw materials as well as atom bombs. "Phantom orders" on a huge scale have been issued to industrialists to give them an idea of what to get ready for when the day comes. Big Business is even charting its course for probable developments after the war has begun: "Present living standards

might have to drop. . . by 20 to 40 percent," says Hanson W. Baldwin, in what is no doubt a conservative estimate. "Sooner or later a National Service Act or its equivalent, which would give the Government power to place any man or woman (within certain age limits and with certain exemptions) in any position in or out of uniform, might be passed." The difficulties and dangers that will face the unions under such fascist-like legislation can readily be visualized.

The unfolding of the Marshall Plan abroad will have its symmetrical counterpart at home. The strengthening of reaction abroad and Wall Street's open military preparations in Western Europe for war will inevitably strengthen reaction at home and pave the way for outright union-smashing. The same men who offer the hand of friendship to the Nazis and the butcher Franco will foster native fascism with no less hesitation.

The camouflage of humanitarianism and noble ideals is wearing off the Marshall Plan. Its real reactionary aims are becoming visible for all to see as the war-makers press toward atomic war. In the period to come events will reveal how correctly the Trotskyists estimated the Marshall Plan as not intended for the reconstruction of war-torn Europe but designed to construct a military and economic stronghold for reactionary capitalism in Western Europe.

Marxism vs. U. S. Social Democracy

Text of Speech Delivered by Farrell Dobbs in the Debate with Norman Thomas, New York, October 17, 1948

A notable feature of the debate between Farrell Dobbs and Norman Thomas was that it brought out strikingly to what extent the thinking of the Social Democracy, in the person of Norman Thomas, had drifted to the right, becoming virtually indistinguishable from middle-class liberalism. In their past debates with revolutionary Marxists, Social Democrats have customarily placed the main stress on their "agreement" as to the goal of socialism but their disagreement as to the means of attaining this goal, putting forth gradualism or the patching up of bankrupt capitalism as the most effective and "economical" way of gaining socialism. Norman Thomas dropped all this. He was frankly pessimistic about the working class, not only discarding all talk about attaining socialism but openly flaunting the Marxist doctrine. Especially noteworthy was Thomas' open acknowledgment of his betrayal of his pledge to oppose World War II. He also avowed his determination to stay in the camp of the war-mongers and support not only the next war when it breaks out but the actual preparations for it, especially those already undertaken under the cover of the Marshall "Aid" Program. In this connection Farrell Dobbs succeeded in exposing and smoking out Thomas completely. — Ed.

* * *

Comrade Chairman, Comrades, and Friends,

The question we are debating today — "Which Program Will Lead to a Socialist America?" — is not a new one.

We are actually dealing here with a century-old struggle waged by the adherents of scientific socialism against all pretenders who have advocated, under a socialist label, programs and theories that have nothing in common with socialism. This struggle has been in progress since the day the *Communist Manifesto* of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels was first published in 1848.

Seen in this light, the only correct one, it is easy to understand that the issues in this debate go far beyond mere rivalries in an election campaign, whose immediate outcome will settle nothing fundamental. Let me pose these basic questions:

Why has the bankrupt system of capitalism survived? Why has the Russian Revolution degenerated? Why has the scourge of fascism lacerated mankind? Why have the devastations of one world war been followed by another, with a third and more terrible war in open preparation?

There is only one answer to these questions, and it has been given by history: Bankrupt capitalism has survived beyond its time, and inflicted untold evil on the world, primarily because of the betrayal of the program and principles of socialism by those who pretended to speak in its name.

The imperialists were able to dragoon the socialist working class of Europe into the First World War in 1914 thanks only to the betrayal of the Social-Democratic leaders. For years they had spoken in the name of socialism,

but when the decisive test of war came they acted as agents of capitalism. For years before the outbreak of war they had preached international working-class solidarity and threatened revolutionary action in case of war. But when the war broke out they forgot their promises and supported the war of the imperialists. They set the pattern in World War I which Norman Thomas followed in World War II.

The great Russian Revolution of 1917 was led by real socialists, honest disciples of Marx, who had fought capitalism in war as in peace. Lenin and Trotsky hoped to extend the revolution to Germany and then to the other European countries, and establish the Socialist United States of Europe.

That would have sounded the death knell of capitalism, and it was entirely possible. The war-tortured masses of Europe had been raised to their feet by the Russian Revolution and were ready for the great transformation.

But here again the pseudo-socialists, who controlled the great Social-Democratic parties and trade unions, intervened to play their tragic role of deception, sabotage and betrayal. They continued to preach socialism in words, but in practice they placed themselves at the service of the capitalist class and its regime. The Social-Democratic leaders saved tottering capitalism, and took over the responsibility of government when the capitalists were no longer able to rule in their own name.

When Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg worked to pave the way for the socialist solution in Germany in 1918 and early 1919, they were murdered at the instigation of the self-proclaimed socialists Scheidemann and Noske, who were in power at that time in Germany under the "socialist" President Ebert.

By their policies, by their actions, the Social Democrats helped to drag mankind to the edge of the abyss. It was this ruthless crushing of the German socialist revolution that opened the road to Hitler and enabled Stalinism to rise in Russia.

Stalinism is not an aggressive crusading force for international workers revolution, as the American imperialists falsely and cunningly represent it, and as some victims of their propaganda mistakenly understand it. On the contrary, Stalinism is a timid, cowardly, national reformist movement which began with the repudiation of revolutionary internationalism and thereby broke fundamentally with the doctrines and the tradition of Bolshevism. That is the real reason for the purges. The Stalinists had to massacre a whole generation of revolutionary internationalists to achieve their aims.

Stalinism is a new variety of reformism which has nothing in common with the revolutionary internationalism of the Bolsheviks. But at bottom, Stalinism has very much in common with the reformist Social Democrats.

It is not an accident or a misunderstanding that the Stalinists have consistently and unceasingly fought the Marxist internationalists, the Trotskyists, with every weapon from frame-up and slander to mass murder and individual assassination, while they have frequently collaborated in the most intimate manner with the reformist

socialists of the Social-Democratic camp in all countries of the world, including the United States.

Of course, Stalinism and Social Democracy are not identical. There is a fierce rivalry between them for control of the labor movement. But it is the rivalry of bureaucratic cliques and not the rivalry of irreconcilable ideological opponents. They are both reformists to the marrow of their bones. They both fear and hate the proletarian revolution above everything else, and never hesitate to unite against it as they did in Spain and France in 1936 and the subsequent years. And they never cease to hound and slander the Trotskyists, precisely because the Trotskyists are the consistent and uncompromising advocates of the workers revolution.

The prolonged survival of capitalism, with all its frightful consequences, is due primarily to the influence and the treacherous work of these two reformist currents in the labor movement, one falsely calling itself "socialist," and the other "communist." All the might of American imperialism could not save international capitalism, nor save itself, without their aid.

Consider the situation throughout the world for the last 34 years.

We have witnessed the complete bankruptcy of capitalism as a social system, above all in Europe. The working people of Europe showed themselves eager to find the socialist solution. Despite deceit and treachery, the European proletariat fought over and over again, in one country after another, to put an end to decaying capitalism and to establish a socialist order.

But in every crisis, whenever the capitalists were no longer able to rule in their own name, they turned to the so-called socialists and to the reformist labor parties — alone, or in combination with the Stalinists — to save their rule.

A similar situation is again unfolding in Europe today. The British Labor Party is working with might and main to prop up senile British imperialism, thereby only paving the way for a return of reaction. The decrepit French empire was saved after World War II by a coalition of Stalinists and reformist Socialists, thereby paving the way for the coming of General de Gaulle to power. And that can mean nothing else than the establishment of a military-police state which will attempt to crush all workers organizations with the economic and military help of American imperialism. It was likewise a coalition of Stalinists and Socialists that salvaged Italian capitalism, only to be booted out of office when their services were no longer needed.

These are the bitter fruits of opportunism and class collaboration policies, practiced with equal vileness by Social Democrats and Stalinists.

We of the Socialist Workers Party have nothing to do with these brands of so-called "socialism" or "communism." We are orthodox Marxists, because we know that Marxism is the only *revolutionary* socialism of the working class, and that is the only *genuine* socialism. History has demonstrated the spuriousness of every other brand.

Marxism is a theory of social evolution which affirms that capitalism is obsolete and bankrupt, and that it must

be, and inevitably will be, replaced by a higher form of social organization which Marx and Engels called socialism, or communism.

Marxism teaches that socialism will not fall from the skies. Neither will it be gained by any appeals to the good will and compassion of the capitalist exploiters, as the utopians, who preceded Marx, used to think, and as some people still seem to think.

Socialism can be realized only as the outcome of the class struggle of the workers.

The *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, in which the principles of scientific socialism were first proclaimed to the world 100 years ago, begins with the words: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."

The class struggle is the motive force of history. Politics has no serious meaning except as the expression of conflicting class interests. Marx and Engels asserted, and we repeat after them, that there is an irreconcilable conflict of class interests between the workers and their capitalist exploiters. The political program of a working-class party must be determined accordingly.

All the political actions and judgments of a workers party must always be directed against the capitalist class, and never be taken in collaboration with them. The class struggle is the central and governing principle of socialist politics. It is by carrying the class struggle to its necessary conclusion — that is, to the victory of the working class and the abolition of capitalism — that the socialist society will be realized. This is the teaching of Marxism. There is no other way.

And every attempt to find another way, by supporting the capitalists, by conciliating them, by collaborating with them, in peace or in war, has led not toward the socialist goal but to defeat and disaster for the workers.

Whenever revolutionary socialists discuss the socialist road for their own country, they talk in terms of a worldwide struggle. This is especially necessary today when we discuss "Which Program Will Lead to a Socialist America?" Involved is not only America but the entire world. For everybody knows that American monopoly capitalism is the main bulwark, one might even say the only bulwark, of tottering capitalism the world over.

The tyrannical Greek monarchy, the moth-eaten British empire, the paralytic French regime, the Vatican government in Italy, the puppet regime of the Japanese Mikado, the corrupt and bloody dictatorship of Chiang Kai-shek in China — all of them would have crumbled into dust long ago, were it not for American support.

Let me add, that the monstrous Stalinist regime of police oppression, forced labor and bloody purges could never survive the American socialist revolution.

This role of American imperialism as the main powerhouse of world reaction places tremendous responsibilities on American socialists. Among these is the responsibility to learn from the lessons of the terrible defeats of the European working class, and to teach these lessons to the American workers. This is what we Trotskyists are trying to do.

Bourgeois Liberation Versus Marxism

The American working class, so powerful in its trade union organizations, is on the verge of a great political awakening. All the more incumbent is it upon socialists, or those who want to be socialists, to educate this working class in the true program of socialism. And that is the program of Marx and Engels, of Lenin and Trotsky.

There can be no greater crime than to miseducate or deceive this working class upon whom so much depends for the salvation of mankind. It is a crime to offer them a program of middle-class liberalism under the label of socialism. That is essentially what the program, and even more the practice, of Norman Thomas and the Socialist Party sums up to.

Some 12 years ago there was a glimmer of promise that the Socialist Party would once again become a potent factor in the class struggle of the workers for socialism. Those were the days when the Old Guard gang of conservative and contented bureaucrats broke with the Socialist Party and founded the Social Democratic Federation. Those were the days of revolutionary-sounding resolutions against war and capitalism, when revolutionists were invited to come into the party. That promise didn't last very long.

The approach of war made it clear that the brave words of the party resolutions would soon be put to the test, and Thomas and the group around him shrank from the test.

The split with the Old Guard had taken place precisely over the anti-war resolution. But Thomas and the others, who reject the socialism of Marxism, the socialism of the class struggle in war as in peace, turned against the revolutionists who remained true to the struggle against imperialist war and again sought unity with the Old Guard war-mongers.

The Socialist Party, as represented by the heroic, fearless revolutionary socialist, Eugene V. Debs, has changed its character beyond recognition under the leadership of Norman Thomas. The middle-class liberalism of war-supporting Norman Thomas has no more in common with the militant socialism of the anti-war fighter Debs than Stalinism has in common with the Bolshevik Party of Lenin. The Socialist Party today represents not a continuation of Debs' tradition but a complete break with this tradition.

Trotsky once said that Norman Thomas calls himself a socialist as a result of a misunderstanding on his part. Trotsky did not mean this remark as a personal insult, but simply as a reference to the fact that by rejecting Marxism and the class struggle as the guiding line of politics, he could not carry on a consistent struggle against the capitalist rulers and their government.

This remark was made in 1940, a year before America entered the war. The evolution of Socialist Party policy since that time under the guidance of Thomas has amply demonstrated the correctness of Trotsky's appraisal.

Ever since America entered the war, for profit and plunder, in December 1941, Thomas has found himself in fundamental agreement with the United States State Department on all the fundamental questions of foreign policy while critical on secondary points.

Henry Wallace, whom we oppose just as Thomas does but for opposite reasons — Thomas criticizes Wallace because he is friendly with the Stalinists; we say the Stalinists have once again betrayed the workers by supporting the capitalist politician Wallace — Wallace didn't miss the mark very far the other day when he characterized Thomas as a fellow-traveler of the bipartisan foreign policy of the Republican-Democratic coalition.

To make that characterization more precise and accurate, I would add that he is a critical fellow-traveler of this imperialist foreign policy, but a fellow-traveler just the same. He supports all their major decisions and invariably limits his criticisms to methods of executing them and similar secondary matters.

He supported the war of the American imperialists but insisted that they conduct it as humanely as possible. Consider his comment on the dropping of the atomic bomb on defenseless Hiroshima, the most terrible atrocity in the history of the human race.

When this Japanese city and its doomed population were blasted into atomic dust, Norman Thomas wrote in the *Socialist Call*, August 20, 1945: "Certainly that bomb should not have been dropped on a crowded city without warning."

Not without warning! Such humanitarianism is on the same plane as criticizing an assassin because he has failed to inquire about his victim's health before plunging a dagger into his heart.

The so-called socialism of Norman Thomas and the Socialist Party turns out in practice to be nothing but critical support of American imperialism. The capitalist rulers understand that very well. That's why they have such a benevolent attitude toward him and give him so much free and friendly publicity in their press.

The Socialist Workers Party is an irreconcilable opponent of American imperialism. They understand that too. That's why they persecute and prosecute us. And even deprive a legless veteran, James Kutcher of Newark, New Jersey, of the right to make a living as a clerical worker for the simple reason that he is a member of the Socialist Workers Party.

It is true that the Stalinists derive their policy directly from the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and sell out the interests of the American working class every time, in response to every twist and turn of Stalinist diplomacy. That's why we are the irreconcilable opponents of the Stalinists and their so-called "communism."

But it is equally true that Norman Thomas derives his basic policies from the American State Department, as shown by his support of the imperialist war from 1941 to 1945 and his present support of the Marshall Plan which is nothing but the program of preparation for another world war. That's why we are irreconcilable opponents of Norman Thomas and his so-called "socialism."

Our Program

In contrast to the Socialist Party and the Stalinists, the Socialist Workers Party pursues on all questions, especially the war question, a policy independent of both the Krem-

lin and Washington. Our policy is designed to serve the interests of the working people and not of their masters or bureaucratic betrayers.

Our Election Platform demands the taking of the war-making powers out of the hands of Congress. We are opposed to all secret diplomacy. We stand for the withdrawal of all troops from foreign soil. We demand the complete independence of the colonial peoples. We place no confidence whatever in the United Nations, or in the Marshall Plan, or the Baruch Plan, or any other plan, scheme or subterfuge designed to cover and promote the predatory aims of American imperialism.

Our program, for war as for peace, is summed up in two fundamental propositions which proceed from the principle of the class struggle as the guiding line of working-class politics.

1. No support whatever to the government of the capitalists in war or in peace.

2. In place of the capitalist government which rules America and seeks to rule the whole world and seeks to dominate the peoples of the entire world — in the interests of a small minority — we advocate a government of workers and farmers which would rule in the name and the interests of the immense majority at home and offer peace and friendship to all the peoples of the world.

The War Question

The question of war, in which all questions of socialism are concentrated, now has a burning urgency for all the people everywhere who live in dread of the terrible things in preparation, in these twilight days of the long-outlived and utterly reactionary capitalist system.

What hope can we ever have of socialism, or even of the preservation of the remnants of democracy, or even of the salvation of the human race, if we don't resolutely oppose the endless wars which capitalism inflicts upon mankind?

I wish to put this burning question before you now as the central and decisive issue of our discussion, as it is the center of all discussions taking place throughout the world. I will begin by asking Norman Thomas not *what* he is doing, but *why*?

I ask him point-blank to explain to this audience why he betrayed his promise to oppose the Second World War.

I ask him to explain why he supports the present bipartisan foreign policy of the United States government, which is nothing but a sinister preparation for a Third World War, that threatens the life of the whole human race on this planet.

I want to ask him to explain to this audience why he is doing that, and how he reconciles it with the principles and traditions of socialism.

It is not necessary for me to ask Norman Thomas what position he is going to take in the impending war. You and I already know. His whole course shows that he is going to support the same American imperialist gang that he supported in the last war. This time for the domination and enslavement of the world by the most bloodthirsty

enemies of the human race, whose twin headquarters are Wall Street and Washington.

And it is not necessary to ask *us* where the Socialist Workers Party will stand. We proved in the last war, not without risks and sacrifices, that we are opposed to this imperialist gang in war as well as in peace, as every genuine socialist must be.

The war which the cold-blooded financiers and militarists are preparing will be a war of aggression by American imperialism for the domination and enslavement of the whole world. Irreconcilable opposition to this projected war will be a defense of the human race. We take our position in this defense for the life and freedom and independence of mankind. And no one worthy of the name of socialist can do otherwise.

One of the aims of this war for the conquest of the world, by reducing a few hundred cities and a few hundred million people to atomic ashes, will be the conquest of the Soviet Union, the overthrow of its system of nationalized economy and planned production, its dismemberment and reduction to colonial status, the reestablishment of the rule of capitalists and landlords under a fascist regime serving as the agents of the American imperialist overlords and sharing their blood-drenched profits with them.

An essential part of the war program of American imperialism will be the cementing of alliances with the most reactionary elements in all countries against their own people.

In the period of preparation of this third war for so-called "democracy" we already see in the first line the reactionary, authoritarian Vatican and its army of priestly enemies of human freedom throughout the world; the ecclesiastical vultures who blessed the dictator-murderer, Mussolini, and sprinkled holy water over the head of the butcher Franco.

Reaching its foreign tentacles into this country, our "democratic" ally, the Vatican, has only recently given us a demonstration of its love for free speech and democracy by instigating the exclusion of the liberal *Nation* from the public schools of Newark and New York; by working night and day to undermine and destroy the American public school system; and by uniting and organizing all reactionary forces in the trade unions — through the in-

strument of the priest-controlled "Association of Catholic Trade Unionists" — to drive out all militant unionists.

Those who wish to enter this so-called "democratic" coalition for the Third World War must begin by kneeling to the Pope, for he is the first and most powerful ally of the American State Department.

Those who support the coming war for so-called "democracy" under American leadership must shake hands in friendship and smoke the pipe of peace with all the dethroned monarchs who have found ready asylum in America and England in flight from the wrath of their own people; and the King of Greece who is supported on his bloody throne by American money, arms and generals.

They must shake the blood-stained hand of the dictator Chiang Kai-shek; unite with the reactionary feudal gang in Turkey, and with de Gaulle, the American candidate for military dictator of France.

And finally, gagging and protesting, but going along just the same, they must accept the partnership of Franco, who will soon be rebaptized as a "democrat" and furnished with American arms and money for his part in the holy war for "democracy" and "freedom" and the "rights of man," and the sacred profits of American financiers.

The Socialist Workers Party will not go along with this alliance. It is madness! It is a conspiracy against humanity! And it will not succeed! The threatened peoples of the world will never consent to become the colonial slaves of Wall Street.

And the American working class — the greatest social power in the world — will soon discover that they are marked as the first victims of this imperialist war against humanity, and they will rise up against it.

The alliance of the American imperialists with all the reactionary, privilege-seeking elements throughout the world is a great and fearsome power. But the alliance of the great American working class with the oppressed and freedom-seeking peoples of the world is a still mightier power. And in the end it will prevail.

The victory of this alliance will bring peace and socialism to the world.

The Socialist Workers Party will fight in this alliance and for this victory at all costs and with all its strength.

The Yugoslav Affair

By Pablo

The break between the Kremlin and the Yugoslav Communist Party, brought into the open by publication of the Cominform resolution on June 28, is an event of historic importance for an understanding of Stalinism, both in its present situation and development, as well as for the entire revolutionary working-class movement.

At the very moment when the power and internal stability of the Stalinist apparatus, directing the USSR and the Communist parties from the Kremlin, seemed to many

people more impressive than ever, the Yugoslav affair came to remind them of a factor on which revolutionary optimism rests, namely: the laws of history which will in the final analysis prove stronger than any type of bureaucratic apparatus.

For the Yugoslav affair is in reality an expression of the internal crisis of Stalinism, which is constantly nourished by the profound organic contradictions inherent in this regime. Far from diminishing with the postwar Stalin-

ist expansion over a great part of Europe and Asia, these contradictions have, on the contrary, become more acute, and are driving toward even more powerful explosions as the process of convulsive disintegration of Stalinism unfolds.

The Yugoslav affair is an expression of the general crisis of Stalinism which has developed under the new conditions of the rise of Communist parties to power in a number of countries under the Kremlin's control. The explanation why the crisis first broke out in Yugoslavia is to be found in the specific conditions in that country, but similar processes are generally ripening throughout the "buffer zone."

(Since this article was written, the crisis has extended to the Polish Workers Party which has manifested "rightist and nationalist deviations" and whose general secretary Gomulka, unwilling to disavow Tito, has been dismissed; it has extended to the Czechoslovak Communist Party, which has been severely criticized by the Cominform organ; and to the Hungarian Communist Party, which has just undergone a widespread purge. Moreover, a "purge," that is to say, the Kremlin's attempt to secure absolute control over all Communist parties through its direct agents, is currently in full swing in all the "buffer-zone" countries.)

A bureaucratic police system so extremely rigid as the Stalinist system is able to win victories by employing its mechanical strength much more easily in an isolated country and under conditions of demoralization and prostration among the masses who have been subjected to its crushing pressure for a long time, than it is able to do when it expands into other countries, where there is a different set of economic, political and historical conditions, and where fresh human reserves are available.

Stalinist expansion into the "buffer zone" has in fact introduced centrifugal forces and new ferments into the bureaucratic system, which are aggravating all the contradictions within the regime. Although characterized by a set of specific factors, the Yugoslav affair is nonetheless a warning of far more general significance.

What Is the Nature of This Crisis?

Bourgeois politicians and journalists, on the one hand, and representatives of anti-Stalinist tendencies in the labor movement from Rosmer and the "Proletarian Revolution" group in France, to Shachtman, on the other hand, have closely studied the Tito case in search of the causes underlying his clash with the Kremlin. The most varied hypotheses have been offered. Let us summarize the most important explanations.

Tito came into conflict with the Kremlin for reasons of foreign policy, that is, because Moscow withdrew its support of Tito's "nationalist" and "imperialist" claims. (Trieste, Austrian Carinthia, Balkan Federation, etc.)

Tito revolted against the exploitation of Yugoslavia by the USSR and is seeking support from Washington. He has broken with the Kremlin on a rightist basis, as an expression of capitalist and imperialist pressure upon the USSR.

Tito and Stalin, each representing a bureaucratic class,

have come into conflict in order to decide the question of who will exploit Yugoslavia, exclusively and better. Involved here is only an internal conflict of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

It is only fair to note that serious bourgeois periodicals such as the English *Economist*, the French *Le Monde* and the American *New York Herald Tribune*, have attributed the crisis to the Kremlin's attempt to impose its absolute control over Tito and the latter's resistance.

Lacking a theoretical understanding of the nature of Stalinism and of the new conditions of its development after the second imperialist war, these explanations err at the very least in that they exaggerate one element from among all those which have played a role in the development and outbreak of this conflict. Every natural and social event is the product of many causes; but what is important from the standpoint of Marxist analysis is to determine the principal factor or factors which have given rise to a particular event. Now the Tito case is not an instance of the personal relations between Tito and Stalin nor is it an instance of the relations between the bureaucratic Yugoslav CP leadership and that of the Kremlin. It is a manifestation of the internal crisis of Stalinism under the new conditions of its expansion into the "buffer zone."

Tito and the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party have as their base a mass party which experienced a specific evolution during the second imperialist war. Moreover, this party is bound up with a real movement of worker and peasant masses in Yugoslavia, embracing several million people. Stalin and the Kremlin, on the other hand, represent specific social forces in the USSR and in the world. In order to arrive at a Marxist understanding of the Yugoslav affair, it is necessary to review the nature of Stalinism in the light of the new conditions which arose after its expansion into the "buffer zone"; and, within this framework, to review the special conditions of the Yugoslav situation.

Events which have taken place since publication of the Cominform resolution, condemning the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party, have by and large dispelled certain doubts on a number of points which might otherwise have persisted up to this moment.

Tito and his group are fiercely defending themselves against charges of their desiring to break with Stalinist ideology (which they confuse with Marxism-Leninism) and with the foreign policy of the USSR, and of their seeking to join the camp of the capitalist West in one way or another. Neither on the economic nor on the political level has Tito formulated fundamental differences with the Kremlin such as would allow us to assert that he had already in the past developed a coherent and firm opposition on important points to policies followed by the Kremlin.

Finally, for reasons related to: (1) the pro-Stalinist and pro-Soviet education of Tito's party and the mass movement on which it is based; (2) the economic needs of Yugoslavia, linked by numerous ties to the other countries of the "buffer zone" and to the USSR, and fear of

economic reprisals; and (3) his own ideological considerations—it is Tito who is seeking grounds for compromise with the Kremlin. And by refusing all compromise and by aggravating the conflict with its ferocious attacks which are increasingly oriented toward civil war in Yugoslavia and toward the overthrow of Tito at any cost, it is the Kremlin which is demonstrating in life *the organic incompatibility of its regime with every tendency which is free from or which may escape its direct and absolute control.*

The Preliminaries to the Conflict

It was the Kremlin which began hostilities against the leadership of the Yugoslav party by the first letter addressed by the CC of the Russian Communist Party to the CC of the Yugoslav party on March 27, 1948. Up till then the impression was that Tito's Yugoslavia, touted so highly by the world Stalinist press, represented the vanguard of the "People's Democracies." Belgrade had been selected as the seat of the Cominform, and the Yugoslav Communist Party was considered as the most zealous partisan of the Stalinist "left" turn inaugurated by the Information Bureau.

The Soviet press itself was unsparing of praises for Yugoslavia. For instance, in the article which *Pravda*, October 18-19, 1947, devoted to the occasion of the appearance of the first issue of *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy* at Belgrade, we read under the signature of M. Maritine: "The report of Edouard Kardelj presents a truly grandiose chart, of the very important historical reforms accomplished in Yugoslavia in the last few years." The author then goes on to completely endorse Kardelj's report on Yugoslavia, as well as Kardelj's conclusion that: "Yugoslavia is no longer a capitalist country, nor is it a country with a dominant capitalist sector. But it is a typical country realizing the passage from capitalism to socialism, a country where a socialist economy rules, as a result of the struggle conducted by the working class and all the toilers."

On the other hand, it has now been established, by publication of the correspondence since March 28, 1948 between the Russian Communist Party and the Yugoslav Communist Party, that the principal charge made by the former in the beginning comes down to the accusation that the Yugoslav leadership was following a "hostile" policy toward the USSR. Accusations concerning the "anti-Marxist" policy of the Yugoslav party toward the peasants, the role of the Communist Party, the internal party regime and "nationalism," did not crop up until later, as the struggle unfolded. This is particularly important for an understanding of the real reasons underlying the struggle.

Before the Kremlin dressed itself up in some "ideological" semblance of "doctrinal" differences over an "anti-Marxist" policy toward the peasants, over internal party regime, internationalism, etc., its attack was levelled against the *resistance* encountered by its Russian and Yugoslav political and military agents in Yugoslavia, when they tried to establish direct and absolute control over the Yugoslav government and party.

What does the Russian Communist Party actually complain about in its first letter of March 28, 1948, to the Yugoslav party? It complains:

1) That Yugoslav party members secretly revile the USSR and the Russian Communist Party while hypocritically praising them in public; 2) that leading Yugoslav figures slandered the Red Army, while Soviet specialists in Yugoslavia were subjected to surveillance by Tito's secret police; 3) that the Yugoslav party cadres were under the surveillance of the Minister of the Interior and that neither democracy nor opportunity for criticism existed inside the party, but there was a system of military leadership (the Cominform resolution will later call it a "Turkish system.")

This last point was principally aimed at measures taken against Andrija Hebrang and Sreten Zudovic, direct Yugoslav agents of the Kremlin, who tried to foment an opposition within the Yugoslav party against the Tito leadership.

In its reply of April 13, 1948 to this first letter of the Russian Communist Party, the Yugoslav leadership refutes these accusations and adds: ". . . On the contrary, as has been established by several reports of members of the Yugoslav Communist Party to their organizations, as well as by statements of other citizens of this country, it is they who have all been, from liberation to the present time, under the surveillance of the Soviet secret police. The CC of the YCP considered, as it still does, as inexcusable such an attitude toward a country where the Communists are the leading party and which is developing toward Socialism. The CC of the YCP considered, as it still does, that relations between Yugoslavia and the USSR should be based on absolute confidence and sincerity, and on the basis of this principle, organs of the Yugoslav State have never even entertained the idea of placing under surveillance or controlling Soviet citizens in Yugoslavia." (See the pamphlet published by Yugoslovenka Knjiga, *Statement of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.*)

That Tito's police kept the direct agents of the Kremlin, Russian and Yugoslav, under observation, certainly cannot be doubted for a moment. And it was precisely this activity—the clearest indication of Tito's determination to resist the "Russification" of the Yugoslav government and party, which the Kremlin was trying to achieve through its direct agents Russian and Yugoslav alike—which resulted in embittering the struggle, and pushed the Kremlin toward the complete break. And now we approach the real reasons for the struggle which in appearance begins on a plane pertaining exclusively to matters of police and mutual espionage.

The Kremlin and the Communist Parties In the "Buffer Zone"

Why does the Kremlin spy upon Tito, mistrust him, plot against him? Tito resists. Why is he able to resist successfully? To answer these questions, which outline the development of the Yugoslav affair, is to reach a concrete understanding of this affair.

It is necessary to recall and underscore the fact that relations between the Kremlin, representing the Russian Soviet bureaucracy, and the Communist parties outside the USSR, have been regulated over a long period on the basis of the direct dependence of the latter upon the Kremlin, of direct and absolute control by Moscow over all the Communist parties. They are nothing but executive agencies for orders issued by the Kremlin and have no independence whatever.

Soviet expansion into a series of European and Asiatic countries and the rise of Communist parties to power have created a *new situation* in their relations with the Kremlin. On the one hand, the policy of the Soviet bureaucracy in these countries is dictated in a general way by their own interests as a privileged Russian caste and not by anxiety for "socializing" these countries and allowing them an independent development. On the other hand, the rise of Communist parties to power in these countries has provided them with a basis of a different order of importance from that which they possessed as mere political parties in capitalist countries, owing their influence over the masses to their role as official representatives of the USSR. These parties now possess their own state apparatus; they control important sections of the national economy, and assume responsibility for the general policy of an entire country.

Because of this, they are subject to a whole series of influences and reactions, and within these, tendencies may show up which may at a given moment be opposed to the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. Against the danger of the Communist parties in power becoming, even in a partial and distorted way, the agents of interests other than its own, the Soviet bureaucracy has no other method of struggle than the maintenance of its own absolute control over Communist parties through leaderships composed of its direct agents. For this reason the Kremlin has imposed upon the ruling Communist parties in the "buffer zone" men who have spent a long time in Moscow and offer every guarantee of complete devotion to the Kremlin, in the place of those native leaders who did not leave their countries during the war.

Such an operation was especially necessary in the leadership of the Yugoslav party which, of all the European Communist parties, is the one which experienced a specific development during the war that was likely to prove favorable to resistance against the direct and absolute control of the Kremlin.

The Special Conditions of the Yugoslav Situation

In its struggle against the Cominform, the Tito leadership has placed the emphasis on a number of points which clearly bring about the special conditions of the Yugoslav situation and which have in a large part been the determining factors in the struggle. These are: (1) The reorganization of the Yugoslav Communist Party by Tito since 1937 and its development during the war. (2) The character of its activity during this period and immediately after "liberation." (3) Its policies since that time. (In this

connection see the publications of the Yugoslav Communist Party answering the charges of the Cominform, principally the reports of the Fifth Congress of the Yugoslav Communist Party, published by the Yugoslav New Telegraph Agency *Tanjug*.)

The Yugoslav Communist Party was reorganized in 1937 by Tito on his return from Spain. Until the occupation of Yugoslavia by the Germans, however, this party still remained quite weak. Rankovic, who made the report on the organizational work of the Yugoslav party at the Fifth Congress, gave the number of party members at the time of the Fourth National Conference, held in October 1940 at Zagreb, where a new Central Committee of 29 members was elected, as 6,000 for the party and 15,000 for the Youth. But within a few months, after the party began its armed struggle against the occupying forces, this membership had already doubled. (All figures are Rankovic's.)

At the end of the war, the party numbered around 141,000 members, and the figure rose to 468,000 by July 1, 1948. Development of the Youth was no less impressive—1,415,000 enrolled members.

The social composition of the party is currently as follows: about 30% workers; about 15% intellectuals; about 55% peasants.

Development of the party during the war was achieved mainly in the partisan army, said to have numbered some 300,000 combatants, poor peasants and workers, and led by the Communist Party.

This army, which was the most important partisan movement in occupied Europe, immobilizing more than 30 German divisions, became from its very beginning the instrument of a merciless struggle both against the imperialist occupation and the national bourgeoisie. The Yugoslav leaders are particularly insistent on this point, which according to them distinguished their activity during the war in a fundamental way from the activities of all other Communist parties. They attribute this to the clear positions which they took from the very beginning.

"When the people of Yugoslavia rose against the occupation forces in order to conduct a struggle for liberty and independence, their objective from the beginning was for liberty and independence of a different kind from those which they had experienced in the old decaying Yugoslavia. *Our people, when they rose arms in hand against the occupation forces, did not for one moment intend to fight for the resurgence of the old Yugoslavia.*" (Joseph Broz-Tito: "Bases of a Democracy of the New Type." *Democratie Nouvelle* No. 3, March 1947.)

This declaration, in an even more explicit form, reappears in all discussions at the recent Congress of the YCP and motivates the criticisms of and attacks against the other Communist parties on this score, particularly against those of France, Hungary, and Bulgaria, which were unable to combine the struggle for "national liberation" in an effective way with the struggle for the revolutionary transformation of their countries.

The Yugoslav leaders take pride in the fact that even during the war, which took over 50,000 victims among

its party and youth, they succeeded in replacing "the smashed apparatus of the old administration with a new authority, new in its form and content." (Speech of Ivan Gosnjak at the Fifth Congress of the YCP.)

"Immediately upon the liberation of territories under the old administrative apparatus, the old State forms were destroyed down to their very foundations," declared Kardelj in his report on Yugoslavia published in the first number of the Cominform organ *For a Lasting Peace, For a New Democracy*. "The slogan of the National Liberation Front was: The whole power in liberated territory, to the degree that it is not restricted for reasons of a purely military character, belongs to the Committees of National Liberation; or, to put it another way, the entire people—peasants, workers, all toilers and honest patriots—must take this power."

On November 29, 1943, the Central Committee of Liberation proclaimed the overthrow of the emigrant Yugoslav government, banned the return of the dynasty into the country, and transformed Yugoslavia into a federated state on the basis of national equality. The Central Committee confirmed the local People's Committees in their function as the "sole and competent organs representing the people's will inside the country." (Article of N. Maritine in *Pravda*, October 18-19, 1947.)

Consequently, of all the countries in the Soviet "buffer zone," only Yugoslavia really had, on the day after "liberation," a pyramidal system of people's committees on which the government rested.

These committees, however bureaucratized they might have been, nonetheless represented a real mass movement, led by the Yugoslav Communist Party, of far greater scope and depth than in all the other countries subject to Soviet influence.

This fact also finds its expression in the activities associated with the "revolutionary transformation" of Yugoslavia, undertaken as far back as the war period.

Despite rich deposits of lead, zinc and bauxite, Yugoslavia is a country where "rural economy is dominant, and where industry is little developed," admits E. Varga. (E. Varga, "Democracy of a New Type." *Democratie Nouvelle*, No. 9, September 1947.)

According to Boris Kidric (report on the building of the socialist economy to the Fifth Congress of the YCP) the distribution of the Yugoslav national income in 1937 was as follows: Out of 44,221 million dinars, urban capitalist elements absorbed 7,312 millions, or 16.5%. All capitalist elements took 46.1% of the national income; the capitalist State, through its monopolies and other revenues, absorbed 15.9%; the workers and salaried employes 14.2%; the middle and small peasants 19.1%; while all other petty-bourgeois layers, artisans, etc. took 4.7%. Politically, prewar Yugoslavia was subject to a government of national oppression for the special profit of the Serbian big bourgeoisie; as regards the proletariat and poor peasants, who constitute the majority of the population, it was a government of reaction.

What reforms has the State of the "New Yugoslavia" introduced into this state of affairs?

If we are to believe the Yugoslav leaders, this country has already ceased to be a country in which a capitalist economy predominates and is proceeding with socialist construction, the "power of the exploiters" having been definitely smashed.

The Yugoslav leaders were, even before their struggle with the Cominform, most resolutely opposed to all interpretations of their "New Democracy" as being a "stage" on the road to socialism, and had on many occasions defended the thesis that Yugoslavia was already building socialism.

As Kardelj expressed it in his previously mentioned report on Yugoslavia, "the advance of the people's democratic revolution—in Yugoslavia—became infused with socialist principles which have today become dominant."

When the struggle with the Cominform was already developing in April 1948 and the Kremlin's agents in the Yugoslav party, Hebrand and Zujovic, taking up Varga's arguments on the nature of the "new democracies," challenged the "socialist" character of the "New Yugoslavia" and defended the theory of "stages," the Yugoslav leaders replied as follows through the lips of Kidric, President of the Economic Council, in his speech before the National Assembly:

There are "theories" spread in our midst which seek to challenge the socialist character of our nationalized economic sector. These "theories" go hand in hand with "theories" to the effect that the economic forces of our country are inadequate for the building of socialism. Veiled with leftist phraseology, these "theories" even claim that our people's democracy is merely a stage and that our political leaders have not succeeded in defining the character of our revolution and of our economy.

Simultaneously pretending that the nationalized sector of our economy is nothing else but state capitalism, that we do not have sufficient resources of our own, and that resistance is encountered by measures to reorganize our economy whenever these measures are directed toward cleaning out all capitalist forms and remnants in our nationalized sector, these "theories" of "stages" and state capitalism in the new Yugoslavia are actually nothing else but a method of struggle against the building of socialism in our country. (*Borba*, April 29, 1948.)

What are the precise premises on which these "super-egotistical" statements of the Yugoslav leaders are based?

In chronological order, the economic and social reforms introduced in Yugoslavia since its "liberation" are as follows:

The First Nationalizations of Industry

On November 21, 1944, the authorities emerging from the "war for liberation" decided in effect to confiscate and place under state control the properties and enterprises belonging "to Germans, Yugoslav war criminals and their accomplices."

As was the case in other "buffer zone" countries, this economic sector had in reality been abandoned by its runaway or slain German or Yugoslav collaborationist owners, and represented 82% of the entire industry of the country. Although this percentage appears impressive, the objective itself was actually a very limited one, for

in Yugoslavia, just as in Bulgaria, "there were few elements for nationalization," and the economic importance of nationalization of the great industrial enterprises in these countries "is relatively weak," as E. Varga admits in his foregoing article.

a) Agrarian Reform

On August 23, 1945, the Yugoslav government promulgated its agrarian reform. In this country where the peasants constitute about 80% of the population, the agrarian question retains all of its sharpness, despite the fact that "in certain areas the land has been placed under agrarian reform." (See the previously mentioned article by Tito.) An examination of statistics brought out, for example, that "200 great landowners held almost as much land as 300,000 poor peasants, holdings. Among these great landowners were a number of foreigners and the Catholic Church." ("The Yugoslav Constitution," By E. Fajon. *Democratie Nouvelle*, February 1947.)

The agrarian reform law confiscated without indemnity the domains of great landowners exceeding 35 to 45 hectares (as the case might be), of which 25 to 30 hectares at most could be tillable land, and set the legal maximum holding of land property at the same limits. By this reform "95% of the cultivated lands passed into the hands of working peasants." (*Ibid.*)

In an article published by V. Begovic in *Borba*, July 27, 1948, he compares the Yugoslav agrarian reform with that of Poland (legal maximum 50 hectares and in East Poland even 100 hectares), and finally with Hungary where there are still domains of 400 hectares. In this same article, Begovic lauds the graduated income tax imposed on the peasants which favors the poorest among them, as well as the development of agricultural cooperatives embracing around 2,200,000 members and 10,000,000 consumers in 1948. (A new law on the taxation of agricultural production, effective since September 1, 1948, sharpens still further these measures against the well-to-do peasants and favors those peasants who do not employ outside labor, as well as the cooperatives of "working peasants.")

b) The Five-Year Plan

On November 27, 1947, Tito proposed to the Assembly a Five-Year Plan, designed to transform Yugoslavia from an agricultural country to an industrial country, and to solve the problem of peasant overpopulation by an intensive industrialization of the country based primarily on hydroelectric energy. According to this plan, national income in 1951 would increase 193% as compared with 1939; industrial production would be multiplied five times in value; production of electricity would go from 71 KW per inhabitant to 272 KW in 1951 and 1952.

In September 1947, according to the previously cited report of Kardelj, industrial production had already reached 167% of the prewar level. (The Five-Year Plan projected specifically: a) investments of about 1½ billion pounds sterling; b) quadrupling the production of iron and steel; c) increase of 272% in the output of the principal mines; d) quadrupling the production of electric energy;

e) irrigation of 8 million hectares of land; f) construction of 15,000,000 square meters of housing; g) building of 110 hospitals; h) increase in live stock.)

c) New Nationalization

In April 1948 a new law was adopted, nationalizing 3,100 enterprises, above the level of small shops and small businesses, and "thereby accomplishing the nationalization of all Yugoslav industry." These are the measures which Kidric presented to the Assembly as signifying "first of all that the socialist sector of our economy is already consolidated to such a point, and socialist construction of our country, endowed with so solid a framework, has made such progress, that we can without danger of delay, take over under the effective direction of the State even the management of small businesses." (*Borba*, April 29, 1948.) These same measures were subsequently criticized by the Cominform as demagogic and adventuristic.

In explaining the motivations for this new law on nationalization (see previously cited article by Tito), insistence was placed on the fact that after the first nationalizations, a certain number of enterprises continued to remain in the hands of individuals. These enterprises, "neither by their size nor importance, can be considered as having either a federal or republican importance. Their importance is purely local. Nevertheless they are very important for the socialist economy."

"The experience with the first year of the Plan has shown that we cannot depend on these enterprises in realizing the Plan and that we cannot struggle successfully against speculation" while these enterprises remain in the hands of individuals.

This new law also planned the nationalization of a certain number of vessels in river and maritime navigation, as well as (a) all health institutions, hospitals, sanatoriums, bathhouses, etc., (b) printing houses, lithograph plants, and motion picture houses, (c) hotels catering to tourists.

To what extent have all these reforms really changed the country's economic and social structure?

Again according to the report presented by Kidric to the Fifth Party Congress, the scope of these changes is reflected in the following distribution of the national revenue for 1947, which it is useful to compare with that of 1937 previously quoted:

Out of a total of 935,905 million postwar dinars, the urban capitalist elements absorbed 3.4%; the rural capitalist elements 11.7%; "The Socialist State" (according to Kidric) 35.97%; the workers and salaried employes, 23.1%; the middle and small peasants 22%; the other petty-bourgeois layers, artisans, etc. 1.8%.

According to the same report, redistribution of the national income for 1948 will be as follows:

Urban capitalist elements 1.55%; rural capitalist elements 9.67%; workers and salaried employes 25.07%; middle and small peasants 23.55%; other petty-bourgeois layers 4.83%; "The Socialist State" 38.33%.

Kidric consequently concludes: "There is absolutely no doubt that Socialism in our country is developing more

rapidly than capitalist elements, and consequently that the relative importance of capitalist elements is declining."

Naturally this bold declaration is based on the relationship between what Kidric calls "The Socialist State" and the combined capitalist elements of the city and country, a relationship viewed through a comparison of their respective shares in the national income. In reality, comparison between the capitalist sector and the state-ized sector (which Kidric calls socialist) should be made bearing in mind that in the capitalist sector must be included the entire sphere of private property in the means of production, peasant, artisan, small business; whereas in the so-called Socialist State's sector, it should be remembered that appropriation of the surplus value produced by this sector is in part recaptured by bourgeois elements through the channels of trade.

The Reasons for Yugoslav Resistance

After the above analysis, it is easier to see why Tito has resisted, and has been able to resist up to now, the attempted "Russification" of his government and his party by the Kremlin.

As against all the other Communist parties in the "buffer zone," which won their power thanks to the direct support of the Kremlin and the Red Army, the Yugoslav Communist Party during the war led a real mass movement with distinct revolutionary tendencies which brought it to power. Tito and the "band of partisan leaders who surround him" (according to the characteristic expression of the Polish Vice-Marshal Zombrowski) were intimately linked during the whole war with this plebeian movement supported by the majority of workers, poor peasants, and other exploited layers of old Yugoslavia. Between this group, which conducted a bold and difficult struggle, at the head of an army of rugged and proud men, and those groups of functionaries who spent the entire war period at Moscow, there is naturally considerable difference in how each conceives and understands the mutual relations with the Kremlin. The Yugoslav Communists emerged from the war, proud of their exploits and enthusiastic for "socialist reconstruction." Contact with the "Soviet brothers" sent from the Kremlin was probably not the happiest. Their conditions of poverty and the austerity of their behavior, including that of their own rising bureaucracy, contrasted sharply with the life and attitude of the representatives of the old bourgeoisified and corrupted Soviet bureaucracy. The work of surveillance and espionage by the GPU, prime duty of every orthodox Stalinist toward his own brothers, shocked them and put them on their guard.

It is quite possible that the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party and other party cadres may very well have expressed their discontent and disapproval on all these points. It is quite possible that cadres and members of the party may well have whispered "strange" remarks in the corridors "about the degeneration of the USSR." It is also quite possible that on even more important questions, the Yugoslav leadership may have taken, or tried to take points of view different from the Kremlin.

It is possible, for example, that on the question of the Balkan Federation, so ardently desired, as has now been proved, by the Yugoslavs, Bulgarians, and Albanians as a far greater framework for their economic development, differences may well have become manifest against the Kremlin's policy; but these never reached the level of a real opposition.

As regards economic relations between Yugoslavia and the USSR, there are no facts to prove that these relations could have been considered as disadvantageous for Yugoslavia or that they could have been the motivation for any kind of negative reaction on its part. On the contrary, from this point of view Yugoslavia occupied a privileged position in comparison with all the other "buffer-zone" countries, maintaining far greater economic relations with the other countries of the "buffer zone" than with the USSR itself. In this sphere, Yugoslavia appears even to have received more from the USSR than it gave in return.

Thus the real stumbling-block in Belgrade-Moscow relations does not seem to be some kind of coherent and firm opposition by Tito. *It rather lies in the independent character of Tito's movement and of his party, which if left to its own development, contains a real threat of leading to serious differences with the Kremlin.* In the long run these differences would be between "socialist reconstruction" and Yugoslav policy in general, as viewed from the angle of Yugoslav interests, and Russian policy, as viewed from the angle of the special interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. In order to avoid such a development, the Kremlin, forewarned by a series of minor facts and always guided by its refined sense of smell which can so rapidly sniff out suspicious situations, and even *potentially suspicious ones*, has set itself the task of eliminating Tito. However, this task has failed in Yugoslavia, having encountered the organized resistance of an apparatus with state power at its command, and supported by a party and a mass movement which still surround it, despite its bureaucratization, with a genuine devotion.

Whither Yugoslavia?

Tito has won the first round. But at the same time by his type of defense he has put himself in a position which can only lead to his defeat if he persists in it.

The leadership of the Yugoslav party reaffirmed their attachment to Stalin at the Fifth Congress and likewise affirmed that "no fundamental theoretical difference" exists between them and the Stalinist doctrine. By this they mean, more specifically, the theory of "socialism in one country" which they hold dear, and "monolithism" of the revolutionary party, which liquidates ideological tendencies counter to the policies of the leadership by calling in the secret police. But at the same time they must be in considerable difficulty to pretend to be unaware that Stalin is the great instigator of the campaign which is being conducted against them by all the Communist parties, a campaign whose objective, as has become increasingly clear, is the violent overthrow of Tito. For Stalin will never pardon the defiance hurled by the Yugoslav leadership against his direct and absolute control over all Communist

parties, which is the cardinal rule of the Stalinist game, the essence of its regime.

In its resolution on the struggle with the Cominform presented at the Fifth Congress, the Yugoslav leadership, by the moderation of its language and its circumspect attitude toward the Russian Communist Party and toward Stalin in particular, made a final effort to reach a direct compromise with the master in the Kremlin. It was, in fact, fearful of the consequences of a complete break and it was, on the other hand, under pressure from its rank and file, which had been brought up in the pro-Stalinist and pro-Soviet cult. But it soon had to change its tone. The Kremlin apparatus directed by Stalin started marching as a phalanx to crush the "renegade" of Belgrade, whose example could become so dangerously contagious.

In Yugoslavia itself and in all countries under Soviet control, from the Albania of Enver Hodza — who only yesterday was praising the benefits of Yugoslavia's "generous" assistance — all the direct agents of Stalin are concertedly conducting a political, economic and police campaign which is aimed at bringing about Tito's fall. Tito is compelled to reply by strengthening the centralization of his government and of his party and by leaning more and more on his faithful police apparatus rather than on the conscious support of the masses. For in order to mobilize the latter against his enemies, *he would have to denounce what they stand for ideologically, he would have to put Stalinism on trial and break with it.* It is more than doubtful that Tito and his group can take this step by themselves. But the members of the Yugoslav Communist Party and the Yugoslav masses in general have been placed in an objective situation which compels them to search for a way out. For Yugoslavia the way out can only be the path toward the real road of proletarian revolution and socialism, breaking with the Kremlin and denouncing it openly.

The present position of the Yugoslav leadership is untenable. It will demoralize the rank and file of the Yugoslav party as well as the masses of the country. In the absence of a revolutionary way out of this struggle, the Yugoslav leadership, isolated within the "buffer zone" and increasingly isolated from the masses, will accentuate the Bonapartist character of its regime and can eventually become, unless overthrown or liquidated previously by the direct agents of the Kremlin, an instrument of other class interests than those which it represents at the present time.

The class struggle goes on in Yugoslavia and is organically linked to the international class struggle. Tito and the Yugoslav leadership represented for a period the bureaucratic distortion of an anti-capitalist, revolutionary plebeian current. But on the morrow this Bonapartist apparatus, under the conditions of isolation, inevitable internal difficulties, and the sharpening of imperialist pressure, can imperceptibly become the spokesman for reactionary forces. As against the perspective of elimination by the direct agents of the Kremlin or that of capitulation to imperialism, there is only one solution: To place one's confidence in the Yugoslav and world masses, lean upon them exclusively, install genuine democracy in the party and in the country, break with Stalinism and expose it, call for the real socialist revolution by the masses and for the masses, within the buffer zone, throughout Europe and the world.

Here is the only road of salvation for Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav Communist Party. Here lies its immeasurable historical mission for the future of the entire world working-class movement. And toward that end it is the duty of all the forces of the Fourth International to work.

August 1948

Translated by Ed Wilde

The Revolutionary Answer To the Negro Problem in U. S.

By J. Meyer

The report published below was delivered by Comrade Meyers in presenting the draft resolution on the Negro Question to the Thirteenth Convention of the Socialist Workers Party, July 1-5, 1948. — Ed.

* * *

Comrades, our party, with this Resolution, is preparing to make a powerful entry into a section of the class struggle that is now raging in the United States. The decay of capitalism on a world scale, the rise of the CIO in the United States, and the struggle of the Negro people, have precipitated a tremendous battle for the minds of the Negro people and for the minds of the population in the U. S. as a whole over the Negro question. During the last few years certain sections of the bourgeoisie, recognizing the importance of this question, have made a powerful

theoretical demonstration of their position, which has appeared in *The American Dilemma* by Gunnar Myrdal, a publication that took a quarter of a million dollars to produce. Certain sections of the sentimental petty bourgeoisie have produced their spokesmen, one of whom is Lillian Smith. That has produced some very strange fruit, which however has resulted in a book which has sold some half a million copies over the last year or two. The Negro petty bourgeoisie, radical and concerned with communism, has also made its bid in the person of Richard Wright, whose books have sold over a million copies. When books on such a controversial question as the Negro question reach the stage of selling half a million copies it means that they have left the sphere of literature and have now reached the sphere of politics.

President Truman has made his literary and theoretical declaration in the report of the Civil Rights Committee, and he has also made his political declaration in his recommendations to Congress to accept the proposals of that committee. The Communist Party is doing its hardest in the same field and has declared at one of its recent plenums that the test and touchstone of the work of the party, of its maturity in the United States, is the work it has done and does on the Negro question.

It is into this battle that we now propose to enter, in a more rounded, more consistent, and more militant form than we have entered in the past. That is the first significance of this Resolution. It is not only a guide to the actions of the party; its mere presentation to the public will mean that the policies of genuine Bolshevism are now ready to compete fully armed in the tremendous battle that is raging over the Negro question in the United States.

Now what is it that we have to say that is new? In one sense—and I quote—"nothing is new." What we say in this Resolution has been "implicit," it has been an "underlying conception" of our activity in the past. It has appeared in many discussions, by Trotsky and in various articles and speeches. But nevertheless it has not appeared in such consistent and rounded and finished form as we propose to do in this Resolution.

We can compare what we have to say that is new, in that sense, by comparing it to previous positions on the Negro question in the socialist movement. The proletariat, as we know, must lead the struggles of all the oppressed and all those who are persecuted by capitalism. But this has been interpreted in the past—and by some very good socialists too—in the following sense: The independent struggles of the Negro people have not got much more than an episodic value, and as a matter of fact, can constitute a great danger not only to the Negroes themselves, but to the organized labor movement. The real leadership of the Negro struggle must rest in the hands of organized labor and of the Marxist party. Without that the Negro struggle is not only weak, but is likely to cause difficulties for the Negroes and dangers to organized labor. This, as I say, is the position held by many socialists in the past. Some great socialists in the United States have been associated with this attitude.

Our Standpoint

We, on the other hand, say something entirely different.

We say, number 1, that the Negro struggle, the independent Negro struggle, has a vitality and a validity of its own; that it has deep historic roots in the past of America and in present struggles; it has an organic political perspective, along which it is traveling, to one degree or another, and everything shows that at the present time it is traveling with great speed and vigor.

We say, number 2, that this independent Negro movement is able to intervene with terrific force upon the general social and political life of the nation, despite the fact that it is waged under the banner of democratic rights,

and is not led necessarily either by the organized labor movement or the Marxist party.

We say, number 3, and this is the most important, that it is able to exercise a powerful influence upon the revolutionary proletariat, that it has got a great contribution to make to the development of the proletariat in the United States, and that it is in itself a constituent part of the struggle for socialism.

In this way we challenge directly any attempt to subordinate or to push to the rear the social and political significance of the independent Negro struggle for democratic rights. That is our position. It was the position of Lenin thirty years ago. It was the position of Trotsky which he fought for during many years. It has been concretized by the general class struggle in the United States, and the tremendous struggles of the Negro people. It has been sharpened and refined by political controversy in our movement and, best of all, it has had the benefit of three or four years of practical application in the Negro struggle and in the class struggle by the Socialist Workers Party during the past few years.

Now if this position has reached the stage where we can put it forward in the shape that we propose, that means that to understand it, should be by now simpler than before; and by merely observing the Negro question, the Negro people rather, the struggles they have carried on, their ideas, we are able to see the roots of this position in a way that was difficult to see ten or even fifteen years ago. The Negro people, we say, on the basis of their own experiences, approach the conclusions of Marxism. And I will have briefly to illustrate this as has been shown in the Resolution.

First of all, on the question of imperialist war. The Negro people do not believe that the last two wars and the one that may overtake us, are a result of the need to struggle for democracy, for freedom of the persecuted peoples by the American bourgeoisie. They cannot believe that.

On the question of the state, what Negro, particularly below the Mason-Dixon line, believes that the bourgeois state is a state above all classes, serving the needs of all the people? They may not formulate their belief in Marxist terms, but their experience drives them to reject this shibboleth of bourgeois democracy.

On the question of what is called the democratic process, the Negroes do not believe that grievances, difficulties of sections of the population, are solved by discussions, by voting, by telegrams to Congress, by what is known as the "American way."

Finally, on the question of political action. The American bourgeoisie preaches that Providence in its divine wisdom has decreed that there should be two political parties in the United States, not one, not three, not four, just two; and also in its kindness, Providence has shown that these two parties should be one, the Democratic Party and the other, the Republican, to last from now until the end of time.

That is being challenged by increasing numbers of people in the United States. But the Negroes more than

ever have shown — and any knowledge of their press and activities tells us — that they are willing to make the break completely with that conception.

Recent Negro Struggles

Such are the ideas that are moving among the Negro people. And it is not only a question of approaching the conclusions of Marxism, in their own instinctive way, under the banner of democratic rights. We have seen during the last ten or fifteen years that the Negro people have carried on tremendous struggles, significant in themselves but still more significant as a portent of the possibilities of things to come. We saw them riot and break out in Harlem in 1935. We saw it again in 1940 when the "March On Washington" exploded and shook the American bourgeoisie, particularly the Roosevelt administration. We saw it again in Detroit and in various other towns in 1943 and later. We have seen it explode recently in the tremendous challenge and defiance of the Randolph-Reynolds movement. And, finally and most important, at the time when the American bourgeoisie presented its most powerful organization and clamped its strength upon the American people during the war by means of the American bourgeois military machine, we saw individual Negroes, groups of Negroes, masses of Negroes, hurl themselves at that machine with a reckless disregard for their personal safety and their personal situation that shows the tremendous revolutionary potentialities that are simmering among the Negro people.

So that our theoretical position, our analysis of the situation among the Negro people — what they are *thinking* — has got evidence in what the Negro people have been *doing*.

Now we can draw from this one of the first of the important conclusions. The Randolph-Reynolds movement, the mere declaration by Reynolds and Randolph, caused a tremendous confusion in the ranks of the bourgeoisie. It disrupted the propaganda for mobilizing the nation to go into the war. You have seen also that it has seriously disrupted the passage of the important draft bill in Congress. And if not what Randolph *says* and what Randolph *proposes* but if what Randolph *expresses* can find the organizational expression which we hope it will find, then it is certain that under the banner of Negro democratic rights, asking only for an army that will not practice segregation, the Negro people will have a terrific impact, national and international, upon the preparations of the American bourgeoisie for the war. It is impossible to deny this.

Secondly. If we look at what took place after the "March on Washington" and if we look again at what took place in Harlem after the 1943 outbreak, we shall see the Negro people, by their independent mass activity and by their determination to gain their rights, have been striking terrific blows at one particular point in the Democratic Party, the link between the organized labor movement and the Southern reactionaries.

When the history of the Democratic Party comes to be written, and particularly the history of the *break-up*

of the Democratic Party, it will be seen that the independent Negro struggle, the vigor with which the Negroes are protesting, their determination to gain their rights under American bourgeois democracy, has been one of the most powerful means of breaking that unnatural alliance between the most advanced section of the population — the organized labor movement — and the Southern reactionaries.

Already a Powerful Factor

Under the banner of Negro democratic rights, struggling purely for what seem to be limited objectives, the independent Negro movement is contributing to the release of the proletariat from the stranglehold of the Democratic Party and giving it an opportunity and a possibility to emerge as an independent political force.

This is our basic position. It can be concretized and will have to be developed. But it is clear that we cannot look upon the independent Negro movement as episodic or of little importance. It is a part of the political life of the country and, more important, of fundamental importance for the political development of the proletariat.

But when that is said—we have little doubt that it will be accepted — there arises for us a very important problem.

As Bolsheviks we are jealous, not only theoretically but practically, of the primary role of the organized labor movement in all fundamental struggles against capitalism. That is why for many years in the past this position on the Negro question has had some difficulty in finding itself thoroughly accepted, particularly in the revolutionary movement, because there is this difficulty—what is the relation between this movement and the primary role of the proletariat — particularly because so many Negroes, and the most disciplined, hardened, trained, highly developed sections of the Negroes, are today in the organized labor movement.

Fundamental Propositions

Now let us note first that the resolution does not falter in one single degree on fundamental propositions. It states, for instance, that the Negro struggles in the South are not merely a question of struggles of Negroes, important as those are. It is a question of the reorganization of the whole agricultural system in the United States, and therefore a matter for the proletarian revolution and the reorganization of society on socialist foundations.

Secondly, we say in the South that although the embryonic unity of whites and Negroes in the labor movement may seem small and there are difficulties in the unions, yet such is the decay of Southern society and such the fundamental significance of the proletariat, particularly when organized in labor unions, that this small movement is bound to play the decisive part in the revolutionary struggles that are inevitable.

Thirdly, the Resolution pays great care and attention to the fact that there are one and a quarter million Negroes, at least, in the organized labor movement.

On these fundamental positions we do not move one inch. Not only do we not move, we strengthen them.

But there still remains the question: what is the relationship of the independent Negro mass movement to the organized labor movement? And here we come immediately to what has been and will be a very puzzling feature unless we have our basic position clear.

Those who believe that the Negro question is in reality, purely and simply, or to a decisive extent, merely a class question, these pointed with glee to the tremendous growth of the Negro personnel in the organized labor movement. It grew in a few years from three hundred thousand to one million; it is now one and a half million. But to their surprise, instead of this lessening and weakening the struggle of the independent Negro movement, *the more the Negroes went into the labor movement, the more capitalism incorporated them into industry, the more they were accepted in the union movement, it is during that period, since 1940, that the independent mass movement has broken out with a force greater than it has ever shown before.*

That is the problem that we have to face, that we have to grasp. We cannot move forward and we cannot explain ourselves unless we have it clearly. And I know there is difficulty with it. I intend to spend some time on it, because if that is settled, all is settled. The other difficulties are incidental. If, however, this one is not clear, then we shall continually be facing difficulties which we shall doubtless solve in time, but which it must be the function of *this* Convention to try to get rid of at once.

Now Lenin has handled this problem and in the Resolution we have quoted him. He says that the dialectic of history is such that small independent nations, small nationalities, which are powerless—get the word, please—*powerless*, in the struggle against imperialism, *nevertheless* can act as one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, which can bring on to the scene the real power against imperialism—the socialist proletariat.

Let me repeat it please. Small groups, nations, nationalities, themselves powerless against imperialism, nevertheless can act as one of the ferments, one of the bacilli which will bring on to the scene the real fundamental force against capitalism—the socialist proletariat.

In other words, as so often happens from the Marxist point of view, from the point of view of the dialectic, this question of the *leadership* is very complicated.

What Lenin is saying is that although the fundamental force is the proletariat, although these groups are powerless, although the proletariat has got to lead them, it does not by any means follow that they cannot do anything until the proletariat actually comes forward to lead them. *He says exactly the opposite is the case.*

They, by their agitation, resistance and the political developments that they can initiate, can be the means whereby the proletariat is brought on to the scene.

Not always, and every time, not the sole means, but one of the means. That is what we have to get clear.

Our Task

Now it is very well to see it from the point of view of Marxism which developed these ideas upon the basis

of European and Oriental experiences. Lenin and Trotsky applied this principle to the Negro question in the United States. What *we* have to do is to make it concrete, and one of the best means of doing so is to dig into the history of the Negro people in the United States, and to see the relationship that has developed between them and revolutionary elements in past revolutionary struggles.

For us the center must be the Civil War in the United States and I intend briefly now to make some sharp conclusions and see if they can help us arrive at a clearer perspective. Not for historical knowledge, but to watch the movement as it develops before us, helping us to arrive at a clearer perspective as to this difficult relationship between the independent Negro movement and the revolutionary proletariat. The Civil War was a conflict between the revolutionary bourgeoisie and the Southern plantocracy. That we know. That conflict was inevitable.

But for twenty to twenty-five years before the Civil War actually broke out, the masses of the Negroes in the South, through the underground railroad, through revolts, as Aptheker has told us, and by the tremendous support and impetus that they gave to the revolutionary elements among the Abolitionists, absolutely prevented the reactionary bourgeoisie — (revolutionary later) — absolutely prevented the bourgeoisie and the plantocracy from coming to terms as they wanted to do.

In 1850 these two made a great attempt at a compromise. What broke that compromise? It was the Fugitive Slave Act. They could prevent everything else for the time being, but they could not prevent the slaves from coming, and the revolutionaries in the North from assisting them. So that we find that here in the history of the United States such is the situation of the masses of the Negro people and their readiness to revolt at the slightest opportunity, that as far back as the Civil War, in relation to the American bourgeoisie, they formed a force which *initiated and stimulated and acted as a ferment.*

That is point number one.

Point number two. The Civil War takes its course as it is bound to do. Many Negroes and their leaders make an attempt to get incorporated into the Republican Party and to get their cause embraced by the bourgeoisie. And what happens? The bourgeoisie refuses. It doesn't want to have Negroes emancipated.

Point number three. As the struggle develops, such is the situation of the Negroes in the United States, that the emancipation of the slaves becomes *an absolute necessity*, politically, organizationally and from a military point of view.

The Negroes are incorporated into the battle against the South. Not only are they incorporated here, but later they are incorporated also into the military government which smashes down the remnants of resistance in the Southern states.

But, when this is done, the Negroes are deserted by the bourgeoisie, *and there falls upon them a very terrible repression.*

That is the course of development in the central episode of American history.

Historical Anticipations

Now if it is so in the Civil War, we have the right to look to see what happened in the War of Independence. It is likely—it is not always certain—but it is *likely* that we shall see there some *anticipations* of the logical development which appeared in the Civil War. They are there.

The Negroes begin by demanding their rights. They say if you are asking that the British free you, then we should have our rights and, furthermore, slavery should be abolished. The American bourgeoisie didn't react very well to that. The Negroes insisted—those Negroes who were in the North—insisted that they should be allowed to join the Army of Independence. They were refused.

But later Washington found that it was imperative to have them, and four thousand of them fought among the thirty thousand soldiers of Washington. They gained certain rights after independence was achieved. Then sections of the bourgeoisie who were with them deserted them. And the Negro movement collapsed.

We see exactly the same thing but more intensified in the Populist movement. There is a powerful movement of one and one quarter of a million Negroes in the South (the Southern Tenant Farmers Association). They joined the Populist movement and were in the extreme left wing of this movement, when Populism was discussing whether it should go on with the Democratic Party or make the campaign as a third party. The Negroes voted for the third party and for all the most radical planks in the platform.

They fought with the Populist movement. But when Populism was defeated, there fell upon the Negroes between 1896 and about 1910 the desperate, legalized repression and persecution of the Southern states.

Some of us think it is fairly clear that the Garvey movement came and looked to Africa because there was no proletarian movement in the United States to give it a lead, to do for this great eruption of the Negroes what the Civil War and the Populist movement had done for the insurgent Negroes of those days.

And now what can we see today? Today the Negroes in the United States are organized as never before. There are more than half a million in the NAACP and, in addition to that, there are all sorts of Negro groups and organizations — the churches in particular — *every single one of which is dominated by the idea that each organization must in some manner or another contribute to the emancipation of the Negroes from capitalist humiliation and from capitalist oppression.* So that the independent Negro movement that we see today and which we see growing before our eyes—is nothing strange. It is nothing new. *It is something that has always appeared in the American movement at the first serious sign of social crisis.*

A Sign of the Times

It represents a climax to the Negro movements that we have seen in the past. From what we have seen in the past, we would expect it to have its face turned towards the labor movement. And not only from a historical point

of view but today concrete experience tells us that the masses of the Negro people today look upon the CIO with a respect and consideration that they give to no other social or political force in the country. To anyone who knows the Negro people, who reads their press—and I am not speaking here specially of the Negro workers—if you watch the Negro petty bourgeoisie — reactionary, reformist types as some of them are, in all their propaganda, in all their agitation — whenever they are in any difficulties, you can see them leaning toward the labor movement. As for the masses of Negroes, they are increasingly pro-labor every day. So that it is not only Marxist ideas; it is not only a question of Bolshevik-Marxist analysis. It is not only a question of the history of Negroes in the U. S.

The actual concrete facts before us show us, and anyone who wants to see, this important conclusion, that the Negro movement logically and historically and concretely is headed for the proletariat. That is the road it has always taken in the past, the road to the revolutionary forces. Today the proletariat is that force. And if these ideas that we have traced in American revolutionary crises have shown some power in the past, such is the state of the class struggle today, such the antagonisms between bourgeoisie and proletariat, such, too, the impetus of the Negro movements toward the proletariat, that it is clear that the Negro *movement toward the revolutionary forces, which we have traced in the past is stronger today than ever before.* So that we can look upon this Negro movement not only for what it has been and what it has been able to do — we are able to know as Marxists by our own theory and our examination of American history that it is headed for the proletarian movement, that it must go there. There is nowhere else for it to go.

And further we can see that if it doesn't go there, the difficulties that the Negroes have suffered in the past when they were deserted by the revolutionary forces; those will be ten, one hundred, ten thousand times as great as in the past. The independent Negro movement, which is boiling and moving, must find its way to the proletariat. If the proletariat is not able to support it, the repression of past times when the revolutionary forces failed the Negroes will be infinitely, I repeat, infinitely, more terrible today.

Therefore our consideration of the independent Negro movement does not lessen the significance of the proletarian—the essentially proletarian—leadership. Not at all. It includes it. We are able to see that the mere existence of the CIO, its mere existence, despite the fakery of the labor leadership on the Negro question, as on all other questions, is a protection and a stimulus to the Negroes.

Penalty of Defeat

We are able to see and I will show in a minute that the Negroes are able by their activity to draw the revolutionary elements and more powerful elements in the proletariat to their side. We are coming to that. But we have to draw and emphasize again and again this important conclusion. If—and we have to take these theoretical

questions into consideration—if the proletariat is defeated, if the CIO is destroyed, then there will fall upon the Negro people in the U. S. such a repression, such a persecution, comparable to nothing that they have seen in the past. We have seen in Germany and elsewhere the barbarism that capitalism is capable of in its death agony. The Negro people in the U.S. offer a similar opportunity to the American bourgeoisie. The American bourgeoisie have shown their understanding of the opportunity the Negro question gives them to disrupt and to attempt to corrupt and destroy the labor movement.

But the development of capitalism itself has not only given the independent Negro movement this fundamental and sharp relation with the proletariat. It has created Negro proletarians and placed them as proletarians in what were once the most oppressed and exploited masses. But in auto, steel, and coal, for example, these proletarians have now become the vanguard of the workers' struggle and have brought a substantial number of Negroes to a position of primacy in the struggle against capitalism. The backwardness and humiliation of the Negroes that shoved them into these industries, is the very thing which today is bringing them forward, and they are in the very vanguard of the proletarian movement from the very nature of the proletarian struggle itself. Now, how does this complicated interrelationship, this "Leninist" interrelationship express itself? Henry Ford could write a very good thesis on that if he were so inclined.

The Ford Experience

The Negroes in the Ford plant were incorporated by Ford: first of all he wanted them for the hard, rough work. I am also informed by the comrades from Detroit he was very anxious to play a paternalistic role with the Negro petty bourgeoisie. He wanted to show them that he was not the person that these people said he was—look! he was giving Negroes opportunities in his plant.

Number 3, he was able thus to create divisions between whites and Negroes that allowed him to pursue his anti-union, reactionary way.

What has happened within the last few years that is changed? The mass of the Negroes in the River Rouge plant, I am told, are one of the most powerful sections of the *Detroit proletariat*. They are leaders in the proletarian struggle, not the stooges Ford intended them to be.

Not only that, they act as leaders not only in the labor movement as a whole but in the Negro community. It is what they say that is decisive there. Which is very sad for Henry. And the Negro petty bourgeois have *followed the proletariat*. They are now going along with the labor movement; they have left Ford too. It is said that he has recognized it at last and that he is not going to employ any more Negroes. He thinks he will do better with women. But they will disappoint him too.

The Case of Negro Women

Now there we have a movement, essentially proletarian, proletarianized Negroes, Negroes who are part of the organized labor movement and who dominate the Negro community.

Here it would *seem* is a place where the independent Negro movement should play a strictly subordinate role. But history takes its own course.

Let us look at what happened in Detroit in 1943.

The struggle *began over the Sojourner Truth housing development* for Negroes. Isn't that so? It continued by the activity and hostility of the Negro people to being pushed around, and finally the general dissatisfaction burst out in the rioting.

At this stage the organized labor movement had to intervene; absolutely had to intervene. In other words, owing to the activity and conflict of the Negro people, the proletariat begins to get some education in its responsibilities not only for the demands and needs of labor, but for other sections of the population. But it didn't stay there, it didn't stay there.

When the municipal election came up, the Negroes wanted to run a candidate. They put up a Negro clergyman (one of those petty bourgeois whom Ford thought he had won over).

Now the revolution sometimes needs the whip of the counter-revolution. Frankenstein, then a CIO leader, was running for Mayor. Mayor Jeffreys and the rest thought they saw an opportunity to discredit Frankenstein's campaign by calling him a Negro lover and flooding Detroit with information that the victory of Frankenstein would mean that whites and Negroes would have to live in the same houses, and so on.

Naturally Frankenstein, (in great difficulty, and sweating no doubt), had to play a peculiar course. He had to remember that the Negroes played a certain role in the labor movement, that he couldn't afford to antagonize them, that on the whole he had to be careful not to antagonize Negroes in general, and had to preserve the honor of the labor movement; and yet he did not want to give the impression that he was a Negro lover. It was difficult but that is his difficulty; not ours.

What we have to look at is what happened. *In spite of themselves* the Negro masses found themselves pushed up against the organized labor movement, and though with a lot of confusion, the organized labor movement found itself *compelled to take over, so to speak, the leadership of the Negro community*. It was very confused and hesitant; but the general line was clear.

Most remarkable of all, *this Negro clergyman in the Negro community ran on the CIO ticket*. This made Jeffreys say that the Negroes and the labor unions were planning to run Detroit. He was a little bit premature but nevertheless it showed that *he* could recognize these *possibilities*.

Beginnings of a Great Alliance

The movement has fallen off since, but we have seen enough to know this: *That the struggle which began by Negro militants in the Negro community fighting purely for Negro rights—a simple matter of housing, and resisting people who pushed them around, resulted ultimately in—let us put it mildly—the beginnings of an alliance, a*

political alliance between the Negro community and the organized labor movement in Detroit.

I give you this as an example of how complicated the relationships can be between the Negro community and the organized labor movement even in a city where the Negro community is dominated by proletarians of a very high quality who have their *first* allegiance to the organized labor movement.

If we can reflect on that, if we can constantly be on the alert to see these possibilities, the leadership, the fundamental leadership that organized labor can give to the Negro movement, the basic dependence of the Negro movement upon organized labor; but we can at the same time see the kind of leadership, the kind of stimulus, the kind of impetus, the kind of anticipation that *the Negro movement can give* to organized labor, then we shall be able to deal with all problems, not only the general problems outside, but the specific problems that the party will have to face.

Now if all this is true from a theoretical point of view, and if it is true also from a historical point of view, and if we are able to see the signs of it — not too clearly but nevertheless sufficiently for us to draw some tentative conclusions in Detroit — then we, as a party, having participated in Negro work, having taken part in it for the last three or four years, should be able to see this general movement reflected in party life and in the activity of the party. We have been able to see it.

What fundamentally has been the history of the party as I have seen it, as it has been explained, as we have heard it in discussion? The party in 1946 embarked on the task, consciously and deliberately to transform itself from a propaganda group (that is to say, a group that more or less puts over the whole program), into a mass party, in other words, a party which would draw workers not on the basis of general socialist conceptions, but on the basis of concrete activity and readiness to help them on basic problems that were immediately troubling them and which, as far as they could see, required, if not an immediate solution, at least immediate activity. It was the Negroes in the crisis of '43, '44, and '45, who came first to the party and *offered the party for the first time* the opportunity to draw masses on the basis of agitation and with the perspective of concrete activity. Our general analysis shows that this experience of the party was no accident. It took place this way because of this peculiar relationship of the Negro mass movement to the general struggle. Our first opportunity, our first experience, really to become a mass party was given to us by the Negroes.

Recent Party Experiences

Now the fact remains that a great number of Negroes who came into the party left. First of all, the most fundamental reason which has been given to me and which I see no reason to disagree with, is that the party was not quite ready to handle these tremendous problems. It could handle a specific case like the Fontana case. It could handle a case like the Hickman case and carry it

through to a brilliant conclusion. But the actual day-to-day struggles against the bourgeoisie, and the Negro organizations, and the inertia of the labor movement, we simply were not powerful enough to handle.

And we come to another very important conclusion here for our practical activity. If the vitality of the independent Negro movement depends in the last analysis upon the power and response of the proletariat, then life and activity, the strength of the party's Negro work must depend also — American society being what it is — upon the strength the party has in the organized labor movement and as a Marxist organization.

You see the pattern continues. It is impossible to be able to do Negro work in the sense that the party at this stage wants to do it, in mass activity, meeting the demands of the Negroes, transformation from a propaganda organization to a mass party, without great strength and power in the organized labor movement. That the convention has dealt with. It is to be remembered that this is a report on the Negro Resolution, but we must never lose sight of that; that was our experience. And in fact, I have been told that the best work has been done and the best Negro cadres have remained where our party *was strongest in the labor movement*. That must guide us in the coming period.

In addition to these there were certain subordinate reasons for our difficulties. The Negro militants who came to us came in revolt from the NAACP and these other organizations which were, as usual, like the labor bureaucracy, talking but doing little or nothing. When they came to us, we were not able, under our own banner, as I have said, to carry on a sustained *mass* activity on these questions.

The correct road for these Negro militants was back into the Negro mass organizations and there to do solid, patient fraction work as we do in the union movement. But they had just come from there. It was very difficult, it was very difficult for them to understand that they had come from there to us only to learn that they had to go back there again.

And, not at all to be forgotten, I am informed that the party didn't have trained, experienced personnel to be able to lead this work in the way that it should be done. So that we have been more successful with the Negro comrades in the unions, who could work in one of our fractions in the labor movement. That is good, but it is not sufficient.

Now, we hope, upon the basis of the experience that we have had, upon the fact that certain solid Negro cadres remain, upon the basis of the work that we intend to do with this Resolution, upon the basis of the impetus to thinking, study, penetration in the Negro movement, and observation of the Negroes in the trade union movement, which we hope will come from this Convention and the six months' discussion, we hope that those opportunities which were presented to us, from which we have gained some capital, we hope that we can begin again, we hope that when opportunities will be presented—we are absolutely

sure they will be—then the party will be able to undertake that task and lay a solid foundation in its Negro work.

A Permanent Feature of Activity

And therefore our policy is that a clear consideration of all theoretical issues involved in what is a very difficult, very complicated and at times can be, a very exasperating question, our party proposes to you that we make a permanent, fundamental feature of our work, the work in the Negro organizations. (Applause)

We say that whatever these Negro organizations are today, they represent the channel whereby the Negro people today or tomorrow will express themselves in the way we have outlined. We make our main orientation the NAACP. That is the most powerful Negro organization. Today it may look to be petty bourgeois, reformist or whatever you think; that is not the issue.

Behind this organization, or liable to flow into it, or to create an organization which can destroy it at a future date, is the tremendous revolutionary potentiality of the Negro people that we have outlined.

We have to be there, we have to devote ourselves to this work and in much the same way that for us the trade union is the basic place where we can work, whatever may be the position of the labor bureaucracy. We concentrate on the Negro organizations and for the time being as a general rule, the NAACP is the place where we are going to work, because we are confident that the Negro movement has these great potentialities both for itself and in regard to revolutionary developments.

But as the Resolution states clearly, we go into those movements, into that movement, as we go into all others, as revolutionists.

I have been talking to one or two Negro comrades, not as many as possible but I have been talking to some and one of them says that he gets an impression that this insistence upon the significance of the Negro struggle for democratic rights gives him the feeling that when we go into the Negro movement, we may go there concerned only with a democratic program, when in reality, he says, there are many Negro militants who want Marxism. We can assure you that in saying many Negro militants want Marxism he is absolutely correct. We go there as revolutionists seeking to make those organizations into class organizations, seeking to inculcate proletarian methods of struggle, seeking to clear out the petty-bourgeois reformist leadership and substitute the leadership of organized labor or of revolutionary militants. But we do more than that.

If our analysis of the Negro people is correct, if what they think about fundamental questions approaches empirically the conclusions of Marxism, if we believe that the Negro movement is heading toward the proletarian revolution led by the proletariat, then it is absolutely imperative that we carry into those Negro organizations the fundamental doctrines of Marxism not only on the Negro question but on all the political questions of the day. We are not going into those movements to limit ourselves to the Negro struggle for democratic rights and

the particular methods which may appear to be used by the majority of the Negroes in those organizations at that time. Not at all. If our analysis is sound and if we grasp its significance, we gain two things. We gain, one, the conviction to be able to stay in these movements and to work patiently under the most difficult conditions. But we gain something else. We gain a conviction of the necessity that our Marxist ideas, Marxist propaganda, our struggle for the labor party and our struggle for the proletarian revolution *must* meet some important response from the Negro militants in those organizations, and with the necessary discretion we have a fruitful field for party recruitment and the development of the general Marxist movement.

Racial Prejudices

Now there are only one or two things more that I would like to say. There is the question — and I hope you will allow me a minute or two extra — there is the question of racial prejudice. I am not talking here about going out to dinner with Negroes or having Negroes at your house or any of those things. When the party gets larger and rank-and-file Negro and white workers and others come into it, rank-and-file white workers will bring their prejudices. Negroes will bring their suspicions, and in my opinion, absolutely justified suspicions, and there will be difficulties created of a certain kind. But the party is a Bolshevik organization and on the basis of a fundamental political line and its general socialist aspirations, will be able to settle the crudest forms of those to the extent that they appear. The cadre by and large today is sound on these matters. But bourgeois race prejudice against the Negroes in the United States is something extraordinarily powerful and of a range and subtlety that it takes years to understand and only the proletarian revolution and the break-up of the bourgeoisie will make the proletariat fully understand. Such is the tremendous power which racial prejudice exercises in the United States, at every stage, wherever the races meet. In the Resolution we select *one* series of examples.

Undoubtedly this Resolution is breaking a new stage in the organized form in which we are bringing forward Negro work and our conception of the Negro contribution, bringing it forward before the country and before the organized labor movement. We can accept it. We can feel that we shall do everything we can to carry it through. But bourgeois race prejudice isn't going to let it pass so easily. No. We have pointed out (and this has been the experience of many and particularly in the old Communist Party), that you will find many high-class unionists who accept a sound policy on the Negro question, genuinely mean to carry it out. Then they find themselves in a certain situation in the union, maybe a union of predominantly white workers, and the constant hammering home by the party of the importance of the Negro question and the significance of the Negro question in the party press and in the party propaganda and agitation begins to affect the work. There are problems created.

A problem arises and these unionists ask, couldn't we in

this particular situation, not on the whole but in this crisis, couldn't we play down the Negro angle a bit. Sometimes, in fact, we have to. But you can find, and it is possible that as we expand you will find this tendency to push the Negro question back a bit. Not for any reactionary reasons but with the genuine intention to advance what looms as more important, the role of the party in the organized labor movement at large. If we have time, maybe tonight, I will tell you many instances that have been given to me. This is not an individual aberration, it is not a personal weakness of a comrade. If it were, it wouldn't find a place in the Resolution. It is the pressure of bourgeois race prejudice that will penetrate into the party and impede the development of Negro work to the stage that we want to place it.

Problems Facing Negro Militants

There are other examples. You find a Negro unionist who for thirty years of his life has been bothered with chauvinism and the problem of where the Negro people are going to find some salvation. And at last he gets into the union movement, a progressive union. He meets other unionists, he sees what the union signifies, he grasps the question of the class struggle. Good. Now he has a perspective. He comes to the revolutionary party, and there he sees in embryo, despite certain difficulties, he catches a glimpse of the perspectives of a new society, and he is reinforced in his fundamental conceptions. When we now begin, when the party now begins to insist upon the significance and vitality of the independent Negro movement, this a shock to him.

He doesn't understand it too well. He thinks that we may be taking a step back. He doesn't quite see it. And you will find that he may align himself with those (I have seen this) who are finding some sort of objection to the projection forward of the Negro work. That is only another aspect of bourgeois race prejudice. It isn't that the Negro unionist is prejudiced. Don't misunderstand it. It is the impact of prejudice, that affects us at every turn.

There are others, there are plenty of others besides those that are mentioned here. There are petty-bourgeois Negroes who more than most Negro groups suffer terribly in a personal way from the persecutions and humiliations of bourgeois society. When they come into a fairly large party, there they are able to work genuinely for the revolution and at the same time find a social milieu in which they can be comfortable and are saved from the merciless repression and savage attacks that bourgeois society subjects them to. I have seen, I have been told, and we shall undoubtedly see, you will find, if not today, tomorrow, some of these who, also using as argument the basis of "the class struggle" tend to push the Negro question back, so to speak, into a sort of obscurity. It seems to be forcing forward what they have gotten away from. This again, is the influence of the prejudice of bourgeois society.

Thus, *inside the party*, you get certain tendencies

which are likely to stand in the way of our work. Nothing can check this but a clear fundamental theoretical line and the education of the party not abstractly, not "black and white unite and fight" (that is a very crude example) and not "the Negroes must follow the whites and the proletariat must lead them" — not at all. No. We need a careful systematic building up of historical, economic, political, literary ideas, knowledge and information, on the Negro question inside the party. Because it is only where you have Bolshevik ideas, Marxist ideas, Marxist knowledge, Marxist history, Marxist perspectives, that you are certain to drive out bourgeois ideas, bourgeois history, bourgeois perspectives which are so powerful on the question of the races in the United States. That is what we must do. (Applause)

Inescapable Difficulties

We will have, we have had difficulties in the party. We cannot escape them. I have been hearing of some. I hope the Negro comrades in the party will express themselves freely and fully. But all these difficulties assume importance and in the last analysis can be traced directly to, both on the part (and I am speaking now of the party), both on the part of the white comrades and on the part of the Negro comrades, can be traced to the fact that we have not thoroughly grasped to the fullest extent the difficulties that the party faced when it was placed before masses of Negroes coming into the party and having to deal with them as a mass party when it was still a propaganda group.

It is the settled opinion of the most experienced comrades and certainly it is mine—I have a wide experience on the Negro question — that a basic fundamental understanding, a clear understanding (within the limitations of the party and the objective situation), a clear historical and theoretical grasp of perspectives is the only cure for those difficulties that are bound to arise, and if they don't turn up today, they are bound to turn up tomorrow. Because we are not creating them. It is the tremendous power of bourgeois society which tries to stop and tries to prevent a complete coordination and pushes itself into the party at all times. That is what is taking place. It is an aspect of the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletarian movement. And we have to learn to meet it in a proletarian way.

Comrades, in bringing forward this Resolution, the Political Committee is telling the party now, in a manner more serious, more concentrated, more organized than ever before, not to consider ourselves merely as the champions of Negro rights, but to make it our special business to advocate to the Negroes, to the organized labor movement and to the country at large the role which these persecuted, humiliated, despised people are going to play in the destruction of bourgeois society. The moment you say that in this American bourgeois structure, ridden with race prejudice, hatred and contempt of the Negroes, the moment we push forward what the Negroes can and will do, we shall find ourselves represented not merely as the champions of Negro rights, *but as mortal enemies of the whole bourgeois structure.*

The Revolutionary Potential

Let us not forget that in the Negro people, there sleep and are now awakening, passions of a violence exceeding perhaps, as far as these things can be compared, anything among the tremendous forces that capitalism has created. Anyone who knows them, who knows their history, is able to talk to them intimately, watches them at their own theatres, watches them at their dances, watches them in their churches, reads their press with a discerning eye, must recognize that although their social force may not be able to compare with the social force of a corresponding number of organized workers, the hatred of bourgeois society and the readiness to destroy it when the opportunity should present itself, rests among them to a degree greater than in any other section of the population in the United States. That we must know, and must know that in this Resolution here, behind its sober, disciplined words, there is contained a clear recognition of this immense revolutionary potentiality.

When we go to the Negro movement we are preparing one of the important channels of the proletarian rev-

olution. And we must do this not with the idea that it is for some distant future and we have a long period for theoretical preparation. No. In 1943 the miners revolted in their own way against the domination of the American bourgeoisie. The Negroes in Harlem did the same. Today the American bourgeoisie prepares for war. Once more the miners, that oppressed section, express their defiance. Randolph and Reynolds open up for the Negroes. It is a repetition on a higher scale of what took place in the midst of the war. In the period that is facing us, these two currents are bound to join. It is our task to effect that unification. Nobody else can do that but ourselves. When that unification is effected, the floodgates will be opened but we are not afraid. We shall rule the wind and the whirlwind too. We will be able to deal with any passions, forces, that are developed once we can direct them plainly and simply to the overthrow of bourgeois society. But to do this requires sober, patient, painstaking work and preparation. This is what the Resolution attempts to prepare us for. And that is why we recommend it to you for your careful study and acceptance.

Report on the Fourth International Since Outbreak of the War, 1939-48

Submitted by the International Secretariat for Approval by the Second World Congress

1. FROM THE WAR TO THE APRIL 1946 CONFERENCE

A. How the International Withstood the Test of the War

Founded in 1938, the Fourth International was confronted with the difficult test of a global war before it was a year old. The leadership which emerged out of the Founding Congress was largely dispersed before it had the possibility to firmly establish itself as a representative body expressing politically and organizationally the collective will of the sections and enjoying their confidence. Communication with the sections and contact between them was rendered difficult and in most cases impossible.

All the sections of the International without exception were submitted to various degrees of persecution by all the warring powers. The Stalinist bureaucracy, the fascists, as well as the "democratic" imperialists, fearing the revolutionary consequences of the war, sought by various means to still the voice of revolutionary Marxism and to annihilate its cadres before they could sink deep roots within the working class.

Comrade Trotsky, the founder, leader and inspirer of the International, was among the first to be murdered by Stalin after the outbreak of the war. Later the Stalinist gangsters claimed other victims. In Greece they killed over one hundred Trotskyists, included among them the most qualified leaders of the movement. In Indo-China they

disposed of Tha-Tu-Thau and numerous others. They killed Blasco, the Italian Trotskyist leader who could have rendered inestimable service in the construction of the Italian party.

The Gestapo, wherever it had control, hounded the Trotskyist militants and submitted them to fierce torture and annihilation. Only a handful of the German Trotskyists survived the concentration camps. The Austrian Trotskyists lost some of their major cadres after they were placed on trial by the Nazis and condemned to death. The Czechoslovak Trotskyists lost about a dozen of their cadre elements. The Polish section was wiped out almost in its entirety. The French, Belgian, the Dutch organizations lost the most experienced leaders and many militants.

The Anglo-American imperialists who fought the war ostensibly in the name of democracy and against fascism did not feel in the least restrained in persecuting the Trotskyists. The leaders of the American Trotskyists were thrown into prison for over a year. The British Trotskyists suffered a similar fate. But they were especially ruthless in the colonial countries. The leaders and many members of the Indian party spent the war years in jail without indictment, trial or any definite term. The Chinese Trotskyists were submitted to the triple brutalities of the Japanese imperialists, Chiang Kai-shek's hangmen and the Stalinists. Even Switzerland, the ideal country of bourgeois democracy, which remained neutral in the war, would not allow the Trotskyists to function freely and jailed its leading spokesmen.

The seat of the International Secretariat and IEC was removed from the European Continent at the outbreak of the war and remained in the Western Hemisphere until 1944. But there the IEC and the IS could find a basis of support only in one party. This party, even though among the strongest and the oldest in the International, and which distinguished itself by its political firmness, could not nevertheless substitute for a genuinely representative, collectively functioning International leadership. During this period the IS, fully cognizant of the limitations imposed on it by the situation, set itself the modest task of maintaining the thread of continuity of the International pending a turn in the objective situation which would permit the reestablishment of contact with the sections and the setting up of new representative leading organs.

Where the ties were not completely severed by the war, like Latin America, England, Australia and India, the IS rendered assistance to the sections materially and politically. It assisted the unification of the British movement; it helped bring about the unification of the Argentine groups. The latter did not prove lasting for reasons outside the control of the IS.

The IS was responsible also for the appearance of the International Bulletin and together with the IEC produced several documents expressing the policy of the International on the most immediate issues. The most important of these documents were as follows:

The Resolution on American Intervention in China (May 1941).

The Manifesto for the Defense of the USSR (October 1941).

The Manifesto for the Workers and Peasants of India (October 1942).

The Manifesto on the Dissolution of the Comintern (July 1943).

These documents based themselves in their entirety on the programmatic positions elaborated within the International by Comrade Trotsky prior to the war as part of the political arming of the International for the imminence of war. It was this preparatory work which was primarily responsible for the fact that despite the severed ties, the sections of the International carried out a generally correct political line.

a) The International and all its sections fought tenaciously against the imperialist war. They all carried out faithfully the policy of revolutionary defeatism, that is, irreconcilable opposition to the capitalist governments and to the capitalist class as a whole.

b) The International maintained its position for the defense of the USSR as a degenerated workers' state and of China as a semi-colonial country, both engaged in a war against imperialist powers seeking to enslave them.

c) Faced with the Nazi occupation of Europe and the reactions this occupation provoked among the masses, the International defended the principle of tying the struggle for "national independence" to the struggle for the socialist revolution and the Socialist United States of Europe. The International insisted on the need of safeguarding the organizational and political autonomy of the revolutionary party and the workers' movement against all attempts aimed at dissolving into a "National People's Front" of

resistance organizations under bourgeois and Stalinist leadership.

d) Against the flood of chauvinist propaganda which inundated the entire world, the Trotskyists held high the banner of revolutionary internationalism. They advocated and they practiced the fraternization of all proletarians in uniform. Outstanding in this respect was the work conducted inside the German army and the publication of an organ for the German soldiers, *Arbeiter und Soldat*.

The record of the Fourth International during the war has few comparisons in the annals of the revolutionary movement. It is a record of tenacious devotion to principles, of uncompromising struggle against terrible odds and of costly sacrifices.

The balance sheet of the International during the war shows an array of powerful forces bent on the destruction and the annihilation of the International. These forces included the capitalist governments, their Socialist agents, the trade-union bureaucracy and the Stalinist gangsters. They failed in their objective only because of the indestructibility of the ideas on which the International was founded.

B. The Political Divergences in the International During the War

The balance sheet of the International during the war also shows its weaknesses which the hard test of the war underscored especially. The International and its sections were as yet only in the propaganda stage at the outbreak of the war. Not a single section could be classified as a party in the real sense of the word. Their ties with the masses were very slim. For this, there are profound historical reasons.

The degeneration of the first workers' state carried in its train the degeneration of a whole generation of proletarian revolutionists whose political consciousness dates back to the Russian Revolution. Ever since the Russian Revolution the world proletariat has been subjected to a series of uninterrupted defeats. It found itself on the eve of the war betrayed by its traditional parties and leaders and demoralized by the march of fascist reaction.

The International in its propaganda stage attracted to its ranks many petty-bourgeois intellectuals who if they had continued to function in a workers' milieu might have rendered valuable service to the revolutionary movement. But under the conditions of isolation imposed on the revolutionary vanguard, many of them succumbed in one way or another to the terrible pressure of the war. Some went over completely into the camp of the class enemy; others developed revisionist positions which they sought to impose on the International or to break the International when they met with no success.

The first of these revisionist groups to emerge with the outbreak of the war was that of Burnham, Shachtman and Abern in the United States, where the pressure of "democratic" imperialism was greatest. This group which Comrade Trotsky characterized as a petty-bourgeois opposition took the Stalin-Hitler pact in 1939 as the occasion for rejecting the position of the International on the defense of the Soviet Union. In the course of the polemic on this question in which Comrade Trotsky fully participated, it

became clear that involved in the struggle was not merely the question of the defense of the USSR against imperialist attack but a petty-bourgeois rebellion against the Marxist method of analysis of the character of the state and of politics in general. It became clear furthermore that this group rejected the Bolshevik conception of the revolutionary party and its discipline.

Finding themselves in a minority in the American party, they refused to submit to the discipline of the majority and of the International. They split and formed their own organization, the Workers Party. Since that split in 1940 they have done all they could to extend the split into the International as a whole. This criminal split, in the midst of the war, necessitated the convocation of an Emergency International Conference which was held in May 1940. This conference was made necessary in addition in order to rearm the International on the questions posed by the outbreak of the war and its development. The Emergency Conference reaffirmed its basic programmatic line as it applied specifically to the war. This was set down in the Manifesto entitled "Imperialist War and the Struggle for the Proletarian Revolution." The Emergency Conference also elected a new leadership. This was made necessary because several members elected to the IEC by the Founding Congress betrayed the trust placed in them and sided with the splitters.

Another revisionist grouping emerged out of the emigre German group. Their views were first propounded in the document, "The Three Theses," which appeared in October 1941. The conceptions propounded by this group diverged sharply from the programmatic positions on which the International was founded. The authors of "The Three Theses" have since then developed their revisionism even further. The resolution of the April 1946 Conference took cognizance of this fact when it summarized the political line of the IKD. This resolution stated that "... the leadership of the IKD has substituted for our transitional and socialist program corresponding to the historic character of our epoch, which remains fundamentally a period of socialist revolution, a national-democratic program based on the necessary detour via the democratic revolution and on the perspective of the next great national-democratic war of all the oppressed peoples of Europe."

The WP and the IKD have given extreme expression to the revisionism inside the International produced by the impact of the war and the inherent weaknesses within the organizations. But there were other less profound political divergences which developed within the International during the war. The general programmatic positions of the International did not in all cases supply concrete answers to all the complicated questions posed before the sections. The severance of the ties between the sections meant in effect that each one was compelled to determine its own policy and in most cases the International had no possibility to participate in the internal struggles within the sections.

The pressure of the war and the occupation of Europe by the Nazis at first disoriented completely the leadership of the prewar Trotskyist movement in France. Some deserted the organization and others abandoned political ac-

tivity. Among the remaining leading comrades there were some who developed a position which represented in essence a complete retreat from the revolutionary positions of the Fourth International. They raised doubts about the need of the Fourth International and its strengthening and proposed instead the "... intervention in the different International and National regroupments." (Report of Comrades M.H. and Y.C. of August 7, 1940 to the IEC.) This extreme position was subsequently abandoned by the leadership of the French POI. New differences however, developed later on the "national question."

In China a struggle developed within the section over the attitude toward the war against the Japanese imperialists. Our position, in support of China as a semi-colonial country fighting for its independence, came up for re-examination once America entered the war. The Chinese section split over this issue. The majority basing itself on the positions of the International retained its defensist policy. A minority however, rejected this position, maintaining that the character of the war had changed with America's entry and that China's struggle had become subordinated to the general imperialist character of the war. This consideration of the minority was coupled with its conception that the Chinese bourgeoisie, and the colonial bourgeoisie in general, cannot play even a partially progressive role in the struggle against foreign imperialism.

In the European countries under German occupation, the sections were confronted with the need of concretizing their positions on the national question. We shall deal with this question here in greater detail since the divergences took place in Europe during the German occupation and the real issues were not fully known to the International as a whole.

C. *The National Question During the War*

The suppression of national independence and the oppression of the peoples by the occupying imperialists was much more extensive during the Second World War than during the First. The especially brutal character of the Nazi occupation provoked among the proletarian masses and the petty bourgeoisie of the European countries spontaneous resistance which assumed various forms.

The native bourgeoisie, on the other hand, was preoccupied above all with the maintenance of the capitalist regime, with its participation in the exploitation of the masses, with the struggle against the resistance of the masses and the defense of that part of the world market which it seized for itself. It was divided into two sections, each closely collaborating with one of the two opposing imperialist blocs. But it maintained its solidarity as a class. Through its "resistance" section, it sought to exploit the "national" sentiment of the masses in behalf of its war aims and to ensure its continued domination in the eventuality of a German defeat.

It was the task of the revolutionary proletariat to direct the popular sentiment of the masses into the channel of the proletarian revolution and the Socialist United States of Europe. It was necessary to take advantage of the revolutionary dynamism inherent in the resistance of the masses

and to prevent the "Allied" bourgeoisie and the Soviet bureaucracy from utilizing it for their reactionary aims. For this reason, it was the task of the revolutionary vanguard to oppose the "unification" of the various forces claiming to belong to the "Resistance Movement" (all the way from de Gaulle and up to the workers' formations). On the contrary, it was necessary to promote everywhere the differentiation between the workers and the capitalists. It was necessary to develop thoroughly the elements of civil war which existed in a veiled or open form throughout the struggle of the masses under the occupation.

Such a policy is entirely within the general framework of revolutionary defeatism and of proletarian internationalism which constitute the programmatic foundation of the Fourth International. It is merely a question of combining organically the national demands of the masses with the revolutionary and socialist program of the proletariat. The sections or tendencies which failed or hesitated to audaciously take the initiative in inscribing in their program the struggle for national demands, in organizing this struggle and in participating in the "national" movements of the masses (strikes, partisan armies, insurrections of the type which took place in Greece in December 1944), have committed grave sectarian mistakes which impeded their development (Greece). An analogous error was committed by the CCI in France. They refused to recognize the existence of the national question as it was imposed by the occupation. They practically ignored the justified reaction of the masses provoked by the occupation.

Equally false was the attitude of the sections or tendencies which conceived of the struggle for our *combined* socialist and revolutionary program, national demands included, as a struggle by stages: the first stage—"national" and democratic, which then opens the road to the second stage—"socialist and proletarian." This was the thesis of the IKD. In the same category was the slogan of "national insurrection" advocated by the French POI. It favored cooperation and even political participation of our sections in the leading organism of the "Resistance Movement" which was dominated by the bourgeoisie and the class-collaborationist Stalinist bureaucracy working jointly to stifle, for the benefit of the imperialist war, the real mass movement of opposition to the occupation. The same tendencies also favored the united front on a "national" and "democratic" platform with the "resistance" section of the bourgeoisie (policy of the French PCI, 1940-42).

The national oppression suffered under the Nazi occupation of Europe did not end with Germany's defeat in the war. The victors in the war, the "Allied" imperialists and the Soviet bureaucracy practice their own specific forms of oppression against the conquered peoples and others.

This demonstrates once again that the struggle against national oppression and for the people's right to self-determination is indissolubly linked with the struggle against the capitalist regime and for the Socialist United States of Europe and of the World. It was in this spirit that the European Conference of April 1946 endeavored to answer this question.

There are those who, *a posteriori*, criticized the "non-comprehension" of the national question by the International and the non-participation in the resistance movements. They attribute to these "errors" the principal cause for the weakness of our European sections. Among other things, they ignore the fact that this question was posed practically for only two European sections: the French and the Greek. In Greece—and here one should not exaggerate the likely results that might have been achieved by a policy different from that followed by the majority of the comrades—it is incontestable that the mistakes committed have handicapped considerably the subsequent development of our movement in that country. But in France, it was the "non-sectarian" tendency which led the organization until about the end of 1943. It has given no proof whatever of what it means in practice "to understand" and "to participate" in the "Resistance Movement." Nor has it shown how it could have led to a decisive or even important development of the party.

The "Resistance Movement" in France, as elsewhere, existed in reality only in the following three forms:

1) As a diffused popular sentiment of opposition to the foreign imperialist masters and their native bourgeois accomplices.

2) As limited underground organizations led exclusively by the direct agents of the "Allied" bourgeoisie and the Soviet bureaucracy. They served the Allied General Staff and carried out military tasks auxiliary to the operations of the Allied armies.

3) As "*corps francs*" (special military formations for sabotage).

In France it was only after 1944 that the partisan movement assumed some amplitude.

The revolutionary party responded to the popular "resistance" sentiments by including national demands in its revolutionary and socialist program, by organizing, participating, and wherever possible directing mass struggles opposed directly or indirectly to the occupation regime (strikes, demonstrations, insurrections). But the party opposed all collaboration with, and especially all political participation in, the leading organisms of the "Resistance Movement" which grouped the direct agents of the Allied General Staff and which had no organized popular base. On the contrary the party denounced the nationalist reactionary character of these formations.

The revolutionary party, on the other hand, advocated participation in the popular partisan armies, especially in those countries where they embraced important sections of the working class and the poor peasants (Balkan countries, Poland). It was necessary to penetrate these mass formations which offered an opportunity for advancing our revolutionary program. Elsewhere we advocated participation in all the organisms of the mass "resistance" such as the "Patriotic Militias," "Liberation Committees," etc. This policy was generally followed in France after the unification of the POI and the CCI, which constituted the present PCI. But even after the unification, a certain amount of confusion prevailed in the French organization due to the excesses committed by the extreme tendencies in the POI

and the CCI and which prevented the party as a whole from applying such a policy with more clarity and firmness. But even more important is the fact that the party did not dispose of sufficient forces for effective work in the "national movements" (*Franc-Tireur*, Patriotic Militias, Liberation Committees).

In addition to a correct policy, the party must dispose of sufficient experienced cadres capable of carrying the policy into the mass organizations and influencing them in a revolutionary direction. But the French party was in a very unhealthy state at the outbreak of the war. The unfavorable conditions under which the entry of the split PCI into the PSOP took place, the illegality following the outbreak of the war, the defection of the most prominent leaders, then the defeat and the occupation of the country, accentuating the demoralization of the workers' movement—all this had led to the virtual decomposition of the organization and the disorientation of its cadres. The young militants—who were responsible for the subsequent regroupment of the Trotskyist forces under the most adverse conditions of the Nazi and Vichy terror, and who published an illegal press—have done heroic work. But it would be too much to expect of them to have wrested the leadership of the "Resistance Movement" from the hands of the Stalinist apparatus and from the de Gaullists. It is necessary to guard the proper proportions when one speaks of the "mistakes" committed on the national question.

D. The Defense of the Soviet Union During the War

Just as the Nazi occupation of Europe confronted the International with the task of concretizing its position on the national question, so, too, the subsequent defeat of Nazi Germany and the advance of the Red Army outside the borders of the USSR necessitated the concretization of our position in defense of the Soviet Union and a shift in emphasis in the light of the new situation. At that point in the war it became necessary to place the greatest emphasis on the exposure of the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism. This question has been elaborated in the thesis on the USSR and Stalinism. It will suffice to summarize it here.

a) The International has been completely justified in stressing the unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack. The International was furthermore justified in its stress on the revolutionary wave which would follow the Red Army victories. The events themselves have given clear confirmation of it.

b) The mistake made was in the failure to warn the masses clearly and insistently at the same time that the Red Army as the instrument of the Stalinist bureaucracy would do everything in its power to suppress the independent revolutionary movement of the masses; that the social reforms the Stalinists would institute, even when progressive in themselves, would be imposed bureaucratically and would be strictly limited by the interests of the Kremlin oligarchy.

c) We correctly warned the masses that the Anglo-

American imperialists replacing the Nazi occupation forces in Europe would play a counter-revolutionary role. But we did not warn them sufficiently in advance of the counter-revolutionary role of the Stalinist occupation. This hesitation expressed itself even in the political resolution of the April 1946 Conference which failed to advance clearly the demand for the withdrawal of the Stalinist occupation forces.

E. Germany's Role in the Revolutionary Crisis

Until 1944 and even some time after, the International in its entirety maintained the position that the German revolution was inevitable and that this would from the start give a powerful impetus to the whole revolutionary crisis in Europe following the war.

In this perspective we did not give sufficient consideration to a series of factors which proved powerful enough in their totality to prevent the outbreak of the German revolution.

a) The material and human destruction in Germany; b) the reactionary character of the Soviet and Allied occupation; c) the extreme atomization of the German proletariat under fascism. All these factors served to negate the premises for large-scale actions by the German masses.

This self-criticism was already made by the International at its Conference of April 1946.

F. The International Leadership from 1943 to the April 1946 Pre-Conference

We mentioned earlier the restricted functioning of the central organs of the International imposed by the conditions of the war and the lack of effective contact with the sections of the International, particularly with those of continental Europe, which were in the center of revolutionary developments in the final stage of the war. But such was the vitality of the International and the firmness of its ideological ties that a new continental leadership emerged in Europe right in the midst of the war. After several, at first only partially successful, attempts during the year 1942 to establish a secretariat comprising representatives of the different European sections, a stable functioning European Secretariat was finally established in July 1943. It was composed of representatives of the Trotskyist organizations of France, Belgium, Germany, Spain and Greece. The European Secretariat took charge of co-ordinating and guiding and extending the work of the sections. It undertook the publication of the *Quatrieme Internationale* as a theoretical organ, as well as of an internal discussion bulletin. It undertook the task of preparing a European Conference which was held in February 1944. The political positions adopted at this Conference were set down in the thesis, "On the Liquidation of the Imperialist War." This Conference also brought about the unification of the POI and the CCI in France into the present PCI. It elected an enlarged European Executive Committee and a European Secretariat.

(To be continued.)

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