

Workers International News

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*Theoretical
Organ of the
Revolutionary
Communist
Party*

Contents

EDITORIAL
NOTES

“PEACE” CONFERENCES
INDIA
COMMUNIST PARTY AFFILIATION

**LEON TROTSKY on
THE JEWISH QUESTION and
TRANSFORMATION OF MORALS**

I.L.P. CONFERENCE REPORT

DEMOCRACY AND BONAPARTISM

*June
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WORKERS INTERNATIONAL NEWS

256 HARROW ROAD, LONDON, W.2.

Telephone : CUNningham 2526.

EDITOR HAROLD ATKINSON.

BUSINESS MANAGER ANGUS MAXEY.

Contents

	Page
EDITORIAL NOTES	195.
I.L.P. CONFERENCE AND AFTER Bill Hunter	205
DEMOCRACY OR BONAPARTISM P. Frank	207
THE JEWISH QUESTION Leon Trotsky	219
TRANSFORMATION OF MORALS Leon Trotsky	222

Manager's Column

With the next issue we are trying to resume regular monthly publication of "**Workers' International News**". Owing to the financial and technical difficulties which face us, this will not be easy, and it will not be accomplished without some efforts on the part of our readers and supporters. Because of pressure of work on the printing houses, W.I.N. often appears late in the month. This makes it difficult to dispose of many copies through casual sales, and it means that we can only survive on the basis of an established nucleus of **regular** readers.

This is where **you** come in, comrade reader. We don't have to stress the importance of maintaining a regular theoretical magazine based on revolutionary Marxism. It is essential to provide, for the vanguard of the British working class, a Marxian analysis

of world developments together with discussion articles on topical subjects. Also W.I.N. brings to British readers all the important documents of the Fourth International. It is to our sympathisers, who appreciate the importance of the function of our magazine, that we appeal to help build up the circle of **regular** readers.

We appeal to all those who receive the magazine regularly to take out subscriptions. The rates are 7/- for 12 issues or 3/6 for 6 issues, post free. **We also ask every reader to get at least one other regular reader.** Take out a subscription for an interested friend. Having once made the introduction, we are sure that there will be no difficulty in getting the subscription renewed. The important thing for a magazine like W.I.N. is a stable circulation. It's up to **you** to help in this connection.

WORKERS INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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Editorial Notes

Struggle Between 'Peacemakers'

THE failure of the first Paris Conference and the recriminations now proceeding between the Foreign Ministers, again sharply underline the inability of the "United Nations" to project their spurious unity into the post-war epoch. This conference was no gathering of representatives of the peoples seeking genuine solutions to the problems of our epoch. It was no more than a diplomatic manoeuvre, a phase in the struggle between the rival groupings on the arena of power politics.

THE LINE-UP OF FORCES.

Through the many cross-current of antagonism and rivalry two major forces confront each other: the United States, with its constellation of capitalist supporters; and the Soviet Union with its satellites. All the lesser nations must ultimately gravitate towards one bloc or the other. All that is left to the erstwhile omnipotent British Empire is to manoeuvre between the two.

A fundamental conflict exists between the imperialist United States, pushed by the force of historical development along the road of world domination, and the Soviet Union, with its nationalised and planned economy, which bars the road of the Western leviathan. Because of the war-weariness and radicalisation of the masses, including the American workers, there can be no question of direct military conflict with the Soviet Union in the period immediately ahead. A new military explosion along this line could be engineered only on the basis of the decisive defeat of the working class in the principal Metropolitan centres and the triumph of black reaction. What faces us, however, is not a period of defeat and reaction but a whole revolutionary epoch in which it can be confidently assumed that the proletariat will succeed in creating a revolutionary movement and leadership capable of performing the historic mission of the only extant progressive class in history; capable of leading humanity out of the impasse in which it now finds itself into the epoch of Socialist abundance.

If, however, the European and world working class fails in this historic task and allows reaction to triumph (for there is no intermediate alternative), then a new world war between the USA and the USSR is inevitable in the next ten or fifteen years.

ACCORD AND DIFFERENCE.

Whilst the big powers have this plane of cleavage, they have also one basic cement—their overriding fear of the working class; of the European revolution. This applies no less to the Kremlin usurpers, who have destroyed every tradition of the Russian revolution and wiped out every conquest of October 1917 except the nationalised and planned economy, than to the rulers of the capitalist states. This was, in fact, the only basis upon which the war alliance of the "United Nations"

could have been achieved. Its primary foundation was the military struggle against Nazi Germany and the political struggle against the proletarian revolution. It was given content in the Teheran and Yalta agreements. But, no longer joined by the bonds of war, the conspirators against the toiling masses are not finding it easy to maintain any measure of concord in the post-war era.

Despite the solemn war-time agreements contracted by the imperialists and their Kremlin allies, they are proving that no honour exists among these thieves. Each is going back on its solemnly proclaimed obligations. Each is trying to outwit the other in the struggle for strategic economic and military positions. The manoeuvres are characterised above all by an overriding disregard for the interests of the toiling masses whom they seek to convert into mere pawns on the chess-board of power politics.

THE NEW BALANCE OF POWER

Nobody envisaged that the war would end as it did. No one calculated on the Soviet Union, after its lamentable performance in Finland, defeating the mightiest European military machine hitherto conceived almost single handed. The Anglo-Soviet alliance was founded, and later joined by America, not on calculations of the strength of the USSR, but on false estimates of its weakness. As was revealed by Moore-Brabazon, Churchill and the British capitalists reckoned on the mutual destruction of the armies of Hitler and Stalin. They hovered like vultures waiting to alight on the carcasses of the contestants. Churchill, with huge armies stationed in the Middle East for this purpose, proposed to march in and "defend" the rich Caspian oil lands when it appeared that the Nazi armies would be victorious. But all their plans went wrong. A much different situation faces them today than they envisaged when they threw in their lot with their "warrior friend" in the Kremlin!

The changed relationship of forces is reflected in the difference in attitude towards the Soviet Union between the League of Nations at the time of the Soviet-Finnish war and the attitude of its successor, UNO, towards the new "aggressions" of the Stalinist bureaucracy. In seeking to understand the underlying cause of this it is instructive to compare today's maps of Europe and Asia with those of 1939 and to examine a few simple statistics.

As a result of the war the USSR has gained nearly 274,000 square miles of territory inhabited by more than 24,000,000 people. If the war losses of the Soviet Union are placed at twice the official computation, i.e. at 14,000,000, it still leaves a nett gain of 10,000,000 population. But it by no means ends there, that is with the direct acquisitions of territory and peoples. As Churchill so sadly laments the "iron curtain" of Stalinist control stretches from Stettin on the Baltic to Trieste on the Adriatic. About half of Europe is now within the very clearly defined sphere of Stalinist influence.

Nor does this suffice to satisfy Stalin's demands. As Churchill revealed in his New York oration "At Potsdam the Americans and British offered Russia a joint guarantee of the complete freedom of the Straits in peace and war, whether for merchant ships or ships of war . . . But we were told this was not enough. Russia must have a fortress inside the Straits from which she could dominate Constantinople. But this is not to keep the straits open but to give the power of closing them to a single nation." Stalin has not achieved this aim. The demands on Turkey, at the time of writing, are not in the foreground, but no doubt more will be heard of them.

FROM EUROPE TO ASIA.

In Asia, too, the Soviet bureaucracy has many ambitions. They by no means end with the already acquired Tannu-Tuva, Southern Sakhalin, Northern Korea and the Kuriles. Richer stakes reside in the treaties and in the influence which flows from the manipu-

lation of the puppet political movements in Northern Persia, Eastern Turkey and North China (Korea and Manchuria.)

The Soviet Union now holds oil concessions in half of Persia. Under US pressure, Chiang-Kai-Shek will have to come to terms in Manchuria with the Chinese "Communists". And this, as the experienced if reactionary bourgeois observer, J. L. Garvin, comments is but the **beginning** of Stalin's penetration of Asia.

RUSSIAN ECONOMIC ADVANCES. A glance at the rate of proletarianisation of the Russian masses indicates the tempo of industrial development which the nationalised and planned economy has made possible in the Soviet Union **despite** the suffocating pressure of the Stalinist bureaucracy which weighs so heavily on the toiling masses and on the economy.

In June 1926 the **total proletariat**, according to Bukharin, numbered less than 2,000,000. Today it is in the region of twenty to twenty-five million workers, and by 1950, if the new five-year plan is achieved, there will be 33,500,000 workers and employees in the national economy. War speeds up all processes. It speeded up the process of political degeneration and social differentiation and in that sense weakened the Soviet Union. On the other hand it speeded up the industrialisation of the eastern regions and the proletarianisation of the toilers. The foundation of any economy is machinery, raw materials, labour power and skill. Taking this into account it is not difficult to understand why the USSR occupies the place it undoubtedly does occupy in world affairs—second only to that of the United States.

DEBIT AND CREDIT. Russia suffered terrible devastation and privations during the Nazi onslaught. Even Churchill admitted that no other nation could, under similar conditions, have survived. And this can be attributed only to the nationalised and planned economy, wellspring of the moral fervour of the Red Army and the Russian masses who felt that they fought for their own land, in contrast to the workers of the capitalist countries. As in the past, the living standards of the mass of the Soviet peoples remain extremely low. And a tremendous effort and sacrifice will still need to be made if the economy is to be restored and the five year plan achieved. The economy is weighed down with the burdens of defence expenditure which for the time being, at any rate, remain on war-time levels. Nevertheless the Soviet economy is in a stronger position now than ever before, if not actually at the present time certainly potentially. Its possibilities of recovery and advance are far greater than after the last war following the defeat of the revolutions in Europe, and after the famine and crisis of 1929-31. It is interesting to observe the Kremlin's attitude towards foreign loans today in comparison with the years referred to.

For credits for periods as short as twelve to eighteen months the Soviet Union was compelled to pay British capitalists 8 and 9 per cent. in the period 1929-32. As late as 1936 they were paying 5½ per cent. for £10,000,000 on five years credit. Today Britain is offering Russia £30,000,000 for five years at 2½ per cent. And this has been refused and countered with a demand for £100,000,000 for fifteen years!

The negotiations for American loans are stalemated at present by Stalin ignoring the communication of Washington which raises as conditions for a billion-dollar credit the opening of channels of world trade and the settling of lend-lease. There can be no doubt of the need which Russia has for American equipment yet Stalin appears to prefer to play a waiting game, taking the attitude that in a few years at most, when the slump hits the capitalist

countries, the Soviet Union will be able to get all the loans it wants on its own terms. Washington is on the horns of a dilemma in this connection. In granting credits and equipment to the USSR it will be building up the economy and war potential of its major rival, yet without large-scale exports the US economy and war potential will be seriously undermined in the years ahead.

THE DECLINE OF CAPITALISM.

In computing the relationship of the Soviet Union with world imperialism it is necessary to take into account, not only the strength of the USA but the decline of capitalism on a world scale. Germany and Japan, Russia's one-time powerful capitalist neighbours, are destroyed militarily and, for some years to come, economically. They are destroyed for years ahead so far as their war-making propensities are concerned. The empires of Britain, France and Holland are collapsing about their ears. And mighty America, with all its strength and power contains within itself far greater contradictions than does the USSR. Not only does she face in the next few years the greatest slump in history—a depression which will make the 1930 days seem like prosperity—but the problems which immediately face her are no less grave.

The USA has achieved world prominence in the twilight of the capitalist epoch, to be more precise, it has arrived on the scene only during its death agony. The logic of historical development has forced the Western giant out of isolation and along the road of world domination. In the beginnings the US built its empire almost solely on the dollar. Now the dollar needs more than gold to back it. It needs armies and navies and air forces spread over the entire planet and the oceans. Unfortunately for Wall Street, in America there exists no military tradition. The American workers, even more so than the British workers, will not take, and are not taking, too kindly to the prospects of extended military service to defend the interests of the capitalist plunderers in foreign lands. It will become difficult in the extreme if not impossible for the victors to maintain their armies in the defeated countries for any length of time.

DIPLOMATIC STRATEGY.

It is this factor, primarily, which is determining the strategy and tactics of the big powers in the manoeuvring for economic and strategic positions. America's aim is to establish regimes and treaties in the interests of US imperialism and to get her armies out of it as soon as she can. This course is being dictated, not by any considerations of democracy or concern for the rights of nations, but by the decline of the morale of her armies abroad. Conversely the Soviet Union, which is in a better position in this respect wishes to retain the present military occupation and armistices unless it is compensated by some very tangible gains which its western "allies" are not prepared to concede. The Diplomatic Correspondent of the OBSERVER summed this process up, at the beginning of the Paris Conference, thus:

"The Russians can, under the present rules of the game, hold their own. Can the Americans? The uneasy background to the ambitious American diplomacy is formed by reports that the state of discipline and morale of the already much-reduced U.S. occupation forces in Europe is giving a serious headache to the American military authorities.

"The open spectacle of ebbing American strength is watched with anxiety by some, perhaps with satisfaction by others. America would certainly play a stronger hand in diplomatic conferences if she could maintain peace-time armies in Europe which could really guarantee the external and internal security of their occupation areas for any length of time."

From this it becomes obvious why the meetings of the diplomats take the

course they do and suffer the fate which they suffer at the hands of Stalin and Molotov.

How long this can continue is another matter. Before the Paris meeting Byrnes was mildly threatening to sign separate treaties in the event of another deadlock. He is now proposing to do it through UNO. But this is not a simple matter. Britain and France must be in favour of such a course as well as the USA. And accord on the question of Germany will not easily be reached. The predatory designs of France on Western Germany run directly counter to the European policy of Britain. One or the other, or both will have to make considerable compromises before it will be possible for America to push her policy through.

THE RULERS AND THE PEOPLES. The ruling classes can offer nothing to the peoples over whom they rule and whom they exploit. Despite the existence of the Soviet Union, and the predominance of the workers' parties in the Governments of Britain and France, the policies carried on by these countries, as well as by the USA, are reactionary through and through. They do not in any measure lighten the burden of those who toil, nor hold out any hope for future peace. On the contrary they are carried on at the expense of the exploited masses whose misery they perpetuate. The problems facing humanity can and will only be solved by the direct intervention of the workers.

We are living in a revolutionary epoch. At the present time on the ebb of the first post-war revolutionary wave which brought the left-wing governments to power and showed the extent to which the organised workers retain their faith in the old mass parties and their parliamentary methods. It will be some time before the treachery of the Socialist and Stalinist leaderships reveals itself clearly to the masses. And when it does the process and the reactions will not be simple. A measure of disillusionment and demoralisation is already being evidenced in France and Italy by the setbacks of the workers' parties in the elections. This move rightward indicates that the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie are wavering and losing the confidence they placed in the workers' parties.

This is inevitable mainly because of the crass opportunism which has replaced internationalism in the Communist Parties which now play such a predominant rôle in European politics. The position of the various Communist Parties, manipulated as they are by Moscow, is becoming farcical. As Walter Lippman recently wrote in the DAILY MAIL:

"The German Communists are openly opposed to the French Communists over the Ruhr and the Rhineland, and they are opposed—not quite openly, but very nearly so—to the Polish Communists over the annexed territories.

"The Polish and Czech Communist Parties are deeply at odds over Teschen; the Austrians and the Italians over the South Tyrol the Italians and the Yugoslavs over Trieste and Venezia Giulia.

"The Communist parties are divided on the nationalist issues which divide Europe.

"They are united and follow a common policy laid down in Moscow, where the issue is not primarily European but is one of world power between the Soviet Union and Great Britain or the United States."

Such is the revolting situation created by Stalinism. The main strength of the Soviet Union lies in the sympathy and support given it by the masses of the toilers in other lands. In the last analysis the gains of October can be retained and extended only on the basis of a series of successful revolutions in the capitalist countries. But the whole policy of the Kremlin clique is designed to prevent the masses from taking such a course. The policies of brutal expropriation and plunder, the counter-revolutionary policies of the Communist

Parties add up to the defence of the interests of the reactionary Bonapartist bureaucracy and the sabotage of the revolutionary defence of the Soviet Union.

Thus the struggle for the defence of the Soviet Union can be seen as a struggle to defend the European revolution against Stalinism. The European peoples must be free to work out their own destinies. The right of self-determination of all nations must be recognised and fought for by the revolutionary class methods of the proletariat.

The struggle of the masses in occupied Europe in the coming period will inevitably, in the first stages, take the form of a struggle against national oppression. The duty of the revolutionists in these countries is to give the national liberation movements a class content, to convince the masses that national emancipation can be achieved only through the proletarian revolution. In the countries of the occupying powers the workers must demonstrate their solidarity with the workers of Germany and Eastern Europe in their struggle. The demand must be raised for the withdrawal of the armies from Europe. As a concrete agitational demand the advanced workers in the various oppressing countries will put in the foreground the demand for the withdrawal of their "own" troops. But recognition of the right of self-determination for the nations means that this is not confined to the troops of the capitalist powers. As a general principle we are for the withdrawal of all the armies from occupied Europe including the Red Army. Solidarity and the fraternisation of the working peoples of the oppressed and the oppressor countries must become the battle cry of the revolutionists. Unitedly we will achieve the socialist revolution, will join in building the socialist united states of Europe.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE LABOUR PARTY.

We are writing these lines before the Whitsun Conference of the Labour Party, but all the signs indicate that the Communist Party's application for affiliation will be decisively rejected. The Stalinists have made a determined bid to get inside the Labour Party in order to gain a grip on the machine in much the same way as they have infiltrated, largely on the basis of the general apathy and their own dynamic minority activities, into the industrial machine.

Transport House, however, alarmed by the initial successes of the Stalinists in their "unity" campaign, swung the bureaucratic steamroller into action and regained control of a situation which threatened to slip from their grasp. The trade union leaders, the Labour Party, the press, M.P.s, Cabinet Ministers, even Attlee himself, joined in the hue and cry against CP affiliation. Nor was the campaign confined to the recognised bourgeois right wing. It was led by Laski and by the TRIBUNE, organ of the erstwhile left wing of the Labour Party.

SWING TO THE RIGHT.

The way in which the affiliation campaign developed is very revealing. On the basis of Executive decisions the Stalinists lined up some of the most important trade unions including the AEU, ETU (electricians) and the Mineworkers. But through the rank and file, by taking the issue into the branches, the Labour bureaucrats largely reversed the position. Particularly significant was the reversal in the case of the mineworkers. In South Wales especially the Stalinists have exercised a large measure of control over the trade union for years. Yet even here the vote of the Executive, led by Arthur Horner, was reversed. This shows the drift to the right, largely no doubt as a result of Stalin's foreign policy. It indicates that even though passively the masses are still supporting the Labour leaders.

Both sides, the Labour and the Stalinist leaders, have conducted a 'phoney campaign. Neither have dared to reveal their aims. The Labour leaders have

thundered against the CP as if it was a genuine Communist Party, giving it an aura which it has no title to and which will, unfortunately, tend to stand it in good stead in the coming period. Yet they are fully aware that the CP has nothing in common with Communism but the name. It would have been a progressive development had the CP leaders succeeded in gaining affiliation, for there is no need for two reformist parties. Affiliation would have put all the reformists into the one camp. It would have shown the advanced workers that the CP leaders are but the left wing of social-democracy.

REVOLUTIONARY ATTITUDE TO AFFILIATION.

The manner in which the Stalinist leadership is demanding entry into the mass Labour Party is an indication of the distance they have travelled from the path of Bolshevism and along the road of unprincipled opportunism. Lenin, in his time, was also in favour of the affiliation of the revolutionary party to the Labour Party given certain conditions. First and foremost the revolutionary party must be firmly united on the basis of revolutionary principles, programme and discipline. It must enter the mass Party, not as the left wing of reformism, but as a revolutionary opposition to the reformist leadership. It must retain its revolutionary banner, its platform and its discipline. It must have the perspective of winning the best elements to the banner of communism and emerging, at the most expedient time, strengthened as a revolutionary party.

Contrast Lenin's conceptions of affiliation to those of the Stalinists. They are crawling at the feet of the Labour leaders and assuring them (correctly as it happens) that no programmatic differences exist. They are the most ardent defenders of the Labour Party's programme. All they ask is a chance to prove it by being allowed inside the sacred portals of Transport House! The only reason deduced for the maintenance of their organisation is its dynamic energy as an organised unit capable of driving the masses to greater production efforts and more enthusiastic acceptance of the reformist programme of the Labour Government.

In support of their contentions the CP leaders show how they helped line up the workers behind the war machine of British imperialism after June 1941, and how they are pursuing a similar course today in such industries as coal-mining.

SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY AND STALINISM.

But whilst they are in essence the two wings of social-democracy there is an important difference between the Labour and Communist Parties. And it is precisely this which terrifies the Labour leaders at the thought of having Pollitt and his colleagues as bedmates. So far as their domestic policy goes both are opportunist reformists. But whilst Attlee and Co. are always the faithful servants of their own ruling class, the CP leaders are the agents of Moscow. Their attitude towards their own bourgeoisie is not consistent. It is governed by the prevailing diplomatic relationships of the Kremlin. Herein is contained the core of the difference between Transport House and King Street. It goes no deeper. Neither is concerned with the interests of the masses whom they claim to lead. Above all neither wants the socialist revolution.

However this does not exhaust the factors determining the relationship of the Labour and Stalinist parties. During the war the ruling class and the Labour leaders did not scorn the strikebreaking activities of the Stalinists in their struggle to keep the masses lined up behind the war machine. And today they are glad of the assistance of influential Stalinists like Horner in their production drive in the coalfields. In France and other countries events have compelled the ruling classes to make even greater use of the Stalinist leaders

in order to stave off the revolution; in order to canalise the struggle into reformist channels.

In this respect Pollitt shows in his writings a better understanding of the process than do the self-satisfied and empty Labour leaders. In a recent article in the DAILY WORKER Pollitt wrote:

"Two years is not a long period in the march of history, but the next two years will bring the most profound changes that mankind has yet witnessed.

"We are not fighting for a policy only for today, when, serious though the problems are, they are as nothing compared with those we shall have to face at the end of the trade replacement boom."

He warns the Labour leaders that they have "a rude awakening" coming to them. In his words: "In a certain sense the Labour Government is in a honeymoon period. Life teaches all of us that honeymoons do not last for ever." And he appeals to the Labour leaders for "unity" in order the better to betray the workers in the stormy period ahead. For that is the only service the Stalinists have to offer.

STALINISM AND THE FUTURE.

In Britain the Stalinists do not enjoy the support of the masses in the same measure as in Europe. But the affiliation campaign has proved very enlightening. In some of the biggest unions, in particular the mineworkers, the executives went on record for CP affiliation yet, under pressure from Transport House, in one of the fiercest campaigns it has ever conducted, the rank and file overturned these decisions. This reveals how the Stalinists have become integrated into sections of the trade union leadership whilst the Labour leaders still retain the passive support of the organised workers.

But as Pollitt points out, the honeymoon period of the Labour Government will end with the termination of the cyclical trade boom. And when the masses turn from the Labour leadership the CP will largely benefit. They will be able to turn to good account the positions which they are now busily occupying. The policy of Attlee, Morrison and the right-wing intransigents of the Labour Party may well prove to be a boomerang. The exclusion of the CP from the Labour Party will be seen in a different light in the future. The Labour leaders will be seen to be the "splitters". The mantle of "Communism" on which they based their attacks against the Stalinists will serve Pollitt and Co. in good stead. Excluded from the Labour Party the hands of the CP leaders are freed for a demagogic "left" turn. They will be able to pose before the masses as a militant, communist alternative to the Labour leadership. They will, consequently, in the first stages at any rate, be the main beneficiaries of the left wing development of the masses.

COMPROMISE IN INDIA.

A new stage is beginning in the political development of India. Behind the scenes a conspiracy is being hatched against the Indian masses and their aspirations for national and social liberation. What is being attempted is a sort of hybrid form of colonial "palace revolution".

The Indian bourgeoisie and landowners, through their political instruments, the Congress Party and the Moslem League, are seeking a broad basis of compromise with British imperialism which, in turn, is being compelled to pursue a new course in its colonial policies.

This represents an important retreat for British imperialism and indicates the extent of its decline. Whereas arch-imperialists in the past like Joynson

Hicks and Churchill pronounced their intentions of holding India by "the sword" today Britain is forced to offer the Indian bourgeoisie a partnership.

Despite the howls of the Tory die-hards about the "casting away" of "our heritage", no Socialist can accept this latest manoeuvre of the Labour Government as an application of the principle of the right of self determination for the colonial peoples. Had it been so there would have been no haggling, just a simple declaration of Indian independence and an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the armed forces from Indian soil. Material factors and not socialist principles are dictating the colonial policy of Attlee and his Government.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND. Without the support of its armed forces no power can maintain an imperialist occupation of a colonial country, and British imperialism no longer has this support so far as India is concerned. Major Woodrow-Wyatt was sent by the Cabinet to tour among the armed forces in India and make a confidential report on their morale. It is believed that he told the Cabinet that they could not rely on the armed forces in the event of a violent conflict with the Indian nationalist movement. The strikes which recently took place in the RAF lend weight to this contention so far as the white forces are concerned.

In the Indian forces the position is infinitely worse from the standpoint of British imperialism. The trial of the leaders of Bose's Indian National Army has had to be abandoned because of the demonstrations of support for the INA by the Indian troops. And the deep-going discontent of the Indian forces broke through to the surface in its sharpest expression through the Indian Navy mutiny which sent cold shivers down the spines of the Labour "statesmen" in Downing-street as it froze with fear likewise the Indian nationalist leaders. All round, the NEW STATESMAN & NATION recently calculated, half the personnel of the Indian armed forces have gone over to the nationalist movement. In simple terms the British Government no longer retains control of the armed forces of India and cannot rely upon its own occupying armies.

That is one aspect of the political motivation of the new imperialist policy of the Labour Government. Added to this is the economic position of Britain.

ECONOMIC BACKGROUND. Britain owes to India over one thousand million pounds sterling. This amount is frozen and at present not available to the Indian capitalists. By means of Imperial Preference and currency agreements Britain is maintaining a precarious hold on Empire, particularly Indian, trade. But Wall-street is intervening in this connection. Included in the terms for the American loan are acceptance of the Bretton Woods scheme, agreement on the multiconvertibility of Britain's sterling debts and an end to the present Imperial Preference policy. This cuts the ground from right under the feet of Britain's economic relations with India. In addition Indian capital is ousting British investments and now has control of the major enterprises. Even the TIMES OF INDIA has been transferred into Indian hands.

From this it becomes apparent that British imperialism must develop a different social base for itself in this Asiatic sub-continent. The present relationships with the Indian bourgeoisie have become outmoded and anachronistic. The British capitalists seek to penetrate with their capital the new Indian enterprises which industrialisation will bring into being. But for this they need a partnership basis with the Indian capitalists. The old methods of military domination are unsuited for this purpose and incapable of achieving the desired ends.

But the general international situation has also played an important part in determining this course of action by Britain. The British ruling class is compelled to seek a better relationship with the Indian bourgeoisie to strike a

weapon from the hands of Moscow which now casts such a formidable shadow over the Asiatic scene. The nightmares which haunted Britain's nineteenth century rulers, their fears of the Tzarist "menace from the East", are today being revived by Stalin's expansionist policy.

THE TERMS OF THE OFFER.

All this does not mean, however, that Britain is not demanding its pound of flesh in the bargaining which is being conducted by the Cabinet mission. There are, as yet, no indications of the likely terms of the proposed treaty between India and Britain. But this is the nub of the whole question. It is precisely the treaty which will consummate the new relationship.

On other aspects the terms reveal that compromises are being made all round. Jinnah's scheme for Pakistan has been rejected but the manner of grouping the Moslem and Hindu provinces goes some way in this direction and gives Jinnah the chance to claim that sufficient of the substance of Pakistan is contained in the proposals to warrant its acceptance by the Moslem League. The Princely order, too, is to remain largely intact as Nehru's recent references to the Princes indicate. Taken together with the proposed method of constructing the Assembly, all this can only result in weak national structure leaving the Interim Government largely dependent on the administrative services of British imperialism together with its armed forces which are to be retained in order to ensure the "orderly transfer of power".

INDIAN BOURGEOISIE WANT OFFER.

The Indian bourgeoisie are generally favourable to the acceptance of the British offer. At his first prayer meeting after the offer was made Gandhi asked God to give the Indian people the wisdom to appreciate the generosity and significance of the terms. In his paper HARIJAN he has commended the Cabinet proposals whilst admitting their imperfections. As the most influential spokesman of the Indian bourgeoisie, we can take Gandhi as an indicator of their attitude towards the offer. Nehru's attitude points also in the same direction as that of Gandhi.

If one takes the "revolutionary", nationalist pronouncements of the political representatives of the Indian bourgeoisie at their true worth, as mere bargaining weapons against British imperialism, then it can be seen that there are strong reasons for their willingness to come to terms with imperialism against the Indian masses. One is as anxious as the other to avoid a violent struggle on the part of the masses for national independence. The Indian bourgeoisie is incapable of leading such a struggle for it is bound up with the solution of the democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution and the agrarian revolution. This struggle can be led to a successful conclusion only if it becomes a struggle for the socialist revolution led by the working class. For the Indian bourgeoisie is incapable of giving the land to the peasants, it is linked by a thousand ties, financial and family, to the landowning aristocracy.

By a new agreement with British imperialism, the Indian bourgeoisie hopes to come to power without the bourgeois revolution. The structure of the independent India will be a hybrid containing within itself not only the bourgeois form of state but also the Princely states and the feudal structure and property relationships which are being carried over from the middle ages.

Other secondary factors also act in favour of the Indian bourgeoisie. The gates of the American capital market will be opened. And, whilst the present signs indicate that the Indian bourgeoisie will pursue a joint course with the British capitalists, access to the American dollar well is always a handy bargaining counter to hold in reserve.

THE REAL FORCES. This simple scheme being worked out by the imperialists and the Indian bourgeoisie can never produce the stability on which its sponsors calculate. For the masses will not remain quiescent.

Events will dictate the course of the struggle. For the Indian masses do not regard national independence as an empty abstraction, as an end in itself. The Indian toiler sees in imperialist oppression a barrier between himself and a better standard of life. Imperialism appears to him as the cause of the famine and misery which stalks India. In this light the compromise of the Indian bourgeoisie with imperialism can only provoke the suspicion and hatred of the Indian toilers for the bourgeois nationalist leadership. The struggle for a real constituent assembly to be elected on a universal franchise will transform the whole situation.

The Indian working class is already showing signs of its willingness to wage a struggle on the economic field as the threatened railway strike indicates. In such an explosive atmosphere this may well develop into a general strike and take on a political colouration. For the struggle for complete national liberation from the yoke of imperialism, as will become more apparent by the compromise of the Indian bourgeoisie, is indissolubly linked with the struggle for social emancipation. And such a struggle for state power, for a workers' and peasants' soviet government can only be led by the Indian proletariat.

I.L.P. CONFERENCE AND AFTER

By BILL HUNTER

The manoeuvrings of the leadership, and the consequent flounderings of the party during the past period, resulted in a much reduced number of delegates and visitors being present than at the 1945 Conference. A comparison of the number of votes recorded on the major issues in 1945 with those at the last conference shows a terrific decline in membership. Representation was less to the tune of some 26 delegates. NEW LEADER and general literature sales have declined. Similarly the activities and interest of the membership. This was revealed in the debates. Carmichael, for example, stated that at a recent aggregate in Glasgow and district—the stronghold of the ILP—only forty members could be mustered.

In giving a report of the ILP Conference we have no need to reiterate our analysis of the reasons for the decline of this Party. Events have shattered this centrist husk. Depression pervaded the Conference. It met in an atmosphere of rumours of the impending split and the departure of the Parliamentary group and other leading circles to the Labour Party in the event that affiliation was defeated.

On the agenda were two resolutions dealing with the Labour Party. The first one called for the convening of a special conference to discuss the role of the ILP in relation to the Labour Party after the Annual Conference of that body had been held at Whitsuntide. It also declared in favour of allowing members of the ILP to become individual members of the Labour Party. This resolution got on to the agenda only by the slick manoeuvring of the NAC after their first attempt to introduce it as an emergency resolution had failed. Later they pushed it through as a "composite" resolution incorporating the ideas contained in several branch resolutions even though it introduced entirely new material.

It became evident that behind this resolution lay the intention of the right wing to end the ILP as a political party. The new role of the ILP to be considered after the Labour Party's Whitsun Conference could only be its transformation into a harmless political club, acceptable as an affiliated body of the Labour Party, or the complete elimination of the ILP thus obviating the need for the right wing

to leave it behind when they enter the Labour Party.

The alternative resolution demanded the maintenance of the ILP as an independent organisation and as an alternative to the Labour Party.

The debate around these two resolutions produced impassioned appeals from Padley, Brockway and the supporters of the first resolution. Brockway spoke of the personal crisis through which he was passing and threatened to resign from the editorship of the NEW LEADER. McGovern and Carmichael predicted the doom of the ILP, should it continue to function independently.

The vocal support given to the anti-affiliation resolution was a mélange of pacifist and sectarian confusion. Many of the ideas expressed were from the recipe book of "third period" Stalinism against which the right wing solemnly warned.

Despite the efforts of the pro-affiliationist right wing, the second resolution was carried by 75 votes to 60.

The decision of the ILP to remain outside the mass Labour Party is virtually its death warrant. Lacking a revolutionary programme, discipline and leadership, it can never become an alternative to the Labour Party. The workers cannot distinguish its policy from that of the mass Labour Party and, consequently are unable to understand the reason for its separate existence.

The ILP is now completely split. The pitiful, sentimental character of the party is underlined in an article by John McNair in the NEW LEADER of May 4th. The General Secretary endeavours to prevent a split by a tearful appeal to the right wing who are deserting to the Labour Party in defiance of the majority decision of the Conference. He writes:

"This decision (to stay outside the LP) was arrived at in accordance with the genuine democratic procedure which governs the ILP and it will be implemented, not only in the letter but in the spirit, by our National Council and by our Party Officers.

"I think many of us heaved a sigh of relief when the final decision was

reached. We have been divided on this issue for many months. The full intensity of our flow of work for International Socialism has been retarded by this difference of tactical approach. The NAC as well as the membership was divided (1). We have never sought and never accepted the dull acquiescence of totalitarian subservience. Such divisions as this are of the essence of democracy and we are prepared to pay the price even though it be high. In this case the price is high as some of our comrades may be leaving us. It is hard, terribly hard, to lose comrades with whom one has worked for many happy years in loyal and fruitful collaboration.

"But our comrades have not yet gone. From the depths of my socialist conscience I make this appeal to them:—"Must you go? Can't you stay? There has been no bolting nor barring of doors. There was a perfectly reasonable difference of opinion on a tactical problem. The Party has decided. The doors of the Party are wide open to all who are prepared loyally and sincerely to implement Conference decisions. Remember what the Party has meant to you. Will you find such joy in Socialist service elsewhere? Is there not an imperious need for an independent Socialist Party? I am sure there is and I am certain that the ILP is such a Party. Therefore, comrades, we want you to stay with us. We don't want you to go."

But this sentimental claptrap has fallen on deaf ears! Those Party Officers whom McNair promises will implement the Conference decision "not only in the letter but in the spirit" are already on their way out! Fenner Brockway is resigning from the political secretaryship and editorship of the NEW LEADER. Two of the Parliamentary Group, McGovern and Campbell Stephen, together with most of the Glasgow Councillors, are preparing to go over to the Labour Party. This is all the respect they have for Conference decisions "arrived at in accordance with the genuine democratic procedure which governs the

ILP" and all that the General Secretary can say is "must you go!"

Some of the rank and file ILP comrades at the Conference had illusions that the passing of the anti-affiliationist resolution would have a sobering effect on the right wing and would put them back on the rails. Subsequent events will have dispelled their illusions. They are to be left in the remnants of the independent "alternative to the Labour Party", without a programme, without a perspective, without hope for the future.

The plight of the rump of Commonwealth, which has suffered an identical fate to that of the ILP (Millington, its lone MP, has already gone into the Labour Party) may provide the basis for fusion. C. A. Smith, Commonwealth Chairman, has had such an idea in mind for some time and has been making approaches to the ILP behind the scenes. It will solve nothing if it does take place. It will not halt the decay of either organisation. These two lame dogs will prove incapable of helping each other over the stile.

The Conference showed that the possibilities of the ILP playing any great role in the future are growing ever more dim. Its literature circulation, its general activity, its active membership do not compare with those of the RCP. Such industrial influence as it exerts is at the official level. Its trade union leaders, Bob Edwards, Tom Stephenson and Will Ballantine, lacking a firm policy, do not assist the Party's industrial development but transmit the pressure of the Labour and trade union bureaucracy into the ILP. This was shown by the unchal-

lenged report of the Industrial Committee which declared that "it would be comparatively easy for a number of employers . . . to deliberately provoke industrial disputes with the object of embarrassing the Labour Government. This situation calls for discrimination in our relationship to strikes and we should be careful that we are not used as tools of the employers in any such attempts." This is only one step away from the war-time position of the Stalinists which branded all strikes as provocations of the employers and called upon the workers not to yield to such provocations, not to strike.

The main capital of the ILP during the past years has consisted of its Parliamentary Group and its tradition in the Labour movement. Without the M.P.s it will be nothing.

The development, more precisely the degeneration, of the ILP has verified the prediction of the last RCP Congress. We said:

"As a current separate and apart from the reformists and the revolutionaries, the ILP will not be able to maintain itself. Like its brother parties on the continent of Europe it will disappear ignominiously from the scene."

The Conference revealed that there are very few elements remaining in the ILP who are not so steeped in its centrist atmosphere as to be capable of absorbing the revolutionary ideas of Trotskyism. Those who have such capacities will be propelled in our direction. The coming struggles will demonstrate the viability of Trotskyism, of the programme and method of revolutionary Communism.

DEMOCRACY OR BONAPARTISM IN EUROPE? By PIERRE FRANK

The following article is presented for international discussion by a leading member of the Parti Communiste Internationaliste, French Section of the

Fourth International. It does not represent the view of the W.I.N. A reply will be published in our next issue.

The problems of the proletarian revolution are posed today in Europe under the most varied aspects. It is not surprising therefore that differ-

ences on these questions are expressed in the ranks of the revolutionary vanguard. The comrades of the Socialist Workers Party in particular have dis-

cusSED several questions concerning democratic demands and the possibilities of democratic regimes in Europe. If for some it was only a question of putting the emphasis on democratic demands while for others one of putting it on the slogans of soviets and the Socialist United States of Europe, this difference would very likely be resolved in the daily activities of the parties, provided both tendencies knew how to connect dialectically the democratic slogans and the specific slogans of the proletarian revolution. On the other hand a question which must be treated with the greatest precision and which cannot be settled by daily activity is that of the nature of the present regimes in Europe. It is a theoretical problem of the first importance to know whether or not we have democratic regimes in Europe, for differences on this point must finally result—which is not necessarily the case with democratic slogans—in different policies, as happened on the question of the nature of the Soviet State which has so often been brought forward during the years of Stalinist degeneration and reaction.

Do Democratic Regimes Exist in "Liberated" Europe?

Our reply to this question obviously does not depend on the criteria required by the Foreign Office and the State Department for the diplomatic recognition of a government, any more than on those defined by Stalinist propaganda. Bourgeois democracy is a political form the analysis of which has been made by the most eminent Marxists and it is their analysis which serves completely to guide us on this matter.

The principal problem of Europe is Germany. Unfortunately, under present conditions, the political forms and formations there are still only in an embryonic state; the military occupation governments stifle all political life capable of disturbing their own aims. Consequently, Germany scarcely affords us criteria concerning the political forms of the state in Europe.

Throughout that part of Europe occupied by the Red Army great over- turns are taking place; but the Stalin-

ist manoeuvres completely distort the simplest bits of information. In any event we are not confronted with democratic governments far or near. These are governments based on capitalist property, under the control of the Moscow bureaucracy, and with a greater or lesser base in the worker and poor peasant masses. Only the presence of the Red Army assures their continuance.

But after all, the discussion among the American comrades has dealt, and moreover rightly so, with the countries of Western Europe, those which are in the "zone of influence" of American and British democratic imperialism.

Unquestionably, the most characteristic example in this zone is that of France, which once again constitutes the most appropriate subject for a Marxist study of specifically political questions. Let us say in the beginning that everything that is true for France is not necessarily true at present, for Italy, the Scandinavian countries, Belgium, etc., but it is certainly in France that the political tendencies manifest themselves with the greatest clarity and distinctness.

Do we have a democratic regime in France? Comrade Morrow, in an article aimed at summarizing the positions of his tendency in the discussion, replies in the affirmative in the following terms:

"The struggle of the masses is limited by the fact that it still accepts the leadership of the reformist parties. The objective resultant is bourgeois democracy.

Another factor working for bourgeois democracy is the resistance of a section of the French capitalist class, led by de Gaulle, to U.S. domination. There was much indignation at the plenum, notably from Comrade Cannon, when I defined the Gaullists as a bourgeois-democratic tendency. The majority could not understand this quite simple phenomena, that a section of the French capitalist class, first to resist German imperialism and then to resist U.S. domination, was for a period basing itself on the masses through the mediation of the reformist

parties." (Fourth International, May 1945).

We shall endeavour to show by an analysis of the class relations that this reasoning is faulty on a number of points. As one knows, it is always profitable not to examine a question solely by its appearance at a given moment, but to see it in its historical development over a longer period. This is very easy for us to do since the Fourth International has taken very clear positions on France over a period of many years.

In February 1934 a violent reactionary attack dealt a mortal blow to the democratic Third Republic. The new regime was defined by Trotsky as follows: "a preventive Bonapartist regime cloaking itself with the worn-out formulae of the parliamentary state and manoeuvring between the insufficiently strong camp of the fascist regime and the insufficiently class conscious camp of the proletarian state." (August 1934).

The violent reactionary attack awakened the labouring masses. A strong surge to the left took place, which forced a leftward shift of the Bonapartist governments, at the same time that the Popular Front was created to check and mislead the revolutionary movement of the masses. The year 1936 saw the triumph of the Popular Front thanks to the exploitation of strong democratic illusions; but it also saw a strong surge of the workers (June 1936). The division of France into mortally hostile camps deepened. The regime of the Popular Front was not a democratic regime it contained within itself numerous elements of Bonapartism as we shall see further on.

With Munich and the liquidation of the Popular Front, the governments of Deladier and Reynaud, resembling those of Doumergue and Flandin, prepared the Bordeaux transaction of June 1940 which served to install the Petain regime. Despite the support it received from German imperialism (it held power only with German support and went under as soon as the German Army had to quit French territory), this regime was not considered by us as fascist but rather as

Bonapartist. In the notes he dictated for an article shortly before his assassination, which he did not have the time to write, Trotsky expressed himself as follows:

"In France there is no fascism in the real sense of the term. The regime of the senile Marshal Petain represents a senile form of Bonapartism of the epoch of imperialist decline. . . . Precisely because Petain's regime is senile Bonapartism it contains no element of stability and can be overthrown by a revolutionary mass uprising much sooner than a fascist regime." (Fourth International, October 1940).

Several months later a manifesto of the International Secretariat entitled "France Under Hitler and Petain" declares:

"The swift invasion of the German troops has shattered the administrative system. The only group representing a certain relative solidity were the top ranks of the Army. Around them rallied some Anglophobe politicians. This combination was crowned by the octogenarian Petain. The new Bonaparte did not even use cannon against parliament, which decided on its own hook to disappear. . . .

The struggle for democracy under the flag of England and the United States will not lead to a noticeably different situation. General de Gaulle struggles against 'slavery' at the head of colonial governors, that is to say, of slave masters. In his appeals this 'leader' uses, just like Petain, the royal 'we'. The defence of democracy is in good hands! If England should install de Gaulle in France tomorrow, his regime would not in the least be distinguished from that of the Bonapartist government of Petain." (November 1940).

Thus our most responsible international body had predicted that a simple substitution of gangs following a victory of the Allies would not signify a change in the nature of the political regime. Have events verified this prediction or not? We find ourselves in the presence of an evaluation on the historical scale based on positions which were defended for many years by

the Fourth International against all other theories and cheap labels spread by the other tendencies and formations of the labour movement. If an error was committed it would truly be a considerable one and we would be urgently obliged to seek the reasons for it and correct it. As for ourselves, we don't believe that our organisation was in error on this point. We sought to define the regime of de Gaulle in 1944 at the moment when he had ceased being the leader of a military legion at London and had become the head of the government installed in Algeria as the step before becoming the head of the government at Paris. We gave only a personal evaluation which does not have the authority of the citations given above but one may well excuse us for reprinting it here, for it applies in large measure to the present regime in France.

"The significance of the sentence pronounced by the Algiers tribunal goes far beyond the personality of Pucheu and of his judges. The sentence reveals the 'common nature' of the Petain regime in France and the de Gaulle regime now established in North Africa which lays claim to the future government of France. At the same time, the sentence may serve to lay open some of the differences between the two regimes.

The Petain regime is the dictatorship of the army and the police in the service of big capital. This is Bonapartism, not fascism. It is Bonapartism propped up by the Gestapo and the German occupation troops.

The de Gaulle regime—especially since its establishment at Algiers—contains an ever increasing number of men from the army and the police who have deserted Vichy. This too is Bonapartism. It is Bonapartism propped up by the Allied troops and the crumbs of Lease-Lend.

The differences between these two Bonapartist regimes are in no way exhausted by the fact that some of these French patriots have a marked preference for the Basic English as opposed to the jargon of the 'Voelkischer Beobachter.'

In France, independent working

class organizations are driven to illegality by Petain; in Algeria, where reaction still reigned supreme at the time of the proletarian offensive of 1936, the de Gaulle regime cannot help tolerating the open expression of trade unions and working class parties and must even seek their collaboration.

In France, Petain is constantly being spurred on by the agitation of the fascist organizations, in particular by Doriot's PPF. In Algeria, these same fascist organizations have been reduced to illegality and there actually appears to be no fascist movement in existence at Algiers. Obviously, one of these bonapartist regimes leans essentially on fascist reaction, whereas the other leans more towards the exploited masses. This is nowise to the credit of one or other of the leading cliques, it is simply the resultant of the class forces in operation; but it is a fact of great importance for the future development of the class struggle." (Fourth International, June 1944).

We don't see that the "liberation" of France has brought fundamental changes in the above-mentioned characteristics of the de Gaulle regime. Unquestionably the weight of the worker masses is markedly heavier in France than in Algeria and the stronger democratic traditions are factors which contribute to weakening the regime and force it to drape itself in enough shapeless camouflage to hide its Bonapartist traits; but it doesn't change its nature.

Bonapartism

After having shown the continuity of our political analysis for more than ten years of French history and before proceeding to a more penetrating study of the de Gaulle regime, we believe it worthwhile to review some generalizations on Bonapartism at the cost of a new series of citations.

In "Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State" Engels explains how a Bonapartist form of state appears under certain circumstances:

"At certain periods it occurs that the struggling classes balance each other so nearly that the public power

gains a certain degree of independence by posing as the mediator between them. The absolute monarchy of the 17th and 18th century was in such a position balancing the nobles and the burghers against one another. So was the Bonapartism of the first, and still more of the Second Empire, playing the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and vice versa. The latest performance of this kind, in which rulers and ruled appear equally ridiculous is the German Empire of Bismarckian make, in which capitalists and labourers are balanced against one another and equally cheated for the benefit of the degenerate Prussian cabbage junkers."

Limiting ourselves in this article to the Bonapartism of the capitalist regime we merely call to mind the definition of Bonapartism applied and explained on many occasions by Trotsky in reference to the Stalinist dictatorship. But Trotsky was very insistent in attributing this conception of Bonapartism to the von Papen and von Schleicher governments in the months preceding Hitler's coming to power; he did this in two pamphlets one of which "The Only Road" devotes itself mainly to this very question. He showed the same insistence concerning the Doumergue and Flandin ministries in France which had resulted from the violently reactionary attack of February 6, 1934. He showed the differences in the class relations between a democratic regime and a Bonapartist regime:

"The passing over of the bourgeoisie from the parliamentary to the bonapartist regime does not finally exclude Social-Democracy from that legal combination of forces upon which capitalist government bases itself. Schleicher, as is well known, sought in his time the aid of the trade unions. Through his friend Marquet, Doumergue has without doubt relations with Jouhaux and Co. . . . The essence of the democratic state consists, as is well known in the fact that everyone has the right to say and write what he pleases but that the big capitalists retain the power of deciding all im-

portant questions. This result is obtained by means of a complicated system of partial concessions (reforms) becomes exhausted. Social-Democracy ceases to be 'the main political support of the bourgeoisie.' This signifies: capital can no longer rely upon a tamed 'public opinion'; it needs a state apparatus which is independent of the masses—i.e. bonapartist.

In the one case, society turns almost in a circle about the big bourgeoisie as a pivot; the latter find in the petty bourgeoisie and in a section of the working class a stable foundation; consequently the government and the state apparatus rest on these strata by means of a parliamentary majority. In the other case the big bourgeoisie does not find sufficient support in the masses which are polarised towards the camp of the revolution and the camp of the counter-revolution; under these conditions in order to save the social order the state apparatus, with the forces of repression in the forefront, tends to raise itself above society. The state machine no longer rests on a mass base but maintains itself in unstable equilibrium between two camps; these feats of social gymnastics come to a lamentable end the moment one of the camps takes the initiative in a decisive struggle.

The examples mentioned above for Germany of 1932 and France of 1934 are those of a weak bonapartism in the period of capitalist decline; the qualification of bonapartism in their case was not contested in our ranks probably because, as Trotsky wrote, it is still easy to recognize in an old man the characteristics which he possessed in his youth.

But the bonapartism of declining capitalism can cloak itself in other costumes. In certain cases it is fairly difficult to recognize it, for example in the case of governments of the left, even very much to the left, notably of the Popular Front type. There bonapartism is so outrageously varnished with a democratic sheen that many allow themselves to be taken in by it. The existence of bonapartist elements in the Kerensky regime was the subject of a chapter of "The History of

the Russian Revolution" by Trotsky who characterized Kerensky as "the mathematical centre of Russian bonapartism." This theoretical evaluation was in agreement with that of Lenin who, on September 23, 1917, wrote to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party: "We must give . . . a correct and clear slogan: to drive out the Bonapartist gang of Kerensky with its fake pre-parliament." There was no question there of an agitational formula. In "State and Revolution", the greatest Marxist classic on the question of the state, Lenin, after having recalled the terms of Engels cited above with the same examples, adds the following phrase: "Such, we add, is the present Kerensky government in Republican Russia since it began to persecute the revolutionary proletariat, at a moment when, thanks to the leadership of the petty bourgeois democrats, the soviets had already become impotent while the bourgeoisie was not yet strong enough openly to disperse them."

Certain individuals may be surprised to see an idea applied to regimes so widely separated from one another and will doubt its usefulness. Many other ideas familiar to Marxists are applied to extremely wide fields and yet are no less correct and useful. For example centrism. Also, for example, the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is applied to the Paris Commune under its leadership of Proudhonists and Blanquists, as well as to Soviet Russia under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky. The term "bonapartism" does not completely exhaust the characterization of a regime, but it is indispensable to employ it in present day Europe, if one wishes to go forward with the least chance of error. Let us add finally that Marxism is not alone in the possession of such important general ideas; all the sciences do likewise. Thus chemists call bodies carbides which differ more widely from one another than the bonapartism of Schleicher and that of Kerensky. And chemistry doesn't get along so badly either on that account. The contrary is true.

Let us note that the greatest theoreticians of Marxism did not at all

define the political nature of a bourgeois regime by the positions which the latter held in the field of foreign policy but solely and simply by the position it occupied in relation to the classes composing the nation. Let us likewise observe that the limitation of the struggle of the masses because of the treacherous leaderships (according to the expression of Comrade Morrow) or, what amounts to the same, the paralysis or impotence of the mass organizations (to employ the terms of Lenin or Trotsky) does not give as "objective resultant" a bourgeois democracy, in the conditions of present day France, but rather a bonapartism which possesses an apparent strength.

The de Gaulle Government

The conditions which dictate a bonapartist regime to the bourgeoisie equally dictate a foreign policy which is in no way a policy of "resistance." The social crisis of France acquires a particular acute character precisely because of the change of its world position. But to see French capitalism or part of it "resisting" American or German imperialism and becoming democratic by virtue of this is to fall into error.

France's crisis owes its extreme acuteness to the fact that a great power of the 19th century must accommodate itself to a second-rate position in the capitalist world of the twentieth century, because of the weakness of its economic base which has remained stagnant in the face of the development of new and younger powers. A retrogression of this type (like that occurring in Great Britain after its "victory" in the Second World War) does not only signify securing a camp stool in place of an armchair in the international conferences, but above all a considerable lowering of the national revenue, and therefore a considerable reduction in the standard of life, particularly for the working masses. The first luxury article that capitalism tries to eliminate under such circumstances is democracy. Well before 1939 big capital in France understood that it could no longer claim a seat of great power as in the past. It had to find a protector for a future-

full of threats. Inertia had more or less kept it trailing behind British imperialism; but it was easy to see that the latter was also in serious straits although it had more reserve to hold out longer. To resist the revolutionary movements it was necessary to look elsewhere than London and its ailing democracy. Beside French heavy industry had some special business reasons for orienting French capital towards German imperialism, which with the coming to power of the Nazis moved forward with seven-league boots.

But if French capitalism turned its eyes towards German imperialism and was guilty of counter-revolutionary defeatism in 1940 in the interests of its domestic politics, it none the less sought to prevent those few cards which remained in its hand from being completely taken away, knowing that German imperialism was still far from having consolidated its position and that it had not been able to secure any better ally than Italy. On the other hand an important section of French capitalism (finished goods, industries, luxury articles, tourist trade) could not because of its special interests neglect the American continent where it had its principal customers. As a result, French imperialism, pulled from opposite sides, endeavoured to play an intermediary role between Germany and the United States immediately after the debacle of June 1940, hoping to be able to earn a small commission for this work. It hasn't been forgotten that certain elements of American capitalism lent themselves for a time to this (Leahy mission). But when it became clear that the United States was intransigent toward German imperialism and the latter had no further chance of victory, this role of go-between was abandoned and the Bank of France and the Comités des Forges themselves became "resistant," in their own fashion, of course. Billions were transferred to Algeria in the months preceding the occupation of North Africa by the Americans; the top French administration made contact with de Gaulle.

For a little more than a year, de Gaulle, as head of the government,

while endeavouring from time to time to rattle his wooden sabre a bit, tried to re-establish this courtier's policy, adopting it to the new principal powers that is to say, the U.S. and the USSR, and ignoring England. De Gaulle quickly signed a treaty of alliance with the U.S.S.R., but this document soon proved to be worthless, for Stalin, having nothing to get from de Gaulle, let him down in all the international conferences which have been held since then. In his recent visit to Washington de Gaulle obtained some loans for French economy (in which sufficiently important American business interests are involved) but he returned empty-handed from the political point of view. It took him less than a year to learn that it is one thing to play the role of arbiter between two weaker states and another thing for a small state to wish to manoeuvre between two great powers. General de Gaulle would have been able to learn something about this without having to experience it if he had addressed himself to certain ancient Polish colonels. Finally, de Gaulle who was openly attacked by a section of the French bourgeoisie for his policy of isolation has taken a small step towards England and the countries of Western Europe by proposing to create an association resembling one for the blind and the paralyzed.

Any way one may examine it this foreign policy of French capitalism is in no way "resistant" and, besides, there is nothing in it which predisposes the "Gaullists" to democracy.

If one studies the class relations in France, the bonapartist character of the de Gaulle government appears in the greatest clarity, since the day of "liberation" up to the elections of October 21, 1945 and to the conditions created by them.

The liberation of Paris was accomplished under the leadership of the Comité National de la Résistance (CNR), whose mass base was constituted by the workers' organizations (General Confederation of Labour, Communist Party, Socialist Party) and the militias composed in great part of worker members of these organizations. The CNR and more particularly the

workers' organizations, would have been able at this time to establish themselves in power, supporting themselves on the militias and the local committees of resistance. (These last represented in a bureaucratic fashion, and not democratically, the proletariat and the exploited masses in general.) In this period de Gaulle personally had very few real forces and would not have been able to oppose the CNR. As for the reaction and the old capitalist forces they were completely demoralized and disorganized and were hiding themselves. To save the capitalist regime thus left stripped bare, it was necessary from the very beginning to find something to cover it again and to camouflage it for the eyes of the masses. For this desired effect the uniform of a resisting general was used and they raised him as the representative of the nation, above classes, parties and groupings. In many respects this operation resembled that which occurred in February 1917 when the conciliators of the Petrograd soviet yielded the power, surrendering without firing a shot, to a provisional government without any real base.

It goes without saying that the bonapartism thus created has not at all the intention of leading to precarious an existence. It seeks to create a base for itself while securing the complicity of the leadership of the political formations and others who, in the given period, canalize the class forces between which it tries to maintain itself.

Traitorous Working Class Leaders

From the very first de Gaulle had to obtain the collaboration of the leaders of the parties which included the working class in order to accomplish the dissolution of the militias, the submission of the local committees of resistance to the organizations of the old bourgeois states as well as a unification of all the armed forces under the control of the government artificially created by these leaders themselves. Despite the support of the traitorous leaders, this operation took several months to achieve.

Every bonapartist government in France has tried to create a base for itself in the peasantry; the army hav-

ing been for a very long time a sort of protector of the middle peasantry (see "The Eighteenth Brumaire" in particular where Marx wrote "The uniform was the holiday costume of the peasant.") In the new circumstances de Gaulle has remained faithful to the bonapartist tradition. Shortly after the Second World War when the countryside suffered from the manpower shortage and it was necessary to resort to the employment of prisoners of war for the tasks of trained workers, especially in the mines, de Gaulle attempted to maintain an army of one million men, that is, a standing army superior to those which France had preceding the years of re-armament and direct preparation for the war. Promises have been made to the peasantry, higher prices have been allowed for their products, etc., without much being accomplished, however, in the way of results, since the peasants need manpower, materials, livestock, seeds, manufactured products; since there is a shortage of all these things; and since the profits they can make on the black market cannot be used to obtain these things.

The elections which have just taken place provide one of the most striking proofs of the bonapartist character of the regime. Elections, a constituent, a parliament, a government responsible to an elected assembly, are so many disagreeable things for the general. He couldn't throw all this into the garbage can. What he was interested in above all was to wield stable power which would not be at the mercy of an assembly. Look, he said, at the history of the Third Republic with its cascades of falling ministries. Thus he decided that simultaneously with democratic elections to elect an assembly on the bases of programme and parties, there should be held a referendum in the nature of a plebescite designed to deprive the elected assembly of the greater part of its rights and to preserve, on the other hand, the greater part of the power in his own hands. Upon the announcement of this referendum a number of the democratic politicians of France shouted "bonapartism." Surely it was not a knowledge of Marxist literature on this

question but very simply an elementary knowledge of the history of their country which led them to such declarations.

For a long time the French bourgeoisie has sought to resolve a problem that the years have made as insoluble as squaring the circle. It wanted "a strong state," in part to insure the defence of its frontiers, but mainly to hold in check the domestic enemy, the working class; but all the same, it did not wish this state to become too strong, for each time that it has permitted the state to entrench itself too strongly, it quickly found its own posterior in contact with the military boots. To assure themselves that the state would not be further disturbed by political conflicts, the generals evinced an intention to transform the whole country into a barracks and to deprive everyone, including the bourgeoisie themselves, of political rights. This is the essential reason why even the most reactionary and personally arbitrary democratic politicians of the Third Republic, notably Clemenceau and Poincaré, opposed and fought vigorously against the interference of the generals in politics. But that is already ancient history.

In the October 21 elections the end of the democratic regime was incontestably demonstrated by the inglorious foundering of the principal formation of the Third Republic, the Radical party, which had dominated and been maintained in every possible and imaginable way by that Republic. In "Whither France" Trotsky showed among other things that the policy of the Popular Front, the alliance of workers' organizations with the Radical party, was going in a direction directly contrary to the development of the situation, that is to say, to the decomposition of bourgeois democracy and of its principal party, that of the Radicals.

But the voting has created a situation in which bonapartism is literally under one's nose. The double vote of October 21—the democratic elections and the plebiscite—has resulted in the most desirable situation for a general of the coup d'état.

Votes Almost Equally Divided

In the elections for the Constituent Assembly, the votes were pretty nearly equally divided between three parties: the Stalinist Party followed by a majority of the proletariat and by an important layer of the petty bourgeoisie of the towns and countryside; the Socialist Party, with a minority of the proletariat (without however losing its working class base in northern France) and a very great number of petty bourgeois votes. Finally the Mouvement Republicain Populaire (MRP), organized by Catholic politicians, who before the war flirted with the Popular Front and during the war participated in the resistance, but who were always solid pillars of the capitalist regime. In return, they received on October 21 all the votes of the reactionaries who have realized that they had no chance at all under their old colours.

The plebiscite is such a model stratagem that you can say without fear of deception it could only have been conceived beneath the kepi of a general. A direct question for or against de Gaulle would never have given the desired result, for the present day bonapartism is too weak to intimidate the voters. Therefore guide was necessary. It was decided to pose two questions instead of one. (They even dreamt for a moment of posing three to do the job better.) To the first question there was no doubt that, save for a tiny minority of greybeards, everyone was going to reply Yes; the Third Republic is dead. To say Yes to the first question was to influence many voters to say Yes to the second question; besides it is easier to say Yes than No even in a referendum. It sufficed to wrap the second question in fine-spun language to finish the sowing of confusion. The result was a majority of about 60 percent of the votes for de Gaulle, who on the strength of this will receive the post of head of the government from the new assembly.

What is going to happen? De Gaulle, feeling strong with 13,000,000 votes behind him, does not have to share counsel with anyone. Before him is an assembly with three parties of

practically equal numbers, and a perspective of new elections in nine months. They will all manoeuvre with each other. The Assembly and also the ministry in which the representatives will find each other again, will have to submit to the arbitration and will of General de Gaulle. All that resembles parliamentarism and democracy is going to be discredited in quarrels and in impotence; but there will always be a general to restore order!

At least for the most immediate future, the French government will be composed of representatives of the three parties. The Socialist party which cannot play the role of bonapartism is in the most difficult position. It evidently does not wish to form a government with the Stalinists alone (the latter strongly indicated this possibility the day after the elections, because they were sure that the socialists would not take it into consideration the Stalinists kept insisting strongly and will do nothing to realize it). The Socialist party can no more, under the present conditions form a ministry with the MRP, leaving the Stalinists "in the opposition."

As for de Gaulle, it is evidently all to his advantage to make the ministry a nest of intrigues and disputes by introducing into it members of the three parties, which will contribute to discredit them and to reinforce his personal position. It is quite possible, as the Stalinists do not wish to conduct too "revolutionary" a policy and the MRP not being able to adopt too soon an openly reactionary attitude, that the crisis will not open in the very first days. But it is not the desire of the politicians—in or out of uniform—which regulates the development of events. The class conflicts will not fail at an early date to place the political problems on a razor's edge.

The importance of a correct definition of the European governments goes beyond the domain of theory. What Trotsky wrote in 1932 on the subject of bonapartism in Germany preserves all its value mutatis mutandis for the bonapartism of 1945:

"If we have insistently demanded that a distinction be made between Fascism and Bonapartism, it has

been in no wise out of theoretical pedantry. Names are used to distinguish between concepts; concepts, in politics, in turn serve to distinguish among real forces. The smashing of Fascism would leave no room for Bonapartism, and, it is to be hoped, would mean the direct introduction to the social revolution.

Only—the proletariat is not armed for the revolution. The reciprocal relations between Social Democracy and the Bonapartist government on the one hand, and between Bonapartism and Fascism on the other—while they do not decide the fundamental questions—distinguish by what roads and in what tempo the struggle between the proletariat and the Fascist counter-revolution will be prepared."

One must no more confuse the bonapartism "of the right" with fascism than the bonapartism "of the left" with democracy. We have seen that bonapartism takes very different forms according to the conditions in which the two mortally opposed camps find themselves; we maintain also that the existence of democratic liberties, even of very great democratic liberties, does not suffice to make a regime democratic. The bonapartists à-la-Kerensky, Popular Front . . . are even notorious for their flood of democratic liberty up to the point where capitalist society thereby even risks its balance and is in danger of capsizing. Democratic liberties do not proceed, as in a regime which one can correctly define as democratic, from the existence of a margin for reforms within capitalism, but on the contrary, from a situation of acute crisis, the result of the absence of all margin for reforms.

Precisely because we do not generally have in Europe at the present time democratic regimes, because there is literally no place for them and because the extension of democratic liberties can only undermine the bonapartist regimes, we put forward the most extreme democratic demands, in connection of course with the transitional demands which prepare the duality of power.

The resolution of the recent national conference of the English section of the Fourth International ignores, alas, in

a general fashion bonapartism for Europe, and employs the expression, devoid of content, "democratic counter-revolution" for the European governments. The resolution contains on the other hand a fairly good example for the future development of events in Europe, namely that of Spain in the period which extends from the fall of Primo de Rivera up to the civil war against the fascism of Franco. In all this period of the Spanish Republic there was no democratic regime properly speaking.

Bonapartism, as will probably be the case in all Europe, expressed itself through a series of epileptic convulsions, of great shifts to the right and to the left. The same phenomenon likewise occurred in France after 1934: 1934, violent reactionary attack; 1936, general strike and occupation of the factories; 1940, coup d'etat of Bordeaux; 1944, uprising against the Petain regime. These great leaps follow one another, accompanied by deepening division of the nation along with a political clarification on both sides in regard to the decisive struggle.*

The use of democratic slogans—combined with transitional slogans—is justified more precisely because the possibilities of a democratic regime are non-existent, because present-day bonapartism is completely unstable and the struggle for the most extreme democratic demands can only end its existence. But again it is necessary for us to understand one another on the democratic slogans which we adopt and not to define slogans as democratic when they are not.

Let us merely recall in passing that the partisans of the "Three Theses" seriously propose to make a struggle for the freedom of religion—a democratic slogan, unquestionably—one of the most essential points in the struggle against fascism. For anyone who has not completely lost the use of his faculties in the course of these terrible years of reaction through which we have passed, it is clear that such a democratic slogan has nothing in common with us. It is on the contrary more and more evident that this slogan is today the property of a whole section of reaction which does not dare to show its true face.

But a great error, even a very dangerous error, has been committed in qualifying as democratic and in proposing to our organization the slogan of "the Republic" (cf. the article of Comrade Logan on Italy). We are completely in favour of the slogan "Down with the monarchy" in Italy, in Greece, and for all the countries where this institution inherited from feudalism exists. We are no less in favour of the slogan of the Assembly of a single chamber which is against the Senate, the House of Lords, etc. . . . But between these slogans and the "Republic" there is a deep moat which we cannot cross. In one case we endeavour to direct the masses against institutions of a profoundly reactionary character, which limit, even under the capitalist regime, the possibility of democratic expression of the masses, and which, in moments of crisis become quasi-automatically the rallying point for the forces of the counter-revolu-

*Since we here speak of the resolution of our English comrades let us note that it defines the new Labour government as "Kerenskyism". The Bonapartism, that they ignored, has found the means to insinuate itself into their document under a very special name. But we do not think that the present Attlee government is bonapartist a-la-Kerensky. Without questioning the coming to power of this government, that is to say, of a formation which rests on the working class but wishes to leave intact The City and British capitalism, at the moment when the latter has only gained a victory at the price of its very substance, will accelerate the downfall of British imperialism. The oldest of democracies has, as a result of the last elections, reached a dead end. But the term "Kerenskyism" is not appropriate, for it already presupposes the accomplishment of the passage from democracy to this form of bonapartism. On the contrary, it is in the future, probably very soon, that this passage will occur and the English workers and their organizations will then have to face an important crisis. In England one can only observe features of bonapartism. For example the Labour government, under the pressure of capital and encouraged by the administrative apparatus, of which it hasn't harmed a hair, is inclined to play a role of referee above the parties, while a section of the Labour parliamentary group endeavours to continue representing in a reformist and parliamentary fashion the worker masses who have elected them.

tion. In the other case, we would advance the slogan which, if we made the mistake of adopting it, would make us the promoters of a completely vague state form. "The Republic"? This slogan does not concern a partial objective but puts to the fore the very question of the state. What republic can we recommend in the current epoch? The Republic of Workers and Peasants Soviets alone, and not a bourgeois republic. The slogan of "the Republic" is absolutely silent on this point and can only, by its confusion, favour the class enemy.

It is evident that, despite our rejection of this slogan, we will not be neutral in the plebiscites which may be held in Europe on the question of the monarchy. We shall call the workers and peasants to vote against the monarchy, but clearly specifying that we do not have the choice as to the other term of the alternative, that we are voting against the monarchy but not in favour of the bourgeois republic.

It is almost twenty years ago that the Italian Social Democrats in one of their fits of theoretical audacity inscribed in their programme of the struggle against fascism the slogan of "the democratic republic of the toilers" and, for a certain period, the Italian Communist Party, in one of its zig-zags to the right, had an equivocal position towards this slogan. When in 1930, a section of the leadership of the Italian CP broke with Stalinism, formed the New Italian Opposition and turned toward the Left Opposition, this slogan was the object of a clarification in the exchange of views which took place at that time. The old opposition, that of the Bordigists, had an absolutely negative attitude on democratic slogans; it was especially necessary that the new Italian comrades should not take for their part a position which could be exploited by the Bordigists and which would have been fatal in the struggle against fascism. In a letter to the comrades in the NOI Trotsky expressed himself as follows on the slogan of the Italian Social Democrats:

"While advancing one or another set of democratic slogans we must irreconcilably fight against all forms

of democratic charlatanism. Such low-grade charlatanism is represented by the slogan of the Italian Social Democracy: 'The Democratic Republic of the Toilers'. The 'Toilers republic' can be only the class state of the proletariat. The 'Democratic Republic' is only a masked rule of the bourgeoisie. The combination of the two is a naive petty bourgeois illustration of the Social Democratic rank and file (workers, peasants) and deliberate treachery on the part of the Social Democratic leaders (all these Turatis, Modiglianis and their ilk). Let me once again remark in passing that I was and remain opposed to the formula of a "National Assembly on the basis of worker-peasant committees" precisely because this formula approaches the Social Democratic slogan of the 'Democratic Toilers Republic' and, consequently, can render extremely difficult for us the struggle against the Social Democrats." May 14, 1930.

The slogan of "the Republic" as such is also as erroneous and pernicious as that of "The Democratic Republic of the Toilers" although, we are persuaded, few comrades in our international organization would have at present an inclination to mix in the above fashion the forms of bourgeois power with the forms of proletarian power. But it is not the thoughts and intentions of this or that comrade which are under discussion but the slogan of "the Republic" itself. This is not a democratic slogan but, to employ the strong expression of Trotsky, democratic charlatanism.

The theoretical principles and positions which are a part of the accumulated capital of the Bolshevik-Leninists gained in the course of their years of struggle against Stalinism, reformism and all the varieties of centrism in this workers' movement, and which we have called to mind in this article, obviously far from exhaust the questions which arise on the European situation. But it is indispensable to take them as a point of departure to permit our militants and our sections to orient themselves correctly, despite the enormous confusion which rages and which, unhappily, will not fail to rage for the

duration of a complete period, up to the point when the events and ourselves, in assisting events by a correct

policy, consciously array an important fraction of the working class under the flag of the Fourth International.

THE JEWISH QUESTION

By LEON TROTSKY

We publish herewith four statements by Trotsky during the last years of his life expressing his views on the Jewish question. The first is in the form of an interview given to correspondents of the Jewish press upon his arrival in Mexico. The second is an excerpt from an article on "Thermidor and Anti-Semitism" written in 1937. The third is a letter which Trotsky addressed to the Jews menaced by the mounting wave of anti-semitism and fascism in the United States, calling upon them to support the revolutionary struggle of the Fourth International as the only road to their salvation. The fourth statement is from the archives of Leon Trotsky.

I.

Before trying to answer your questions I ought to warn you that unfortunately I have not had the opportunity to learn the Jewish language, which moreover has been developed only since I became an adult. I have not had, and I do not have the possibility of following the Jewish press, which prevents me from giving a precise opinion on the different aspects of so important and tragic a problem. I cannot therefore claim any special authority in replying to your questions. Nevertheless I am going to try and say what I think about it.

During my youth I rather leaned toward the prognosis that the Jews of different countries would be assimilated and that the Jewish question would thus disappear in a quasi-automatic fashion. The historical development of the last quarter of a century has not confirmed this perspective. Decaying capitalism has everywhere swung over to an exacerbated nationalism, one part of which is anti-semitism. The Jewish question has loomed largest in the most highly developed capitalist country of Europe, in Germany.

On the other hand the Jews in differ-

ent countries have created their press and developed the Yiddish language as an instrument adapted to modern culture. One must therefore reckon with the fact that the Jewish nation will maintain itself for an entire epoch to come. Now the nation cannot normally exist without a common territory. Zionism springs from this very idea. But the facts of every passing day demonstrate to us that Zionism is incapable of resolving the Jewish question. The conflict between the Jews and Arabs in Palestine acquires a more and more tragic and more and more menacing character. I do not at all believe that the Jewish question can be resolved within the framework of rotting capitalism and under the control of British imperialism.

And how, you ask me, can socialism solve this question? On this point I can but offer hypotheses. Once socialism has become master of our planet or at least of its most important sections, it will have unimaginable resources in all domains. Human history has witnessed the epoch of great migrations on the basis of barbarism. Socialism will open the possibility of great migrations on the basis of the most developed technique and culture. It goes without saying that what is here involved is not compulsory displacements, that is, the creation of new ghettos for certain nationalities, but displacements freely consented to, or rather demanded by certain nationalities. The dispersed Jews who would want to be reassembled in the same community will find a sufficiently extensive and rich spot under the sun. The same possibility will be opened for the Arabs, as for all other scattered nations. National topography will become a part of the planned economy. This is the grand historical perspective that I envisage. To work for international socialism means also to work

for the solution of the Jewish question.

You ask me if the Jewish question still exists in the USSR. Yes, it exists, just as the Ukrainian, the Georgian, even the Russian questions exist there. The omnipotent bureaucracy stifles the development of national culture just as it does the whole of culture. Worse still, the country of the great proletarian revolution is now passing through a period of profound reaction. If the revolutionary wave revived the finest sentiments of human solidarity, the Thermidorian reaction has stirred up all that is low, dark and backward in this agglomeration of 170 million people. To reinforce its domination the bureaucracy does not even hesitate to resort in a scarcely camouflaged manner to chauvinistic tendencies, above all to anti-semitic ones. The latest Moscow trial, for example, was staged with the hardly concealed design of presenting internationalists as faithless and lawless Jews who are capable of selling themselves to the German Gestapo.

Since 1925 and above all since 1926, anti-semitic demagogy, well camouflaged, unattackable, goes hand in hand with symbolic trials against avowed pogromists. You ask me if the old Jewish petty bourgeoisie in the USSR has been socially assimilated by the new soviet environment. I am indeed at a loss to give you a clear reply. The social and national statistics in the USSR are extremely tendentious. They do not serve to set forth the truth, but above all to glorify the leaders, the chiefs, the creators of happiness. An important part of the Jewish petty bourgeoisie has been absorbed by the formidable apparatuses of the state, industry, commerce, the co-operatives, etc., above all in their lower and middle layers. This fact engenders an anti-semitic state of feeling and the leaders manipulate it with a cunning skill in order to canalize and to direct especially against the Jews the existing discontent against the bureaucracy.

On Biro-bidjan I can give you no more than my personal evaluations. I am not acquainted with this region and still less with the conditions in which the Jews have settled there. In

any case it can be no more than a very limited experience. The USSR alone would still be too poor to resolve its own Jewish question, even under a regime much more socialist than the present one. The Jewish question, I repeat, is indissolubly bound up with the complete emancipation of humanity. Everything else that is done in this domain can only be a palliative and often even a two-edged blade, as the example of Palestine shows.

January 18, 1937

II.

Some would-be "pundits" have accused me of "suddenly" raising the "Jewish question" and of intending to create some kind of ghetto for the Jews. I can only shrug my shoulders in pity. I have lived my whole life outside of Jewish circles. I have always worked in the Russian workers movement. My native tongue is Russian. Unfortunately, I have not even learned to read Jewish. The Jewish question, therefore, has never occupied the centre of my attention.

But that does not mean that I have the right to be blind to the Jewish problem which exists and demands a solution. "The friends of the USSR" are satisfied with the creation of Biro-bidjan. I will not stop at this point to consider whether it was built on a sound foundation and what type of regime existed there (Biro-bidjan cannot help reflecting all the vices of bureaucratic despotism). But not a single progressive thinking individual will object to the USSR designating a special territory for those of its citizens who feel themselves to be Jews, who use the Jewish language in preference to all others, and who wish to live as a compact mass.

Is this or is this not a ghetto? During the period of Soviet democracy, of completely voluntary migration, there could be no talk of ghettos. But the Jewish question and the very manner in which settlements of Jews occurred, assumes an international aspect. Are we not correct in saying that a world socialist federation will have to make possible the creation of a Biro-bidjan for those Jews who wish

to have their own autonomous republic as the arena for their own culture?

It may be presumed that a socialist democracy will not resort to compulsory assimilation. It may very well be that within two or three generations the boundaries of an independent Jewish republic, as of many other national regions, will be erased. I have neither time nor desire to meditate on this. Our descendants will know better than we what to do. I have in mind a transitional historical period when the Jewish "question" as such, is still acute and demands adequate measures from a world federation of workers' states.

The very same methods of solving the Jewish question which under decaying capitalism will have a utopian and reactionary character (Zionism) will, under the regime of a socialist federation take on real and salutary meaning. This is what I want to point out. How could any Marxist or even any consistent democrat object to this?

1937

III.

Dear Friend:

Father Coughlin, who apparently tries to demonstrate that the absolute idealistic moral does not prevent man from being the greatest rascal, has declared over the radio that in the past I received enormous sums of money for the revolution from the Jewish bourgeoisie in the United States. I have already answered in the press that this is false. I did not receive such money, not, of course, because I would have refused financial support for the revolution, but because the Jewish bourgeoisie did not offer this support. The Jewish bourgeoisie remains true to the principle: not to give, even now when its head is concerned. Suffocating in its own contradictions, capitalism directs enraged blows against the Jews, moreover a part of these blows fall upon the Jewish bourgeoisie in spite of all its past "service" for capitalism. Measures of a philanthropical nature for refugees become less and less efficacious in comparison with the gigantic dimension of the evil burdening the Jewish people.

Now it is the turn of France. The victory of fascism in this country would

signify a vast strengthening of reaction, and a monstrous growth of violent anti-semitism in all the world, above all in the United States. The number of countries which expel the Jews grows without cease. The number of countries able to accept them decreases. At the same time the exacerbation of the struggle intensifies. It is possible to imagine without difficulty what awaits the Jews at the mere outbreak of the future world war. But even without war the next development of world reaction signifies with certainty the physical extermination of the Jews.

Palestine appears a tragic mirage, Biro-bidjan a bureaucratic farce. The Kremlin refuses to accept refugees. The "anti-fascist" congresses of old ladies and young careerists do not have the slightest importance. Now more than ever, the fate of the Jewish people—not only their political but also their physical fate—is indissolubly linked with the emancipating struggle of the international proletariat. Only audacious mobilization of the workers against reaction, creation of workers' militia, direct physical resistance to the fascist gangs, increasing self-confidence, activity and audacity on the part of all the oppressed can provoke a change in the relation of forces, stop the world wave of fascism, and open a new chapter in the history of mankind.

The Fourth International was the first to proclaim the danger of fascism and to indicate the way of salvation. The Fourth International calls upon the Jewish popular masses not to delude themselves but to face openly the menacing reality. Salvation lies only in revolutionary struggle. The "sinews" of revolutionary struggle, as of war, are funds. With the progressive and perspicacious elements of the Jewish people rests the obligation to come to the help of the revolutionary vanguard. Time presses. A day is now equivalent to a month or even to a year. That thou doest, do quickly!

December 22, 1938

IV.

The attempt to solve the Jewish question through the migration of Jews to Palestine can now be seen for what it is, a tragic mockery of the Jewish

people. Interested in winning the sympathies of the Arabs who are more numerous than the Jews, the British government has sharply altered its policy toward the Jews, and has actually renounced its promise to help them found their "own home" in a foreign land. The future development of mili-

tary events may well transform Palestine into a bloody trap for several hundred thousand Jews. Never was it so clear as it is to day that the salvation of the Jewish people is bound up inseparably with the overthrow of the capitalist system.

July, 1940

TRANSFORMATION OF MORALS

By LEON TROTSKY

The article published below, written in October 1923, was first printed in English in "Inprecorr", Vol. 3, No. 67.

Communist theory is some dozen years in advance of our everyday Russian actuality—in some spheres perhaps even a century in advance. Were this not so, the communist party would be no great revolutionary power in history. Communist theory, by means of its realism and dialectic acuteness, finds the political methods for securing the influence of the party in any given situation. But the political idea is one thing, and the popular conception of morals another. Politics change rapidly, but morals cling tenaciously to the past.

Why Bourgeois Enlightenment Failed

This explains many of the conflicts among the working class, where fresh knowledge struggles against tradition. These conflicts are the more severe in that they do not find their expression in the publicity of social life. Literature tendencies, anxious to keep pace with the revolution, do not concern themselves with the usages and customs based on the existing conception of morals, for they want to transform life, not to describe life! But new morals cannot be produced out of nothing, they must be arrived at with the aid of elements already existing, but capable of development. It is therefore necessary to recognize what are these elements. This applies not only to the transformation of morals, but to every form of conscious human activity. It is therefore necessary first to know what is already existing, and in what manner its change of form

is proceeding, if we are to co-operate in the re-creation of morals.

We must first see what is really going on in the factory, among the workers, in the co-operative, in the club, the school, the public house, and in the street. All this we have to understand, that is, we must recognize the remnants of the past and the germs of the future. We must call upon our authors and journalists to **work in this direction**. They must describe life for us as it emerges from the tempest of revolution. The study of the morals of the working people must become one of the main tasks of our journalists, at least of those who **have eyes and ears for such things**. Our press must see to it that the history of revolutionary morals is written. And the press must also draw the attention of its contributors among the working class to these questions. The majority of our newspapers could do much more and much better in this respect.

In order to reach a higher stage of culture, the working class—and above all its vanguard—must consciously alter its morals. It must work consciously towards this goal. Before the bourgeoisie came into power, it had fulfilled this task to a wide extent through its intellectuals. When the bourgeoisie was still an oppositional class, there were poets, painters, and writers already thinking for it.

Observe Life as It Is

In France the Eighteenth Century which has been named the century of enlightenment, was precisely the period

in which the bourgeois philosophers were changing the conception of social and private morals, and were endeavouring to subordinate morals to the rule of reason. They occupied themselves with political questions, with the church, with the relations between man and woman, with education, etc. There is no doubt but that the mere fact of the discussion of these problems greatly contributed to raising the mental level of culture among the bourgeoisie. But all efforts made by the 18th Century philosophers towards subordinating social and private relations to the rule of reason were wrecked on one fact—the fact that the means of production were in private hands, and that this was the basis upon which society was to be built up according to the tenets of reason. For private property signifies free play to economic forces which are by no means controlled by reason. These economic conditions determine the morals, and so long as the needs of the commodity market rule society, so long is it impossible to subordinate popular morals to reason. This explains the very slight practical results yielded by the ideas of the 18th Century philosophers, despite the ingenuity and boldness of their conclusions.

" Young Germany "

In Germany, the period of enlightenment and criticism came about the middle of the last century. "Young Germany," under the leadership of Heine and Boerne, placed itself at the head of the movement. We here see the work of criticism accomplished by the left wing of the bourgeoisie, which declared war on the spirit of servility, on petty bourgeois anti-enlightenment education, and to the prejudices of war, and which attempted to establish the rule of reason with even greater scepticism than its French predecessor. This movement amalgamated later with the petty bourgeois revolution of 1848, which, far from transforming all human life, was not even capable of sweeping away the many little German dynasties.

In our backward Russia, the enlightenment, and the criticism of the existing state of society, did not reach

any stage of importance until the second half of the 19th Century. Chernishevsky, Pissarev, and Dobrolubov, educated by the Bielinsky school, directed their criticism much more against the backwardness and reactionary Asiatic character of morals, than against the economic conditions. They opposed the new realistic human being who is determined to live according to reason, and who becomes a personality provided with the weapon of critical thought. This movement, connected with the so-called "popular" evolutionists (Narodniki), had but slight cultural significance. For if the French thinkers of the 18th Century were only able to gain a slight influence over morals—these being ruled by the economic influence of the German critics of society was even less, the direct influence exercised by this Russian movement on popular morals was quite insignificant. The historical role played by these Russian thinkers, including the Narodniki, consisted in preparing for the formation of the party of the revolutionary proletariat.

Premises for the Transformation

It is only the seizure of power by the working class which creates the premises for a complete transformation of morals. Morals cannot be rationalized, that is, brought into congruity with the demands of reason, unless production is rationalized at the same time, for the roots of morals lie in production. Socialism aims at subordinating all production to human reason. But even the most advanced bourgeois thinkers have confined themselves to the ideas of rationalizing technique on the one hand (by the application of natural science, technology, chemistry, invention, machines), and politics on the other (by parliamentarism); but they have not sought to rationalize economics, which have remained the prey of blind competition. Thus the morals of bourgeois society remain dependent on a blind and non-rational element.

When the working class takes over power, it sets itself the task of subordinating the economic principles of

social conditions to a control and to a conscious order. By this means, and only by this means is there a possibility of consciously transforming morals. The successes which we gain in this direction are dependent on our success in the sphere of economics. But even in our present economic situation we could introduce much more criticism, initiative, and reason, into our morals than we actually do. This is one of the tasks of our time. It is of course obvious that the complete change of morals: the emancipation of woman from household slavery, the social education of children, the emancipation of marriage from all economic compulsion, etc., will only be able to follow on a long period of development, and will come about in proportion to the extent to which the economic forces of socialism win the upper hand over the forces of capitalism. The critical transformation of morals is necessary, in order that the conservative traditional forms of life may not continue to exist in spite of the possibilities of

progress which are already offered us today by our sources of economic aid, or will at least be offered tomorrow.

On the other hand, even the slightest successes in the sphere of morals, by raising the cultural level of the working man and woman, enhance our capacity for rationalizing production, and promoting socialist accumulation. This again gives us the possibility of making fresh conquests in the sphere of morals. Thus a dialectic dependence exists between the two spheres. The economic conditions are the fundamental factor of history, but we as a communist party, and as a workers' state, can only influence economics with the aid of the working class, and to attain this we must work unceasingly to promote the technical and cultural capacity of the individual element of the working class. In the workers' state culture works for socialism, and socialism again offers the possibility of creating a new culture for humanity, one which knows nothing of class difference.

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