

Fourth International

Kuomintang Faces Its Doom

CIVIL WAR IN CHINA.... By Li Fu-jen

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**The Radical Vote
In 1948**

By George Clarke

**Class Forces in
Truman's Victory**

SWP Resolution

•

Winston Churchill-Tory War-dog

By William F. Warde

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A Forgotten Fighter Against the Plutocracy

By William Warde

February 1949

25c

Manager's Column

In the spirit of the recent decision of the plenum of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party to wage intensified warfare on all fronts against the enemies of Marxism, the Fourth International is taking measures to become one of the chief weapons in this struggle. As might be expected, the editorial board is knee-deep in plans for coming issues in order to make this weapon as sharp and effective as possible.

But no one should think that the contents of the Fourth International are the concern only of the writers and editors. All readers—all sympathizers of our party—are urged to send in suggestions and criticisms for making the magazine a better one. Questions and comments are also welcome, and the editor promises to print as many letters from readers as space will allow.

The kind and the amount of response that we get will measure, to a great degree, how well the Fourth International is serving its purpose as a medium of revolutionary theory—whether it succeeds in arming advanced workers with Marxist thinking—whether it exposes clearly all those enemies of scientific socialism who work night and day to steer the working class away from the course of Marxism. So please write.

What the magazine has to say and how effectively it says it is only part of the problem. The other part, of course, is to see that it is read. We must find the means of widening the circulation. In the coming period we want especially to direct our efforts toward colleges and universities. Be sure that newsstands near the campus in your city carry the Fourth International. Place it

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in the popular bookstore patronized by students and faculty—there always is at least one such store.

Campus bulletin boards will

carry notices of student clubs from all student and faculty and their meetings which will be worthwhile covering. A salesman stationed for an hour or so on the campus will be sure to attract new readers.

COMING!

In the March FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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1. New Problems in the American Labor Movement By James P. Cannon
 2. The Priests Bore from WithinBy Art Preis
 3. The New Union BureaucracyBy Bert Cochran
 4. Harry Truman's Popular Front
- A Century After the Communist Manifesto (II.) —
100 Years of Work and Wages in the U. S. . By C. Curtis

Try to get a subscription from the college library as well as members on your list of acquaintances.

Still another fruitful outlet for Fourth International sales are political meetings of all shades. Stalinist meetings, social democratic meetings, forums and lectures will nearly always net some sales especially if the salesman is there half an hour in advance of the meeting and really plugs the magazine. Experience has shown that there are always a few, at least, in such audiences who want to know what we have to say even if they do not agree with us. We must make it as easy as possible for them to get the Fourth International and find out.

While these suggestions are made particularly to FI agents, there is no reason why all enthusiastic readers, even those not so fortunate as to belong to a branch of the Socialist Workers Party, should not become agents for the Fourth International. Here too we welcome suggestions and criticisms aimed at increasing our circulation. SWP branches are asked to write us how they are distributing their present bundle and how they think they might increase it. Tell us to what extent the magazines you sell are being read, and what you think can be done to increase readership. If you are having a hard time selling any, what do you think might be the reason. Let's have the good news and the bad.

Each month we will try to tell you the main contents of the following month's issue so that you can plan your sales campaigns in advance. The March issue will be devoted to the problems of the American labor movement. We suggest that you draw up a list of all the trade unionists you know and plan to get this issue to them.

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME 10

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CIVIL WAR IN CHINA

The Kuomintang Faces Its Doom

By Li Fu-jen

Twenty-two years ago Chiang Kai-shek seized power through the sanguinary smashing of the Chinese revolution. Today he stands face to face with his political doom. Amid vast economic chaos, social upheaval and military defeats by the Stalinist "Red" armies the Kuomintang regime totters on the brink of destruction. It is now totally on the defensive, weakly trying to stave off the final catastrophe.

This situation, developing at an accelerated pace over a period of three years, signifies a tremendous change in the relationship of forces as between the Kuomintang regime and its capitalist-landlord backers, on the one hand, and the Stalinist party, leading the rural masses, on the other. As a necessary preliminary to an understanding of what has happened, and why, let us establish the broad sequence of events leading up to the present situation.

In the last days of the Second World War Stalin moved Red Army troops into Manchuria. These disarmed the Japanese army of some 750,000 men and prepared the way for the Chinese Stalinists to take over when they withdrew. Under the Japanese occupation there were already sizable formations of Chinese peasant guerrillas under Stalinist leadership which engaged Japan's Manchurian army in partisan warfare. When the Soviet troops entered the country, more of these peasant guerrillas swept in from the Mongolian borderlands. The surrender of the Japanese army in North China gave renewed mobility to additional large numbers of these fighters who had been isolated in the northwest hinterland of China proper. These began moving northeastward, swarming across the Great Wall to reinforce their comrades in Manchuria. There is no doubt that but for the intervention of American imperialism the whole of Manchuria would immediately have come under the domination of the Chinese Stalinists.

The Struggle for Manchuria

At Yalta, Stalin had agreed to turn over Manchuria, with the exception of Dairen and Port Arthur, to the "legal government" of China after the Japanese had been disarmed. Chiang, however, did not possess the means of occupying the country with the necessary rapidity. The American imperialists obligingly placed at his disposal a large number of transport planes. With these Chiang was able to fly in troops to the principal cities—Harbin, Changchun, Mukden, etc.—and also take over the connecting railroads. But the surrounding countryside was in the

hands of the Chinese, Stalinists and the cities became isolated pockets of Kuomintang rule.

Equipped with weapons such as they had never possessed before—virtually all the military equipment surrendered by the Japanese—the Stalinists made short work of the isolated Kuomintang garrisons, whom Chiang found it increasingly difficult to supply. Manchurian city dwellers, who had welcomed Chiang's troops, were quickly disillusioned in their "liberators" and transferred their sympathies to the "Reds"—all, that is, but the capitalists and big landlords who fled south of the Great Wall as the Stalinist forces tightened their encirclement of the cities.

It soon became obvious that the Kuomintang possessed not even the shadow of a social base for its rule in Manchuria. Chiang's troops were bombarded with "Red" propaganda. The Stalinist slogan of "Land to the Peasants" had a strong appeal for soldiers who were also peasants. They hated the Kuomintang regime. They hated their officers. In large numbers they went over to the other side, taking their American weapons with them. Chiang lost 300,000 of his Manchurian troops, three-fifths of the total. The remaining 200,000 were withdrawn inside the Great Wall.

Now, with all Manchuria as a solid bastion at their backs, and after time out for regroupment, assault troops of the "Red" armies wheeled southward and in the space of a few months, operating among people friendly to their cause, conquered practically all of North China except for isolated enclaves, represented by such cities as Peiping and Tientsin, and the Shantung port of Tsingtao which is held by the American imperialists as a naval base. At this writing, Peiping and Tientsin are under siege and the tide of battle has flowed to within less than 100 miles of Nanking, Chiang's capital on the south bank of the Yangtse. The decimated Kuomintang armies are falling back on the river for a "final stand."

Disintegration of the Kuomintang

As with all reactionary regimes upon which history has pronounced the sentence of death, the Kuomintang finds itself in the hour of mortal peril without reliable props or supports. Discord and treachery invade even the top levels of government. The armed forces dissolve. In the great battles around Suchow on the North China plain, and again in the battles at the Hwai River, Kuomintang troops

again deserted in droves to the "Red" armies. The Stalinist land program proves more potent than military discipline. In many instances Kuomintang commanders were killed by their men when they refused to surrender with their units. Chiang's officers in the field, seeing the handwriting on the wall, are less and less inclined to carry out operational commands which commit them in the eyes of their men to a last-ditch defense of the Kuomintang regime. They withdraw from battle if they can. If withdrawal is too risky, they stay put and await the opportunity to surrender. Chiang's armies are literally melting away.

In Nanking, the frightened coterie of politicians and generals which comprises the government has split into two factions, those favoring an attempt to negotiate peace with the Stalinists, and those favoring a fight to the finish. There is talk of jettisoning Chiang Kai-shek and replacing him with a more "liberal" figure. The Kuomintang clique and the nervous bourgeoisie view the Generalissimo in a dual role—as the source of all their troubles and at the same time their only possible sheet-anchor in the angry storm now swirling around them. Frantic appeals to U.S. imperialism to come to the rescue have produced no results.

There are proposals for moving the government south—to Changsha, to Hengchow, to Foochow, to Canton. But these cities, like the Manchurian cities before them, are isolated in a surging sea of rebellion. Stalinist guerrillas surround all the key points. There is also talk of moving the government to the island of Formosa. But here, too, there is seething hatred for the Kuomintang regime. Just a little more than a year ago the garrison there carried out a savage campaign of repression in putting down a rebellion brought on by the corruption and oppression of Chiang's deputies. There is no safety here either. Thus, 22 years after its ascent to power, the party of the Chinese landlords and capitalists finds itself isolated without a sure point of support anywhere. Floundering impotently, exuding decay from every pore, it can now scarcely fight back.

What is the meaning of the dramatic events now unfolding on the Chinese scene? Are we confronted here with just a pure and simple case of Stalinist expansionism, or, as the imperialists would phrase it, "Soviet imperialism"? We can readily admit, as one press commentator put it, that Mao Tse-tung and his leading henchmen are "stooges" of Moscow. With scrupulous fidelity they have geared their policies to every twist and turn of the Kremlin line for twenty years and more. In doing so, they have not hesitated to violate and betray the most elementary interests of the Chinese workers and peasants, not to speak of the fundamental interests of the Chinese revolution.

But when you have designated these dyed-in-the-wool Stalinists as stooges of the Kremlin, you have disclosed only a part of their political physiognomy, and not the most important part at that. In addition to being Stalin's agents, Mao and his cohorts are the leaders of a mighty, indigenous mass movement, the rebellious peasantry which constitutes more than 80 percent of the Chinese nation. This movement is no concoction of secretive plotters. It springs from the social soil of the country. It is this gigantic mass of rural toilers which is the source of the

impressive power which the Stalinists have been translating into massive military victories.

The changed relationship of class forces which characterizes the present situation is marked in the political sphere by the fact that in the space of three years the Stalinists have passed from the policy of a People's Front with the Kuomintang, and class collaboration with the exploiters, to a policy which calls for the overthrow of the Kuomintang and the expropriation of the landlords. If we probe into the reasons—both internal and international—for this political about-face, we shall be able to discover the basic causes for the present developments.

Evolution of Stalinist Policy

The wartime People's Front was forged by the Stalinists in 1936, on the eve of Japan's all-out attack on China. Chiang Kai-shek had up to then been pursuing a policy of "appeasement" toward the Japanese imperialists and this had alarmed the Kremlin. If Japan could extricate herself from the "China incident" by an agreement with Chiang, then her hands would be freed for an attack on the USSR. The Chinese Stalinists, then pursuing their program of agrarian revolution, were ordered to make an abrupt political turn—to abandon land expropriations and their aim of overthrowing the Kuomintang, and on that basis to seek an agreement with Chiang for China's defense against any further attacks by Japanese imperialism. Stalin wanted China to fight Japan, so that Japan would be tied down and unable to make war on the USSR.

In a programmatic statement, the Chinese Communist Party declared resistance to Japan to be the primary task to which everything else must be subordinated. They did not, of course, mean revolutionary resistance, but resistance based on the People's Front type of class collaboration. They asserted that "only Chiang Kai-shek" could lead a successful war of resistance. Chiang, under growing popular pressure because of his attitude toward Japan (also pressure exerted by his bourgeois supporters who had become fearful that Japan would swallow the whole country), had every reason to accept the Stalinists' proposals—in reality their political surrender.

And so the "People's Anti-Japanese United Front" was born. Chiang did not share power with the Stalinists. All they got was a few seats in the impotent People's Political Council. The developing movement of opposition to the Kuomintang was canalized into a patriotic war movement. Thus the "bloc of four classes" which led to the destruction of the Chinese revolution ten years earlier was revived in the form of a new bloc of all "patriotic elements" for the "sacred war of resistance."

How effectively Chiang led the war against Japan is now a matter of historical record. One military disaster followed upon another until almost all of eastern China was under Japan's domination. It is true that Japan did not succeed in conquering China. But neither did Chiang succeed in expelling the Japanese invaders. China's ultimate "victory" was won by the armed might of American imperialism. In this fact alone is revealed the enormity of the crime which the Stalinists committed against the

Chinese masses when they made this—their second—compact with the hangman of the Chinese revolution.

What the Chinese agents of the Kremlin actually did was to slow down the disintegration of the Kuomintang regime and rescue it from the wrath of the people at a time when all the conditions for its overthrow were rapidly maturing. This was a crime, not only against the Chinese masses and the Chinese revolution, but against the world proletariat and the world socialist revolution. How different would have been the course of world events these past few years if China's defense against Japan had been a revolutionary defense in the authentic tradition of Bolshevism, a defense resting on the revolutionary initiative and fighting courage of the exploited masses, in alliance with the Japanese and world proletariat!

The Class Struggle Undermines the Coalition

The wartime class-collaborationist program of the Stalinists cut sharply across the objective realities of class, social and political relationships. Mao Tse-tung could and did proclaim the end of land seizures, but the rural toilers did not because of that cease hating the landlords. Mao could and did make the Communist Party the guardian of capitalist private property. But workers did not because of that become reconciled to capitalist exploitation. Mao could and did make a "united front" with the murderous Chiang. But that in no way lessened the gulf which separated the masses from the Kuomintang regime. Mao and Chiang could and did enter into a compact whose aim was to exorcise the class struggle in the alleged interests of the war against Japan, but the class struggle, even though muted, continued nevertheless.

During the war years peasant uprisings, accompanied by land seizures, flared in hundreds of villages. Kuomintang officers, trying to impress the peasant youth into the army, encountered fierce resistance everywhere. Savage repressions ensued, only to be followed by more rebellious outbreaks. In the cities workers went on strike. All the conditions of daily life were going from bad to worse as far as the masses were concerned, feeding ever fresh fuel to the fire of the class struggle.

As the war drew to a close, the tide of class struggle flowed more and more strongly against the political dikes of class collaboration. The sharpening of class antagonisms and the growing movement of opposition to the Kuomintang compelled the Stalinists to make a show of opposition to Chiang and his government in the form of cautious criticism. But they continued in the "united front" and their representatives remained in Chiang's fake parliament, the People's Political Council. Chiang, for his part, accused the Stalinists of fomenting peasant revolt, thereby violating the "united front." It was plain that the wartime policy of class collaboration must be shipwrecked on the jagged rocks of the class struggle. Chiang virtually ceased fighting the Japanese and began making troop dispositions in preparation for future battle against the Stalinists. Stalin's agents responded by expanding their territorial hold wherever possible. Actual battles between Chiang's troops and the Stalinist guerrilla forces were taking place

with increasing frequency as Imperial Japan went down in defeat.

The internal dynamics of Chinese political life, on the morrow of Japan's surrender, drew together with developments in the sphere of international relationships. The outstanding new fact in these relationships was the confrontation of the Soviet Union by the arrogant might of a victorious American imperialism, in a world where international rivalries had been narrowed down, in the main, to the antagonism between these two powers. The third world war was already on the agenda. Little effort has been made by the American imperialists to conceal the fact that they are converting the Japanese bourgeoisie into a future war ally, and Japan itself, together with southern Korea and the Philippines, into a base for war against the Soviet Union.

Stalin responded in characteristic fashion. Having long since abandoned Lenin's concept of the defense of the Soviet Union through the extension of the socialist revolution, Stalin is replying to the American threat in kind. Between America's Far Eastern bases and the Soviet borders he plans to interpose a Stalinist-dominated China. *The conjuncture of the Kremlin's strategic plans and the internal dynamics of Chinese political development furnishes the basic explanation for the current Stalinist policy in China, for the shift from People's Frontism to renewed class struggle.*

Stalin's Aims in China

What does Stalin need in China? A limited, "controlled" revolution which, while making China a bulwark against American imperialism, will not develop into a prairie fire of socialist revolution and thus endanger the rule of the Soviet bureaucracy. After a long-drawn-out series of negotiations between Chiang and the Stalinists which followed the war—negotiations which found Chiang unyielding to Stalinist demands—efforts to end the growing civil war and establish a Stalinist-Kuomintang coalition were abandoned. Chiang would not and could not agree to those concessions which for the Stalinists were the irreducible minimum without which their own influence must inevitably wane—namely, "democracy" (meaning full legality for themselves) and extensive land reforms. Chiang demanded what he had always demanded before—the political and military surrender of his adversaries. Even the U.S. mediator in these negotiations, General Marshall, thought it unrealistic to demand that the Chinese Stalinists commit political suicide at a time when their power was growing.

Mao Tse-tung and company formalized the rupture in a series of policy declarations. Explicitly or implicitly these meant: Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang must go. The Communist Party would proceed to overthrow this regime by military means. It would bring "democracy" to China, founded upon a coalition of anti-Kuomintang elements. "Feudalism" must be destroyed and the land transferred to the peasants. Since China is backward and

poverty-stricken, all talk of socialism is "unrealistic."* Hence there would be no attempt to upset capitalist property relations. The peasants would get the land, but the workers must be content with their lot as wage-slaves, though they may have a few bones of reform thrown to them.

The Stalinist Agrarian Program for China

On October 10, 1947 the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party promulgated its "Basic Program on Chinese Agrarian Law," thus bringing formally to an end the policy of class collaboration in the village which it had instituted eleven years earlier. It is necessary to quote this law at some length in order to make clear the basis for the support which the Stalinists now enjoy in rural China.

Article 1: The agrarian system of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation is abolished and the agrarian system of "Land to the Tiller" is to be realized.

Article 2: Land ownership rights of all landlords are abolished.

Article 3: Land ownership of all ancestral shrines, temples, monasteries, schools, institutions and organizations are abolished.

Article 4: All debts incurred prior to the reform of the agrarian system are cancelled.

Article 6: Except as provided in Article 9, Section B (referring to forests, mines, lakes, etc.—LFJ) all land in villages owned by landlords, and all public land, shall be taken over by the village peasants' unions, and together with all other village land, in accordance with the total population of the village irrespective of sex or age, shall be unified and equally distributed; with regard to quantity, surplus land shall be taken to relieve dearths, and with regard to quality, fertile land shall be taken to supplement infertile, so that all village inhabitants shall equally share the land, and it shall be the individual property of each person.

Article 10: Section D. Landlords and their families shall be given land and properties equivalent to that of the peasants. Section E: All families of Kuomintang military officers and soldiers, government officials and personnel, party members and other enemy personnel, whose homes are in rural areas, shall be given land and properties equivalent to that of the peasant.

Article 11: The government shall issue to the people deeds of ownership of the land, and moreover, recognize their rights to free management, trading, and under specially determined conditions, to renting their land. All land deeds and all notes on debts contracted prior to the reform of the agrarian system shall be turned in and shall be declared null and void.

*This is a revealing commentary on Stalin's theory of "Socialism in One Country." According to Stalin it was entirely possible to construct a socialist society in backward Russia. According to Mao it is entirely impossible to construct socialism in backward China. In reality, it is not a question of the compatibility of backwardness with socialism—an obvious absurdity. In China today, as in the Russia of 1917, the continuance of capitalist property relations dooms the country to backwardness and decay. The proletariat must take power and must destroy bourgeois property relations if China is to strike out along a new path, which can only be the path of socialism. Underlying the stupidity of Stalin and Mao alike is their criminal opposition to Trotsky's conception of the permanent and international character of all revolutionary struggles in the contemporary world.

Article 12: The property and legal operation of industrial and commercial elements shall be protected from encroachment.

The attractive power of this program scarcely needs emphasis. To the rural toilers it is a veritable Magna Charta. Millions of landless peasants and tenant farmers have the prospect of planting their feet firmly in the soil. Debt-burdened peasants see in it liberation from their oppressive woes. For all this vast mass of humanity it seems to hold promise of a better life. The plight of these teeming multitudes under the rule of the Kuomintang is revealed, in part, by prewar figures of land ownership. These show that the bigger landlords, representing only 4 percent of the total population, own about 50 percent of the land. Rich peasants who form 6 percent of the population, hold 26 percent of the land. The remaining 90 percent of the population possess only 24 percent of the land. The great bulk of the land population carries on what is known as "subsistence farming" on tiny plots that more and more become uneconomic units. These plots can be made to produce no surplus over and above bare living requirements. In years of poor harvest they are worked at a deficit which increases the ever-growing burden of peasant debt.

The Limits of the Land Reform

As it concerns the land problem, the Stalinist program is clearly revolutionary. It represents an abrupt break with an outworn past and will effect a sharp change in class relationships. The transfer of the land to those who till it is an indispensable preliminary to the thoroughgoing reorganization of agriculture on higher levels and the revolutionary transformation of Chinese society. But viewed in the context of the Chinese social and political scene *as a whole*, it is conservative, one-sided, opportunistic and illusory. Despite the huge preponderance of the peasantry in the population, and the great weight of agriculture in the economy, the agrarian problem is not an independent problem that can be solved separately and apart from the country's economic problems as a whole. The small plot of land continues to be a small plot, an uneconomic unit, even when it is firmly in the hands of the peasant. The expropriation of the landlords will furnish land for the landless, but the plots must remain small. As long as there is subsistence farming there will be a function for the village usurer. Landlordism could easily be reborn.

It will be impossible to raise the level of agriculture with a continuance of small-scale ownership and primitive farming methods. For that large-scale farming, possible only with machinery, is necessary. This implies a great industrial development. Moreover, there are too many people on the land. The surplus population can be drawn away from the land only when alternative means of livelihood are available. This will become possible only through all-sided development of the economy—industry, transportation, communications, etc. The feeble, historically belated bourgeoisie can contribute nothing to such a development. It can only hinder it. Yet the Stalinists propose to leave bourgeois property intact, as witness Article

12 of their Agrarian Law which proclaims that "the property and legal operation of industrial and commercial elements shall be protected from encroachment."

What the Stalinists aim to do is to establish their political rule on the social base of a peasantry freed from "feudal and semi-feudal exploitation" (Article 1 of the Agrarian Law). They direct their attack at "feudalism"—not capitalism—as if the feudal remnants possessed an independent social and political significance. According to the theory behind this programmatic aim, the destruction of "feudalism" will clear a path for capitalist development. When a sturdy capitalism has grown up, that will be the time to talk of the socialist revolution. In this classic Menshevik conception the historical process is chopped up into arbitrary, predetermined stages which ignore actual class relations and the laws of social development. If the world market extended its sway over the Chinese economy, then the Chinese bourgeoisie unquestionably established its hegemony in that economy. Property relations in China, in the countryside as in the city, are *bourgeois* property relations. This is true despite the weighty feudal remains. To tilt at "feudalism" as the main object of revolutionary attack is to throw the whole picture of class relations out of focus and the revolutionary struggle off its true axis.

The French Revolution -- and the Chinese

It is necessary to pursue this subject a little further in order to make crystal-clear the falsity and opportunism of the Stalinist program. In France, in the 18th century, the bourgeoisie moved to destroy the mighty remains of feudalism which blocked its advance as a rising revolutionary class. The revolution of 1789, freeing the peasantry from the burdensome encrustations of the feudal past, created a great internal market on the basis of which capitalist industry and commerce could develop. The French Revolution cleared the road for capitalist development, not only in France but all Western Europe. The Stalinists seem to be intent on repeating on the soil of China the essential developments of the French Revolution, with comparable economic and social results.

But the Chinese bourgeoisie of the 20th century bears little resemblance to the French bourgeoisie of the 18th century. It appeared on the scene in the era of the twilight of world capitalism, not as an independent social formation with a progressive historic mission, but as the handmaiden of imperialism. It did not and could not proceed to smash the powerful remains of feudalism as did its revolutionary forerunners in France. That required a mighty social upheaval which would have doomed the bourgeoisie and *all* class rule and exploitation. The ferocity with which the Chinese bourgeoisie slew the revolution of 1925-27 is ample proof that they understood this well. In the "feudal remnants," the Chinese bourgeoisie saw useful props for its own class rule and its own class interests. It embraced them, adapted them to its own special needs, intertwined its interests with them, became their ardent defenders. The regime of Chiang Kai-shek expresses in the sphere of politics this fact of the *fusion* of the "feudal remnants" with the system of capitalist exploitation. The reorganiza-

tion of Chinese society requires the destruction of the whole existing pattern of class relationships.

What was revolutionary in France 160 years ago, is in essence *reformist* in China today. This political definition of the Stalinist land program is not invalidated by the huge scale of the agrarian reform, the area and the number of people affected. The methods of the Stalinists are naturally tailored to the character of their programmatic aim. They are accomplishing their agrarian reform by military-bureaucratic means. If it is permissible at all to use the term "revolution" to describe the current events in China, we would have to designate it as a "cold" revolution, one in which the broad masses play a minor and passive role assigned to them in advance by their leaders. The Stalinists undoubtedly enjoy the support of huge masses of the peasantry. However, they not only do not encourage, but actively discourage the peasants from taking any revolutionary initiative. There are no flaming appeals to the peasants to rise against the landlords. Instead, the Stalinists enjoin the peasants to await the arrival of the "Red" army.

It is evident that Stalin and his Chinese henchmen want the "revolution" kept within safe limits. This is apparent, again, in their contemptuous indifference toward the proletariat. The Stalinist program offers the workers nothing but a continuation of their wage-slavery. The Chinese proletariat is small. It would be hard to call a roll of three millions in a population of more than 450 millions. Yet the cities in which these workers live and toil are the strategic centers of Chiang Kai-shek's rule and the nerve centers of the whole system of landlord-capitalist exploitation. If the proletariat were armed with a revolutionary program and given its rightful place in the current developments as leader of all the exploited and oppressed, it would give short shrift to the bourgeoisie. What is left of Kuomintang power would quickly be destroyed and the civil war immeasurably shortened. But the Stalinists fear the proletariat—and with good reason—much more than they do the tottering Kuomintang regime. They are determined to keep their "cold" revolution cold.

Why is it possible for the Stalinists to pursue a conservative, half-way, reformist policy in a situation pregnant with the greatest revolutionary possibilities? The explanation is not hard to find. For twenty years and more, since the defeat of the Chinese revolution, the Stalinists have based their program and their activity almost exclusively on the peasantry. In part this was deliberate (in keeping with their theory that the problem is the fight against feudalism), in part due to the relative passivity of the proletariat. The peasant, for all his revolutionary hatred of the landlords, represents a conservative social formation. As Trotsky once wrote, the worker wants to socialize industry, but the peasant merely wants to *possess* the land. The conservatism of the peasant is nourished by economic backwardness, by the persistence of medieval social traditions and customs, by the isolation of rural communities, by the almost universal illiteracy. The social and political horizon of the peasant hardly extends beyond the boundaries of his own village. With this conservative

mass at their backs, the Stalinists think they can afford to be contemptuous of the workers and their needs. And if the proletariat should become a threat to Stalinism, it is not at all inconceivable that the peasants could be pitted against the proletariat.

Having characterized the Stalinist program as in essence conservative and reformist, it is now necessary to add that the social change it will bring about, the transformation of social relations which it will effect, can become the starting point of new developments of a revolutionary character. The proletariat has not yet been heard from. Viewing the vast shake-up of land relations, the workers, we may be sure, will not be satisfied with just a few crumbs of reform.

The economic situation, which even a Stalinist regime will not be able quickly to improve, will provide spurs to revolutionary action. The workers, finding their path blocked by the Stalinist misleaders, will turn to a new revolutionary leadership. They will find it in the Trotskyists and nowhere else. Meanwhile, the civil war is by no means ended. If the proletariat is kept passive and the Kuomintang with or without Chiang Kai-shek decides on a last-ditch resistance, the civil war could drag on for another year or two. To speed the end it is not inconceivable that the Stalinists might take the risk of summoning the workers to action, although their first move would be an attempt to behead the most conscious and revolutionary elements, as recent events have so grimly demonstrated.

The victory of the Stalinists, whenever it is achieved, will at once raise questions of international relations. Whether the Stalinists will rule openly in their own name, or form some sort of coalition regime with "anti-Kuomintang" bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements, remains to be seen. Certain it is that on the morrow of military triumph Mao Tse-tung, like Tito, will be confronted with the need for economic relations with the outside capitalist world. A coalition with the Chinese bourgeoisie, or a section of it, would undoubtedly facilitate contact with the world market. If this variant should develop, Stalin is going to have greater trouble with Mao than he is having with Tito. The incompatibility of the Kremlin's interests and demands with the needs of Chinese economy can provoke greater resistance from the Chinese Stalinists who are conquering power by force of arms in their own right with little outside assistance.

The American imperialists have already emitted cautious hints that they might be ready to do business with a Stalinist-bourgeois coalition in China. For them this would yield both economic and political advantages—trade, and perhaps profitable investments for the contracting American economy, a weakening of the Soviet Union on the international field. On the other hand, the social forces they have set in motion and the further needs of the still uncompleted struggle against the Kuomintang, may compel the Chinese Stalinists to go beyond their present program and move against the property of the bourgeoisie. This variant could be stimulated by a hostile American imperialism.

The American imperialists are impaled on the horns of a dilemma. Having fed lush financial and military aid to Chiang Kai-shek for more than three years, they have watched with dismay the passage of this aid to the Chinese Stalinists. If additional help is now refused the Generalissimo, it is because of this fact. Military intervention on the fullest scale—and nothing short of that could possibly save Chiang Kai-shek—is clearly out of the question. For one thing, American troops could not be relied upon in such a clearly counter-revolutionary undertaking. For another, full-scale intervention in China would cut across the main strategy of American imperialism in the international field, which is to prepare the third world war against the Soviet Union, first of all upon the staging ground of Europe, by means of such vehicles as the Marshall Plan. The grand strategy is to slay the Stalinist octopus by striking at its heart and nerve center—the Soviet Union—not to fritter away strength by attacking the separate tentacles. Even the attempt to "contain" the tentacles and prevent them from extending further has been costly and largely ineffectual, as Truman admitted when he said that his program of "aid to Greece" had proved a sorry flop.

The American imperialists would like to "contain" Stalinism in China—better still, destroy it utterly now—but even the resources of this richest of capitalist powers are not sufficient to effectuate its reactionary purposes everywhere. It must select its courses of action carefully, with an eye always on the main strategic goal. Military intervention in China is strategically impossible. That, and not any lessening of desire for the perpetuation of the Kuomintang regime, is the explanation for Washington's reported "coolness" to the frantic cry for help brought here by Chiang's wife.

What should be the attitude of revolutionary Marxists toward the present developments in China? Where the genuine movements of the masses are concerned, Marxists are never abstentionists. There is no question but that the upheaval in China, despite the limits bureaucratically imposed upon it by the Stalinists, is a genuine mass movement containing great revolutionary potentialities. The tremendous military and political effort required to reach even the limited objectives set by the Stalinists will surely, even if with some delay, set in motion forces of a revolutionary character which Stalin's Chinese agents will find it impossible to control and which will open up avenues for the building of a genuinely revolutionary mass party which will carry to completion all the great tasks of the Chinese revolution.

The first cadres of this party have already been assembled and are playing their part as revolutionary participants in the struggle to end the foul rule of the Kuomintang. The destruction of this regime is an essential and progressive task to which Marxists will give their unconditional support. To the Stalinist leaders of the Chinese masses, however, we give not an ounce of political support or confidence. This is a leadership of perfidy and betrayal. Our place is with the masses—against the Kuomintang and against the Stalinist traitors and misleaders.

Winston Churchill--Tory War-dog

By G. F. Eckstein

Mr. Churchill's book, *The Gathering Storm*, is Volume I of a series of some five projected volumes. It deals chiefly with the period leading up to World War II. But as one reads, it soon becomes obvious that the book is preparing everyone for another storm that is gathering--World War III. Churchill is writing with that in mind. He writes now with even more authority than in the old days. He is the only authentic "great man" of the world bourgeoisie. Far more than even Roosevelt, he was chief spokesman for Anglo-American imperialism in the war against Hitlerite Germany, so today he speaks for the same combination to a world audience on behalf of the war to the death against the Soviet Union and its satellites.

His writings and speeches, and particularly this book, are printed, abridged, serialized, quoted, ballyhooed in all sections of the world bourgeois press, as no other writing by any bourgeois statesman of our time. The Luce publications, in particular *Life*, dramatize its extracts from these memoirs with biographies of Churchill, illustrations and layouts, on which obviously no time and money have been spared. *Life* claims that it goes into 36 percent of the homes of the United States, and is read by over 20 million people. This whole set-up is war propaganda on a colossal scale, such as our fathers and forefathers, or for that matter we ourselves ten years ago did not know. Washington needs these particular services badly. Truman, Forrestal, and the rest are simply incapable of doing anything else except bleating platitudes about "peace," "defense of our American way of life," etc. In fact, it seems highly probable that Churchill's resounding periods gain a proportionately greater audience, more deference (and more cash) in the United States than anywhere else in the world, even Britain.

To the readers of *Fourth International*, Churchill's book, though full of information about diplomatic intrigue and the mechanics of war-making, can throw no particular light on the causes of World War II, or the preparations for World War III. But it affords a certain insight into bourgeois society and politics, and the man who speaks for it. It is with these interrelated aspects that this writer is here concerned.

"The Unnecessary War"

Churchill's central theme is so simple that a child could not miss it. "*There never was a war more easy to stop than that which has just wrecked what was left of the world from the previous struggle.*"

But having established that, he then faces the inevitable query: why then did it take place? And on this all-important question Churchill lets out all the stops.

Here are some of his remarks on the men and the politics of 1918-39.

"History will characterise all these transactions as insane."

"All this is a sad story of complicated idiocy . . ."

"But this modest requirement [concerted action by the victorious powers after 1918] the might, civilization, learning, knowledge, science of the victors were unable to supply."

"It is difficult to find a parallel to the unwisdom of the British and weakness of the French Governments . . ."

"The economic clauses of the treaty [of Versailles] were malignant and silly to an extent that made them obviously futile."

"... all these constituted a picture of British fatuity and fecklessness which, though devoid of guile, was not devoid of guilt . . ."

"We must regard as deeply blameworthy before history the conduct not only of the British National and mainly Conservative government, but of the Labour-Socialist and Liberal Parties . . ."

"... an administration more disastrous than any in our history . . ."

It is natural that these blistering appreciations are made chiefly about the British and the European politicians. He is more careful in his remarks about the American politicians, but his opinion of them is in no way different. After saying that it is difficult to find a parallel to the unwisdom and weakness of the British and French Governments, he adds immediately: "nor can the United States escape the censure of history." "The censure of history" is his diplomatic phrasing for the censure of Winston Churchill which he distributes so liberally.

These then were the men who ruled England, France, and the United States between the end of World War I and the beginning of World War II.* To this we have to add only his characterization of the dictator of Germany as "a maniac of ferocious genius, the repository and expression of the most virulent hatreds that have ever corroded the human breast--Corporal Hitler."

All the millions who have read and will read Churchill should pause a long while and ponder over what this means. On the one side, the side of the democracies, he shows us insanity, complicated idiocy, unparalleled unwisdom and weakness, government more disastrous than ever before, fatuity and fecklessness; on the other side, a ferocious maniac. That was their society, bourgeois society. Fools, idiots, madmen, cowards ruled Western Europe and America. But for them the catastrophe of the war would not have fallen upon us. We limit ourselves to two questions of the many that are begging to be asked:

1) How could this happen, what sort of system is this that produces democratic idiots or fascist maniacs as rulers?

*It is clear that he is leaving for later volumes any full development of his views on the USSR. It should be noted, however, that consistent as has been his hatred for the USSR, his special fury is reserved for the Trotskyists because of their unshaken adherence to the doctrines of Lenin and Trotsky.

2) How do we know that the same thing is not going on today? Many of the men who ruled then are in high position now. Shall we have World War III and then learn that the men who led us into it were fools, idiots, and maniacs? To thinking people Churchill's book must bring at the very start a profound disquiet about these far-reaching denunciations and what they imply for us today. It is obvious that the question cannot be as simple as Churchill makes it out to be.

Marxism, revolutionary socialism, has no quarrel with these concrete judgments of the great spokesmen of the bourgeoisie. Those whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad. This is an expression frequent among Marxists. It is precisely our clear consciousness of the folly and madness of bourgeois society which forms the basis of our unalterable opposition to it in war as well as in peace. And folly, madness, idiocy will rule bourgeois society until it is torn up by the roots and replaced by socialism. Such of course, is not the view of Churchill. To this collection of fatuous and feckless idiots, Churchill does not counterpose a new social order. He counterposes—himself. It sounds incredible but it is true. On the one hand were the insane, the idiots and the maniacs, and on the other—Winston Churchill. This is the legend under which the people are being shepherded to listen to him—and be guided into the next war. Extracts from Churchill's second volume are now being advertised with a statesman-like portrait of Churchill, in spectacles and civilian clothes, carefully unmilitary. The caption reads, "I hope you will give full consideration to my words. I have not always been wrong."

This is the second step in the propaganda barrage. Churchill was not only the man who with Roosevelt led the world to victory. He, we are given to understand, foresaw all that was going to happen. He fought for his position in vain. If only the insane and the complicated idiots had listened to him, things would have been different. When they had ruined the situation they had to turn to him to win victory for them. If we are wise we should listen to him today. That is the legend. It disposes of the doubts about the last war, and puts him into an unassailable position to plug for the next one. The only thing wrong with this story is that it isn't true. It is a fiction skillfully constructed out of some thin elements of fact and much paste, tinsel and wordage. The first thing to do is to find out exactly who and what is this Winston Churchill.

A Few Facts About Churchill

The American people should know that long before 1939, when the outbreak of war saved his career, Winston Churchill had established himself as the most discredited, the most untrustworthy, and the most irresponsible of all the senior politicians in England. The rulers of Britain did not take him seriously on the politics of war because, except for his capabilities as a war minister, they did not take him seriously on anything except his capacity to make a serious nuisance of himself.

Churchill was born the son of Lord Randolph Churchill, a brilliant young nobleman who reached the post of Chan-

cellor of the Exchequer and seemed headed for the premiership but wrecked his career by his erratic political behavior. His character was adequately summed up in the phrase "the boy who would not grow up." It was the kind of heritage that a careful politician would take care to live down. It is characteristic of Winston Churchill that he lived up to it. He joined the army as a cavalry officer and thus began his lifelong and passionate interest in war. He became a war correspondent, was captured by the Boers and escaped. When he lectured in New York in 1906, at the age of twenty-six, he was billed as "the hero of five wars." He was already actively interested in politics. In the early years of the century, liberalism seemed in the ascendancy in Britain. Churchill made a spectacular break with the Tory Party and joined the Liberals.

He became Home Secretary and distinguished himself by what is derisively known as the Battle of Sidney Street. A group of foreign anarchists well supplied with arms refused to give themselves up to the police. Churchill converted a police operation into a battle. He went down himself to take charge of the "struggle" (or as privileged observer), was nearly killed, and created a scandal among his colleagues and the sober-minded British people. In 1911 he went over to the Admiralty and there did his best work, preparing the fleet for 1914.

But the war of 1914 had no sooner begun than Churchill was at it again. A critical situation at Antwerp found Churchill, still head of the Admiralty, persuading the reluctant Sir Edward Grey to let him go to Belgium in person. He found himself as usual under fire. The battle stimulated him to offer, from Antwerp, his resignation from the Admiralty to take command of the British land forces at Antwerp. The transfer was not made but as one of his biographers (Philip Guedalla) says of the unsatisfactory outcome: "There was a vague feeling that Mr. Churchill's restlessness might be to blame . . . that it was Sidney Street over again . . ."

By 1915, despite his competence, he had lost his post at the Admiralty. He held other posts, but it is related of him that at one time while a minister in London he did most of the work in a chateau in France so as to be near the firing line. After World War I he was the moving spirit in the military intervention against Russia. It is known that in 1944 to keep Churchill from joining the cross-channel expedition the present king had to threaten that he would also join it if Churchill insisted on going; baffled here, nevertheless Churchill turned up with the invading army in the last stages of the victory against Germany.

That is the man. Every British politician knew him and his Napoleonic complex, his preoccupation with war and war preparations, his extraordinary capacity for making a fool of himself on critical occasions. Asquith, Prime Minister in 1914, wrote of him "Winston, who has got on all his war-paint, is longing for a sea-fight in the early hours of the morning to result in the sinking of the *Goeben*." Someone who saw him at the beginning of the 1914 war remarked on his "happy face."

In this book the same thing appears.

When war was finally declared in 1939 and he was sure of being included in the war ministry, he describes his feelings.

"There [in the House of Commons] I received a note from the Prime Minister asking me to come to his room as soon as the debate died down. As I sat in my place, listening to the speeches, a very strong sense of calm came over me, after the intense passions and excitements of the last few days. I felt a serenity of mind and was conscious of a kind of uplifted detachment from human and personal affairs. The glory of old England, peace-loving and ill-prepared as she was, but instant and fearless at the call of honour, thrilled my being and seemed to lift our fate to those spheres so far removed from earthly facts and physical sensation. I tried to convey some of this mood to the House when I spoke, not without acceptance."

That is *his* sphere. When the war has begun and men want to hear words of resolution and single-minded devotion to the conflict, to hear the greedy, bloody, bestial business glamorized and made to look like something noble and uplifting, then the stage is set for Churchill.

What effect could the warnings about war and preparedness of this notorious gladiator have on the men who ruled Britain and France in this period? Perhaps the best thing that could have happened to the cause he claims to have advocated is that *he* should have had nothing to say about it. In such a case, words like right and wrong have no meaning. He could neither be right nor wrong for he was singing the same tune all his life. He is doing it today. While the regular diplomats of Western Europe and America are busy jockeying for position with Stalin and seeking, as is the careful way of these confidence-men, to place the blame on the enemy, Churchill a few months ago shouted: Let us give Stalin an ultimatum and a period in which to answer, and if he does not, let us have the show-down. That is his perpetual role. The man of the show-down, always ready for it, always preparing for it, *especially when in opposition and in conflict with the leaders of his party.*

In the cabinet reshuffle of 1936, everyone expected him to be included because of his audacity as a war minister. Baldwin left him out. Churchill writes: "He thought no doubt that he had given me a politically fatal stroke, and I felt he might well be right." He says too, "There was much mockery in the press about my exclusion." Exactly. His career was always in danger. His adventures were the subject of perpetual mockery.

We can now judge with a little more sense of proportion Churchill's claim that on a question vital to the world he was the purveyor of wisdom to fatuous idiots and fools. If the words idiot and fatuity, etc., were to be applied up to 1936, chief candidate would have been Churchill himself. Never at any time did he behave like a man who had a serious point of view, knew what was at stake and fought seriously for it.

These erratic habits of his were intimately connected with the failure of his supposedly correct policy on the war. It was precisely during the time that he was supposed to be fighting this life-and-death struggle to prevent the unnecessary war, that Churchill showed that age had not withered nor custom staled the infinite variety of what the

novelist, Arnold Bennet, called his "incurable foolishness." He describes two of his political adventures in this book and it is clear that to this day he is not fully aware of the folly of his procedure in relation to his war policy.

The first concerns India. In 1931, British imperialism began the colossal, and as it has proved, the impossible task of reconciling India to British rule by binding the Indian bourgeoisie and the feudal lords to the British system. *After Hitler's accession to power in Germany this was an urgent task precisely because of the uncertain world situation.* Churchill, however, for years rallied the worst of the *Daily Mail* type of Conservatives and led a struggle against Baldwin which for intemperance and unscrupulousness even he has rarely surpassed. He was ignominiously defeated as he was bound to be. Today he can still write that his determined opposition to any kind of self-government for India was correct and for proof cites the massacres of Moslems and Hindus. He is still of the opinion that the Members "of all parties" were "ignorant." Yet, any level-headed capitalist politician could not but see that some sort of settlement and pacification of India was necessary for any British government that contemplated war.

By the end of his battle of India, the Conservative Party had no use whatever for him. However by 1936 he had built around himself a little group around a policy he called "Arms and the Covenant," the Covenant being the League of Nations. The sharpening international situation was giving weight to their attacks upon the policy of the Baldwin government. But then came the crisis of Edward VIII and Wallie Simpson. Here was another battle and Churchill plunged into it. Let him describe himself the effect of one speech to a hostile House of Commons.

"There were several moments when I seemed to be entirely alone against a wrathful House of Commons. I am not, when in action, unduly affected by hostile currents of feelings; but it was on more than one occasion almost physically impossible to make myself heard."

What was the result? These are his own words.

"All the forces I had gathered together on 'Arms and the Covenant,' of which I conceived myself to be the main-spring, were estranged or dissolved, and I was myself so smitten in public opinion that it was the almost universal view that my political life was at last ended."

Not entirely though. Nothing is more illuminating of what Britain's rulers thought of Churchill than his account of how, all through his years of political exile, *every* British Prime Minister saw to it that he was well informed of the latest military and scientific developments; he was even placed on some of the most secret war committees. This explains his place in British politics. He was a kind of national strong-arm man who was kept well trained and in shape, for the day when blows were needed. Until then nobody wanted to have anything to do with him. And this book shows that no one had worked more assiduously to build this reputation than himself.

But perhaps, it may be said, that despite all his follies Churchill *was* right in his consistent opposition on the war issue. His book explodes that fable. Churchill's opposition on the actual issue of the war was no different from his

shrill opposition on other issues. He spoke with more authority perhaps on this, and he certainly impressed outsiders and the general public. But he did not impress the politicians and for one very good reason. *They knew that they could have shut up his mouth at any time by giving him office.* The measure of their contempt for him can be judged by the fact that eloquent and active as he was they refused to do this.

History is full of men who felt that a certain policy was essential to the life of their country or their class and fought for it to the end, reckless of victory, defeat or their personal fate. Such for instance was the uncompromising struggle of Clemenceau for leadership of France in the days of 1914-18 when the government was in such a crisis that at one time his attacks upon the government sounded like treason to the bourgeoisie. No such mantle can be hung on Winston Churchill despite all the assiduous tailoring of Henry Luce. Churchill knows better than to make any great claims for himself on this matter. There are too many men alive who could tear him to bits if he tried to do this. It was not principled opposition which kept him out of the ministry in 1936 and thus saved him from getting himself as thoroughly compromised as Baldwin and Chamberlain. It was his bad reputation and habits. He writes:

"Mr. Baldwin knew no more than I, how great was the service he was doing me in preventing me from becoming involved in all the Cabinet compromises and shortcomings of the next three years, and from having, if I remained a Minister, to enter upon a war bearing direct responsibility for conditions of national defence bound to prove fearfully inadequate.

"This was not the first time—or, indeed the last—that I have received a blessing in what was at the time a very effective disguise."

What kind of hero is this? That Churchill did not have his own warm well-padded cell in the lunatic asylum of the insane and complicatedly idiotic was due to no fault of his own. He tried hard enough to get in. It was the lunatics inside who kept him out; they did not want a lunatic of that stamp in with them. Until the war came Churchill was nobody, played no heroic role, opposed the government but was always ready to enter it. How hollow becomes the great boast with its sham modesty "I was not always wrong."

An Alternative Road to Ruin

But maybe Churchill did have the correct policy, if even he did not make any heroic battle for it. Now this is precisely what was in dispute all the time *and is still in dispute.* And here, above all, Churchill's policy, in so far as he had a policy, seemed to his colleagues the quintessence and crown of his irresponsibility.

Let us try to get clear exactly what Churchill's policy was *not.*

First of all Churchill was not and today is no enemy of either dictatorship or fascism. He is an enemy of all who threaten the British Empire and the "pleasant life" he leads and refers to so often. That is all. On January 30, 1939, this stern opponent of Chamberlain's policy of appeasing the dictators wrote as follows:

"Up till a few years ago many people in Britain admired the work which the extraordinary man Signor Mussolini had done for his country. He had brought it out of incipient anarchy into a position of dignity and order which was admired even by those who regretted the suspension of Italian freedom." (*Step by Step*, 1936-1939, by Winston Churchill, p. 285.)

On February 23, 1939 he wrote of Franco.

"He now has the opportunity of becoming a great Spaniard of whom it may be written a hundred years hence: 'He united his country and rebuilt its greatness. Apart from that he reconciled the past with the present, and broadened the life of the working people while preserving the faith and structure of the Spanish nation.' Such an achievement would rank in history with the work of Ferdinand and Isabella and the glories of Charles V." (*Ibid*, p. 285.)

Nor was Churchill, or any British minister for that matter, ready to give Hitler a "free hand" in the East against Russia. Conquest of Eastern Europe by Hitler meant inevitably that France and Britain would next be on the list of an enormously strengthened Germany. To Ribbentrop's request for a free hand in the East, Churchill replied:

"... I said at once that I was sure the British government would not agree to give Germany a free hand in Eastern Europe. It was true that we were on bad terms with Soviet Russia and that we hated Communism as much as Hitler did, but he might be sure that, even if France were safeguarded, Great Britain would never disinterest herself in the fortunes of the Continent to any extent that would enable Germany to gain the domination of Central and Eastern Europe."

What then *was* the policy? As far as the record goes in this book he makes an extraordinarily good case for himself on the question of the air-race with Germany. But that is not enough to build the pedestal for his statue. And beyond this it is difficult to find out exactly what, at any precise moment, he concretely stood for.

He claims today that the Allied nations never should have disarmed.

What is the meaning of this observation? In the economic crisis that followed 1929 any government that tried to maintain the burden of armaments would have been thrown out of office. The British masses, proletarian and petty-bourgeois, would not have stood for it. And least of all from the pro-Mussolini, pro-Franco, erratic Churchill. The same thing held for France. These idiotic statesmen were fighting for their political lives and their political systems. They had an enemy abroad but they had an enemy at home. They could only do the best they could, and despite all of Churchill's talk, he could not have done better.

His second major point is even more untenable than his first. He thinks that when Hitler began to rearm he should and could have been defeated, in 1934, in 1936, and again in 1938. This is why the war was the most unnecessary in history. First of all it is extremely doubtful if Churchill ever directly gave any such advice at these particular times. He does not say this anywhere. He says he thought so, or he thinks so, which are both very different things from the first. But if we understand what

was the logic of the insane and the idiotic, for they had a logic, we shall see why they distrusted Churchill so profoundly. His whole temper and attitude as expressed in the Battle of Sidney Street, the Antwerp adventure and the agitation on India were not only discreditable and compromising to himself and to his party. This supposed readiness to engage the enemy in the circumstances of 1934-39 could have precipitated the destruction of the Empire. He himself writes in this book:

"We have at length emerged from a scene of material ruin and moral havoc the like of which had never darkened the imagination of former centuries. After all that we suffered and achieved, we find ourselves still confronted with problems and perils not less but far more formidable than those through which we have so narrowly made our way."

Quite so. And it is this consciousness of doom which the erratic Churchill never understood and to this day does not understand despite his sounding phrases. Neville Chamberlain (and this found expression in the responsible American press) believed that another war would mean the end of the British Empire, *whether Britain won or lost*. George V, it was reported, believed that he would be the last king of Great Britain. Every European government knew in its heart that Hitler meant to fight, but every government trembled to overthrow him because 1) they did not know what would succeed him in Europe; 2) they did not know what would be the effect on their own countries of defeating Germany and unloosing an avalanche in Europe. These considerations never troubled the belligerent Churchill. He was always ready to jump on his horse and lead the charge
God for England, Winston and St. George."

Never since the Commune had the class struggle been so bitter in France as between 1934 and 1938. In Britain in 1933, the workers passed a resolution by a tremendous majority which vowed never to support the British Government in any imperialist war. The British statesmen remembered that in 1919-21 in Ireland, in Egypt, in India, and in a dozen other places, the Empire had rocked on its foundations. Churchill's attitude on India showed that all this was nothing to him. Lloyd George in 1934 warned openly that Hitler should not be overthrown. Communism, said Lloyd George, will take his place and, he added, a German communism far more efficient than communism of the Russian type. This was the dilemma. The idiots and the insane fought for peace because at all costs they wanted to prevent the consequences of war. They hesitated to form the alliance with Stalin. Look at Europe today and the Kremlin's position in it. These men were conscious of the real dangers. Look at Britain today, living only by self-interested charity from the United States.

Churchill says that the French statesmen should have engaged Hitler when he marched into the Rhineland in March 1936. Sure, Hitler would have been defeated. And then, what? A few months afterward, in June to be exact, there were the strikes in France when the workers seized the factories. In July came the Spanish Revolution. Imagine what would have happened to that Europe if

Hitler had been overthrown in the spring of 1936 by what would have been a very brief war. The politicians were insane not to overthrow him. But they would have been insane to overthrow him. They were fatuous to try to get him to fight the Soviet Union alone. But the complicated situation forced upon them the complicated idiocy of trying to get him to fight the Soviet Union and yet not give him a free hand in the East. Churchill thinks that Czechoslovakia should have fought in 1938. France, he says, would have been bound to come in and England would have been compelled to follow.

As characteristic of him he never learns, not even from history. There were powerful elements in the ruling classes of Czechoslovakia and of Poland who felt that once Russian troops entered these territories they would never get them out again. Who in 1948 can say from their point of view that they were wrong? Today the war has been fought. Victory has been won. And there remains a Europe dominated by an enemy of imperialist Britain far more securely installed than was Germany. Churchill is as busy as ever preparing for this new war. The idiots and the fatuous could tell him with justice: "We never heard from you one single word which showed that you understood the perils in which our civilization stood. You were then as we have always known you, seeing red on every occasion, and perpetually irresponsible." They would be right.

Lenin summed up our age many years ago: imperialist war and proletarian revolution. Socialism or barbarism. Churchill saw only one—the war. For the insane, the idiotic, the fatuous, in short for the agents of capitalism, socialism or barbarism was a terrible choice. They tried to avoid both. Churchill rides gallantly, intent on what he calls victory. But another such victory and what would remain? Today as ten years ago that does not trouble him overmuch. His motto remains unchanged: "On to the battle. Conquer first and see what happens afterward." His vaunted policy was an alternative road to ruin. That was all. Neither then nor now have the great masses of people anything to learn from him. His quarrels with his opponent are merely disputes over ways of trying to save what is doomed to destruction—bourgeois society.

As Reactionary as Ever

From all this it must not be considered that Churchill is a negligible person. That would be stupidity. Put him in a war department, or give him a war to lead, and from all the evidence he is far above his colleagues, in energy, in knowledge, in attention to business and curiously enough, in tempering his audacity with sobriety of judgment. He has also developed another valuable gift. His famous sense of history is famous nonsense. He has none, as I shall show in a moment. What he does have in his head is the writings of the great British historians and the speeches of the great British orators. This and his singlemindedness, his operative consciousness of playing a great role in historic conflicts, enable him at times to rise to great heights of rhetoric.

At times his words can be singularly effective, especially when people are frightened and bewildered by the complex

class, national and international currents of modern war. Churchill has no doubts, as a bull in a china shop has no doubts. He has a great gift of phrase, and long training as a journalist gives him an eye for the salient facts in a military or political situation. At all points he is equipped for war, to shout for war, to glamorize past wars, to explain a war that is going on, to make new ones look like a defense of civilization.

Politically he is as stupid a reactionary as ever. The war was no sooner over than he aroused universal execration in Britain by saying on the radio that the victory of the Labour Party would mean a Gestapo for Britain. He himself lost thousands of votes in his own constituency. Today in his own party the wish is widespread that he would resign. It is a measure of the degeneration of our society that such a man should be its most notable spokesman; above all it is a scandal that he should be represented in the United States as a defender of democracy and civilization. In reality the evidence is thick in this book that Churchill is not merely a conservative, but is today as ever a vicious reactionary. A few examples will suffice.

Today, even after the terrible experiences of the war, he has no hostility to the German Junkers with their feudal estates and their perpetual war-making. He remains opposed to the Weimar Republic. He wanted a monarchy. On page 11 of his book he says: "*All the strong elements, military and feudal, which might have rallied to a constitutional monarchy and for its sake respected and sustained the new democratic and parliamentary processes, were for the time being unhinged.*"

Here speaks the provincial British reactionary. Despite all his historical quotations and references he cannot to this day see that monarchy is doomed. It is difficult to decide which is greater, the folly that a monarchy would have solved the contradictions of capitalist Germany; or the reactionary mentality which *always* finds its friends and subjects of admiration or excuse in people like Mussolini,

Franco, the German Junkers, the military and feudal elements.

He dares even to admire Hitler. In *this* book, after all that has happened, writing about Hitler in 1932 he uses these sentences: "*I admire men who stand up for their country in defeat, even though I am on the other side. He had a perfect right to be a patriotic German if he chose. I always wanted England, Germany, and France to be friends.*" Hitler attacked Britain. That is all that concerned Churchill. But for that he would have admired him to this day.

Nor is that the least of his consistent violations of elementary decency. Readers of this book will be struck by Churchill's constant use of the term *race* where other writers would use *people* or *nation*. "Polish race," "German racial bloc," etc. You have to read the book itself and not the extracts to know why. In the extracts which appeared in *Life*, April 19, 1948, speaking to an emissary of Hitler, Churchill is made to say:

"Why is your chief so violent about the Jews? How can any man help how he is born?"

It sounds bad enough. Turn to page 83 of this book and see what he really wrote.

"Why is your chief so violent about the Jews? I can quite understand being angry with the Jews who have done wrong or are against the country, and I understand resisting them if they try to monopolise power in any walk of life; but what is the sense of being against a man simply because of his birth? How can any man help how he is born?"

Admiration for dictatorship and military and feudal elements, racial arrogance, anti-Semitism, these and much more stare you in the face as soon as you shake yourself free of bourgeois propaganda and his rolling periods. It is characteristic of his impudence that he scorns to hide them. It is one of the urgent tasks of the struggle against war to expose before the American people the pretensions of this reactionary prize-fighter to be a defender of democracy and civilization.

The Radical Vote in 1948

By George Clarke

It is a risky venture to assess the degree of radicalization of the masses on the basis of election returns alone. The parliamentary barometer is an extremely inaccurate instrument for registering the mood of the working people. During periods of great social upheaval, its tardiness in registering changes in popular consciousness make its findings downright misleading.

In this country, the findings of the parliamentary barometer are still further distorted by the ingrained and even hereditary habits of voting produced by the two-party system, by the absence of mass working-class parties and by the denial of suffrage to the bulk of the Negro population. In addition, it is customary for capitalist politicians to tamper with the vote where radical parties are concerned.

However, once these factors are understood and accounted for, the study of election returns becomes extremely useful for Marxists in appraising their own strength and the class consciousness of the masses. That is the aim of this analysis.

An important observation must be noted from the beginning. Since 1924, when the Communist Party entered a presidential ticket for the first time, there have been only two presidential elections in which the influence of the radical parties was genuinely measured. These years were 1928 and 1932.

In 1924, the Socialist Party supported LaFollette. In most states election laws frustrated its intention to run LaFollette on the SP line and it is therefore impossible to uncover a truthful picture of SP influence in that election.

In 1936, the Stalinists supported Roosevelt. They appeared in their own name on the ballot only to avoid embarrassing the president with open Communist support. But as a consequence of their slogan "Defeat Landon at All Costs," only a section of the party membership and supporters voted for Browder.

In 1940, the Stalinists had switched to opposition to Roosevelt because of the Hitler-Stalin pact. Browder was again a token candidate because it was impossible for the CP to openly declare for the Republican Willkie except at the peril of complete disgrace in the eyes of the working class public. Browder's vote dropped to almost one-half of its 1936 size; the CP members and followers either stayed away from the polls or voted for Roosevelt in defiance of party instructions.

In 1944, the Stalinists had the war and national unity as the pretext to support Roosevelt openly without a sham independent ticket. Finally in 1948, the Stalinists again abstained from running their own candidate, this time throwing their unqualified support behind Wallace and his third party ticket.

With these facts as a background it is possible to establish certain trends and conclusions from the following table:

Year	Total Vote	Radical Vote	Percent
1920	26,217,352	917,799 (1)	3.5
1924	28,933,458	379,789 (2)	1.4
1928	36,879,414	337,793 (3)	.9
1932	39,816,522	1,021,048 (3)	2.5
1936	45,647,117	278,415 (3)	.5
1940	49,815,312	160,056 (3)	.3
1944	48,025,684	125,854 (4)	.3
1948	48,680,416	173,066 (5)	.3

Our point of departure for a study of the radical vote is the combined figures in presidential elections for parties bearing the label "socialist" or "communist." We are not unaware of the serious limitations imposed by such a method of analysis. There are, for example, the deep political gulfs which separate these parties and the widely varying motivations behind the votes cast for them. By lumping them all together as "socialists," the Shachtmanites reveal more about their own break from Marxism and their animosity to authentic Trotskyism than they do about the radical vote. The sympathy with revolutionary socialism which motivates most Trotskyist voters is utterly different from the petty-bourgeois political sentiments which send the bulk of the Thomas flock to the polls. Yet, since most of these votes represent a form of opposition to capitalism, it is convenient to designate them as the "radical vote."

Debs and LaFollette

We have chosen the 1920 elections as our starting point because the First World War, the Russian Revolution and

- (1) For Debs as SP candidate.
- (2) Combined SP, CP, SLP vote; SP vote calculated by totaling SP vote for LaFollette in New York and candidates for state offices in other states.
- (3) Combined SP, CP, SLP vote.
- (4) Combined SP, SLP vote.
- (5) Combined SP, SLP, SWP vote.

the emergence of the Communist International radically transformed the prewar political and social scene and created conditions which, with important modifications, have endured to this day.

The Debs vote, as is obvious, marked the highwater level of American radicalism as an independent force. It was the radiation of the Red dawn of October 1917 in the United States. It came in the midst of the biggest strike wave seen up to then in the country, which was to be exceeded by the strikes of 1946 only in numbers but not in militancy and violence. The revolutionary character of the vote was underscored by its defiance to the Palmer Red raids, then in full swing, and by the presidential candidate still behind prison bars for his revolutionary opposition to the war.

Four years later the radical vote dropped by almost two-thirds. In this period, the open shop drive of the employers had been victorious, the revolutionary wave had ebbed in Europe and the last surge of agrarian radicalism finding expression in LaFollette's Progressive Party, disoriented thousands of former socialist voters. The SP leaders of the time—the Hillquits, Bergers and Oneals and Waldmans—mightily contributed to this confusion by their support of LaFollette, the first major venture of American socialism into People's Front class collaborationism in politics. The Social Democracy here as in Europe established the precedent for subsequent Stalinist betrayals. The Socialist Party never recovered from this move although other factors contributed to its decline.

On the other hand, the Workers Party (Communist) vote was small. The party had entered its first presidential campaign, getting on the ballot in fourteen states. It had just begun to recover from the blows of reaction and from the malignant disease of "leftism" and "undergroundism" which was accompanied by fierce internal factional struggles and splits. But for the intervention of Trotsky, it too would have succumbed to the LaFollette People's Front.

Prosperity and Its Aftermath

Meanwhile the illusion of permanent capitalist "prosperity" spread like chloroform over the country. Marxism had been conquered by Henry Ford—that was the standard theme delivered from every pulpit and seat of learning. Hoover won the presidency in 1928 on the promise of the impending conquest of poverty under capitalism. The radical parties appeared like voices shouting in the wilderness, visionaries whose theories were confounded by the "facts." Their combined vote dropped again by almost 50%.

The 1928 elections sent shudders of despair into the ranks of the radical movement. The ranks thinned out as the weak sisters, led by the impressionistic intelligentsia, broke camp in a procession to the honeyed fields of capitalist "enterprise." Yet such is the speed of social change in our time that within one year of the election, this entire world was shattered. The reality of social crisis and class struggle replaced the Alice-in-Wonderland period of capitalist prosperity. Unemployment bred discontent

which fuelled the fires of American radicalism. The struggles of the unemployed, the bankrupt farmers and the bonus marchers were partially reflected at the polls in 1932.

The total radical vote trebled over 1928 and almost trebled in its percentage relation to the general electorate. The 1932 total was larger in absolute numbers than the high point of 1920 and came within one percent of the 1920 percentage of the total electorate. The Socialist Party was the chief beneficiary of this increase, receiving a total of 884,781 votes, almost four times larger than its 1928 vote. The Communist Party doubled its 1928 total with 102,991.

It is interesting to observe how the reformist party, although practically moribund, was the heavy gainer at the polls while the Communist Party did not at all reflect its growing strength and rising influence. Immersed in its adventurist and ultra-leftist course, which had not yet zigzagged to People's Frontism and class collaboration, the Stalinists appeared as the revolutionary party in the eyes of the masses. "Class against Class" was their slogan as they called upon the workers to "Vote Communist." They had at least ten times more active members than the SP and probably a hundred times its influence among the workers.

Here is another inaccuracy of the parliamentary barometer. The first appearance of radicalization favors the reformist party at the polls and it generally retains this lead until the situation becomes revolutionary. Thousands of workers prepared to follow the leadership of the revolutionary party in daily struggles hesitate at first in voting for its candidates. Other thousands, on the sidelines, express their more passive class consciousness by voting for a more moderate party. It can be set down as an axiom: those who vote for the revolutionary party do so out of far greater consciousness than those who vote for the reformist party.

The Roosevelt Era

The second Roosevelt election in 1936 was preceded and followed by vast and far-reaching social changes. Militant moods spread through the masses. From coast to coast strikers battled cops, armed vigilantes, national guards and anti-labor judges. The sit-down strike—American equivalent of the revolutionary occupation of the factories—became an invincible method of class warfare. The mass production industries were at long last conquered by the unions, and a great new power came upon the scene—the CIO.

Beaten in the conflict, and fearing worse if they continued the struggle by the same methods, the bourgeoisie was persuaded to drop the crude use of jungle warfare for the more subtle and "civilized" poison of class collaboration. Roosevelt was quick to make a virtue out of necessity. Under the imposing name of New Deal he concocted a "philosophy" of liberalism out of the concessions and social reforms he was forced to grant to avert revolution, and drew the willing labor bureaucracy into a ramified system of class collaboration. Its evil effects have persisted through the years, determining the outcome of every

election including the most recent one. Each time the masses were led to the polls to extend the "New Deal," to safeguard it, to revive it or to prevent something worse from happening. In the process, no independent political instrument was created to complement the economic power of the CIO, the development of class consciousness was stunted and deformed and the radical vote declined sharply.

The Betrayal of Stalinism

Without in any way underestimating Roosevelt's immense influence over the workers, it is correct to say that Stalinism in its own right became a mighty factor in deforming class consciousness. The Communist Party, having reversed its ultra-left policy, directed the cadre of militants it had trained in the struggles of the unemployed and the "Red" trade unions into the CIO drive to organize the unorganized. The belated impact on the American workers of the Russian Revolution, which appeared in the form of planning and industrialization in the Soviet Union as contrasted to unemployment and economic stagnation here, added new strength to the Stalinists. They became, in fact, the number one party of American radicalism, dominating or sharing control in almost every CIO international union and wielding the leadership of CIO central labor bodies in the major industrial centers.

Yet this tremendous growth, which presaged the transformation of the Communist Party from a propaganda group into a mass party, was not reflected at the polls as the foregoing table indicates. These organizational successes were accompanied by a political transformation which converted Stalinism into a servile class collaborationist party. Instead of becoming the instrument for the advancement of American radicalism, Stalinism became the medium for its subversion and stultification, the foe incarnate of every move towards political independence of the trade unions or socialist opposition to Roosevelt.

That the Stalinists themselves went into opposition to the Democratic Party on two occasions, against Roosevelt in 1940 and Truman in 1948, does not in any way mitigate this truth. Each time their opposition was dictated by the needs of the Soviet bureaucracy which made American Stalinism the pawn of its foreign policy. Far from reverting to a revolutionary policy, the CP sought merely to rebuild its Popular Front alliances with other sections of the ruling class: with the America Firsters in 1940; with Wallace in 1948.

The low radical vote from 1936 to 1948 is primarily a reflection of the crimes of Stalinism. Having won the confidence of tens of thousands of radicalized workers who turned to the CP as an anti-capitalist party, Stalinism deliberately miseducated them, turning them back to the very class collaborationist methods with which they had just broken. It is historical justice that, after having inflicted their damage upon the workers' movement as a whole, the crimes of Stalinism boomeranged with terrible force against the CP as well. Confronted in their unions with a choice between two class collaborationist bureaucracies, the workers chose the native rather than the foreign-dominated agency of capitalism, deserting the CP in

droves in its hour of greatest need. Confronted politically with a choice of two People's Front candidates, the workers chose Truman over Wallace, as the more plausible "lesser evil" and the representative of the stronger party.

This brief sketch should illuminate some of the trends and factors which, combined with the given conditions of the past few years, helped determine the size, allocation and significance of the radical vote in 1948. From this point of departure, we can now make our analysis:

I. THE WALLACE VOTE

If we begin our discussion of the radical vote with the Progressive Party, it is not because we consider it a socialist, communist or anti-capitalist party. On the contrary, Wallace, by his character, his record, his position of unshared public leadership of the party, his unmistakable enunciation of "progressive capitalism" as the fundamental aim of the organization, stamped the party from the outset as a capitalist party. Yet the Progressive Party belongs in this discussion because of the considerable role played by the Stalinists in the apparatus and at the base of the party and in influencing its policy.

The first significant feature of the Wallace vote is its smallness. The Trotskyist press has already demonstrated that Wallace was outflanked in social demagogy by Truman, and that the Stalinists were outmaneuvered by the labor bureaucracy in the campaign to elect a "lesser evil." We propose here to examine the size of Wallace's vote by two comparisons.

Wallace did not even come within smelling distance of the vote received by his prototype, Robert LaFollette Sr., who campaigned on an analogous liberal capitalist program under the Progressive Party emblem in 1924. LaFollette received 4,822,856 votes or 16% of the total vote as against 1,157,416 for Wallace representing 2.3% of the total 1948 vote. Both parties made their appearance in periods of anti-labor reaction and growing discontent with the two-party system. Both parties dammed up a labor party tide and channeled this sentiment into their third party ventures. Both parties had the support of the strongest radical party, the Socialist Party backing LaFollette in 1924 and the Communist Party backing Wallace twenty-four years later.

But here the similarities end. Where Wallace was practically ignored by a more or less satisfied rural population enjoying a high level of agricultural prosperity, LaFollette received a large part of his votes from a well-organized agrarian movement in the Midwest brought into being by the farm crisis after World War I. Where Wallace was actively opposed by the entire trade union movement with the exception of the small section under Stalinist control, LaFollette had the official endorsement of the AFL and most of the Railroad Brotherhoods unions, comprising the entire trade union movement of that time.

It is axiomatic—as is illustrated in the contrast noted above—that it is impossible to build a third capitalist party or to even receive a large vote without the support of the farmers or the organized working class. The

Stalinists, who publish innumerable volumes of pseudo-Marxist studies on American history, should have at least understood this axiom. In any case, regardless of their understanding, the decision to form and support the Progressive Party was not in their hands but came from the masters in the Kremlin who, like the Bourbons, think their drive for self-preservation can counteract all the laws of history.

It may be objected that LaFollette received a bigger vote because he was not tainted with the support of a foreign power as Wallace was. This is absurd. A third party last year could not have been created without the active support of the Stalinists. Unlike LaFollette, who relied upon his own powerful organization in Wisconsin and upon the farmer and farmer-labor party movements in the Northwest, Wallace had no apparatus save that supplied him by the Stalinists. In those states where this apparatus embraced all or part of an electoral machine which had formerly been an adjunct of the Democratic Party, in addition to a strong Stalinist movement, Wallace received a larger percentage of the total vote than he did in the nation as a whole. In New York, the American Labor Party, supporting Wallace, accounted for 8% of the total state vote and 45% of Wallace's national vote. In California, where the Democratic machine was badly shattered, Wallace received 4.7% of the total vote. And in Washington, where the Stalinists had at one time dominated the Democratic Party, the Progressive Party emerged with 3.5%. In all other states the Wallace vote hugged the national percentage of 2.3%.

The second historical contrast which emerges from the election returns is that offered between the Wallace vote in 1948 and the Debs vote in 1920. The higher percentage of the national total (3.5%) received by Debs as a revolutionary socialist speaks volumes about the effects of the crimes and degeneration of Stalinism in the United States. 900,000 votes for Debs signified a great victory for revolutionary socialism, a powerful challenge to the capitalist masters and the basis for the growth and extension of the revolutionary party. One million votes for Wallace was a terrible setback for Stalinist Popular Frontism, a shocking disappointment to thousands who had been led astray by the Pied Pipers of opportunism and a richly deserved body blow to the Stalinist ring-masters of the Wallace circus.

The size of the Wallace vote is nevertheless highly significant because at least this section of newly radicalized workers and intellectuals remained firm despite Truman's radical demagogy, despite the repression and red-baiting directed against the Wallace party. It indicated the scope of the movement which could have been aroused by a genuine revolutionary party comparable in size and influence to the Stalinists.

On the other hand, the disciplined character of the Wallace vote illustrated the limited nature of the radical awakening of this stratum which is the product of Rooseveltian and Stalinist miseducation. The returns show that the bulk of the Wallace voters shifted their vote to the Democratic Party wherever the Progressive Party had withdrawn in favor of a "progressive" and "lesser evil" Democrat in a congressional or gubernatorial race. They

voted as New Deal Democrats for such candidates as Humphrey in Minnesota, Bowles in Connecticut and Holifield in Los Angeles even though these gentlemen were supporters of the Truman-Marshall doctrine and violent opponents of Wallace's foreign policy platform. Equally significant is the failure of any substantial number of this group to shift their vote to the Socialist Workers Party in these local elections although the SWP candidates were the most outspoken foes of the bipartisan administration.

The Stalinists, who won the first battle for leadership and influence over this newly radicalized section of workers and intellectuals, have led this group into a defeat and a blind alley. They have stifled all discussion on the reasons for this defeat not only in the CP but in the Progressive Party. To batter down the bars of bureaucratic suppression and to explain the significance of the election and the bankruptcy of People's Frontism to the rank and file Wallaceites—that is an important task for the revolutionary Marxists.

2. THE REWARDS OF OPPORTUNISM

Norman Thomas, campaigning for the sixth time for president on the Socialist Party ticket, received 139,547 votes as against 80,516 in 1944. Strangely enough this increase of 74% marks neither an increase of socialist sentiment in this country, nor does it signify the strengthening of the SP as an organization.

Thomas' campaign was the epitome of opportunist double-talk. He was excelled only by Dewey in meaningless effusions, pompous platitudes and glittering generalities. His campaign was less socialist than any of the preceding five — not an easy record even for Thomas to break. The SP candidate introduced himself to the general public with an article in *Look* magazine in which he complained that the Democratic and Republican parties had stolen his program. In that article he reduced socialism to the small change of reform measures such as old age pensions, unemployment insurance and workmen's compensation. Although Thomas disturbed the elements by strange ranting during the campaign about "nationalizing the commanding heights of our economy" (whatever that means), the *Look* article gave a more truthful picture of his "socialist" conceptions.

A far more significant feature of Thomas' campaign was his vulgar anti-Stalinism. Except for a few pacifist bleats about disarmament to appease some of his retinue of preachers and affluent old ladies of both sexes, Thomas stood cheek-by-jowl with the crudest of the war-mongers and State Department Brass Hats. Most of his criticisms of the Truman-Marshall world conquest plans came from the *right*, viewing with alarm any tendency to "appease" Stalin and bemoaning the lack of sufficient "energy" and "firmness" in the prosecution of these plans.

The bourgeoisie began by viewing Thomas' campaign with the customary good-humored contempt it has shown to SP campaigns since the death of Debs. The *N. Y. Times* wrote that Thomas can do no harm. But as the Wallace movement became a pole of attraction for millions of peo-

ple in rebellion against the Brass Hats, against the encroachments of a police state, against the union-busters and the white supremacists, the bourgeoisie saw a new use for Thomas. Here was a safe and sane "socialist" antidote to Wallace, completely in sympathy with the foreign policy of American imperialism who, they thought, might catch the votes of those who could no longer stomach Truman. Furthermore, Thomas, it was felt, would serve as a good showpiece abroad, deflecting the attention received by Wallace and proving the devotion of the American bourgeoisie to "democratic" methods.

They showered him with affection and special consideration. The *Denver Post* hired Thomas as a columnist and syndicated his column in many papers. The *N.Y. Times* played up Thomas' campaign and time and again printed full texts of his logic-murdering speeches. Thomas probably received more free radio and television time than all the other candidates combined. Under these conditions the significant factor is not so much the increase in the SP vote as the small size of the increase.

Thomas failed to attract any significant section of the millions of eligible voters who stayed away from the polls in disgust and revolt against the two-party fraud. There was nothing in Thomas' campaign to inspire these masses even to the point of taking action at the polls. Who were the 60,000 voters who accounted for the SP increase over 1944? Obviously there are no accurate methods of discovering their class and political identity. But Thomas' campaign suggests the answer to this question.

The new Thomas voters appeared to be in the main not socialist voters but "protest" voters; who were not more but less radical than the Wallace voters. In the main they consisted of those who were to the left of Truman but to the right of Wallace. They opposed Truman because of his domestic program but as supporters of the anti-Communist cold war of the administration, they preferred Thomas to Wallace.

Perhaps an even larger section of the new Thomas voters came from that group which would have voted for Truman if they thought he could be elected. Thomas played on this theme throughout his campaign. In casting a protest vote, this group also was voting more against Wallace than for Thomas. This view was openly expressed by anti-socialist intellectuals like Dorothy Thompson, Vincent Sheean, Max Lerner and others. They were joined by a few ex-Trotskyist intellectuals like James T. Farrell, Felix Morrow and Harold Isaacs, whose support of Thomas was the equivalent of a public declaration against Marxism and a notice that their swing to the right was proceeding apace.

Despite Thomas' enhanced popularity as a "public figure," his vote was a cruel disappointment to the SP. Their illusion that the SP would again become a mass party as a result of the election returns was completely shattered. This had begun to happen in 1932 when Thomas' vote rose to 884,781 as against 267,420 in 1928. But this time there was no depression, the SP was practically non-existent as an organization and its own campaign meetings during the campaign were small disappointing affairs. The SP

proved that it could purchase publicity by sacrificing socialist principles. But it also discovered that not all the support of the State Department, the capitalist press and radio can convert a moribund reformist sect into a mass working-class party.

The first result of the election "victory" for the SP is the proposal of its National Committee to liquidate the organization by means of a merger with the Social Democratic Federation. Why not? After all the only difference between the two will disappear when Thomas quits being a candidate. This development is to be hailed as one of the more constructive results of the election campaign.

3. LAMENT OF THE SECTARIANS

That the parliamentary barometer often deals in the compilation of pieces of paper rather than with social realities is well illustrated by the Socialist Labor Party vote. Since the death of its great leader Daniel De Leon before World War I, the SLP has neither influenced the course of the class struggle nor been influenced by it. A chemically pure sect, the SLP with haughty disdain eschews the daily struggles of the workers and turns its withering contempt upon their imperfect mass organizations. The SLP is not fazed because the bourgeoisie ignores its ultimatum of "unconditional surrender" or that the workers ignore its ultimatum to abandon their impure "capitalist" unions and form the unsullied Socialist Industrial Union. With Jovian confidence it awaits the visitation of the historic process.

Yet in every election campaign the SLP unfurls its banner, spends a small fortune for propaganda and the returns show a few tens of thousands of votes in its column. The vote is as passive as the party. It does not signify influence in the unions or activity in the class struggle but platonic sympathy with basic socialist ideas.

The world-shaking events which pass the SLP by have little effect on its vote. In 1932, for example, when the depression produced a radicalization which found expression in the trebling of the SP and CP votes over 1924, the SLP merely returned to its 1924 total of approximately 33,000 after losing about 12,000 votes in 1928. In 1936 and 1940, they dropped to 10,000 and 14,000 respectively. But then for no ascertainable reason, in 1944, their vote rose to an all-time high of 45,000 at the very time the SP vote reached a twenty-year low.

In 1948 the SLP vote dropped again to 29,240 although their program remained unchanged and, if anything, they expended larger sums in the campaign. Of all their explanations only one interests us: the loss of votes due to confusion of names with the Socialist Workers Party. The weakness of this alibi is that the same confusion could also work to their advantage by receiving votes intended for the SWP. However, the facts permit no such simple explanation. In Minnesota for instance the SWP running under its own name received only 606 votes for its presidential candidates, where the SLP running as Industrial Government Party received almost four times that many. In Pennsylvania,

where neither party ran under its own name, the SWP ran ahead by almost 700 votes.

The anger and worry concealed behind this complaint arises from a more fundamental cause. Obviously many former SLP voters switched to the SWP in this election but not because of confusion in names. These were revolutionary socialist and Marxist voters who in the past, bristling at the caricatured socialism of Thomas, cast their votes for the SLP. This time they had no difficulty in choosing between the dead but unburied SLP and the genuine practitioners of revolutionary Marxism, the Trotskyists. Slowly but surely the woods are being cleared, even of the petrified remains.

4. THE REVOLUTIONARY VOTE

The Trotskyist vote was small in number but large in significance. 13,611 votes were counted for Farrell Dobbs and Grace Carlson, the SWP presidential banner-bearers in 12 states. The SWP vote was lower than that of the SP or the SLP for two main reasons: 1. The SWP received few general protest votes. Most of the "againststers" marked their ballot for Wallace or Thomas. 2. The SWP could only get on the ballot in less than one-fourth of the states because lack of resources and electoral experience handicapped it in the struggle against discriminatory state laws.

Nevertheless in ten states where the SWP and the SLP were both on the ballot the vote was as follows: SLP—18,653; SWP—13,405. The figures draw closer if approximately 4,000 of the 4,274 SLP votes in Iowa are discounted because there the SLP was third on a ballot of eight parties; it had never received more than a few hundred votes in that state and there was no apparent sign of such an increased influence as to make its Iowa return second only to Massachusetts. In its first presidential campaign the SWP did as well as the SLP although the latter had over 50 more years of electoral experience and a much larger treasury.

Prevailing political conditions (in addition to the usual electoral frauds practiced against minority parties) kept the SWP vote down to a bare minimum of its strength and influence. Many workers who had voted for SWP candidates in local contests in previous years were caught up in the "lesser evil" fever and considered it more important to defeat Dewey than to register their sympathies with Trotskyism. Others, awakened for the first time by radical ideas, were lured by the extreme left demagoguery of Wallace. Finally, the SWP was the only party in the presidential race handicapped by the subversive blacklisting of the Department of Justice.

Precisely these reasons, when added to the uncompromising campaign waged by the SWP and the attitude of the capitalist press towards the party, give grounds for saying that most of the 13,600 votes were conscious revolutionary socialist votes. Further proof is the fact that SWP votes in the larger cities were a reasonable percentage approximation of the audiences which heard Trotskyist speakers. Finally, while local Progressive Party and SP candidates ran far behind the national ticket, local SWP candidates

ran slightly ahead of Dobbs and Carlson in all cases except Minnesota where Vincent R. Dunne ran far ahead because of special conditions. The SWP vote was a party vote, another indication of its revolutionary character.

It was the campaign however that was of decisive importance. The entrance of the SWP in the presidential race marked the first time in 16 years that a workers' party had openly championed the doctrines of Marx and Lenin (this time, however, free of Stalinist corruption) and preached the message of class struggle in a national election.

The SWP campaign was a high product of revolutionary consciousness and leadership. The times were exceedingly inappropriate for the entrance of a small and revolutionary party into the contest. A hurricane of reaction was beating down upon the masses who were in retreat before anti-labor legislation, red-baiting, loyalty purges and witch-hunting. The labor movement appeared passive and apathetic. The field was choked with competitors, not the least of which was the popular mass-supported Wallace movement. The SWP had not yet reached the numerical strength which made participation in a presidential campaign as natural a form of activity as trade union work or anti-Jim Crow actions.

The impulse for participation came entirely from within. It was imperative to present a revolutionary program and candidates to the working masses. Therefore, despite myriad obstacles, it was done. That is the essence of Bolshevism.

For the first time in its history, the SWP was unified nationally in a great public action in the name of the party. Other campaigns had been for strictly party building purposes or limited to this or that locality. More than that, it was an eminently revolutionary action. The campaign was conducted in the teeth of reaction and in struggle against that reaction. The fight against the "subversive listing" became a leading task of the campaign itself. The campaign put the party on its mettle, shaking up the conservative and routine circle habits which form so imperceptibly, thus preparing the membership for its role as the leader of great masses.

The campaign popularized the SWP, for the first time in its twenty-year history as a national party, as the extreme left wing of American politics. Millions heard and read about the SWP and its candidates and, of these, thousands who knew something of the deeds and writings of Trotsky discovered for the first time that his teachings were embodied in a living organization.

Although SWP meetings were twice as large as they had been for many years, the extant fear and apathy militated against any mass turnouts. More significant was the fact that at least 50,000 people heard national or local SWP candidates or party campaign workers at trade union meetings, at the factory gates, on the longshoremen's picket line in San Francisco, on the street corners, at symposiums and forums arranged by the NAACP, tenants and community organizations and on the university campuses.

This comprises only a fraction of the millions who heard the SWP candidates in seven national hookups over the major networks in a total of 2 hours and 15 minutes. In addition, the SWP candidates spoke over 76 local stations

throughout the country for a total time of 18 hours and 35 minutes. Except for 17 of these local broadcasts, all of this time was obtained through an aggressive struggle for equal rights under FCC regulations which the hookups and local stations are so prone to forget or ignore where minority parties are concerned.

Approximately 400,000 pieces of campaign literature, including the *Militant*, the national campaign platform, local platforms, folders, leaflets, pamphlets, stickers and posters were distributed, sold and posted from coast to coast. An achievement for an organization with extremely limited funds! Millions read about the SWP and its candidates in the newspapers and periodicals of the nation as the following figures show.

187 daily and weekly papers and magazines in 119 cities and 31 states carried writeups ranging from a brief mention or photograph to full length interviews, editorials or feature stories. This figure includes 1 national daily, 4 national weeklies, 15 Negro weeklies, 4 trade union periodicals, 4 university dailies and 3 foreign language papers. Like the radio time, much of this newspaper space was obtained through the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the campaign workers and by a constant struggle to force the press to observe, at least in part, its pretenses of fair play.

The first Trotskyist presidential campaign is a milestone in the history of the American working class and revolutionary movement. For the workers it marked the entry of a new revolutionary force on the national political arena. For the SWP, it provided a wealth of experience in electoral action and a surge of self-confidence for the membership which accomplished a task that appeared impossible. It was indeed a triumph of revolutionary audacity.

These results, although still for the most part intangible, will prove deep and enduring. The seeds have been sown. When the season arrives, the crop will be harvested.

CORRECTION

We call attention to the following corrections in "The Position of the American Working Class — 100 Years After the Communist Manifesto" by C. Curtis which appeared in the January 1949 *Fourth International*: On page 15, ninth line from the top, the prefix "un" was omitted before the word "employment." The sentence should read: "... Stanley J. Lebergott... gives the following figures (in percentages) of non-agricultural unemployment in the U. S."

On the same page, in the table from 1920 to 1947, the tabular average for unemployment for 1920 to 1929 should read 9.34 (not 6.9) percent.

The second installment of this study will appear in the *March Fourth International*.

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A Forgotten Fighter Against Plutocracy

By William F. Warde

Recent converts to capitalist "free enterprise" glorify this system of robber rule as the foundation of American democracy. However, the real traditions of plebeian democracy in the United States, especially since the Civil War, have been bound up with the mass struggles against Big Business. Many anti-monopolist battles have been waged under the banner of democracy by movements and individuals apart from the tendencies inspired and guided by Marxism.

However great their deficiencies in other respects, these forces at least correctly viewed the plutocracy as the deadliest enemy of the rights of the people. Until recently they occupied the foreground in American thought and politics. Their eclipse has been an integral part of the process by which the representatives of Big Business have sought to shove aside all critics and opponents of its regime.

The best of these standard-bearers of the anti-monopolist crusade were known beyond the borders of this country. Even in the midst of the reconstruction of the Soviet Union, Lenin, for example, found time to follow their work. In October 1922, Oscar Cesare, the American artist, went to sketch Lenin in his Kremlin office. Cesare told Walter Duranty the next day that he had murmured something about political opinion in America. "Yes," Lenin replied, "I've just been reading this," and he held up a red-bound copy of Pettigrew's *Plutocrat Democracy* (sic). "It's a very fine book," he said—and his eyes sparkled as he looked down at it. "I got the impression," Cesare commented, "that Lenin didn't admire the American political system as much as he admired the book."

Who was Pettigrew? What sort of man was this Republican senator that he could call forth Lenin's admiration? Lenin was not in the habit of praising bourgeois politicians or their works.

You will not find the answer to these questions in the best-known liberal histories of Pettigrew's period—in the *Beards' Rise of American Civilization*; in Kendrick and Hacker's *History of the United States Since 1865*; or in John Chamberlain's *Farewell to Reform*. As though designed to emphasize his ob-

scurety, Pettigrew's name remains misspelled and the title of his book misquoted in Duranty's Moscow dispatches published in book form twelve years after Cesare's interview with Lenin.

It is only when we turn to Pettigrew's book that we begin to see why he has been obliterated from official historical memory. His book is a scathing indictment of monopoly rule beside which the writings of the muckrakers and speeches of the reformers seem pale and harmless.

As we delve deeper into the events of Pettigrew's career, we understand still more clearly why he has been cast into obscurity. Richard Franklin Pettigrew was the first United States senator from South Dakota. He was not only a picturesque personality but an influential figure in national politics at the turn of the century.

Pettigrew's elimination from the political arena coincided with the defeat of the middle-class radicalism he represented. He was crushed by the political steamroller of the plutocracy as an obstacle to its concentration of power. In the process his reputation was so blackened and his deeds so distorted that he has never been accorded his rightful place as one of the staunchest opponents of monopoly domination in American public life.

I.

Pettigrew's resistance to tyranny carried forward his family traditions. Several ancestors fought in the Revolution and his father was an Abolitionist who helped many slaves to escape through the underground railroad. Pettigrew was born in Vermont in 1848 and spent his boyhood in Wisconsin. After studying law at the University of Wisconsin and teaching school for a year in Iowa, he went to Dakota in 1869 to help in the government survey of the territory. At that time Dakota was on the fringe of the frontier, a region of wind-swept plains and "bad-lands," dotted with military posts and sparsely settled with unfriendly Indians and homestead farmers.

Pettigrew started a law office and real estate business in Sioux Falls, the urban center of the territory, and lived there most of his life, practicing law,

promoting business enterprises such as the Midland Pacific Railroad and participating in the Territorial government. When South Dakota attained statehood in 1889, he was elected to the U.S. Senate.

He served in that Millionaires' Club for twelve years from 1889 to 1900, when he was defeated for a third term. Although removed from the national scene at that time under circumstances we shall soon set forth, he kept in close touch with the major political events and personages until his death twenty-six years later. Thus, for over fifty years Pettigrew had his finger on the pulse of American politics during a period of tremendous transformations in American society.

II.

Pettigrew entered public life as a member of the Republican Party which had been launched as the upholder of freedom against slavery on the basis of an alliance between the Northern bourgeoisie and the free-soil farmers of the West. However, he was an independent Republican, never hesitating to oppose party policy on any issue that ran counter to his convictions or to the interests of the farmers and merchants of South Dakota.

His first major conflict with the Republican Party leadership and its boss, Mark Hanna, came in the presidential campaign of 1896 when Pettigrew led a large group of Free-Silver Republicans in a dramatic walkout from the convention which nominated McKinley into the camp of the Bryan Democrats. He quit the Republican Party forever once he saw that it had been totally converted into a tool of the capitalist oligarchy.

The campaign of 1896 was fiercely fought. The Populists who had polled over a million and a half votes in the preceding presidential election endorsed Bryan along with the Free-Silver Republicans while the Gold Democrats went over to McKinley's side. In this realignment of political forces only the Socialist Labor Party of DeLeon retained its independence.

For the first time since the Civil War the masters of industry and finance felt that the machinery of the Federal Executive threatened to fall into unreliable hands. Two weeks before election day John Hay wrote to Henry Adams that Cleveland capitalists had visions of themselves hanging from lampposts on Euclid Avenue. The rulers of America had become frightened by their own propaganda; McKinley was reelected.

Although Bryan and his cohorts were repulsed, the insurgent agrarians had won victories in several Western states.

The most notable was in South Dakota, Pettigrew's bailiwick, where the legislature had been captured by a Democratic-Populist coalition, headed by former leaders of the Knights of Labor and the Farmers' Alliance, which proceeded to enact the first Initiative and Referendum measure in the United States. Populism in the West, as well as Pettigrew in the Senate, remained to plague the Republicans.

III.

While the monopolists were consolidating their economic and political supremacy at home, they had been reaching out beyond the national boundaries for fresh markets and sources of raw materials, planting the first seeds of imperialism which were soon to flower in "the splendid little war" against Spain. For five years before the battleship Maine exploded in Havana harbor, the Senate had been the arena of combat between the imperialists and anti-imperialists over the question of Hawaiian annexation.

Pettigrew was the leader in the rancorous debates that punctuated the five-year struggle in the Senate and cast the lone Republican vote in the last desperate filibuster of the anti-imperialists against the adoption of the annexation resolution in July 1898. His anti-imperialist speeches, gathered by Scott Nearing in a book entitled *The Course of Empire*, constitute a valuable record of the first steps of American imperialism in Hawaii, Cuba, and the Philippines.

A study of Roman and European history, a first-hand acquaintance with British imperialism gained from a trip to the Far East in 1897, and his daily contacts with the agents of the corporations had made him familiar with the forces behind imperialist enterprise. With the Pullman and Homestead strikes fresh in his mind, Pettigrew asserted that "the sum and substance of the conquest of the Philippines is to find a field where cheap labor can be secured, labor that does not strike, that does not belong to a union, that does not need an army to keep it in leading strings, that will make goods for the trusts of this country; and as the trusts dominated the St. Louis Convention and own the Republican Party, it is a very proper enterprise for them to engage in."

Pettigrew warned the Republican Party that even as "it had come into being as a protest against slavery and as the special champion of the Declaration of Independence, it would go out of being and out of power as the champion of slavery and the repudiator of

the Declaration of Independence." He helped found the Anti-Imperialist League which attracted a membership of over half a million people and became a center of popular agitation against McKinley's administration. Pettigrew received another lesson in the interrelations between imperialist politics and monopoly when Andrew Carnegie, one of the League's original backers, withdrew financial support after the Morgan organizers of the Steel Trust warned him that the tariff dependent on McKinley's reelection was essential to the consummation of their plans.

IV.

In following the trail of corruption left by the captains of industry and finance, Pettigrew was led to the inner sanctum of the Republican high command and the Senate seat of Mark Hanna himself. Hanna was the Bismarck of Big Business. Ever since "Dollar Mark" had come forward, Pettigrew hated him and all he represented. When Hanna entered the Senate, a clash between the two was unavoidable, and they soon engaged in a duel epitomizing the struggle between the declining agrarian democracy of the West and the industrial magnates of the East.

Pettigrew first grappled with Hanna during the spring session of the Senate in 1900 in a dispute over anti-trust legislation. The Steel Trust had been caught submitting bids to the Navy Department asking four times the average cost of production for armor plate. The anti-monopolists countered with a proposal to build a government armor-plate factory unless the steel manufacturers reduced their prices.

As Hanna was marshalling his men to combat this move, Pettigrew hurled a thunderbolt into the Senate. He told how a wealthy shipbuilder named Cramp had given \$400,000 to the Republican campaign fund in 1892 in return for promised contracts from the incoming administration. Cramp had complained to Pettigrew that his contribution had been "misused" to line the pockets of members of the Republican National Committee.

The Republican leaders tried to ignore this accusation until they began to be baited by the Democrats for their failure to reply. In view of the approaching fall elections, this challenge from the Democratic side of the Senate could no longer be left unanswered. Thereupon Senator Carter, who had received the \$400,000 from Cramp rose to defend the honor of his party by an attack upon

Pettigrew's character and a shout that "those who lie down with dogs must expect to get up with fleas." Hanna followed with the curt statement that "he considered the accusation unworthy of notice and declined to dignify it with a reply." He neglected to mention that an investigation might have proved extremely embarrassing since Cramp, who had been visited in the interim by a Republican delegation, stubbornly declined to deny Pettigrew's story until he got back his \$400,000.

After Carter and Hanna had spoken, Pettigrew delivered his second blow. He charged that Hanna had bought his way into the Senate. His assertion was based upon a pending petition, signed by four out of the five members of the Ohio Senate Committee on Elections, asking the U.S. Senate to inquire into Hanna's bribery of two members of the Ohio legislature. Hanna dared not keep silent in the face of this personal accusation. Flushed with anger, he jumped up from his chair, which happened to be directly in back of Pettigrew's and began an indignant but inadequate defense of his probity in business, politics and personal life. He wound up with a warning to Pettigrew that judgment day was at hand and accounts between them would be settled at the coming election.

This was Hanna's maiden speech in the Senate. Chauncey Depew later characterized it as "not so much of a speech as an explosion." Luckily Hanna did not have to rely on his speeches to retain his seat. The Senate Committee on Elections, packed with regular Republicans, refused to pursue the investigation further, despite protests from the Democratic minority.

V.

The presidential campaign of 1900 caricatured the contest of 1896. The same candidates, the same issues; but four years of prosperity and a successful war against Spain had seated the Republicans firmly in the saddle.

McKinley's reelection was a foregone conclusion. The chief task of the Republicans was to sweep away the strongholds of Populism in the Middle West. Political strategy and personal hatred combined to make Pettigrew and his fellow agrarians the focus of attack and Mark Hanna, the campaign manager, was eager to drive the nails into their political coffins with his own hands.

When the rumor spread through Washington during the summer of 1900 that Mark Hanna was preparing to make a speaking tour of the farm belt, the Republican leaders were alarmed. Hanna

might be shot by one of those crazy Populists and, even if he was unharmed, his presence might offend the farmers and turn them against the Republican ticket. His already celebrated feud with Pettigrew was more than likely to rebound to Pettigrew's favor, if he showed himself in South Dakota. Armed with these arguments, Hanna's friends protested in person and by letter against the expedition—and Hanna growled: "Isn't it nice to be told that you're not fit for publication?" McKinley himself sent the Postmaster-General to dissuade Hanna. "Return to Washington and tell the President that God hates a coward," was Hanna's command to the envoy.

Amid the fears and prayers of the Republican leaders Hanna set out after his prey. Lest the goal of his trip seem too manifest, Hanna looped his itinerary through Iowa and Nebraska, Bryan's home state. But his route converged on the den of the "rattlesnake Pettigrew" in South Dakota. Teddy Roosevelt, the vice-presidential candidate, exposed the animus behind Hanna's mission when he joined the chorus howling for Pettigrew's scalp. "Good Lord," he telegraphed Boss Platt of New York, "I hope we can beat Pettigrew for the Senate. That particular swine seems to me, on the whole, the most obnoxious of the whole drove."

Hanna mobilized his full resources to effect Pettigrew's defeat. He handed out free railroad passes, reckless promises, adroit flattery to key citizens. A battery of celebrities was brought into South Dakota to blast away at Pettigrew. Vast sums of money were put in the hands of local leaders to buy votes.

Shortly before election, Hanna had the state polled and discovered that Pettigrew might win by a few thousand votes. The alarm was sounded. Hanna raised a special fund of \$500,000 among the railroad interests, trusts and financial institutions. According to Pettigrew, the Republicans visited every banker in every country town of the state and deposited a sum of money with them together with instructions on the part they were to play in the campaign. Farmers were promised ten dollars before and ten dollars after the election if they voted right. After these preparations, Hanna returned home and awaited the results.

About ten o'clock on election night, Hanna telephoned from Cleveland to his private secretary in Chicago for news of the balloting. He was told that McKinley was undoubtedly elected. "Oh, I know that," Hanna replied, "but how about Pettigrew?" "Pettigrew is undoubtedly beaten," his secretary assured

him. "If you are sure of that," said Hanna, "I can go home and to sleep. I wanted to accomplish two things in this election—to elect McKinley and to beat Pettigrew—and I did not know which I wanted most!"

"Dollar Mark's" hatred of Pettigrew lasted to his dying day. In an oration at Hanna's funeral in 1904 Chauncey Depew alluded to their feud, stating that Pettigrew had written his political epitaph by opposing Hanna: "the titanic power the Dakota Senator had evoked was his political ruin."

VI.

Pettigrew's defeat at the polls climaxed the long campaign directed against him by the placemen of capital. They could not enjoy the sweets of office in comfort so long as he remained in the Senate. They winced whenever he arose, not knowing what he might reveal nor whom he might attack. As he unfolded his exposures, according to Charles Willis Thompson, "they shivered silently and were thankful when he was through with them." Thomas Beer relates how Senator Cushman Davis, the wit of the Senate, greeted Pettigrew's approach one day with the remark: "Here comes pale malice." John Hay described him as "a howling lunatic."

During the Spanish-American War the yellow press damned Pettigrew as pro-Spanish and pro-Filipino. Soon the respectable journals set to work discrediting him. They manufactured a picture of Pettigrew as a venomous fanatic. The following portrait of Pettigrew by a conservative Washington correspondent, Charles Willis Thompson, shows how his chromo was tinted and twisted.

"Pettigrew was a malicious minded man whose guiding star was hatred. His sole pleasure lay in hurting somebody. He was suspicious to an almost insane degree, and saw evil in every action of other men. He had an uncanny genius for tormenting people. He was so skillful in hurling his poisoned darts that men were afraid of him, and let him go unrebuked; though one day a Senator who was his direct antithesis in character, sturdy, jolly, open-hearted Ed Wolcott of Colorado, who feared no man, woke the Senate echoes with a speech painting Pettigrew as one 'who views the world with jaundiced vision' and who, 'when the sun shines sees only the shadow it casts.' Pettigrew listened with a white face that grew whiter, and when Wolcott ended, he made a low-voiced bitter reply that sounded to me like the hiss of a rattlesnake."

The facts we have presented enable us to see the reality behind this malicious caricature. Pettigrew's "insane suspiciousness" meant that he was alert to the maneuvers of the money power and ready to expose them fearlessly. He was called a "rattlesnake," not because he menaced the people, but because his thrusts were dreaded by the sycophants of the rich and the purveyors of corruption in high office.

Estimates of Pettigrew differed according to the reporter's sympathies. Charles Edward Russell, a Socialist journalist, declared that Pettigrew had one of the coolest, clearest, and steadiest minds he had ever encountered in a long acquaintance with public men of affairs. His speeches confirm that impression. They are eloquent, firmly knit, well-informed, and keenly perceptive of the immediate and long-range bearing of the issues involved. No, Pettigrew was regarded as a Wild Man from the West, was defamed and driven from public office not because he was a half-demented crank, but because he would not bend his knee in homage to the plutocracy.

During his active political life, Pettigrew moved in the social orbit and shared the political point of view and provincial prejudices of the Middle-Western farmers and merchants among whom he lived. He was an ardent patriot given to spread-eagle spouting ("I yield to no man in my devotion to my country and my flag"), an anti-monopolist, Free-Silverite, Single-Taxer, and protectionist. His prejudices stand out in his mixed motives for opposing Hawaiian annexation. He not only declared that imperialism endangered democracy, violated the Constitution, threatened the dignity and character of American labor, but that the tropical natives were debauched, unchaste, unfit and incapable of self-government.

Like other reformers, he sought to curb the power of the trusts by placing the bridle of government regulation upon them. He had yet to realize that the monopolies could not operate without controlling the federal government which was supposed to control them. In 1897 Daniel DeLeon, the Socialist Labor Party leader, saw in the trusts, not only the growing centralization of capitalist ownership and wealth, but also a material prerequisite for socialized industry. The task was not to break up the capitalist combines or regulate them, but to deprive the monopolists of their economic and political strangleholds through the rule of the working class. While not unsympathetic to DeLeon's

socialist viewpoint, Pettigrew still hoped to reverse the wheels of economic development and return to the bygone era of free competition.

Although Pettigrew lacked the insight into the laws of capitalist development and the nature of the state which Marxism had given DeLeon, he nevertheless learned many things in the harsh school of struggle with his own bourgeoisie. He grasped the character of capital ("capital is stolen labor and its only function is to steal more labor") and the connection between free land and capitalist democracy ("free land makes a free people").

In 1900 the American Red Cross invited Pettigrew to contribute to a symposium on the topic of progress in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Here is the essence of his views on the character of our epoch:

"The early years of the century marked the progress of the race toward individual freedom and permanent victory over the tyranny of hereditary aristocracy, but the closing decades of the century have witnessed the surrender of all that was gained to the more heartless tyranny of accumulated wealth . . . I believe the new century will open with many bloody revolutions as a result of the protest of the masses against the tyranny and oppression of the wealth of the world in the hands of the few, resulting in great progress toward socialism and the more equal distribution of the products of human toil and as a result the moral and spiritual uplifting of the race."

VII.

After leaving Washington, Pettigrew went to practice law in New York City where he could observe the capitalist overlords at work in their private demesnes. Although he never again held public office, he participated in all the movements of middle class insurgence against the unrestrained domination of Wall Street. He was a delegate to the Democratic national conventions in 1904 and 1908 and served as a member of the platform committee and chairman of the subcommittee on the tariff planks and the Philippines.

When Woodrow Wilson became the Democratic nominee in 1912, he concluded that the Democratic Party was no less irremediably tied up with Big Business. He termed Wilson "the worst Tory in the United States." He transferred his allegiance to Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Party, wrote the original draft of its platform and helped carry South Dakota for Roosevelt in

1912 as he had carried it for Bryan in 1896. With the collapse of the Progressive Party venture, he severed all political affiliations and became a man without a party.

The outbreak of the First World War and the entrance of the United States into the conflict came as no surprise to this old student of imperialism. Early in the nineties he had predicted that the first step of the United States in acquiring "the tainted territory of Hawaii by a robber revolution" would be fast followed by the taking of the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Cuba and the conquest of South America. The first parts of his prophecy were fulfilled in short order; the second was being realized during the early decades of the century.

When the United States went into the war, Pettigrew openly declared that if he had been in the Senate he would have voted against America's entry. He was indicted for sedition in Sioux City for making statements like this to a reporter: "We should never have gone into a war to help the Schwabs make \$40,000,000 a year." He was never tried for treason and the indictment was dropped. But he remained proud of his anti-war stand and kept the indictment framed in his home as one of his treasured possessions.

Later he wrote: "Capitalism produced the war. Capitalism profited by the war." He saw that the imperialist powers were preparing bigger and bloodier wars through the Versailles Treaty and the League of Nations, which he characterized as another Holy Alliance against Soviet Russia, the backward countries and the defeated nations for the purpose of crushing out socialism, safeguarding the British Empire, and uniting the exploiters against the exploited.

Upon Harding's election in 1920, Pettigrew had to admit that his fight for the preservation of democracy within the framework of bourgeois politics had been irrevocably lost. Like Grant and McKinley before him, Harding was nothing but the puppet of the political gang who ran the Grand Old Party and acted as orderlies for the financial aristocracy. The financial aristocracy itself was no longer the invisible government of Wall Street but the open and undisputed possessors of state power. As Lincoln Steffens observed, "Washington was no longer the kept woman but the legally wedded wife of Wall Street."

VIII.

Guided by these experiences and reflections, in the evening of his life Pet-

tigrew sat down to review the political development of the United States since his youth. He was well equipped for the task. For a half century he had observed the real rulers of America. He had been on the inside of the Big Business of Politics and the Politics of Big Business. He had been personally acquainted with all the important men in the major parties, the members of the diplomatic corps, ten presidents, and the industrialists and financiers who oiled the political machines and made and unmade presidents. The fruit of this knowledge was his book **Triumphant Plutocracy**, privately published in 1922 and reprinted by Charles H. Kerr under the title of **Imperial Washington**.

Triumphant Plutocracy is Pettigrew's minority report on the degradation of American bourgeois democracy, a documented exposure of the men, methods, and measures used by the piratical plutocracy to capture the ship of state and steer it in line with their greedy desires. The book is like a magnifying glass which concentrates hitherto scattered rays of light on the dark deeds and hidden recesses of national politics since the Civil War.

Pettigrew was a homespun democrat of the frontier, truckling to no man and to no party, and standing unawed before official authority and manufactured reputation. He had known all the presidents from Andrew Johnson to Woodrow Wilson. This is his judgment on the decemvirate. "These ten presidents were not brainy. They were not men of robust character. They were pliable men, safe men, conservative men. Many of them were usable men, who served faithfully the business interests that stood behind them."

Grover Cleveland he recalls as the chief actor in the scandalous bond transactions of 1894 and 1895 whereby Morgan and his fellow financiers dipped their endless chain of buckets into the Treasury for a cool thirty million dollars.

Teddy Roosevelt seemed to him an egotistic poseur who permitted lies to be spread about his heroic feats in the taking of San Juan Hill, using them as a political stepladder in his career, and who talked of "trust-busting" while sanctioning the purchase of the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company by the Steel Trust.

Wilson was a Southern aristocrat who feared and despised the masses and who ran for reelection on the slogan "he kept us out of the war" while making preparations to enter it.

Even Bryan, whom he twice supported

for president, was only "an American politician, vacillating, uncertain, overlooking the fundamental things, ignorant of the forces that were shaping American public life, incapable of thinking in terms of reality, but making phrases a substitute for thought."

There is scarcely a method of muleting the masses and appropriating the public wealth that Pettigrew did not encounter in his career and describe in graphic detail: land-grabbing by the railroads, the preemption of mineral lands and natural resources by predatory individuals and corporations; tariffs, trusts, and monopolies; railroad reorganization proceedings; the centralization and control of credit in Wall Street through the national bank system; the creation of a huge national debt; control of political parties by campaign contributions and of the judiciary by rewards of fat fees and sinecures. His book is a guide to the grand larceny practiced by the chief citizens of capitalist America between the close of the Civil War and the beginning of the First World War.

Pettigrew analyzes the roles played by the various branches of the government in defending and extending the power of the plutocracy. He spares no category of office-holders in his investigation; county and state officials, governors, representatives, senators, presidents and justices. The lawyers, who make up the majority of the political plunderbund, he places on a par with prostitutes. "Under the ethics of his profession," he says scornfully, "the lawyer is the only man who can take a bribe and call it a fee." He lets loose ferocious blasts upon that holy of holies of the propertied classes, the Supreme Court, asserting that it usurped the law-making powers from the elected representatives of the people and ran roughshod over the Bill of Rights in one case after another.

Pettigrew did not confine his criticism to the bourgeoisie and its political servants. He pointed out the part assigned to the officials of the American Federation of Labor in fixing the yoke of capitalist control upon the shoulders of the working class. Gompers and the labor aristocracy, he says, entered into combination with the industrialists and aided their exploitation of the unorganized masses. The capitalists were thus enabled to buy out the upper crust of the working class by giving them a small share of their profits. The policy of pure and simple unionism, restricting trade union struggles to higher wages and shorter hours, played into the hands

of the capitalist parties and helped perpetuate the system of wage slavery. When Gompers solicited his opinion on the trade union movement in 1911, Pettigrew insisted that trade unions should be universal, embracing everyone that toils in either farm or factory. Labor could not be emancipated, he said, until the lands and implements of production were cooperatively used and publicly owned.

When Gompers denounced this as socialism, Pettigrew wrote him in 1916: "The position of the American Federation of Labor as represented by you is that of standing in with the corporations who employ labor to secure a part of what labor is entitled to and make the corporations divide with organized labor what they take from the public . . . The only way to make a federation of labor effective is to combine all those who are producers of wealth in a political organization and take charge of the government and administer the government in the interests of the rights of man. It is now being administered in the interests of the rights of property and administered by the men who did not produce any of the property, but have stolen it from those who did produce it."

When the Bolsheviks took power in Russia, Pettigrew hailed the event as a beacon of hope to the international working class. "The war," he wrote, "was an affirmation of capitalism. The Russian Revolution was the answer of the workers . . . It is the greatest event of our time. It marks the beginning of the epoch when the working people will assume the task of directing and controlling industry. It blazes a path into the unknown country, where the workers of the world are destined to take from their exploiters the right to control and direct the economic affairs of the community."

With these resounding revolutionary words Pettigrew draws to a close his story of public life in America from 1870 to 1920. His conclusions are clear

and decisive. Democracy has been strangled by plutocracy. The society of free land and free competition, which had inspired the democratic dream of the pioneers, had been transformed into a society owned and ruled by a small oligarchy which, in its insatiable greed for profits and world dominion, was driving the United States toward the shambles of imperialism.

The issue before the American people was no longer democracy versus class-rule, but socialism, the rule of the working class, or barbarism. With Jefferson and Lincoln, Pettigrew appealed to the historic and democratic right of revolt by the people against a governing class which represented neither the interests of the people nor the necessities of social progress. He urged the masses to rise from their enslavement and seize the power and property that was rightfully theirs. A half century of struggle had convinced him that the entrenched plutocracy could not be otherwise overthrown.

Triumphant Plutocracy was Pettigrew's last testament to the American people. He died four years later in 1926 at the age of 78. He had traveled a long and winding road in the course of his political career and his final position was far from his starting point. He had entered the Republican Party soon after the Civil War, a devout believer in the virtues of capitalist democracy, the Constitution and the Flag. As the bankers and industrialists tightened their grasp upon the economic and political life of the nation, throttling resistance to their ever-expanding power, plunder and privileges and extending their sphere of exploitation around the globe, Pettigrew, fighting them all along the way, gradually shed his illusions.

The clarity of this insight into the development and destiny of American monopoly capitalism deepened until at the end of his life this plebeian fighter for democracy began to see the dawning of a new light and a new era.

From the Arsenal of Marxism

Discussion on Negro Question

Following is the concluding installment of the transcript of discussions which took place in 1939 between Leon Trotsky and a group of comrades. These discussions occurred on the basis of a document "Preliminary Notes on the Negro Question" submitted by Comrade George. The first and second installments were published in the May 1948

and September 1948 issues of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL. The text is based on stenographic notes which were not subsequently corrected by any of the participants in the discussion.

* * *

Proposals taken up point by point:

1. Pamphlet on the Negro question and the Negroes in the CP, relating it

to the degeneration of the Kremlin. . .

Trotsky: Good. And also would it not be well perhaps to mimeograph this book,* or parts of it, and send it together with other material on the question to the various sections of the party for discussion?

2. A Negro number of the magazine.

Trotsky: I believe that it is absolutely necessary.

Owen: It seems to me that there is a danger of getting out the Negro number before we have a sufficient Negro organization to assure its distribution.

George: It is not intended primarily for the Negroes. It is intended for the party itself and for the other readers of the theoretical magazine.

3. The use of the history of the Negroes themselves in educating them.

General agreement.

4. A study of the permanent revolution and the Negro question.

General agreement.

5. The question of socialism—whether to bring it in through the paper or through the Bulletin.

Trotsky: I do not believe that we can begin with the exclusion of socialism from the organization. You propose a very large, somewhat heterogeneous organization, which will also accept religious people. That would signify that if a Negro worker, or farmer, or merchant, makes a speech in the organization to the effect that the only salvation for the Negroes is in the church, we will be too tolerant to expel him and at the same time so wise that we will not let him speak in favor of religion, but we will not speak in favor of socialism. If we understand the character of this milieu, we will adapt the presentation of our ideas to it. We will be cautious; but to tie our hands in advance—to say that we will not introduce the question of socialism because it is an abstract matter—that is not possible. It is one thing to be very attentive to the concrete questions of Negro life and to oppose socialism to capitalism in these questions. It is one thing to accept a heterogeneous group and to work in it, and another to be absorbed by it.

George: I quite agree with what you say. What I am afraid of is the putting forth of an abstract socialism. You will recall that I said that the leading group must clearly understand what it is doing and where it is going. But the socialist education of the masses should arise

*A historical and statistical study privately prepared and sent to Comrade Trotsky for his views.

from the day-to-day questions. I am only anxious to prevent the thing's developing into an endless discussion. The discussion should be free and thorough in the theoretical organ.

In regard to the question of socialism in the agitational organ, it is my view that the organization should definitely establish itself as doing the day-to-day work of the Negroes in such a way that the masses of Negroes can take part in it before involving itself in discussions about socialism. While it is clear that an individual can raise whatever points he wishes and point out his solution of the Negro problems, yet the question is whether those who are guiding the organization as a whole should begin by speaking in the name of socialism. I think not. It is important to remember that those who take the initiative should have some common agreement as to the fundamentals of politics today, otherwise there will be great trouble as the organization develops. But although these, as individuals, are entitled to put forward their particular point of view in the general discussion, yet the issue is whether they should speak as a body as socialists from the very beginning, and my personal view is no.

Trotsky: In the theoretical organ you can have theoretical discussion, and in the mass organ you can have a mass political discussion. You say that they are contaminated by the capitalist propaganda. Say to them, "You don't believe in socialism. But you will see that in the fighting, the member of the Fourth International will not only be with you, but possibly the most militant." I would even go so far as to have every one of our speakers end his speech by saying, "My name is the Fourth International!" They will come to see that we are the fighters, while the person who preaches religion in the hall, in the critical moment will go to the church instead of to the battlefield.

6. The organizing groups and individuals of the new organization must be in complete agreement on the war question.

Trotsky: Yes, it is the most important and the most difficult question. The program may be very modest, but at the same time it must leave to everyone his freedom of expression in his speeches, and so on; the program must not be the limitation of our activity, but only our common obligation. Everyone must have the right to go further, but everyone is obliged to defend the minimum. We will see how this mini-

mum will be crystallized as we go along in the opening steps.

7. A campaign in some industry in behalf of the Negroes.

Trotsky: That is important. It will bring a conflict with some white workers who will not want it. It is a shift from the most aristocratic workers' elements to the lowest elements. We attracted to ourselves some of the higher strata of the intellectuals when they felt that we needed protection: Dewey, LaFollette, etc. Now that we are undertaking serious work, they are leaving us. I believe that we will lose two or three more strata and go more deeply into the masses. This will be the touchstone.

8. Housing and rent campaign.

Trotsky: It is absolutely necessary.

Carlos: It also works in very well with our transitional demands.

9. The demonstration in the restaurant.

Trotsky: Yes, and give it an even more militant character. There could be a picket line outside to attract attention and explain something of what is going on.

Owen: That is a point that I wished to present. Some years ago I was living in Los Angeles near a Negro section—one set aside from the others. The Negroes there were more prosperous. I inquired as to their work and was told by the Negroes themselves that they were better off because they were servants—many of them in the houses of the movie colony. I was surprised to find the servants in the higher strata. This colony of Negroes was not small—it consisted of several thousand people.

Trotsky: Yes, I believe it is very important; but I believe that there is the first a priori consideration that many of these Negroes are servants for rich people and are demoralized and have been transformed into moral lackeys. But there are others, a larger stratum, and the question is to win those who are not so privileged.

George: That is true. But if you are serious, it is not difficult to get to the Negro masses. They live together and they feel together. This stratum of privileged Negroes is smaller than any other privileged stratum. The whites treat them with such contempt that in spite of themselves they are closer to the other Negroes than you would think. . . .

11. Mobilize the Negroes against fascism.

General agreement.

12. The relationship of the Negroes to the Republican and Democratic parties.

Trotsky: How many Negroes are there in Congress? One. There are 440 members in the House of Representatives and 96 in the Senate. Then if the Negroes have almost 10% of the population, they are entitled to 50 members, but they have only one. It is a clear picture of political inequality. We can often oppose a Negro candidate to a white candidate. This Negro organization can always say, "We want a Negro who knows our problems." It can have important consequences.

Owen: It seems to me that Comrade George has ignored a very important part of our program—the labor party.

George: The Negro section wants to put up a Negro candidate. We tell them they must not stand just as Negroes, but they must have a program suitable to the masses of poor Negroes. They are not stupid and they can understand that and it is to be encouraged. The white workers put up a labor candidate in another section. Then we say to the Negroes in the white section, "Support that candidate, because his demands are

good workers' demands." And we say to the white workers in the Negro area, "You should support the Negro candidate, because although he is a Negro you will notice that his demands are good for the whole working class." This means that the Negroes have the satisfaction of having their own candidates in areas where they predominate and at the same time we build labor solidarity. It fits into the labor party program.

Carlos: Isn't that coming close to the People's Front, to vote for a Negro just because he is a Negro?

George: This organization has a program. When the Democrats put up a Negro candidate, we say, "Not at all. It must be a candidate with a program we can support."

Trotsky: It is a question of another organization for which we are not responsible, just as they are not responsible for us. If this organization puts up a certain candidate, and we find as a party that we must put up our own candidate in opposition, we have the full right to do so. If we are weak and cannot get the organization to choose a revolutionist, and they choose a Negro Democrat, we might even withdraw our

candidate with a concrete declaration that we abstain from fighting, not the Democrat, but the Negro. We consider that the Negro's candidacy as opposed to the white's candidacy, even if both are of the same party, is an important factor in the struggle of the Negroes for their equality; and in this case we can critically support them. I believe that it can be done in certain instances.

13. A Negro from South or West Africa to tour the States.

Trotsky: What will he teach?

George: I have in mind several young Negroes, any one of whom can give a clear anti-imperialist, anti-war picture. I think it would be very important in building up an understanding of internationalism.

14. Submit documents and plans to the Political Committee.

General agreement.

George: I agree with your attitude on the party work in connection with the Negroes. They are a tremendous force and they will dominate the whole of the Southern states. If the party gets a hold here, the revolution is won in America. Nothing can stop it.

Class Forces in the Truman Victory

The following resolution on "The Election Results and the Tasks of the SWP" was unanimously adopted by the Plenum of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party held on December 26-27, 1948 in New York City.

1. The 1948 elections mark the end of a cycle which began with the termination of the Second World War and the breakup of wartime national unity. In rapid movements, the pendulum of class struggle swung sharply from the mobilization of the trade unions in defense of the living standards of the masses to a violent onslaught of reaction under the open auspices of monopoly capitalism, culminating with the Republican defeat and the restoration of a form of New Deal class collaborationism.

2. This cycle was characterized by two outstanding phenomena: (a) The failure of the working class to convert its vast and far-flung defensive struggles of the 1945-46 period into offensive actions because of the absence of a bold leadership and social program and primarily because of the absence of any mass working-class party. This resulted in a general retreat of the unions as soon as monopoly capitalism mounted its counter-offensive.

(b) The aggressive dive of monopoly capitalism to replace the New Deal equilibrium of class relationships with one more favorable to itself. Flushed with victory in the war and backed by huge reserves, monopoly capitalism launched a drive to destroy the unions as organs of struggle capable of defending the workers' living standards. It is now clear, however, that in the first postwar struggles the bourgeoisie was engaged in testing the strength, the unity and the endurance of the unions and probing the workers' front for weaknesses. Its over-all purpose was to gain partial advantages

from each struggle and to improve its position for the anticipated decisive conflicts. The tactic was promoted by monopoly-spurred inflation, by long-drawn-out strikes, by anti-labor legislation and through a calculated red-baiting hysteria, which aimed in part to change the relationship of forces within the unions in favor of the more conservative and company-minded elements.

The Big Business Offensive

3. The balance sheet of this campaign, as the 1948 elections approached, showed that monopoly capitalism had been successful in many of its objectives. The long-drawn-out strikes under conditions of continuing inflation had discouraged economic struggles, as demonstrated by a steady decline in the number of strikes. The passage and operation of the Taft-Hartley Law and similar laws in the states created an atmosphere of fear and confusion in the union movement and was beginning to cripple the fighting power of the masses. The red-baiting campaign penetrated the unions. Reactionary coalitions, with the priest-dominated ACTU playing a prominent role, won leadership in union administrations. Militant and class-conscious elements were increasingly isolated in the plants.

It must be understood, however, that these victories of the bourgeoisie were only of a preliminary nature. Except for a few instances where strikes were broken and local unions smashed, the unions remained undefeated, their strength was impaired and weakened but not broken. On the other hand, however, the bourgeoisie was compelled to pay a heavy price for these partial triumphs. It was forced to reveal its objective, i.e., the unrestrained rule of the nation by monopoly capital; the cessation of new social gains and the discon-

tinuance of old ones; the crippling of the unions; the curbing of civil rights and the steady drift toward Brass-Hat rule and a police state. It was precisely this strengthening of reaction which alarmed the masses, aroused their resentment and was engendering a determination to resist the encroachments of reaction. A new leftward crystallization among the workers was in the making.

4. The main political instrument employed by the bourgeoisie for its reactionary onslaught was the Republican party. Under the leadership of Taft, the Republican party brazenly fostered the program of Big Business and openly proposed to undo the social reforms of the New Deal era. On the other hand, the Democratic and Republican parties drew closer together under the influence of the needs and habits of bipartisanship in foreign policy and the increasing prominence in the government of the Brass Hats and the representatives of finance capital, who remained aloof from the party struggle and pressed the interests of Big Business regardless of partisan party interests. The process of dropping the reformism of the New Deal, begun by Roosevelt in preparing for war, was continued and hastened under the Truman administration. But the junking of social reformism not only deprived the Democratic party of its identity as a distinct political force, but disrupted the class coalition forged by Roosevelt and created a crisis within the party. The crisis of the Democratic party threatened to become the crisis of the two-party system.

Crisis in the Democratic Party

5. Repelled by the rightward swing of the Democratic party, the workers began seeking new means of political expression. Under pressure of this ferment and seeking to capitalize upon it, Wallace and the Stalinists launched their third party. At the same time, the trade union bureaucracy began to indulge in increasing talk about the formation of a new party. The threat of a rival party sharpened the internal struggle within the Democratic party, crystallizing into a conflict between a left wing led by the ADA and supported by the labor bureaucracy on the one side, and a right wing led by the Southern Democrats and supported by monopoly capital on the other. The emergence of the Wallace movement brought the struggle to a head and settled it in favor of the left wing, which intends to revive collaboration with monopoly capitalism on a New Deal basis.

The danger of the Wallace movement lay not merely in its threat to supplant the Democratic party but in its aggressive opposition to bipartisan foreign policy. The usual alarm of the bourgeoisie at the formation of a third party was raised to hysteria by the threat of a new movement seeking to combine domestic discontent with opposition to the war program.

The mass discontent, reflected in the formation of the Wallace party, was similarly evidenced in the mood of insurgency among the Negro people. The emergence of the Randolph-Reynolds movement was one significant manifestation, directing the discontent of the Negro people into a movement of opposition to the Jim Crow conscript army. Here again this domestic opposition had the effect of threatening the world aims of American imperialism and sped the precipitation of the crisis within the Democratic party. The split of the Dixiecrats completed the leftward swing of the Democratic party.

Under pressure of the Wallace movement on the one hand and the discontented Negro people on the other hand, the coalition with the trade union bureaucracy was revived within the Democratic party. This renewed coalition found expression in the program of social demagoguery adopted by the Democratic convention in Philadelphia in July 1948 and advocated by Truman during the campaign.

6. The crisis within the Democratic party could have been resolved in a progressive direction, that is by the smashing of the Democratic party, only through a determined drive

of the working class toward the establishment of a labor party. Neither the class base nor the program of the Wallaceites equipped the Progressive Party for this task. The Wallace movement was the victim of its own success in identifying both major parties as parties of reaction and thereby forcing the Democrats to the left. As it helped deepen the gulf between the Republican and the Democratic parties, the differences between the Progressive and the Democratic parties on domestic issues were almost obliterated. At this point the Wallace party began to appear in the eyes of the masses solely as the instrument of the Kremlin, because opposition to bipartisan foreign policy totally uncritical of Stalin became its primary distinguishing characteristic.

The general effect of the Wallace movement was not to assist the process toward a labor party but to revive and strengthen the two-party system for the time being. The elections demonstrated again that it is unlikely that a labor party will emerge from a third capitalist party outside of official union channels and opposed by the main sections of the trade union bureaucracy.

Obstacles Facing the Left Wing

7. The failure to create a labor party under favorable political conditions of widespread disillusionment with the two-party system is primarily the responsibility of the trade union bureaucracy. That the bureaucracy could continue their bankrupt political line without serious opposition from the ranks was due to the weakness of the left wing within the union movement. The former left-wing groupings were corrupted and demoralized by the Stalinists, who in turn have become discredited among the workers and then routed by the trade union bureaucracy. The new left wing is still in its incipient stages of development. It has been unable to grow rapidly or to exert great pressure upon the top bureaucracy because of the economic boom, full employment, and wage gains which partially offset the rise in living costs. Where pressure from the ranks during the last depression was powerful enough to create a crisis and split in the AFL leadership leading to the formation of the CIO, the current movement for a labor party was strong enough only to elicit promises from a few of the top leaders for independent political action after the elections.

This process is best illustrated in the case of the miners' union. The miners were the central target of the repressive government attacks against the labor movement. They were the victims of presidential persecutions by two Democratic administrations and of the Republican-dominated Taft-Hartley Congress. Yet despite governmental blows, the miners emerged from each battle with the operators with greater economic gains than any other section of the union movement. As a result, John L. Lewis could retain unchallenged domination of the UMW although his choice of capitalist candidates ran counter to the desires of most of the miners. It might also be added that although the supporters of Truman made themselves heard at the last UMW convention, no voice was raised in favor of the labor party.

8. The same economic boom which hindered the rapid growth of the left wing also militated against a conclusive victory over the unions by monopoly capital. Enjoying unprecedented profits, the corporations felt no compulsion to seek an immediate and definitive showdown. In addition, without a large reserve army of unemployed and with the sympathy of the veterans generally on the side of the unions, conditions were not yet favorable for such a showdown. Finally, the bourgeoisie feared a showdown could have set into motion such vast struggles as to jeopardize its attempt to establish a favorable political and economic equilibrium in Europe—the most urgent, immediate aim of American imperialism in its drive for world conquest.

9. The defeat of the Republican party in the elections indicated an underestimation by the bourgeoisie of anti-Big Business sentiments among the workers and represented a

defeat of Tory opposition to New Deal class collaborationism. The election results transferred the crisis from the Democratic to the Republican party but saved the two-party system for the time being because the Republican party still rests on a far more stable and far less contradictory class base than that of its political antagonist. At the same time, victory at the polls on a platform of social demagoguery revitalized the Democratic party as a "liberal-labor" coalition, thus retarding the process of leftward crystallization among the workers which had begun after the passage of the Taft-Hartley Law.

Debate of the Wallace Movement

10. The rocket-like rise and decline of the Progressive Party illustrates that there exists a large body of radicalized workers, disgusted with the two-party system and dissatisfied with bipartisan "cold war" policies. Brought on the arena by the Wallace movement, this force constituted the first mass opposition to the spreading reaction. The large working class following which rallied in huge and enthusiastic meetings for Wallace in the early days of the campaign was one of the most potent forces in pushing the Democratic party to the left. The election returns proved that the struggle for the allegiance of these advanced workers was one of the decisive factors in determining the outcome. This electoral incident provides a preview of the tremendous influence a substantial if numerically smaller revolutionary party will exercise on the course of the class struggle in this country.

But the poor electoral showing of the Wallace party indicates the collapse of an elaborate effort, with the active aid of the Kremlin, to build a competitive bourgeois reformist party. The election returns demonstrated again that support of the organized labor movement is almost as important in the creation of a bourgeois reformist party as it is in the building of a labor party.

11. The debacle of the Wallace movement is first of all illustrated in its small vote which totaled only 2½ percent of the electorate or a lower percentage than that received by the imprisoned Debs in 1920 on the Socialist ticket. In the final weeks of the campaign millions of voters who might have voted for Wallace chose the Democratic party as the more likely-to-succeed "lesser evil." The withdrawal of Progressive Party candidates for Congressional and state offices led many to draw the logical conclusion of voting for national candidates on the same basis: Why support Humphrey against Ball and not Truman against Dewey?

The million and a quarter votes for Wallace represent the mass opposition to the bipartisan foreign policy in its cold war with the Soviet Union. This aggregate of voters consists in its great bulk of the Stalinists, their working class and middle class periphery and a new draft of radicalized students and intellectuals. The defeat in the election confronts this movement with the question of perspective. What next?

Because of the dominant role of the Stalinists in the apparatus and as activists at the base of the party, it would be incorrect to apply the criteria which doomed third-party movements in the past to disintegration and disappearance after less crushing electoral defeats. In this case, however, the future of the Wallace movement is bound up with the foreign policy of the Kremlin. It faces the alternative of re-absorption in the Democratic party or of a feeble existence as an adjunct of the Communist Party to be used like the ALP as an electoral machine, as a bargaining agency for deals with the two capitalist parties and as a pressure group serving the interests of the Kremlin clique.

Effects of the Truman Victory

12. The Democratic victory at the polls, achieved with the major assistance of the trade unions, for the time being has arrested the onslaught of naked reaction, strengthened class collaborationist tendencies in the country and has led

the bourgeoisie to alter its "tough" attitude toward the labor movement. On the other hand, the victory has caused a setback to the movement and aspirations for the immediate organization of a labor party. The trade union bureaucracy, which several months ago was despairing over its future in alliance with a disintegrating Democratic party and gloomy about Truman's chances, has received a big injection of self-confidence by the Truman victory and the defeat of Taft-Hartley Congressmen. The bureaucracy construes the election as a vindication of its class collaborationist policies and feels strengthened by its new influence in government circles. For the next period the bureaucracy has charted a course of extending its influence in top Democratic circles and its control in local Democratic organizations using PAC and LLPE as its main political instruments for this purpose.

But the election results have also stimulated the confidence of the organized workers in their political power. They correctly feel that their unions and votes played the decisive role in defeating Dewey and electing Truman; cutting down the Taft-Hartley Congressmen, and upsetting the plans of Big Business.

For the time being this heightened political self-confidence has expressed itself in the backward form of support to a renovated Democratic party as the vehicle for the realization of the workers' demands.

Differences will tend to develop between the bureaucrats with their policy of complete subordination to the Democratic party and the ranks who will find their expectations unfulfilled. These conflicts will provide openings for Trotskyist propaganda and proposals in the unions.

Class Collaboration and the Boom

13. The length of this unfolding period of class collaborationism depends primarily on the economic situation in the United States and on the ability of American capitalism to grant economic concessions and social reforms which in turn depend on accumulating contradictions at home and abroad. The addition of the cost of social reforms to the cost of rearmament at home and abroad can only be supported on the basis of a continuing boom.

The present boom, however, rests on shaky foundations and must give way either to a devastating economic crisis or a stepped-up drive toward an all-out war economy. In either case, the living standards of the masses will be under attack. Once the economic basis for social reforms is undermined it will weaken the ground for mass support of the class collaborationist policy of the labor bureaucracy. As in the early postwar period, the Democratic party, as the capitalist party in power, will become the principal agency of a policy of reaction and attack on the living standards of the masses.

14. The ramified political activities of the unions planned by the bureaucracy within the framework of the Democratic party in the next period will tend to diminish the force of labor party agitation as a slogan for action. However, the contradiction between this political activity—independent in form but not in purpose—and the betrayal of promises by the Truman administration, plus its meager reforms, will give prominence to labor party agitation as a slogan of propaganda.

With a change in economic conditions, with the trade unions unable to advance on the economic front, the struggle for a labor party can rapidly be raised from the level of propaganda to that of action. Fundamentally, the slogan of the labor party will remain a key method of educating the workers for independent political action as long as a break with capitalist politics remains the central task of the workers' movement. The course of coming struggles combined with the development and fate of the present People's Front coalition will determine whether a labor party will be realized in life or whether that stage will be supplanted by the emergence of the SWP as a mass revolutionary party.

Perspective for Economic Struggles

15. The defeat at the polls of the Big Business policy of open reaction will have two opposite effects on economic struggles. On the one hand, the resumption of class collaboration methods by the bourgeoisie and the granting of limited social reforms by the government will have a restraining effect on economic struggles and will tend to strengthen the hand of the trade union bureaucracy. On the other hand, the more liberal climate, allaying fears of heavy government repressions, can also lead to an increase in economic struggles because wage increases will hardly keep pace with the rise in the cost of living and especially because improvement in working conditions will be stubbornly resisted by the corporations.

The tendency toward such struggles will cause conflicts not only between the workers and the capitalist class but also between the workers and the labor bureaucracy which will tend to trade working conditions for limited wage gains. Retarded in its development by the Truman victory, the left wing will gain new strength from the struggle for those economic demands and reforms opposed by the bureaucracy. Radical changes in the relationship of forces within the unions await the next turn in the economic conjuncture.

Program for the Left Wing

16. The central task of the left wing for the next immediate period is the organization of the pressure of the rank and file upon the bureaucracy to rally the masses of the workers to force the Democratic administration to carry out its campaign promises. As against reliance on the Democratic party and maneuvers for its reform, the left wing must counterpose a program of mass action. As against the extravagant lobbying plans of the top bureaucracy, the left wing must counterpose the mobilization of all the unions in a Congress of Labor. To the limited reforms of the Truman administration, which will be readily accepted by the Greens and Murrays, the left wing must press forward the transitional program concretizing those slogans which apply at each stage of the struggle.

Thus as against the reform of the Democratic party we must agitate for the creation of a labor party. As opposed to government price control we must urge the sliding scale of wages and price control directed by the unions, mass consumer committees and working farmers. Instead of a limited excess profits tax we must fight for an expropriation tax on the big corporations and for their nationalization under workers' control.

17. Whether or not a truce is arrived at in the cold war with the Soviet Union, it is already becoming evident as we predicted that there will be no fundamental change in the bipartisan foreign policy of world conquest and little significant alteration in the Brass Hat-monopoly capital direction of this policy. Whatever its form, the struggle against war and against American imperialism will remain the central political task of the party. Opportunities will not be lacking for the resumption of agitation for a popular referendum on war. A new tendency toward international solidarity is rising among the American working class as was indicated by John L. Lewis' support of the French miners' strike and by the resolution of the AFL convention against "Taft-Hartleyism" in Germany and Japan. An active development of this tendency towards international solidarity, and its translation into action, will constitute one of the best practical means of extending and deepening the struggle against bipartisan foreign policy in the next period.

Struggle for Democratic Rights

18. The least realizable of all the promises of the Democratic party are those made to the Negro people. To counteract the new power of the labor-liberal coalition within the Democratic party, Truman will seek to patch up the broken

alliance with the Southern Democrats discarding all or part of his civil rights program as his part of the bargain. Precisely because of the large and decisive vote by the Negro people for Truman, cast on the basis of concrete promises, discontent with failure to realize these promises will go deeper in this section of the population than in any other. Slight reforms will only add fuel to the flames of this discontent and spur the struggle for radical changes. Militant demands and slogans will gain new strength under these conditions and will enrich our work in Negro organizations and the Negro community with an agitational and organizational program of action. Disillusionment with the Democratic party rising more rapidly among the Negro people should facilitate recruiting to the party.

19. The struggle to safeguard democratic rights retains its full validity despite an apparent liberalization of the new administration. It will continue to meet the sharp opposition of the administration which took the lead in witch-hunting and whose natural tendency is towards a police state. The first objective of this struggle must be for the abrogation of the subversive list in general and the removal of the SWP from this list in particular. The Kutcher case is the main vehicle for this struggle and must become the chief point of action for the party in the next period. While the case has already attracted considerable support in top circles of the trade union movement and among liberals, the main task of the party is to carry the struggle to the membership of the unions and mass organizations, to involve rank and file trade unionists, students and veterans in action on behalf of Kutcher and against government witch-hunting.

The Crisis of Stalinism

20. The party must take special note of the Wallace debacle and of the crisis of Stalinism and organize a planned campaign towards winning over the best elements in this movement. The million and a quarter Wallace voters will be particularly susceptible to Trotskyist propaganda because of the defeat of the Progressive Party at the polls and its complete lack of a perspective. More specifically, this campaign should be directed to the Stalinist workers and students who had hoped for a return by the Communist Party to an independent class and revolutionary policy after the Browder purge.

The dissatisfaction in the ranks which emerged then has remained to this day and has been deepened by defeats in the unions. The discontent was temporarily allayed by the prospect of a successful Wallace movement which appeared to be an alternative to the bankrupt post-Browder policies. Thrust into a corner by supporting a disintegrating People's Front—while a newly formed People's Front excluding the Communist Party has achieved partial power in Washington—the edge of dissatisfaction is now sharpened by the rout and capitulation of Stalinist trade union leaders to the CIO bureaucracy.

A well planned and steady educational campaign must be directed towards these Stalinist elements with the aim of recruiting larger numbers of Stalinist workers and students to the SWP than in the past. This propagandist offensive must combine the sharpest ideological attacks with offers of solidarity and support in united action for Communist Party leaders and workers singled out for government persecution. Proposals for united action can take a reciprocating and easily understandable form. On the one hand, we demand support and united action for the restoration of Kutcher's democratic rights and on the other hand we offer our support and assistance in the struggle against the victimization of the 12 CP leaders coming to trial under the Smith Act.

The most important role in this campaign will be assumed by our press which will adjust itself in content and in tone to the purposes of this two-sided offensive against Stalinism. The press must be more widely distributed among the Stalinists and their periphery. Our general propagandist offensive against the anti-Marxists, the revisionists and the

renegades will serve to demonstrate to Stalinist workers that the Trotskyists are the most capable, the most loyal and in fact, the only defenders of Marxism and Leninism.

21. The party must also take note of the first beginnings of political awakening and ferment in the schools and colleges. The principal factor making for discontent among students has been a feeling of insecurity produced by the rapid steps towards war and the peacetime draft. The Wallace movement taking advantage of this ferment made considerable headway among student circles by its aggressive opposition to bipartisan war policies and to conscription. This movement has by no means dissipated with the defeat of the Wallace party at the polls.

On the contrary, the steady drift towards militarization, which will not abate under the new administration, will deepen the dissatisfaction in the schools and lead to widening discussion of fundamental questions. In the last several months our own youth groups, notably New York and Detroit, have experienced a revival, recruiting in a relatively larger proportion than the party. We must take the offensive in this arena prepared for ideological warfare with all the enemies of Marxism. The Political Committee and local branches should specifically assign leading comrades to the work of developing our youth groups and extending our influence on the campus.

Lessons of SWP Presidential Campaign

22. The great achievement of our presidential campaign—making the party known to millions of workers, linking the name and teachings of Trotsky to that of the Socialist Workers Party and establishing the SWP as the extreme left wing of American politics—will become one of our biggest assets in the next period. But this gain can be quickly cancelled out because of our small numbers if the party returns to circle and sectarian methods of propaganda and agitation activities. Despite our limited numbers and resources, the party must act like a party and not like a propaganda group.

The methods of agitation developed during the presidential campaign, and modified to apply to the new situation, must be injected into every opening created by new developments. The spokesmen of the party, who headed the campaign on a national and local scale, must be kept in the public eye, intervening in public actions and government hearings wherever the slightest opening exists. Every opportunity to obtain time on the radio or publicity in the press must be exploited. Insofar as possible, our Marxist propaganda campaign should seek a wider arena than that afforded by the party itself through the organization of public debates, symposiums and through the intervention of prominent party spokesmen in the colleges and universities.

* * *

Summary: The New Situation

The main orientation of the party since 1938 and particularly since the breakup of wartime national unity has been the struggle for working class political independence and the formation of a labor party. Our struggle for this program was facilitated by the abandonment of New Deal reformism by the bourgeoisie and the consequent weakening of the two-party system.

The strikebreaking actions of the Truman administration, the enactment of the Taft-Hartley Law, the drift towards Brass Hat government and a police state—all combined to disintegrate the Democratic party and to discredit the political program of the union bureaucracy. Moreover, the overwhelming weight of government intervention in union affairs and strikes tended to point to political solutions for economic and trade union problems. As a result, the program of the SWP gained a constantly widening audience among radicalized workers discontented with the bankrupt policies of the trade union bureaucracy.

The results of the election have altered this situation at least for the next period. It is characterized by a revival of New Deal class collaborationism with a number of important differences from the Roosevelt era. The preponderant role of the workers in the Truman victory on the one side and the defection of the Dixiecrats on the other gives greater weight to the union bureaucracy and to bourgeois liberals within the Democratic party and the new administration.

Variation of People's Frontism

In its reconstituted form the Democratic party—and to a lesser extent, the Democratic administration—resembles a People's Front, inasmuch as a People's Front coalition of labor bureaucrats and New Deal bourgeois liberals operates as an organized force within the party and exercises substantial influence over its policies. Differing in form from the European People's Fronts which consisted of a political coalition of working class and bourgeois reformist parties and the unions, the present American People's Front consists of all these forces, minus a mass working class party, operating as factions within the Democratic party.

Allowing for differences in the objective situation, the major aim of the People's Front on both continents is similar. The People's Front in Europe sought to stop fascism on the one side and prevent proletarian revolution on the other. In this country it is directed against open capitalist reaction and against independent political organization of the working class. Class collaboration, social demagoguery and social reformism are the principal methods of the People's Front here as they are in Europe.

New Tasks and Perspectives

The altered situation requires a certain revision in tactics for the party and imposes new tasks upon it.

First and foremost, the party must patiently explain its program to the workers. We must expose the fraud of class collaborationism as a substitute for class struggle in solving the problems of the workers. It must point out how People's Frontism disarms the workers, emasculates their independent strength and saturates the working masses with illusions about the good intentions of the class enemy.

Second, the party must analyze every stage in the development of this People's Front in order to formulate timely changes of tactics.

Third, the party must seek to participate in all mass struggles in opposition to the new administration.

To counteract the danger of sectarian isolation, the party must combine with its fundamental propaganda timely answers to current questions and appropriate action slogans. The party must seek out opportunities for action on day-to-day issues and on the electoral field. We must lose no occasion to demonstrate the implacable opposition of Trotskyism to all forms of class collaborationism.

On the favorable side are the following factors:

A. The awakening of the self-confidence of the masses, their distrust of capitalist propaganda and their "wait-and-see" attitude towards the Truman administration which they elected as a "lesser evil" and not as "their own labor government" as was the case with the British workers.

B. The capitalist form and content of the party in power which is subject neither to the control of the workers nor of the labor bureaucrats who at best are second-rate citizens in this capitalist coalition.

C. The contradictions and crises of world capitalism which now affect American capitalism with an impact almost equal to its own domestic contradictions and difficulties. These world contradictions set specific limits to the reformism of the new administration and paves the way for its discreditment.

To understand these factors as Marxists and to act upon them as Bolsheviks is to insure the progress of the party in the next period.

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