

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

The Socialist Workers Party Convention
By the Editors

**The Moralists and the Sycophants
Against Marxism**
By Leon Trotsky

**The Struggle for National Supremacy
1789 - 1848**
By George E. Novack

**Economic and Political Life
In Argentina**
By Pedro Milesi

**The Suicide of Ernst
Toller**
By Oscar Fischer

Irish Labor and the Bombings

At Home

AT the convention of the Socialist Workers Party recently held in New York City, your Manager reported on problems of our press, and a very stimulating discussion followed from the floor. Delegates from all parts of the country spoke on their experiences in circulating THE NEW INTERNATIONAL and *Socialist Appeal* and contributed numerous suggestions for increasing the sales of our press considerably. It is to be hoped that the delegates will endeavor to put the various suggestions and propositions into effect in their localities. On our part we will try to plan promotion and subscription campaigns even more explicitly in the future.

The report and discussion established clearly that several cities proceed systematically and persistently to increase the sales and subscription base of NEW INTERNATIONAL and *Appeal* and as a result show proportionately and actually much better results than the other cities. It became all too obvious from the floor discussion that relatively and actually poor circulation in several large cities was simply a case of NEGLECT AND NO SYSTEMATIC WORK AND NOTHING ELSE. Some cities just let magazine and *Appeal* circulation "take care of itself". And of course nothing happened. The delegates were considerably disconcerted and somewhat shamed when the reporter listed the figures on the unusually large circulation of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL in foreign cities, such as Johannesburg, Cape Town, Sydney, London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, as compared with the very low figures in the large American cities, such as Los Angeles, Boston, Cleveland, Newark, Greater New York, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and others. Again, the discussion established that only the failure to do elementary work, such as trying to sell the magazine at meetings and other gathering places of workers, and to canvass prospects for subscriptions, was the cause of relatively small circulation in some of the cities. While a circulation of more than 4,000 is regarded as a very high amount for a theoretical organ, for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL it is by no means high enough; quality can and ought to attract more readers, and the 5,000 goal can and must be reached in a reasonable period hence. The convention discussion on the press will, we are sure, prove to have been a strong stimulant for increased circulation of our press. The business departments of both THE NEW INTERNATIONAL and *Appeal* are now busy with plans

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for increasing the circulation, and the Locals and Agents will hear direct from them.

An opportunity was afforded between sessions of the convention to discuss local press problems with various delegates, and much good has already come of these discussions. Circulation problems, varying from city to city, were taken up and solutions and suggestions developed.

By and large the summer period has not affected the circulation of the magazine; indeed in a few places, particularly abroad, there have been increases. In a few places, it was necessary to discontinue the bundle. New York has experienced a sharp slump in the past three months and this decline seriously affects the revenue and maintenance of the magazine. Only the Upper West Side and Bronx Branches have maintained and in a measure increased their bundle sales. Circulation in New York slumped by about 200 in this area, including 100 as yet un-renewed subscriptions. It is mainly neglect by the members. This loss is absolutely unnecessary, and just a reasonable increase in organized effort to sell the magazine and to obtain subscriptions can not only make up this loss within 30 days, but actually produce an increase. Local New York of the Y.P.S.L. has lately shown improvement, but even here some Y.P.S.L. units do not as yet handle the

magazine regularly.

The Berkeley, Cal., unit of the Y.P.S.L. deserves special mention for its work in the sale of the magazine on the campus. The comrades dispose of 30 copies. Should other Y.P.S.L.'ers in universities and colleges throughout the country do similarly as well, there would follow a substantial increase in the magazine's circulation. University of Chicago comrades and C.C.N.Y., New York, do comparable work.

All things considered, the Chicago organization, under the very competent and energetic direction of Sam Richter, does the best job of anybody in the United States with THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. Chicago bundle orders total 190, plus a growing subscription list. Cities like Boston, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Newark and others can, by greater participation by the ranks in the work, step up the circulation and subscription list substantially and proportionately. But agents like John Taber in Boston will get better results in the next period.

ALMOST 400 SUBSCRIPTIONS REMAIN TO BE RENEWED. CHIEF ATTENTION IN COMING WEEKS must be given by the Branches to obtain these renewals, which is entirely possible. Since this matter has been gone into fully with delegates and localities, only a reminder is necessary here

now. These renewals mean a revenue from \$400 to \$800 for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, besides maintenance of important contacts.

A few localities decreased their bundle orders for the summer period but expect to increase their allotments very soon again, and perhaps increase them. These cities are: Los Angeles, Youngstown, St. Louis. It must be pointed out that the latter two cities have really done very well in the sale of the N.I. in the past year and a half, and still take bundles much larger in proportion and actually than many larger cities.

New Order: Fitchburg, Mass., 7 copies. O.W., agent.

New Agents: J. Darnell, Detroit; K., Winnipeg; D., Toronto; B. George, Columbus; Leo Hassell, Los Angeles; F. Daniel, Lynn; El Booth, San Francisco; C. Wallace, Oakland.

In Toronto, the comrades write, prospective subscribers are visited by automobile, and similarly are house-to-house visits made. The New Castle, Pa., agent writes: "I shall pay my account in full by August 1st. . . I have given the magazine on credit to worthy workers who have returned to employment and therefore can pay me. I do not want to give you the impression that the magazine does not sell and must pay out of my own pocket. My trouble is collecting money. For example, I deliver a copy to a friend's home. He is either broke or not at home. Not wanting to make a second trip I naturally leave it. . . However, on this point, my customers the other day all faithfully promised to come across."

From Edinburgh, Scotland, Frank Maitland writes: "The June issue was very interesting and has sold rapidly. A hundred copies is the most we can handle just at the present, but we are undertaking a fresh drive to raise sales. . . Enclosed \$10.00 on our account."

From Newark, N. J., a sympathizer, Harold P., writes: "You [the Fourth Internationalists] now represent the organ of the class-conscious and revolutionary nucleus in America, and as such the only real threat to the capitalist system in this country. The Stalinists may fool the workers, but they can never fool the capitalists. The capitalist class never forgets its class enemies, whereas the C.P. collaborates with them opportunistically."

But the THE NEW INTERNATIONAL awakens and teaches the workers so that not even Stalinist calumny and demagoguery has effect.

BUILD UP THE CIRCULATION!

THE MANAGER

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

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The Editor's Comment

The Revolutionary Party as the Union of Theory and Practice—The Mystic Cult of Action and The Mystic Cult of Abstract Ideas—Three Stages of the Fourth International Movement In the United States — From Left Opposition of Communist Party to Independent Center of Advanced Militants—New Stage of Direct Intervention in Class Struggle Opened by Recent National Convention of Socialist Workers Party

WHEN ON THE EVE OF OCTOBER, Lenin broke off the manuscript of *State and Revolution* with the remark that it is more interesting to make a revolution than to write about one, it should also be remembered that he had spent a number of those world-shattering autumn weeks in the writing of this little masterpiece. Genuine revolutionists have been always distinguished by the union of theory and practice on which Marx insisted so often: ideas, words and programs are nothing if not translated into the actions of men; men's actions are futile unless directed by clear ideas and an unyielding program. The concrete institution in which theory and practice, word and deed, program and men fuse is the revolutionary party.

What else but the all-importance of the party is the central lesson of our age? Every task is summed up, compressed in that of building the party. During the past twenty years there has been no lack of evils to provoke the masses to revolt, nor of rational arguments to prove the desirability of socialism; there is no deficiency in heroic workers and farmers, everywhere in the world, ready to fight to the end, no absence of revolutionary crises in which the structure of society has trembled to its deepest foundations. But, except in Russia, and in Russia for a few years only, there has not been the party; and without the party, neither crises nor heroism can ever be enough.

André Malraux, in his novels and his life, preaches a mystic cult of action, surgically cut from idea and program. For the sake of the healing balm of the act, which he discovers beneath the filth of Stalinism, he has denied the truth and the idea. But thereby he has been able only to make his own Stalin's measureless betrayal; and, so significantly, he finds as artist that this mind-less action of his is resolved only in death — for even when he calls his book, *Man's Hope*, the theme of all he writes is death. Malraux betrays grossly, through the act. But the betrayal through the word, less coarse, is not less dissimilar. Victor Serge, Charles Plisnier, Sidney Hook, Max Nomad, John Dos Passos, Max Eastman — these are now, they say, concerned only to tell the truth, only with the idea and the word. But the truth they think to tell, reversing Malraux, is cut from the act — from men, from the building of the party. Its controlling reference points are not the actions of men, but uplifted abstractions, moral categories: a mystic cult of abstractions, as Malraux' is a mystic cult

of action. Like Malraux, in the case of the artists among them (Serge, Plisnier, Dos Passos) their cult can achieve fulfillment only in death. And for both cults the implicit advice has got to be: bow down to things as they are.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is a *theoretical* magazine, but we are interested in theory for the sake of building a party and a movement, just as our attitude toward all parties and movements is controlled by the theory to which we adhere. We are, we confess, in a day as late as this, growing more than a little impatient with political theorizing which is divorced from the building of the party. Does anyone who has thought seriously about Marxist politics still believe that socialism can be achieved without the proletarian revolution? that the revolution can be successful without the leadership of a firm, clear party? that if the revolution is much longer delayed, mankind can avoid an epoch of barbarism so devastating that even the shreds of civilization will perhaps not endure?

The party must be built. Upon this all else depends. That is why, in our eyes, the most important event of the last year was not Munich nor the invasion of Czechoslovakia, not the end of the New Deal nor even the fall of Barcelona, but the modest gathering, during the first week of July, of seventy-five delegates of the Socialist Workers Party, American section of the Fourth International, in their national convention.

The Nature of the Problem

THE MOVEMENT WHICH BEGAN as the Left Opposition of the Russian Bolshevik party has in this country, during its ten and a half years of existence, completed two major stages of development and entered the third and decisive stage. For the first five years, until 1933, it functioned here, as elsewhere, as an opposition faction of the Communist International. During this period it exhausted the possibilities of reform of the Comintern. This task, however, was by no means wholly negative and critical. To function as a principled opposition, it was necessary to *understand* the degeneration of the Comintern, to explain the meaning of the rise of Stalinism, to see exactly where the program and policies of the Comintern had gone wrong, and at all points to counter-pose the correct program and policy. Upon the experience of those years of the opposition, gained either at first-hand or through its

living tradition, depends all real and adequate comprehension of the Russian revolution which, in turn, is the major source of revolutionary knowledge in our era. Nevertheless, the political life of an opposition faction is severely limited. Its chief activities are analytic and programmatic. It is, and should properly be, a programmatic *sect*.

In 1933, with the victory of Hitler and the failure of the Communist International to draw any progressive conclusions whatever from its fatal errors — its failure even to acknowledge its share in the catastrophe, it became clear that fruitful development as an opposition faction was no longer possible. History had brought a chapter to its end; and the Left Opposition proclaimed the final political bankruptcy of the Comintern and the necessity for building the new revolutionary International, the Fourth International. In the United States, the movement entered its second stage. In this stage, the task was to assemble together, on the basis of the program which had been laid out in the first stage and was being completed in the second, the scattered militants from the existing parties and groups who were ready to break with the past and form the nucleus of the new mass party of the future. Through the fusion between the Communist League of America (successor to the Left Opposition of the Communist Party) and the American Workers Party, between the Workers Party resulting from this fusion and the left wing of the Socialist Party, and the adherence of individual militants from other parties and groups, including the Communist Party, this was, even if not as quickly and successfully as might be wished, accomplished. The Socialist Workers Party is the outcome of this second stage.

The transition from the first to the second stage was not carried through without difficulty. The weight of the past lies heavy on every organization, and to do the new task meant to overcome the habits, ideas and persons who were immovably in the way of life of an opposition faction. The whole second stage was marked by sharp, often bitter, battles with *sectarianism*. These were the unavoidable price of growth and change. At the same time, there was an illusion shared by many of us, half-shared perhaps by all, that this second stage, the stage of the assembling of the advanced militants, could simultaneously be the stage of beginning growth as a genuine mass party. As it turned out, this was not the case. The second stage had to be completed before the third stage could be properly begun.

The Convention Faces the New Problem

AS WE LOOK BACK AT the convention of the Socialist Workers Party held a year and a half ago, we can now see clearly that it brought to an end the second stage, without at the same time definitively starting the third stage — the stage, namely, of transforming an enlarged propaganda group (the end product of the second stage, which began with an opposition faction) into a mass party through direct intervention in the mass movement. What was most encouraging, and crucial for the future, in last month's convention, was that the delegates, with not a single exception, saw and faced the new task and the new problem.

That the Socialist Workers Party, in attitude and resolve at least, is ready to enter seriously the third stage,

was proved by a number of features in the proceedings of the convention which distinguish it from all the preceding conventions of the last decade. In the first place, though there were many and sometimes heated conflicts, there was no important dispute over the basic structure of the general program of the Fourth International, whereas in virtually all previous conventions there had been such disputes. In this lack there was not the slightest trace of monolithism or conformism. The delegates were simply aware that our movement has completed, at least for the time being, the work of formulating the basic program which corresponds to the historical period now facing us, that the task is now to win others to that program, and to apply it to life. The basic program is the rich legacy of the first two stages.

But second, and for us even more striking: a large part of the convention's time was given to questions of organization. Not only did this appear as a special item on the agenda, in addition to a lengthy discussion of the press, but whatever the item before the convention, much of the debate was occupied with the problem: how is our policy to be translated into life, how are we going to *act* in accordance with it, how will we win recruits on the basis of it. It may seem, no doubt, naive to stress so simple a phenomenon. But it was a revealing symptom for our movement. In it was suggested the firm knowledge that in the last analysis men make the revolution, that a program without the men willing to fight and die for it is not even worth arguing about. The delegates wanted a party that will find it more interesting to make a revolution than to write about it. . . .

Third, for the first time in these ten and a half years, the convention used an entire session to discuss, in both theoretical and practical aspects, the Negro question. That we have never done so in the past is simply one more indication that we have not been a genuine party; that we do so now is some justification for believing that we have begun to grow up. The workers of this country will not be victorious in their revolution unless they are heavily supported from the ranks of the 13,000,000 Negroes. These, the most terribly and infamously exploited of the populace, from whose treatment Hitler has learned what social tyranny means, have a key rôle in the days ahead. No party in this country could even pretend to be the party of the proletariat and of socialism which did not number in its ranks and among its closest friends an important percentage of Negroes. The change of the Communist party into an instrument of social-chauvinism and imperialism is shown quite plainly in its loss of tens of thousands of Negro members and hundreds of thousands of Negro supporters.

The Convention and the War

THE STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT of the revolutionary party do not follow merely from an idea that pops into someone's head or from exclusively internal developments in the revolutionary movement itself. Rather are they the responses to great historical events, which demand a corresponding change in conscious politics. So it was with the foundation and dissolution of the First International, and the founding of the Second. It was the war of 1914 that demanded the break of the revolutionists from

the Second International, and the Bolshevik Revolution that called for the organizational formation of the Third. The final suppression, in 1927, of all revolutionary expression in the parties of the Third International (the result, first of all, of the failure of the post-War revolutions outside of Russia, and of the Chinese revolution), called for the founding of an opposition faction which could keep alive the revolutionary tradition and program. Hitler's triumph demonstrated the end of the Comintern, from the point of view of the revolutionary movement, and demanded the proclamation of the Fourth International.

But history does not wait. We have now entered a time of a permanent, general, social crisis, expressed most acutely in the war crisis. This is what the convention of the Socialist Workers Party took as its point of departure; and from its estimate of the social crisis and the war — not from its own dreams or idle fancies — the required tasks followed. As in 1914, so today, the crisis of the imperialist war make politics unambiguous — for or against war. The present and the future have so many problems that we tend to forget the past. Yet how instructive to think back for even four or five years. Then everyone, more or less, except the heads of the American Legion, was anti-war. Do you remember how everyone had “learned the lessons” of the last war, and could explain just what happened and why? Do you remember how the Communist party fought war, breathing fire and brimstone? Do you remember the social-democrats, so proud of St. Louis and Debs? Do you remember the brave intellectuals, the Lewis

Mumfords and all the “enlightened”?

But four or five years ago, the next war was no more than a faint cloud on the far horizon. Everyone could be brave with the storm so distant. Today the black cloud has covered the sky, and the storm is poised to break. Today all the rats skurry for the patriotic shelter.

Every one. We did not exaggerate when we predicted it, many years ago. With the rare exceptions of isolated individuals, noble and powerless, only a revolutionary group or party can stand firm against the war. Already in this country, all groups but ours have gone over either to the open, shameless chauvinism of the Stalinists and the Social Democratic Federation and many of the official pacifist organizations or to the more mealy-mouthed, respectable patriotism with which Norman Thomas and Lovestone tie themselves in their Keep America out of War Committees and their “united front” meetings.

Social crisis and war: this is what history presents us. And this is why we must build a party, a mass revolutionary party, and build it well and quickly. Mankind may never recover if from the war and the crisis there does not issue the socialist revolution. Is that not clear? And is it not clear also that the outcome depends upon the success or failure in building a party that will fight the war — to the end? We have the right, then to demand that everyone to whom these things are clear shall join with us to build that party. Our convention was proud, above all, in proclaiming this simple truth: that *the Socialist Workers Party is the anti-war party*. And because it is the anti-war party, it will be the party also of victorious socialism.

Moralists and Sycophants against Marxism

Peddlers of Indulgences and Their Socialist Allies, or the Cuckoo in a Strange Nest

THE PAMPHLET *Their Morals and Ours* possesses merit at least in this, that it has compelled certain philistines and sycophants to expose themselves completely. The first clippings from the French and Belgian press received by me testify to this. The most intelligible of its kind is the review which appeared in the Parisian Catholic newspaper *La Croix*. These gentlemen have a system of their own, and they are not ashamed to defend it. They stand for absolute morality, and above all for the butcher Franco. It is the will of God. Behind them stands a Heavenly Sanitarian who gathers and cleans all the filth in their wake. It is hardly surprising that they should condemn as unworthy the morality of revolutionists who assume responsibility for themselves. But we are now interested not in professional peddlers of indulgences but in moralists who manage to do without God while seeking to put themselves in His stead.

The Brussels “socialist” newspaper *Le Peuple*—here is virtue's hide-out!—has been able to find nothing in our little book except a criminal recipe for building secret cells in the pursuit of the most immoral of all goals—that of undermining the prestige and revenues of the Belgian labor bureaucracy. It may of course be said in reply that this

bureaucracy is smeared with countless betrayals and sheer swindles (we need only recall the history of the “Labor Bank”!); that it stifles every glimmer of critical thought in the working class; that in its practical morality it is in no way superior to its political ally, the Catholic hierarchy. But, in the first place only very poorly educated people would mention such unpleasant things; secondly, all these gentlemen, whatever their petty sins, keep in reserve the highest principles of morality. To this Henri de Man sees personally, and before his high authority we Bolsheviks cannot of course expect any indulgence.

Before passing on to other moralists, let us pause for a moment on a prospectus issued by the French publishers of our little book. By its very nature, a prospectus either recommends a book, or, at least, delineates objectively its contents. We have before us a prospectus of an entirely different type. Suffice it to adduce only one example: “Trotsky is of the opinion that his party, once in power and now in opposition, has always represented the genuine proletariat, and he himself—genuine morality. From this he concludes for instance the following: shooting of hostages assumes an entirely different meaning depending upon whether the order is issued by Stalin or Trotsky. . .” This quotation is quite ample for an appraisal of the behind-the-scenes commentator. It is the unquestionable right of an

author to supervise a prospectus. But inasmuch as in the present case the author happens to be on the other side of the ocean, some "friend", apparently profiting from the publisher's lack of information, contrived to slip into a strange nest and deposit there his little egg—oh! it is of course a very tiny egg, an almost virginal egg. Who is the author of this prospectus? Victor Serge, who translated the book and who is at the same time its severest critic, can easily supply the information. I should not be surprised if it turned out that the prospectus was written . . . naturally, not by Victor Serge but by one of his disciples who imitates both his master's ideas and his style. But, maybe after all, it is the master himself, that is, Victor Serge in his capacity of "friend" of the author?

"Hottentot Morality!"

Souvarine and other sycophants have of course immediately seized upon the foregoing statement in the prospectus which saves them the bother of casting about for poisoned sophisms. If Trotsky takes hostages, it is good; if Stalin, it is bad. In the face of such "Hottentot morality", it is not difficult to give vent to noble indignation. Yet there is nothing easier than to expose on the basis of this most recent example the hollowness and falsity of this indignation. Victor Serge publicly became a member of the P.O.U.M., a Catalan party which had its own militia at the front during the Civil War. At the front, as is well known, people shoot and kill. It may therefore be said: "For Victor Serge killings assume entirely different meaning depending upon whether the order is issued by General Franco or by the leaders of Victor Serge's own party." If our moralist had tried to think out the meaning of his own actions before trying to instruct others, he would in all probability have said the following: But the Spanish workers fought to emancipate the people while Franco's gangs fought to reduce it to slavery! Serge will not be able to invent a different answer. In other words, he will have to repeat the "Hottentot"¹ argument of Trotsky in relation to the hostages.

Once Again on Hostages

However, it is possible and even probable that our moralist will refuse to say candidly that which is and will attempt to beat about the bush: "To kill at the front is one thing, to shoot hostages is something else again!" This argument, as we shall shortly prove, is simply stupid. But let us stop for a moment on the ground chosen by our adversary. The system of hostages, you say, is immoral "in itself"? Good, that is what we want to know. But this system has been practised in all the civil wars of ancient and modern history. It obviously flows from the nature of civil war itself. From this it is possible to draw only one conclusion, namely, that the very nature of civil war is immoral. That is the standpoint of the newspaper *La Croix*, which holds that it is necessary to obey the powers-that-be, for power emanates from God. And Victor Serge? He has no considered point of view. To drop a little egg in a strange nest is one thing, to define one's position on complex historical problems, is something else again. I readily admit that

people of such transcendent morality as Azaña, Caballero, Negrin and Co. were against taking hostages from the fascist camp: on both sides you have bourgeois, bound by family and material ties and convinced that even in case of defeat they would not only save themselves but would retain their beefsteaks. In their own fashion, they were right. But the fascists did take hostages among the proletarian revolutionists, and the proletarians, on their part, took hostages from among the fascist bourgeoisie, for they knew the menace that a defeat, even partial and temporary, implied for them and their class brothers.

Victor Serge himself cannot tell exactly what he wants: whether to purge the civil war of the practise of hostages, or to purge human history of civil war? The petty-bourgeois moralist thinks episodically, in fragments, in clumps, being incapable of approaching phenomena in their internal connection. Artificially set apart, the question of hostages is for him a particular moral problem, independent of those general conditions which engender armed conflicts between classes. Civil war is the supreme expression of the class struggle. To attempt to subordinate it to abstract "norms" means in fact to disarm the workers in the face of an enemy armed to the teeth. The petty-bourgeois moralist is the younger brother of the bourgeois pacifist who want to "humanize" warfare by prohibiting the use of poison gases, the bombardment of unfortified cities, etc. Politically, such programs serve only to deflect the thoughts of the people from revolution as the only method of putting an end to war.

The Dread of Bourgeois Public Opinion

Entangled in his contradictions, the moralist might perhaps try to argue that an "open" and "conscious" struggle between two camps is one thing, but the seizure of non-participants in the struggle is something else again. This argument, however, is only a wretched and stupid evasion. In Franco's camp fought tens of thousands who were duped and conscripted by force. The republican armies shot at and killed these unfortunate captives of a reactionary general. Was this moral or immoral? Furthermore, modern warfare, with its long-range artillery, aviation, poison gases, and, finally, with its train of devastation, famine, fires and epidemics, inevitably involves the loss of hundreds of thousands and millions, the aged and the children included, who do not participate directly in the struggle. People taken as hostages are at least bound by ties of class and family solidarity with one of the camps, or with the leaders of that camp. A conscious selection is possible in taking hostages. A projectile fired from a gun or dropped from a plane is let loose by hazard and may easily destroy not only foes but friends, or their parents and children. Why then do our moralists set apart the question of hostages and shut their eyes to the entire content of civil war? Because they are not too courageous. As "leftists" they fear to break openly with revolution. As petty bourgeois they dread destroying the bridges to official public opinion. In condemning the system of hostages they feel themselves in good company—against the Bolsheviks. They maintain a cowardly silence about Spain. Against the fact that the Spanish workers, anarchists, and P.O.U.M.ists took hostages, V. Serge will protest . . . in twenty years.

¹ We shall not dwell here on the shabby custom of referring contemptuously to the Hottentots in order thereby more radiantly to represent the morality of the white slave-owners. It was adequately dealt with in the pamphlet.

The Moral Code of Civil War

To the very same category pertains still another of V. Serge's discoveries, namely, that the degeneration of the Bolsheviks dates from the moment when the Cheka was given the right of deciding behind closed doors the fate of people. Serge plays with the concept of revolution, writes poems about it, but is incapable of understanding it as it is.

Public trials are possible only in conditions of a stable régime. Civil war is a condition of the extreme instability of society and the state. Just as it is impossible to publish in newspapers the plans of the general staff, so is it impossible to reveal in public trials the conditions and circumstances of conspiracies, for the latter are intimately linked with the course of the civil war. Secret trials, beyond a doubt, greatly increase the possibility of mistakes. This merely signifies, and we concede it readily, that the circumstances of civil war are hardly favorable for the exercise of impartial justice. And what more than that?

We propose that V. Serge be appointed as chairman of a commission composed of, say, Marceau Pivert, Souvarine, Waldo Frank, Max Eastman, Magdeleine Paz and others to draft a moral code for civil warfare. Its general character is clear in advance. Both sides pledge not to take hostages. Public trials remain in force. For their proper functioning, complete freedom of the press is preserved throughout the civil war. Bombardment of cities, being detrimental to public justice, freedom of the press, and the inviolability of the individual, is strictly prohibited. For similar and sundry other reasons the use of artillery is outlawed. And inasmuch as rifles, hand grenades and even bayonets unquestionably exercise a baleful influence upon human beings as well as upon democracy in general, the use of weapons, fire-arms or side-arms, in the civil war is strictly forbidden.

Marvelous code! Magnificent monument to the rhetoric of Victor Serge and Magdeleine Paz! However, so long as this code remains unaccepted as a rule of conduct by all the oppressors and the oppressed, the warring classes will seek to gain victory *by every means*, while petty-bourgeois moralists will continue as heretofore to wander in confusion between the two camps. Subjectively, they sympathize with the oppressed—no one doubts that. Objectively, they remain captives of the morality of the ruling class and seek to impose it upon the oppressed instead of helping them elaborate the morality of insurrection.

The Masses Have Nothing at All to Do with It!

Victor Serge has disclosed in passing what caused the collapse of the Bolshevik party: excessive centralism, mistrust of ideological struggle, lack of freedom-loving (*"libertaire"*, in reality anarchist) spirit. More confidence in the masses, more freedom! All this is outside time and space. But the masses are by no means identical: there are revolutionary masses, there are passive masses, there are reactionary masses. The very same masses are at different times inspired by different moods and objectives. It is just for this reason that a centralized organization of the vanguard is indispensable. Only a party, wielding the authority it has won, is capable of overcoming the vacillation of the masses themselves. To invest the mass with traits of

sanctity and to reduce one's program to amorphous "democracy", is to dissolve oneself in the class as it is, to turn from a vanguard into a rearguard, and by this very thing, to renounce revolutionary tasks. On the other hand, if the dictatorship of the proletariat means anything at all, then it means that the vanguard of the class is armed with the resources of the state in order to repel dangers, including those emanating from the backward layers of the proletariat itself. All this is elementary; all this has been demonstrated by the experience of Russia, and confirmed by the experience of Spain.

But the whole secret is this, that demanding freedom "for the masses", Victor Serge in reality demands freedom for himself and for his compeers, freedom from all control, all discipline, even, if possible, from all criticism. The "masses" have nothing at all to do with it. When our "democrat" scurries from right to left, and from left to right, sowing confusion and scepticism, he imagines it to be the realization of a salutary freedom of thought. But when we evaluate from the Marxian standpoint the vacillations of a disillusioned petty-bourgeois intellectual, that seems to him an assault upon his individuality. He then enters into an alliance with all the confusionists for a crusade against our despotism and our sectarianism.

The internal democracy of a revolutionary party is not a goal in itself. It must be supplemented and bounded by centralism. For a Marxist the question has always been: democracy for what? For which program? The framework of the program is at the same time the framework of democracy. Victor Serge demanded of the Fourth International that it give freedom of action to all confusionists, sectarians and centrists of the P.O.U.M., Vereecken, Marceau Pivert types, to conservative bureaucrats of the Sneevliet type or mere adventurers of the R. Molinier type. On the other hand, Victor Serge has systematically helped centrist organizations drive from their ranks the partisans of the Fourth International. We are very well acquainted with that democratism: it is compliant, accommodating and conciliatory—*towards the right*; at the same time, it is exigent, malevolent and tricky—*towards the left*. It merely represents the régime of self-defense of petty-bourgeois centrism.

The Struggle against Marxism

If Victor Serge's attitude toward problems of theory were serious, he would have been embarrassed to come to the fore as an "innovator" and to pull us back to Bernstein, Struve and all the revisionists of the last century who tried to graft Kantianism onto Marxism, or in other words, to subordinate the class struggle of the proletariat to principles allegedly rising above it. As did Kant himself, they depicted the "categorical imperative" (the idea of duty) as an absolute norm of morality valid for everybody. In reality, it is a question of "duty" to bourgeois society. In their own fashion, Bernstein, Struve, Vorländer had a serious attitude to theory. They openly demanded a *return* to Kant. Victor Serge and his compeers do not feel the slightest responsibility towards scientific thought. They confine themselves to allusions, insinuations, at best, to literary generalizations. . . . However, if their ideas are plumbd to the bottom, it appears, that they have joined an old cause, long since discredited: to subdue Marxism by

means of Kantianism; to paralyze the socialist revolution by means of "absolute" norms which represent in reality the philosophical generalizations of the interests of the bourgeoisie — true enough, not the present-day but the defunct bourgeoisie of the era of free trade and democracy. The imperialist bourgeoisie observes these norms even less than did its liberal grandmother. But it views favorably the attempts of the petty-bourgeois preachers to introduce confusion, turbulence and vacillation into the ranks of the revolutionary proletariat. The chief aim not only of Hitler but also of the liberals and the democrats is to discredit Bolshevism at a time when its historical legitimacy threatens to become absolutely clear to the masses. Bolshevism, Marxism—there is the enemy!

When "brother" Victor Basch,² high priest of democratic morality, with the aid of his "brother" Rosenmark, committed a forgery in defense of the Moscow trials and was publicly exposed. Convicted of falsehood, he beat his breast and cried: "Am I then partial? I have always denounced the terror of Lenin and Trotsky." Basch graphically exposed the inner mainspring of the moralists of democracy: some of them may keep quiet about the Moscow trials, some may attack the trials, still others may defend the trials; but their common concern is to use the trials in condemning the "morality" of Lenin and Trotsky, that is, the methods of the proletarian revolution. In this sphere they are all brothers.

In the above-cited scandalous prospectus it is stated that I develop views on morality "basing myself on Lenin". This indefinite phrase, reproduced by other publications, can be taken to mean that I develop Lenin's theoretical principles. But to my knowledge Lenin did not write on morality. Victor Serge wished in reality to say something altogether different, namely, that my immoral ideas are a generalization of the practise of Lenin, the "immoralist". He seeks to discredit Lenin's personality by my judgments, and my judgments by the personality of Lenin. He is simply flattering the general reactionary tendency which is aimed against Bolshevism and Marxism as a whole.

Souvarine, the Sycophant

Ex-pacifist, ex-communist, ex-Trotskyist, ex-democrat-communist, ex-Marxist . . . almost ex-Souvarine attacks the proletarian revolution and revolutionists all the more brazenly the less he himself knows what he wants. This man loves and knows how to collect quotations, documents, commas and quotation marks and how to compile dossiers and, moreover he knows how to handle the pen. Originally he had hoped that this baggage would last him a lifetime. But he was soon compelled to convince himself that in addition the ability to think was necessary. . . His book on Stalin, despite an abundance of interesting quotations and facts is a self-testimonial to his own poverty. Souvarine understands neither what the revolution is nor what the counter-revolution is. He applies to the historical process the criteria of a petty rationalizer, forever aggrieved at sinful humanity. The disproportion between his critical spirit and his creative impotence consumes him as if it were an acid. Hence his constant exasperation, and his lack

of elementary honesty in appraising ideas, people and events, while covering it all with dry moralizing. Like all misanthropes and cynics, Souvarine is organically drawn toward reaction.

Has Souvarine broken openly with Marxism? We never heard about it. He prefers equivocation; that is his native element. In his review of my pamphlet he writes: "Trotsky once again mounts his hobby-horse of the class struggle." To the Marxist of yesterday the class struggle is—"Trotsky's hobby-horse". It is not surprising that Souvarine himself has preferred to sit astride the dead dog of eternal morality. To the Marxian conception he opposes "a sense of justice . . . without regard for class distinctions". It is at any rate consoling to learn that our society is founded on a "sense of justice". In the coming war Souvarine will doubtless expound his discovery to the soldiers in the trenches; and in the meantime he can do so to the invalids of the last war, the unemployed, the abandoned children, and the prostitutes. We confess in advance that should he get mauled while thus engaged, our own "sense of justice" will not side with him. . .

The critical remarks of this shameless apologist for bourgeois justice "without regard for class distinctions", are based entirely on—the prospectus inspired by Victor Serge. The latter, in his turn, in all his attempts at "theory" does not go beyond hybrid borrowings from Souvarine, who, nevertheless, possesses this advantage: that he utters what Serge does not yet dare to say.

With feigned indignation — there is nothing genuine about him—Souvarine writes that inasmuch as Trotsky condemns the morality of democrats, reformists, Stalinists and anarchists, it follows that the sole representative of morality is "Trotsky's party", and since this party "does not exist", therefore in the last analysis the incarnation of morality is Trotsky himself. How can one help tittering over this? Souvarine apparently imagines that he is capable of distinguishing between that which exists and that which does not. It is a very simple matter so long as it is a question of scrambled eggs or a pair of suspenders. But on the scale of the historical process such a distinction is obviously over Souvarine's head. "That which exists" is being born or dying, developing or disintegrating. That which exists can be understood only by him who understands its inner tendencies.

The number of people who held a revolutionary position at the outbreak of the last war could be counted on one's fingers. The entire field of official politics was almost completely pervaded with various shades of chauvinism. Liebknecht, Luxemburg, Lenin seemed impotent isolated individuals. But can there be any doubt that their morality was above the bestial morality of the "sacred union"? Liebknecht's revolutionary politics were not at all "individualistic", as they then seemed to the average patriotic philistine. On the contrary, Liebknecht, and Liebknecht alone, reflected and foreshadowed the profound subterranean trends in the masses. The subsequent course of events wholly confirmed this. Not to fear today a complete break with official public opinion so as on the *morrow* to gain the right of expressing the ideas and feelings of the insurgent masses, this is a special mode of existence which differs from the empiric existence of petty-bourgeois convention-

² Victor Basch is head of the League for the Rights of Man in France, organization of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois democrats. Rosenmark, one of its members, is an obscure lawyer used by the Stalinists to whitewash the Moscow Trials which, like the Englishman, Pritt, he "happened" to attend.—TRANS.

alists. All the parties of capitalist society, all its moralists and all its sycophants will perish beneath the débris of the impending catastrophe. The only party that will survive is the party of the world socialist revolution, even though it may seem non-existent today to the sightless rationalizers, just as during the last war the party of Lenin and Liebknecht seemed to them non-existent.

Revolutionists and the Carriers of Infection

Engels once wrote that Marx and himself remained all their lives in the minority and "felt fine" about it. Periods when the movement of the oppressed class rises to the level of the general tasks of the revolution represent the rarest exceptions in history. Far more frequent than victories are the defeats of the oppressed. Following each defeat comes a long period of reaction which throws the revolutionists back into a state of cruel isolation. Pseudo-revolutionists, "knights for an hour", as a Russian poet put it, either openly betray the cause of the oppressed in such periods or scurry about in the search of a formula of salvation that would enable them to avoid breaking with any of the camps. It is inconceivable in our time to find a conciliatory formula in the sphere of political economy or sociology; class contradictions have forever overthrown the "harmony" formula of the liberals and democratic reformers. There remains the domain of religion and transcendental morality. The Russian "Social Revolutionists" attempted to save democracy by an alliance with the church. Marceau Pivert replaces the church with Freemasonry. Apparently, Victor Serge has not yet joined a lodge, but he has no difficulty in finding a common language with Pivert against Marxism.

Two classes decide the fate of modern society: the imperialist bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The last resource of the bourgeoisie is fascism, which replaces social and

historical criteria with biological and zoological standards so as thus to free itself from any and all restrictions in the struggle for capitalist property. Civilization can be saved only by the socialist revolution. To accomplish the overturn, the proletariat needs all its strength, all its resolution, all its audacity, passion and ruthlessness. Above all it must be completely free from the fictions of religion, "democracy" and transcendental morality — the spiritual chains forged by the enemy to tame and enslave it. Only that which prepares the complete and final overthrow of imperialist bestiality is moral, and nothing else. The welfare of the revolution—that is the supreme law!

A clear understanding of the interrelation between the two basic classes—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the epoch of their mortal combat—discloses to us the objective meaning of the rôle of petty-bourgeois moralists. Their chief trait is impotence: *social* impotence by virtue of the economic degradation of the petty bourgeoisie; *ideological* impotence by virtue of the fear of the petty bourgeoisie in the face of the monstrous unleashing of the class struggle. Hence the urge of the petty bourgeois, both educated and ignorant, to curb the class struggle. If he cannot succeed by means of eternal morality—and this cannot succeed—the petty bourgeois throws himself into the arms of fascism which curbs the class struggle by means of myths and the executioner's axe. The moralism of V. Serge and his compeers is a bridge from revolution to reaction. Souvarine is already on the other side of the bridge. The slightest concession to these tendencies signifies the beginning of capitulation to reaction. Let these carriers of infection instil the rules of morality in Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain and Daladier. As for us, the program of the proletarian revolution suffices.

COYOACAN, D. F., June 9, 1939.

L. TROTSKY

The Socialist Crisis in France

IF THE EXISTENCE OF THE Republic had depended upon the Waldeck-Rousseau cabinet, it would have perished long ago. The buffoonery of the monarchist insurrection was matched by the buffoonery of the republican defense.

Seldom has a government taken the helm in a more serious moment and seldom has a government had greater hopes placed in it. It is time that the monarchist danger was more of a spectre than a reality. The really serious possibility, however, was that the guerilla war with the monarchist elements would reveal to the insubordinate army chiefs and mutiny-preaching clergy the impotence of the Republic and, thereby, make repetitions of similar crises inevitable in the future.

The eyes of the civilized world were turned to France. It was necessary to prove her ability to exist as an orderly state. It was necessary to show that bourgeois France still was powerful enough to isolate and neutralize the elements of disintegration that it had produced.

The measures to be taken were dictated by the situation itself. If the army has grown to an independent body and posed itself against the organism of the Republic, it is necessary to lay the axe to its independence and to draw it closer to civilian society through the abolition of the court-martial and the shortening of the period of military service. If the priests support the rebellious tendencies of the militarists and agitate against the Republic, it is necessary to destroy their power through the dissolution of the religious orders, confiscation of their property and separation of the school from the church and the church from the state.

And above all, if the corruption in the army and the legal lynching of Dreyfus—with its complex web of lies, falsifications, perjuries, and other crimes—if this has completely shattered the prestige of France, both internally and externally, it is necessary to reestablish the authority of republican justice by making an example of the guilty ones, by pardoning all those unjustly convicted, and by the full clarification of the issues.

The cabinet has been at the helm for nineteen months.

* See NEW INTERNATIONAL, July 1939 for first installment—EDITORS.

It has twice outlived the average life-span of a French cabinet—the fatal nine months. What has it accomplished?

It is hard to imagine a more extreme contradiction between means and ends, between task and accomplishment, between the advance advertisement and the subsequent performance than is to be found in the expectations roused by the Waldeck-Rousseau cabinet and its achievements.

First—The Army

The whole program of reform of military justice has now been reduced to the promise of the Minister of War to take into account "mitigating circumstances" in the course of court-martial proceedings. The socialist, Pastre, speaking in the Chamber on December 27 of last year, proposed the introduction of the two year military term, a reform already introduced in semi-absolutist Germany. The Radical Minister of Republican Defense, General André, answered that he could take no position on this question. The socialist, Dejeante, demanded in the same session that the clergy be removed from the military academies, that the religious personnel of the military hospital be replaced by a secular personnel, and that the distribution of religious publications by the army be ended. The Minister of Republican Defense, whose task it was to secularize the army, answered with a blunt rejection of the proposals and a glorification of the spirituality of the army—amid the stormy applause of the Nationalists. In February, 1900, the socialists denounced a series of terrible abuses in the army, but the government rejected every proposal for a parliamentary investigation. The Radical, Vigne d'Octon made some gruesome revelations in the Chamber (session of December 7, 1900) on the conduct of the French military régime in the colonies, particularly in Madagascar and Indo-China. The government rejected the proposal for a parliamentary inquiry as being "dangerous and purposeless". Finally came the climax: the Minister of War mounted the tribune of the Chamber to tell of his heroic defense of—an officer of the Dragoons who was boycotted by his colleagues for having married a divorcee.

Next—The Church

A legal formula is devised which covers the monastic orders with the same provisions that apply in the case of open societies. Its application against the clergy will depend upon the good will and its application against the socialists upon the bad will of future ministers.

The Republic has in no way weakened the authorized orders. They still have their property of almost 400 million francs, their state subsidized secular clergy headed by 87 Bishops, their 87 seminaries, their 42,000 priests, and their budget for publications of about 40 million francs. The chief strength of the clergy lies in its influence upon the education of two million French children who are at present being poisoned in the parochial schools and made into enemies of the Republic. The government bestirs itself and prohibits such instruction—by non-authorized religious orders. But almost the entire religious instruction is precisely in the hands of the authorized orders and the Radical reform results in 15,000 out of 2 million children being rescued from the holy water sprinklers. The capitulation of the government to the church was introduced with Waldeck-Rousseau's speech in which he paid his respects to the

pope and was sealed with the vote of confidence in the government offered by the Nationalists.

Grand Climax: The Amnesty Laws

The "defense of the Republic" à la Waldeck-Rousseau reached its grand climax last December with the adoption of the Amnesty Law.

For two years France was in a turmoil. For two years the cry went up for truth, light, and justice. For two years a judicial murder weighed upon its conscience. Society was being literally suffocated in the poisoned atmosphere of lies, perjuries, and falsifications.

At last the government of Republican Defense arrived on the scene. All the world held its breath. The "great sun of justice" was about to rise.

And it rose. On December 19 the government had the Chamber adopt a law which guaranteed immunity to all charged with crime, which denied legal satisfaction to those falsely accused, and quashed all trials already in process. Those who were yesterday declared the most dangerous enemies of the Republic are today again taken to its bosom as prodigal sons returned home. In order to defend the Republic, a general pardon is extended to all its attackers. In order to rehabilitate Republican justice, all victims of the judicial frame-ups are denied the opportunity for vindication.

Petty-bourgeois radicalism ran true to type. In 1893 the bourgeois radicals took the helm through the Cabinet of Ribot to liquidate the crisis caused by the Panama scandal. But because the Republic was declared in danger, the accused deputies were not prosecuted and the whole affair was allowed to dissolve into thin air. Waldeck-Rousseau, commissioned to handle the Dreyfus Affair, dissolves it in a complete fiasco "in order to close the door to the monarchist danger".

The pattern is an old one:

The shattering overture that announces the battle loses itself in a timid growl as soon as the action is to start. The actors cease to take themselves seriously, and the performance falls flat like an inflated balloon that is pricked with a needle. (Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire*.)

Was it to realize these grotesque, piddling, laughable measures—I speak not from the viewpoint of socialism, or even of a half-way capable radical party, but merely in comparison to the republican measures of the opportunists in the '80s, like Gambetta, Jules Ferry, Constant, and Tirard—was it for this that a socialist, the representative of working-class power, had to be taken into the cabinet?

The opportunist Gambetta, with his moderate Republicans, demanded in 1879 the removal of all monarchists from government service and, through this agitation, drove MacMahon from the presidency. In 1880 these same "respectable" Republicans carried through the expulsion of the Jesuits, and a system of compulsory, free education. The opportunist Jules Ferry drove over six hundred monarchist judges from the bench in his judicial reforms in 1883 and dealt a hard blow at the clergy with his law on divorce. The opportunists Constant and Tirard, in order to cut the ground from under Boulangism, reduced the term of military service from five to three years.

The radical cabinet of Waldeck-Rousseau failed to even rise to the stature of these most modest republican measures.

of the opportunists. In a series of equivocal manœuvres in the course of nineteen months it accomplished nothing, absolutely nothing. It did not carry out the least reorganization of military justice. It did not bring about the slightest reduction in the period of military service. It did not take one decisive step to drive the monarchists out of the army, judiciary, and administration. It did not undertake a single thorough measure against the clericals. The one thing it *did* do was to maintain its pose of fearlessness, firmness, inflexibility—the classic pose of petty-bourgeois politicians when they get into hot water. Finally, after much ado, it declared that the Republic is not in a position to do anything about the band of military rogues and simply must let them go. Was it for this that the collaboration of a socialist was necessary in the Cabinet?

How "Necessary" Was Millerand?

It has been said that Millerand was personally indispensable for the building of the Waldeck-Rousseau cabinet. As far as is generally known, France is not suffering from a lack of men who are covetous of a cabinet portfolio. If Waldeck-Rousseau could find two useful Generals in the ranks of the rebellious army to serve as Ministers of War, he could have found a half-dozen men in his own party who were eager for the post of Minister of Commerce. But after one has come to know the record of the cabinet, one must in any case admit that Waldeck-Rousseau could have calmly taken any agreeable Radical as a co-worker and the comedy of the "defense of the republic" would not have come out one hair worse. The Radicals have always understood how to compromise themselves without outside assistance.

We have seen that the monarchist danger, which scared everyone so much during the Dreyfus crisis, was more of a phantom than reality. The "defense" of Waldeck-Rousseau, therefore, was not necessary to save the Republic from a *coup d'état*. Those, however, who still today defend the entry of Millerand into the government as they did two years ago, and point to the monarchist danger as both the motive for the entry and for remaining, are playing a dangerous game. The more serious one paints the picture, the more pitiful appear the actions of the cabinet, and the more questionable the rôle of the socialists who participated.

If the monarchist danger was very slight, as we sought to establish, then the rescuing efforts of the government begun with pomp and circumstance and ended in fiasco, were a farce. If, on the other hand, the danger was great and serious, then the sham actions of the cabinet were a betrayal of the Republic and of the parties that placed their confidence in it.

In either case, the working class has not, in sending Millerand into the cabinet, taken over that "large share of responsibility" which Jaurès and his friends speak of so proudly. It has merely fallen heir to a part of the shameful "republican" disgrace of petty-bourgeois radicalism.

The contradiction between the hopes confided in the cabinet of Waldeck-Rousseau and its actual achievements has confronted the Jaurès-Millerand section of French socialism with but one alternative. It could confess its disillusionment, admit the uselessness of Millerand's participation in the government, and demand his resignation. Or

it could declare itself satisfied with the politics of the government, pronounce the realities to be just what it had expected, and gradually tone down its expectations and demands to correspond with the gradual evaporation of the government's will-to-action.

As long as the cabinet avoided the main question and remained in the stage of preliminary skirmishes—and this stage lasted an entire eighteen months—all political tendencies that followed its policies, including the socialists, could still drift along with it. However, the first decisive step of the government—the Amnesty Law—pushed matters out of their twilight zone into the clear light of day.

"The Whole Truth!"

The outcome of the Dreyfus Affair was of decisive importance for the Jaurès group, whether they liked it or not. To play on this card, and this card only, had been their tactic for two full years. The Dreyfus Affair was the axis of all their politics. They described it as "one of the greatest battles of the century, one of the greatest of human history!" (Jaurès in *Petite République*, August 12, 1899). To shrink from this great task of the working class would mean "the worst abdication, the worst humiliation" (*ibid.*, July 15, 1899). "*Toute la vérité! La pleine lumière!*" The whole truth, full light, that was the goal of the socialist campaign. Nothing could stop Jaurès and his friends—neither difficulties nor nationalist manœuvres nor the protests of the socialist group led by Guesde and Vaillant.

We battle onward, [Jaurès called out with noble pride] and if the judges of Rennes, deceived by the detestable manœuvres of the reactionaries, should again victimize the innocent in order to save the criminal army chiefs, we will again stand up on the morrow, despite all proclamations of expulsion, despite all mealy-mouthed references to the falsification, distortion, and belittling of the class struggle, despite all dangers, and call out to the generals and the judges: You are hangmen and criminals! (*Ibid.* July 15 1899.)

During the trial at Rennes, Jaurès wrote confidently:

Be it as it may, justice will triumph! The hour is drawing nigh for the freeing of the martyrs and for the punishment of the criminals! (*Ibid.* Aug. 13, 1899.)

As late as November of last year, shortly before the passage of the Amnesty Law, Jaurès declared at Lille:

For my part I was prepared to go further. I wanted to continue until the poisonous beasts would be forced to spit out their poison. Yes, it was necessary to prosecute all forgers, all liars, all criminals, all traitors; it is necessary to pursue them to the extreme summits of the truth, as on the extreme point of a knife, until they were forced to admit their crimes and the ignominy of their crimes before the entire world. (*Les Deux Methodes*, Lille, 1900, p. 5.)

And Jaurès was right. The Dreyfus Affair had awakened all the latent forces of reaction in France. The old enemy of the working class, militarism, stood completely exposed, and it was necessary to direct all spears against its body. The working class was called upon for the first time to fight out a great political battle. Jaurès and his friends led the workers into the struggle and thereby opened up a new epoch in the history of French socialism.

Jaurès Crosses the Rubicon

As the Amnesty Law was presented to the Chamber, the right-wing socialists suddenly found themselves facing a Rubicon. It was now clear that the government that had been formed to liquidate the Dreyfus crisis, instead of "turning on the spotlight", instead of establishing the

"entire truth", and instead of forcing the military despots to their knees, had extinguished truth and light and bowed its own knee to the military despots. This was a betrayal of the hopes Jaurès and his friends had placed on the government. This ministerial post revealed itself to be a useless tool for socialist politics and the defense of the Republic. The tool had turned against the master. If the Jaurès group wanted to remain true to their position in the Dreyfus campaign and to the task of republican defense, they immediately had to turn their weapons and use every means to defeat the Amnesty Law. The government had laid their cards on the table. It was necessary to trump them.

But to decide on the Amnesty proposal was also to decide on the existence of the cabinet. Since the Nationalists declared themselves against the Amnesty, and made the question one of a vote of confidence in the government, it was easy for a majority to be formed against the proposal and lead to the downfall of the cabinet.

Jaurès and his friends now had to make a choice: either fight through to the finish their two-year campaign on the Dreyfus issue, or to support the Waldeck-Rousseau cabinet, either for the "full truth" or the cabinet, either for the defense of the Republic or the ministerial post of Millerand. The question balanced in the scales for only a few minutes. Waldeck-Millerand outweighed Dreyfus. The cabinet's ultimatum accomplished what the Guesde-Vaillant manifestoes of excommunication had failed to accomplish: in order to save the cabinet, Jaurès and his group voted for the amnesty and thereby gave up the Dreyfus campaign.

The die had been cast. With the acceptance of the Amnesty Law, the right-wing socialists made as the guide for their conduct, not their own political interests, but the maintenance at the helm of the Waldeck-Rousseau cabinet. The vote for the Amnesty Law was the Waterloo of their Dreyfus campaign. In the twinkling of an eye, Jaurès had brought to naught all he accomplished in the course of two years.

The Retreat Becomes a Rout

After surrendering their chief political stock, the Jaurès group sped merrily on their sportive way. To save the government, they gave up—reluctantly and with internal *Katzenjammer* over the costly price—the goal of two years of gigantic struggles: the "whole truth" and "complete light". But to justify their own adherence to a government of political fiascos, they had to deny the fiascos. Their next step was to justify the capitulation of the government.

The government pigeon-holed the Dreyfus Affair instead of fighting it through to the end? But that was necessary "in order to put an end to the now useless and boring trials and avoid sickening the people with too much publicity, which would now soon obscure the truth." (Jaurès in *Petite République*, Dec. 18, 1900).

It is true that two years ago the whole of "loyal and honest France" had been called upon to pledge: "I swear that Dreyfus is innocent, that the innocent shall be vindicated and the guilty shall be punished" (*Ibid.*, Aug. 9, 1899).

But today "all these judicial trials would be an absurdity. They would only tire the country without clarifying it and hurt the cause we are trying to serve. . . The true justification of the Dreyfus Affair lies today in the work for the

Republic as a whole" (*Ibid.*, Dec. 18, 1900).

Yet another step and the former heroes of the Dreyfus Campaign appear to the Jaurès group as troublesome ghosts of the past with whom one cannot finish quickly enough.

Zola, the "great defender of justice", "the pride of France and of humanity", the man of the thundering "*J'Accuse!*", issues a protest against the Amnesty Law. He insists now, as previously, on "the whole truth and the full light". He accuses once more. What confusion! Does he not see, asks Jaurès, that there is already "enough light" to penetrate all intellects? Zola should forget his failure to be vindicated before a court of law and remember that he is glorified in the eyes of "that great judge, the whole of humanity", and please, be so kind as not to bother us with his eternal "*J'Accuse!*" "Only no accusations, no empty reiterations!" (*Ibid.*, Dec. 24, 1900.) The work for the Republic as a whole, that is the main thing.

The heroic Picquart, "the honor and pride of the French army", "the pure knight of truth and justice", rejects as an insult his prospective recall to the army under the Amnesty Law—what arrogance! Does not the government offer him, with its intended recall to the army, "the most brilliant vindication"? True enough, Picquart has a right to have the truth spread on the records of the courts. But our good friend Picquart should not forget that the truth is not only a concern of Col. Picquart, but of the whole of humanity. And in comparison to humanity as a whole, Picquart's concern for vindication plays a little rôle indeed. "In fact, we must not permit ourselves, in our insistence upon justice, to be limited to individual cases." (Gerault-Richard, *Petite République*, Dec. 30, 1900.) The work for the Republic as a whole, that is the main thing.

Dreyfus, this "example of human suffering in its deepest agony", this "incarnation of humanity itself upon the summits of misfortune and desperation", (Jaurès, *Petite République*, Aug. 10, 1898)—Dreyfus defended himself, bewildered, against the Amnesty Law, which cut off his last hope for legal rehabilitation—what rapacity! Do not his tormentors suffer enough already? Esterhazy drags himself through the streets of London, "hungry and broken in spirit". Boisdeffre was forced to flee from the general staff. Gonse is out of the top ranks and goes about dejected. DePellieux died in disgrace. Henry committed suicide by cutting his throat. Du Paty de Clam is out of the service. What more can one ask for? Are not the pangs of their conscience enough punishment for the criminals? And if Dreyfus is not content with this favorable outcome of events and insists upon punishment by human courts—just let him be patient. "There will come a time when punishment will overtake the wretches." (Jaurès, *Petite République*, Jan. 5, 1901.) "There will come a time"—but right now the good Dreyfus must realize that there are more important problems in the world than these "useless and boring trials". "We have better things to gain from the Dreyfus affair than all this agitation and acts of revenge." (Gerault-Richard, *Petite République*, Dec. 15, 1900.) The work for the Republic as a whole, that is the main thing.

One more step and the Jaurès group regard all criticism of the government's policies, to which the Dreyfus cam-

paign was offered as a sacrificial lamb, as frivolous playing with the "government of Republican Defense"

Sobering voices are gradually raised in Jaurès' own camp to question the action of the cabinet in the "democratization of the army" and the "secularization of the Republic"—what light-mindedness! How terrible "systematically and with nervous impatience [after eighteen months—R.L.] to discredit the first achievements of our common efforts. . . Why discourage the proletariat?" (Jaurès, *Petite République*, Jan. 5, 1901.) The proposals of the government on the religious orders was a capitulation to the church? Only a "dilettante and mealy-mouthed performer" could say that. As a matter of fact, "it is the greatest struggle between the church and bourgeois society since the laws on the secularization of the schools" (*Ibid.*, Jan. 12, 1901).

And if, in general, the government flounders from one fiasco to another, does not the "assurance of future vic-

tories" remain? (*Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1901). It is not a matter of single laws—the work for the Republic as a whole, that is the main thing.

Just what, after all of this procrastination, is the "work for the Republic as a whole"? It is no longer the liquidation of the Dreyfus Affair, nor the reorganization of the army, nor the subordination of the church. As soon as the existence of the cabinet is threatened, everything else is given up. It suffices for the government, in order to pass its favorite measures, to pose it as a vote of confidence, and Jaurès and his friends are safely put into the harness.

Yesterday, the cabinet must take defensive action in order to save the Republic. Today, the defense of the Republic must be given up in order to save the cabinet. "The work for the Republic as a whole" means, today, the mobilization of all Republican forces to keep the cabinet of Waldeck-Millerand at the helm. (*To be continued.*)

TRANSLATED BY ERNEST ERBER

Rosa LUXEMBURG

The Struggle for National Supremacy 1789-1848

IN 1848 AMERICAN SOCIETY was divided into three distinct interdependent systems of production: the slave plantation system, the wage labor system of industrial capitalism, and the small family farms. Each of these systems of labor was concentrated in a particular part of the country. The planters and their chattels were rooted in the Southern states; the manufacturers and their wage workers were located for the most part in the Northeast; the largest yet least centralized class of small farmers was scattered in varying proportions throughout the land. Its most important segment lived in the inland region along the Great Lakes and in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys.

These three principal branches of national economy supported the three great classes which dominated American political life between the First American Revolution and the Second: the Southern planters, the Northern bourgeoisie, and the petty proprietors of the town and country. Such subordinate social strata as the proletariat of the North and the poor whites of the South were but slightly and indirectly represented in national affairs. Negroes and Indians, like the women, were excluded from participation in politics. Political activity was the prerogative of propertied white males with power accruing to them in geometric proportion to the amount of property at their command.

The mutual relations between these three major social forces determined the political situation at any given moment. Although the lesser bourgeoisie, the family farmers in the rural regions together with the shopkeepers and craftsmen of the cities, composed the mass of the population, their political weight did not correspond to their numerical size. The leading political rôles were taken by representatives of the two ruling minorities, the big planters or the big bourgeoisie, whose mighty economic power and superior social standing compensated for their lack of bulk.

With the adoption of the Constitution in 1789 and the launching of the Republic a new social order had been erected upon the equilibrium established among the three classes as the result of their preceding revolutionary struggles. The mercantile and planting aristocracies formed the cornerposts and the petty-bourgeois plebians the pedestal of the new state. Thus the political system of the Republic inverted the real relations of the social order. Whereas the social pyramid rested upon the toiling masses, the basis of the political system rested upon the interrelations between the two governing groups.

The struggle for hegemony between planter and capitalist was the axis around which the political history of the United States revolved between the two revolutions. Their contest, beginning shortly after the birth of the Republic, continued to be the cardinal preoccupation of American statesmen until its climax in the disruption of the Union they had organized together. Whoever does not keep firmly in mind the fact that the gravitational center of American politics during the first seventy-two years of its existence lies precisely in this major conflict runs the risk of losing the guiding thread in the labyrinth of events.

The artisans of the Constitution assumed that the planters and capitalists would share sovereignty in the new nation. This theory of a balance of power was based upon a transitory conjunction of mutual interests. In reality, the Constitution simply defined the terms and provided the arena in which their contest for supremacy was to work itself out. The Constitution did no more than adjust the most pressing points of difference between the two classes; it could not, by its very nature as a compromise agreement, determine which should rule over the other. The answer to this crucial question could be given only as the result of further struggle between them.

No sooner, therefore, had the machinery of the new government been put into operation than the erstwhile allies found themselves opposed to each other on a number of important issues. Their contest for supremacy was resumed on a broader scale within the framework of the Republic. Seven decades of parliamentary struggle, and ultimately a civil war, were required to determine, once and for all, whether planter or capitalist was to dominate the United States.

A graph of their struggles would show a series of acute crises, alternating with periods of comparative harmony between them. Setting aside the storms and stresses within each, the contest between the two opponents passed through three well-defined stages of development from 1789 to 1860.

In the first period of their relations during the administrations of Washington and Adams the commercial capitalists controlled the Federal machine. Piloted by Hamilton, the most far-sighted of the American statesmen, they succeeded in enacting the most important parts of their program. The national debt was refunded and the state debts assumed; a national bank was chartered and a system of internal imposts and revenue taxes instituted; Federal troops sent into Pennsylvania to crush the Whiskey Rebellion established the authority of the central power; a pro-English foreign policy was pursued; the dictatorial Alien and Sedition laws were passed. Around the struggle over these issues the division between the merchant capitalists and the commercial agrarian interests which is the key to early American political history crystallized into the Federalist and the Democratic-Republican parties.

The brief reign of the commercial bourgeoisie ended in 1800. With Jefferson's election the planters ascended the throne and became the real rulers of the Republic. For the next sixty years their word was law in the United States. The planters dictated the major domestic and foreign policies of the country; made its wars; annexed new territories; nominated presidents and Supreme Court justices; and staffed the government offices and armed forces with their appointees. The planters had no monopoly of state power. They governed in grudging or in willing collaboration with segments of the Northern bourgeoisie and Western farmers. From 1800 to 1860 specific combinations of class forces at the top changed many times, but they had one common denominator: the planters exercised their domination through them all. As the senior partner in the government, they had the last word on all questions affecting their vital interests.

If the lines of class interest were so tightly intertwined in many of the most important internal issues that it is sometimes difficult, and always tedious, to disentangle them, the dictatorship of the planters stands out clearly in the sphere of foreign affairs, the touchstone of social supremacy. The main lines of American foreign policy from Jefferson's administration to Lincoln's election were laid down in accordance with the interests of the planters and their allies. The purchase of Louisiana, the war of 1812, the conquest of Florida, the promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine, the annexation of Texas and the Mexican War; the Gadsden Purchase, the Ostend Manifesto—all these actions were undertaken with an eye to the promotion of

the agrarian interests, in most cases against the bitterest opposition of Northern merchants, monied men, and manufacturers.¹

The course of territorial expansion followed the path marked out by the planters. Compare the diametrically different policies of the government in regard to Mexico and England in 1844. Despite the popular war-cry of "54-40 or Fight", the representatives of the slave power voluntarily compromised with England over the Oregon boundary dispute, while they maintained an attitude of irreconcilable aggression toward Mexico until they had swallowed up half its lands and were preparing to bite off the rest, simply because cotton could be raised and slavery extended on the Mexican acres but not in Oregon. For similar reasons the Democratic government forced Commissioner Parker to abandon Formosa and blocked plans of commercial expansion in the Far East.

Positive proof of this negative side of the planters' foreign policy was provided shortly after the Civil War. No sooner had the government changed hands than the direction of territorial expansion changed with it. Although they did not hesitate to buy Louisiana in 1803, the slaveholders would certainly not have paid millions of American dollars for Alaska in 1869.

Since neither capitalists nor planters commanded enough power or numbers to rule in their own right, they were compelled to seek supplementary political support among the masses. This meant above all going to the farmers who constituted the vast majority of the population.

The rôle of the farmers in nineteenth century American politics is a magnificent illustration of the axiom that an economically subordinate class cannot be the supreme power in political life. The American farmers lacked the internal cohesion, the integrated economic strength, and the broad political outlook to lead the nation. By far the most numerous portion of the people, they were also the most heterogeneous and dispersed. The settled and prosperous farmers of New York and Pennsylvania were almost as far removed in the social scale from the pioneer squatters and immigrant homesteaders of the West as the wealthy cotton planters were from the piedmont farmers and poor whites on the mudsill of Southern civilization. The farmers were divided geographically, economically, politically. The Appalachians separated the Eastern from the Western farmers, the Ohio River the Western from

¹ This was substantially the opinion of Henry Clay. "During the first twelve years of the administration of the Government, northern counsels . . . prevailed; and out of them sprung the Bank of the United States; the assumption of the State debts; bounties to the fisheries; protection to the domestic manufactures—I allude to the act of 1789; neutrality in the wars with Europe; Jay's treaty; alien and sedition laws; and a quasi war with France. I do not say, sir, that those leading and prominent measures which were adopted during the administration of Washington and the elder Adams were carried exclusively by Northern counsels. They could not have been, but were carried mainly by the sway which Northern counsels had obtained in the affairs of the country. "So, also, with the latter party, for the last fifty years. I do not mean to say that Southern counsels alone have carried the measures which I am about to enumerate, I know they could not exclusively have carried them; but I say they have been carried by their preponderating influence, with cooperation, it is true, and large cooperation, in some instances, from the Northern section of the Union. "And what are those measures during the fifty years that Southern counsels have preponderated? The embargo and other commercial restrictions of non-intercourse and non-importation; war with Great Britain; the Bank of the United States overthrown; protection; protection to domestic manufactures enlarged and extended; (I allude to the passage of the act of 1815 or 1816); the Bank of the United States reestablished; the same bank put down; reestablished by Southern counsels and put down by Southern counsels; Louisiana acquired; Florida bought; Texas annexed; war with Mexico; California and other Territories acquired from Mexico by conquest and purchase; protection superseded and free trade established; Indians removed west of the Missouri; fifteen new states admitted into the Union."—*Speech on the Compromise Resolutions, delivered in the Senate, Feb. 5-6, 1850.*

the Southern farmers. One part of the Western cultivators found their chief markets in the industrial East and Europe; another in the slaveholding South. Economic dependence led to political dependence. One section of the farmers attached itself to the Democratic party of the planters, others linked themselves with the parties of the Northern bourgeoisie, the Whig and later the Republican parties. Scattered, absorbed in local concerns, without direct connection or community of interests with each other on a national scale, they could conquer power in a single state but not in the Federal government.

The nineteenth century witnessed several abortive attempts of the farmers to assume control of the government. In no case did they come closer to that goal than to obtain a minor share of the state power in coalition with one or the other of the two ruling classes. The peak of their influence before the Civil War was under Jackson's administration. Even then, like the Social Democracy in post-war Germany, the farmer's representatives only participated in managing the affairs of state but they did not rule. The repeated failures of the most progressive farmers to perfect an enduring national party of their own, notably the experiments with the Free-Soil and early Republican movements, demonstrated their inability to forge the most elementary instrument for taking power.

Prevented by their social heterogeneity, their geographical division, their economic subservience, and their provincial outlook from following an independent, united, and consistent political course, the representatives of the various sections of the farmers fulfilled the function of mediators between the two opposing camps. They were the arbiters of their disputes and the buffers of their collisions. It was no accident that Henry Clay, "the Great Compromiser", came from Kentucky, or that Stephen Douglas, who attempted to reenact the conciliatory rôle of Clay in a new and different historical situation and failed so miserably, came from Illinois.

The farmers, and especially the frontier farmers, were natural allies of the planters. The political alliance between the agrarian interests, first consummated under Jefferson, continued to be the backbone of the Democratic party and the cause of its success. The agrarian democracy acted as brokers between the planters and capitalists, serving the interests of their bosses in order to advance their own. The farmers obtained their own demands only as a pendant to the planter or capitalist program. Nine times out of ten, however, the farmers came out of political transactions with their superiors holding the short end of the stick. The frontiersmen together with the planters foisted the war of 1812 upon the young nation in the hope of winning Canada. But while the Southerners succeeded in snatching Florida from the feeble hands of Spain, the unfortunate Westerners failed in their efforts to wrest Canada from England. The same thing happened in 1844 in regard to Texas and Oregon.

The farmers were to have no better luck in their dealings with the big bourgeoisie later. The Homestead Act, part of the price paid by Northern capitalists for the Western farmers' support in the armed struggle against the slaveholders, ended in a similar fiasco. While the government bureaus bestowed baronial domains upon the land specu-

tors, railroads, mining, and lumbering corporations, and big ranchers, the small homesteader had to sweat for years to possess his quarter section.

After Jefferson's victory in 1800, the merchant aristocracy never recovered its lost leadership. The merchants were forced to cede a portion of their political power to their agrarian opponents for every commercial concession they obtained from their régime. So long as the commercial capitalists remained the dominant section of the bourgeoisie, the capitalists offered no serious challenge to the rule of the planters. The friction between them shook the framework of the Republic twice but it never split or overturned its foundations. During the "era of good feeling" following the War of 1812 the merchants became reconciled to playing second fiddle in the national orchestra conducted by the slaveholders. When Cotton was crowned King, they not only bowed low before his liege lords at Washington but became their most ardent attorneys in the North.

How passionately these men of property defended slavery — and for what reasons — can be seen from the following outburst on the part of a "New York Merchant of first rank" in 1829 to Reverend Samuel May, a prominent abolitionist.

Mr. May, we are not such fools as not to know that slavery is a great evil; a great wrong. But it was consented to by the founders of our republic. It was provided for in the Constitution of our Union. A great portion of the property of the Southerners is invested under its sanction; and the business of the North as well as the South, has become adjusted to it. There are millions upon millions of dollars due from Southerners to the merchants and mechanics of this city alone, the payment of which would be jeopardized by any rupture between the North and South. We cannot afford, sir, to let you and your associates succeed in your endeavor to overthrow slavery. It is not a matter of principle with us. It is a matter of business necessity. We cannot afford to let you succeed. We mean, sir [said he, with increased emphasis], we mean sir, to put you Abolitionists down,—by fair means, if we can, by foul means, if we must. (*William Lloyd Garrison*, by John J. Chapman, p. 32.)

As the Northern merchants degenerated into utterly reactionary accomplices of the slaveowners, the sole progressive force within the capitalist ranks were the manufacturers, who were destined to be the beheaders of the slaveholders and their successors as rulers of the Republic. In more or less constant opposition to the planters from the earliest days of the Union, they came into sharp conflict with them in 1819 over the question of the extension of slavery into the territories, in 1832 over the "Tariff of Abominations", and in 1845 over the Mexican war. The first struggle ended in a drawn battle; the last two in crushing defeats for the industrialists. They did not begin to gird themselves and organize their forces for the final showdown until the rise of the Republican Party in the Fifties. Before they met in mortal combat, however, the slaveholders were to enjoy a noon-hour of absolute mastery over the nation.

The third and final chapter in the struggle for national supremacy between the planters and capitalists was just beginning in 1848. This period had three chief characteristics. It was marked by the ever-tightening autocracy of the slaveholders attended by a steady diminution of their economic weight; by the economic and political ascent of the industrial bourgeoisie and the deepening antagonism be-

tween them and the slave power; and by the gradual recession of the conciliatory petty-bourgeoisie into the background as the head-on collision between the rival contenders for power approached.

With the growth of the nation since 1789 all three classes had considerably increased their size, wealth, and domain. These quantitative changes were accompanied by even more important qualitative transformations. The planting aristocracy of the Atlantic seaboard, whose fortunes had been founded on tobacco and who had given so many leaders to the Revolution and to the Republic, had become impoverished and decayed, yielding their power and place to the new nobility of King Cotton. The commercial aristocracy of the Northern seaports had been shouldered aside by the rising manufacturers, whose demands thundered for recognition in the halls of Congress. The small farmers who had been packed between the Alleghanies and the Atlantic ocean were beginning to build an empire of their own upon a foundation of foodstuffs in the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys and along the Great Lakes.

Political interrelations had changed with these alterations in their internal social structure. The planters who had allied themselves with the capitalists to form the Union were now at sword's points with the industrialists and preparing to depart from the Yankee Republic. While the Northern merchants of the seaboard cities maintained close ties with the Southern slaveholders and still supported the new as they had upheld the old, the bonds between them were weakening. Instead of being allied against common enemies, the Northern merchants now stood in the old position of the English merchants as exploiters and oppressors of the planters. The farmers were beginning to split into two parts, the free-soil farmers of the North Central states going over to the camp of the industrialists, while the more backward farmers of the Southern and border states, retaining a certain community of interests with the slaveowners, continued to follow in their footsteps.

All these relationships were to crystallize into firm formations in the years between 1848 and 1860 and to be precipitated in 1861. George E. NOVACK

A Graphic History of Bolshevism

PRINTED BELOW IS THE history of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party in statistical form. These tables, carefully compiled from data in the Soviet press, are eloquent enough in themselves. But it would not be superfluous to append a brief commentary as an introduction to them.

Beginning with the Sixth Party Congress (July 1917) there were thirteen party congresses held in a period of 22 years. Between the Sixth and the Seventh Congresses eight months elapsed. The next six congresses were held at intervals of one year; furthermore, under Lenin this interval fixed in the party statutes was very rigidly observed. Thereafter, the schedule was violated. The Twelfth Congress was convened in April, 1923 and the Thirteenth was held in May, 1924, after a month's delay. The next congress, the Fourteenth, was held only in December, 1925, that is, one year and a half later. The Fifteenth Party Congress at which the Left Opposition was expelled from the party convened in December, 1927, that is, two years after the Fourteenth. Violations of the party statutes had already become the rule. The Sixteenth Congress was called only after a lapse of two and a half years, in June, 1930. But even this interval was found to be too brief. The Seventeenth Party Congress was called after three years and eight months had elapsed. Finally, the last Congress—the Eighteenth—was held in March of this year, more than five years after the preceding one.

This prolongation of time intervals was of course no accident. In the years of the revolution and the civil war the party found it possible to adhere to its own statutes the Central Committee remained an organ subject to the control of the party. The Central Committee began to rise above the party simultaneously with the rise of the Soviet bureaucracy over the workers' state. The control of the party, however terrorized, became an irksome fetter for the Central Committee. The intervals between the Con-

gresses were henceforth determined to an ever larger measure by the administrative exigencies of the ruling nucleus in the Central Committee, that is, Stalin's clique. Thus, the Fourteenth Congress was convened after a half year's delay in connection with the internal struggle in the "troika" (Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev). Before presenting himself at the Congress, Stalin had to make sure of his majority in the provinces. It was no longer a question of solving controversial issues, nor of exercising control over the C.C. but of setting the seal of approval on accomplished facts. The Fifteenth Congress was convened for the sole purpose of drawing the balance sheet of the strangulation of the Left Opposition. The time for its convocation was determined by this very task. An identical task was fulfilled by the Sixteenth Congress, this time, in relation to the Right opposition. The Seventeenth Congress was called only after the crisis in collectivization had passed its acutest phases and the C.C. was already in position to report certain "consoling" items. Finally, the Eighteenth Congress was convened after the purges of Yagoda, Yezhov and Berya had succeeded in rooting out opposition, in terrorizing the party, and reconstituting the ruling apparatus in the state and the army. The interrelationship between the party and the apparatus has been stood completely on its head.

The choice of the personnel of the C.C. was not left to chance but came as the result of years of work, testing and selection. It was only in the nature of things that a stable nucleus should be formed in the personnel of the C.C. which was reelected from one year to the next. The C.C. was renewed on the one hand by the dying out of the older men and on the other by the coming to the fore of young forces. Generally speaking, as appears from Table No. 1, from 60% to 86% of the outgoing C.C. composed the members of the incoming committees up to the Seventeenth Congress. The foregoing statement must be qualified to this

effect that these bare percentages do not of themselves provide a sufficiently correct picture of the actual process whereby the C.C. had been renewed. During the first seven congresses—from the Sixth to the Twelfth—one and the same nucleus was in reality reelected, and the changes in the composition of the C.C. amounted to the inclusion of new elements who were then subjected to test and selection. The Thirteenth Congress marked a breaking point. In the initial period of Thermidor, changes in the political character of the Bolshevik staff were attained through an artificial expansion of the C.C., *i.e.*, by a dilution of the old revolutionists with new office-holders grateful for a rapid career and firmly clinging to the coat-tails of the General Secretary. Up to 1923 the number of members of the C.C. varied between 15 and 27. From 1923 on, it was increased first to 40 and later to 71. Stalin's clique found it easier at the outset to introduce docile or semi-docile novices into the C.C. than to remove immediately the basic nucleus of Lenin's party. Toward the latter part of 1927 a stabilization was achieved in point of the number of members but there began a shunting of the old Leninist nucleus. However, even as pariahs, the old Bolsheviks represented a political danger. A far greater danger was the growth of the Fourth International. Stalin in his own fashion "combined" these two dangers so as to cope with them through the medium of Yagoda and Yezhov. The shunting aside of old Bolsheviks as well as the revolutionists of the new generation was supplanted by a drive to exterminate them physically.

Of necessity, these complex processes are abstracted from Table No. I. It only registers in figures the proportions to which each new Central Committee was renewed. As we have already observed, up to a certain time each C.C. passed on to its successor from 60% to 86.6% of its personnel. In the last five years we find this continuity violently disrupted. The Eighteenth Congress held in March of this year took over from the outgoing C.C. only 22.5% of its members! The personnel of the C.C. which in the preceding eleven years had smashed the Left Opposition and then the United opposition and then the Right opposition and had secured the complete "monolithism" of Stalin's party thus proved to have consisted of more than three-quarters traitors, betrayers, or just plain "enemies of the people".

Table No. II shows how many members from the staff of each of the preceding twelve Central Committees have been preserved in the composition of the present Central Committee; and it also registers the fate suffered by the members who were removed. As an instance in point we take the Central Committee that was elected in August, 1917 and which led the October revolution. This historical staff consisted of 21 members. Of them only one remains at the present time in the party leadership—Stalin. Seven have died of disease or have fallen at the hands of the enemy (we shall not engage in a dispute over the causes). Shot or condemned to the firing squad—seven; three have disappeared during the purges; three others have been liquidated politically—and perhaps also physically; a total of thirteen, that is, almost 62% of the participants in the October staff turned out to be "enemies of the people"

Stalin here provides a statistical confirmation *sui generis*

of the hoary theory of Miliukov-Kerensky that the October revolution was the handiwork of the agents of the German General Staff.

The Tenth Congress, held in March 1921, which launched the "New Economic Policy", elected a Central Committee of 24 members. At the present time, participating in the leadership are five of them, that is, about 20%. Fifteen members, that is 62.5% have been liquidated physically and politically. The Fifteenth Congress which expelled the "Trotskyists" in December, 1927 established a Central Committee of 71 members. Of them, ten have remained at the present time in the party leadership, *i.e.*, 14%; fifty men have been liquidated, *i.e.*, over 70%. Of the personnel of the C.C. established by the Sixteenth Congress (1930), 76% have been exterminated physically and politically. Lastly, of the 71 members of the C.C. elected by the Seventeenth Congress (1934), only 16 souls now remain in the leadership; 48 have been liquidated, *i.e.*, 67.6%. We cannot tell as yet just how or to what extent the incumbent C.C. will be extirpated, but its horoscope is a dark one.

In the sphere of candidates the purges have taken even a more devastating toll. At the last Congress less than 12% of the candidates to the previous C.C. were reelected; 86.7% of the candidates have been liquidated physically and politically. In almost all the congresses we observe the workings of one and the same law: the proportion of reelected candidates is smaller while the proportion of those liquidated is much larger than the corresponding proportions among the actual members. This fact is of exceptional interest: the fate of the candidates, recruited from among new party cadres, indicates the direction in which the new party bureaucracy is developing. Contrary to the constantly reiterated assertions that the youth is unconditionally "loyal" to Stalin it turns out that the proportion of "traitors", "betrayers" and generally unreliable elements among the young cadres is even larger than among the personnel of the old guard. This is the irrefutable testimony of figures! However, the difference lies in this, that the "criminals" from among the old guard were in most instances guilty of devotion to the revolutionary tradition, whereas the "criminals" from among the young bureaucracy are apparently pulling more resolutely than Stalin himself in the direction of class society. But both the former and the latter are dangerous!

The changes in the composition of the C.C. were accompanied by even more drastic changes in its rôle. The old Bolshevik C.C. was the undisputed leader of the party and was most conscientious in its attitude toward questions of theory and the voice of the workers. The incumbent C.C. has no independent meaning whatever. It is handpicked as an auxiliary to the ruling nucleus, and it is altered by the nucleus in the interval between the Congresses. Changes in the personnel of the C.C. are effected through the state apparatus, or, to put it more correctly, through certain "secret" departments of this apparatus, above all the G.P.U. Among the staff of 71 members of the incumbent C.C. there is Berya, the head of the G.P.U., and Vyshinsky, former chief prosecutor, now Molotov's deputy. Berya's past in the party is at best an obscure one. Vyshinsky's past in the party is quite clear: he adhered to Menshevism in the

“heroic” periods of his career, at a time when it was impossible not to belong to a “leftist” party; but for the most part he was an attorney for the oil trust. He appeared on the Soviet arena during the period of the crushing of the Trotskyist opposition. This individual did not become a Bonapartist lackey, he was born such. Stalin leans not upon the C.C. but on Berya, Vyshinsky and their assistants in whose presence the ordinary members of the C.C. quake.

From among the diplomats, the personnel of the latest C. C. includes Litvinov and Potemkin. Litvinov is an old Bolshevik who participated in the party from its day of foundation. Potemkin is a former bourgeois professor who joined the Bolsheviks after they were victorious; and who enjoyed, as an avowed and importunate courtier, the merited contempt of all those who knew him. Today Potemkin has not only replaced Litvinov as head of the diplomatic corps but he also plays a far more important part in the party line than does Litvinov. From among the old military men in the C.C. there is Budenny who has no essential ties with the party; and among the candidates there is the former General Shaposhnikov.* Shaposhnikov's political physiognomy may be characterized by the fact that during the Soviet-Polish war, the then head of the War Department suspended the publication of the periodical *Military Art (Voyennoye Dyelo)* in which Shaposhnikov had printed an exceptionally coarse chauvinist article in the style of the good old Czarist days. Even as a military man, Shaposhnikov is lacking in any stature. He is a docile functionary of the Czarist General Staff, and nothing more; his political stature calls for absolutely no comments. Surviving the purge which has destroyed the flower of the commanding staff, Shaposhnikov is today along with Potemkin a figure symbolic of the Stalinist C.C.

The Central Committee as a committee is a many-headed myth. It goes without saying, that the most important questions, such as purging the C.C. itself, cannot even be discussed in the Committee, inasmuch as 32.4% of its members cannot possibly pass a decision to destroy 67.6%. Such questions are decided by the Super-Central Committee of Stalin-Yagoda-Yezhov-Vishinsky. The fate of the party depends as little on the C.C. as the fate of the latter does on the party.

The Political Bureau, in its turn, does not at all depend on the C.C. This is most glaringly demonstrated in the fact that the Political Bureau has undergone relatively little change in the Stalinist Era, while the C.C. “electing” it has been periodically subjected to extermination. But this immutable Political Bureau serves itself only as a more or less stable piece of decoration. It wields no power. In contrast to the C.C., the Political Bureau is composed predominantly of old Bolsheviks. Of them, Stalin alone served as a member of the Political Bureau under Lenin; Kalinin was for a while a candidate. The majority of the remaining members, men like Molotov, Andreyev, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan are by no means youngsters whose talents bloomed in the recent period. They were sufficiently well-known fifteen and even twenty years ago; but it was precisely for this reason that the idea never entered any-

one's mind that these people were capable of leading the party. They are kept in the Political Bureau primarily because in the guise of “old Bolsheviks” they provide a species of cover for shysters of the Vyshinsky-Berya-Potemkin-*et al.* type. On every important question Stalin confronts his “Political Bureau” with an accomplished fact.

To sum up, on the basis of the tables printed below, we can draw two extremely important conclusions:

1. What is now being designated as party “monolithism” has acquired a social and political content which is the diametrical opposite of Bolshevism. A genuine Bolshevik party prides itself on its unanimity but only in the sense that it groups the vanguard of the workers on the basis of an irreconcilable revolutionary program. The party demarcates itself from all other tendencies along the line of the proletarian class struggle. The Stalinist party has the following characteristic trait: there is a systematic shift away from proletarian politics toward the policy of defending the privileged layers (the kulak, the Nepman, the bureaucrat—in the first period; the bureaucrat, the labor and *kolkhoz* aristocracy, in the second period). This social shift is intimately bound up with the recasting of the entire program both in domestic as well as world politics (the

TABLE NO. I.*

Congress	Date of Congress	1. Members C.C.		Former Members of C.C. and Candidates Relected	
		2. Candidates			
VI	August 1917	21 4	— —	— —	— —
VII	March 1918	15 8	13 2	86.6 25.0	
VIII	March 1919	19 8	12 1	63.0 12.5	
IX	Mar.-April 1920	19 12	13 3	68.4 25.0	
X	March 1921	24 15	15 4	62.5 25.6	
XI	Mar.-April 1922	27 19	20 7	74.0 36.8	
XII	April 1923	40 17	24 10	60.0 58.8	
XIII	May 1924	53 34	37 10	69.8 29.4	
XIV	December 1925	63 43	49 22	77.7 51.1	
XV	December 1927	71 50	52 39	73.2 78.0	
XVI	June-July 1930	71 67	57 39	80.3 58.2	
XVII	February 1934	71 68	56 36	78.9 52.9	
XVIII	March 1939	71 68	16 8	22.5 11.7	

*Latest reports declare that Shaposhnikov has since been liquidated! —ED.

*Tables compiled by the Editorial Board of the *Bulletin of the Opposition*.

TABLE NO. II.

Congress	Date of Congress	Members of C.C.		In the Party Leadership at Present		Deceased		Victims of Thermidor				General Total	
		1. Members	2. Candidates	No.	%	No.	%	By Court Decision	Suicide	Disappeared	Politically Liquidated	No.	%
VI	August 1917	21		1	4.8	7	33.3	7	—	3	3	13	61.9
		4		—	—	—	—	—	2	2	—	4	100.0
VII	March 1918	15		2	13.3	5	33.3	5	—	3	—	8	53.3
		8		—	—	2	25.0	—	1	4	1	6	75.0
VIII	March 1919	19		2	10.5	3	15.8	9	1	3	1	14	73.7
		8		2	25.0	2	25.0	1	—	2	1	4	50.0
IX	Mar.-April 1920	19		3	15.8	3	15.8	10	1	2	—	13	68.4
		12		2	16.6	3	25.0	—	—	4	3	7	58.3
X	March 1921	24		5	20.8	4	16.6	7	1	2	5	15	62.5
		15		—	—	3	20.0	3	—	7	2	12	80.0
XI	Mar.-April 1922	27		6	22.2	5	18.5	9	1	4	2	16	59.2
		19		3	15.8	3	15.8	2	—	6	5	13	68.4
XII	April 1923	40		7	17.5	7	17.5	11	1	9	5	26	65.0
		17		2	11.8	1	5.9	1	1	3	9	14	82.3
XIII	May 1924	53		9	17.0	8	15.0	10	1	16	9	36	67.9
		34		2	5.8	—	—	3	1	9	19	32	94.1
XIV	December 1925	63		10	15.8	9	14.3	10	1	17	16	44	69.8
		43		3	6.9	2	4.6	4	3	10	21	38	88.4
XV	December 1927	71		10	14.0	11	15.5	5	3	25	17	50	70.4
		50		5	10.0	1	2.0	3	1	12	28	44	88.0
XVI	June-July 1930	71		11	15.5	6	8.4	6	4	25	19	54	76.0
		67		4	6.0	1	1.5	7	—	21	34	62	92.0
XVII	February 1934	71		16	24.0	6	8.4	11	1	24	12	48	67.6
		68		8	11.8	1	1.5	8	2	20	29	59	86.7

theory of socialism in one country, the struggle against equality, the defense of imperialist democracy, People's Fronts, etc.) The ruling apparatus systematically adapts the party and its institutions to this changing program, that is, in the service of new and ever more privileged social tiers. The principal methods of this adaptation are the dictatorial purges. The monolithism of the party signifies today not its unity on the basis of the proletarian program but its docility to the apparatus that betrays this program. Renewals in the personnel of the C.C. have reflected and continue to reflect the social shift of the party from the oppressed to the oppressors.

2. The second conclusion is indissolubly linked with the first. The unimpeachable language of figures mercilessly refutes the assertion so current among the democratic intellectuals that Stalinism and Bolshevism are "one and the same". Stalinism originated not as an organic outgrowth of Bolshevism but as a negation of Bolshevism consummated in blood. The process of this negation is mirrored very graphically in the history of the Central Committee. Stalinism had first to exterminate politically and then physically the leading cadres of Bolshevism in order to become that which it now is: an apparatus of the privileged, a brake upon historical progress, an agency of world imperialism. Stalinism and Bolshevism are mortal enemies.

Marx and Engels on the Proletarian Party

For almost forty years we have stressed the class struggle as the immediate driving force of history and in particular the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as the great lever of the modern social revolution; it is therefore impossible for us to cooperate with people who wish to expunge this class struggle from the movement. When the [First] International was formed we expressly formulated the battle-cry: the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. We cannot therefore cooperate with people who say that the workers are too uneducated to emancipate themselves and must first be freed from above by philanthropic bourgeois and petty-bourgeois. If the new party organ adopts a line corresponding to the views of these gentlemen, and is bourgeois and not proletarian, then nothing remains for us, much though we should regret it, but publically to declare our opposition to it, and to dissolve the solidarity with which we have hitherto represented the German Party abroad. But it is to be hoped that things will not come to that. . . . (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels to Bebel, Liebknecht, Bracke, and Others. September 1879).

The Suicide of Ernst Toller

ERNST TOLLER'S SUICIDE, which created a sensation not only in the German emigration, cannot be explained merely as a "personal collapse". The significance of this case extends much further and the private sides of the "sensation" recede into the background before the ideological and the political. Toller was a representative of a certain type of the German intelligentsia—and even by his death Toller represented precisely this type just as he did during his life-time. Toller's fall symbolizes the fall of the democratic-pacifist ideology; his end coincides with the end of the illusions once concentrated in the slogan "Never again war!" But apart from this symbolical significance, Toller's death raises at the same time the question of the real state of mind of those circles who consider themselves the spiritual élite of the German (and not only of the German) emigration and the representatives of the German future.

Of characteristic importance in judging the personality and the work of Ernst Toller is the fact that the period of his widest public influence coincided with the flowering of the Weimar republic (in whose early years Toller was imprisoned and tormented in the most wretched way), with the period, that is, in which one was disposed to dream of the dawn of a "democratic-pacifist era". Uplifted by the first sweep of the German revolution and especially by the Bavarian Soviet republic (for which he had to pay with harrowing years in prison), Toller later stagnated in a sentimental humanistic pathos. Pathos was the most widespread manifestation of German pacifism in its variegated species. Where revolutionary clarity of goal and resoluteness were the most burning questions of the day, only humanitarian-pacifist vagueness emerged. In those brief democratic-pacifist years of the republic, one could speak for a time in Germany of an Ernst Toller fashion, under whose influence stood the social-democratic pacifist youth in particular. The ideology of this youth was the pacific faith in humanity and its slogan read: "Never again war!" But of all the hopeless illusions, none was more gruesomely destroyed than this particular one.

Ernst Toller's suicide is not the first of such cases in the German emigration. In December, 1935, three and a half years before Toller, Kurt Tucholsky voluntarily left a life which, to him also, was then only a chain of disillusionment, despair and revulsion. What is *common* to both cases, Tucholsky's as well as Toller's suicide (however different both were as characters and men of letters), is this: their death contains the public declaration of the helplessness and hopelessness that has befallen, by and large, the German so-called "emigration élite" and which is expressed in the most varied forms: primarily in the open, cynical admiration of the "democratic" imperialisms and their "holy wars", in political mysticism, in passivity—and finally also in suicide. Tucholsky left behind sharp accusations in a letter of farewell against these "bigwigs" who, both in the Weimar republic and in emigration, had themselves celebrated, as they still do, as the spiritual élite of all Germany. And nothing, in turn, more accurately characterizes this "élite" than the fact that it feared to

make known to the public Tucholsky's letter of farewell in its complete form, a political document and a settlement of accounts of first-rate importance. They only dared to publish the document with the omission of all "painful" passages (a procedure which is, in part, only a gross falsification). The *prima donnas* of the emigration have sensitive nerves; they cling convulsively to the last shameful tatters of their whilom authority—and themselves even strangle the critical voice of the deceased.

It is not hard to define the present position of these emigrant bigwigs: pushed out by the newly-rising German imperialism which is striking out on all sides without restraint, they very soon found refuge under the roof of other imperialist states. Their most far-reaching perspective is the "rebirth of the German democracy"—but a democracy without new dangers and without the risk of losing a sinecure. Their dream is the old Weimar republic with guarantees for their own civil peace and security. The most typical figure of this sort is undoubtedly Herr Thomas Mann.

Yet it is impossible to speak of these "bigwigs" without special emphasis upon the most frequent type among them: those who are simply financially dependent, or in other words, those more or less openly tied up with the Stalinist bureaucracy. They have been least affected by the events and the defeats of recent years—for the very simple reason that they are already political corpses who pass off the cadaverous odor they exude as the "breath of the German future". This position, based exclusively on vicious ignorance and mendacity, has its very particular advantages. Proceeding from it, one can commit himself on two sides: for the "democratic" imperialists and for the Stalin bureaucracy, for "social democracy" and for imperialist war.

Ernst Toller undoubtedly represented an exception in this collection of emigrant bigwigs. He was more serious about his views; he took the collapse of his ideas more tragically than the others. And at last suicide appeared to him the lesser evil as against the permanent decomposition of his imperialistic and pro-Stalinist colleagues. As far as he could see, the swamp, gluttonous hypocrisy and corruption extended ever deeper around him. Toller could no longer raise himself above the crumpled walls of his ethical pathos and his pacifistic faith in humanity, and as far as his eye could see in the circles in which he moved, there was hopelessness and decay, helplessness and rot. Was it worth while living on?

The *N. Y. Times* of May 23, 1939 reports on the causes of Toller's suicide, in part:

Friends said he had undertaken no new writing but was casting about for further material. They attributed much of his depression to the gloomy view he had to take recently of events in Europe and the threat that he saw in the extension of totalitarianism to the American continent.

This testimony of his friends, however, only leads to half the truth. The successes of the totalitarian states, by themselves, could hardly have determined Toller's step; evidently of decisive significance to him was rather his absolute doubt that a limit could be placed upon the totali-

tarian successes in the future. He had lost faith in the strength and the ability of those organizations under whose influence and in whose surroundings he lived and moved. Undoubtedly, Toller, before deciding upon his final step, first drew the political and ideological conclusions from the activity of the emigrant bigwigs. And it was this balance-sheet that was annihilating—nor could it be otherwise—for the Stalinized protagonists of the rebirth of the Weimar republic, annihilating for the whole ideology of the “German People’s Front”.

Toller’s suicide can only be understood as a consequence of the situation of the emigrated German intelligentsia. Kurt Tucholsky, who preceded Toller in death, left behind him, at once as settlement of accounts and as a final demonstration, an accusatory letter of farewell. Toller probably renounced even this last protest of the letter of farewell. He knew these bigwigs and their state of mind and that is why he deemed it no longer even worth the effort to leave them his last repugnance in writing. He departed silently—and yet even in that lies an accusing protest. With a farewell letter or without one, the meaning is the same in either case: they preferred a voluntary departure from life to slow decomposition in the swamp of the “official” German journalism of the emigration (there is such a

thing, actually—made up of those who were and still are always on tap, who crawl from Ebert to Daladier, to Chamberlain and to Roosevelt, and extend their open and empty hands in all directions).

Up to now, surely, it has been the most honest and cleanest characters who preferred to draw the final personal conclusions for themselves from their ideological misery. Their mistake, or rather their misfortune, was that they did not find the road to the ranks of the social revolution. Unfortunately they were unable to free themselves of the perfidious and ruinous illusion of equating reformism, pacifism and Stalinism with socialism and revolutionary emancipation. And this illusion was the reason for their greatest, deadly disappointment—just as it is the tragedy of thousands who, at first in good faith and with blind confidence, followed reformism and the Stalin bureaucracy in their initial steps into the swamp of decline—and then, finally, could no longer see a way out. And one can predict with certainty that the inevitable and advancing disintegration of the ideology concocted by reformism and Stalinism, “democratic imperialism” and “Popular Front” will leave behind it additional “voluntary” victims.

Oscar FISCHER

Reading from Left To Right

by Dwight
Macdonald

Lost in the Dismal Swamp

AT FIRST GLANCE, Charles and Mary Beard’s *America in Mid-Passage* looks like the book bargain of the year: almost 1,000 pages—977, to be exact—of history, forming the final volume (1925-1938) of the authors’ celebrated *Rise of American Civilization*. Trying to read this thick volume, however, is like being lost in the Dismal Swamp lands of Virginia. The style, none too firm and precise in the Beards’ best books, is by now definitely marshy. (The Beards begin their section on the C.I.O.-A.F.L. split with this lucid sentence: “Whether as a consequence of the new federal legislation or as another incident in a long stream of economic and intellectual tendencies, a terrific clash among labor leaders and within the ranks of industrial workers tore into the labor system and intensified the conflict of other interests in America.” I find it hard to visualize an incident in a stream, nor do I see how a clash can tear into a system. The scenery, furthermore, is extremely monotonous: the Beards evidently have a corps of none too imaginative research workers, who have piled up on the masters’ desks a huge heap of newspaper clippings, which are crammed into the book without very much predigestion.)

There is at once too much data in the book and not enough. There are too many longwinded quotations from public figures like Nicholas Murray Butler—the Beards, like most liberals, take all speeches, articles, and other

verbal outpourings of public personages with the utmost seriousness—and too little solid statistical documentation. There is an interminable amount of vague speculation about the episodic shifts of the New Deal, and very little about unemployment, the labor movement, or left-wing groups. It is hardly believable, but the Beards on the one hand devote seven full pages to summarizing the plots of three obscure novels—Jack Conroy’s *The Disinherited* (two pages), Kay Boyle’s *My Next Bride* (three pages) and Hamilton Basso’s *In Their Own Image* (two pages), and on the other hand devote to the General Motors strike just one sentence (“In February, 1937, the Committee ‘breached the united front of the basic industries in winning a contract with the General Motors Corporation’, hitherto an adroit and indomitable foe.”). The entire C.I.O. campaign in Big and Little Steel is disposed of in just one sentence: “While the country was watching the outcome with anxiety, ‘Big Steel’ came to terms with industrial unionism in Mrach, 1937; but ‘Little Steel’, personified in its spokesman, Tom Girdler of the Republic Steel Company, refused to sign on the dotted line and presented a solid front of resistance.” There is not a single word in all these thousand pages, so far as I have been able to find, about either the San Francisco maritime strike of 1934 or the Minneapolis truck drivers’ strikes.

Such disproportions are symptomatic of the terrible effects of the ever-sharpening crisis of American capitalism on the liberal consciousness. When a historian of the rank of Charles A. Beard shows such an obvious deterioration, it is small wonder that the liberal weeklies, edited by journalists of much lesser stature, have degenerated as they have done in the last two years.

But the passage which really makes one gasp at its ignorance, irresponsibility, and malice is the following description (p. 540) of the rôle of the “Trotskyites”—Beard ap-

parently lumps all anti-C.P. tendencies on the left under this heading—in the C.I.O. movement:

Despising the Stalinite wing of communism with the intensity of disillusionment following utter confidence in utopia, Trotskyites took delight in pointing out and exaggerating the communistic element in the industrial unions. A small fraction themselves, they would have wielded slight influence had it not been for the energy of the general opposition riding full tilt against the Committee. Riding with it, they obtained for their testimony and for their "revelations" a degree of publicity that could not have been won otherwise. In this state of affairs their writings and agitations gave the press an opportunity to whip up resentment against the only form of unionism that, in the nature of mass production, could offer any method of accomplishing the wholesale organization of labor in the United States.

When a reputable historian thus echoes the grossest and most easily refuted falsifications of the Stalinist press, one senses the advanced stage of decomposition reached by the bourgeois-liberal tradition in history-writing, as in history-making.

The Crisis in Education (Continued)

Month before last I devoted this department to a consideration of the crisis in popular education, as revealed in nation-wide slashing of school funds and worsening of educational standards. I think it worth devoting a little space now to the recent annual convention of the National Education Association. The seriousness of the current educational crisis manifested itself dramatically in the sessions, attended by no less than fifteen thousand teachers and educators from all over the country.

The National Education Association, which has 800,000 members, is a rather conservative and stuffy organization. Its past meetings have been staid, routine affairs. Not so the 1939 gathering. Speech after speech emphasized the terrible cuts that have already been made in school appropriations, and the even deeper cuts that will probably be made in the next few months. President Shaw gave the keynote speech, pointing out that 800,000 children between seven and thirteen did not go to school last year because there were no schools open for them to go to (he didn't mention the much greater number who didn't go to school because of insufficient food or clothing, or because their small earnings were needed at home), and that there were no high school facilities for 3,500,000 boys and girls of high school age. He spoke of the importance of education in preventing crime, in preserving democratic forms, etc. But when he came to suggest a Way Out, he could only say: "The teaching profession must improve greatly its contact with the public to the end that those who produce funds for the support of the schools will have more clearly in mind the facts and their importance in connection with our particular form of government." In plain words: teachers must go out and sell the ruling class on the idea that cuts in school funds mean a weakening of "democracy". Dr. Shaw suggested they start in working on Kiwanis, Rotary, and the American Legion. This would seem to be a rather tough selling assignment.

Hardly more hopeful as a solution was the "Trust in the New Deal" note struck by many other speakers. There is now before Congress, as it has been for many months, a bill to appropriate large sums of Federal money for the rescue of the beleaguered school system. The reporter for the N.E.A.'s legislative commission, President Graham of

the American Association for School Administration, spoke most hopefully of this.

It is my opinion [he said] that the opportunity for passing the Federal aid bill in 1940 is good. It can be passed in the Senate at the present time. A majority of the Senators are for it. If the Administration would give active support in the House, it could be passed for the House.

Last June in New York the President, in his speech to the N.E.A., showed that he believed in Federal aid. Therefore, it is my conclusion that the opportunity to pass the bill in 1940 is excellent.

The good doctor's logic is impeccable, but his premises are shaky. The President has an excellent command of heart-warming language, but he is an impulsive sort of fellow who often lets his heart run away with his head. And his head these days is concerned with two subjects only: the coming crusade to make the world safe for democracy, and the 1940 elections. The difficulties of the school system will be solved by the New Deal only in so far as the solution fits into these dominant patterns.

Far from urging Congress to appropriate new millions for education, the President has taken the lead in cutting W.P.A. This produced an ironical situation at the N.E.A. convention, by the way. One of the speakers, L. R. Alderman, director of the educational division of the W.P.A., drew a gloomy picture of the nation's educational progress: "When we take a look at ourselves, we see that two-thirds of us adults have less than an elementary school education, that 85% of us have less than a secondary school education, and that there are twice as many of us who are illiterate as there are college graduates." One of the reasons for this deplorable state of affairs, he said, is the common belief that adults cannot be educated. Proudly he described the W.P.A. program for adult education, which has reached through its classes no less than 7,000,000 men and women. But even as he was speaking, W.P.A. officials in Washington were working on plans to liquidate this and similar programs, which had become impossible luxuries as a consequence of the drastic cut in W.P.A. funds. And who first proposed this cut to Congress? Who but that same Franklin D. Roosevelt to whom the assembled teachers looked so hopefully for a solution of their fiscal difficulties!

Rappoportiana

From a recent issue of *Les Hommes du Jour*, a French periodical, I excerpt some rather amusing *mots d'esprit* by the well-known French left-wing politician, Charles Rappoport:

"Leon Blum is more successful in small things than in great. It's not really his fault, but rather that of the times: you don't replace window panes during an earthquake. And Blum is a glazier of the tottering capitalist régime."

* * * * *

"Bolshevism is Blanquism, with Tartar sauce."

* * * * *

"Stalin, instead of executing the constitution which promises every liberty, prefers to execute the revolutionists who inspired it."

* * * * *

"Some one once asked Rappoport why he detested the social democrats so much. "Because they have forced me to become a Bolshevik."

During a tea-table discussion on Bolshevism, a countess once asked him: "Is it true that in Russia the commissars of the people have blanks with which they can requisition the pretty girls they pass in the street?" "Madame la Comtesse," he answered, "you are getting your régimes mixed. Here, in the Champs Elysée, a hundred franc bill is a requisition order for most of the women, pretty and otherwise, one passes in the street."

Civil War Among the Masses

When jobs are few, as they are today, the masses can react in one of two ways. They can fight against the ruling class which maintains the system that is starving them. Or they can fight a civil war *among themselves* for the scanty employment and governmental funds available. It is an ominous sign of the times that such internecine warfare between the various sections of the masses seems to have become more pronounced since the 1937 business decline.

Thus at the N. E. A. convention described above, one of the main themes was the increasingly open conflict between the advocates of old age pensions and those who want to maintain educational appropriations. "For the first time in the history of our civilization," said President Frasier of Colorado State College of Education, "the oldsters are lining up against the youngsters." The group organized to discuss the crucial topic, *Can America Afford to Educate Her Children?* — it is significant that the theme was put in the form of a question — spent most of its time debating "whether states must choose between schools for the young and pensions for the aged".

Octogenarians can vote, school children can't. The political advantages, both short term and long term, would seem to lie with the old folks. *Short-term*: the weight of the Townsend and similar movements in last fall's elections, and the fact that Congress has just liberalized old-age pension payments under the Social Security Act but shows no signs of acting on Federal aid for education. *Long-term*: the declining birth rate and increasing longevity of the average age of the American population: actuaries expect a steady rise in the average age of the population over the next few decades. Youth will have to fight, and fight hard, for every concession it gets in the future—under capitalism, at least.

Age-vs.-Youth is only one of many such struggles now

breaking out in our dying economic system. A week after the N. E. A. convention, the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs met in Kansas City, and spent most of its time talking about "the most serious problem confronted in its twenty years of existence". Recent Gallup polls have shown that 85% of those polled oppose married women holding jobs. In some twenty state legislatures bills have been introduced barring married women from state and city jobs and other forms of employment. "We must remember," warned one of the speakers at the convention, "that it was easier to get the vote than it may be to retain our jobs. This is possibly going to be a battle for livelihood, a kind of fight in which men are not apt to be gallant or even just. They give no quarter here."

It is one of the paradoxes of capitalism that most people oppose jobs for married women on the grounds that they don't "need" the money since they have a husband as breadwinner — whereas in actuality, as the 1937 Federal unemployment census showed, many if not most of the married women now working have been forced into employment because their husbands are jobless or on part-time wages too small to support their families. The number of women and children in jobs has been going up in late years, because only by selling the whole family labor power — remember Marx on capitalism as the guardian of the family hearth!—can many working-class families get along.

Youth against age! Married women against men! Thus are the masses atomizing themselves into warring groups waging merciless civil war upon one another. Many other similar antagonisms might be mentioned. The old Negro-vs.-white conflict has been sharpened by discriminations against the Negro in hard times — always "first to be fired, last to be hired", as the relief records of any large city will show. There is also anti-Semitic feeling, another old and dangerous division which, according to many observers close to labor, has been spreading lately even in the ranks of the working class. Most fatal of all, there seems to be a growing antagonism between employed and unemployed workers, a split in the ranks of the proletariat which offers *fine opportunities* to fascist demagogues. Unless these internecine struggles are suspended in favor of a common struggle against the economic system which makes jobs scarce in the first place, it will be fascism and not socialism that puts an end to the present social chaos.

Cotton Economy In Depression

FROM THE CLOSE OF THE Civil War until about 1870, there was a marked drop in the number of acres under cultivation. The following period, which lasted until 1910, saw a gradual increase in production. After 1910, and continuing until 1923, there was a wave of destruction caused by the invasion of the boll weevil. Traveling from West to East at the rate of about 40 to 160 miles a year, the boll weevil progressively laid waste to the seven southeastern cotton states. From 1910 to 1930, these states lost 19,000,000 acres of farmland, or more than 14% of their total acreage.

During the same period, from 1910 to 1930, there was a rapid increase in the cotton acreage of Texas and Oklahoma. As each new state in the east was attacked by the weevil, Texas and Oklahoma brought more acreage under cultivation so that by 1930 the total increase in these two states amounted to 100% and comprised 50% of the entire cotton acreage. The figures for 1937 indicate a slight drop in this proportion.

Mechanization

Mechanization has also played an important rôle in assuring the predominance of the Southwest over the South-

east. The tractor and the two-row equipment can be used in the Southwest because of the hard, flat bottom; in most of the Southeast, however, where the bottom is soft and the terrain rolling, mechanical equipment of this kind can hardly be used. How machinery lowers operating costs can be seen from the following table:

OPERATING COSTS PER ACRE OF COTTON AT THE DELTA
EXPERIMENT STATION, STONEVILLE, MISS.¹

Equipment	Power	Labor, power and machinery cost per acre
½ row	One mule	\$14.20
1 row walking	Two mules	11.19
1 row riding	Two mules	10.78
2 row	Four mules	8.97
2 row	Tractor	6.78
4 row	Tractor	5.20

A man using two-row equipment drawn by four or six mules can cultivate ten to fifteen times as many acres in the Southwest as a man using a mule and a plow in the Southeast. As a result of mechanization, large operators in many parts of the Southwest can make a profit on cotton at a farm sale price of six cents per pound.²

Until 1930 only 12.2% of all farm tractors in the United States were being used in the ten leading cotton states. Seven years later, in 1937, this figure had risen to 18.5% and the number of tractors had nearly doubled.³

In the five chief cotton producing counties of Oklahoma, for example, the number of tractors increased approximately 32% from 1929 to 1936. During a period shorter by two years, 1930 to 1935, one of these counties lost 1,602 or 17.5% of its horses and mules. In the following single year between 750 and 1,000 horses and mules were shipped out of this same Oklahoma county.

Human beings were even harder hit. When the landlord purchases a tractor he throws his smaller farms into one operating unit and thereby displaces anywhere from two to fifteen tenants. Thus from 1930 to 1935 this one Oklahoma county lost 24% of its rural population.

. . . tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and farm laborers—whites and Negroes alike—are being swept from the land and onto relief in some of the most important sections of the Cotton Belt. . . A planter in the Mississippi Delta, to cite an outstanding example, purchased 22 tractors and 13 four-row cultivators, let go 130 of his 160 cropper families, and retained only 30 for day labor.⁴

A postmaster of Carey, Texas, explained:

The landlords get the crop production money and buy tractors with it, and it's putting the renters out. The landlords take all the "reduction". If the tenants don't give 'em all, they put 'em off.⁵

Some of these tenants, [write two local citizens⁶] have resided on these farms for 18 years and have cooperated with their landlords in every way . . . but it appears now that these tenants have about reached the end of their row, for the landlords have advised them to vacate the farms, saying they wanted to farm all their lands with tractors . . . in Hall County [Texas] alone there will be moving from the farms here 420 tenant farmers. With an average of five persons to the family it simply means that 2,100 men,

¹ Stephens, P. H., *Mechanization of Cotton Farms*.

² The Rust mechanical cotton picker is as yet not being used on a commercial scale. It is estimated that it will reduce the cost of picking from \$1.00 per hundred pounds to 18 cents (overall cost).

³ National statistics corroborate the increasing importance of tractor farming in the Cotton Belt. Sales of farm tractors in 1936 were 10.6% above 1929 despite the fact that sales of all types of farm equipment were still 10.7% below 1929.

⁴ Statement of Prof. Paul S. Taylor, *Extract from Hearings before a Special Committee to Investigate Unemployment and Relief*, 75th Congress, Third Session, p. 1161.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Exhibit 5, p. 1612.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Exhibit 4, p. 1611.

women and children will be driven . . . from the only occupation which they have ever known. Whither will they go?

Men without funds, wives looking sad and blue, and worst of all, little children who should be in school, half naked and undernourished, the victims of tractor farming and that greedy, selfish spirit of the "land hog" who no doubt feels that he should own and cultivate the earth.

To which a local banker replies:

Tractor farming and fewer people will be bad for the merchants and good for the banks.⁷

Mechanization of cotton production has meant throwing human beings on the scrap heap. Between mechanical farming and the A.A.A. crop-reduction program the staggering total of 500,000 to 1,000,000 Cotton Belt families have been made homeless or dependent on the landlord's charity. As if this were not enough, it is already certain that the Rust mechanical cotton picker which can do the work of 50 to 100 hand pickers will immediately displace 75% to 80% of the remaining sharecroppers.

The Program of the A.A.A.

When the depression hit the cotton states in 1930, it struck an economy already considerably weakened. As can be seen in Chart I, the trend from 1927 through 1931 was sharply downward. Temporary, partial recovery followed until 1936. From then on the general trend again turned downward.

As in other spheres of economy, the New Deal endeavored to meet the breakdown of capitalism in agriculture by attempts to price stabilization and the granting of subsidies to replace lost profits. The efforts of the New Deal amounted, however, to an attempt to square a circle. Over a billion and a half dollars were spent and loaned to stabilize the price of cotton. It was a vain endeavor.

The year 1932 saw the price of cotton at 6.52c per pound, less than one cent above the all-time low of the previous year. The industry was in a chaotic condition, the biggest farmers threatened with ruin. Roosevelt began his rescue work.

In the first year of the A.A.A. alone, almost 11 million acres of cotton were plowed under, \$178,550,000 dished out to big farmers as a bonus for destruction and an additional \$120,000,000 loaned on ginned cotton withheld from the market.

When cotton crossed 10c in 1933, adjustment payments for 1934 were eased off by over 62 million. In 1934, however, when the price reached a peak of 12.3c payments were not further reduced, but raised by almost 50 million to \$163,000,000. It is probable that the doctor prescribed an extra dose of dollars as the result of his own election jitters.

On the morning after of 1935 the price of cotton dipped over one cent and payments for 1936 shrunk to 135 million. Yet fortune favored the New Deal brave. By the end of 1935 exports had increased by over a million bales, so that 1936 saw a favorable price of 12.36c.

In agriculture no less than in other fields, 1936 was the last year of Roosevelt prosperity. Then cotton economy took the deep, dizzy plunge almost to the chaotic level of 1932. The years 1937 and 1938 saw cotton at 8.40c and 8.52c. Payments skyrocketed to \$202,000,000 and \$265,000,000.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Exhibit 5, p. 1612.

Deal has to its credit the fact that at least \$1,539,000,000 were poured into the pockets of big and middle farmers in the form of benefits and loans. It also has to its credit the fact that it has materially assisted in making 500,000 to 1,000,000 families in the Cotton Belt homeless or dependent on the landlord's charity.

Government Aid to Low Income Groups

Largely as the result of conditions which were brought to light during the Arkansas "reign of terror" in March, 1935, a program of federal aid to low income groups was inaugurated. We have already seen that the number of tenant families has been placed at 1,790,783 and that they constitute about 65% of all farmers in the Cotton Belt. We have also seen that \$1,539,000,000 went to the other 35% who own the land. How much did the low income majority get?

From the inception of the program on July 1, 1935, some 255,000 families in the nine chief cotton producing states received about \$132,600,000 in rehabilitation and emergency crop loans which are repayable in two to five years. The weighted average loan amounted to about \$520 per family. Relief grants to 116,000 families in the same area from the inception date of July 14, 1936 to November 30, 1938 totaled about \$8,120,000. The yearly grant per family amounted to slightly over \$70.

On July 22, 1937, following the recommendation of the report of the President's committee on farm tenancy, the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act went into effect. The most important feature of the Act is its provision for the purchase of farms by tenant families. Under this provision a government loan may be made to a family which owns no land for the full value of the farm it desires to buy, plus the cost of improvements. Preference is given to farmers able to make a down payment or who own livestock and equipment. The loan bears 3% interest and may be repaid over a period of 40 years under a variable payment plan which is adjusted to crop values and prices. As security the government accepts a lien on the property purchased and an agreement that the owner will follow a sound system of farming under government supervision. Committees of local farm owners passed on both the tenants to receive loans and the farms to be purchased. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1938 \$10,000,000 was appropriated, and for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1939, \$25,000,000. A maximum of \$50,000,000 has been authorized for all sub-

sequent years.

During the year July 1, 1937 to June 30, 1938, 38,000 families filed applications, which no doubt had to receive advance approval, from 333 designated counties throughout the entire United States. A total of 1,887 loans were finally approved.

The Farm Security Administration is also establishing rural homestead projects. They are either scattered, individual farms, farm communities or subsistence homesteads, where farm income supplements industrial income. As of October 1, 1938, 34 rural homestead projects had been substantially completed in the Cotton Belt, providing 220,479 acres of land and homes for 2,884 families. The total outlay for the land was approximately \$7,716,800 and for the buildings \$8,363,699. Perhaps an additional \$1,500,000 was loaned to cooperatives in the South for machinery.

Thus a grand total of about \$163,074,000 was disbursed in loans and benefits to tenants and small bankrupt owners. (See Chart 2.)

The Farm Security Administration has also secured some improvements in tenure status: 65,480 producers out of a million (1) or more advanced from croppers to tenants; and an unspecified number of cotton tenants secured written and longer leases.

We have seen that 100,000,000 acres of farmland in the United States have been completely or nearly completely ruined by soil erosion and are unfit for cultivation. On another 100,000,000 acres the top-soil is washed away. Yet the Soil Conservation Service has purchased only 11,200,000 acres for new uses, which is less than half the acreage in the Cotton Belt alone which is unfit for farming.

In seven years of reformist planning, the New Deal has hardly scratched the surface of the problems presented by the cotton regions of the South. It is only necessary to glance at Charts 3 and 4 to see that the masses of Southern tenants and sharecroppers are still illiterate, still racked by typhoid, pellagra, and malaria, three diseases which are symptomatic of a low standard of living. As these charts also show, the New Deal has failed to solve the central problem of all; the serious disproportion between living standards in the South and in the rest of the country. President's Roosevelt's fine talk about the South being "the nation's No. 1 economic problem" and therefore first on the order of the day for action by the New Deal, this is simply —fine talk.

Jerry PYTLAK

Economic and Political Life in Argentina

THE fact that Argentina is a semi-colony of international finance capital has for some time been a common-place. The penetration of foreign capital dates back to the days of the proclamation of Argentine "independence" as a nation. From 1800 on the rich landowners carried on the struggle against Spain, the struggle to make their market accessible to the rest of the world. Once free of the monopolizing influence of the Spanish homeland, Argentina and the other former Spanish colonies began to

fall under the economic rule of the capitalist powers, first the European ones and later the young capitalism of the U. S. A.

The attempts at actual territorial domination—the British invasions of 1806 and 1807—were unsuccessful. With the proclamation of independence in 1810, therefore, the British oriented themselves toward economic and financial penetration. Ever since then Britain has held the dominant position in these fields, and consequently also in the political and social life of the

nation.

The capital invested by Great Britain amounts at the present time to £600 million. The railway lines under her exclusive control cover a spread of 25,000 kilometers. Trolley cars, hydraulic works, packing houses, machinery, workshops and great expanses of land, are under British control. "Bovril", "La Forestal", "Liebig", "Southern Land Company", and other British firms hold million of hectares of land and millions of heads of cattle. To put it briefly,

all the commanding points in the economy of the country are in the hands of the bankers of the City of London.

At first sight it seems that British imperialist penetration has brought us a great deal of progress. A closer scrutiny will show that while this penetration has influenced the general development of the country, the progress brought by it has been restricted to those regions whose products have been and still are necessary for the provisioning of the British Isles, thus finally placing us in the position of being a monocultural country. To these regions they have extended the big railways, and in these regions there is a noticeable rise in the cultural level. The other regions remain in a state of stagnation little better than they were prior to 1810 under the Spaniards. As corroboration of this we note the fact that 90% of the agricultural (including cattle) production is confined to the three provinces of Sante Fé, Corboda and Buenos Aires.

If any doubt existed of the dependent status of Argentina it would have been dispated by the recent Pan-American Conference of Lima. As is well known, the conference was nothing more in the last analysis, than the attempt of the United States to yoke the Latin American countries to the chariot of Yankee imperialism. At Lima, and despite the strenuous efforts of Mr. Cordell Hull, the discordant note was, and had to be, introduced by the Argentine delegates. "Who will repay us for the loss of our European markets, particularly our British market, our main customer?" That was the dominant note of all their speeches. This brought into clear daylight not only the dependent position of Argentina with respect to England but also the inter-imperialist struggle for the control of Latin-American countries.

The motives that move the very democratic Mr. Roosevelt were well exposed by the said Mr. Hull in a speech delivered under the title of "International Relations and the Foreign Policy of the United States". In that memorable discourse the noted U. S. statesman makes his confession (but without atonement, of course). "Without the development of foreign commerce no industrial nation can maintain reasonable standards of living, and if trade barriers are maintained, *the uncontrollable gravitation of public necessities* (Read: imperialist expansion. P. M.) *will dictate a reliance upon force and conquest* to obtain resources that are denied to the people by discriminatory customs policies." Behind the elegant euphemisms of the Secretary of State the "democratic" motives that moved the Lima Conference stand exposed with unmistakable clarity. But if any doubt still remained, Mr. Hull must have removed it when he added: "*The state of war is already potentially in existence as soon as mutual hostility and mistrust, manifested in the sphere of intercourse, become apparent, maintain themselves, and even increase.*" (Our emphasis.)

The logical result of all these premises was the Lima proposal of a Pan-American

military-economic alliance against economic, and not only economic, subjugation to the "totalitarian" and the "democratic" countries of Europe.

Apparently all this was discussed behind the scenes at the celebrated Munich Conference, and since then it has spread. What is worthy of note is that since the Lima Conference quite a series of polemics has arisen (and not always unfolded in the soft language of diplomacy) between the U. S. financial interests on one side and those of Argentina on the other side. These polemics have spread so far as to prompt the intervention of the Argentine Finance Minister, who published a memorandum on the state of Argentine-U. S. commercial intercourse. He notes that "since the end of 1937 the Argentine economic situation has suffered a rude recession and events have taken a turn for the worse with respect to the development of trade between Argentina and the United States."

	In millions of Argentine Pesos*			
	1935	1936	1937	1938
Receipts (total)	185	197	345	116
Exports	185	197	345	116
(a) Official market	176	187	333	107
(b) Free market	9	10	12	9
Expenditures (total)	275	285	399	371
Imports	173	183	302	307
(a) Official market	64	86	182	157
(b) Free market	109	97	120	150
Payments on Public Debt and Official Expend.	102	102	97	150
Deficit	90	88	54	255

In the last 28 years, continues the memorandum, Argentina's purchases from the U. S. amounted to P. 8,526 million, practically the same amount as the purchases from the United Kingdom, her principal customer. But during the same period, while the United Kingdom purchased P. 13,499 million worth of Argentine goods, the U. S. only purchased P. 5,101 million worth. This left Argentina with a positive balance of P. 4,570 million with the United Kingdom and a negative balance of P. 3,425 million with the U. S.

Putting to shame the "Marxists" of the social-democratic and Stalinist schools, the Finance Minister goes on to say that "for the Argentine it has never been a question of (political) systems. We have been forced to adapt our economy to new exigencies in the commercial world, always keeping in mind the fact that in our position as a debtor nation we must obtain a positive trade balance in order to make our payments on the external debts and loans". "What do we care about totalitarian or democratic states?" he appears to be saying, "For us it is a question of exports. We cannot buy more than what we are in a position to pay for."

These are the terms in which the problem is posed, and from this flowed the impossibility of a close accord at the aforementioned Conference of Lima.

What was the attitude of the Argentine Socialist and Communist parties to this Conference? Their attitude was confined to presenting the Conference as a happy plan of President Roosevelt to bring about the formation of a "democratic" common front opposed to the advance of the "totali-

*The value of the Argentine peso was listed by the N. Y. Times of June 10, 1939 as: \$2525.

tarian" countries. Thus objectively they have assumed the rôle of defenders of Yankee imperialism by hiding from the Latin-American masses the true motives and true ends of the Conference.

In the present situation, where the economic crisis overshadows everything else in our country—the growing unfavorable balance has already reached P. 800 million for 1938 and promises to continue to increase—the struggle against the imperialist monopolies can only be brought to a successful conclusion if it is developed into a struggle against the native bourgeoisie which is linked to these monopolies by thousands of economic ties. The boasted "national liberation" about which the socialists and Stalinists clamor so loudly, cannot be attained without the socialist revolution. As was so vividly proved by the recent shameful events in Spain, the aforementioned parties are by no means disposed to achieve this revolution. Instead they cover up their treachery to the interests of the proletariat with the cloak of false "defense of democracy" and "struggle against fascism", posing these as problems seemingly independent of the struggle against capitalist imperialism.

The solution of this pressing problem of anti-imperialist struggle can be found only when the working class rejects the crucifixion offered both by the Stalinist-Socialist line of "I neither can nor want to", and the "I want to but can't" of certain sections of the "liberal" native bourgeoisie that, despite their dependency upon the imperialist monopolies, struggle nevertheless in order not to be completely absorbed into the orbit of these interests.

An eloquent demonstration of the rôle of the Stalinists, socialists and "liberals" who evade the real meaning of the anti-imperialist struggle, is furnished by their present campaign against "Nazi infiltration". Whether or not such infiltration exists, whether the compromising "documents" are "made in Germany" or "made in USA", the certain thing, and the thing that makes the whole affair look suspicious, is that the campaign is raised with great virulence *at the precise moment* in which the government signs a barter agreement with Germany. We say suspicious because we remember the somewhat similar situation several years ago when the then president Irigoyen claimed he would try to free Argentina of the hold of the imperialist blocs by means of an Argentine-USSR trade accord. We do not say that the leaders of the S. P. and C. P. are consciously and unconditionally in the service of the Anglo-American imperialists, but the coincidence is shocking: the agitators who brought to a head the campaign which resulted in the defeat of Irigoyen were elements taken from the Socialist party (their name was "Independent Socialist Party").

In this present "anti-Nazi" campaign the Stalinists play a particularly repugnant rôle. "Rally around Ortiz", "Let us support President Ortiz, champion of democracy", "Save our Patagonia"; these are the slo-

gans that figure on all the pages of their paper *Orientacion*. Naturally enough, "our democratic President", like Daladier in France, shows his gratitude for this Stalinist and socialist support by sending two bills to Parliament (where his word is law) providing in the Mussolini fashion for the incorporation of all unions with the consequent prohibition of the right of joint action and striking. What is particularly grievous to the Stalinist-socialist bureaucrats is that these bills also prohibit trade-union leaders from being particularly active, and in their section on the "legalization of political parties" they declare that only those parties can participate in elections who declare themselves in advance to be dedicated to those concepts of the "common good", and those actions, prescribed by the constitution of the country, also *forbidding all organic ties with any foreign entities*.

And while the Stalinists and social democrats dedicate themselves to campaigns such as described above, what is the condition of the Argentine proletariat? In a word: calamitous.

The last crisis was tided over by the Argentine bourgeoisie by the simple expedient of cutting more and more into the salaries of the workers. The latest statistics published by the National Department of Labor carry eloquent data in this connection, even within the limits imposed by the character of the work, the bourgeois criteria, etc. Despite all the attempts they make at "consoling figures" these statistics prove the terrifying truth that *the Argentine proletariat lives in a state of permanent malnutrition*. These statistics divide the workers' families into two categories. The first, composed of parents and three children under fourteen, earns a monthly average of P.150.83. The second, of the same size, earns an average of P.97.21. The expenses of the groups are listed as P.153.83 for the first group and P.112.33 for the second group. Leaving aside the desire of the authors of the report to minimize, and the many omissions in the calculations of the expenses, these statistics prove that there is at best a monthly deficit of P.2.40 and P.15.18 in each case. Furthermore the majority of the working-class families fall into the second category, the figures show, but they don't show where the workers are supposed to get the means of overcoming the deficit they establish.

And these are the conditions in the big cities, where, however weakly, due to the Stalinist and social-democratic bridle, the

restraining influence of the unions is felt. Consider then the plight of the workers in the hydraulic plants, in the mills, in the fields, truly capitalism's feudal domains, the empire of the whip in the hands of the brave police in the pay of the exploiting bosses, where the bullets of the hired bullies put an end to the protests of the insubmissive. . . .

The consequences of these conditions are shown by the fact that fifty to sixty percent of the youths called for army service are rejected; fifty to sixty percent, mind you;—rejected for "thoracic insufficiency", a gracious technical euphemism used to cover up the acute pauperism that rules in many parts of the country (not to mention infant mortality, which reaches frightful proportions particularly in the northern provinces.

The liberal and capitalist press is now raising a great campaign because of the fear occasioned by the growing drop in the nation's birth rate. "Argentina is being depopulated," "decadence of the race," "immorality" are the topics of the day. The truth, however, is much more unadorned, much less complicated; it is: hunger, misery, syphilis. . . . The solution advanced by the learned liberals consists of teaching the Catechism, and . . . the prohibition of contraceptives. To these we must add the "Rally around Ortiz" of the Stalinists.

The intellectual poverty of the Stalinists in this country reaches a new low level. An index of this can be gleaned from the aforementioned *Orientacion*, whose purpose is the orientation of the workers in the direction of the lowest and most repugnant bungling and subjection. Only yesterday, on the eve of the national elections, it was "Alvear ["Radical" leader] to power"; at that time they argued: Ortiz will mean fascism. Alvear being defeated, the slogan became "Rally around Ortiz".

The immense majority of the Stalinist leadership is composed of parvenu individuals recruited from among the most pliant of the opportunists and careerists, some, like the present editor of *Orientacion*, from among the fascists, and reaching to plain "pie-cards" and cabaret hounds (such as "comrade" Setaro, who "lost" the sum of P. 5,000 that was supposed to be sent to the Spanish Loyalists, on a visit to the Café Marabú—a fact attested to by the daily police report).

The union bureaucrats of all stripes do not appear at all perturbed by the serious threat to the workers' rights presented by the projected legislation of President Ortiz

mentioned above. The miserable conditions of the working class in general do not annoy them. The tremendous amount of unemployment does not touch them. The sordid and systematic reactionary moves against the labor movement, such as the deportation of foreign workers (many being turned over directly into the hands of Hitler and Mussolini) leave them perfectly tranquil. They limit themselves to sending letters to the newspapers about their disagreement (and even this is done only to soothe the discontent that they know exists among the rank and file) with those measures that they say "are against the democratic spirit of our constitution". Naturally if any worker continues to call for some action of protest he finds himself alluded to in the next form letter as "a counter-revolutionary Trotskyist" and "agent of the Gestapo" or "of the O.V.R.A."

The old Socialist party continues its descending path, each day more bourgeois in its social composition and more disreputable in its political action, or rather inaction. This has resulted in an internal decomposition and in several splits in the last few years. Many of the dissident S.P.ers took part in the formation of the Workers Socialist Party, or P.S.O., an organization which was formed without bothering to adopt either a principled base or a class program and was consequently quickly "colonized" by the Stalinists. Today this party is openly falling apart, and the leading elements are trying in every way possible to squirm back into the old hole.

Several of the elements that in former years belonged to the Communist party (among others, the militant union leader Mateo Fossa) hastened to join the P.S.O. in the belief that here they had found a serious movement. But fortunately they discovered very quickly that it is neither possible nor convenient to advance by amalgamating everyone on the basis of declarations of good will, and that what is needed is the construction of an organization of action based on revolutionary principles and program. Today a number of the ex-members of the P.S.O. (including Fossa) have come over to the ranks of the Fourth International and it is hoped that their experiences of the past will be valuable in their future work.

These are some of the aspects of the politico-economic and social life of the Argentine Republic.

Translated by Diego Montanes
Pedro MILESI

BUENOS AIRES, Apr. 29, 1939

The Congress of the P.S.O.P.

THE first congress of the *Parti Socialiste Ouvrier et Paysan* (Workers and Peasants Socialist Party, commonly known as the P.S.O.P.) held in Paris on May 28-29, met under circumstances which should have caused the leadership of the party to ex-

amine carefully the course that it has followed since it broke with the Socialist party a little over a year ago. At the time when it was first constituted, the P.S.O.P. claimed a membership of 20,000 and at the present moment even the leadership does

not claim that there are more than 7,000 members of the party, while more realistic estimates place the membership at about 5,000.

What is the cause of this terrific drop in membership and is there anything that can

be done to have the old members return and gain new ones in addition? Most of the leaders had two explanations for the woeful situation in the party: the retreat of the French working class and the activities of the Trotskyists.

It is certainly true that the general discouragement and apathy now prevailing in the ranks of the French workers are important factors contributing to the loss of a large portion of the P.S.O.P. membership. The members of a working-class party, even of a revolutionary Marxian party, cannot be immunized against the moods that grip the working masses and such a party must necessarily suffer in a period of retreat. It would be folly, however, to attribute the loss of such a large proportion of the membership merely to the depressed state of mind of the working class. A large part of the blame can be placed on the important leaders who, by their failure to give the party members a clear revolutionary perspective based on a revolutionary Marxian program, failed to evoke the enthusiasm and devotion which are so essential to keep working-class members in a period of retreat.

At the top, there was hesitation, wavering and indecision. During the September crisis ending in the Munich pact, the P.S.O.P., in place of a revolutionary agitation against war, adopted a pacifist attitude. The work in the trade unions has been exceedingly weak and on the international front Pivert and his collaborators insist on joining hands with the heroes of the defunct London Bureau.

The rank and file, given no revolutionary orientation and naturally affected by the general weakness of the labor movement, dropped out of the party in great numbers.

An attempt was made by some of the right-wing leaders to attribute the loss of membership to the activities of the Fourth Internationalists (Trotskyists) who entered the P.S.O.P. last January. That fell flat for the obvious reason that the drop in membership began long before the entry of the Trotskyists who, if anything, brought new members into the party. Many non-Trotskyists and even anti-Trotskyists offered proof, in concrete cases, that the disappearance of

certain branches were not at all due to the activities of the Fourth Internationalists.

The inordinate amount of time devoted by the right wing to attacking the Trotskyists gave the congress an anti-Trotskyist coloration. Almost every issue was seized upon by the bitter anti-Trotskyists to attack the concepts and activities of that wing of the party. The general report of Marceau Pivert, although moderate in tone, still contained many veiled and not-so-veiled hostile allusions to the Trotskyists as well as some vague threats. It is clear that the right wing, unwilling to explain the real causes of the loss in membership, used the Trotskyist issue to turn the attention of the delegates away from the essential issues. A resolution was actually introduced which would have placed the P.S.O.P. on record as being against Trotskyism but the resolution never came up for a vote.

The general report of Pivert was adopted by a vote of 120 to 38 who voted for the motion of comrade Rous, the leading Fourth Internationalist. In his motion Rous pointed out that the report contained no real explanation for the drop in membership and contained nothing positive to offer the party at the present moment. It can be seen from an analysis of the votes on other important issues that many who voted for Pivert's report did so not because they favored his policies but for sentimental reasons of attachment to their leadership.

Strange as it may seem to American Marxists, the most bitter and most extensive debate took place on the question of Freemasonry. Many of the leading figures in the P.S.O.P. are Masons who include in their membership almost all of the big bourgeois liberal politicians. The rank and file is hostile to Freemasonry but unwilling to make a splitting issue of the question. The motion of Guérin, prominent "native" left winger, declaring that membership in the Freemasons is incompatible with membership in the party actually received a plurality (76 votes) but two other motions holding the contrary received 62 and 50 votes respectively and the Guérin motion was therefore defeated.

Next to the question of Freemasonry the different resolutions on war aroused the

most animated discussion. Originally the right wing introduced a resolution against revolutionary defeatism in so many words. The resolution introduced by Rous, Guérin and Weitz, another prominent "native" left winger, came out flatly for revolutionary defeatism. There was a third resolution which was, or rather claimed to be, for revolutionary defeatism in practice but against the use of the term. The Guérin-Weitz-Rous resolution obtained 59 votes against 120 for a combined resolution of the other two positions.

On the International question Pivert's motion to adhere to the "International Marxist Center", (the London Bureau reorganized) was carried by 121 against 41, with the proviso that the Marxist Center should invite the Fourth International to its conference in September. The motion of Weitz against joining the Marxist Center but for a new conference including the Fourth International was given critical support by the Trotskyists and received 41 votes.

As can be seen from the foregoing the bloc of the "native" left wingers, represented by Guérin and Weitz, and the Trotskyists who entered the P.S.O.P., controlled approximately 30% of the delegates when it came to voting on the various important questions. When one takes into account that about 14 Trotskyist delegates were not seated because the P.S.O.P. leaders accepted the rule existing in the Socialist party that one has to be in the party three years before being permitted to be a delegate, it can be truthfully asserted that within the ranks there is a much greater left-wing sentiment than is shown by the votes at the congress.

With the liquidation of the *Parti Ouvrière Internationaliste* (the French party belonging to the Fourth International) and the entry of a new group of revolutionary Marxists into the P.S.O.P. there is great hope that a block of the various left-wing elements will succeed in turning the party on a revolutionary path and building it into an effective revolutionary instrument.

FAUCHOIS

PARIS, June, 1939

Ten Years of the Russian Bulletin

THE *Bulletin of the Russian Opposition* has been in existence for ten years. At the time it was founded, it was already clear that the Thermidorian reaction in the U.S.S.R. would endure until it met with decisive resistance. Domestic resistance could hardly be counted upon inasmuch as the revolution had already in a large measure spent its fighting resources. The international situation, however, was or appeared to be far more favorable than it is today. Mighty labor organizations flourished in Germany. It was possible to hope that under

the influence of the terrible lessons of the past the German Communist party would take the road of the class struggle and pull along the French proletariat. Two years after our publication was launched, the Spanish revolution, which might have become the starting point for a whole series of revolutions in Europe, erupted. In the minds of the editorial board of the *Bulletin* the fate of the U.S.S.R. was always indissolubly linked with the fate of the world proletariat. Every revolutionary conflict opened at least a theoretical possibility of regenerating that

which once had been the Communist International. But at each new stage of development a tombstone had to be placed over these expectations.

We have often been accused of having been too belated in declaring the Moscow International a corpse. We are not ready to recant on this score. It is better to delay a burial than to bury the not-dead. Whenever it is a question of contending living forces, one can foresee *a priori* the general trend of the movement; but it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to forecast its

stages and time intervals. Only when it became revealed that no open indignation was aroused in the ranks of the Communist International after the latter had surrendered without a struggle the most important position in Germany did it become clear that no hopes remained for the regeneration of this organization. By virtue of this very fact, the hour struck—not for vacillation or hesitation, as was the opinion of the participants in the defunct London Bureau, but for systematic work under the banner of the Fourth International.

So, too, in relation to the Soviet state our hopes and expectations have undergone in ten years an evolution determined not by our subjective likes or dislikes but by the general course of development. Political prognosis is only a working hypothesis. It must be constantly checked, rendered more precise, brought closer to reality. It was utterly impossible to have measured *a priori* how strong would be the internal resistance of the Bolshevik party to the onset of Thermidor. Despite the disillusion and the fatigue of the masses, this resistance evidenced itself. Proof of it are the countless "purgings", the massacre of entire revolutionary generations. But, in the circumstances of the defeats of the world proletariat, the Thermidorian reaction in the U.S.S.R. proved stronger than the resistance of Bolshevism. In 1929, when the *Bulletin* was launched this variant in perspectives was already a probability. But to have chosen beforehand this variant as the sole possibility would have signified the surrender of a position without a battle, that is, treacherous capitulation. Only the complete and manifest strangulation of the Bolshevik party along with the complete prostitution of the Comintern removed the ground from under the program of "reforming" the Soviet state, placing on the order of the day the anti-bureaucratic revolution.

We have often been and are still being indicted for not having to this very day declared the U.S.S.R. a non-workers state. Our critics have refrained, however, from giving *their* definition of the Soviet state, if we leave aside the term "state capitalism" which is applied by them equally to the U.S.S.R., Germany and Italy. We have rejected, and still reject, this term which while it does correctly characterize certain features of the Soviet state, nevertheless ignores its fundamental difference from capitalist states, namely, the absence of a bourgeoisie, as a class of property owners, the existence of the state form of ownership of the most important means of production, and finally planned economy, made possible by the October revolution. Neither in Germany nor in Italy does the foregoing exist. The proletariat, in overthrowing the Bonapartist oligarchy, will lean on this social foundation.

* * *

The last decade was a decade of defeats and retreats of the proletariat, a decade of victories of reaction and counter-revolution. This era has not terminated; the greatest evils and bestialities are still ahead. But the

approaching dénouement is presaged precisely by the extraordinary tension. In international relations this dénouement means war. Abstractly speaking, it would have been far better had the war been forestalled by the proletarian revolution. But this did not occur and—we must say flatly—the remaining chances for it are few. The war is advancing far more speedily than the rate at which new cadres of the proletarian revolution are being formed. Never before has historical determinism assumed so fatalistic a form as it does nowadays. All the forces of old society—fascism and democracy, and social-patriotism and Stalinism—stand equally in fear of war and keep heading towards it. Nothing will help them. They will make the war and will be swept away by the war. They have fully earned it.

The social democracy and the Comintern are concluding deals with democratic imperialism "against fascism" and "against war". But their "lesser evil" inescapably retreats before a greater evil. Should capitalism, with the aid of the two Internationals, succeed in maintaining itself for another decade, then the methods of fascism will no longer be adequate. Military conquests can achieve only a shift of poverty from one country to another, while at the same time narrowing the base upon which all countries rest. A super-fascism will become necessary, with such legislation as harks back to the time of Herod and the slaughter of innocent babes, so as to preserve the dictatorship of trusts. In that event, the corroded Internationals will doubtless proclaim as a holy duty an alliance with fascism—a lesser evil in the face of a Herod threatening no longer civilization alone but the very existence of mankind. For social democrats and Stalinists there is not and there cannot be—either in China, Germany, Spain, France or anywhere in the world—such conditions as would give the proletariat the right to play an independent rôle; the one thing that the workers are good for is to support one form of banditry as against another. There are no limits within capitalism itself as to the depths to which it can sink; this is likewise true of its shadows: the Second and Third Internationals. They will be the first to be crushed by the war they are themselves preparing. The only world party unafraid of war and its consequences is the Fourth International. We should have preferred another way; but we shall take confidently also the path into which the present masters of the situation are shoving mankind.

The *Bulletin* does not stand alone. Publications of the same spirit appear in dozens of countries. Many articles of the *Bulletin* have been translated during the last decade into dozens of languages. True enough, there remain quite a few left philistines who turn up their noses loftily at our small publications and their small circulation. But we would not swap our *Bulletin* for the Moscow *Pravda*, with all its rotary presses and trucks. Machines may and will pass from one hand to another under the influence of ideas that sway the masses. Neither the Second nor the Third Internationals have a single idea left. They only reflect the mortal fears of the ruling classes. The ideas which comprise the heritage of the Fourth International have a colossal dynamic force lodged in them. The impending events will annihilate all that is decrepit, putrescent and outlived, clearing the arena for a new program and a new organization.

But even today, at the peak of reaction, we derive priceless satisfaction from the knowledge that we have observed the historical process with our eyes open; that we have analyzed realistically each new situation, foreseen its possible consequences, warned of its dangers, indicated the correct road. In everything essential our analysis and our prognosis have been confirmed by events. We did not achieve miracles. Generally speaking, miracles do not enter into our field of specialty. But together with our reader-friends we have learned how to think as Marxists in order when the hour strikes to act as revolutionists. The *Bulletin* enters into its second decade with an immutable faith in the triumph of its idea.

* * *

For almost nine years, the publication of the *Bulletin* was in the hands of L. L. Sedov. To this cause he gave the better part of his youth. Unwaveringly devoted to the cause of revolutionary socialism, Sedov did not flinch once throughout the hard years of reaction. He always lived in the expectation of a new revolutionary dawn. It did not fall to his lot to meet it himself. But like all genuine revolutionists he worked for the future. And the future will hoodwink neither him nor us.

* * *

The publication of the *Bulletin* would have been impossible without the aid of loyal friends. To all of them we send our fraternal gratitude. We are banking firmly in the future for their help which we need today more than ever before.

—Editorial Board of the Russian *Bulletin*

Correspondence

Irish Labor and the Bombings

TO THE EDITORS:

THOUGH Ireland's population is a mere four millions the Irish question is of international revolutionary importance both because of Ireland's strategic position athwart

Britain and because there are some twenty million folk of immediate Irish extraction outside Ireland who are liable to be swayed by Irish nationalist sentiment. In the States that sentiment operating through Clan na Gael was a big factor in blocking an Anglo-

American alliance under Roosevelt the First.

Comrade Sherman Stanley is correct in demanding a scientific and exhaustive study of the Irish question but I'm not sure such a study wouldn't bring him pretty close to comrade Morgan. If the Irish Republican Army should become a valuable revolutionary force in the future it will be in some degree due to the sympathetic efforts to understand their problems and to guide them of such as comrade Morgan. Casual cracking-down on them for failure to work in accordance with principles of which most of them have never heard would merely tend to drive them towards fascism.

Before I go any further I want to assure comrade Stanley that the I.R.A. has no relations, ambiguous or otherwise, with De Valera or Franco nor can I imagine what led him to suppose otherwise.

My own credential for writing on Irish affairs, particularly matters regarding the Border dispute between Eire and Northern Ireland, is as follows. I was born in Northern Ireland of Down Protestants. I was brought up in Tyrone and East Donegal among a mixed Protestant and Catholic population, and I learned the Irish language living among the native Gaelic-speaking peasantry of West Donegal. My Presbyterian paternal great-grandfather fought against the British in Down in 1798 as a member of the United Irishmen, their aim an Irish Republic with "The Rights of Man" as their textbook and I fought in the Irish Republican Army, retiring from its reserve seven odd years ago as a protest against the action of G.H.Q. in court-martialing and expelling Charlie Gilmore (another Ulster Protestant by birth) for, without official authorization, using firearms to defend Communist party headquarters in Dublin against a gang of "Catholic Action" hoodlums. For the past twenty years I've lived and worked on and off in Dublin and I served with the I.R.A. in the West, so I reckon to understand both the Catholic and the Protestant, Eire and Northern Ireland side to the Border issue, and I try to look at it as a socialist.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is not a military technical journal, but some appreciation of Ireland's strategic position is necessary for understanding of Britain's desire to hold Ireland, of Hitler's desire to meddle in Irish affairs. Look at any map of the world and you'll see that Ireland, most westerly point of Europe, lies athwart Europe-North American sea and air routes; that Ireland's deeply indented western coastline from Cork to Londonderry affords several magnificent deep water harbors, some almost completely land-locked, in which fleets of the largest battleships can ride at anchor and scores of hide-outs for submarines, hydroplanes and fast surface boats; that Ireland's saucer-like central plain fringed by mountain ranges is potentially a vast aerodrome; that could a hard-pressed British Government shift key personnel and key industries to the West of Ireland they would be shifting them no doubt only a

few hundred miles further from Continental air bases but, nevertheless, putting another belt of sea-crossing in the way.

Ireland as ally would be a hell of an asset to Britain in war. But no matter what bargains Mr. de Valera may strike, so long as Ireland is partitioned and is denied full international recognition as an independent republic a big section of Irish folk is going to consider the British Government Enemy No. 1, is going to adopt passive resistance and sabotage the moment war breaks out and—face it frankly—is likely enough to go the whole hog, facilitate and link up with landing in Ireland of anti-British forces wherever they come from. In point of fact it would be easier for the British to deal with an independent Ireland run by a hostile Government if that Government joined forces with the Axis Powers, the British could then walk in and squelch opposition by overwhelming military force. Instead they face a situation in which it is hard for them to distinguish between friend and foe and they fear to alienate the former by cracking down on the latter. And Mr. de Valera knows very well what he is up against from his own folk — the present strategy of the Eire Army is based, not upon danger of enemy air raids, but upon danger of enemy landings on coast supported at point of landing by I.R.A. and by I.R.A. risings in the rear.

Ireland unfree is not going to be an ally of Britain, so far as the plain people are concerned irrespective of their Governments, and what socially-conscious folk ought to try to stop is the likely progress of rank-and-file Irish nationalism from being rightly and naturally anti-British Empire to being ignorantly and shamefully pro-fascist.

The vast majority of Irish industrial workers and many professional workers are fully organized in labor unions which are linked into one organism by the Irish Trade Union Congress. A weakness is the rivalry between native unions and British unions which operate here but are affiliated to the T.U.C.

In point of fact for an industrially backward country Ireland has been remarkably progressive as regards labor unionism and has sent missionaries abroad as potent in their way as were the Irish Christian missionaries of early mediæval days — Bronterre O'Brien and Feargus O'Connor of the Chartist movement, James Connolly and James Larkin are names that spring to mind.

Labor unionism here is remarkably poor in theory but strong in practice. By that I mean that the Irish workers, while economically illiterate, tend in practice not merely to fight sectionally for better wages and conditions but as a whole show a high standard of class solidarity. There is no worse insult to an Irishman than to call him "scab". Class solidarity is equally noticeable among the peasantry.

Economically illiterate, the majority of the Irish workers believed that the war against the British in 1920-1921 would, by bringing self-government, bring about a kind of Utopia here. The still-potent organ-

ization of unskilled workers, Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, reached its highest level in numbers and influence at that period, but the political side of the labor movement, became of real importance under Connolly prior to his execution in 1916, was swamped in political nationalism.

That political and industrial labor organization received a setback from which it is still recovering was due to the disillusionment which spread to all departments of life in Ireland, but very specially to the Pontius Pilate rôle which the Irish Labor Party leadership adopted from the beginning of that crisis when they might instead have assumed leadership of a genuine revolutionary movement.

Today the labor union movement is definitely on the upgrade and is likely to learn from experience what it has failed to learn from textbooks. The same cannot be said of the Irish Labor Party which continues to play an opportunist, cowardly, vacillating and evasive rôle, though, and this cannot be too strongly emphasized, it contains very good elements in the shape of Connolly veterans, clear-headed young folk and I.R.A. who have had their viewpoint widened by experience. The Dublin branches in particular contain a number of sincere, intelligent and hard-working socialists who are trying to get past their leaders a message to the masses which is Marxist in essence, and in bright contrast to the collaboration with the so-called democratic governments preached by the Communist party of Ireland.

The record which earns condemnation for the Labor Party leadership is this. In 1922, instead of giving a revolutionary lead, it vocally condemned both parties to the Civil War on quite arguable premises but gave material support to the pro-imperialist side. Today that leadership is vocally as violently nationalist as the I.R.A. itself but has not regained the confidence of the nationalist masses.

It shrieks to the high heavens in protest at fascist aggression in Austria, Czechoslovakia and China, but it remained silent while fascism crushed the Spanish workers. It piously condemns the bureaucracy of the U.S.S.R. but ignores that of the U.S.A.

Only last month, to secure the support of the petty-bourgeois elementary teachers' union it agreed to discard the first plank in its own platform and the very slogan on which James Connolly based the Irish labor political movement—that its aim is the establishment of an Irish Workers' Republic.

DUBLIN, June 6, 1939

William John MacCAUSLAND

RENEWALS

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* * *

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