

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

Their Morals and Ours

By Leon Trotsky

Collapse of New Deal

By Maurice Spector

Max Eastman's Science

By James Burnham

The Socialist Party: A Head Without a Body

By M. S.

Lithuania and the
U.S.S.R. ~ By Jerome

National Guard and
Labor ~ By G. Novack

The Metaphysics of H. Levy

By William Gruen

TWENTY CENTS

JUNE 1938

At Home

A HALF-YEAR of the revived New INTERNATIONAL, and just beginning to go strong. An increased run for the June issue is certain. Minneapolis, Chicago and New York City are undertaking campaigns for the magazine; see other columns. San Francisco and Los Angeles, through the N.I. agents, Eloise Booth and John Murphy, have made new arrangements for the development of literature sales, and already the results are noticeable. A new order has been placed in McDonald's Bookshop, San Francisco. An old-timer, A. C. Doughty, also disposes of a bundle in Los Angeles, in addition to the Party-Y.P.S.L. quota. Minneapolis has increased its order by 25.

Numerous increases to be recorded since the April issue: In Allentown, Pa., Ruth Querio, agent, is following up outside contacts through personal visits and getting results. New Haven, Conn.: "May issue selling wonderfully; newsstands all sold out; send ten more at once."—Morris Gandelman. Youngstown, Ohio: "Increase our order to 20 per month"—Harvey Dawes. Sydney, Australia: Increase our order to 40"—N. Origglasso, Secretary, Workers Party. . . Advance Book Shop, Sydney, Australia: "Increase our order to 20. . . Congratulations on reappearance of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL which is well received here in Australia." London, England: Increase order to 36 copies."—Mildred Kahn, for W.I.N. Group.

In many cities the circulation of the magazine has definitely improved and prospects are reported very bright. T. Leonard, Boston, reports that "Sales at stores increased this month; sold 27 out of 34 copies; this is the best record they have had yet". In Lynn, Mass., St. Louis, Mo., Pittsburgh, Pa., Fresno, Calif., Newark, N. J., Philadelphia, Pa.—indeed in virtually all localities now, the S.W.P. and Y.P.S.L. comrades are taking hold of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL and making progress with circulation. New York City still has to overcome laxness in two or three branches, but improvement will follow soon.

Everywhere THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is hailed. All the more reason, therefore, for our Party and Youth comrades to take the steps necessary to ensure the maintenance of our theoretical organ, and, moreover, to make expansion possible. Bundle circulation is good, but subscriptions remain our weak side, though there has been a slight improvement in recent weeks. But not nearly enough. Organized subscription campaigns, as in Minneapolis and Chicago, are the answer. Where not yet started, each branch should institute a subscription drive, following methods best suited to their locality.

Also, social affairs, picnics, etc. are in order for the benefit of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. Chicago re-

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VOLUME IV

JUNE 1938

NUMBER 6 (Whole No. 21)

Published monthly by the New International Publishing Company, 116 University Place, New York, N. Y. Telephone: ALgonquin 4-8547. Subscription rates: \$2.00 per year; bundles: 14c for 5 copies and up. Canada and Foreign: \$2.50 per year; bundles 16c for 5 copies and up. Single copy: 20c. Entered as second-class matter December 9, 1937, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

Editorial Board: JAMES BURNHAM, MAX SHACHTMAN, MAURICE SPECTOR.
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cently held a social at the home of comrade B. Ogren, attended by about 60 persons, mostly University students. The Indiana Harbor, Ind., branch is scheduled to hold a social for the N.I.

The commentaries from so many sources on the high calibre of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL are so laudatory that surely Party and Y.P.S.L. comrades can, with some organized efforts, obtain large numbers of new readers and subscribers.

What readers say:

Detroit, Mich.: "I did not wish to send you an empty letter, but Roosevelt's Recession struck my practise with such disastrous force that it was difficult to collect a few spare dollars. . . . I am sending you ten dollars to bring my pledge to date. . . . I find THE NEW INTERNATIONAL a very stimulating magazine, and only wish the editorial parts were even more extensive. The book reviews are very helpful."—S.G.

Vancouver, B.C.: "The April issue is a honey; keep up the good work. It's getting better every issue."—G.S. Hildegard Smith, Hutchinson, Kansas: "The February issue is gorgeous. . . . If you can keep up that record!" Of course we can—through the co-operative effort of the editors, business department, Party and Y.P.S.L.

London, England: "From every issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, there is something to be gained which one can't possibly obtain from any other journal."—Henry Sara.

Winnipeg, Canada: "THE NEW INTERNATIONAL has been selling all right. Am concentrating on getting subscriptions now. Certainly we value the importance of our Marxian theoretical magazine."—N.C.

Neudorf, Czechoslovakia: "We have received the issues of THE NEW IN-

TERNATIONAL. We were surprised at your really excellent and beautiful review which indeed is in every regard superior to our European publications."—H.T.

Omaha, Nebraska: "THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is received with gratitude. It gets mighty lonely out in the weeds and a 'trade unionist' can be mighty happy and get the clear dope after messing around in all the junk connected with our work. . . . The N.I. is preserving the ideas and the banner of the revolution."—A.R.

Ted Selander, Toledo, Ohio, lauding the magazine, at the same time offers numerous suggestions for articles. Other readers, follow suit. Suggestions are welcomed.

Readers in Glasgow, Scotland, Strasbourg, France, Washington, D.C., and many other cities, too numerous to cite here, send in their endorsement.

Sheffield, England: "THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is the very thing. Will you please accept this cheque as a small token of my appreciation—toward the cost of production."—F.W.C.

How shall YOU say it? Well, we like flowers, of course, but better yet, say it with donations and subscriptions.

THE MANAGER

* * *

As we go to press, additional orders are coming in for the June issue. Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Hutchinson, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Fargo and Allentown are among some of the cities that have placed extra orders in anticipation of the increased demand for this number.

New York City is preparing for a wide circulation of the June number, and there is every indication that sales will be increased several hundred.

Notes

READERS who have been looking forward to the article, "Their Morals and Ours", which was promised in this column some time ago, will, we are sure feel rewarded for their patience. Upon its receipt, the editors debated on whether to divide it into two or three installments, spread over the same number of months, or to print it in full in one single issue. Although our readers rightly prefer a larger and more varied number of shorter articles, we are confident of their agreement with the decision to print this most stimulating and brilliant article by Trotsky in one installment. Breaking it up to spread over a quarter of a year would have been an injustice both to the author and his readers.

Debate brings to mind the still controversial question of the Kronstadt uprising of 1921, on which Wright and Trotsky have already written in our pages. We have on hand two communications on the subject—one from Victor Serge, in Paris, the other from Dwight MacDonald, one of the editors of the *Partisan Review*. Crowded out of this issue, they will appear, with comment by the editors, next month, under the heading of "Discussion". This is a feature of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL which, as we announced in the editorial on policy that appeared in our first issue, the editors are concerned with maintaining and extending.

The July issue will also contain an analysis of the convention now going on of the Communist Party of the United States. Its new constitution, as our readers already have learned from the press, is "democratic" in a "new" sense, and has evoked a good deal of comment in the press. What it really signifies, in relation to the development of international Stalinism, will be dealt with in detail in our analysis.

Like our "Discussion" section, a number of other features, old and new, had to be crowded out of the current issue in order to make room for more pressing articles, above all the one by Trotsky. But we can promise our readers the re-appearance in July of "The Editor's Comments", which will be devoted largely to the recent political developments in Europe, the re-alignment of the imperialist powers in preparation for the coming world war—so vitally important for the policy of the labor and revolutionary movements—and to the position of the Soviet Union in the new picture which is being drawn.

Our "Archives of the Revolution" will also be resumed in the coming issue with the publication of an extremely interesting speech by Trotsky in the early days of the Communist International. It deals with such pertinent questions as the nature of the united front, its relation to Soviet-bourgeois alliances, etc. It makes lively reading!

THE EDITORS

Their Morals and Ours

IN MEMORY OF LEON SEDOFF

Moral Effluvia

DURING AN EPOCH OF triumphant reaction, Messrs. democrats, social-democrats, anarchists, and other representatives of the "left" camp begin to exude double their usual amount of moral effluvia, similar to persons who perspire doubly in fear. Paraphrasing the Ten Commandments or the Sermon on the Mount, these moralists address themselves not so much to triumphant reaction as to those revolutionists suffering under its persecution, who with their "excesses" and "amoral" principles "provoke" reaction and give it moral justification. Moreover they prescribe a simple but certain means of avoiding reaction: it is necessary only to strive and morally to regenerate oneself. Free samples of moral perfection for those desirous are furnished by all the interested editorial offices.

The class basis of this false and pompous sermon is—the intellectual petty bourgeoisie. The political basis—their impotence and confusion in the face of approaching reaction. Psychological basis—their effort at overcoming the feeling of their own inferiority through masquerading in the beard of a prophet.

A moralizing Philistine's favorite method is the lumping of reaction's conduct with that of revolution. He achieves success in this device through recourse to formal analogies. To him czarism and Bolshevism are twins. Twins are likewise discovered in fascism and communism. An inventory is compiled of the common features in Catholicism — or more specifically, Jesuitism — and Bolshevism. Hitler and Mussolini, utilizing from their side exactly the same method, disclose that liberalism, democracy, and Bolshevism represent merely different manifestations of one and the same evil. The conception that Stalinism and Trotskyism are "essentially" one and the same now enjoys the joint approval of liberals, democrats, devout Catholics, idealists, pragmatists, and anarchists. If the Stalinists are unable to adhere to this "People's Front", then it is only because they are accidentally occupied with the extermination of Trotskyists.

The fundamental feature of these *approchements* and similitudes lies in their completely ignoring the material foundation of the various currents, that is, their class nature and by that token their objective historical rôle. Instead they evaluate and classify different currents according to some external and secondary manifestation, most often according to their relation to one or another abstract principle which for the given classifier has a special professional value. Thus to the Roman pope Freemasons and Darwinists, Marxists and anarchists are twins because all of them sacrilegiously deny the immaculate conception. To Hitler, liberalism and Marxism are twins because they ignore "blood and honor". To a democrat, fascism and Bolshevism are twins because they do not bow before universal suffrage. And so forth.

Undoubtedly the currents grouped above have certain common features. But the gist of the matter lies in the fact that the evolution of mankind exhausts itself neither by universal suffrage, nor by "blood and honor", nor by the dogma of the immaculate conception. The historical process signifies primarily the class strug-

gle; moreover, different classes in the name of different aims may in certain instances utilize similar means. Essentially it cannot be otherwise. Armies in combat are always more or less symmetrical; were there nothing in common in their methods of struggle they could not inflict blows upon each other.

If an ignorant peasant or shopkeeper, understanding neither the origin nor the sense of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, discovers himself between the two fires, he will consider both belligerent camps with equal hatred. And who are all these democratic moralists? Ideologists of intermediary layers who have fallen, or are in fear of falling between the two fires. The chief traits of the prophets of this type are alienism to great historical movements, a hardened conservative mentality, smug narrowness, and a most primitive political cowardice. More than anything moralists wish that history should leave them in peace with their petty books, little magazines, subscribers, common sense, and moral copy books. But history does not leave them in peace. It cuffs them now from the left, now from the right. Clearly—revolution and reaction, Czarism and Bolshevism, communism and fascism, Stalinism and Trotskyism—are all twins. Whoever doubts this may feel the symmetrical skull bumps upon both the right and left sides of these very moralists.

Marxist Amoralism and Eternal Truths

The most popular and most imposing accusation directed against Bolshevik "amoralism" bases itself on the so-called Jesuitical maxim of Bolshevism: "The end justifies the means." From this it is not difficult to reach the further conclusion: since the Trotskyists, like all Bolsheviks (or Marxists) do not recognize the principles of morality, there is, consequently, no "principled" difference between Trotskyism and Stalinism. Q.E.D.

One completely vulgar and cynical American monthly conducted a questionnaire on the moral philosophy of Bolshevism. The questionnaire, as is customary, was to have simultaneously served the ends of ethics and advertisement. The inimitable H. G. Wells, whose high fancy is surpassed only by his Homeric self-satisfaction was not slow in solidarizing himself with the reactionary snobs of *Common Sense*. Here everything fell into order. But even those participants who considered it necessary to defend Bolshevism did so, in the majority of cases, not without timid evasions (Eastman): the principles of Marxism are, of course, bad, but among the Bolsheviks there are, nevertheless, worthy people. Truly, such "friends" are more dangerous than enemies.

Should we care to take Messrs. Unmaskers seriously, then first of all we would ask them: what are your own moral principles? Here is a question which will scarcely receive an answer. Let us admit for the moment that neither personal nor social ends can justify the means. Then it is evidently necessary to seek criteria outside of historical society and those ends which arise in its development. But where? If not on earth, then in the heavens. In divine revelation popes long ago discovered faultless moral criteria. Petty secular popes speak about eternal moral truths

without naming their original source. However, we are justified in concluding: since these truths are eternal, they should have existed not only before the appearance of half-monkey-half-man upon the earth but before the evolution of the solar system. Whence then did they arise? The theory of eternal morals can in nowise survive without god.

Moralists of the Anglo-Saxon type, in so far as they do not confine themselves to rationalist utilitarianism, the ethics of bourgeois bookkeeping, appear conscious or unconscious students of Viscount Shaftesbury, who—at the beginning of the 18th century!—deduced moral judgments from a special “moral sense” supposedly once and for all given to man. Supra-class morality inevitably leads to the acknowledgment of a special substance, of a “moral sense”, “conscience”, some kind of absolute which is nothing more than the philosophic-cowardly pseudonym for god. Independent of “ends”, that is, of society, morality, whether we deduce it from eternal truths or from the “nature of man”, proves in the end to be a form of “natural theology”. Heaven remains the only fortified position for military operations against dialectic materialism.

At the end of the last century in Russia there arose a whole school of “Marxists” (Struve, Berdyaev, Bulgakov, and others) who wished to supplement the teachings of Marx with a self-sufficient, that is, supra-class moral principle. These people began, of course, with Kant and the categorical imperative. But how did they end? Struve is now a retired minister of the Crimean baron Wrangel, and a faithful son of the church; Bulgakov is an orthodox priest; Berdyaev expounds the Apocalypse in sundry languages. These metamorphoses which seem so unexpected at first glance are not at all explained by the “Slavic soul”—Struve has a German soul—but by the sweep of the social struggle in Russia. The fundamental trend of this metamorphosis is essentially international.

Classical philosophic idealism in so far as it aimed in its time to secularize morality, that is, to free it from religious sanction, represented a tremendous step forward (Hegel). But having torn from heaven, moral philosophy had to find earthly roots. To discover these roots was one of the tasks of materialism. After Shaftesbury came Darwin, after Hegel—Marx. To appeal now to “eternal moral truths” signifies attempting to turn the wheels backward. Philosophic idealism is only a stage: from religion to materialism, or, contrariwise, from materialism to religion.

“The End Justifies the Means”

The Jesuit order, organized in the first half of the 16th century for combatting Protestantism, never taught, let it be said, that *any* means, even though it be criminal from the point of view of the Catholic morals, was permissible if only it led to the “end”, that is, to the triumph of Catholicism. Such an internally contradictory and psychologically absurd doctrine was maliciously attributed to the Jesuits by their Protestant and partly Catholic opponents who were not shy in choosing the means for achieving their ends. Jesuit theologians who, like the theologians of other schools, were occupied with the question of personal responsibility, actually taught that the means in itself can be a matter of indifference but that the moral justification or judgment of the given means flows from the end. Thus shooting in itself is a matter of indifference; shooting a mad dog that threatens a child—a virtue; shooting with the aim of violation or murder—a crime. Outside of these commonplaces the theologians of this order made no promulgations.

In so far as their practical moral philosophy is concerned the Jesuits were not at all worse than other monks or Catholic priests, on the contrary, they were superior to them; in any case, more consistent, bolder, and perspicacious. The Jesuits represented a militant organization, strictly centralized, aggressive, and dan-

gerous not only to enemies but also to allies. In his psychology and method of action the Jesuit of the “heroic” period distinguished himself from an average priest as the warrior of a church from its shopkeeper. We have no reason to idealize either one or the other. But it is altogether unworthy to look upon a fanatic-warrior with the eyes of an obtuse and slothful shopkeeper.

If we are to remain in the field of purely formal or psychological similitudes, then it can, if you like, be said that the Bolsheviks appear in relation to the democrats and social-democrats of all hues as did the Jesuits—in relation to the peaceful ecclesiastical hierarchy. Compared to revolutionary Marxists, the social-democrats and centrists appear like morons, or a quack beside a physician: they do not think one problem through to the end, believe in the power of conjuration and cravenly avoid every difficulty, hoping for a miracle. Opportunists are peaceful shopkeepers in socialist ideas while Bolsheviks are its inveterate warriors. From this comes the hatred and slander against Bolsheviks from those who have an abundance of their historically conditioned faults but not one of their merits.

However, the juxtaposition of Bolshevism and Jesuitism still remains completely one-sided and superficial, rather of a literary than historical kind. In accordance with the character and interests of those classes upon which they based themselves, the Jesuits represented reaction, the Protestants—progress. The limitedness of this “progress” in its turn found direct expression in the morality of the Protestants. Thus the teachings of Christ “purified” by them did not at all hinder the city bourgeois, Luther, from calling for the execution of revolting peasants as “mad dogs”. Dr. Martin evidently considered that the “end justifies the means” even before that maxim was attributed to the Jesuits. In turn the Jesuits, competing with Protestantism, adapted themselves ever more to the spirit of bourgeois society, and of the three vows: poverty, chastity, and obedience, preserved only the third, and at that in an extremely attenuated form. From the point of view of the Christian ideal, the morality of the Jesuits degenerated the more they ceased to be Jesuits. The warriors of the church became its bureaucrats and, like all bureaucrats, passable swindlers.

Jesuitism and Utilitarianism

This brief discussion is sufficient, perhaps, to show what ignorance and narrowness are necessary to consider seriously the contraposition of the “Jesuit” principle, “the end justifies the means”, to another seemingly higher moral, in which each “means” carries its own moral tag like merchandise with fixed prices in a department store. It is remarkable that the common sense of the Anglo-Saxon Philistine has managed to wax indignant at the “Jesuit” principle and simultaneously to find inspiration in the utilitarian morality, so characteristic of British philosophy. Moreover, the criterion of Bentham-John Mill, “the greatest possible happiness for the greatest possible number”, signifies that those means are moral which lead to the common welfare as the higher end. In its general philosophical formulations Anglo-Saxon utilitarianism thus fully coincides with the “Jesuit” principle, “the end justifies the means”. Empiricism, we see, exists in the world only to free us from the necessity of making both ends meet.

Herbert Spencer, into whose empiricism Darwin inculcated the idea of “evolution”, as a special vaccine, taught that in the moral sphere evolution proceeds from “sensations” to “ideas”. Sensations conform to the criterion of immediate pleasure, while ideas permit one to be guided by the criterion of *future, lasting and higher pleasure*. Thus the moral criterion here too is “pleasure” and “happiness”. But the content of this criterion acquires breadth and depth depending upon the level of “evolution”. In this way Herbert Spencer too, through the methods of his own “evolutionary” utilitarianism, showed that the principle, “the end justifies the means”, does not embrace anything immoral.

It is naïve, however, to expect from this abstract "principle" an answer to the practical question: what may we, and what may we not do? Moreover, the principle, the end justifies the means, naturally raises the question: and what justifies the end? In practical life as in the historical movement the end and the means constantly change places. A machine under construction is an "end" of production only that upon entering the factory it may become the "means". Democracy in certain periods is the "end" of the class struggle only that later it may be transformed into its "means". Not embracing anything immoral, the so-called "Jesuit" principle fails, however, to resolve the moral problem.

The "evolutionary" utilitarianism of Spencer likewise abandons us half-way without an answer, since, following Darwin, it tries to dissolve the concrete historical morality in the biological needs or in the "social instincts" characteristic of a gregarious animal, and this at a time when the very understanding of morality arises only in an antagonistic milieu, that is, in a society torn by classes.

Bourgeois evolutionism halts impotently at the threshold of historical society because it does not wish to acknowledge the driving force in the evolution of social forms: *the class struggle*. Morality is one of the ideological functions in this struggle. The ruling class forces *its* ends upon society and habituates it into considering all those means which contradict its ends as immoral. That is the chief function of official morality. It pursues the idea of the "greatest possible happiness" not for the majority but for a small and ever diminishing minority. Such a régime could not have endured for even a week through force alone. It needs the cement of morality. The mixing of this cement constitutes the profession of the petty bourgeois theoreticians and moralists. They dabble in all colors of the rainbow but in the final instance remain apostles of slavery and submission.

"Moral Precepts Obligatory Upon All"

Whoever does not care to return to Moses, Christ or Mohammed; whoever is not satisfied with eclectic *hodge-podges* must acknowledge that morality is a product of social development; that there is nothing invariable about it; that it serves social interests; that these interests are contradictory; that morality more than any other form of ideology has a class character.

But do not elementary moral precepts exist, worked out in the development of mankind as an integral element necessary for the life of every collective body? Undoubtedly such precepts exist but the extent of their action is extremely limited and unstable. Norms "obligatory upon all" become the less forceful the sharper the character assumed by the class struggle. The highest pitch of the class struggle is civil war which explodes into mid-air all moral ties between the hostile classes.

Under "normal" conditions a "normal" man observes the commandment: "Thou shalt not kill!" But if he murders under exceptional conditions for self-defense, the judge condones his action. If he falls victim to a murderer, the court will kill the murderer. The necessity of the court's action, as that of the self-defense, flows from antagonistic interests. In so far as the state is concerned, in peaceful times it limits itself to individual cases of legalized murder so that in time of war it may transform the "obligatory" commandment, "Thou shalt not kill!" into its opposite. The most "humane" governments, which in peaceful times "detest" war, proclaim during war that the highest duty of their armies is the extermination of the greatest possible number of people.

The so-called "generally recognized" moral precepts in essence preserve an algebraic, that is, an indeterminate character. They merely express the fact that man, in his individual conduct, is bound by certain common norms that flow from his being a member of society. The highest generalization of these norms is the "categorical imperative" of Kant. But in spite of the fact that it

occupies a high position upon the philosophic Olympus this imperative does not embody anything categorical because it embodies nothing concrete. It is a shell without content.

This vacuity in the norms obligatory upon all arises from the fact that in all decisive questions people feel their class membership considerably more profoundly and more directly than their membership in "society". The norms of "obligatory" morality are in reality charged with class, that is, antagonistic content. The moral norm becomes the more categorical the less it is "obligatory" upon all. The solidarity of workers, especially of strikers or barricade fighters, is incomparably more "categorical" than human solidarity in general.

The bourgeoisie, which far surpasses the proletariat in the completeness and irreconcilability of its class consciousness, is vitally interested in imposing *its* moral philosophy upon the exploited masses. It is exactly for this purpose that the concrete norms of the bourgeois catechism are concealed under moral abstractions patronized by religion, philosophy, or that hybrid which is called "common sense". The appeal to abstract norms is not a disinterested philosophic mistake but a necessary element in the mechanics of class deception. The exposure of this deceit which retains the tradition of thousands of years is the first duty of a proletarian revolutionist.

The Crisis in Democratic Morality

In order to guarantee the triumph of their interests in big questions, the ruling classes are constrained to make concessions on secondary questions, naturally only so long as these concessions are reconciled in the bookkeeping. During the epoch of capitalistic upsurge especially in the last few decades before the World War these concessions, at least in relation to the top layers of the proletariat, were of a completely genuine nature. Industry at that time expanded almost uninterruptedly. The prosperity of the civilized nations, partially, too, that of the toiling masses increased. Democracy appeared solid. Workers' organizations grew. At the same time reformist tendencies deepened. The relations between the classes softened, at least outwardly. Thus certain elementary moral precepts in social relations were established along with the norms of democracy and the habits of class collaboration. The impression was created of an ever more free, more just, and more humane society. The rising line of progress seemed infinite to "common sense".

Instead, however, war broke out with a train of convulsions, crises, catastrophes, epidemics, and bestiality. The economic life of mankind landed in an *impasse*. The class antagonisms became sharp and naked. The safety valves of democracy began to explode one after the other. The elementary moral precepts seemed even more fragile than the democratic institutions and reformist illusions. Mendacity, slander, bribery, venality, coercion, murder grew to unprecedented dimensions. To a stunned simpleton all these vexations seem a temporary result of war. Actually they are manifestations of imperialist decline. The decay of capitalism denotes the decay of contemporary society with its right and its morals.

The "synthesis" of imperialist turpitude is fascism directly begotten of the bankruptcy of bourgeois democracy before the problems of the imperialist epoch. Remnants of democracy continue still to exist only in the rich capitalist aristocracies: for each "democrat" in England, France, Holland, Belgium there is a certain number of colonial slaves; "60 Families" dominate the democracy of the United States, and so forth. Moreover, shoots of fascism grow rapidly in all democracies. Stalinism in its turn is the product of imperialist pressure upon a backward and isolated workers' state, a symmetrical complement in its own *genre* to fascism.

While idealistic Philistines—anarchists of course occupy first place—tirelessly unmask Marxist "amoralism" in their press, the

American trusts, according to John L. Lewis (C.I.O.) are spending not less than \$80,000,000 a year on the practical struggle against revolutionary "demoralization", that is, espionage, bribery of workers, frame-ups, and dark-alley murders. The categorical imperative sometimes chooses circuitous ways for its triumph!

Let us note in justice that the most sincere and at the same time the most limited petty bourgeois moralists still live even today in the idealized memories of yesterday and hope for its return. They do not understand that morality is a function of the class struggle; that democratic morality corresponds to the epoch of liberal and progressive capitalism; that the sharpening of the class struggle in passing through its latest phase definitively and irrevocably destroyed this morality; that in its place came the morality of fascism on one side, on the other the morality of proletarian revolution.

"Common Sense"

Democracy and "generally recognized" morality are not the only victims of imperialism. The third suffering martyr is "universal" common sense. This lowest form of the intellect is not only necessary under all conditions but under certain conditions is also adequate. Common sense's basic capital consists of the elementary conclusions of universal experience: not to put one's fingers in fire, whenever possible to proceed along a straight line, not to tease vicious dogs . . . and so forth and so on. Under a stable social milieu common sense is adequate for bargaining, healing, writing articles, leading trade unions, voting in parliament, marrying and reproducing the race. But when that same common sense attempts to go beyond its valid limits into the arena of more complex generalizations, it is exposed as just a clot of prejudices of a definite class and a definite epoch. No more than a simple capitalist crisis brings common sense to an *impasse*; and before such catastrophes as revolution, counter-revolution and war, common sense proves a perfect fool. In order to realize the catastrophic transgressions against the "normal" course of events higher qualities of intellect are necessary, philosophically expressed as yet only by dialectic materialism.

Max Eastman, who successfully attempts to endow "common sense" with a most attractive literary style, has fashioned out of the struggle against dialectics nothing less than a profession for himself. Eastman seriously takes the conservative banalities of common sense wedded to good style as "the science of revolution". Supporting the reactionary snobs of *Common Sense*, he expounds to mankind with inimitable assurance that if Trotsky had been guided not by Marxist doctrine but by common sense then he would not . . . have lost power. That inner dialectic which until now has appeared in the inevitable succession of determined stages in all revolutions does not exist for Eastman. Reaction's displacing revolution, to him, is determined through insufficient respect for common sense. Eastman does not understand that it is Stalin who in a historical sense fell *victim* to common sense, that is, its inadequacy, since that power which he possesses serves ends hostile to Bolshevism. Marxist doctrine, on the other hand, permitted us to tear away in time from the Thermidorian bureaucracy and to continue to serve the ends of international socialism.

Every science, and in that sense also the "science of revolution" is controlled by experience. Since Eastman well knows how to maintain revolutionary power under the condition of world counter-revolution, then he also knows, we may hope, how to conquer power. It would be very desirable that he finally disclose his secrets. Best of all that it be done in the form of a *draft program for a revolutionary party* under the title: How to Conquer and Hold Power. We fear, however, that it is precisely common sense which will urge Eastman to refrain from such a risky undertaking. And this time common sense will be right.

Marxist doctrine, which Eastman, alas, never understood, per-

mitted us to foresee the inevitability under certain historic conditions of the Soviet Thermidor with all its coil of crimes. That same doctrine long ago predicted the inevitability of the downfall of bourgeois democracy and its morality. However the doctrinaires of "common sense" were caught unaware by fascism and Stalinism. Common sense operates on invariable magnitudes in a world where only change is invariable. Dialectics, on the contrary, takes all phenomena, institutions, and norms in their rise, development and decay. The dialectical consideration of morals as a subservient and transient product of the class struggle seems to common sense an "amoralism". But there is nothing more flat, stale, self-satisfied and cynical than the moral rules of common sense!

Moralists and the G.P.U.

The Moscow trials provided the occasion for a crusade against Bolshevik "amoralism". However, the crusade was not opened at once. The truth is that in their majority the moralists, directly or indirectly, were friends of the Kremlin. As such they long attempted to hide their amazement and even feigned that nothing unusual had occurred.

But the Moscow trials were not at all an accident. Servile obedience, hypocrisy, the official cult of mendacity, bribery, and other forms of corruption had already begun to blossom ostentatiously in Moscow by 1924-1925. The future judicial frame-ups were being prepared openly before the eyes of the whole world. There was no lack of warning. The "friends", however, did not wish to notice anything. No wonder: the majority of these gentlemen, in their time irreconcilably hostile to the October Revolution, became friends of the Soviet Union merely at the rate of its Thermidorian degeneration—the petty bourgeois democrats of the West recognized in the petty bourgeois bureaucracy of the East a kindred soul.

Did these people really believe the Moscow accusations? Only the most obtuse. The others did not wish to alarm themselves by verification. Is it reasonable to infringe upon the flattering, comfortable, and often well-paying friendship with the Soviet embassies? Moreover—oh, they did not forget this!—indiscreet truth can injure the prestige of the U.S.S.R. These people screened the crimes by utilitarian considerations, that is, frankly applied the principle, "the end justifies the means".

The King's Counselor, Pritt, who succeeded with timeliness in peering under the chiton of the Stalinist Themis and there discovered everything in order, took upon himself the shameless initiative. Romain Rolland, whose moral authority is highly evaluated by the Soviet publishing house bookkeepers, hastened to proclaim one of his manifestos where melancholy lyricism unites with senile cynicism. The French League for the Rights of Man, which thundered about the "amoralism of Lenin and Trotsky" in 1917 when they broke the military alliance with France, hastened to screen Stalin's crimes in 1936 in the interests of the Franco-Soviet pact. A patriotic end justifies, as is known, any means. *The Nation* and *The New Republic* closed their eyes to Yagoda's exploits since their "friendship" with the U.S.S.R. guaranteed their own authority. Yet only a year ago these gentlemen did not at all declare Stalinism and Trotskyism to be one and the same. They openly stood for Stalin, for his realism, for his justice and for his Yagoda. They clung to this position as long as they could.

Until the moment of the execution of Tukhachevsky, Yakir, and the others, the big bourgeoisie of the democratic countries, not without pleasure, though blanketed with fastidiousness, watched the execution of the revolutionists in the U.S.S.R. In this sense *The Nation* and *The New Republic*, not to speak of Duranty, Louis Fischer, and their kindred prostitutes of the pen, fully responded to the interests of "democratic" imperialism. The execution of the generals alarmed the bourgeoisie, compelling them to understand that the advanced disintegration of the Stalinist apparatus light-

ened the tasks of Hitler, Mussolini and the Mikado. *The New York Times* cautiously but insistently began to correct its own Duranty. The Paris *Le Temps* opened its columns slightly to shedding light upon the actual situation in the U.S.S.R. As for the petty bourgeois moralists and sycophants, they were never anything but servile echoes of the capitalist class. Moreover, after the International Commission of Inquiry, headed by John Dewey, brought out its verdict it became clear to every person who thought even a trifle that further open defense of the G.P.U. signified peril of political and moral death. Only at this moment did the "friends" decide to bring the eternal moral truths into god's world, that is, to fall back to the second line trench.

Frightened Stalinists and semi-Stalinists occupy not the last place among moralists. Eugene Lyons during several years cohabited nicely with the Thermidorian clique, considering himself almost-a-Bolshevik. Withdrawing from the Kremlin—for a reason that is to us a matter of indifference—he rose, of course, immediately into the clouds of idealism. Liston Oak until recently enjoyed such confidence from the Comintern that it entrusted him with conducting the English propaganda for republican Spain. This did not, naturally, hinder him, once he had relinquished his post, from likewise relinquishing the Marxist alphabet. Expatriate Walter Krivitsky, having broken with the G.P.U., immediately joined the bourgeois democracy. Evidently this too is the metamorphosis of the very aged Charles Rappoport. Having tossed Stalinism overboard, people of such ilk—they are many—cannot help seeking indemnification in the postulates of abstract morality for the disillusionment and abasement of ideals they have experienced. Ask them: "Why have you switched from the Comintern or G.P.U. ranks to the camp of the bourgeoisie?" They have a ready answer: "Trotskyism is no better than Stalinism."

The Disposition of Political Chessmen

"Trotskyism is revolutionary romanticism; Stalinism—practical politics." Of this banal contraposition with which the average Philistine until yesterday justified his friendship with Thermidor against the revolution, there remains not a trace today. Trotskyism and Stalinism are in general no longer counterpoised but identified. They are identified, however, only in form not in essence. Having recoiled to the meridian of the "categorical imperative", the democrats actually continue to defend the G.P.U. except with greater camouflage and perfidy. He who slanders the victim aids the executioner. In this case, as in others, morality serves politics.

The democratic Philistine and Stalinist bureaucrat are, if not twins, brothers in spirit. In any case they belong politically to the same camp. The present governmental system of France and—if we add the anarchists—of republican Spain is based on the collaboration of Stalinists, social-democrats, and liberals. If the British Independent Labour Party appears roughed up it is because for a number of years it has not withdrawn from the embrace of the Comintern. The French Socialist Party expelled the Trotskyists from their ranks exactly when it prepared to fuse with the Stalinists. If the fusion did not materialize, it was not because of principled divergences—what remains of them?—but only because of the fear of the social-democratic careerists over their posts. Having returned from Spain, Norman Thomas declared that "objectively" the Trotskyists help Franco, and with this subjective absurdity he gave "objective" service to the G.P.U. executioners. This righteous man expelled the American "Trotskyists" from his party precisely as the G.P.U. shot down their co-thinkers in the U.S.S.R. and in Spain. In many democratic countries, the Stalinists in spite of their "amoralism" have penetrated into the government apparatus not without success. In the trade unions they cohabit nicely with bureaucrats of other hues. True, the Stalinists have an extremely lightminded attitude toward the

criminal code and in that way frighten away their "democratic" friends in peaceful times; but in exceptional circumstances, as indicated by the example of Spain, they more surely become the leaders of the petty bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

The Second and Amsterdam Internationals naturally did not take upon themselves the responsibility for the frame-ups; this work they left to the Comintern. They themselves kept quiet. Privately they explained that from a "moral" point of view they were against Stalin, but from a political point of view—for him. Only when the People's Front in France cracked irreparably and forced the socialists to think about tomorrow did Léon Blum find at the bottom of his inkwell the necessary formulas for moral abhorrence.

If Otto Bauer mildly condemned Vyshinsky's justice it was only in order to support Stalin's politics with greater "impartiality". The fate of socialism, according to Bauer's recent declaration, is tied with the fate of the Soviet Union. "And the fate of the Soviet Union", he continues, "is the fate of Stalinism so long as [!] the inner development of the Soviet Union itself does not overcome the Stalinist phase of development." All of Bauer is contained in this remarkable sentence, all of Austro-Marxism, the whole mendacity and rot of the social-democracy! "So long as" the Stalinist bureaucracy is sufficiently strong to murder the progressive representatives of the "inner development", until then Bauer sticks with Stalin. When in spite of Bauer the revolutionary forces overthrow Stalin, then Bauer will generously recognize the "inner development"—with not more than ten years delay.

Behind the old Internationals, the London Bureau of the centrists trails along, happily combining in itself the characteristics of a kindergarten, a school for mentally arrested adolescents, and a home for invalids. The secretary of the Bureau, Fenner Brockway, began with the declaration that an inquiry into the Moscow trials could "harm the U.S.S.R." and proposed instead an investigation into . . . the political activity of Trotsky through an "impartial" Commission of five irreconcilable enemies of Trotsky. Brandler and Lovestone publicly solidarized with Yagoda; they retreated only from Yezhov. Jacob Walcher, upon an obviously false pretext, refused to give testimony which was unfavorable to Stalin before the International Commission headed by John Dewey. The putrid morals of these people is only a product of their putrid politics.

But perhaps the most lamentable rôle is that played by the anarchists. If Stalinism and Trotskyism are one and the same, as they affirm in every sentence, then why do the Spanish anarchists assist the Stalinists in revenging themselves upon the Trotskyists and at the same time upon the revolutionary anarchists? The more frank anarchist theoreticians respond: this is payment for armaments. In other words: the end justifies the means. But what is their end? Anarchism? Socialism? No, merely the salvaging of this very same bourgeois democracy which prepared fascism's success. To base ends correspond base means.

That is the real disposition of the figures on the world political board!

Stalinism—A Product of the Old Society

Russia took the greatest leap in history, a leap in which the most progressive forces of the country found their expression. Now in the current reaction, the sweep of which is proportionate to the sweep of the revolution, backwardness is taking its revenge. Stalinism embodies this reaction. The barbarism of old Russian history upon new social bases seems yet more disgusting since it is constrained to conceal itself in hypocrisy unprecedented in history.

The liberals and the social-democrats of the West, who were constrained by the Russian Revolution into doubt about their rotted ideas, now experienced a fresh influx of courage. The moral

gangrene of the Soviet bureaucracy seemed to them the rehabilitation of liberalism. Stereotyped copybooks are drawn out into the light: "every dictatorship contains the seeds of its own degeneration"; "only democracy guarantees the development of personality"; and so forth. The contrasting of democracy and dictatorship, including in the given case a condemnation of socialism in favor of the bourgeois régime, stuns one from the point of view of theory by its illiterateness and unscrupulousness. The Stalinist pollution, a historical reality, is counterpoised to democracy—a supra-historical abstraction. But democracy also possesses a history in which there is no lack of pollution. In order to characterize Soviet bureaucracy we have borrowed the names of "Thermidor" and "Bonapartism" from the history of bourgeois democracy because—let this be known to the retarded liberal doctrinaires—*democracy came into the world not at all through the democratic road*. Only a vulgar mentality can satisfy itself by chewing on the theme that Bonapartism was the "natural offspring" of Jacobinism, the historical punishment for infringing upon democracy, and so on. Without the Jacobin retribution upon feudalism, bourgeois democracy would have been absolutely unthinkable. Contrasting to the concrete historical stages of Jacobinism, Thermidor, Bonapartism the idealized abstraction of "democracy", is as vicious as contrasting the pains of childbirth to a living infant.

Stalinism in turn is not an abstraction of "dictatorship", but an immense bureaucratic reaction against the proletarian dictatorship in a backward and isolated country. The October Revolution abolished privileges, waged war against social inequality, replaced the bureaucracy with self-government of the toilers, abolished secret diplomacy, strove to render all social relationships completely transparent. Stalinism reestablished the most offensive forms of privileges, imbued inequality with a provocative character, strangled mass self-activity under police absolutism, transformed administration into a monopoly of the Kremlin oligarchy and regenerated the fetishism of power in forms that absolute monarchy dared not dream of.

Social reaction in all forms is constrained to mask its real aims. The sharper the transition from revolution to reaction; the more the reaction is dependent upon the traditions of revolution, that is, the greater its fear of the masses—the more is it forced to resort to mendacity and frame-up in the struggle against the representatives of the revolution. Stalinist frame-ups are not a fruit of Bolshevik "amoralism"; no, like all important events in history, they are a product of the concrete social struggle, and the most perfidious and severest of all at that: the struggle of a new aristocracy against the masses that raised it to power.

Verily boundless intellectual and moral obtuseness is required to identify the reactionary police morality of Stalinism with the revolutionary morality of the Bolsheviks. Lenin's party has long ceased to exist—it was shattered between inner difficulties and world imperialism. In its place rose the Stalinist bureaucracy, transmissive mechanism of imperialism. The bureaucracy substituted class collaboration for the class struggle on the world arena, social-patriotism for internationalism. In order to adapt the ruling party to the tasks of reaction, the bureaucracy "renewed" its composition through executing revolutionists and recruiting careerists.

Every reaction regenerates, nourishes and strengthens those elements of the historic past which the revolution struck but which it could not vanquish. The methods of Stalinism bring to the highest tension, to a culmination and at the same time to an absurdity all those methods of untruth, brutality and baseness which constitute the mechanics of control in every class society including also that of democracy. Stalinism is a single clot of all monstrosities of the historical State, its most malicious caricature and disgusting grimace. When the representatives of old society puritanically counterpoise a sterilized democratic abstraction to

the gangrene of Stalinism, we can with full justice recommend to them, as to all of old society, that they fall enamored of themselves in the warped mirror of Soviet Thermidor. True, the G.P.U. far surpasses all other régimes in the nakedness of its crimes. But this flows from the immense amplitude of events shaking Russia under the influence of world imperialist demoralization.

Among the liberals and radicals there are not a few individuals who have assimilated the methods of the materialist interpretation of events and who consider themselves Marxists. This does not hinder them, however, from remaining bourgeois journalists, professors or politicians. A Bolshevik is inconceivable, of course, without the materialist method, in the sphere of morality too. But this method serves him not solely for the interpretation of events but rather for the creation of a revolutionary party of the proletariat. It is impossible to accomplish this task without complete independence from the bourgeoisie and their morality. Yet bourgeois public opinion actually now reigns in full sway over the official workers' movement from William Green in the United States, Léon Blum and Maurice Thorez in France, to Garcia Oliver in Spain. In this fact the reactionary character of the present period reaches its sharpest expression.

A revolutionary Marxist cannot begin to approach his historical mission without having broken morally from bourgeois public opinion and its agencies in the proletariat. For this, moral courage of a different calibre is required than that of opening wide one's mouth at meetings and yelling, "Down with Hitler!" "Down with Franco!" It is precisely this resolute, completely-thought-out, inflexible rupture of the Bolsheviks from conservative moral philosophy not only of the big but of the petty bourgeoisie which mortally terrorizes democratic phrase-mongers, drawing room prophets and lobbying heroes. From this is derived their complaints about the "amoralism" of the Bolsheviks.

Their identification of bourgeois morals with morals "in general" can best of all, perhaps, be verified at the extreme left wing of the petty bourgeoisie, precisely in the centrist parties of the so-called London Bureau. Since this organization "recognizes" the program of proletarian revolution, our disagreements with it seem, at first glance, secondary. Actually their "recognition" is valueless because it does not bind them to anything. They "recognize" the proletarian revolution as the Kantians recognized the categorical imperative, that is, as a holy principle but not applicable to daily life. In the sphere of practical politics they unite with the worst enemies of the revolution (reformists and Stalinists) for the struggle against us. All their thinking is permeated with duplicity and falsehood. If the centrists, according to a general rule, do not raise themselves to imposing crimes it is only because they forever remain in the byways of politics: they are, so to speak, petty pick-pockets of history. For this reason they consider themselves called upon to regenerate the workers' movement with a new morality.

At the extreme left wing of this "left" fraternity stands a small and politically completely insignificant grouping of German émigrés who publish the paper *Neuer Weg* (The New Road). Let us bend down lower and listen to these "revolutionary" indicters of Bolshevik amoralism. In a tone of ambiguous pseudo-praise the *Neuer Weg* proclaims that the Bolsheviks are distinguished advantageously from other parties by their absence of hypocrisy—they openly declare what others quietly apply in fact, that is, the principle: "the end justifies the means". But according to the convictions of *Neuer Weg* such a "bourgeois" precept is incompatible with a "healthy socialist movement". "Lying and worse are not permissible means of struggle, as Lenin still considered." The word "still" evidently signifies that Lenin did not succeed in overcoming his delusions only because he failed to live until the discovery of *The New Road*.

In the formula, "lying and worse", "worse" evidently signifies—violence, murder, and so on, since under equal conditions vio-

lence is worse than lying; and murder—the most extreme form of violence. We thus come to the conclusion that lying, violence, murder are incompatible with a “healthy socialist movement”. What, however, is our relation to revolution? Civil war is the most severe of all forms of war. It is unthinkable not only without violence against tertiary figures but, under contemporary technique, without murdering old men, old women and children. Must one be reminded of Spain? The only possible answer of the “friends” of republican Spain sounds like this: civil war is better than fascist slavery. But this completely correct answer merely signifies that the *end* (democracy or socialism) justifies, under certain conditions, such *means* as violence and murder. Not to speak about lies! Without lies war would be as unimaginable as a machine without oil. In order to safeguard even the session of the Cortes (February 1, 1938) from Fascist bombs the Barcelona government several times deliberately deceived journalists and their own population. Could it have acted in any other way? Whoever accepts the end: victory over Franco, must accept the means: civil war with its wake of horrors and crimes.

Nevertheless, lying and violence “in themselves” warrant condemnation? Of course, even as does the class society which generates them. A society without social contradictions will naturally be a society without lies and violence. However there is no way of building a bridge to that society save by revolutionary, that is, violent means. The revolution itself is a product of class society and of necessity bears its traits. From the point of view of “eternal truths” revolution is of course “anti-moral”. But this merely means that idealist morality is counter-revolutionary, that is, in the service of the exploiters.

“Civil war”, will perhaps respond the philosopher caught unawares, “is however a sad exception. But in peaceful times a healthy socialist movement should manage without violence and lying.” Such an answer however represents nothing less than a pathetic evasion. There is no impervious demarcation between “peaceful” class struggle and revolution. Every strike embodies in an unexpanded form all the elements of civil war. Each side strives to impress the opponent with an exaggerated representation of its resoluteness to struggle and its material resources. Through their press, agents, and spies the capitalists labor to frighten and demoralize the strikers. From their side, the workers’ pickets, where persuasion does not avail, are compelled to resort to force. Thus “lie and worse” are an inseparable part of the class struggle even in its most elementary form. It remains to be added that the very conception of *truth* and *lie* was born of social contradictions.

Revolution and the Institution of Hostages

Stalin arrests and shoots the children of his opponents after these opponents have been themselves executed under false accusations. With the help of the institution of family hostages Stalin compels those Soviet diplomats to return from abroad who permitted themselves an expression of doubt upon the infallibility of Yagoda or Yezhov. The moralists of *Neuer Weg* consider it necessary and timely to remind us on this occasion of the fact that Trotsky in 1919 “also” introduced a law upon hostages. But here it becomes necessary to quote literally: “The detention of innocent relatives by Stalin is disgusting barbarism. But it remains a barbarism as well when it was dictated by Trotsky (1919).” Here is the idealistic moralist in all his beauty! His criteria are as false as the norms of bourgeois democracy—in both cases *parity* is supposed where in actuality there is not even a trace of it.

We will not insist here upon the fact that the Decree of 1919 led scarcely to even one execution of relatives of those commanders whose perfidy not only caused the loss of innumerable human lives but threatened the revolution itself with direct annihilation. The question in the end does not concern that. If the

revolution had displayed less superfluous generosity from the very beginning, hundreds of thousands of lives would have been saved. Thus or otherwise I carry full responsibility for the Decree of 1919. It was a necessary measure in the struggle against the oppressors. Only in the historical content of the struggle lies the justification of the decree as in general the justification of the whole civil war which, too, can be called, not without foundation, “disgusting barbarism”.

We leave to some Emil Ludwig or his ilk the drawing of Abraham Lincoln’s portrait with rosy little wings. Lincoln’s significance lies in his not hesitating before the most severe means once they were found to be necessary in achieving a great historic aim posed by the development of a young nation. The question lies not even in which of the warring camps caused or itself suffered the greatest number of victims. History has different yardsticks for the cruelty of the Northerners and the cruelty of the Southerners in the Civil War. A slave-owner who through cunning and violence shackles a slave in chains, and a slave who through cunning or violence breaks the chains—let not the contemptible eunuchs tell us that they are equals before a court of morality!

After the Paris Commune had been drowned in blood and the reactionary knaves of the whole world dragged its banner in the filth of vilification and slander, there were not a few democratic Philistines who, adapting themselves to reaction, slandered the Communards for shooting 64 hostages headed by the Paris archbishop. Marx did not hesitate a moment in defending this bloody act of the Commune. In a circular issued by the General Council of the First International, in which seethes the fiery eruption of lava, Marx first reminds us of the bourgeoisie adopting the institution of hostages in the struggle against both colonial peoples and their own toiling masses and afterwards refers to the systematic execution of the Commune captives by the frenzied reactionaries, continuing: “. . . the Commune, to protect their [the captives’] lives, was obliged to resort to the Prussian practise of securing hostages. The lives of the hostages had been forfeited over and over again by the continued shooting of prisoners on the part of the Versailles. How could they be spared any longer after the carnage with which MacMahon’s Prætorians celebrated their entry into Paris? Was even the last check upon the unscrupulous ferocity of bourgeois governments—the taking of hostages—to be made a mere sham of?” Thus Marx defended the execution of hostages although behind his back in the General Council sat not a few Fenner Brockways, Norman Thomases and other Otto Bauers. But so fresh was the indignation of the world proletariat against the ferocity of the Versailles that the reactionary moralistic bunglers preferred to keep silent in expectation of times more favorable to them which, alas, were not slow in appearing. Only after the definite triumph of reaction did the petty bourgeois moralists, together with the trade union bureaucrats and the anarchist phrase-mongers destroy the First International.

When the October Revolution was defending itself against the united forces of imperialism on a 5,000 mile front, the workers of the whole world followed the course of the struggle with such ardent sympathy that in their forums it was extremely risky to indict the “disgusting barbarism” of the institution of hostages. Complete degeneration of the Soviet State and the triumph of reaction in a number of countries was necessary before the moralists crawled out of their crevices . . . to aid Stalin. If it is true that the repressions safeguarding the privileges of the new aristocracy have the same moral value as the revolutionary measures of the liberating struggle, then Stalin is completely justified, if . . . if the proletarian revolution is not completely condemned.

Seeking examples of immorality in the events of the Russian Civil War, Messrs. Moralists find themselves at the same time constrained to close their eyes to the fact that the Spanish revolution also produced an institution of hostages, at least during that period when it was a genuine revolution of the masses. If the

craftiness, in other words, without lying and deceit. May the Ger-indicters dare not attack the Spanish workers for their "disgusting barbarism", it is only because the ground of the Pyrenean peninsula is still too hot for them. It is considerably more convenient to return to 1919. This is already history, the old men have forgotten and the young ones have not yet learned. For the same reason Pharisees of various hues return to Kronstadt and Makhno with such obstinacy—here exists a free outlet for moral effluvia!

"Morality of the Kaffirs"

It is impossible not to agree with the moralists that history chooses grievous pathways. But what type of conclusion for practical activity is to be drawn from this? Leo Tolstoy recommended that we ignore the social conventions and perfect ourselves. Mahatma Ghandi advises that we drink goat's milk. Alas, the "revolutionary" moralists of *Neuer Weg* did not drift far from these recipes. "We should free ourselves," they preach, "from those morals of the Kaffirs to whom only what the enemy does is wrong." Excellent advice! "We should free ourselves. . . ." Tolstoy recommended in addition that we free ourselves from the sins of the flesh. However, statistics fail to confirm the success of his recommendation. Our centrist mannikins have succeeded in elevating themselves to supra-class morality in a class society. But almost 2,000 years have passed since it was stated: "Love your enemies", "Offer also the other cheek. . ." However, even the holy Roman father so far has not "freed himself" from hatred against his enemies. Truly, Satan, the enemy of mankind, is powerful!

To apply different criteria to the actions of the exploiters and the exploited signifies, according to these pitiful mannikins, standing on the level of the "morals of the Kaffirs". First of all such a contemptuous reference to the Kaffirs is hardly proper from the pen of "socialists". Are the morals of the Kaffirs really so bad? Here is what the *Encyclopædia Britannica* says upon the subject:

"In their social and political relations they display great tact and intelligence; they are remarkably brave, warlike, and hospitable, and were honest and truthful until through contact with the whites they became suspicious, revengeful and thievish, besides acquiring most European vices." It is impossible not to arrive at the conclusion that white missionaries, preachers of eternal morals, participated in the corruption of the Kaffirs.

If we should tell the toiler-Kaffir how the workers arose in a part of our planet and caught their exploiters unawares, he would be very pleased. On the other hand, he would be chagrined to discover that the oppressors had succeeded in deceiving the oppressed. A Kaffir who has not been demoralized by missionaries to the marrow of his bones will never apply one and the same abstract moral norms to the oppressors and the oppressed. Yet he will easily comprehend an explanation that it is the function of these abstract norms to prevent the oppressed from arising against their oppressors.

What an instructive coincidence: in order to slander the Bolsheviks, the missionaries of *Neuer Weg* were compelled at the same time to slander the Kaffirs; moreover in both cases the slander follows the line of the official bourgeois lie: against revolutionists and against the colored races. No, we prefer the Kaffirs to all missionaries, both spiritual and secular!

It is not necessary in any case, however, to overestimate the conscientiousness of the moralists of *Neuer Weg* and other *cul-de-sacs*. The intentions of these people are not so bad. But despite these intentions they serve as levers in the mechanics of reaction. In such a period as the present when the petty bourgeois parties who cling to the liberal bourgeoisie or its shadow (the politics of the "Peoples' Front") paralyze the proletariat and pave the road for Fascism (Spain, France . . .), the Bolsheviks, that is, revolu-

tionary Marxists, become especially odious figures in the eyes of bourgeois public opinion. The fundamental political pressure of our time shifts from right to left. In the final analysis the whole weight of reaction bears down upon the shoulders of a tiny revolutionary minority. This minority is called the Fourth International. *Voilà l'ennemi!* There is the enemy!

In the mechanics of reaction Stalinism occupies many leading positions. All groupings of bourgeois society, including the anarchists, utilize its aid in the struggle against the proletarian revolution. At the same time the petty bourgeois democrats attempt, at least to the extent of fifty percent, to cast the repulsiveness of the crimes of its Moscow ally upon the indomitable revolutionary minority. Herein lies the sense of the now stylish dictum: "Trotskyism and Stalinism are one and the same." The adversaries of the Bolsheviks and the Kaffirs thus aid reaction in slandering the party of revolution.

The "Amoralism" of Lenin

The Russian "Socialist Revolutionaries" were always the most moral individuals: essentially they were composed of ethics alone. This did not prevent them, however, at the time of revolution from deceiving the Russian peasants. In the Parisian organ of Kerensky, that very ethical socialist who was the forerunner of Stalin in manufacturing spurious accusations against the Bolsheviks, another old "Socialist Revolutionary" Zenzinov writes: "Lenin, as is known, taught that for the sake of gaining the desired ends communists can, and sometimes must 'resort to all sorts of devices, manœuvres and subterfuge' . . ." (*New Russia*, February 17, 1938, p. 3) From this they draw the ritualistic conclusion: Stalinism is the natural offspring of Leninism.

Unfortunately, the ethical indicter is not even capable of quoting honestly. Lenin said: "It is necessary to be able . . . to resort to all sorts of devices, manœuvres, and illegal methods, to evasion and subterfuge, in order to penetrate into the trade unions, to remain in them, and to carry on communist work in them at all costs." The necessity for evasion and manœuvres, according to Lenin's explanation, is called forth by the fact that the reformist bureaucracy, betraying the workers to capital, baits revolutionists, persecutes them, and even resorts to turning the bourgeois police upon them. "Manœuvres" and "subterfuge" are in this case only methods of valid self-defense against the perfidious reformist bureaucracy.

The party of this very Zenzinov once carried on illegal work against Czarism, and later—against the Bolsheviks. In both cases it resorted to craftiness, evasion, false passports and other forms of "subterfuge". All these *means* were considered not only "ethical" but also heroic because they corresponded to political *aims* of the petty bourgeoisie. But the situation changes at once when proletarian revolutionists are forced to resort to conspirative measures against the petty bourgeois democracy. The key to the morality of these gentlemen has, as we see, a class character!

The "amoralist" Lenin openly, in the press, gives advice concerning military craftiness against perfidious leaders. And the moralist Zenzinov maliciously chops both ends from the quotation in order to deceive the reader: the ethical indicter is proved as usual a petty swindler. Not for nothing was Lenin fond of repeating: it is very difficult to meet a conscientious adversary!

A worker who does not conceal the "truth" about the strikers' plans from the capitalists is simply a betrayer deserving contempt and boycott. The soldier who discloses the "truth" to the enemy is punished as a spy. Kerensky tried to lay at the Bolsheviks' door the accusation of having disclosed the "truth" to Ludendorff's staff. It appears that even the "holy truth" is not an end in itself. More imperious criteria which, as analysis demonstrates, carry a class character, rule over it.

The life and death struggle is unthinkable without military

man proletariat then not deceive Hitler's police? Or perhaps Soviet Bolsheviks have an "immoral" attitude when they deceive the G.P.U.? Every pious bourgeois applauds the cleverness of police who succeed through craftiness in seizing a dangerous gangster. Is military craftiness really permissible when the question concerns the overthrow of the gangsters of imperialism?

Norman Thomas speaks about "that strange communist amorality in which nothing matters but the party and its power" (*Socialist Call*, March 12, 1938, p. 5). Moreover, Thomas throws into one heap the present Comintern, that is, the conspiracy of the Kremlin bureaucracy against the working class, with the Bolshevik party which represented a conspiracy of the advanced workers against the bourgeoisie. This thoroughly dishonest juxtaposition has already been sufficiently exposed above. Stalinism merely screens itself under the cult of the party; actually it destroys and tramples the party in filth. It is true, however, that to a Bolshevik the party is everything. The drawing-room socialist, Thomas, is surprised by and rejects a similar relationship between a revolutionist and revolution because he himself is only a bourgeois with a socialist "ideal". In the eyes of Thomas and his kind the party is only a secondary instrument for electoral combinations and other similar uses, not more. His personal life, interests, ties, moral criteria exist outside the party. With hostile astonishment he looks down upon the Bolshevik to whom the party is a weapon for the revolutionary reconstruction of society, including also its morality. To a revolutionary Marxist there can be no contradiction between personal morality and the interests of the party, since the party embodies in his consciousness the very highest tasks and aims of mankind. It is naïve to imagine that Thomas has a higher understanding of morality than the Marxists. He merely has a base conception of the party.

"All that arises is worthy of perishing," says the dialectician, Goethe. The destruction of the Bolshevik party—an episode in world reaction—does not, however, disparage its world-wide historic significance. In the period of its revolutionary ascendance, that is, when it actually represented the proletarian vanguard, it was the most honest party in history. Wherever it could, it, of course, deceived the class enemies; on the other hand it told the toilers the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Only thanks to this did it succeed in winning their trust to a degree never before achieved by any other party in the world.

The clerks of the ruling classes call the organizers of this party "amoralists". In the eyes of conscious workers this accusation carries a complimentary character. It signifies: Lenin refused to recognize moral norms established by slave-owners for their slaves and never observed by the slave-owners themselves; he called upon the proletariat to extend the class struggle into the moral sphere too. Whoever fawns before precepts established by the enemy will never vanquish that enemy!

The "amoralism" of Lenin, that is, his rejection of supra-class morals, did not hinder him from remaining faithful to one and the same ideal throughout his whole life; from devoting his whole being to the cause of the oppressed; from displaying the highest conscientiousness in the sphere of ideas and the highest fearlessness in the sphere of action, from maintaining an attitude untainted by the least superiority to an "ordinary" worker, to a defenseless woman, to a child. Does it not seem that "amoralism" in the given case is only a pseudonym for higher human morality?

An Instructive Episode

Here it is proper to relate an episode which, in spite of its modest dimensions, does not badly illustrate the difference between *their* morals and *ours*. In 1935, through a letter to my Belgian friends, I developed the conception that the attempt of a young revolutionary party to organize "its own" trade unions is

equivalent to suicide. It is necessary to find the workers where they are. But this means paying dues in order to sustain an opportunist apparatus? "Of course," I replied, "for the right to undermine the reformists it is necessary temporarily to pay them a contribution." But reformists will not permit us to undermine them? "True," I answered, "undermining demands conspirative measures. Reformists are the political police of the bourgeoisie within the working class. We must act without their permission, and against their interdiction. . . ." Through an accidental raid on comrade D.'s home in connection, if I am not mistaken, with the matter of supplying arms for the Spanish workers, the Belgian police seized my letter. Within several days it was published. The press of Vandervelde, De Man, and Spaak did not of course spare lightning against my "Machiavellianism" and "Jesuitism". And who are these accusers? Vandervelde, president for many years of the Second International, long ago became a trusted servant of Belgian capital. De Man, who in a series of ponderous tomes ennobled socialism with idealistic morals, making overtures to religion, seized the first suitable occasion in which to betray the workers and became a common bourgeois minister. Even more lovely is Spaak's case. A year and a half previously this gentleman belonged to the left-socialist opposition and came to me in France for advice upon the methods of struggle against Vandervelde's bureaucracy. I set forth the same conceptions which later constituted my letter. But within a year after his visit, Spaak rejected the thorns for the roses. Betraying his comrades of the opposition, he became one of the most cynical ministers of Belgian capital. In the trade unions and in their own party these gentlemen stifle every critical voice, systematically corrupt and bribe the most advanced workers and just as systematically expell the refractory ones. They are distinguished from the G.P.U. only by the fact that they have not yet resorted to spilling blood—as good patriots they husband the workers' blood for the next imperialist war. Obviously—one must be a most hellish abomination, a moral deformation, a "Kaffir", a Bolshevik, in order to advise the revolutionary workers to observe the precepts of conspiracy in the struggle against these gentlemen!

From the point of view of the Belgian laws, my letter did not of course contain anything criminal. The duty of the "democratic" police was to return the letter to the addressee with an apology. The duty of the socialist party was to protest against the raid which had been dictated by concern over General Franco's interests. But Messrs. Socialists were not at all shy at utilizing the indecent police service—without this they could not have enjoyed the happy occasion of once more exposing the superiority of their morals over the amorality of the Bolsheviks.

Everything is symbolical in this episode. The Belgian social-democrats dumped the buckets of their indignation upon me exactly while their Norwegian co-thinkers held me and my wife under lock and key in order to prevent us from defending ourselves against the accusations of the G.P.U. The Norwegian government well knew that the Moscow accusations were spurious—the social-democratic semi-official newspaper affirmed this openly during the first days. But Moscow touched the Norwegian ship-owners and fish merchants on the pocketbook—and Messrs. Social-Democrats immediately flopped down on all fours. The leader of the party, Martin Tranmæl, is not only an authority in the moral sphere but openly a righteous person: he does not drink, does not smoke, does not indulge in meat and in winter bathes in an ice-hole. This did not hinder him, after he had arrested us upon the order of the G.P.U., from especially inviting a Norwegian agent of the G.P.U., one Jacob Fries—a bourgeois without honor or conscience, to calumniate me. But enough. . . .

The morals of these gentlemen consists of conventional precepts and turns of speech which are supposed to screen their interests, appetites and fears. In the majority they are ready for any baseness—rejection of convictions, perfidy, betrayal—in the name

of ambition or cupidity. In the holy sphere of personal interests the end to them justifies any means. But it is precisely because of this that they require special codes of morals, durable, and at the same time elastic, like good suspenders. They detest anyone who exposes their professional secrets to the masses. In "peaceful" times their hatred is expressed in slander—in Billingsgate or "philosophical" language. In times of sharp social conflicts, as in Spain, these moralists, hand in hand with the G.P.U., murder revolutionists. In order to justify themselves, they repeat: "Trotskyism and Stalinism are one and the same."

Dialectic Interdependence of End and Means

A means can be justified only by its end. But the end in its turn needs to be justified. From the Marxist point of view, which expresses the historical interests of the proletariat, the end is justified if it leads to increasing the power of man over nature and to the abolition of the power of man over man.

"We are to understand then that in achieving this end anything is permissible?" sarcastically demands the Philistine, demonstrating that he understood nothing. That is permissible, we answer, which *really* leads to the liberation of mankind. Since this end can be achieved only through revolution, the liberating morality of the proletariat of necessity is endowed with a revolutionary character. It irreconcilably counteracts not only religious dogma but every kind of idealistic fetish, these philosophic gendarmes of the ruling class. It deduces a rule for conduct from the laws of the development of society, thus primarily from the class struggle, this law of all laws.

"Just the same," the moralist continues to insist, "does it mean that in the class struggle against capitalists all means are permissible: lying, frame-up, betrayal, murder, and so on?" Permissible and obligatory are those and only those means, we answer, which unite the revolutionary proletariat, fill their hearts with irreconcilable hostility to oppression, teach them contempt for official morality and its democratic echoers, imbue them with consciousness of their own historic mission, raise their courage and spirit of self-sacrifice in the struggle. Precisely from this it flows that *not* all means are permissible. When we say that the end justifies the means, then for us the conclusion follows that the great revolutionary end spurns those base means and ways which set one part of the working class against other parts, or attempt to make the masses happy without their participation; or lower the faith of the masses in themselves and their organization, replacing it by worship for the "leaders". Primarily and irreconcilably, revolutionary morality rejects servility in relation to the bourgeoisie and haughtiness in relation to the toilers, that is, those characteristics in which petty bourgeois pedants and moralists are thoroughly steeped.

These criteria do not, of course, give a ready answer to the question as to what is permissible and what is not permissible in each separate case. There can be no such automatic answers. Problems of revolutionary morality are fused with the problems of revolutionary strategy and tactics. The living experience of the movement under the clarification of theory provides the correct answer to these problems.

Dialectic materialism does not know dualism between means and end. The end flows naturally from the historical movement. Organically the means are subordinated to the end. The immediate end becomes the means for a further end. In his play, *Franz von Sickingen*, Ferdinand Lassalle puts the following words into the mouth of one of the heroes:

"... Show not the *goal*
But show also the *path*. So closely interwoven
Are path and goal that each with other
Ever changes, and other *paths* forthwith
Another *goal* set up."

Lassalle's lines are not at all perfect. Still worse is the fact that in practical politics Lassalle himself diverged from the above expressed precept—it is sufficient to recall that he went as far as secret agreements with Bismark! But the dialectic inter-dependence between means and end is expressed entirely correctly in the above-quoted sentences. Seeds of wheat must be sown in order to yield an ear of wheat.

Is individual terror, for example, permissible or impermissible from the point of view of "pure morals"? In this abstract form the question does not exist at all for us. Conservative Swiss bourgeois even now render official praise to the terrorist William Tell. Our sympathies are fully on the side of Irish, Russian, Polish or Hindu terrorists in their struggle against national and political oppression. The assassinated Kirov, a rude satrap, does not call forth any sympathy. Our relation to the assassin remains neutral only because we know not what motives guided him. If it became known that Nikolayev acted as a conscious avenger for workers' rights trampled upon by Kirov, our sympathies would be fully on the side of the assassin. However, not the question of subjective motives but that of objective expediency has for us the decisive significance. Are the given means really capable of leading to the goal? In relation to individual terror, both theory and experience bear witness that such is not the case. To the terrorist we say: it is impossible to replace the masses; only in the mass movement can you find expedient expression for your heroism. However, under conditions of civil war, the assassination of individual oppressors ceases to be an act of individual terror. If, we shall say, a revolutionist bombed General Franco and his staff into the air, it would hardly evoke moral indignation even from the democratic eunuchs. Under the conditions of civil war a similar act would be politically completely expedient. Thus, even in the sharpest question—murder of man by man—moral absolutes prove futile. Moral evaluations, together with those political, flow from the inner needs of struggle.

The liberation of the workers can come only through the workers themselves. There is, therefore, no greater crime than deceiving the masses, palming off defeats as victories, friends as enemies, bribing workers' leaders, fabricating legends, staging false trials, in a word, doing what the Stalinists do. These means can serve only one end: lengthening the domination of a clique already condemned by history. But they cannot serve to liberate the masses. That is why the Fourth International leads against Stalinism a life and death struggle.

The masses, of course, are not at all impeccable. Idealization of the masses is foreign to us. We have seen them under different conditions, at different stages and in addition in the biggest political shocks. We have observed their strong and weak sides. Their strong side—resoluteness, self-sacrifice, heroism—has always found its clearest expression in times of revolutionary upsurge. During this period the Bolsheviks headed the masses. Afterward a different historical chapter loomed when the weak side of the oppressed came to the forefront: heterogeneity, insufficiency of culture, narrowness of world outlook. The masses tired of the tension, became disillusioned, lost faith in themselves—and cleared the road for the new aristocracy. In this epoch the Bolsheviks ("Trotskyists") found themselves isolated from the masses. Practically we went through two such big historic cycles: 1897-1905, years of flood tide; 1907-1913 years of the ebb; 1917-1923, a period of upsurge unprecedented in history; finally, a new period of reaction which has not ended even today. In these immense events the "Trotskyists" learned the rhythm of history, that is, the dialectics of the class struggle. They also learned, it seems, and to a certain degree successfully, how to subordinate their subjective plans and programs to this objective rhythm. They learned not to fall into despair over the fact that the laws of history do not de-

pend upon their individual tastes and are not subordinated to their own moral criteria. They learned to subordinate their individual desires to the laws of history. They learned not to become frightened by the most powerful enemies if their power is in contradiction to the needs of historical development. They know how to swim against the stream in the deep conviction that the new historic flood will carry them to the other shore. Not all will reach that shore, many will drown. But to participate in this

movement with open eyes and with an intense will—only this can give the highest moral satisfaction to a thinking being!

COYOACAN, D. F., *February 16, 1938.*

Leon TROTSKY

P. S.—I wrote these lines during those days when my son struggled unknown to me, with death. I dedicate to his memory this small work which, I hope, would have met with his approval—Leon Sedoff was a genuine revolutionist and despised the Pharisees.

L. T.

The Collapse of the New Deal

FIVE YEARS HAVE passed since the inauguration of the New Deal and what is the celebrated State of the Union? The level of industrial production in March of this year stood at 37 per cent below last year's. Production plunged from 1929 to 1933 levels, in the brief span of a single year, a feat the Hoover Administration took three years to chalk up. Quoted stock values on the New York Stock Exchange were reduced by \$27,000,000,000 in the course of a year. Steel is working at 30 per cent capacity. The purchasing power of the farm dollar is 25 per cent less than a year ago. The ranks of the unemployed have swollen to thirteen million. All in all, it would seem, a singularly inappropriate moment for the *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt* to appear! The five volumes successively bear these titles: *The Genesis of the New Deal, 1928-1932*; *the Year of the Crisis, 1933*; *The Advance of Recovery and Reform, 1934*; *The Court Disapproves, 1935*; *The People Approve, 1936*. The conclusive sequel to this apotheosis was furnished rudely and without permission of the Brain Trust, by history in 1937.

The precipitous economic decline is relegating the myth of the New Deal to a place alongside its predecessor, the illusion of the New Era (1923-29). The economic millenium of Harding and Coolidge seems now pre-glacially remote. But dewy-eyed pilgrims from the European social-democracy once came questing to those shores for the secret of eternal prosperity. The installment plan promised to go on world without end, the nearest thing under capitalism to the just-pluck-yourself-a-banana economy of the South Sea islands. The supply of American heiresses for noble transatlantic studs loomed as inexhaustible. The learned professors proclaimed the permanent annulment of the business cycle. Poor Marx was triumphantly demolished as a sour German Jew, an exploded Hegelian, or charitably, as another eminent Victorian. It was the Golden Age, Peterkin, and a man named Lovestone explained it as "American exceptionalism". At the Moscow Congresses of the Comintern, the American communist delegates basked in the reflected glory of their bourgeoisie, masochistically proud of the strength of American imperialism.

Until there came a day in the chill autumn of 1929, when leaves were sere and pedestrians trod warily to avoid colliding with brokers leaping from the topmost flights of Wall Street skyscrapers. American capitalism crashed. While the extreme left of society had been predicting this in a general and routine way for years, the actual event found them perhaps no less incredulous and unready than the Union League Club. In the momentous period of 1929-1932, wages sank 60 per cent, salaries dropped 40 per cent, and dividends 57 per cent. Industrial paralysis created an army of 15,000,000 unemployed and 30,000,000 people were thrown on private or public charity.

The "Roosevelt Revolution"

Whatever difficulties historians may have assessing Roosevelt's place in history, there can be no doubt that he did manage for a time to salvage capitalism. On the morning of his inauguration,

the entire banking structure of the country had broken down and the masses were on the verge of hunger revolts. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which Roosevelt inherited from Hoover, took over the functions of Wall Street, pumping billions of dollars into every kind of financial and industrial enterprise, railroads, banks, insurance companies. By the close of 1934 there were 25,000,000 on relief. The country was put on a colossal dole.

In 1934 steel-rail production was 1,008,000 tons as against 408,000 in 1933. But of the 600,000 ton increase, the government lent the railroads the cash with which to buy 425,000 tons. "The steel industry, the automobile industry, every industry that has been boasting about its better business in 1934 got that better business out of Federal funds paid out to its customers," wrote John T. Flynn. "These industries are on the dole. . . . Their employees are on the dole. . . . The stockholders who have been getting the rising dividends and the bondholders who have been getting their continuing interest are on the dole too."

But the "Roosevelt Revolution" claimed more than that it had put America on relief. It promised that it would plan reform and recovery. "Yes," boasted Roosevelt in his Charleston speech in 1935, "we are on our way back, not just by pure chance, my friends, not just by a turn of the wheel, of the cycle. We are coming back more soundly than ever because we are planning it that way, and don't let anybody tell you differently." The nature of New Deal planning was quickly established. It was an attempt to curb the productive forces, by restriction of output and subsidizing scarcity. It was organized sabotage for the purpose of creating an artificial shortage. The Agricultural Adjustment Act was essentially a measure to restrict farm output. The N.R.A. swept aside the obstacles of the anti-trust laws.

Big Business was not originally averse to "planning" and actually took a big hand in framing the N.R.A. In 1932 industry had suffered losses of probably not less than \$8,000,000,000 and was thoroughly panic-stricken. In reply to a questionnaire of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce in 1932, ninety per cent of the replies declared in favor of economic planning. The Chamber wanted to eliminate "the evils of unrestricted competition", modify the anti-trust laws, and regulate wages and hours by trade associations under N.R.A. supervision instead of by statute. Big Business wrote the codes. Stabilizing industry meant stabilizing its largest units. Monopoly profits rose. Big Business was perfectly willing to accept all the state subsidies, loans and guarantees necessary. It had no objection to H.O.L.C. and the various farm credit instruments where the government took the risk and secured the mortgage-holder, the banks and insurance companies. 1435 manufacturing and trading companies quickly increased their net profits from \$640,000,000 in 1933 to \$1,051,000,000 in 1934, or 64 per cent. But once profits were restored Big Business demanded an end to government encroachment, a return to untrammelled exploitation.

The New Deal is primarily a petty-bourgeois attempt to rescue capitalism by the methods of social reformism. If the present

Stalinist effort to mobilize the masses in support of the New Deal is treacherous, no less false was their first characterization of the New Deal as fascist. Certainly the New Deal contains elements common to all capitalist state-planning and Roosevelt represents the Wall Street bankers in the general sense that he aims to preserve capitalist property. But it must be remembered that the social-democracy at different times also attempted to "control" capitalism by these methods. Examples are available from the experience of Australia, Sweden and other countries. Essentially based on the demands of the middle classes for reform, security and control of the natural resources, and with the organized labor movement in tow, the New Deal is the American equivalent of the Popular Front, social reformism *sans* a social-democracy. Section 7a of the statute requiring the codes to grant labor the right to organize and bargain collectively was conceived as a counterweight to Big Business.

The same fate which has overtaken social-democratic coalitionism, labor governments and Popular Fronts has caught up with the New Deal. Economic planning without attacking the profit system itself, must either lead to the iron rule of the monopolies, or create greater disproportions and chaos. Planned economy on a socialist basis involves creating a balance between production and consumption on an ascending scale by control of investment. It would mean control of production and prices, consumption, wages, profits, and income, of the output of capital goods and consumption goods, capital accumulation and investment, of agriculture and industry. The New Deal could prime the pump but could not control the flow of investment, a control impossible without abolishing capital claims and profits. Tugwell, Berle, Frankfurter and the other Brains thought they could have planned economy without the messiness of revolution. While capitalism was still licking its wounds, they would sneak up behind and before it could say Robinson, they would knock it senseless into a managed economy. That a change of property relations, of ownership was necessary was in Berle's view a Marxist prejudice. Under the corporate system, he contended, ownership didn't count—it was too dispersed. Management exercised control over production. Therefore it was easier to make demands on this "control group" than to put a government machine in place of it. Damn clever these Harvard boys!

Recovery—Diminuendo

The short-lived New Deal recovery proved an illusion. The Roosevelt Administration spent \$20,000,000,000 trying to pull capitalism up by its bootstraps. "It has actually spent more money in five years," moans the *New York Times*, "than was spent in the aggregate by all the administrations that have governed this country from the days of George Washington to the days of Woodrow Wilson. . . . Yet the business of the country has been subnormal three-fourths of the time." The fact of the matter is that there never was any recovery in the sense of an expansion of capital. There was a restoration of profits and a temporary stabilization at a lower level. In the past, capitalist prosperity depended upon the increasing output and absorption of capital goods; under the New Deal capital secured its profits by restriction. The New Dealers were no doubt equally aware that normal recovery starts from an increase in private investment but it was hoped that after government spending had sown the seed of the upswing, increased demand from private sources would replace pump-priming—and so make an honest woman out of the recovery. But when government expenditures were cut in the hope of balancing the budget, the upswing stopped dead. Private capital failed to "take up the slack".

Every depression before 1929 had ended with a recovery that carried economic activity to a point above the pre-depression

level. Crises were once a means of actually advancing capitalist production. But when the Roosevelt recession set in, production was still ten per cent short of the 1929 level. The most striking feature of the present crisis has been the complete stoppage of industrial development. There is no parallel for this in American economic history. New Deal expenditures served to prop up the sagging foundations of capitalism but not to restore its progressive economic force. Formerly capitalism surmounted its crises and restored prosperity because of increasing opportunities for accumulation. Today the productive forces are already too highly developed for the fetters of the wage system. The Brookings study showed there was an unused capacity to produce goods of over 20 percent in 1929 and yet 20,000,000 families had incomes below \$2,000. But unused capacity exists under capitalism because its use is unprofitable. Most important fact of all is that the New Deal could not solve the crisis for the simple reason that its roots are international. The loss of foreign trade is directly bound up with the world crisis. Recovery in the case of the United States, as of every other nation, depends upon the restoration of markets for normal export trade, and this prospect is more remote than ever. Every capitalist State is placing increasing obstacles to the international division of labor and trade expansion. Since the end of the World War there has been simultaneously a great increase in the process of industrialization and of barriers to economic intercourse. Incessant economic warfare has been waged since the armistice, a warfare that is now rapidly turning to military means for the solution of the world market problem.

The Social Crisis

The American crisis is thus no longer merely a cyclical fluctuation but a state of decline, ruling out all prospects of a new period of genuine expansion or durable stability. It is a social crisis, a crisis of the social order itself, involving all classes, and every aspect of economic activity. The present depression is a stage in the development of this permanent crisis in the economic and social relations of American capitalism. This by no means excludes the possibility of a revival but one brief and fitful, on a lower level, and yielding to a fresh catastrophe and more grinding depression. What is the last wisdom of the New Dealers in the face of the most recent slump? Precisely the same program of pump-priming that has already failed and is at most a form of relief, chiefly a matter of P.W.A. lending and granting activities. Paul Y. Anderson, a friend of the Administration comments: "The country will be fortunate if half this sum [the new P.W.A. appropriation of \$1,465,000,000] is spent by this time next year. The amount is too small to have a decisive effect on the national economy." Even if industrial production were again to rise to the 1929 level, we have Harry Hopkins' assurance that the number of the unemployed would remain between six and a half and seven and a half million. The increasing rise in the workers' output means their progressive displacement in railroading, mining and manufacturing, a displacement that, in the absence of industrial expansion, tends to become absolute.

The development of the crisis through its various stages, recurring upswings and precipitous declines, must have a searing effect on the consciousness of the American masses. The revolutionary movement will not have to wait for success until the American workers' standard of living has reached the depths of the German or Italian. American Marxists have in general been overcautious in estimating the solidity and power of American capitalism. There is, of course, no justification for rushing to the conclusion that American capitalism can be knocked down with a feather. But there undoubtedly has been a tendency to overestimate its staying power and to be dazzled by its facade.

The masses themselves are evidencing less and less their old confidence in capitalism. Twenty-five million Americans have been on relief, millions more on other forms of government bounty. American farmers have been evicted and foreclosed, overturned milk trucks and battled the sheriff. The jobless have invaded and occupied the precincts of the legislatures. The ex-servicemen have marched on Washington. The middle classes, their security gone, have been in a state of ferment. The Townsend movement, the Epic movement, Share the Wealth movement, Father Coughlin, are all signs of a changing attitude towards capitalism. The American working class has staged the unprecedented wave of sit-down strikes, in violation of capitalist law and order. They have shown the most impressive ingenuity and militancy in struggle. All this vast radicalization is proceeding under conditions of world crisis and imperialist preparations for war.

There exists an undeniable gap between the objective revolutionary conditions and the political consciousness of the masses. How to help bridge that is the crucial problem of the revolutionary party. The older forms of revolutionary propaganda and agitation for the socialist goal combined with daily agitation for minimum demands realizable within the framework of capitalism, have been outlived. The proportion of the total wage bill to the total value of manufacturing output in the United States has been growing progressively smaller. During nine years only of this last third of a century do available records of the wages and cost of living of 22,000,000 employed workers show any marked improvement. During the whole period from 1890 to 1918, the index numbers of real earnings moved within a range of only eight points. Under the conditions of capitalist decline, with the

output of capital goods and capital accumulation moving downwards, unemployment and lower wages reduce still further the worker's share of the national wealth. If in the period of capitalist expansion the welfare of the masses lagged behind the development of the productive forces, today successful resistance to exploitation is impossible without coming into conflict with the barriers of capitalism. Even the struggle for the so-called immediate demands must take on the character of a struggle against the confines of capitalist law and order (sit-down).

The situation therefore demands that the revolutionary Marxists develop a program of revolutionary transitional demands which will at once impress the masses with their essential realism as an answer to their immediate requirements and at the same time present a revolutionary challenge to capitalism. The failure of the New Deal must lead to deeper ferment and disillusionment of the masses with half-way measures and mere reformism. In growing despair, the middle classes may become more receptive to the demagogy of fascism. The sharpening class struggle will undoubtedly lead capitalism to subsidize reactionary violence against trade union movement, crush strikes, and suppress civil liberties. The imperialist war preparations will likewise be used to fetter working class freedom of action. Nobody can foretell the exact speed of events, but nobody has the right, in view of the catastrophic developments of the American scene in the past two decades, to count on an even and gradualist course of the class struggle. The big, immediate task of the revolutionary Marxists, therefore, is to discover America.

Maurice SPECTOR

A Head Without a Body

IT IS A LONG TIME SINCE a convention of the Socialist Party of the United States has met in such a state of internal apathy and amid such general indifference towards its deliberations on the part of the labor movement and the public in general. The bourgeois press, which has in the past accorded the S.P. national assemblies an attention more or less befitting America's second minority party, dismissed the Kenosha convention with obscure paragraphs. The labor press was scarcely more concerned, if at all. In significant contrast to its attitude towards the Chicago 1937 convention, the Stalinist movement and press devoted, this year, virtually no attention at all to the gathering of the Socialist Party.

No great wizardry is required to explain this state of affairs. The American Socialist Party has succumbed to a malignant malady known as *centrism*. The progressive development of the party signalized by the victory over the ossified Old Guard at the Detroit convention in 1934 and confirmed two years later at Cleveland, when the Old Guard finally split away, was abruptly arrested a few months after the Chicago convention last year. Terrified by their own verbal audacity, the party centrists made common cause with the right wing of Thomas-Hoan-Laidler. They launched a red-baiting expulsion campaign against the "Trotskyists" as a prerequisite—we quote one of the expulsionists—to putting the party on the auction block in the New York municipal elections where it was sold, without bids, to the LaGuardia combination, amid the applause of the Stalinists.

The mass expulsion of the left wing, carried out in as brutally bureaucratic a manner as ever under that Stalinist régime for which Thomas, Tyler and Co. profess such a virgin abhorrence, ripped the revolutionary heart out of the Socialist party. Whole state and local organizations of the party disappeared from the roster; the decisive majority of the youth organization came over to the Fourth International, leaving the old party with an

all but empty shell; large numbers of members, in addition, dropped out of the party, disgusted and disillusioned by the turn in policy and régime of the official leadership. Except for the sovereign state organization of Wisconsin, an autarchic principality of the right wing whose frontiers cannot be crossed by out-of-state party representatives without visa in hand, the rest of the party was reduced in the following months to a rather expanded but not overly active propagandist sect. That is the Socialist Party today.

Sects, very often, have their virtues which compensate in part for their smallness, lack of influence, isolation from the mass movement into which the revolutionists are sometimes driven by powerful waves of reaction. They can have no greater virtue and, in periods of reaction, they can have no other justification than a firm adherence to soberly worked-out revolutionary principles and an uncompromising struggle to defend them from all petty bourgeois attacks.

On the other hand, an organization without a very clearly defined program or set of principles, or one which does not yet have a fully developed revolutionary doctrine but is only in the process of elaborating it, can justify its existence at certain periods on the condition that it is moving *towards* the left, is permitting the unhampered expression of revolutionary currents, and is bringing masses of workers into its ranks on that basis. It is in this sense that every genuine step forward, every mobilization of the masses in a revolutionary direction, is worth a dozen programs, more accurately, a dozen confused or underdone programs.

But here lies the tragedy of the present-day Socialist Party. It has neither the revolutionary intransigence and principle of a Marxist sect without masses, nor the masses of a large and growing reformist party without revolutionary principle. It is a

centrist propaganda group, with the weight of political emphasis placed at the right. The Kenosha convention did not fail to underline this fact, as a few points will reveal.

1. Neither during nor after this convention was any appeal made to the "unattached radicals" to join the ranks of the Socialist Party. After the victory of the "Militants" at Detroit, this appeal was frequently repeated, in particular by Norman Thomas. It was attractive and exercised a strong influence on many revolutionary militants who, revolted by Stalinism, were nevertheless reluctant to join a "small group", however correct its program. The S.P. then appeared to be developing in a sound direction and offered them the right of presenting and defending a consistent revolutionary position in its ranks. This democratic aspect of the S.P. compensated, in the minds of these militants, for many of its defects.

The party leadership took this right seriously only in the hope that it would not be seriously exercised. As soon as it was, the bureaucracy abrogated it by administrative ukase. It has no intention of restoring it. So far as the left wing is concerned, there is no need of restoring it—for the left was expelled long before the convention and was as completely unrepresented in its sessions as it is in the ranks of the party. So far as the right wing is concerned, there is no need of restoring it either—for the right wing was never deprived of the right to criticism, inside the party or outside, to autonomy, and freedom of action, regardless of conformity with the official party line.

2. The anti-war resolution unanimously adopted at the convention is of a piece with the most recent development of the party. Compared with the by no means adequate resolution of the Chicago convention a year ago, it marks a tremendous shift to the right. About petty bourgeois pacifism, or pacifism in general, there is literally not a single word, not one. In Chicago, under pressure of the left wing, the party at least formally disavowed pacifism. This year it left it unmentioned, for otherwise how could a unanimous vote be obtained? About imperatively needed proletarian independence and a class struggle policy in the fight against war, again, not a word. About using the social crisis in the course of war for overthrowing the bourgeoisie, not a word, although this was clearly indicated a year ago in Chicago. As for the "biggest" enterprise of the party—the "Keep America Out of War" movement—the resolution is as silent as a carp; it doesn't even mention it. The active social-patriotic position of the Second International—of which the S.P. is the American section—might just as well have been an obscure phenomenon of the Middle Ages for all the reference made to it in the Kenosha resolution. The vital question of the defense of the U.S.S.R. in war, and its relationship to the question of Soviet-imperialist alliances against another imperialist group, is simply ignored. (Such an attitude is called: "giving leadership to the workers".)

But for that we find a program calling for "the abandonment by the United States of all imperialist ventures, whether of an economic, financial, or military nature, in Latin America," the only criticism of which can be that it is not supplemented by a point calling for the abandonment of immodesty in all brothels, superstition in all churches, and cretinism in all cretins.

One could continue almost indefinitely on this unhappy document without reaching bottom. But important is the fact that its radical introductory ponderosities ("War has its root in imperialism", is one earth-shaking example) simply have the purpose of covering up the completely reformist *work* of the party. And what is decisive is, as the Greeks say, *ou gnosis alla praxis*—not the theory but the practise. The pacifist practise of the S.P. in the "Keep America Out of War" movement, on the one side, and the perfunctory radicalism of a convention resolution which prudently omits mention—much less condemnation—of this practise, there is a picture of centrism for you, of the closed compartments in which it segregates its deeds from its words.

3. The trade union resolution is not less in character. If there is one thing that the S.P. leadership fears more than isolation from the unions, it is "offending" or irritating the American trade union bureaucracy. Even more threateningly than in the past, however, this bureaucracy is today the most pernicious obstacle in the path of an independent and aggressive development of the labor movement. No real progress can be made without smashing it, and replacing it with a leadership based on class struggle policies, free from contamination with and subordination to the bourgeoisie and its parties. The healthy movement of the ranks is there; it requires only direction, consciousness, encouragement, organization. The rôle and record of the Lewis-Green machines require no re-telling here. But the S.P. is quite able to hold a national convention and adopt a resolution on the trade union question which has not a word to say about this vital, fundamental aspect of the problem. It is as if it does not exist for the party. The resolution expresses the usual concern over the split between the A. F. of L and the C.I.O.; so, God knows, does everybody. It urges, you may rest assured, unity and rank and file pressure for it. But a call for the organization of all militants to fight for the class independence of the unions, for a class struggle policy, for a serious battle against the bureaucracy which subjects the unions to the bourgeoisie—that, you see, would not be a "judicial" and "realistic" trade union policy.

4. "The Socialist Party," reads the anti-war resolution "repudiates isolationism and narrow nationalism in all its forms." Good. Very good. Then it endorses internationalism? Also very good. And it intervenes in international questions? Apparently, for it does not hesitate to chide the Stalinern for its war-mongering. But the S.P., we believe, does not belong to the Stalinist International; it is the American section of the Second International. Is that something like being affiliated to the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks or the Phi Mu Sorority? Or is it to be taken seriously? Then what has the Socialist Party to say about the ignominious rôle of M. Léon Blum, fellow member of the International, during his premiership? What has it to say about Sr. Juan Negrín, fellow member of the International, and his suppression and imprisonment of followers of Caballero, also a fellow member? What has it to say about Major Atlee, another fellow member, and his passionate cries for bigger and better aviation and the defense of the Empire? What has it to say, in short, about the thoroughly chauvinistic, pro-war position of the whole International and its leadership? To condemn the Comintern is pretty easy nowadays and sometimes pretty cheap. It would be more serious if the S.P. were to sweep clean the thickly besmirched doorstep of its own International first.

But about its own International and associate members, the Kenosha convention had nothing to say, absolutely nothing! It did, it is true, "condemn the actions of the Communist International and the conservative political elements of Loyalist Spain in denying civil rights to the left forces". But the "political elements" it speaks of include—indeed, are headed by—"comrades" Negrín and Prieto, of the Socialist Party. Isn't it what those accustomed to strong language would call loathsome hypocrisy to condemn one gangster and to cover in silence another, just as guilty, only because he happens to be a member of your lodge or sorority?

It should be borne in mind that especially in these crucial days, with the war threat more imminent than ever, living internationalism is the only true touchstone for all those who call themselves socialists.

The Socialist Party today has neither numbers nor revolutionary principles and program. It does have Norman Thomas who heads a small coterie that dominates the party. The S.P. is in reality a head without a body.

Thomas has described a magic circle beyond which his "left" critics—if we may be pardoned the adjective—dare not go. Up to the rim, and no farther. For, as they say among themselves in awed-horrified whispers, if this or that point is pressed (*i.e.*, if we take our radical talk seriously), Thomas will drop out, and then what will be left of the party?

One illustration out of literally hundreds will suffice. During the intense debate over the S.P. capitulation to the LaGuardia-A.L.P. bureaucracy in the last New York election campaign, Tyler, Zam, Delson and confrères denounced Thomas as a traitor to the party and the principles of socialism, and his policy as treason. These are scarcely terms to be bandied about lightly. The treasonous Thomas-Altman policy was the one actually followed, as is known. Now comes the highest authority of the party—its national convention. Our "Clarityite" heroes, who talked so big last October, have a majority of the convention votes. Do they propose that the convention condemn the policy pursued in New York, that is, condemn the traitors to socialism and their treason? Their blood, never very rich, freezes

at the very thought. For this lamentable "left" wing, which takes very seriously the ever-present threat of Thomas to leave the party if he does not have his way or something very much like it, does not take itself seriously. It understands quite well how little indeed it represents today.

Poverty and misery give birth and sustenance to religion. Solace for an empty stomach is often found by the wretched in the adoration of an icon. The S.P. today is pretty well reduced to the icon of Norman Thomas. That is why he so thoroughly dominates the party and, in the public eye, is the party—all that is left of it. That is why he has his personal political column in the party press. If his views therein coincide with the official party line, no matter; if they do not, no matter. (See, for a characteristic example, the conflict between the Thomas approach to the LaFollette party and the official party statement.)

A head without a body—for where the body should be there is not the flesh and blood of numbers, the pulse of life, but an ectoplasmic emanation of centrist verbiage and political hypocrisy.

M. S.

Max Eastman As Scientist

IT IS NOT EASY to be sure just what Max Eastman is trying to say in his article, "Russia and the Socialist Ideal," published in the March issue of *Harper's Magazine*. He ranges over a considerable field, meditates on a variety of problems, psychological, historical, political, moral; and, as a rule, reaches conclusions so vague and general as to be hardly arguable. He seems, however, if we sum up the general impression given by the article as a whole, to have two main concerns in mind:

In the first place, he revives at length his perennial attack upon the "philosophy" and "religion" which he attributes to Marx. Now, the problem of what Marx "really meant" is an interesting one for scholarly research. We all know, moreover, that Marx made a number of false statements. None of us, if we take historical method seriously, is surprised that Marx was limited by the stage which scientific knowledge had reached in his day, or that his terminology was influenced by the social context in which he lived. I, for one, agree with Eastman that it is desirable to change, in part, this terminology, in order to bring it more closely into accord with contemporary scientific method and practise.

However, these problems of scholarly research and linguistic reform are comparatively leisurely, impersonal and postponeable. The Marxism which is of decisive moment to revolutionists is not the dried letter of Marx's books but the theory and strategy of the living revolutionary movement. And here Eastman adds to his familiar attack upon his conception of Marx a new attack, upon Marxism. In the past Eastman has attacked Marx, so he rightly or wrongly contended, for the sake of socialism. He has held that Marx's philosophy and its literal interpretation by present-day Marxists is an ineffective instrument for the realization of socialism. But he has never called into question the socialist ideal itself.

In this current article—if it is meant seriously, if it isn't mere eyewash and potboiler—Eastman takes up arms against precisely the socialist ideal. It is only a beginning; the attack is not yet launched against the socialist ideal in its entirety, nor indeed is it altogether clear just exactly what he is attacking. He still speaks, in one paragraph, of "we socialists", which might unfortunately remind us of how Aristotle spoke of "we Platonists" when he began his fundamental break with Platonism. But at the end he sums up "our revision of the socialist ideal". He remarks: "No mind not bold enough to reconsider the socialist

hypothesis in the light of the Russian experiment can be called intelligent." No legitimate exception could be taken to this statement as it stands by itself: every intelligent mind is ready to reconsider every hypothesis in the light of new evidence. But it is evident that when Eastman writes "reconsider" he means revise, modify or reject.

The traditional socialist hypothesis—the socialist proposals for the reconstruction of society and the solution of its major problems—has been, Eastman argues, disproved. It has been disproved from one direction by modern science, in particular by biology and psychology; from another by "the experiment in Russia". It is therefore necessary to revise that hypothesis; and the article ends with the listing of eight proposed points for such a revision.

2

It is Eastman's claim that he approaches his problem, and reaches his conclusions, as a scientist; and he criticizes Marxists for not being scientific. I wish to begin by examining Eastman's right to this claim, as shown by the evidence of the article itself. I certainly agree with Eastman about the desirability of employing scientific method in all problems where truth and falsity are at issue; but a method is not scientific merely from being called so by its user.

1. Eastman begins by stating that he is better situated than Trotsky for perceiving "the scope and significance of the Russian failure". This follows, in part, because "I am completely detached from party struggle and not vitally concerned about revolutionary prestige. I am in a position to regard Stalin and his dictatorship not as an enemy, but as a result". This opening is more than a little disingenuous. Eastman is saying that our processes of investigation and analysis are affected by the interests we have at stake. This is a psychological commonplace, and holds not merely for Trotsky but for everyone, including of course Eastman. Does Eastman mean that he has *no* interests at stake in pursuing his inquiries? This is what he *suggests* (and that is why I have called the statement disingenuous); but as a scientist he could scarcely defend the suggestion. His argument can be exactly countered by suggesting that *he* is unqualified because he is interested in defending his detachment. More than this: with reference to the particular problem at issue, it might well be maintained that "detachment from party struggle"

not merely runs the always present risk of causing biased selection of evidence, but specifically disqualifies the investigator by depriving him of ready access to a great deal of significant data. Eastman will not hold that "party struggle" is irrelevant to an understanding of the Russian experiment. Quite the contrary. And in this respect Trotsky is not in a worse but a better position than Eastman: he is acquainted with more of the data, and with more kinds of data, relevant to the problem.

2. Eastman constantly stresses his belief that Marxists are guilty of wish-fulfillment thinking. It is amusing to notice that both the content and the very wording of a number of his eight points listed in his "revision of the socialist ideal in the light of science" are simply—wishes. Above all No. 8: "We must guard with eternal vigilance the rest [of our individual freedom]." There is nothing necessarily wrong with this. An ideal is, in a sense, a wish. Socialists wish socialism. Max Eastman wishes individual freedom. But there is nothing particularly scientific about wishes as such. Science comes in when we ask whether the wish is possible of realization, and how. I mention this matter only to indicate how Eastman is using the word "scientific" primarily as an epithet of praise and blame and not as a description of one method as against another.

3. Point 2 in the revision is much more remarkable. "Problems of being and of universal history arising from this situation should be acknowledged to exist. . . ." Do I need to remind scientist and anti-metaphysician Eastman that contemporary science recognizes *no* problems of "being" or of "universal history"? These, the problems of traditional, arch-metaphysical Ontology and Cosmology are interpreted by contemporary science as either empirically meaningless or purely analytic, and are ruled out of scientific discourse. "It is a question," Eastman writes, "of going forward or of being stuck in the mud." Here, as elsewhere, Eastman is not in the least going forward in the light of contemporary science, but returning backward to pre-Marxian conceptions, to the very rationalist metaphysics which Marx himself so vigorously rejected.

4. "It is," Eastman says, "in the definition of the end that Marxism falls most obviously short of the standards of science. . . ." It falls short, he somewhat inconsistently argues, because it does not specify what the end is, and because it specifies an impossible end. It should be remarked: The "definition of an end", where the end in question is an ideal, is only partly a scientific procedure; in part it is an assertion of value, of what we want, or propose to try to get. It is possible, though it seldom happens, that someone might agree entirely with all of the Marxian descriptive analysis of capitalist society, and yet disagree with the end (socialism), preferring perhaps fascism and barbarism or simply retirement to the country. Science can tell me how to cure a disease, but it alone cannot make me take the cure. The analogy which Eastman draws between an empirical scientific hypothesis and an ideal end is not accurate.

But, secondly: it is not at all the case that a failure to blueprint in detail (as Eastman demands) the definition of an end is necessarily a defect. In fact, where the end is an end of moral or social action, the opposite is often true: too detailed a blueprint is a defect, imposing upon the agent either doctrinaire inflexibility or utopian unrealism, both of which alike Eastman claims to deplore. Intelligent action demands as much elaboration of probable consequences as we can reasonably accomplish under the given circumstances. A detailed blueprint is possible only where we have, in advance, comprehensive knowledge of all relevant facts: as in building a bridge. We do not have such comprehensive knowledge about either life or society. The most we can do or need to do, therefore, is to lay out a general rough sketch. We learn about the details in action, through cumulative experience, modifying, shifting, adapting, filling in the outlines provided by the rough sketch as we go along.

If a man, for example, decided to become a doctor, he would be unable to blueprint his career. He would, if he were intelligent, have considered the available alternatives in the light of the satisfactions they might probably bring, he would have made reasonably sure that he had the requisite potential abilities and could secure the means for professional education. Nothing much more. He would, most likely, not determine in advance even what branch of medicine he would practise in—waiting to see through experience what he was best at or what had most openings; he would not know the hospital where he would try to get his internship, or the office with which he might later try to get associated. In behaving so, he would not be "unscientific". He would be absurd if he did otherwise; it would be an astrologer, not a scientist who in such cases mapped out blueprints. Nor is it merely a question of insufficient knowledge in advance. The future is not laid out according to a prearranged pattern, but is itself modified by our actions.

How much more ridiculous would it be to lay out a detailed blueprint for the future in the case of a plan of social action, above all a drastic and revolutionary plan. If we are reasonably sure of the main outlines, we go ahead and find out what happens, adjusting ourselves flexibly to experience within the boundaries of our firm central purposes. Only in this way can we be genuinely scientific; the blueprinters are compelled to retire into their own imaginations from which their blueprints sprung, to become utopians or sectarians, and to complain at history because it doesn't fit their pattern. Eastman praises the utopian socialists, Owen and St. Simon and Fourier, over Marx because they had blueprints. Revealing praise! Does he wish us to return to the utopians? Here, as before, Eastman does not "move forward" toward contemporary science, but swings back to pre-Marxian fantasies. It was exactly Marx's scientific scrupulousness which led him to reject sternly, whenever the question was raised, the illusion of Utopia by Blueprint.

In passing, it might also be noticed how necessary the anti-blueprint temperament is at every stage both to the understanding of contemporary events and especially to decisive political action. The blueprinters were not prepared to make the Russian Revolution because Marx had expected the revolution first in the most advanced industrial countries. Eastman himself is blocked from a scientific appraisal of the Russian Revolution because he confines his attention primarily to its non-conformity with the blueprint he had accepted *a priori* instead of devoting his analysis to the revolution as it is actually developing. For all his metaphysical doubts, I am sure Eastman will not be the first to deny that it is Trotsky who has done more than any other historian in the analysis of the Russian Revolution as it has actually happened; indeed Eastman says as much in this article. How does he reconcile this fact with his charge against Trotsky? Can a scientific theory so entirely wrong yield such fruitful scientific results?

But, thirdly, a directive ideal, though it is utopian and religious, if utterly incapable of any considerable degree of realization, is not required to be fully and statically realizable. In fact, great ideals are never fully realizable (which is one reason why Heaven was invented: a land where ideals can be fully realized), and, because of their dynamic function would be meaningless if they could be. Eastman makes fun of many elements of the socialist ideal—"From each according to his ability, to each according to his need"; the disappearance of the State; the breaking down of the barrier between intellectual and physical labor; "society of the free and equal". . . . What is he trying to prove? If he means merely that it is doubtful that all of these ideals can soon and universally and simultaneously be realized, that many of them can never be *completely* realized, there is no ground for argument. But if he means that, with the technical means and scientific knowledge even now at our

disposal—without even allowing for the advances which all evidence permits us to predict—there is not even a possibility of realizing these ideals to a considerable extent, immeasurably more than realized today (though even today they have restricted operations), then he is being not a scientist but a mystic. He is once more *going back*, going back to an acceptance of the “tragic sense of life”, to the belief in the original sin which dooms man forever, to those religious, not scientific, doctrines which express, not prove, man’s weakness and despair in the face of the problems which confront him. The remedy for these moods is not science alone, but more determination.

Formally speaking, the ideal of from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs is impossible, since man’s needs are indefinitely expansible. But even within capitalist society, this ideal has gained some operative efficacy—in, for example, the treatment of the unemployed, the blind and crippled and aged, within the family, in the assignment of wages within a working class political party, *etc.* What possible evidence suggests that it will not have enormously increased efficacy once the technical plant is harnessed—as it certainly *can* be—to provide enough for the major material needs of men. Certainly no evidence from psychology or biology, to which Eastman appeals, which have not the slightest relation to the problem.

Marx, not knowing the monotony of modern mass production methods, was perhaps over-optimistic in hoping that labor will become instead of drudgery “the highest desire of life”. But with manual factory labor reduced to a minimum through the application of inventive technique (compare even today a continuous rolling mill with the former still existing mill for the same process), and hours of that type of labor shortened to a small fraction of the day, with adequate sanitary and æsthetic conditions of work, with general education and leisure, with city and country planned as even today they are technically capable of being handled, why should not labor become if not man’s highest desire at least part of a highly desirable life? And why should not the barrier between intellectual and manual labor be gradually overcome? Certainly neither science nor facts stand in the way. On the contrary, they provide the means for approximating if not achieving exactly the ideals of socialism, and they show that those ideals are entirely possible, not merely logically but materially as well. What stands in the way are men’s attitudes, among others Eastman’s attitude of despair and resignation. And the business of revolutionary politics is, among other things, to change those attitudes so that the means may be used, the science applied, and the ideals approached.

5. Eastman writes, toward the end of his article, that Marx tried to combine two contradictory ideals: the Jeffersonian ideal of freedom and rank individualism together with the industrial ideal of equality, coöperativeness and governmental regulation. He concludes his article (points 7 and 8 of the “revision of the socialist ideal”) with remarks which make clear that with him the first of these ranks much the higher, and that he will surrender to the second only what is “indispensably necessary”. We have here one more example of Eastman’s purely rationalist—non-scientific and non-empirical—method of analysis; and we have besides an old-fashioned Romantic (again, pre-Marxian) conception of freedom as the equivalent of arbitrariness and sheer spontaneity (a conception, by the way, familiar in Eastman from his tastes in and criticism of art).

Eastman is writing about Platonic Forms of “freedom” and “coöperativeness”, and arguing about the logical incompatibility of abstract categories. An empirical scientist will, in contrast, always examine specific historical contexts. The *Jeffersonian* ideal of freedom, based upon the life of free farmers on rich, virgin soil (and, to tell the truth, farmers who like Jefferson himself had slaves and servants), has little relevance to contemporary and future society. Freedom takes on new concrete meaning in its

new contexts. Eastman insists that coöperation and governmental regulation necessarily destroy freedom, because the two concepts are verbally contradictory. They would destroy a Jeffersonian kind of freedom, that is true. They would make impossible a Romantic kind of freedom, which considers the free man to be the one who does immediately whatever comes into his head, who acts from every momentary impulse with no thought of consequences or social effects. But coöperation, governmental regulation (if by this Eastman means, as he seems to mean, socialized economy), economic, social and political equality, in modern society are just what, and what alone, will make a more significant and meaningful individual freedom possible.

Here too we can discover faint foreshadowing examples even in capitalist society. In some places in the T.V.A. territory, the New Deal has introduced considerable “regulation” and coöperativeness among the subsistence farmers of the region. It has taught them how to save their soil, what to grow, how to terrace their land; it has introduced electricity and sanitary devices and even aided in building new homes; it has arranged in some instances that many individual plots of land shall be farmed coöperatively. In so doing it has undoubtedly decreased the Romantic and arbitrary “freedom” of the individual farmers to destroy their soil, half-starve, spread epidemics, raise rickets-weakened and pellagra-struck children, drink contaminated water, and work seventeen hours a day with little result. I do not think that this is the kind of freedom which Eastman seriously wishes to preserve. In any humanly important sense, the freedom of these T.V.A. farmers has been vastly increased, not contradicted, by greater governmental regulation, coöperation and equality. Nor does this in the least entail “spiritual regimentation” against which Eastman so rightly fights. That is only a cock-and-bull story of reaction. The breeder of spiritual regimentation is slums, low wages, unsanitary factories, universal insecurity, poor land—anyone with eyes can see that by looking at the human products of these conditions. The “regulated”, equalized, coöperating farmers are in an immeasurably better position to develop their own individual talents and tastes.

6. “To my more skeptical and yet far from pessimistic mind,” Eastman writes, “it seems obvious that if the socialist idea of a free and equal coöperative commonwealth emerging from the dictatorship of the proletariat were practical under an economy of abundance, we should find under an economy of scarcity some lame approximation to it.” This argument, Eastman’s main *formal* point against Trotsky’s analysis of the causes of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution, has become familiar during the past year. In fact, because of its specious plausibility, it has become a crux in the general attack on socialism as “disproved” by the “Russian experiment”. It has no weight whatever. Far from being “scientific”, it betrays once more an elementary misunderstanding of scientific method.

The fallacy here can be easily illustrated by analogous arguments in the same form. “To my skeptical mind, it seems obvious that if you can live comfortably on so many calories of food a day, you can live lamely on a tenth that number.” But you can’t; you starve to death on a tenth that number. “If heavy rain helps grass grow luxuriantly, then a light rain helps it somewhat.” But it doesn’t; a light rain, in a drought season, not penetrating to the roots and below, is *worse* for the grass than no rain at all. If intelligence plus honor make a noble man, it does not follow that intelligence plus a lack of honor make a *somewhat* noble man; rather might the latter make a much more *ignoble* man than would be the case in the absence of *both* qualities. Similarly, if an economy of abundance plus the dictatorship of the workers makes possible a rapid transition to socialism, including the decrease in coercive state authority, it does not at all follow that the dictatorship alone, based on an economy of scarcity, will make possible a somewhat rapid transition to social-

ism and some but less decrease in state authority. The opposite happened. The dictatorship in an isolated country plus an economy of scarcity led to the greatest *increase* in state authority in history. Many persons, including many revolutionary Marxists, *hoped* that this would not happen. But all that has been proved is that in the specific Russian circumstances, and probably in closely similar circumstances, the rapid transition to socialism with the rapid decrease in state authority which that implies, is not possible.

3

I have been trying to demonstrate, up to this point, that Eastman's pretension to scientific method in his analysis of his problem is no more than a pose. I have dealt chiefly with his *method*. I now wish to turn to the crux of his material argument, and to examine this in the light of the conclusions of contemporary science.

I have pointed out that Eastman holds that the socialist hypothesis has been disproved by (a) the failure of the Russian experiment; and (b) the conclusions of modern biology and psychology. What then, according to Eastman, is the explanation of the failure of the Russian experiment and what are the conclusions of modern biology and psychology? He gives the same answer to both questions.

"Developments that to the most ordinary shrewd good sense reveal a conflict between Marxian theory [on the degeneration of the Russian Revolution] and *the universal attributes of human nature . . .*" (my italics. J.B.). The theme constantly is reiterated: ". . . a scientific mind would raise the question what qualities in the material, human nature can be relied upon . . ."; "What *is* there in human nature to give assurance . . ."; "Is human nature . . . sufficiently capable . . .". The explanation for the failure of the Russian experiment, provided by the grandiose achievements of contemporary biology and psychology, is: human nature; and not mere plain ordinary human nature but "the universal attributes of human nature"; which include prominently, as we have previously seen, what but our old friend Original Sin.

Alas, Max Eastman! All in the name of Science, he now wants us to go back not merely to the Romantic, to the Eighteenth Century Rationalists, but hurtling headlong into the Middle Ages. We will revive the doctrines of Substance and Essence. We will dispute together, like good Scholastics before the Emperor, over the problem of "the essential nature of man", and refine our definitions to the vanishing point.

Are we to take him seriously? I do not need to tell him that among the very greatest of the methodological achievements of modern sciences, a presupposition of rapid advance in almost every field, is the abandonment of Substance and Essence in the interpretation of phenomena, and the substitution of functional analyses. Eastman himself praises highly Trotsky's "sustained sense of human society as a process rather than a thing". "Universal attributes . . ."—these, he knows as well as I, are the dead lumber of the Platonic realm of Being. And he knows also that the whole approach of the best of contemporary theory in education, medicine, penology, ethnology, sociology . . . is solidly based on the conception of human beings as active organisms, actively in inter-relationship with their changing material and social environments, changed by that environment and changing it. Is he tomorrow going to tell us again that men become criminals because they are "criminal types", that there is an "essential" difference between various races, that slum-dwellers are "naturally" slovenly, that scoundrels and hoboos and tyrants are Born not Made. Of course not. But this is where explanations in terms of "universal attributes of human nature", of doctrines about what human nature "essentially" *is* (his underlining), logically and plausibly lead.

To explain the failure of the Russian experiment by an appeal

to "eternal human nature" is to abandon the last vestige of scientific method. And, in point of fact, *nothing* eternal or universal can ever explain *anything* specific which happens. If any factor were eternal or universal, it can never account for *difference*, and without difference there is no distinction among events: that is, time and history dissolve into everlasting and undifferentiated Being. Let us assume with you that human nature is eternally and universally what it is. Then what explains that blunt fact that the Russian Revolution occurred, and degenerated? We are no further advanced in solving this problem. We must relate our human nature to the environment, material and technical and social, in relation to which it operated. Included in our explanation will be the specific activities of specific men and groups of men (the Stalin clique, for example); but these activities in their turn must be explained. They do not explain themselves, unless you accept a doctrine of Essence, whereby out of the Essence of Man there logically unfolds the particular sector of the Absolute.

4

A last question, which deserves extended treatment, but which I shall only summarize:

Human beings, assuming that we are not going to lie down and die, must be active in one way or another. Whether in individual or in social matters, we have no choice between action and no action, but only between this, that or the other line of action. This means that when selecting a moral or political program (which are generalizations of lines of action) we must make our choice from among the available alternatives.

To show that in Program A there is a difficulty, a confusion, a risk, is by itself without significance unless we are at the same or risk, together with approximately equal or greater positive time showing that in Program B there is *less* difficulty, confusion potentialities. There is confusion and risk in *all* programs.

Let us, for a moment, assume the truth of Eastman's negative criticism of "the socialist hypothesis". What does he wish us, then, to do? He is compelled, if he is responsible, to propose *another* alternative hypothesis, another program.

If *nothing*, in terms of action, follows from his argument, then the argument is not merely politically but also empirically meaningless, comparable to the idle academic debates over Ontology and Epistemology.

If something does follow, and it is not the program of the Fourth International, then what is it? If Eastman disagrees with the program of the Fourth International, just what does he disagree with and what does he propose to substitute? If he holds that the socialist hypothesis has been disproved, does he then conclude that we should be *passive*: *i.e.*, submit to imperialism? There are those who draw this conclusion, both in words and in action, from his present position; his position in fact justifies and rationalizes their passivity—and he is morally and politically responsible for this unless he makes unequivocally clear that this is not the valid inference from his position.

Does he think, in the light of a scientific appraisal of history, that a purely individualistic struggle against specific individual injustices, without the "inevitably degenerative" party organization, is the best program for "arriving at a more reasonable and decent general form of social life"? There are some who draw this conclusion from his present position; and he is also responsible for them, unless, again, he makes unequivocally clear that this is not a valid inference from his position.

These seem to me the only two alternative programs which might be suggested by the general trend of his current argument as it has so far been developed. If so, Eastman has placed himself in an awkward dilemma: his position is either empirically meaningless, in that nothing whatever follows from it in terms of action; or it is reactionary. And in either case, it is the friend of neither science nor the revolution.

James BURNHAM

Reform Labor Politics and the Crisis—II

WHEN AMERICAN CAPITALISM was in its hey-day, there was some economic justification for reform labor politics. There was some justifiable hope that capitalism could grant, and reform labor politics could wrest, substantial economic concessions for the workers. That period was buried beneath the crash of 1929. Since then American capitalism has been declining and it cannot grant substantial concessions. Before, when the concessions might have been wrested, the workers did not want reform labor politics. Today they want it but it can gain them little.

1.

However, even in the face of the widespread declines in production, employment and payrolls that took place between 1929 and 1937, a case could still be made for reform labor politics if only the following argument were true: That the declines in employment and payrolls were accompanied by increased profits for the capitalists. If this were true, reform labor politics would have a pretty strong justification. It could point to the inability of the workers to stave off falling wages and living standards because they limit their struggles to the economic plane. It could point to the bulging profits of the capitalists as something to be gotten for the workers through political action within the limits of capitalism. It could point to itself as the weapon by means of which the workers could gain substantial concessions in order to redress their economic losses. If this were true, reform labor politics would have an economic reason for existence. But *is* it true that the declines in employment and payrolls were accompanied by increased profits for the capitalists?

The facts are crushing proof that those who spread this argument as truth are either themselves ignorant or want to keep others ignorant. For the decline of American capitalism has not only smashed production, employment and payrolls, but it has also dragged down profits with it. For instance, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, which is the dominant bank in the Federal Reserve System, publishes a monthly economic bulletin called the *Monthly Review of Credit and Business Conditions*. In the issue for April 1938, the bank gives a table showing the trend in the amount of profits made by the American capitalists. The table lists 37 groups of corporations, containing 700 of the largest industrial and mercantile corporations in the United States and engaged in the most varied fields of economic activity. It shows their profits during various years between 1929 and 1937. *And it shows that the total profits of these giant corporations fell precipitately and was 21 percent lower in 1937 than in 1929.*

The truth is that the decline of American capitalism is turning "sour" the very top cream of industrial corporations. "Sour" is the word used in financial circles but it is only another word for falling profits. This becomes crystal clear when we examine separately two of the corporation groups. One of them is the steel group, whose output is the very backbone of an expanding industrial economy and whose profits can increase only in an expanding capitalism. In 1929, the 29 corporations in the steel group accounted for 372.9 million dollars out of the total of 2,687.1 million dollars of profits made by the 700 corporations. But *their profits in 1937 were 43 percent lower than in 1929.* The other group consists of corporations producing food and food products. The output of these corporations depends upon the purchasing power of the masses. So do their profits. In the amount of profits that they made, they were probably second only to the steel

group. *Their profits fell just as sharply, dropping off 42 percent between 1929 and 1937.*

Falling profits here do not tell the whole story. Class I steam railroads, which at one time were the sustaining force of American industrial development, and which still form a basic industry in the American economy—*Class I steam railroads showed a loss in profits of 89 percent in 1937 as compared with 1929.* The public utilities were one of the most important reasons for the prosperity that prevailed between 1923 and 1929. They are also strategically placed for profit-making, since they serve both consumers and industry. Nevertheless, *public utilities (excluding telephone companies) made 31 percent less profits in 1937 than they did in 1929.* Metals and mining corporations alone, of all the groups of corporations, showed a greater amount of profits than in 1929. However, its total then was only 70.6 million dollars, less than one-fifth of what the steel corporations showed. And its increase in 1937 over 1929 was *only 10 percent.*

These sharp declines in profits make ridiculous any hopes that reform labor politics can gain substantial economic concessions for the workers. The militant actions of the workers during 1937 make this hope even more ridiculous. For during this year the trade unions unleashed the greatest wave of strikes in the history of the American labor movement. Despite this they were unable to keep the rotten fruits of economic decline from being unburdened upon them. Could reform labor politics, whose action consists of talk and the ballot, succeed where the strikes failed?

The method of strike struggles was often sit-ins, whereby the workers seized control of the plants of giant corporations in order to wrest economic concessions from them. The workers not only seized properties, but they held them until the capitalists granted their demands. In both ways they challenged the very foundations of the capitalist system—*i.e.*, the sanctity of private property and the legal right of the capitalist to unhampered use of his factory. Nevertheless they could not shunt off the decline heaped upon them by capitalism in the form of unemployment, wage cuts, and lower living standards. But can reform labor politics, moving in the ethereal atmosphere of parliamentary halls, succeed where they failed?

The strikes were often pitched battles in which the workers engaged in armed struggles with the police, the state militia, and the courts. In short, the workers met in head-on conflict the very instruments of oppression of the ruling class. And as often as not the workers emerged victorious. Can reform labor politics, then, which leaves unchallenged the class control of the state—can it succeed where they failed?

The armed might of the workers failed because it was not consciously directed against capitalism. The conscious aims were union recognition and wage increases. The methods of struggle were incidental to this aim. That they had to resort to methods which challenged capitalism itself proved certain important facts: First, declining profits hampered the capitalists and they could not give in easily to the economic demands made on them. When they did give concessions, it was only because not doing so would endanger the very foundations of their profit system. They gave in for the moment and prepared for a more propitious time to strike down the workers. Second, the workers were concerned, first and foremost, with their own welfare and they acted as a class. If they could not get concessions through "normal" methods of struggle, methods that did not contravene the *status quo*, they stood ready to challenge capitalism itself. Third, the trade union leaders found they were unable to gain concessions through conference room compromises and they either had to ride the tide of militancy, even when it challenged capitalism, or be cast aside. The fact that so many sit-ins took place was due pri-

ERRATUM: In the preceding article on "Labor Politics and the Crisis" the words "reformist labor party politics" appeared twice. This was due to an editorial error. The words should have been "reform labor politics". The incorrect wording gave the wrong impression that I considered current labor political movements to be of two sorts: one sort being reformist and the other being revolutionary now or potentially revolutionary. It was my intention to leave this question open until I had sufficient evidence at my disposal to warrant a responsible judgment.—D.C.

marily to the militancy of the workers, who were goaded on by economic decline. It was due, also, to their constant pressure upon the leadership for action, and their ability to check the benefits of that action by their every day experience. Despite all this militancy, the workers suffered in the economic decline. And they suffered precisely because their challenge to capitalism was occasional, incidental, and subsided soon after it began.

2.

The persistent reformer may brush aside these difficulties by admitting them. All that we say is true, runs his argument. Nevertheless, *conditions have changed*. The present is better than the past and economic conditions are improving. For him, as for the famous Dr. Pangloss, this is on the way to becoming the best of all possible worlds.

Again, those who spread these arguments are either themselves deceived or they plan to deceive others. Consider the rate of decline in the basic economic indexes during the seven months following the current crash which began August 1937 and compare them with the seven months period following the crash of September 1929. The Federal Reserve Board's unadjusted index of industrial production dropped 14 percent in the 1929 crash, but it dropped 31 percent in the present depression, falling over twice as fast as it did in 1929. This drop reflects not just a few, isolated corporations but all manufacturing and minerals production. Moreover, it affected the profits of the capitalists. The Standard Statistics index of the profits of 161 corporations, representing industrials, railroads and public utilities, fell off only 34 percent in the six months following September 1929 but they fell 59 percent in the same six months of the current depression. It affected the workers even more sharply. During the seven months of the 1929 depression, the Bureau of Labor Statistics index of factory employment fell 5 percent, but it crashed 19 percent in the present one. The rate at which the workers were thrown into unemployment was almost four times as great in the present depression as it was in the previous one. During the same seven months, the Bureau of Labor Statistics unadjusted index of factory payrolls fell 13 percent in the 1929 crash but it fell 29 percent in the current one.

Here are comprehensive indexes from the most reliable government and capitalist sources and they prove certain things beyond question: First, the present depression is far worse than the previous one. Second, the drastic declines in production had scarcely less drastic effects upon the profits of the largest corporations. Third, these corporations kept their profits up somewhat by passing a substantial portion of their economic decline on to the workers in the form of falling employment and smaller payrolls. Fourth, with all the decline the militant opposition of the unions to wage-cutting had this effect: Whereas employment during the current seven months of depression fell almost four times as fast as in 1929, wages fell a little over twice as fast. The militancy of the unions stopped mass wage-cutting far more effectively in 1937 than in 1929.

Nevertheless, precisely because they accepted the limitations of capitalism, the workers also had to accept the capitalists' right to cut his costs and their own "right" to swell the permanent army of unemployed—which is itself one of the basic features of capitalism in decay. Reform labor politics also accepts the limitations of capitalism. Can it succeed where they failed? The workers were able to put a heavy brake on wage-cutting only by means of great economic struggles. How could reform labor politics aid them substantially when it shuns the grime and blood of their daily struggles; when, even if it does capture office, it leaves untouched the very organs of suppression which the workers must battle daily?

The answers are too evident to need extended discussion. The

workers *must* redeem their temporary submission to capitalism with increasing challenges to the very foundations of capitalism. The sanctity of property they repudiate with sit-ins. The authority and assaults of police and militia they answer during strikes with whatever weapons at their disposal. The injunctions of judges they disregard as they would the warnings of ordinary individuals. The very necessities of existence *compel* them, in their economic struggles, to challenge the limits of declining capitalism or sink into submission and poverty. But reform labor politics whirls in a loftier orbit. It moves in an atmosphere of council chambers, of counting of ballots, of counting of political trades and of counting of political clubs. Where the workers temper their ideological submission to capitalism and the state with class struggles that challenge both capitalism and its state, reform labor politics need challenge neither at any time and accepts both—always.

3.

Even yet, the economic justification for reform labor politics is not entirely destroyed. There is still a final refuge for reform labor politicians and opportunists. The argument may still be made: True, there has been economic decline in the past. True, there is worse economic decline today. But what of the future? Are there not reserves of expansion for American capitalism to draw upon? Should not the workers, through their political action, share in the profits which an upswing in capitalism will surely bring? The questions are rhetorical. The answer expected is, "Yes, of course!" But the dynamics of capitalist development repudiate this false optimism with all the heavy weight of precipitate decline. Here, too, those who put forth the argument are either deceived themselves or they want to deceive others.

A sustained upswing of capitalism depends upon an increasing output and absorption of capital goods. This has been true of all past upswings. This was true of the recent upswing. It is also true of any future upswing. In the past, three factors supplied the market for an increasing output of capital goods and in this way sustained the upswings of American capitalism. These three factors were mechanization of old industries, development of new industries, and industrialization of new areas. But for today, and for the future even more than for today, these sustaining forces of capitalist upswing have been in large measure exhausted. There are no old industries to be mechanized. There are no new industries whose development requires enormous output of capital goods. The new areas to be industrialized are contracting year by year. Within the United States, the profitable industrialization of the West has been pretty well exhausted. The foreign areas to be industrialized are contracting. Established countries are not good fields for capital investment because they are already over-developed and cannot profitably stand further investment. The undeveloped and colonial areas of the world are either divided up between the imperialist powers or they are the scenes of bitter competition. And the exhaustion of these sustaining factors of capitalist upswing makes futile any hopes of *future* recovery. But it does forebode *decline*.

It is the fear of *this* future that makes *Barron's Financial Weekly* entitle the leading article of its first issue for the current year "The Big Question for 1938". In its very opening sentence it poses this question: "The big question for 1938 is whether the American people will increase their per capita production, or dissipate their energies in fighting over the division of a subnormal output." In support of its thesis it publishes a graph of per capita output which shows that in the depression year 1932, per capita output was flung back to what it had been in 1900. The peak year of the *depressed recovery* that followed the depression was 1937. That year also marked the turning point into the current *depression within a depression*. But in 1937, according to the graph, per capita output was flung back all the way to 1914. With these

figures in mind and current depression already on, they pose the two alternatives.

Naturally enough, *their* two alternatives are both within the limits of capitalism. Actually, however, there is only one alternative within these limits. Under capitalism, the alternative of increasing the per capita output is impossible. The fact is that capitalism is declining. In its agonized efforts to keep up profits it is restricting and destroying production, it is destroying employment and the purchasing power of the workers, and it is destroying the living standards of workers and farmers. There is no avoiding it: Capitalism cannot increase per capita output.

The *only* future under capitalism is one of "fighting over the division of a subnormal output". But as capitalism declines further, there is less and less "subnormal output" to divide. The struggle for a greater share of less and less becomes sharper. The chasm that divides capitalists and workers yawns deeper and wider apart. Throughout the country, capitalist decline displaces the workers from industry and disinherits the farmer from agriculture. At the same time the "subnormal output" presses down both them and the middle class. This is filling up a reservoir of discontent which, once directed and released, will roll like a torrent through the country and shatter with its power the oppressive burden of declining capitalism.

This is the present and *this* is the future which confronts capitalism and the capitalists. Unable to keep up profits through increased production, capitalism restricts production. This cuts purchasing power, cuts output, destroys living standards. No matter. Capitalism must struggle to keep up profits. That is the life-blood of the system. That is the foundation for the dominance of the capitalists. Viewed from their angle, both capitalism and the political dominance of the capitalist class must be maintained even if workers and unemployed, farmers and middle class, everyone except the narrowing circle of capitalists, are bent beneath the back-breaking burden of economic decline. The one question they pose is: How can they keep the swelling discontent from overthrowing them and their system?

4.

Liberals and conservatives, big capitalists and small capitalists, all agree in this: capitalism must be saved. What they disagree in is the method of saving it. The liberal capitalists think capitalism can best be served by keeping the masses quiet with minor concessions. The form of democracy need not be swept aside since the contented masses will not use them to destroy capitalism. The monopoly capitalists think that concessions that were minor during the period of expanding capitalism are major now because capitalism is declining. They cannot be granted to the masses and discontent is sure to grow. The political forms of democracy permit this discontent to be channelized against capitalism and the rule of the capitalists. Therefore democracy must be destroyed. The state must emerge as the naked instrument of class rule.

Although the liberal capitalists are in control today, the course of events makes certain the political leadership of the monopoly capitalists. For as discontent multiplies and the threat to capitalism grows, the liberal capitalists will be faced with the alternatives: Either they support democracy or capitalism. If they choose democracy, they will have to submit to the destruction of capitalism. For inevitably, the workers and farmers will use their political democracy and civil liberties for this purpose. If they choose capitalism, they will have to support the only method that can save it in the approaching period of strife—fascism. And this means they would destroy workers' democracy. However, the experience of all history has proven that no class abdicates its power willingly. The capitalists of the United States are no exception. In the face of the approaching conflict, liberal capitalists and monopoly capitalists will slough off their minor differences

and unite on their common platform: the maintenance of capitalism and the power of the capitalists. And in such a conflict the only instrument to save capitalism is—fascism.

5.

Economic decline and the danger of fascism haunt the workers like specters. Their political answer can take two forms: one is reform labor politics; the other is labor politics also—but revolutionary labor politics. Both agree in their immediate aim: to use the political strength of the workers, farmers, and middle class in order to gain economic concessions for them from the capitalists. But here they separate.

The method of reform labor politics is to accept capitalism; to work within its limits even when, as is the case today, those limits are contracting and making it impossible to gain substantial economic concessions. Revolutionary labor politics works with the conscious knowledge that the overthrow of capitalism and the construction of socialism are the only way which can ensure the workers and farmers the real betterment of their living standards which the great wealth of the United States permits. It only begins with the struggle for substantial economic concessions within capitalism. It realizes that they are incompatible with the continued existence of capitalism. And it uses the struggle for concessions as a lever with which to overthrow the system.

Reform labor politics worships existing class-political relations as the savage worships an idol. Revolutionary labor politics would destroy existing class-political relations because they ensure the dominance of the capitalists and they stand in the way of the welfare of the workers and farmers.

Reform labor politics does its work within existing parliamentary grooves only. Revolutionary labor politics is tied by an indissoluble cord to the every-day struggles of the masses. It is first, last, and always, the political aspect of the workers' struggle for a better wage, better working and better living conditions, better schools, and a better life.

While reform labor politics scrapes obsequiously before the *status quo*, revolutionary labor politics prepares to overthrow it.

Both face the workers with their platform. Reform labor politics has the greater audience today. But capitalism in the United States is declining sharply. The danger of fascism grows. What are the political consequences of reform labor politics in the present crisis?

David COWLES

THE PRESS carries alarming reports about the arrest and impending trial of a group of Spanish militants who are known as adherents of the movement for the Fourth International, on the charge, not unfamiliar to the professional practitioners of the frame-up system in Moscow, of having assassinated an officer of the Loyalist army. The trial is scheduled to open *in secret session* in Barcelona.

The *Socialist Appeal* has already printed sufficient material to indicate the complete innocence of the defendants—whose very adherence to the Fourth International is an evidence of their opposition to individual action and terrorism as a political weapon—and to show that what is involved is another extension of the Stalin-Yezhov system, which has so horrified the international labor movement, to the soil of Spain. An extension down to tiny details, even to that of extorting a "confession" from one of the defendants, which, interestingly enough, the latter has since repudiated.

Not a minute is to be lost in giving vigorous voice to the protests of the labor movement—every section of it—against the new frame-up in Barcelona. It is not only the lives of the defendants that are involved. At stake is the integrity and future of the working class the world over.

Problems of Colonial India*

BEFORE GIVING AN account of the past year and a half of treachery heaped upon treachery as displayed in the actions of the I.N.C., we must describe the working-class political elements that make up the left-wing of this classic anti-imperialist People's Front movement. The I.N.C. itself is a mere carbon copy of the infamous Chinese Kuomintang (bloc of 4 classes!) transferred to India. Its predominant right and center sections consist of the native bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and radical-liberal elements. Its so-called left-wing is made up of the workers, *i.e.*, "radical" parties—the All-Indian Congress Socialist Party; the Indian Communist Party, and the Royist tendency (followers of the well-known Indian leader, M. N. Roy, who was released from jail a little over a year ago after serving a long sentence). These three groupings, of which the Congress Socialist Party is the largest, work closely together in the I.N.C. as part of the "anti-imperialist People's Front".

The character of the Congress Socialist Party is contained in its name. It is petty-bourgeois both in program and in composition. Its arena of activity is limited to the I.N.C. (At the last I.N.C. Congress it controlled approximately one-third of the delegates.) The party itself has few connections with trade unions in the industrial cities, and still fewer connections with mass peasant organizations. It was organized in 1935 by former followers of Gandhi (mostly Hindu students, educated in England—Oxford and Cambridge—and returned home to "lead" the workers and peasants), who had partially grasped the reasons for the failure of the Gandhi movement and had rebelled against its extreme petty-bourgeois ideology. Vaguely sympathetic to the British I.L.P., the C.S.P. stands programatically for socialism "in our time". Its independent program calls for numerous economic reforms and bases its political content on the demand for a Constituent Assembly. But it is infinitely removed (as its presence in and active support of the I.N.C. testifies) from a serious Marxian program for carrying on a revolutionary struggle against Britain based on mass workers and peasant organizations. The C.S.P. is essentially a *reformist* party. Even its most radical immediate demands such as that of a Constituent Assembly are put forward in an abstract, mechanical and parliamentary fashion. Thus, this proposed Assembly is to be based on adult—not even universal—suffrage! Despite the Marxian phraseology (ill-digested, to be sure!) of its publications, the C.S.P. meekly and pathetically accepts the bourgeois leadership in the Congress.

Its party leader is perhaps the single most important individual developed by the Indian Nationalist movement. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has not only replaced the largely discredited Gandhi but, in the eyes of the masses, he is looked upon with far greater admiration and from him are expected the greatest revolutionary deeds. An excellent agitator and orator, he has won an immense personal following. Nehru, in his recently published autobiography, describes how he became disillusioned in Gandhism and launches a fierce attack upon Gandhi's treachery during the "Civil Disobedience" movement. In his presidential speech to the I.N.C. at its Lucknow meeting (May, 1936) he attacked middle-class leadership. "A middle-class leadership is thus often a distracted leadership, looking in two directions at once. In times of crisis and struggle this two-faced leadership is bound to injure the cause and to hold back when a forward movement is called for." The Pandit professes to believe in socialism. "The only key to the solution of India's problems lies in socialism." How often has he repeated that formula! Yet, *à la* Earl Browder, he has often stated his willingness and readiness to "die for democracy". He claims to understand by socialism not some vague, humanitarian utopia, but the scientific socialism of Marx and Engels. Nehru wears the

*This is the last of a series of three articles.

badge of a Marxist, nothing less. Yet when we come to examine his rôle in the last I.N.C. meeting, as well as his actions since then, we shall see that Nehru, in his tremendous confusion, has been swallowed up by the labor movement's greatest plague, *the line of Stalinism*.

As is to be expected, the Indian Stalinists are faithfully carrying out the Comintern's political instructions. They claim great "progress". Emerging from their former isolation, they first joined up with the I.N.C. (a necessary step in the formation of an Indian People's Front); without any difficulty dissolved their "Red Flag Unions" into the All-India Trade Union Congress (1936), and proclaimed as their task the building of a "United anti-Imperialist People's Front". They advocate a program of the crudest nationalism and call for the unity of "all peoples against the British". R. Palme Dutt, the Stalinist Indian expert, declares openly that a movement similar to that of the old "national-revolutionary Kuomintang of China" must be built. With incredible cynicism, these people urge the Indian masses to pursue the same course that led to such disaster in China in 1927 (and again in 1938!). They ask the workers and peasants to join their own rulers in "common" cause.

Marx always pointed to the close relationship between the revolutionary cause of England and that of India. The same relationship holds for the cause of reaction and counter-revolution. With the English Stalinists still anxiously seeking to launch a People's Front in England, despite the abortive failure of their first attempt with the Socialist League and the I.L.P., it is quite in order to expect a corresponding People's Front for India. There it is today, already having delivered heavy blows against the liberation struggle. The motive of the Stalinists is clear. They say, in effect: "Let us get a People's Front government in England. This government will, we hope, ally itself in the manner of France, with the Soviet Union. So far, so good. But what about the English colonies? What if, encouraged by our success, the oppressed natives should carry on a revolutionary struggle against England for liberation. This will weaken England, Stalin's ally! We must therefore simultaneously destroy this colonial movement. We must not let it overrun the traditional bounds! *Ergo*, long live the People's Front of India!" The perfidious goal of the Indian People's Front is to choke off any attempt to fight against England and instead have the Indian masses fight in the approaching World War *with* imperialist England against Germany, Japan or any country that may attack the Soviet Union. This is the Stalinist policy in India, arrived from Moscow *via* London.

Does the reader require a practical illustration of the policy? Let us look at the Stalinist line in Indo-China (a colony of French People's Front imperialism). A little over a year ago, during Blum's honeymoon period in the Popular Front, Duong Bach Mai, Communist Party Counsellor in the city of Saigon, Indo-China, wrote the following:

"The risk of losing Indo-China [for France] no longer comes from within, but externally" (referring to Japanese-German accord).

"From now on the duty of France is clear. It must immediately restore our dignity and personality among the peoples of the Far East by taking measures that will *sincerely attach us* to popular and democratic France" (from *L'Humanité*, Dec. 18th, 1936). Likewise, the French Stalinists have maintained perfect and lofty silence during the periodic waves of police terror launched by the Popular Front régime of France against the natives of Indo-China, Syria, French Algeria, *etc.* Perfect silence *even* when this terror hit their own comrades, as in Indo-China.

Thus, death to the struggle for colonial liberation. That has

been the practice in France for almost two years; that is the practice and policy today in India. Furthermore, it must be understood that while the Stalinists would prefer to see an English People's Front government allied to the Soviet Union—this is *not essential*. A Tory government at war with Hitler will serve as sufficient excuse for the Indian Stalinists to lend their support (in full) to the predatory aims of England. This is the logic of Stalinism's colonial "policy".

Finally, the Royists. The American Lovestone clique has long claimed them as their own. Lately, for sufficient reason, they soft-peddle this relationship. M. N. Roy was a C.P. member who was expelled along with the Comintern Right Opposition in 1928. His influence was quite extensive at one time and still remains an important force in the city of Bombay. Politically, the Royists have accepted the complete reactionary line of Stalinist People's Front and are providing theoretical justification for the I.N.C. by serving up all the warmed-over arguments of Menshevism. M. N. Roy's latest work, a collection of letters to the Congress Socialist Party, is replete with this trash. Immediately upon his release from jail, Roy hastened to participate in the I.N.C. meeting at Allahabad where he soon displayed how far removed his ideas were from revolutionary Marxism. M. N. Roy had changed to a pure petty-bourgeois Nationalist.

* * *

Pledged beforehand to the support of their own native rulers, these three working class tendencies participated in the 50th meeting of the I.N.C., held at Allahabad in December, 1936. Meeting at a time of great uneasiness on all sides, the Congress was to deal specifically with the question of the New Constitution. The bourgeoisie, liberal and conservative sections alike, aimed to make out of the Congress a festival for *social peace*. Aably aided by the Stalinists, C.S.P. and Royists, they succeeded.

Nehru, to whom as president of the I.N.C. fell the job of delivering the keynote speech, sounded loud and familiar notes of harmony and unity. Preparations had previously been made by the Congress Socialist Party for this capitulation to the bourgeois wing of the I.N.C. when, at the Lucknow meeting of the I.N.C. held in April, 1936, the C.S.P. had withdrawn its resolutions favoring a struggle for economic demands. And now Nehru reiterated his "belief" in socialism, but his readiness to "die fighting for democracy". All sections were well pleased with the Pandit's remarks. The Congress then went on record as supporting the Geneva World Peace Congress (influence of Stalinism); adopted another resolution protesting the new "forward"¹ policy of the British; favored the convening of a Constituent Assembly which will create in India a ". . . genuine, democratic state".

To the impassioned questions posed by India's masses there was no answer save that of evading the struggle and preparing to accept Britain's will. A resolution was passed against the New Constitution, but it deliberately failed to outline any definite program of action to be utilized against its enforcement. The motion advocating a General Strike against the Constitution was tabled with the support of socialist and Stalinist delegates. The Congress refused to adopt any resolution or to even hold discussions on agrarian or labor problems! On the most immediate and practical question of the day—whether or not members of the I.N.C. should accept posts in the ministries created under the new Constitution—a step was taken thoroughly preparing for a future opportunism. Decision was postponed until after the elections!

On one lone issue did a fight threaten to develop. That was the matter of the reëlection of Nehru as the president of the I.N.C. But this skirmish was shortly ended. Under pressure from Gandhi, who emerged from his "retirement" long enough to do another good deed for British imperialism, the Pandit withdrew the ideas

¹This refers to the series of attacks still being carried on by army and air forces against native tribes far back in India's hinterland—the imperialists march again!

he had advanced in his opening speeches about India's need for socialism and issued a statement saying: "It would be absurd for me to treat this presidential election as a vote for socialism or anti-office acceptances." As a result, the right-wing withdrew its conservative candidate, all sighed with relief and Nehru was unanimously reëlected. As the *Times of India* (leading English imperialist paper) remarked: "The Pandit's unanimous election is . . . a triumph for the parliamentary wing." The only practical step taken in the entire I.N.C. meeting was the preparation of lists of candidates to run in the April election scheduled under the New Constitution. In short, acceptance of the "Slave Constitution" as an accomplished fact! Thus spoke the Kuomintang of India!

After this disgusting love-feast (with the British Lion as the main guest), the I.N.C. faced the elections. It possessed a blank-check, made out to reformism and opportunism. Very radical was its election propaganda. "This Congress reiterates its entire rejection of the Government of India Act . . . any coöperation with the Constitution is a betrayal of India's struggle for freedom and a strengthening of the hold of British imperialism. . . . The Congress therefore repeats its resolve not to submit to this Constitution, nor to coöperate with it, but to combat it, both inside and outside the legislatures, so as to end it." Yet the bourgeoisie carefully prepared for office acceptance, *i.e.*, administration by direct methods of Britain's will. They saw to it that only candidates of their own choice ran for the legislatures. No working class candidates were supported by the I.N.C. They drastically curbed the tone and scope of preëlection propaganda.

* * *

Yet despite the careful provisions of the Constitution, despite the divisions and strife provoked by the British, despite a sharp wave of terrorism launched by the police during pre-election weeks, the Indian masses rejected the Constitution and signaled once again their great desire to march into combat. The I.N.C. was returned with an absolute majority in 6 Provinces and as the biggest party in 3 other Provinces. This out of a total of 11. The power of this blow at British imperialism is further understood when we realize that every single I.N.C. candidate elected *was pledged to reject and combat the Constitution*.

Then the bourgeoisie of India struck swiftly. It revived Gandhi and conducted a great campaign designed to renew his former influence. It preached moderation and temperance. April 1, 1937—the day of *hartal* and spontaneous general strike all over India—gave way to July 9—the day of office acceptance. The Simla correspondent of the *Times* tells us of these changes: "Throughout the country generally, Congress leaders are adjusting their policies to meet the new conditions, and the Provincial Congress Ministries are endeavoring to bring their political theories into harmony with constitutional realism. . . . This reorientation of the attitude of Congress leaders gives emphasis to a statement made by the Premier of Madras, who urged Congress ministers and Congress members to speak with restraint and a sense of responsibility. He also deprecated attacks on the King-Emperor. . . ."

The inevitable step was taken. The I.N.C. formed ministries in 7 out of the 11 Provinces and today rules politically in most of India. Indian bourgeois nationalism once more served its masters. Roy, Nehru and the Stalinists meekly watched (and silently approved) of these actions on the part of those who had just delivered such fierce pledges of their will to struggle against the bribery of office acceptance. The lion of Indian nationalism turned out to be a pathetically bleating lamb.

The period since elections have been months of disillusion and despair for the workers and peasant masses. The I.N.C.-controlled ministries have refused to set free political prisoners, failed to put into effect any of the proposed land and labor reforms, broken numerous strikes (in particular, the great strike in the jute industry which assumed the proportions of a general strike involving

hundreds of thousands of proletarians), arrested its own members for political and labor activities, endorsed England's rearmament program for India, and is now openly preparing to accept the second half of Britain's new program, a Federated and centralized India.

To such an extent has this policy dampened the ardor of the masses that the I.N.C. felt it necessary to provide an artificial stimulus as a brace for its evaporating support. On August 1st, 1937, meetings held throughout India were requested to adopt a resolution of confidence in the I.N.C. Part of this resolution read: "This meeting sends comradely greetings to the Congress Ministers in the 7 provinces where they have taken upon themselves, in spite of limitations and handicaps, the heavy responsibility of steering public policy in accordance with Congress ideals. In this task of realizing Congress objectives, and of combatting the new Constitution [*sic!*] on the one hand, and of prosecuting the constructive programme on the other, this meeting assures these ministers of its full coöperation." Note the familiar hypocrisy and diplomatic language of the politics of betrayal.

Even the Congress Socialist Party is somewhat dubious of the present state of affairs. "The Congress sail is being filled with reformist wind. The right-wing with its feet in the administrative saddle now thinks in terms of reforms and not revolutionary changes. The constitutional mentality, inescapable with the policy of office acceptance, is growing at a pace even we had not apprehended. In that way lies the danger to militancy in the Congress"

(*Congress Socialist*, October 16, 1937). But the C.S.P. offers nothing and stands idly by, wringing its hands in utter despair.

The crying contradiction in Indian politics today is that between the treacherous leadership and the demands and aspirations of the organized masses. Even the peasant organizations (organized on a tremendous scale into the militant All-India Kisan Committee) possess a program far in advance of that of the I.N.C. They demand reduction in land taxes, end of rack-renting, abolition of debts, aid for the unemployed agrarian laborers, end of forced labor and well taxation, etc., etc. Their rallying cry: "*Inquilab Zindabad!*" (Long live the Revolution!). But the existing parties prevent all struggle; prevent the essential unity of peasant and worker.

It is palpably clear that a regroupment of revolutionary forces, aiming at the formation of a new party is necessary. Without detailing its program, we can state that it will base itself on the struggle of the Indian proletariat allied with the peasantry in an effort to achieve a socialist and agrarian revolution. Above all, the proletariat must learn to conduct a fierce fight against the influence of its own, national bourgeoisie and that, in the words of Trotsky: "the complete and genuine solution of its tasks, democratic and national emancipation, is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, and above all of its peasant masses." Then will the cry of the peasants, "*Inquilab Zindabad!*" take on life and meaning.

S. STANLEY

Russia and the Lithuanian Crisis

SINCE THE YEAR 1920, when the Polish General Zeligowsky broke the just concluded peace treaty of Suwalki between Poland and Lithuania and occupied one-fourth of the Lithuanian Republic including her capital, Vilna, there have been neither diplomatic, political nor trade relations between the two countries. The "dead" Polish-Lithuanian frontier was always strongly guarded by both sides, and the small frontier traffic, often interrupted for months by the Polish authorities, continued under the most difficult conditions.

While the "Ambassadors' Conference" recognized the *status quo* in the Vilna region in 1923, Lithuania never renounced her capital. The protocol of this conference was never recognized by the U.S.S.R. In the course of years, the Poles repeatedly made efforts to conclude an agreement with Lithuania on the basis of the *status quo*. Their efforts nevertheless failed, for even the International Arbitration Court at The Hague declared in 1931 that Lithuania was under no obligation to cultivate any relations with Poland.

This conflict seemed to have become latent and the question of Vilna had shrivelled into a shibboleth of the Lithuanian fascists, when, suddenly, it took on international importance.

How explain it? How explain, above all, that Poland suddenly displays so much interest in the small peasants' republic of Lithuania, a typical agrarian state? Very suspect is the fact that Poland mobilized a fifth of her entire army, hundreds of airplanes, motorized brigades, etc., allegedly only in order to establish *diplomatic* relations with Lithuania.

The diplomatic thrust is, however, only the introduction to a new thrust by Poland on the economic, and above all the strategic, field, and only from this standpoint can the totality of the Polish-Lithuanian question be treated.

Lithuania is a typical purely agrarian state, which exports agricultural products in order to be able to import semi-manufactured and finished commodities. Up until 1933-1934, more than 60 percent of Lithuania's exports went to Germany. But since the sharpening of relations with Germany, because of the Memel district belonging to Lithuania, the latter found herself forced to seek new markets in order to escape the economic exactions of Germany. She oriented her entire foreign trade towards England, which now receives more than 50 percent of the exports. Since Poland is in part also an agrarian state, her exports to Lithuania could never be substantial nor could they interest her in the slightest. Always much more important for Poland was the question of the outlet to the sea. While the Polish Corridor, with the Polish port of Gdynia, allows Poland an outlet to the Baltic Sea, the growing military might of the Hitler régime makes ever more problematic the length of time that this region will continue to belong to Poland.

Lithuania possesses a 56-mile-long stretch of the Baltic coast, including the port of Klaipeda (Memel) and the fishing port of Svetoji. Memel was built up strongly in recent years so that it now shows a comparatively large turnover in goods. In addition, there is the possibility of building up and expanding the fishing port of Svetoji.

The connection between the inland and the coast is completely satisfactory, thanks to the new Kretinga-Telsai railroad line and the Memel-Kaunas automobile highway now under construction, and business can easily be multiplied. Likewise, Lithuania lies on the road from Poland to the two splendidly constructed Latvian ports, Libau (Liepaja) and Riga. In other words, the establishment of diplomatic relations with Lithuania signifies for Poland, hitherto dependent upon Gdynia, access to the ports named.

The rich Polish forest regions lie on the upper courses of the rivers Nemunas and Neris (Vilija), flowing through Lithuania. Poland would like to extend her forest riches, but cannot, for timber cutting is notoriously unprofitable unless the transportation of the wood takes place along waterways and not on expensive railway lines.

The second question—Lithuania's strategic significance—plays by far the greatest rôle in the Polish-Lithuanian conflict. As the southernmost of the three Baltic republics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), Lithuania has a common border with Germany and Poland. Before the occupation of the Vilna region, Lithuania also bordered on the Soviet Union, but since after 1921 she has been separated from Russia by a comparatively narrow corridor.

In case of war with Germany, Russia can march into Lithuania in less than 12 hours and from there directly threaten East Prussia. Kaunas is in fact scarcely an hour and a half by airplane from Minsk. But should the Soviet Union have to fight a war against Germany-Poland, it has the

possibility of developing the front line roughly in the direction of Memel-Grodno-Byalostok. The advantages of such a front are the following: 1) the struggle is conducted on foreign soil; 2) the actual frontiers of Germany are directly threatened; 3) the march on Warsaw lies straight in the direction of this front. For a long time the Soviet Union recognized this and counted strongly on it. Thus, for example, she has had a non-aggression pact with Lithuania since 1927 and always the best diplomatic relations.

In recent years much has been said in Lithuania about certain strategical highways, the arming and equipping of the Lithuanian Army, the construction of barracks and airports, being subsidized by the Soviet Union. Just how true this is cannot be exactly established.

In the Winter of 1937, when the head of the Russian General Staff, the "fascist agent" who now sits behind lock and key, Yegorov, took a trip through the Baltic countries, he remained longest in Kaunas, where he was received with great pomp. At all times the relations between the Lithuanian and the Red General Staffs were most cordial.

It is generally known that Germany and Poland have sought for years to bring together all the countries bordering on the Soviet Union into a powerful anti-Soviet bloc. This coalition was to extend from the once philo-Hitlerite Finland, through the Baltic states, through Poland and Rumania, down to the Black Sea. This front, some 2,000 miles long, was to seal the U.S.S.R. hermetically from Central and Western Europe and thus heighten the chances of a capitalist intervention in Russia. In recent times, the only ones missing in this alliance were the Baltic states, for Rumania now stands closer to the Rome-Berlin axis than to France and the Little Entente. Latvia and Esthonia were already inclined to join this bloc, but bound to Lithuania through the Baltic Entente, they were compelled to take into consideration Lithuania's foreign policy and especially Lithuania's relations to the U.S.S.R.

In recent months, however, Poland conducted an extremely energetic diplomatic offensive in Riga and Tallin (Reval) and, it must be recognized, not without success. She succeeded in improving the relations between Poland, on the one side, and Latvia-Esthonia, on the other, to such an extent that some began to count even upon an eventual alliance between the countries named. But it was not only a *closer collaboration* with Poland, but a quite concrete drawing closer to the bloc of the fascist countries in Europe: Germany-Italy-Poland. This is evidenced also by the visit which the Latvian Foreign Minister, Munters, recently paid to Rome, where he was received with open arms. Now, only Lithuania was still missing from this chain, an extremely important link, for in league with Russia it could be and would be a bastion of the Red Army. But this might bring the front, in case of war, uncomfort-

ably close to the actual territory of the Reich and of Warsaw. But if Lithuania were an ally and not an opponent, then, again in case of war, it would be an easy matter to attack Leningrad through Lithuania-Latvia-Esthonia and to shut off the U.S.S.R. hermetically from the Baltic Sea and from Central and Western Europe.

It cannot be accidental that the border incident on the Lithuanian-Polish frontier should occur right on the day of the march of German troops into Austria and of the Italian offensive in Spain. Just as little an accident can it be that precisely *this* time the border incident should be snatched up politically and not before this; that it was right at that time that Beck, after a visit to Hitler, went to Italy, whence this Foreign Minister of a 30-millioned state suddenly hastened to Warsaw in order to put an ultimatum to a tiny 2 millioned state.

The Polish ultimatum was couched extremely categorically. The sense is clear: Lithuania will first be compelled to establish diplomatic relations with Poland, then to associate herself with Poland's policy, *etc.*, assuming that, following the example of Austria, she does not lose her independence together with Czechoslovakia. Possibly she will be exchanged by Hitler for Posen and West Prussia. The military offensive against Prague will probably be coördinated with the occupation of Lithuania by Poland.

And what did the Soviet Union do when she saw her line of defense threatened?

She simply made it known through her envoy in Kaunas that while she was filled with sympathy for Lithuania, she could not intervene at the moment.

Whereas the U.S.S.R. had never declared herself in agreement with the robbery of Vilna, she now deemed it possible to swallow the restoration of "diplomatic" relations between Poland and Lithuania, which had been preceded by an unheard-of military demonstration. With that the Soviet Union only covers up her flat capitulation, her weakness before the aggressive fascist states. Naturally, nobody can put the question in such a manner that Russia should have acted with military force in this case and brought the Red Army into play. No, it would have sufficed completely if the U.S.S.R. had adopted an energetic position, testifying to her self-respect. But in order to intervene energetically, she would have to cease being absorbed by a creeping civil war in the "land of socialism"; it would have to count upon a genuine Communist International which, by its revolutionary behavior, could call an energetic "Halt!" to the plans for annexation and dominance of German-Polish fascism. But are the present-day mercenaries of the Third International, corrupted by the ravages of Stalinism, capable of appealing for the *revolutionary action of the toilers*? Have they not allowed themselves to be degraded to the level of spies and *provocateurs* of the G.P.U.?

The fascist Lithuanian government, which oppresses the toiling masses, and

which is the only factor the Soviet government counts upon, is unable to do anything but fling itself into the arms of the stronger.

It is indeed out of the question that Stalin could summon the toilers to an independent revolutionary action, to the defense of the U.S.S.R., when he is murdering revolutionists by the thousands right behind the frontier!

This sinister policy is, however, only the result of "socialism in a single country", which, instead of strengthening the Soviet Union, has only lead to her enfeeblement and isolation.

Hence the most important task of the Lithuanian section of the Fourth International, like that of all other sections, is not only the enlightenment of the masses on the counter-revolutionary policy of Stalin, but also the preparation for the defense of the only workers' state in the world—the Soviet Union.

Kaunas, April 1938.

JEROME

MINNEAPOLIS, NEW YORK AND CHICAGO CONDUCTING SPECIAL NEW INTERNATIONAL DRIVES

THREE important centers, Minneapolis, Chicago and New York City, are engaging in subscription and circulation campaigns on behalf of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL during the months of May and June. Of the three efforts, the campaign of the Minneapolis and Saint Paul comrades is the most ambitious and imposing. Minneapolis has set out seriously to obtain *at least 100 subscriptions* during this period, and comrade Michael Freed, chairman of the committee, is confident that the goal will be reached. Other members of the special NEW INTERNATIONAL Committee are Arthur Hopkins, Tom Gaddis and Chester Johnson who is in charge of the records. Prizes are being offered to the contestants who obtain the most subscriptions, with \$1.00 counting as one point. The prizes offered are:

First Prize—*Collected Works of Lenin*, Eight Volumes.

Second Prize—*The Revolution Betrayed*, autographed, by Leon Trotsky.

Third Prize—Bound volume of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

In New York City, Abe Miller, competent Literature Director of the Socialist Workers Party, is endeavoring to mobilize the Party and Youth members for a NEW INTERNATIONAL Week in latter May, during which bookshops, newsstands, high schools, colleges and universities, both day and evening sessions, trade union halls, and public gatherings, indoor and outdoor, will be intensively covered with THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. The June issue, containing the feature article by L. D. Trotsky, is expected to sell strongly in various intellectual circles as well as among the tendencies in the labor movement. The N.I. sales in New York City are now much better organized under Abe Miller than ever before, but comrade Miller says that it is but a beginning. It is expected that the Y.P.S.L. comrades also will begin to take better hold of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

Local Chicago, during the months of May and June, will center on a subscription campaign, as well as general sales, for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. This will be the last big drive in Chicago before the fall season, writes Karl Shier, very able director of literature there. Isadore Bern is lending assistance in this drive; comrade Ed. Myers is making special signs.

Onward! Minneapolis, New York, Chicago!

BOOKS

Metaphysics of H. Levy

A PHILOSOPHY FOR A MODERN MAN. By H. LEVY. x+309 pp. New York. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

This book is motivated by a keen enthusiasm for the socialist movement. It deals with the philosophy "that explains how the movement has arisen, what shapes it, what it is becoming, and your part in it". The function of this philosophy is, however, not merely explanation; it is also meant to aid man in "reshaping the world so that his ideals may finally be achieved". Since not all men have the same ideals, one gathers that Levy's philosophy is not for any modern man but only for those who have socialist ideals.

With this general program for a "practical philosophy" revolutionary socialists will readily sympathize. They need a philosophy that is scientific, empirical and reduced to its fighting weight. But precisely for this reason they will find Levy's book disappointing. For his philosophy is neither scientific, nor empirical, nor is it unencumbered by the dead weight of those traditions which he so ardently repudiates in his introduction.

By far, the larger part of the book consists not of what is properly called philosophy, but of a wide assortment of scientific information. The treatment of this subject is ingenious and sometimes original, but often it seems devoid of any philosophical bearing. Anticipating this objection, Levy writes: "It will be futile to argue moreover that the matters we have touched on fall properly under other headings—sociology, science, ethics, religion, or politics—and are not therefore the concern of philosophers. If our problems are human problems, we cannot ignore these things that are vital to human beings, by withdrawing ourselves from the immediate and practical task of using our science, our sociology, our history, and our politics to shape the world according to our needs." Now, this argument is an abdication of all criteria of relevance. All *problems* are human problems. But not to all human problems is sociology, or history, or politics relevant. A problem in topology or in nuclear physics is human, since it is raised by human beings and its solution is attempted in order to satisfy a human interest. If one takes Levy's argument seriously, then problems could not be dealt with without using sociology, history and politics!

In itself this point is not important. But it is symptomatic of a bourgeois intolerance towards scientific thought when it does not yield immediate cash value, when, in other words, it is not technological. Underlying Levy's attitude is a confusion between the social interests of philosophers or scientists and the nature of philosophy and science. It is admitted that philo-

sophers and scientists, since they are members of society, should participate in social movements, and are in turn profoundly influenced by the structure of their society. But this does not mean that the problems of philosophy or physics are sociological or political problems. The demand that all intellectual enterprises yield immediate technological results is a form of fanaticism and it is not made less vicious by being supported in the name of the socialist revolution.

It is consistent with this anti-intellectual bigotry, that Levy's attack on metaphysics is no more than a shibboleth under which he tries to advance his claim to a scientific philosophy. In practise what he objects to is metaphysical analysis, not metaphysical dogma. He justifies this dogmatism by saying, in effect, that the philosophy of a "real human being" cannot wait to raise metaphysical questions. But it can give the answers. A strangely scientific philosophy! It asserts doctrines, but forbids their critical examination!

Take for example this assertion on page 15: "The universe exists", or this: "actual existence is something different from mere being". A philosophy of scientific empiricism could readily show that, considered as empirical statements, they are entirely meaningless. If they have any meaning, it is only as statements of syntax or formal logic, which is quit obviously not the sense in which Levy takes them. Moreover, Levy not only fails to analyze them, but he adds that "Those who question this need not proceed further with this book." This is astonishing advice, for on page 63 Levy himself denies the existence of the universe. He says: "Existence implies existence in groups." If this means anything, it means that if anything exists it exists within a group. But the universe does not exist *within* a group. Hence it does not exist at all!

Levy makes a great deal of his concept of "isolates". An isolate is anything we think about. It is a part of a wider situation which has become the subject of our examination. When the isolate is regarded as a unit in relation to other units or to a group, it is an "atomic isolate". When it is regarded as consisting of parts, that is, as a group, then it is a "statistical isolate". "Every isolate is simultaneously both atomic and statistical."

The universe, since it includes everything, is not part of a wider situation. Hence it is not an isolate. But everything that becomes the center of our analysis is an isolate. Therefore, the universe cannot become the subject of analysis, that is, we cannot think about it. These conclusions follow from Levy's own doctrines, yet his book abounds in statements about the universe. Can a scientific philosophy make statements concerning something we cannot think about?

Another concept of basic importance in Levy's book is "matter". Although he uses this concept very often, and in fact defines his philosophy in terms of it, his explanation of the concept is scientifically naïve and self-contradictory. Everything—it appears from several passages—is a quality of matter. But matter is not a quality of anything; it is presumably a substance. "It does not vanish, it passes from one changing form to another." Now what is this matter which "does not vanish"? "The word *matter*," writes Levy, "is used here for what we pick up as pieces and objects everywhere" and he adds that science may dissipate matter into light, heat and electrical energy. But if such dissipation is possible (and it is) then matter, as Levy conceives it, can be dissipated into something that is not matter, for obviously light, heat and electrical energy cannot be picked up "as pieces and objects".

These contradictions and obscurities are not incidental to the general content of the book. They are typical of the crudeness with which Levy treats his fundamental concepts and the resulting confusion pervades the entire work.

The chapters on "How a Quality Is Modified", "How a Quality Is Transformed" and "What Causes Change" form a Procrustean bed for science. By its means the concept of isolates is applied to a vindication of the so-called laws of the dialectic. A detailed examination of this operation is not possible in this brief review. One may, however, gain some impression of it from a few typical results of Levy's analysis. Note, for example, the following: "A scientific law is a unity of past and present"; "Number as a changing entity is a statistical isolate with an internal quality of continuity"; "The kind of Russia that has now developed" could have been predicted statistically in 1914; "The collapse of Russia was almost inevitable."

This last concept of inevitability is another example of the metaphysical content of Levy's philosophy. It is evident that no statement of the inevitability of an event can be empirically verified. For empirical science can tell us only what is probable, not what is necessary or inevitable. Any assertion concerning inevitability is therefore either meaningless or is a linguistic assertion concerning the derivability of some statement from given premises.

Levy's doctrine of inevitability becomes sheer mysticism when he asserts that although a change is "inevitable" it may be "delayed by the introduction of artificial constraints". It recalls the Aristotelian doctrine of potentiality and essences. In fact, despite Levy's arguments against teleology, his theory of inevitability makes his own natural and social philosophy teleological.

This review has concentrated on what the reviewer regards as serious and fundamental defects of Levy's book. Its merits lie entirely in its popular exposition of some concepts of probability, physics and economics. These commonplaces of science are available in many popular works where they are not obscured by the traditional metaphysics which vitiates Levy's treatment.

William GRUEN

Call Out the Militia!

CALL OUT THE MILITIA! A Survey of the Use of Troops in Strikes. By WALTER WILSON and ALBERT DEUTSCH. 32 pp. New York. American Civil Liberties Union. 10c.

Few books will be published this year of more vital concern to the labor movement than this small pamphlet. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, it contains "the first available material showing clearly the violations of civil rights by the militia" in the United States.

The facts assembled here on the use of troops in strikes speak eloquently for themselves. They require little additional comment. We shall, therefore, simply quote some of the most important passages.

"Today there are about 200,000 men in the National Guard, besides some 15,000 officers. This powerful army is equipped with artillery, airplanes, gas, machine guns, tanks. It is composed of every branch of service in the regular army. The difference between them is that while the regular army is composed of professional soldiers, the National Guard is composed of men in civilian life, training only periodically and subject to call in war or any 'emergency' or for police duty. The President may call out the National Guard for war or in a national emergency; governors, for state police duty where local police seem inadequate."

"National Guardsmen, when called to duty, are paid by the state. The rate of pay is usually nominal—one dollar a day while on duty. Most employers do not discriminate against men who are members of the National Guard because of possible interruptions of their duties. Often employees are kept on the payroll at regular wages during time spent in National Guard duty."

"The sums spent for National Guard upkeep are staggering. For the fiscal year 1937 the Federal Government appropriated \$38,004,559 for this purpose; additional funds are granted by several states. This record figure is nearly four million dollars above the 1936 appropriation and about ten million dollars larger than the 1935 appropriation, showing the rapidly growing cost of this military force to the nation's taxpayers."

"Originally under complete state control, the militia, thanks to a series of so-called National Defense Acts and amendments passed since 1903, has gradually come under federal control. As at present constituted, the National Guard is officially a 'reserve component part' of the United States Army, directed by the National Guard Bureau of the War Department. Federal money is used in part to pay the guardsmen and to provide practically all the equipment, ranging from mess-kits to tanks. The guardsmen, on entering the service, take a dual oath to state and federal governments."

"The National Guard, as it is now constituted and used, stands as a constant menace to civil liberties. Two major factors make this menace evident: first, the

increasing use in recent years of state troops in labor disputes, violating, with rare exceptions, the rights of workers; second, the ease with which the militia has been employed to build up the personal power of governors."

"A governor has practically unlimited power over the state troops. The rôle of the Louisiana militia in building up and maintaining the personal dictatorship of Huey Long is too well known to require elaboration. . . . Governor 'Alfalfa Bill' Murray of Oklahoma found over twenty occasions to call out the National Guard in three years." The authors cite similar instances of the employment of the National Guard in promoting the personal power of governors in Georgia, South Carolina, Arizona, North Dakota, Florida, Colorado, California, Rhode Island. "In these perilous times," they conclude, "the potential rôle of the National Guard in the creation of dictatorships on a local or state basis cannot be ignored."

"But by far the most important activity of the National Guard in recent years," the authors point out, "has been 'preserving the peace' in industrial conflicts. . . . Figures are more complete for 1935 than for any recent year. In that year, according to the chief of the National Guard Bureau, the militia was called out 84 times in 32 states and one territory in connection with 'civil disturbances'. Of these 84 instances, 18 were connected with strikes. In three instances, the militia was used for 'suppressing the unemployed', as the War Department report bluntly puts it. More than 35,000 men, including officers, were called out in 1935. A total of 22,000 of these men were used in strike duty and against demonstrations of the unemployed—nearly twice as many as for all other purposes combined."

"The record of the use of troops in strikes and demonstrations involving workers, farmers, and the unemployed for the five years 1933 to 1937 inclusive, shows a total of eighty-three instances in which troops were called out in thirty-six states. The map indicates the states in which troops were called out and the occasions in each state over that period. The number varies from year to year according to the occurrence of serious strikes. Troops are more frequently called out in national strikes where governors are induced by the pressure of nation-wide propaganda to respond quickly to the suggestion of threatened violence. It will be noted that in the record for the five years, troops were called out notably during the national textile strike of 1934 and the C.I.O. strikes of 1937."

"Although commanding officers of the National Guard, themselves recruited largely from employer and managerial ranks, usually are content to show their hostility to strikers in terms of action, some officers commanding troops on strike duty have given frank expression of their hostility to labor. For example, the police chief of Massillon, Ohio, testified to a National

Labor Relations Board hearing in July 1937, that when he objected to deputizing company foremen for strike duty, General William E. Marlin, head of the Ohio National Guard, exclaimed in exasperation: "This is no time to be neutral."

"The employers utilize various devices to put the militia under obligations to them. During the Ohio steel strikes in 1937 it was discovered that for years the Ohio Chamber of Commerce had been making annual contributions of \$20,000 toward the upkeep of armories. In some cases the employers furnish free barracks to National Guardsmen on strike duty. During the Elizabethton, Tennessee, rayon strike in 1929-1930, the Glanzstoff-Bemberg Corporation not only provided barracks but served free refreshments, provided music and furnished dancing partners to the men on duty. After the San Francisco general strike in 1934 the largest employers made up a 'purse' which was distributed to the National Guardsmen on duty."

These facts are taken from the first ten pages of this pamphlet. The remaining pages contain considerable more information on the reactionary, strike-breaking rôle of the National Guard that ought to be known to every union member and labor militant. We must see that they are put in possession of them.

The authors neglect to emphasize one significant fact. The alarming growth in the employment and anti-labor activities of the National Guard has taken place entirely under the régime of Franklin D. Roosevelt. This alleged "friend of labor" and "defender of democracy" has never once during his administration protested by word or by deed against National Blackguardism!

These facts prove, beyond a doubt, that the National Guard, although supported by taxes wrung from the workers, is never the protector, but essentially the suppressor, of the rights of labor. The state officials who call out the National Guard aim to break the militant action of the workers for the bosses. They are greater and more dangerous strikebreakers than the thugs hired from private detective agencies. The reactionary repressive rôle of the Governors stands out in bold relief when they send the National Guardsmen against the unemployed struggling for a handout to sustain their lives and families. Finally, the National Guard is the principal weapon for the establishment of dictatorial principalities in the states, as the police, as Jersey City shows, supports municipal despotisms.

What are American workers to do in the face of these facts? The Civil Liberties Union recommends certain legal remedies and legislative actions. The authors state, however, that "Recourse to the courts by labor for relief against abuses by the National Guard has thus far failed to achieve results." This is hardly surprising since the courts, like the National Guard, function by and large in favor of the employers

and are staffed and controlled by their servitors. Whatever legislative bills are passed to curb the violation of civil liberties by state troops—and they should be curbed in every way possible—they will prove insufficient to protect the workers' rights.

In order to defend themselves from all quarters, the workers, employed and unemployed, cannot rely upon the police, the courts, or the capitalist politicians. They can only depend upon their own united and organized strength. Just as pickets are needed in every strike to protect the workers against scabs and gunmen, so organized labor needs its own guard for protection against the bosses' guard. Trade unions ought to take the initiative in constituting such workers' defense committees.

This is the lesson to be drawn from the experiences of American labor summarized in this pamphlet. The deepening social crisis pregnant with colossal new class conflicts will inevitably supply fresh confirmation of this lesson in the coming period.

George NOVACK

The Truth About Spain

REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN SPAIN. By FELIX MORROW. 195 pp. New York. Pioneer Publishers. 50c.

There is no dearth of literature, in the form of sprightly reportage, adventure stories, and political apologetics, on the Spanish civil war. The more degrading the betrayal of the workers' struggle, the bloodier the defeats, the greater is the need for the variegated partisans of the People's Front to dress up each new disaster as a triumph for the cause of progress. The publishers' lists abound with brightly-bound volumes purporting to give the real lowdown on the anti-fascist struggle. Each morning the lovers of democracy go to their libraries, swallow their painless literary pills, and are emboldened to Carry On.

Every day a hairy-chested Hemingway gives birth to some new popular-fronting pæan to the thrilling Spanish combat; a Ralph Bates or Louis Fischer or Harry Gannes brings forth another political treatise, shiny with the gloss of authority, castigating the revolutionists and seeing a bright pink dawn in every defeat; a Rudolph Rocker or a Bertram Wolfe labors with might and main and produces a literary mouse which shouts, albeit somewhat squeekily, that the Poumists, or the socialists, or the anarchists, as the case may be, were right, intelligent, justified, and correct, but. . . . The terrible setbacks, the routs, the anguish of the revolution as it goes down in a sea of blood—somehow these things seem not to exist in the fictional narratives and "analyses" of these special pleaders.

Felix Morrow's book marks an abrupt point of departure in this literature on Spain, already bulky in volume but meager in comprehension or sincerity. His pur-

pose is to explain and clarify the Spanish events. The method he has chosen, although not especially new, is refreshingly novel in the literature on this subject: it is to tell the truth, plainly and baldly, without reading victory into defeat nor political sagacity into blundering and treachery.

Unlike some, more superficial Marxist writers, Morrow has not been content with a repetition of abstract phrases and slogans. The skeleton of revolutionary doctrine takes on flesh and blood in his book: the strategy and tactics of the proletarian revolution are not catchwords, superimposed on a neutral material, but part and parcel of the story itself, inescapable lessons growing out of the concrete experiences of the Spanish masses.

In this sense Morrow's book is not "objective", for the author does not stop with mere portrayal and fact-recording. Morrow has a point of view: he is biased in his solidarity with the revolution and his hatred of capitalism, fascist and "democratic" alike; he is a partisan of the struggle of the workers and peasants for power, and his concern is with the program and strategy necessary for the conquest of that power. But the author's "partial" convictions are not offered as a substitute for sober appraisal or scientific analysis. Careful documentation makes this a valuable source-book for every student of the Spanish events and of the proletarian struggle in general.

Out of the panorama of facts and the concrete analysis a grim picture emerges. It is a picture of the treachery and vacillation, the cringing before the stern might of the "democratic" nations, the hatred of the masses and their desire for liberation which permeate the leading circles of the People's Front and the Loyalist government. It is a picture, above all, of the straightforward alternative which history has posed—either fascism or socialism—and the ruthless way in which all those who seek to pursue a middle course are ground to bits by forces greater than they.

If the last twenty years of social strife have not presented us with proof a-plenty that when worker is pitted against boss, class against class, all attempts to mediate, to establish collaboration, to bridge the gap by combing the enemy camp for "allies", can lead only to catastrophe, Morrow's detailed history of the Spanish People's Front drives that point home with irrefutable logic. And the method which he has chosen is a happy one: the chronological presentation is interrupted from time to time with backward flashes and analytic remarks so that the implications of each development are fully drawn out.

The manifest absurdity of a "government of victory" which suppresses every move towards social reform in the interests of military efficiency is made strikingly apparent by Morrow's presentation, which shows how insolubly military strategy is welded to politics. To the land-hungry Spanish peasants, to the lean workers and the colonial slaves, anti-fascism means

nothing if it does not mean dividing the estates, seizing the factories, granting independence to the subject peoples—in short, if it does not mean government by the workers and peasants (for who else will grant them these things?) and not by their exploiters, even though they wear a halo of "democracy" conferred on them by anarchist, Stalinist and socialist misleaders.

The military history of the civil war is here, in every pertinent detail, and it does not make a pretty story. The sections of the bourgeoisie dominating the People's Front are exposed for what they are, and the treachery which resulted in the ignominious defeats of Bilbao, Santander, Oviedo, and the collapse of the Biscayan, Aragon and Asturian fronts in general, is placed where it belongs, at their door and at the door of the labor "leaders" who shielded them at every turn. At every stage, the magnificent Spanish working class has been sacrificed on the altar of a democratic capitalism which is itself resorting more and more to the totalitarian methods of fascism, all for the greater glory and profit of the Spanish, French and British capitalists. That is the bitter story of the Spanish war, and no writer until now has dared to tell it in such merciless detail.

Bernard WOLFE

Czechoslovakia's Fate

WATCH CZECHOSLOVAKIA! By RICHARD FREUND. 112 pp. New York. Oxford University Press. \$1.50.

Richard Freund, a native of Austria, grew up in Germany and became a British subject some years ago. He is the author of a book published last year, *Zero Hour*, in which, with the factual thoroughness and colorless style of a German scholar, he gives a survey of the matters of dispute for world imperialism, chiefly from the point of view of Downing Street interests.

Freund's latest book displays all the weaknesses of his literary method. In its condensation of facts without internal cohesion, its simplification of problems and its dry presentation of material, it is reminiscent of a high-school text which provides superficial knowledge to the point of boredom. Nevertheless, the reader who lacks elementary information about Czechoslovakia may profit from the book.

The ideology of the author, who writes mainly for the British public, pursues a middle course between collective security and "splendid isolation", the path along which Eden, quoted in this book with deep devotion, has already broken his neck. Freund criticizes the "blunders" of the Czech bourgeoisie in handling the national problems. But all the more emphatically does he sing the customary praises to Czechoslovakian democracy, whose destruction by Hitler, for all we know, might at some point serve even British imperialism as a supplementary moral justification for entering the next war.

Against Goebbel's propaganda, the author defends the French and Czechoslovakian alliances with Russia on the

CLIPPINGS

Accolade by Herve

In *La Victoire* (Paris, Apr. 16, 1938), the former extreme left-wing anti-militarist of French socialism, Gustave Hervé, who became no less extreme a chauvinist throughout the war and who has in recent years edited his paper on a frankly fascist program, gives the French Communist Party his patriotic benediction.

THE heads of the trade union organization of the metallurgical workers have just issued an appeal to the wisdom, the moderation and the patriotism of their comrades. These leaders call their flock back to "the prudence it will be important to observe in the future concerning the utilization of the strike as the ultimate means of defending their claims".

They must "reconcile the defense of their own interests with the concern for guarding and contributing to the security of their country. French independence and liberties must not be imperilled."

Certain journals blinded by hatred of the communists are making game of the cowardice and the hypocrisy of these communist leaders who launch their troops into an adventure like the present strike of the metallurgists and who, feeling defeat coming, are driving to end the occupation of the factories.

The truth is that since 1933 the communist leaders, far from instigating strikes, are trying to curb them as much as they can. Since 1933? Yes, since the arrival of Hitler to the supreme command of Germany and the re-appearance on the scene of the Pan-German colossus.

We said yesterday to one of our good confrères of the left that it is not the Cagou-lards, or some other occult force, manipulated by Hitler and Mussolini, who are inciting our workers to commit stupidities; that the generalized indiscipline of our workers' circles is due to the mortal errors of the French Revolution; we are obliged today to say again to certain of our confrères of the right that it is these mortal errors of our great Bolshevistic and anarchistic revolution of 1793 which are the sole causes of the anarchy that now rages in our workers' circles and that since 1933 the communist leaders, without daring to brave this red wave openly, have been trying to canalize it and to limit its ravages.

What Croizat and the other communist leaders of the metal workers' union say today is exactly what Thorez said during the first wave of strikes and [factory] occupations, when, brusquely, from the top of the tribune of *l'Humanité*, he said one day: "No, everything is not possible," and again: "We must know how to finish a strike," or when he sang, at about the same time, his couplets on the *Marseillaise* and the love of the fatherland, or when he stretched out the hand to the Catholics.

To the outsider, all this does not appear very clearly: but it is perfectly obvious to us, to us who have a feeling for the ignorant and ardent circles which the communist circles are, and who love them, if only for

the natural reason that all the present communist leaders, most often unwittingly, are the intellectual children and the pupils of our journal when, before 1914, it called itself *La Guerre Sociale*.

If they collided head-on with the circles whom they hopped up, until 1933, with their revolutionary alcohol, they would be thrown overboard—just as we ourselves were, during the war. The evolution they have had their troops go through since 1933, in the direction of a national and reformist socialism, with nothing communistic left in it, shows that their method is not without some advantages.

They brought them back, as we ourselves tried to do, from Karl Marx, the malignant doctrinaire who had no patriotism at all in him, to Blanqui, the idealistic leader of that French socialism which was so ardently nationalistic before Karl Marx poisoned socialism with his Prussian cult of brute force.

Those who are entirely unaware of this profound evolution which converted our communistic and internationalistic Bolsheviks into very nationalistic Radical-Socialists, but who feel it confusedly, say with anguish: "This return to a reformist and patriotic socialism, is just pretense. It is Stalin who ordered them to make this manoeuvre because he needs the French Army and French strength to protect himself against the Hitlerite menace."

The truth is that the threat of Hitler produced instantaneously the same reflex in Stalin and among our French communists. They were afraid, the one for Russia, the others for France. And instantaneously and parallelly, moved by the same instinct for preservation, Stalin and our communists, even before coming to an agreement officially, rectified their position simultaneously. And even had it been Stalin who helped our communists to find the fatherland again, we would have to be thankful to him and to bless the Franco-Russian mutual defense pact. Isn't it the German menace, suddenly discernible in 1912, which abruptly opened up the eyes of our group of *La Guerre Sociale* and brought them over completely—since 1912—to a national socialism bordering on that still preached by *La Victoire*?

The blind who are conducting a violent and perfidious campaign in France against the Franco-Russian mutual defense pact do not, moreover, seem to perceive that Stalin, in the light shed for him by the triumph of Hitler in Germany, has discovered that communism is a mortal error. It is visible that, since 1933, instead of the Bolshevik communist that he was, he has become a genuine national socialist. Witness his manner—resembling a little too much that of Ivan the Terrible—of getting rid of all the communists who remained Bolsheviks. Witness, again, the reintegration into the Red Army of officers of the old régime. Finally, witness the patriotic Jacobin tone he adopts in speaking of the Russian army, Russian aviation, Russian fleet, Russian fatherland. Witness even the relatively tame way in which he supported the Spanish "anarchist" revolution....

grounds of Stalin's renunciation of communism, whereas Germany signed a treaty of amity with Russia "when Trotsky's policy of kindling world revolution was not yet superceded by Stalin's policy of consolidating the Soviet system in Russia alone".

The book was written before the annexation of Austria. In the main its point of departure is the idea that Czechoslovakia will be absorbed by Hitler before Vienna. And even within this variant of a neutral Austria—already eliminated—he reckons the limits of Czech resistance against German aggression in days and weeks. "If Czechoslovakia is reduced within a week, her allies might grudgingly accept the accomplished fact. If she holds out for a month, it will be almost impossible to avoid a general European War." After the recent Austrian experience, one cannot take issue with the time limits given by Freund, but one can seriously doubt that Czech "democracy" will really be defended by the partisans of collective security.

In Freund's book there is not one line of analysis of the *social problems* in Czechoslovakia. The author mentions, in passing, that "a visit to the German areas of Bohemia reveals a heartrending picture of poverty and distress. Everywhere one sees deserted factories, silent looms, empty pit-heads, smokeless chimneys. . . . In their despair the people [the German workers—W.K.] firmly believe that the Czechs wish to exterminate them".

If we add the sparse words devoted to the communist party, we have the key to the approaching catastrophe of the Czechoslovakian proletariat. "The communist party is small and powerless; its occasional proposals for the formation of a 'Popular Front' have always been turned down by the socialists, who belong to the broad government coalition. . . . The problem of communism simply does not exist in Czechoslovakia."

At the time of its foundation the communist party, embracing revolutionary workers and peasants of all nations within the Czechoslovakian republic, reached a membership of almost half a million, with only 2 percent of white-collar and intellectual elements. At the moment of Hitler's rise to power the party had, according to the official figures of the Comintern, only 30,000 members—in reality, scarcely more than 10,000. The turn toward the People's Front attracted new adherents, preponderantly from the Jewish petty bourgeoisie. At the same time this once internationalist party, whose sole ambition is now to gain recognition from the Czech bourgeoisie for its state loyalty, became a purely Czech nationalist party, pushing the workers and peasants of the other nations into the arms of fascism and reaction.

Nothing can illustrate this circumstance better than the fact that Henlein is claiming, in defiance of both the Prague government and the Stalinist party, the right of self-determination for all national groups within Czechoslovakia. In this sense the present events in Czechoslovakia are precisely a "problem of communism", its crisis and its betrayal by the Third International.

W. KELLER

A Letter From China...

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一九三八年四月十九日

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TRANSLATION

Shanghai, April 19, 1938

The Communist League of China (4th International) sends its warmest greetings to its comrades of the Socialist Workers Party of the United States and particularly congratulates it upon the re-publication of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. The Chinese comrades are all eager to receive THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. Articles from its pages are regularly translated and as such it forms a powerful weapon for international revolution. Again our congratulations and greetings!

The Communist League of China
By C. C. Chang, Sec'y.

* * *

The letter of our friends in China, who are right in the thick of the war for freedom, is but one of scores of similar communications we get from all parts of the world. They emphasize the solid position our review has attained in the radical movement.

The six issues of the new series of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL that have now appeared, were published largely by the support of a comparatively small number of friends. Without hysterical cries, we nevertheless are obliged to call the attention of our numerous friends to the immediate and urgent need of wider aid if our review is to continue unhampered by financial difficulties. The summer months are the hardest. We appeal to all our friends to help tide the review over its present difficulties by speedy and generous contributions. We feel that an adequate response will be made by the friends of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL in the United States and all over the world, without detailed urgings.

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