

B U L L E T I N

THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Amendments to Part I of the Resolution  
of the National Committee.

Substitute for Part II of the Resolution  
of the National Committee.

by

J. R. JOHNSON

HARRY ALLEN

TOM BROWN

October 16, 1943

THE RESOLUTION OF THE WORKERS PARTY ON THE  
NATIONAL AND COLONIAL STRUGGLES FOR FREEDOM

NEW INTERNATIONAL : JANUARY 1943, p. 9

1. Delete: Paragraph 3 beginning "Between the present day and the day the masses.....both in numbers and in influence."

Substitute the following:

The masses will certainly play a decisive role in bringing the war to an end. Any imperialist war has as its inevitable result a tremendous sharpening of class conflict and the political development of the proletariat. On this question the revolutionary movement, in making a general estimate of the future course, cannot do better than guide itself by the general principles once more elucidated and exemplified in Trotsky's study of the Russian Revolution, which took shape under the impetus of another imperialist war. In words which apply with tenfold force today, Trotsky has written "The war itself, its victims, its horror, its shame, brought not only the old but also the new layers of workers into conflict with the Tsarist regime. It did this with new incisiveness, and led them to the conclusion: we can no longer endure it. The conclusion was universal; it welded the masses together and gave them a mighty dynamic force." From this today we can equally expect the universal indignation, the scattered protests, the demonstrations, strikes, street fights "which will inevitably" draw in a part of the army, paralyze the forces of the enemy, and overthrow the old power.

Thus with or without any independent mass labor movement (unions, political parties, cultural organizations, co-operatives, etc., which have been destroyed by Fascism in continental Europe) and without any cohesive or substantial vanguard party, the masses are fully able not only to rise up against the war but to bring it to an end.

But "to overthrow the old power is one thing; to take the power in one's own hands is another".

In the present historical period, the masses, where they have none of the traditional mass organizations, and most probably even where these exist, will create special committees, factory committees, soviets, soldier's councils, which will form the instruments for achieving both their immediate aim of bringing the war to an end and their historic aims. These organizations are not spontaneous, in that they are prepared by the whole past and present of the class which creates them. They are formed almost automatically by the class. For them to go further than the overthrow of the old power, however, a cohesive substantial vanguard party is needed.

2. Delete p. 9

"This being so, the most important fact to...for national independence."

Delete the whole of Part 11...N.I, Feb. 1943 of the resolution p.38-p.46. Substitute the following.

# THE EUROPEAN SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

## PART I: THE NATIONAL QUESTION AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

### I. The Ruling Classes of Europe and the National Question

#### The Character of Fascism

The second imperialist war has concentrated in Europe all the suicidal tendencies of totalitarian barbarism characteristic of capitalist society in this epoch. European society, still the centre of world civilization, is already a ruin, with the foundations of two thousand years cracking below it. Not only derivative questions, like the national question, but even the war itself, as it has developed and is developing, is being overshadowed by the bankruptcy of the European bourgeoisie, already (or about to be) so ruined and disgraced that in over one-half of Western Europe the proletariat is the class which represents the nation. Even the revolutionary imagination can but partially grasp, and that only by strenuous and repeated effort, the depth and range of the unfolding events. These rush toward a climax beyond the measuring-rod of all previous historical experience. The immediate cause of the catastrophe is the final centralization of European capital in the hands of the German bourgeoisie, its subjugation and torture first of the German proletariat and then of the proletariat of the whole of Europe. It is therefore in Germany that must be sought the theoretical key to any question of continental scope.

German monopoly capital, driven by inexorable forces, commissioned Fascism to destroy the working-class movement as the indispensable condition for its continued existence at home and imperative expansion abroad. But in the present pre-socialist era, the German working-class is the most advanced section of European society. Its destruction as an effective force in European civilization set in motion a train of events which in ten short, years have faced bourgeois Europe with its doom.

To maintain the German workers in subjection, Fascism was compelled to destroy the democratic liberties of the whole nation. It destroyed as socially organized forces all intermediate strata of society which act as a buffer between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, converting them either into bureaucratic appendages or propagandist adjuncts to the regime. All organs of administration, economic and social, it infused with its own corrosive content and stamped with its own loathsome insignia. The bourgeois state, seen abstractly, appeared to have reached the peak of power. In reality, the Fascist state, seen in its concretely developing relations, represented a brutal but hollow facade of bourgeois defence against the invading socialist society.

Fascism began by atomizing but ends by polarizing the nation into the Fascist regime with its supporters on the one hand, and on the other, enemies of Fascism, the large masses of the people. It has so concentrated power in the state that the alleviation of grievances becomes inseparably associated with the smashing of the state-power. By making violence the overt and not the latent force of government, it familiarizes the masses with the idea of violence as the

only solution to their difficulties. It is the implacable enemy of Marxism. Yet it is compelled to make demagogic references to "socialism," "classless society," "workers of the world, unite!" and other Marxist concepts. Thereby it betrays to the world that ten years of the most brutal repression have failed to dim the aspirations and extinguish the hopes of the German proletariat, with its predominant role in modern society and its deeprooted traditions of Marxian socialism.

Unable to solve the basic economic contradictions of capitalism, Fascism embarked on an adventurous war, whence it pushes the regime towards a catastrophic explosion. But much as it has destroyed, Fascism cannot destroy that organization of the working-class which is imposed upon it by the very process of capitalist production itself. When all the superstructural relations of society are destroyed or loosened, the working-class possesses in the social organization of the factory the means of instantaneously creating revolutionary proletarian organizations embracing the class and therefore of a type most dangerous to capitalist society. Owing their very inception to Fascist barbarism and capitalist ruin, these alone can form an organized social force to raise and, to the degree of their political consciousness, carry out the immediate and imperative needs of the nation and thus the historic destiny of the class.

These are the characteristics of German Fascism. And these, in peace as well as in war, it has transferred to the European continent as a whole. But the greater the accumulation of capital, the greater the accumulation of misery. To the deprivation of all democratic liberties in Germany, Fascism is compelled to add, abroad, the deprivation of the only democratic right still left at home, the right of national independence. Thereby it raises the national question on a continental scale. But the process cannot stop there. German monopoly capitalism as a result of Fascism will be compelled to yield or to barter even this last democratic right of the German people to a still greater imperialism in order to retain some shred of profit and privileges. This is the national question in Europe. It is the culmination of the capitalist degradation of European civilization by German monopoly capital. The consolidation of the independent national state was the first creation of the European bourgeoisie and the basis of democratic liberties for the nation. Today the completed centralization of capital is fast leading to its logical conclusion, the destruction of national independence for the whole of Europe.

### The Bankruptcy of the Native Bourgeoisie

True to itself, German Fascism has not only enchained the European proletariat but it has completed the ruin of the native bourgeoisie of Europe as intermediate stratum between itself and the masses. The ruling classes of Europe have lost not only the right but the power to rule.

Since the beginning of the war Fascism has conquered the three largest and most strategically situated of the Anglo-American satellites in Europe. In France, in Poland, and in Yugo-Slavia, the bourgeoisie in varying degrees stands disgraced in the eyes not only of

its own masses but of the world, and nowhere so much as in France, the leading nation of bourgeois democracy in Europe. The French imperialist bourgeoisie did not foresee its fate when it capitulated. Not only military strategy but the necessary reorganization of the European economy made it economically impossible for the bourgeoisie in individual countries to survive at all without linking its fate to German capital. The vacillations of Giraud, Mikhailovitch, the late Sikorski and the Polish exiles are rooted not so much in national or in territorial problems as in the fact that their class domination of their respective nations has been destroyed. The Germans have taken away their titles and even where the titles are retained, they have no power either in the production or distribution of capital. Benes, recognizing the inevitable, has unconditionally accepted Stalinist vassalage as the sole means of survival for the Czech bourgeoisie. And even the German bourgeoisie, for a fleeting minute master of Europe's capital, now faces the prospect of becoming a militarized dependency of American imperialism as the only means of escaping destruction by the German workers.

According to the nationally-circumscribed empiricism of the bourgeoisie, the end of the last war saw Europe divided into countries victorious and countries defeated. According to the Marxist analysis, continental Europe was a social organism in which the victorious bourgeoisie was still able to maintain its class domination over the proletariat at home and thus help to stabilize the bourgeoisie in countries where that domination was in danger. Such is the disintegration of bourgeois Europe, so violent and contradictory have been the remedies attempted by the bourgeoisie in peace and in war, against the working-class and against each other, that even now, before the end of the war, the absolute character of the European crisis is already revealed. With the coming of peace, bourgeois Europe, victorious and conquered, will present the unprecedented spectacle of a continent where conquerors and conquered alike are involved in a common ruin and social disintegration.

Here is the gulf that separates 1943 from 1917. Under the circumstances, nothing in the Old World, not even the intervention, such as it could be, of Britain and Russia, could prevent an uprising of hundreds of millions against the Old Order. Despite the absence of organized revolutionary parties, this social revolution, considered abstractly, could sweep everything before it, and overcoming the inevitable setbacks, rapidly create the organs necessary for the consolidation and retention of power. But the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is waged on international scale. The main barrier in the way of the European proletariat is the counter-revolutionary role of American imperialism.

## II. American Imperialism and the National Question

### The Weakness of Britain and Russia

American imperialism has been compelled in its own interests to attack the gigantic threat constituted by the centralization of European capital in the hands of Germany.

Without the economic and military support of American imperialism, British imperialism, burdened with the defence of an Empire, on which unfortunately the sun never sets, could not continue its resistance to German imperialism for one day. Britain for centuries has opposed any unification of Europe. It would be the deadly enemy of a Socialist Europe. But such is Britain's past and present history, such is the international disgrace of the European bourgeoisie, that any intervention by British armies in the class struggle of Europe would infallibly redound to the benefit of the revolution not only on the continent but in Britain itself.

Russia, the other great imperialist state of Europe, though economically weakened by the war, occupies a strategic position not only in Europe but, of equal or greater importance, in Asia. It further enjoys the enormous prestige among the European masses of having successfully defended its national independence and being the main instrument in the checking of Hitler. Courted by both Britain and America, Stalin demands in Europe the cessation of all coalitions against him, and as a beginning, either the outright annexation or the "protective custody" of all states on his Western borders. If, (subject always to the military outcome), he is assured of these demands, his role in Europe will be that of Britain, the crushing of the proletarian revolution and the reconsolidation of bourgeois society. The Anglo-American imperialists will work mainly through the native imperialists and Stalin, for familiar historical reasons, will work mainly through the proletariat. But Russia has neither the economic nor the political capacity to rebuild the bourgeois counter-revolution in Western Europe. That remains the special responsibility of American imperialism.

American capital therefore faces three gigantic tasks. (1) It must complete the defeat of German imperialism and its allies, which is impossible without the revolutionary cooperation of the European masses. If the European masses were non-revolutionary, that is to say, if they accepted the Hitler regime, worked for it and fought for it, then Germany would be unconquerable for long years. (2) It must restore the power of the self-discredited and impotent European bourgeoisie against the will of those very masses whose revolutionary activity it has been compelled to stimulate. (3) It must at the same time defeat the well-entrenched and far-seeing Japanese Empire, which is impossible without consciously or unconsciously stimulating the national revolution in the Far East, which in turn must be crushed, etc.

Not only is this complicated by inter-imperialist rivalries in Europe and elsewhere and the class struggle at home. A defeat in one sphere is sure to react upon the others.

### America's Main Enemy

The greatest single obstacle to these world-wide plans is neither the armed forces of Germany nor the armed forces of Japan. The main danger is the unity of the proletariat of Europe. An explosion in which the European masses shook from their shoulders the bourgeois heritage of national differences would not only ruin the counter-revolutionary plans for Europe. It would arouse the British prole-

tariat, detonate in North and West Africa and the Middle East, engulf the whole of India in civil war, and wreck all present plans for the conquest of Japan. America will propose to the European proletariat in exchange for its socialist birthright a mess of American pottage. But it will have no stable base in Europe. It will have to police the continent, openly in certain areas, and vicariously, if that is possible, in others. But the policing of a continent is primarily a political and only secondarily a military question. The main political weapon of American imperialism against the European proletariat is the national divisions of Europe.

To save Europe for capitalism, American imperialism must wring every drop out of its glory as the "liberator" of the continent from German Fascism. For the time being it incites occupied Europe against Germany while it promises protection against an embittered Europe to frightened capitalist groups in the Axis. It is bitterly hostile to the underground movements of both France and Germany, the basis of a future proletarian unity. Stalin, more than any other leader of the counter-revolution, knows that a social revolution in Germany could radiate to every corner of Europe. He knows that the bourgeois national passions which divide the proletariat today are subordinate to the fundamental objective unity of the European proletariat, established by the development of the European economy and the cumulative experiences of thirty years. As the revolutionary crisis approaches, Stalin, operating for the Anglo-American imperialist combine among the proletariat, dissolves the Communist International and instructs his minions to campaign for the unity of the anti-Hitler forces in a post-war world where either they or Hitler will not exist. Thus this experienced enemy of the proletariat seeks, for the time being, to isolate and keep isolated the dreaded proletariat of Germany and strikes a moral and political blow at the haunting spectre of proletarian unity.

### III. The European Proletariat and the National Question

#### The European Proletariat as a Whole

The European proletariat, examined abstractly as is the practice of bourgeois empiricism, appears to be divided as never before by the national hatreds of bourgeois barbarism. This corruption of the proletariat by bourgeois nationalism is, like Fascism of which it is a part, an impressive but hollow defence of the bourgeois regime against the invading socialist society and the fundamental objective unity of the European proletariat.

The European proletariat is unified by its common experiences of 1914 to 1939. It is unified by the intensive barbarism, devastation and cruelty of the present imperialist war. It is unified by the centralization of European capital which makes the main enemy in every European country the Fascist regime in Germany. At the end of the war it will be further unified by the changed co-relation of forces between the proletariat in every country and the bankrupt and disgraced European bourgeoisie.

The older generation of European workers has seen the First World War and the almost continuous crises and revolutions which

followed it. Its reaction to them is written in history.

In country after country the workers girded themselves to overthrow capitalism. They formed revolutionary or pseudo-revolutionary parties by the hundreds of thousands at a time and followed them by millions.

The younger generation knows no era of capitalist stability. Crises and revolutions have been its familiar companions from childhood. These are men and women different from those who after years of peace and stability were suddenly thrust into the revolutionary crises at the end of the first imperialist war. Their profound disillusionment with the existing, that is to say, the capitalist society, was most completely expressed in the menacing gloom of the proletariat at the beginning of the war. Never before has the modern world entered into a great war with less enthusiasm.

### The European Proletariat and the Barbarism of the War

This hostility to the existing social order has now been carried far beyond all previous human experience by the new form of the old capitalist crisis, the totalitarian destructiveness of modern war. The most obvious feature of Europe today is that it is being rapidly battered to pieces, its material basis destroyed, its proletarians maimed or murdered by millions. The vast majority of civilians knows no life but that of hunted and starving rats, strained to exhaustion in the remorseless machinery of capitalism. The European proletariat is drinking the capitalist cups to the dregs. It is not merely houses, factories, fields and men that are being destroyed. Destruction and barbarism on the present scale loosen every material and traditional tie which links the proletariat to the existing society, already shaken, battered and reeling from the accumulated shocks of thirty years.

This profound disillusionment with society is not merely negative. Fascism not only in Germany but now on the whole continent continually keeps before the proletariat the ideal of revolution, of socialism, of a classless society, of a new order. The military achievements and social cohesion of Russia, the "socialist state," emphasize to the workers in a positive manner the bankruptcy of the old order. To underestimate the propagandistic value among the European proletariat of the Russian achievements is to nourish illusions as grotesque as those of the European masses about the socialist character of the Russian state. 1943 is not 1917. Never before has any class in history been so thoroughly disillusioned with the social order it is destined to replace. The European proletariat is not merely disillusioned with the war. The war has merely completed its disillusionment with the existing, that is to say, the capitalist society. Go wrong here and there can be no recovery.

If such is the common past and present of the proletariat in Europe, its immediate future experience can be predicted with certainty. Of German imperialism in 1918 the Second Congress of the Communist International said that its military defeat was at the same time the defeat of capitalist society in Germany. No class except the working-class could lay claim to the state power. This



profound formulation illuminates not only the past but the future. Capitalist society has already been defeated over half of Europe and the other half awaits its turn. In Germany the bourgeoisie has enforced unparalleled sacrifices and staked the existence of the nation upon victory. Far more than in 1918, the military defeat of Germany will mean the defeat of capitalist society. The leaders of the Social-Democracy, a powerful, flourishing bureaucracy, alone could save Europe for capitalism in 1918. Fascism has seen to it that no such bureaucracy exists in Europe today. From end to end of Western Europe at the war's close, there will be no European social force with any claim to the state power except the proletariat. Its future is the future of European society. After 1918 the proletariat of the defeated countries kept Europe in turmoil for fifteen years ending in Fascism and imperialist war. At the end of this war the old Europe will be in ruins. The last refuge of capitalism, the totalitarian economy, has been tried and has failed. The united European proletariat will rebuild civilization or it will not be rebuilt at all.

### The Proletariat in the Oppressed Countries

Whether stated or unstated, the bankruptcy of the European bourgeoisie and the unity of the European proletariat are the indispensable basis for any revolutionary approach to the national divisions of Europe. Without this it is impossible to avoid serious disorientation.

Upon the basis of this objective unity, the cruelties of the military occupation, forced upon German officers and men by Fascism, have engendered fierce national hatreds, surpassing anything known in Europe for generations. This has created the belief that nationalism is the dominating social force in Europe today and that in this respect the continent has been thrown back a hundred years. Such a conclusion would be entirely false. Nothing but the destruction of the European economy can throw the mental processes of the present European proletariat back a hundred years, least of all at this time when all tensions are at their highest. In the minds of the masses of the workers of the oppressed countries their liberation from the crimes and catastrophes of thirty years of capitalist society undoubtedly takes the form of the struggle against the foreign oppressor. But whereas the slogan of national independence one hundred years ago was raised by the bourgeoisie on the basis of the struggle for the bourgeois-democratic regime, today the banner of national independence is raised by the proletariat on the basis of the advancing proletarian revolution.

### The Proletariat without the Bourgeoisie

For its own purposes the bourgeoisie has continually dragged the proletariat into political activity with increasingly disastrous consequences. It dragged it into the struggle against the feudal lords and as a result, the proletariat, still immature, did its best to overthrow the bourgeoisie. In the years of bourgeois decline the inescapable duality of this process reaches a stage of extreme sharpness. In 1914-1918, in order to overcome the political maturity of the proletariat and its consequent internationalism, the

bourgeoisie was compelled to whip up fanatical national hatreds and at the same time drag the proletariat into the arena of international politics. Torn from its routine existence by the shocks and crises of the war and driven to live an intense political existence, the proletariat reacted with its own international class politics and the most powerful international activity of its history (1917-1923). For the last twenty years the proletariat has been compelled to participate even if at times passively, in the intense international activity of the age. The climax is the war. The primitive savagery of bourgeois national fanaticism is to be explained only by the objective internationalism of the proletariat and the imminence of its conscious realization. The extreme peak of bourgeois nationalism, German Fascism, has resulted in a resuscitation of national hatreds but on the basis of a still greater internationalization of the proletariat. The increasing crisis and ultimate breakdown of the bourgeoisie result in the increasing political independence of the proletariat and the political independence of the proletariat sets it on the straight road to recognizing its objective unity in the existing social disorder. This dual process taking place under our very eyes has reached an advanced stage.

It is not only that the French bourgeoisie, for example, has disgraced itself in the eyes of the whole nation and of the world as a whole, creating a situation which makes 1943 more different from 1939 than 1939 was from 1839. The fact that stares us in the face is that in France and in Poland the native bourgeoisie as an independent force does not exist. By capitulation or abdication, collaboration or absorption, plain flight or plain destruction, it is gone. Nothing like this has ever happened before, and on account of it all the traditional slogans and incitements of the bourgeoisie are hollow and the simplest demands of the proletariat assume an historical character. The bourgeoisie, sheltered abroad, inflames the national hatreds through the radio stations lent (at heavy interest) by Anglo-American imperialism. It equips armies from the same source. Its secret agents move about among the people. It prepares the counter-revolution. But no class in any period of modern history can escape the consequences of so complete a removal from all its functions, least of all a class which for thirty desperate years has faced the fully mature proletariat of countries like France and Poland.

In the new relation between the proletariat and the non-existent bourgeoisie, even when the proletariat repeats the same words as the bourgeoisie, they acquire a different meaning. The barbarous slogans of bourgeois nationalism become merely an outward shell for a new proletarian content. Every intensification of chauvinistic sentiment against Germany has resulted, as it must result, in the increased development of the proletariat as an independent force in society. In irreconcilable conflict with the German bourgeoisie and the collaborators, and distrusting or ignoring the serio-comic governments in exile, the proletariat is compelled to struggle for the national, i.e., its own emancipation by its own means and in its own way. In this is shown the truly proletarian character of the national revolutions in Europe and their complete difference from the national revolution, in Spain a hundred and thirty years ago, in China yesterday, or in India today.

In 1914-1918 the great strain of the imperialist war prepared the proletariat for the fierce national class struggles in which the war culminated. Today the more fiercely the proletariat fights for the national revolution, the closer it gets to proletarian power. Whereas in China or in India, the native bourgeoisie can retreat or betray or maneuver, the European bourgeoisie is today powerless until the first engagement is over, and in fact can only stimulate and cannot retard the proletarian development of the national revolution.

### The Proletariat of the Oppressed Countries in Action

The workers always act on immediate issues. Such, however, is the situation forced upon them by the bankruptcy of bourgeois Europe that the struggle for immediate demands impels them forward to the leadership of the nation.

There are only two fundamental classes in modern society, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The petty-bourgeoisie is the servant either of the one or of the other, and it can dominate the proletariat only when it has the power of capital and the bourgeois state to reinforce it. Today, in the occupied countries, capital and the bourgeois state are the enemy, not the support, of the petty-bourgeoisie. The petty-bourgeoisie in places appears to lead but in reality must obey the proletariat or forfeit all influence. In Poland the proletariat is its own master already. Every step of the deGaulle Committee of National Resistance shows its understanding of the new role of the proletariat in France today.

The advanced workers can carry on the underground struggle only because they have the almost unanimous support of the masses, and periodically the whole population erupts and places a mass proletarian stamp upon the leadership, whatever they may write in their press. The most effective movements of resistance have been strikes which have shaken towns and districts of France, the general strike in Luxembourg, the great steel strike in Belgium, the general strike in Holland, the mass demonstrations and descent upon stations where deportations are taking place, mass political demonstrations in France on May Day, 1942. All these, whatever their top leadership, are and can only be essentially mass proletarian movements with the petty-bourgeoisie and peasantry in their wake.

The workers and peasants of Yugo-Slavia could be organized by Stalinists but only because the bourgeois defeat gave free rein to class and national hatreds in essence as powerful against Mikhailovich as against the foreign oppressors. When the Germans attempted to wipe out the 40,000 Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, the Polish proletariat smuggled arms into them and simultaneously undertook large-scale actions on many scattered points in order to distract and weaken the German concentration on the Ghetto. This, following upon the proletarian defence of Warsaw and the infinite endurance, heroism and resource of the Polish workers and peasants, shows the Polish proletariat exercising all the functions of the Polish bourgeoisie in defence of the Polish people.

The general strike in Holland in April lasted six days and the Nazis, who understand politics, concentrated on the workers in order to break it.

The European proletariat in the oppressed countries is in proletarian revolt now. There are over a hundred underground papers in Poland alone, the vast majority of them papers written and published by some section of the proletariat. In France and Poland the only press read and accepted by the large masses of the people is the illegal, i.e., the revolutionary press. For foreign news they depend upon the radio. For news and interpretation of their own class struggle they depend upon themselves. Such is the influence of these sheets that the Germans issue soi-disant illegal papers of their own to fool the people.

Thus it is clear that owing to the very bankruptcy of the bourgeoisie the proletariat is compelled to develop its own political independence and self-confidence and, even while it fights under the banner of bourgeois nationalism, is in practice shaking itself free from the old crippling bourgeois ideology with its dependence upon the bourgeoisie. The exiled bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie in the occupied countries, notably the French Committee of Resistance is always chanting hymns to the new unity of the nation. They are striving to deceive the workers. The sacred unity of the nation before the bourgeoisie was driven out was a profane lie based on the domination of the native bourgeoisie. The new unity is equally a bourgeois lie based on the domination of the proletariat. This is the distance travelled by Europe in three short years.

#### Being Creates Consciousness

It would be a monumental error to believe that the proletariat is not increasingly conscious of its new position in the nation. The workers undoubtedly retain bourgeois illusions. But in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat to drive out the existing capitalist class it is being rigorously trained and subjectively educated in the hard school of civil war for its place at the head of the nation. This process, going on before our eyes, is appreciated nowhere so much as by the most class-conscious of all classes, the bankrupt bourgeoisie of Europe. These, far from rejoicing over the destruction of the old organizations of the proletariat, view this new development, the direct product of their own inadequacy, with mortal terror.

The French proletariat no longer looks to parliament to fight Fascism. If Stalingrad and Casablanca lifted it into action, Vichy and Algiers hammered into its head the class character of the national revolution. Since that time the French proletariat, with the dogged determination of the proletariat whenever it is undertaking independent action, has never for one single moment subordinated its proletarian demands to the struggle for national emancipation. It has made the recognition of these a condition precedent for its own recognition of any French leader. This explains not only the open counter-revolution of Giraud but the rapid evolution of de Gaulle. This reactionary Frenchman, who began by proclaiming that he had and intended to have no connection with politics and would concern himself solely with the national emancipation, was compelled to abandon that position and won his initial victory against American imperialism and Giraud only by warning them of the proletarian revolution in France.

The whole power of the French bourgeoisie is concentrated in Algiers where it enjoys the backing of American imperialism. The French proletariat is conscious that the national liberation from Germany depends to a substantial degree upon the armed forces of American imperialism. Yet immediately after Darlanism, it began to shout so loudly that it would resist American imposition of the colonial Vichy by force, that its voice was heard across the Atlantic, if only in the State Department. Hence the international scandal of the imperialist mess in North Africa where not in secret but in the open, Kerensky de Gaulle and Kornilov Giraud demonstrate that infallible sign of the proletarian revolution - the incapacity of the bourgeoisie to decide how to crush it. There, already before the war is over, the new proletariat of France, taught by history, is consciously fighting its first battle for its own national independence against the satellite French bourgeoisie.

### The Proletariat in the Occupied Countries and Socialism

The representatives of the proletariat in Poland, recognizing the truly proletarian character of the national emancipation, have repeatedly issued manifestos to the populace in general describing the new Poland for which the proletariat fights. The latest joint proclamation of the Polish Socialist Party and the Peasants Party, drawn up in Poland, is issued by people who significantly call themselves "the representatives of the workers, peasants and non-manual workers." The working people, says the manifesto, "must overcome the resistance of any privileged classes or groups from the former Poland who desire to preserve their privileges. The democratic concentration will therefore plan the preparation of an armed uprising against the occupying power and for a decisive fight against any reactionary elements within the nation." German capital and Polish capital are here linked as one, to be destroyed by the "armed uprising" of the Polish masses. This is the new language of the proletariat which in 1939 followed docilely behind Beck and the Polish colonels. The political significance of this is immense. At the first hint of the national class struggle, inside or outside occupied Europe, the Polish proletariat will stand in the forefront of the struggle for the conscious unity of the European proletariat.

In every occupied country, the proletariat is travelling that road, driven along it by the specific circumstances of the struggle for national emancipation. In Norway and Holland the bourgeoisie still retains some moral authority. Over large areas of occupied Europe its authority is a thing of shreds and patches although the workers as a whole are not fully conscious of this as yet. It is, as Trotsky has pointed out, the deep conservatism of the human mind which prevents it from acknowledging except at the last possible moment the immense changes which have already taken place. It is in the convulsive spasms and dislocations of European society and their profound effect on class relations that we must seek the deepest mental reactions of the European proletariat to the tremendous social experiences it is passing through.

Essentially false is the idea that the proletariat is satisfied to think, for the time being, only of the restoration of bourgeois democracy. The underground press in France contains full and de-

tailed discussions of socialism and the prospects of a new order. The proletariat does not express its aims clearly. That is the task of the vanguard. But, when even the great masses of the French workers say the Republic, they mean a republic in their own image, that is to say, an abstract, ideal proletarian republic, and above all not the Third Republic which so persecuted the workers and ruined France. As the proletarian revolution in France gains power and confidence, de Gaulle, sensitive to the rapidity of the historical development, persistently raises the slogan of a Fourth Republic.

### The Proletariat in the Occupied Countries and Unity

Such are the contradictory dynamics of the so-called national revolutions in Europe, contradictions inseparable from an old society, bourgeois society, pregnant with a new, the socialist society. The national revolution in Europe a proletarian revolution and is in no way to be confused with the struggle for the national independence of the nascent bourgeois-democratic regime. The bourgeois struggle for national independence, though carried out in the name of the whole nation, organized and consolidated the bourgeoisie as a political class. Despite all superficial and misleading appearances to the contrary, the proletarian struggle for national emancipation, though carried out in the name of the whole nation, does not, cannot throw the proletariat back but accelerates its political consolidation and consciousness as an independent class, representing the immediate historical interests of the nation. In this respect the proletariat of 1943 is immeasurably more advanced than the proletariat of 1939. But to the degree that in action and more slowly in thought it acquires its own independence, its own class position drives it towards recognition of the fundamental objective unity of the European proletariat.

When a worker says that he will defend his country it is the instinct of an oppressed man that speaks. Despite the reality of the national hatreds, his own searing experiences with his own bourgeoisie prepare the worker for recognition of the difference between the German bourgeoisie and the German proletariat, that cornerstone of the European labor movement for nearly a hundred years. The process is going on now. Whatever the consciousness of the Polish proletariat, in the very preparation for the class struggle against the Polish bourgeoisie it is objectively far closer to the proletariat of Germany than is the proletariat of an unoccupied country. There are signs of this already. In Germany the imported workers are already making common cause with the German workers. Conversely, the British proletariat, functioning in a stable bourgeois milieu and therefore still dominated by the successful and triumphant Anglo-American bourgeoisie, allowed its Labor Party to pass a resolution specifically condemning the German proletariat. Thus events in Europe have already shown, and the coming insurrections may reveal with incredible speed to the participants themselves, that it is the proletariat in the occupied countries, far more than those in countries unoccupied, which will be ready for collaboration with each other and with the revolutionary proletariat of Germany.

The Proletariat in the Oppressing Countries and the National Question

The premonitions of approaching disaster with which Goebbels today stimulates the Axis peoples, at the same time prepares them for reactions to bourgeois society similar to those which have been reached in advance by the masses of the oppressed countries. The delay will be compensated for only by a more concentrated development in the final period.

While in Germany itself Hitler has managed to give rations and clothing to the people more regularly and of a slightly superior quality to that of starving Europe as a whole, the demands of the totalitarian economy after four years of war, the increasing difficulties of the German war machine, the incessant bombing of German industrial centers - all demonstrate that the proletariat of Germany is being rapidly reduced to a level little above that of the proletariat of the oppressed countries.

If the German proletariat has not experienced the deportations and the general looting of the oppressed countries, it has felt the actual loss of millions of its young men. Whereas Germany has murdered 35,000 men in France, Germany has lost 100 times that number in dead and wounded. These miseries can only increase. It is not only ridiculous, it is a reactionary political tendency at this particular stage of the crisis, to asseverate that the German proletariat, in comparison with the proletariat of Europe, occupies the position of an aristocracy of labor in the political sense of that phrase. The English labor aristocracy, compared to the proletariat and peasants of India, or the AFofL aristocracy in the United States, compared with the Negro proletariat and peasantry of the South, has had a reasonably high standard of living and political privileges of an advanced order. This is the basis on which the differences of race, social background, religion, etc. were knitted for centuries into the fabric of the nation and became part of the national consciousness. Hitler's ludicrous attempts, beginning yesterday, to create in the minds of the Germans a feeling of national superiority not only over some but over all other Europeans, can have little success with the proletariat in the face of the economic structure and the social traditions of Europe, the heroism of the oppressed, the economic misery, the political servitude and the growing terror of the future - to which within the memory of every living German he has reduced the German people.

The proletariat of the other countries in the Axis suffer the misery of the German proletariat with the additional burdens and humiliations of satellites. In Italy after 20 years of Fascism the Pope can speak to the Italian people and to the world of the widespread and open agitation for social revolution. Such is the European proletariat of today. Not the privileges of a labor aristocracy, not the fear of a Versailles, but the fear of a Tilsit peace which will destroy Germany and its allies, alone keeps these workers from making common cause with the workers of oppressed Europe against Hitler. Such, however, is the European barbarism that in time, the struggle for bare existence will outweigh even the need for national existence. The specific characteristics of Fascism have ensured

that this struggle when it comes will be objectively a struggle for proletarian power. The proletariat in the oppressing countries passionately desires or will increasingly desire some reassurance from the proletariat in the occupied countries that the crimes of Fascism will not fall upon it.

Thus the subjective needs of the European proletariat, not in the abstract historical but in the concrete immediate sense, can be summed up in a sentence: The clear consciousness of the objective unity of the European proletariat taken as a whole against its common enemy, German Fascism.

This expresses itself as the need (a) in the oppressed countries, of a clear consciousness that the proletarian struggle for national independence is a struggle for proletarian power; (b) in the oppressing countries, that the national independence can be saved only by the struggle for proletarian power on a European scale.

Armed with this clarification the proletariat not only shakes itself free from nationalist barbarism and unifies itself for the destruction of its immediate torturers, German imperialism. At the same time it organizes itself to meet the counter-revolution which American imperialism is openly organizing and secretly plotting to clamp upon Europe at the very moment that Hitler is defeated and, where that is possible, before.

This clarification is the task of the international vanguard.



PART II: THE TASKS OF THE VANGUARD

I. The Vanguard as a Whole

The Coming Insurrection

Before the vanguard can clarify the proletariat it must clarify itself.

The vanguard recognizes that the foregoing analysis traces powerful, inevitable and objective trends. Indispensable to the vanguard for an understanding of its own tasks, the analysis is in no way to be confused with prophesy. Some of the trends may overshoot their mark; some may stop short. The question is to recognize them and to work consciously in the direction to which they point. The general historical trends express themselves in particular forms through concrete practice. The mere publication of a serious analysis is itself an historical advance.

The vanguard recognizes that in a war of such gigantic proportions, where already states and empires have collapsed and where the whole society is already in chaos, the masses cannot at all be passive but are impelled towards violent actions of tremendous scope, increasingly uncontrollable by the bourgeoisie. We are not watching an advanced stage of a new and highly concentrated society forcing itself into existence and breaking up an old. Lenin warned that the period of the collapse of capitalism on a full scale and the birth of a socialist society would be a period of tremendous collapses, of wholesale military decisions of a violent nature, of crises. Today classes live new national and international existences. Unlike the proletariat of Britain and America, for instance, the proletariat today in the occupied countries no longer listens to the bourgeoisie for directions as to its participation in the international conflict. With its fundamental realism, it accepts or rejects advice from abroad as it pleases and acts and reacts to the great military decisions of the war. It was demoralized by the defeat of French capitalist society in June 1940 and the rapid domination of Western Europe by German imperialism. But Stalingrad and Casablanca lifted it up again and its revolutionary activity will rise, or, to a lesser but nevertheless substantial degree, fall, with the great military decisions of a violent nature. One signal victory on European territory by Anglo-American imperialism will be a signal to tens of millions for revolutionary action. A succession of such victories will ultimately break the grip of the German bourgeoisie on the German proletariat. Indecision after a series of bloody battles may have any type of consequence except one - the passivity of the proletariat. Under no circumstances in Europe will it remain quiet except in case of an overwhelming German victory which is impossible. Conscious of the great and inevitable movements of the proletariat in a war of this kind, in a society at the present stage of disintegration, the vanguard from the start orients itself confidently not on the torpor and the passivity but on the revolutionary activity of the masses of the people. The vanguard opposes to the death the crimes of capitalist barbarism and the advent of Fascism and imperialist war, but once these have gripped society, the vanguard seeks in them and uses, the weaknesses which give strength to the struggling proletariat.

## The Building of the Party

After a century of European history, the international vanguard knows that the proletariat, with its traditional mass organizations, (as in Catalonia in 1936), or without them (as in Russia in March, 1917), is fully able to achieve a successful insurrection against a bankrupt bourgeois society without any substantial cohesive vanguard party. That is the organic strength of the proletariat.

The same century of European history and forty years of Leninism have taught the vanguard that an insurrection needs for its continued success a powerful well-organized vanguard party. The difficulty of creating this is the organic weakness of the proletariat.

The international vanguard, familiar with the unprecedented bankruptcy of bourgeois society in Europe and with the equally unprecedented ruin of revolutionary and would-be revolutionary organizations, recognizes, therefore, both the exceptional strength and the exceptional weakness of the European proletariat in the present historical crisis.

This concrete situation defines the concrete tasks of the European vanguard, not the building of a revolutionary party in general but the building of a revolutionary party in the Europe of today. The vanguard does not set itself the Utopian tasks of recreating mass trade unions, mass labor parties, or worse still, of postulating the recreation of these before the proletariat can assert its inherent power. Instead, it recognizes that in the occupied countries, the coming insurrections, like all previous insurrections, have already set in revolutionary motion the most resolute elements of the proletariat and, periodically, brings into action the whole proletariat (as in Holland) or large sections of it, as in other occupied countries. The vanguard knows that the proletariat of Europe, in the approaching historical circumstances, without assistance from Marxists, is fully able to break the back of the Fascist regime. Its difficulties will begin afterwards because of the absence of a revolutionary international. The vanguard, small and disorganized as it is, approaches the task of building this, not with lamentations about the destruction of the proletarian organizations, nor with the technique of routine times. Instead, in the organic strength of the proletariat in motion, it seeks the basis of repairing its organic weakness.

The vanguard realizes that the Stalinists, the Social-Democracy, the Radical-Socialists and the down-right fascists are raising the slogan of national emancipation and, according to their policies, seeking to use the working class and then chain or limit it. The vanguard, therefore, as its special task in the national struggle, seeks to unveil to the masses the fundamentally socialist character of the approaching insurrection. It thus hopes to deepen the awakening consciousness of the masses and to gain the attention and crystallize around itself those determined and far-seeing but unorganized elements which any insurrection throws up in profusion, and who have been prepared for Leninism by the whole history of this generation and the drastic political education of 1940-43. Thus in the fires of the rapidly developing class struggle the vanguard forges the instrument of proletarian power.

For the vanguard clarification either of the masses or of itself is inconceivable without action. And today in the occupied countries, action means the struggle for the expulsion of the German oppressor, i.e., the existing capitalist class.

## II. The Vanguard in the Oppressed Countries

### The Slogan of National Independence

Because it so clearly understands the proletarian character of the national revolution, the vanguard in the oppressed countries plunges into the national struggle. Recognizing that the working class is being directly oppressed and persecuted by the capitalist class, even though this speaks a foreign language, it takes its place with the masses. Recognizing its own weakness and incapacity today for effective independent action, it enters the groups of national resistance, undeterred by the mere fact that the leadership of resistance groups may be social-democratic or deGaullist in general ideology. It recognizes the predominantly proletarian and peasant composition of the national resistance and its essentially independent class character.

Every member of the vanguard therefore joins the organized national resistance movement.

The vanguard raises the slogan of national independence and makes this the main political slogan of the day.

The vanguard raises the slogan of national independence because it corresponds to the objective situation and the feelings of the masses.

The vanguard raises the slogan of national independence because at no time whatever does the vanguard hesitate to raise a "democratic" slogan when it corresponds to the historic interests and stimulates the independent activity of the masses.

### The Slogan of Workers Power

The proletariat, however, is in revolt, and every revolution, whatever its character, poses the question of power. The vanguard will fail miserably in its attempt to build a vanguard party if it does not clearly understand the relation between the immediate demands, the political agitational slogan and the question of power. In the Russian revolution, land and bread were immediate demands; peace the main agitational slogan; and all power to the Soviets the slogan of power. Following the same principle Trotsky has memorably written of the Constituent Assembly for China and India even before the Soviets are formed, and when everything still depends on the immediate action of the masses: "This slogan must be indissolubly tied up with the problem of national liberation and agrarian reform."

The vanguard raises the slogan of the power to the workers (or workers and peasants as the national circumstances may warrant).

The vanguard raises the slogan of power to the workers and peasants because this slogan corresponds to the objective class position of the masses in the struggle and because there is no contradiction whatever between a democratic slogan as the main political slogan of a revolution and the struggle of the proletariat for power. Against the Social-Democracy and the deGaullists who indissolubly tie up the slogans of the immediate demands, national liberation and the democratic republic, the vanguard resolutely poses the slogans of the immediate demands, the national liberation and the power of the workers.

This being a question of action and not of education, the vanguard is ruthless against those who enter the national groups of resistance, raise the slogan of workers power and hesitate or dissemble about the slogan of national independence. It is equally ruthless against those who raise the slogan of national independence and hesitate or dissemble about the slogan of workers power. To have no position on the question of power is to leave the workers wide-open to the powerful and purposive agitation of the official social-Democracy, the Stalinists and deGaullists whose conscious, expressed and undisguised aim is to head off the proletarian revolution.

"Indissolubly tied"

It is neither possible nor necessary here to go into the concrete forms which the struggle for immediate needs will take. Nor is it necessary in a serious revolutionary organization to spend time reiterating that until the masses have seized the power this struggle for immediate needs remains the basis for all revolutionary activity. What must be pointed out, however, for its great educational value in our period is (a) the concrete manner in which the immediate needs, the main political slogan and the question of power are linked together in the daily practice of the vanguard and (b) how in a period of revolutionary crisis on the basis of a correct analysis the vanguard concretely educates the masses for power and thus wins its best elements for the party.

In its struggle for the immediate demands, the vanguard does not shirk but does not seek discussions about "socialism" and nationalized property. Like Lenin in 1917 in Russia, it avoids in agitation talk about socialism and the confiscation of the property of the bourgeoisie in general.

Where the native bourgeoisie does not exist, all organization of the proletariat against the foreign bourgeoisie is organization for proletarian power. The vanguard therefore seeks to base the resistance groups consciously upon factory committees or peasant committees. In the mass actions against deportations it struggles for the leadership to be in the hands of or to be based on the factory committees or trade union groups and always directs the population to follow their lead. It encourages the peasants to form joint committees among themselves for the planning of joint production, distribution, and secreting of food. It struggles for a constant relation and representation between the peasant committees of resistance and the city committees, seeking always to build up conscious mutual action, conscious mutual experience and conscious mutual confidence. In this way it concretely prepares the workers in town and country not only for the immediate struggle but for the joint task which history has placed upon them. By constantly emphasizing to the workers and peasants their own responsibility for every action in the struggle for national emancipation, the way is prepared for the final conclusion. With flexibility but with firmness, on every possible occasion, in every speech and in every leaflet, the vanguard distinguishes itself from the Social-Democrats, the Stalinists and the deGaullists by pointing out that the workers and peasants are not sacrificing and dying so that the Girauds, the Peyroutons, the Daladiers, and Blums and all those who led the country into ruin should come back and rule. The rule must be by the workers and peasants themselves, those who are bearing the burdens and will have to face the post-war misery. Thus the vanguard, in the midst of the struggle, by example and by precept, educates the masses of the people, and without in the slightest degree subordinating the national

struggle, attracts to its ideas and organization those elements who are most conscious of the lessons of thirty years.

### The Bourgeoisie and the Day of Liberation

There is one peculiar feature of the struggle for national emancipation in the oppressed countries which makes mandatory upon the vanguard the raising of the slogan of workers power. The first climax of the revolution will precede or immediately follow the decisive imperialist clash and the defeat of Germany. Then, as has been truly said, in most of the oppressed countries, the power will lie in the streets. As has been still more truly said, the workers will instinctively incline to take the power. But even this is still far from the truth.

The instructions published in France for the French underground by the bourgeois Committee of National Resistance are as follows: to try to create contact between the various groups of resistance, to mobilize all groups and lead them in attacks against the enemy's rear, to begin a general strike, to occupy all public buildings, to throw out of office all Vichy officials and replace them by boards of delegates from the resistance groups, to manage food supplies and public administration. The Belgian government by radio issues similar instructions. This, in the Europe of today, is in essence the proletarian revolution. When the proletariat acts, the resistance committees will obey it or be swept out of the way. Even if the bourgeois resistance committees did not give these instructions or raise these questions, it would be the duty of the vanguard to do so not as propaganda but as agitation. And it is the business of the vanguard less to talk of socialism in the future and elaborate programs, than to tear off the wrappings and show to the workers preparing the insurrection what they are really achieving.

Rare indeed are the days in the history of a nation when the power lies in the streets. Still rarer are the occasions when not only the vanguard but the whole world can foresee, if not the exact date, the exact time when this will take place. Unique in history is a situation in which the bourgeoisie (with fear and suppressed curses) is compelled to call upon the proletariat to drive out the existing capitalist government, to seize the power and to administer public affairs. The bourgeoisie plans to disinherit the proletariat at the earliest possible moment. Under the circumstances the vanguard will stand convicted of criminal blindness, timidity and trailing behind the workers if it does not point out to those with whom it works that they must consciously prepare to seize the power and to hold it. All those who are working for the national emancipation and are thus made conscious of its truly proletarian character are irresistibly drawn to the organization or at least the influence of the vanguard.

### The Proletariat and the Day of Liberation

As in all revolutionary periods, i.e., when the proletariat is taking independent action on a national scale, the vanguard will have to strain all its forces not to fall behind the advancing historical development, and never more so that in these fateful days when history sweeps the workers on so rapidly that their consciousness lags behind their actions. Among the Polish proletariat, for example, which prepares the "armed uprising" against the Polish privileged classes and yet sends the memorandum to the Polish Government in Exile, the vanguard carries on an incessant agitation directed towards clearing from the minds of the masses all remains of the old bourgeois ideology. This education,

however, must be concrete or the revolutionary significance of the crisis will be missed.

The great difference between the present historical period and the period immediately preceding it is that the vanguard is able to concretize its revolutionary socialist agitation in terms immediately understandable by the masses. The vanguard does not under any circumstances agitate for an abstract workers power. It bears in mind the bourgeois prejudices still contending in the minds of the more backward elements among the masses. Refusing to be tempted into overrunning the masses, even in Poland, it pertinaciously sets the example of indissolubly tying the proletarian revolution to the national emancipation. The day of the national liberation being set by the approaching historical conjuncture, the vanguard prepares its fellow-workers in the national struggle for specific tasks to be performed by them on the day of the national liberation.

The vanguard incessantly urges the committees all over the country to take careful note and to publish the names of all collaborators at home and abroad and to execute them themselves - on the day of the national liberation. It urges the committees to mark down the property, industrial and private, of all who have used the wealth of the nation against the people, and to confiscate this property - on the day of the national liberation. (By this means, without a word about socialism, the vanguard prepares the expropriation of well over half the European bourgeoisie). In countries where there is a long oppressed peasantry or a landless agricultural proletariat, the vanguard puts forward its program for amelioration, not in Menshevik fashion as a "program", but in revolutionary fashion as a seizure to be carried out by the armed peasantry - on the day of the national liberation.

In Poland the land is now in German hands. With the breakdown of the German state, the land will belong to nobody, begging to be seized. The vanguard will stand blind to the lessons of five hundred years and forever self-condemned if it does not say to the Polish peasants who "prepare the armed uprising" that this same armed uprising must immediately seize the land if it wishes to prevent the privileged classes from restoring their privileges. It is only thus that it will attract peasants into a revolutionary party. The vanguard will din it into the minds of the Polish peasants that they can only hold this seizure if they have a government consisting of themselves and the workers to be formed on the day of liberation. To the workers, the vanguard will without any equivocation say that the workers can best encourage the peasants to fight for the national liberation and accept the workers leadership now and afterwards if they instill into them that their peasant and factory committees of resistance must be the instruments of fighting the Germans, of seizing the land and jointly protecting their interests after the national liberation.

The vanguard will stand forever self-condemned if it does not reply to the brazen preparations and repeated counter-revolutionary declarations of Giraud, by telling the proletariat now that the only way to meet them is by forming a government of the workers and peasants who are carrying on the struggle for the national emancipation.

The vanguard will stand forever self-condemned if it does not say the same to workers and peasants who see before their eyes and feel on their backs the counter-revolution of Mikhailovitch.

The vanguard will even find, in the doubts and queries of the workers, opportunity to point out that it is only by showing the returning armies a workers government that the rank and file can be won over at once from the counter-revolution.

All who are convinced of these things will gather round the vanguard to become the core of the Leninist party and drive the revolution forward.

The vanguard does not aim at the doctrinaire abstraction of a socialist revolution directed towards the seizure of power by the proletariat "for the purpose of expropriating the native bourgeoisie". Lenin in 1917 unwearyingly elucidated from the concrete situation and from the needs of the workers for land, bread and peace, the necessity for workers power. Today the vanguard in the innumerable needs and demands of the actual concrete struggle for national emancipation finds the threads which lead without a break to the slogan of power to the workers. This is the task of the hour, not the preaching of a somewhat abstract and necessarily theoretical socialism as in 1938, but now, when the bourgeois regime is bursting in every seam and every worker is either in revolutionary action, or wishing to be, to show them the connection between concrete solutions and their own power.

The indissoluble linking of the slogans of national liberation and workers power is merely the reflection of the indissoluble link between the national emancipation and the proletarian revolution. It is on this theoretical basis alone that the vanguard, as a vanguard, can educate the masses of the people and attract to itself the most advanced and resolute among those who are struggling for the national emancipation.

### The Struggle Against Bourgeois Ideology

The vanguard is on the alert to prevent any agitation which would deflect the workers from the growing recognition of their own independent power and the unfolding historical tasks. It accepts the fact that in a modern economy the economic needs of the workers compel demands and protests dealing with these needs. But the vanguard in the occupied countries refuses to make any of the traditional political demands upon the oppressing government. It mercilessly castigates and ridicules those political organizations which propose that the proletariat raise the slogans of the right to organize and the right of free press. It points out first that the workers and peasants need no permission to organize resistance committees, factory committees and peasant committees, the rallying points for the "armed uprising" which will hurl the existing government out on the day of liberation. It emphasizes that the proletariat with arms in hand does not demand but asserts its rights. It seizes the opportunity to tell the European workers of 1943 that such ideas and slogans lead them back to the stage of looking upon the existing rulers as their masters with rights to dispense, which has been their ruin in the past and which history itself is teaching them to forget. It thus makes use of the proletarian character of the national revolution to tear out from their minds the tentacles of bourgeois ideology and prepare the workers for their historic task.

At the same time it uses the national character of the proletarian revolution for the same historic purpose. In the full tradition of the great nationalist movements of bourgeois society (Spain, Russia

against Napoleon, Ireland) it will instil into the eager ears of a burning people that this government is not theirs, that the only political demand the people makes on this government is the demand to get out. In such public opportunities as it may get, the members of the vanguard captured by the enemy will openly deny the competence of the foreign court to try any prisoner of the nationally oppressed country. It will instruct the proletariat in the same attitude, as the Polish proletariat today carefully instructs the Polish people how to behave to the German overlord. Wherever the vanguard has influence and the committees of resistance are sufficiently representative, it will encourage the committees to appoint themselves as a provincial ruling body. This body, though devoid of administrative power, will unflinchingly reply officially to the orders and decrees of the German government by instructing the population, e.g., to obey a curfew demand or to refuse to deliver up their young men for deportation.

The instructions of the exiled Dutch government to the people of Holland to refuse to obey the German order to deliver 400,000 soldiers would be anticipated locally on a city, regional, or even national scale by the vanguard and those under its influence, so as to turn the minds of all the workers from the government abroad to the embryo government leading them in the struggle. The vanguard will encourage the committees vigorously to oppose and denounce any flagrant self-seeking by the exiled governments. Thus the vanguard strengthens the tendency of the proletariat to its own class action and its own class rule, independent of any bourgeoisie, and in the very midst of the struggle for national emancipation consciously and concretely prepares the proletariat for socialist power.

The effects of this agitation will vary from country to country. In Holland, Belgium and Norway it is difficult to say what the response will be. In Yugoslavia the workers and peasants are on this road already. But in France and Poland in particular, in the existing historical circumstances, the struggle for immediate needs, the struggle for the national liberation and the power of workers and peasants governments can be made to acquire a concreteness and naturalness intelligible to the simplest worker or peasant. Whereas in India, where the bourgeois-democratic regime is still to be achieved, the vanguard is on guard against confusing future developments, however inevitable, with the concrete stage of the struggle, in Europe the long maturity of the proletariat, the defeat and abdication of the bourgeoisie, all the concrete circumstances of the struggle demand that the vanguard say what is: that on the day of the national liberation the power will be waiting for the workers to take it.

#### The Stalinists and the Social-Democrats

With the coming insurrection uppermost in the minds of all sections of the masses, the vanguard, small though it is, has far greater opportunities to educate itself and grow in revolutionary influence with the workers than when it subscribed to the theses of the Founding Congress of the Fourth International.

Its chief enemies are the Stalinists. The prestige of Russia with the workers is today immense and this makes the Stalinists in one sense even more dangerous than before. Added to this is the devotion, bravery and fanaticism of the Stalinist rank and file; their financial backing and practice in organization. Their strength cannot be estimated with any degree of precision but it is safe to say that in every



oppressed country their organization is probably the most militant and the most powerful except in Poland where they are in a minority. Their leadership will do, as it has been doing, its utmost to subordinate the proletarian character of the national revolution and the slogan of a workers or a workers and peasants government. In the circumstances of the underground movement, however, workers, taken as a whole, are likely to make struggle against the foreign tyrant their first and in fact their main criterion. The bureaucratic power of the flourishing Stalinist bureaucracies of peace-time, which was used drastically against the vanguard in collaboration with the bourgeois press and the bourgeois state, no longer exists. Today the Stalinist leadership can no longer circumscribe, prohibit and destroy acquisition of influence among the workers as easily as in pre-war days.

The vanguard can face these enemies with confidence as long as first, it protects itself with the esteem and confidence of the workers, gained in brave and resolute action. Secondly, and still more important, most of those who today may rally to the Stalinists are moved by revolutionary sentiments, following them because of their militancy. In the circumstances such people are not turned and twisted as easily as those who fill Madison Square Garden in successive weeks to cheer successive policies. Finally, most important of all, the underground movement today can only cut channels for the proletariat. The pent-up wrath and resentment against the crimes of capitalism are not concentrated on the German overlords in a hatred far more widespread than the hatred of the Russian masses for Tsarism. The looting of the occupied countries and the deportations for forced labor have inflamed the populations. As soon as the masses learn of Anglo-American or Russian successes in Western Europe itself and begin to feel the German power really weakening, the revolutionary torrent will burst forth in a flood uncontrollable by those organizations which exist today. Owing to the counter-revolutionary character of these organizations, their incapacity to control the revolutionary outbreak is the greatest strength of the masses in the present period.

The Social-Democracy in Europe today is not the Social-Democracy of pre-war days. In Poland, for example, the Socialist Party which gives notice that it prepares the "armed uprising" against both the German Fascists and those privileged Polish classes who wish to retain their privileges can be linked with the pre-war Social-Democracy in name only. What is the actual strength and organization of the Social-Democracy in a country like France it is impossible to say, except that it exists as an organization and publishes its press. It is a fair estimate, however, that those who actually carry on the struggle, and the masses which may rally around them, cannot possibly be as hostile to a vanguard participating in the common struggle for national emancipation, as was the Social-Democracy to revolutionaries in pre-war days.

"Workers of the World, Unite!"

But the vanguard in the oppressed countries has a task to perform other than the above, the special task of the vanguard. It has to educate the workers in the oppressed countries to a recognition of the fact that the workers of Germany are its allies. This is not a moral duty. It is, at this particular stage, in the immediate and historic interests of the working class, and it is the foundation on which the international vanguard party must be built and individual members recruited, not in words but in action.

The vanguard in the oppressed countries notes that in the present period the German workers in uniform are not fighting organized battles against organized armies but are meeting the workers of Europe for the first time since Hitler came to power. They are performing the most demoralizing and hated of all military duties - policing of a now actively hostile population, and this at a time when the drain on Germany's resources and manpower, its growing difficulties and Goebbels' warnings of destruction make the German soldier particularly sensitive to defeatist propaganda.

While foremost in organizing the hatred of the oppressed peoples against the foreign oppressor, the vanguard attacks the German soldiers not as Germans but always because they are doing the work of Hitler and the Prussian generals. There are innumerable ways which will present themselves to the vanguard for driving home this lesson to the international proletariat. The proletariat itself gives the vanguard indications. In March of this year a joint committee of underground organizations in Poland issued a proclamation giving detailed instructions to deserters from Italian, Slovak and Hungarian units sent by the Germans to Russia. This proclamation was secretly put up on the walls of Warsaw and other large towns in Poland. As often as the posters were torn down by the Gestapo they reappeared on the walls. Italians today, it will be Germans tomorrow. The vanguard will not only serve the bankrupt bourgeoisie, it will be incapable of building a vanguard organization in the Europe of today, if it shirks or slurs over its international tasks.

The vanguard, (for a simple example), prepares a straight-forward leaflet based upon the unity of the European working-class and the need for workers power everywhere. This leaflet, while not abating one inch in the expressed determination to drive the Germans out of the oppressed countries, points out to them their miserable fate if they continue to do the work of Hitler abroad instead of overthrowing him at home. It raises before the German workers the prospect of a place in a new Europe. According to its resources the vanguard tries to reach every German soldier in the oppressed countries so that the simple consistent message is forced home to them and compels discussion in the oppressed country, at home and on other fronts. The vanguard, however, does not make this a main theme in the oppressed countries but uses the leaflet as a talking point for discussion to the workers in the oppressed countries, pointing out practically that this is one additional means of breaking the German morale and speeding up the destruction of Hitler's power over Europe. It is obvious that to the Polish workers who so valiantly struggle to win over Italians, Slovaks and Hungarians, it is a simple matter for the vanguard to point out its agitation the importance of winning over the Germans. Precisely because they have been and continue to be not in words but in action the most implacable enemies of the foreign oppressor, the vanguard has not only the duty but will also have the right to discuss these questions in a friendly but serious way with the workers in the oppressed countries.

By this agitation, addressed to the German workers, can be concretely illustrated the inseparable interconnection between the struggle for the unity of the European proletariat, for the proletarian character of the national revolution, and for the purely proletarian revolution in Germany. For the vanguard in the oppressing countries will have the right to speak to the nationally oppressed proletarians about it

German soldiers only if they have been foremost in the struggle for national independence while at the same time their agitation addressed to the German soldiers can be truly effective only if the German workers see that the struggle for national independence is in fact a struggle not for the old bourgeois Europe but for a new Workers Europe, which will offer them some hope. Already in Norway the German soldiers have nutinied; in Greece Italian soldiers are preparing to join the Greek gucrillas. The vanguard, small though it is, pursues this work with persistence, knowing that the winning over of one single German regiment and its acceptance by an oppressed proletariat patiently prepared for this, can have an electrifying effect not only in Europe but the world over.

It is thus that in the heat of the struggle the vanguard develops the international instincts of the masses and forms an organizational centre for its most advanced elements.

### III. The Vanguard in the Oppressing Countries

#### The Immediate Needs

If the national question in Europe is a new question for the proletariat in the occupied countries, such as France, Holland and Belgium, the national question is also a new question for the proletariat of Germany.

It is not only that as the proletariat of the oppressing country it has a duty to struggle for the national independence of the oppressed countries. As the war continues, the instinctive and inevitable desire of the proletariat to bring it to an end has, as we have pointed out, only one main obstacle - the fear for the national independence of Germany and the other Axis countries. To the instinctive desires of the German proletariat to save Germany from the consequences of the national oppression of Fascism in Europe - the main stock in trade of Goebbels - the European vanguard and particularly its German section must reply with a solution of its own. This, the national independence of Germany, will increasingly become the main question before the German proletariat

But the German vanguard, here as always, bases its actions on the immediate needs and consciousness of the German people. To the German people, the German government is not a foreign government. It is tied to the social structure of Germany by strained but still functioning links. The German proletariat, unlike the proletariat in the oppressed countries, is not yet permeated with an overwhelming desire to drive out the existing capitalist government and destroy the existing capitalist class. The vanguard therefore raises its central slogan around the central question of peace. It raises the slogans of the right to organize and the right of free press. It raises the slogan of a workers government as the repository of power. According to the development of the struggle and the mass adherence, it proposes transitional demands. But the vanguard is on its guard against forgetting that so sudden and violent may be the collapse of German capitalism that the proletariat will, in all probability, find itself almost overnight organizing Soviets for the seizure of power, even before a single democratic demand has been fulfilled.

## The European Proletariat in Germany

But if the German vanguard bases its struggle on the immediate needs and consciousness of the German proletariat, it must also base itself upon the immediate needs and consciousness of the international body of workers now concentrated in Germany. Centralization of European capital means inevitably concentration of production and fusion of the international proletariat. In Germany today it is estimated that there are over 12,000,000 foreign workers of various nationalities. These workers are animated by the sole desire of overthrowing Hitler so as to regain their personal liberty and national independence. Such is capitalist production that some of these workers, owing to their skill, have been incorporated into factories of predominantly German workers. Today, the most significant feature in the whole European tangle is that the French workers in Germany and the German workers have already established good relations against the common oppressor and this fact has been broadcast to the French people by the underground press. There in the very heart of the bourgeois barbarism the Socialist United States of Europe is taking shape.

The German vanguard must demand the right of all those workers who wish to do so to be returned home immediately at the expense of the German government. It must raise the slogan of the national independence of every country oppressed by Germany and call upon the German soldiers in those countries at the first possible moment to join the populations in their struggles against Hitlerite tyranny.

But the German vanguard does not only raise the slogan of national independence for the oppressed nationalities and their fight to return home. For every concrete demand - food, clothing, conditions of labor, right of free press, right to organize, etc., which it makes on behalf of the German working-class, it specifically includes the workers of the nationally oppressed countries, demanding for them special national privileges, such as right to their own press, assembly, etc. and encouraging them to make the same demands. On this basis and in every possible manner it strives to create a complete and yet flexible unity between all sections of the wage-slaves in Germany for the coming revolution and draws together the most advanced and resolute elements as a nucleus for the revolutionary international.

By this double action the German vanguard according to its strength accomplishes tasks of immeasurable significance for German, for the socialist revolution in Europe as a whole, and particularly for those countries where it takes the form of a struggle for national liberation.

(1) It binds to the proletarian revolution in Germany the enormous power of the national aspirations of the imported workers and further reinforces the proletarian character of the German revolution.

(2) As this movement toward unity spreads, as it is doing, it begins to separate the German workers in the minds of millions of European workers, both inside and outside Germany, from the imperialist crimes of German Fascism.

(3) It gives an enormous impetus to the proletarian struggle against national oppression in the occupied countries, stimulates the class struggle all over Europe, and facilitates the difficult struggle of the vanguard in the oppressed countries for the unity of the European proletariat.

(4) By embracing millions of the proletariat from the oppressed countries in a proletarian revolution against Hitler, it gives them an invaluable experience in proletarian unity and proletarian struggle which is certain to have a far-reaching effect when they return to their own country. In Germany today, it is reported, some of the older German workers in the factories are instructing the raw youth in the principles of Marxian socialism.

### Socialism and Barbarism

In organized bourgeois society the masses of one nationality never meet the masses of another. In war the armed masses meet each other under the strictest bourgeois discipline. In oppressed Europe today the masses revolting against German Fascism are in daily contact with the workers of Germany who are under military control. But in Germany the bourgeois barbarism has been compelled to bring together and fuse the European masses, who are being united, disciplined and organized by the very mechanism of capitalist production, and the common ruin and misery of the war inflicted upon them by a common enemy. Here the death-agony of capitalism and the birthpangs of socialism are racking society at the same time - with the whole drive of history and the urgency of immediate needs pushing the European workers towards unity. The international vanguard, inside and outside Germany, must bring this concrete unity of the European proletariat before the workers; thus, from the very beginning consciously basing the nuclei of the revolutionary organization on those elements of the new society which are taking shape before their eyes.

The fundamental characteristic of the European chaos is that the most advanced theory has some immediate practical application. So hungry is German capital for manpower and so fearful is Hitler of the assistance which may be rendered to the invading Anglo-American imperialist armies, not so much by the militarily organized manpower of nationally oppressed Europe as by the mass revolution of the peoples, that Hitler is still busy draining every able-bodied man from these countries into Germany. To the extent that he does this he merely hastens his own doom and the doom of European capital as a whole. From the contamination of bourgeois chauvinism and the danger of being misused by Anglo-American militarism he transfers the revolutionary force of the oppressed peoples to the leadership of the proletariat of Germany now being forced to a militant internationalism in its own national needs. At the same time he prepares an international proletarian force for the unadulterated class struggle and lays the practical basis of the Socialist United States of Europe. Such are the contradictions of capitalism in the period of its death-agony.

The vanguard bases itself on those concrete conditions which are not accidental but rooted in the historical movement of European capital. It must not attempt the Utopian and therefore reactionary task of trying to push everything back to where it was before attempting to start forward again. To be a vanguard, it must adapt its slogans to the socialist future and not the bourgeois past which are locked together in mortal contradiction in the present historical stage. By unveiling to the workers in Germany the close inter-relation between their immediate needs and their historical future the vanguard cannot fail to draw to itself the most advanced elements of those with whom it is united in action.

## The German Proletariat and American Imperialism

However well it may struggle against German Fascism, on the basis of the immediate needs and the presence of the twelve million European proletarians in Germany, there still remains for the German proletariat the dread spectre of American imperialism. It is the imperialist necessity to punish and restrict Germany which will be the basis of the American counter-revolution in Europe.

If the ultimate stage of the degradation of Europe by the German centralization of European capital will be the German loss of national independence and the subordination of the continent to American imperialism, it is in the imminence of that very degradation that the German vanguard must seek and inevitably find the basis for the salvation of the German proletariat and salvation for Europe. The whole of Germany is aware of the fact that its national independence is threatened by Anglo-American imperialism immediately after that defeat of German Fascism which the revolution will certainly ensure. The revolutionary vanguard in the oppressed countries, as it sees the moment approaching when the power will lie in the streets, vigorously prepares the proletariat for its seizure. The vanguard in Germany, as it sees the impending imperialist domination of Germany by Anglo-American imperialism, prepares the German people for the only road out. It is careful, however, to raise its slogan of the national independence of Germany in such a manner so as not to confound it with the national oppression of countries under German domination. It therefore watches the developing struggle and at the correct moment raises the slogan "The workers and peasants of Europe must safeguard the German revolution". According to the success which it has had in forging a unity between the millions of workers from the oppressed countries and the German proletariat, the vanguard thereby creates a powerful sentiment among the masses of the European liberated people in support of Germany's national independence and builds up the consciousness of unity among the European proletariat. Thus it is the proletarian struggle for national independence which leads the proletariat to international socialism.

The analysis of the national question in Europe thus begins and ends with Germany. What was apparently merely the national question in oppressed Europe is in reality the most powerful adjunct to the achievement of the all-important proletarian revolution in Germany and the strongest preparation for the defence of the European proletariat against American imperialism. Thus, on the basis of a sound theoretical analysis the vanguard in each national unit not only facilitates the struggle against German Fascism. It mobilizes, according to its strength, the whole of the European proletariat to meet the American counter-revolution, today the main barrier to the Socialist United States of Europe.

### IV . The Socialist United States of Europe

#### Workers Power Everywhere

The slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe is a propaganda slogan, and it is clear from the above that it is by no manner of means to be considered as a substitute for the main agitational slogans. In one sphere, in regard to the strictly practical question of demoralizing and winning over the German soldiers in the occupied countries, this slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe can be presented

as a practical policy; this only in a non-ultimattistic manner, and only by those who have earned in action the right to propagandize for such a policy. Harsh experience, if not elementary common sense, will teach the vanguard that it must reserve its main strength for its mass agitation, physical struggles, etc.

Yet the socialist slogan, as a propaganda slogan, is more than ever applicable to the Europe of today. The vanguard must continually seek ways and means to bring it before the workers and, in the circumstances of a collapsing society, it can have a mighty reverberation. It is true that Europe now presents the spectacle of one dominating national state and numerous oppressed countries. To judge, however, the urgency of the slogan by this criterion is a purely bourgeois method of analysis. Judged by the proletarian criterion of class relation and the bankruptcy of the bourgeoisie, the slogan stands out as far closer to the practical activity of the vanguard than ever before. It is the class relationship and the bankruptcy of the bourgeoisie in Europe which forces the slogan of workers power as indissolubly tied to the main agitational slogans in every European country, and the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe is nothing more than Workers Power Everywhere. Once this is grasped theoretically, the bankruptcy of bourgeois society will provide innumerable opportunities for popular exposition.

In the oppressed countries the vanguard in its popular propaganda will pose the question first of all as the unity of the proletariat of all the oppressed countries in their common struggle against Hitler. It will strive to build up the consciousness and aim of unity among these peoples as important for the struggle today and for the consolidation of the victory tomorrow. Not only this, it poses also in popular form the question of the coming misery of post-war Europe and the necessity of the workers and peasants themselves continuing the unity, planning internationally the production and distribution of food, clothing, etc. In Poland, the leaders of the underground movement have already put forward a concrete scheme for a federation stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea with the chief means of production nationalized and with the federal authority having the power to direct production according to a common plan. Such a proletariat is today willing to listen to propaganda for the Socialist United States of Europe. On the basis of the common degradation of oppressed Europe under Hitler, the vanguard can pose to the mature European proletariat socialism for two-thirds of Europe. And with flexibility and skill, and the confidence born from its acknowledged struggle against the common oppressor, it poses the importance, the necessity of adding the German workers also to this new Europe when they join with the proletariat of Europe to overthrow Hitler.

In Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and all the countries threatened by Stalinist Russia, the vanguard follows Lenin's advice to Poland in 1916 and tells them with unmitigated frankness that, while they must continue their struggle, not even a successful workers revolution at home will save them from Stalinist Russia. Except for those who believe in God or Roosevelt, the sole hope of even national existence lies in stimulating a proletarian revolution in Europe, under the present circumstances particularly in Germany. Any other course would be deception of the grossest kind.

Not only does the vanguard carry on this propaganda in a popular form. The vanguard in Poland, for instance, foreseeing the miserable condition of the transported German workers who now occupy their land, and recognizing also the desperate situation in which these will find themselves as the German defeat approaches, wages a bold propaganda among the Polish proletariat and peasantry to offer to these Germans the opportunity to remain in Poland and assist in the rebuilding of the new Europe with the full right of Polish citizenry. In the factories of occupied Europe where German workers and even technicians have worked alongside the oppressed workers, the vanguard urges the proletariat to take advantage of their increasing fears and to offer them also citizenship in the particular country.

On this concrete basis the vanguard wages a powerful propaganda for the new socialist Europe. At the same time it gains potential adherents for the struggle against Hitler, and opens up a channel for the demoralization of the German army, making a bridge for its more rapid incorporation with the revolutionary elements at the moment of the Fascist debacle.

### The Liberation of the Colonial Countries

Traditionally associated with the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe is the slogan of liberation for the colonial countries. Through this slogan can best be illustrated the great differences between country and country in Europe and at the same time how closely propaganda for socialism in certain areas and in special spheres, forces itself into the agitation for immediate needs. In Belgium the slogan for colonial liberation would have little but propagandistic appeal; in Holland perhaps a little more, although the proletarian vanguard in Holland would be criminally guilty if it allowed the exiled government to speak of a "new" regime for the East Indies and did not itself deal with the question. In France, however, in the present period, colonial liberation has acquired an immediate urgency far transcending its appeal to the masses before the loss of national independence.

The French proletariat is acutely conscious of the fact that Spanish Morocco was used as a basis by the Spanish Fascists not only for supplies but also for men. The French proletariat has in the past seen French African troops brought from North Africa to cow and overawe the French proletariat because of the obvious differences in social background and appearance. The French proletariat has seen the men of Vichy use the French colonial empire, first to collaborate with the Germans and now with Anglo-American imperialism; in both instances, for the purpose of preserving its profits and its power. It knows that the national strength of the Vichy counter-revolution, its mortal enemies, is today based on the possession of the French colonial empire in Africa which is geographically very near to France. It knows, moreover, that in the army of Giraud-deGaulle or deGaulle-Giraud, there are many thousands of African troops who are being prepared for precisely the same purpose that France used the Moors. It knows already or will soon know that Giraud plans to train and arm a quarter of a million African natives, ostensibly for use against Germany but in reality to crush the French proletariat. Its hatred for all the men of Vichy, its fear for what they intend to do after the liberation, its determination to prevent it, makes the French proletariat more ready than ever before to listen to the slogan of colonial independence, not indeed for Indo-China, but for North Africa today.



At the same time the vanguard will be able to link with this the necessity for the independence of Spanish Morocco and the overthrow of Franco as an indispensable necessity for the safety of the French proletariat. The vanguard will be able to point out to the workers not only that their own vital interests are at stake but that they also have now experienced national domination by a foreign power, can appreciate the role of the collaborating native rulers, and can therefore understand the revolutionary socialist appeal to the workers and peasants of the colonies. At every turn the bankrupt bourgeois society compels the proletariat in defence of its own immediate needs to go beyond the bounds of bourgeois society and thus stumble empirically on socialist territory.

### The Revolutionary Milieu

While the vanguard will maintain the difference between agitation and propaganda and will not forget the elementary truth that it is always the immediate needs of the masses which form the main driving force of any revolution, it will not forget that at a certain stage, the very urgency of these needs, the proved incapacity of the bourgeoisie to satisfy them, impelling to independent action, creates in the proletariat a more than usual receptivity to the most advanced political propaganda. And this circumstance, noticeable in all revolutionary periods, that is to say, in periods where the masses are taking independent action on a national scale, is of particular relevance in Europe today, owing to the experiences of the last thirty and particularly the last four years. An examination of the underground press in France will show that despite the urgency of the national emancipation, questions of socialism, statism, United States of Europe, etc. are regularly discussed in general and sometimes in great detail, not only by proletarian but by bourgeois journals as well. The leader of the general strike in Luxemburg was a German worker who, when asked by the German court why he had betrayed his nationality replied that he was an international socialist fighting for the workers of all countries. In this charged atmosphere the vanguard must present the full socialist position in both popular and scientific form and struggle for it more powerfully than ever before.

In the oppressing countries the vanguard, while raising and emphasizing the slogan of national independence for the oppressed peoples, fearlessly couples this with the slogan of workers power, not only for Germany, Italy, etc., but for workers power everywhere - from which flows inevitably the propaganda slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe. The vanguard in Germany will repudiate all claims of Germany to colonies. The vanguard in Germany will agitate among the German people to pledge not only the restoration of all the loot of Fascism from oppressed Europe. It will urge them to pledge themselves today to use the technical skill and industrial organization of Germany for the benefit of all of ruined Europe. Its greatest propagandistic triumph will be a conference representative of all nationalities in Germany which, while embodying these declarations in a manifesto to the oppressed peoples, will yet denounce Hitler and Fascism as the main enemy at home and abroad.

The vanguard all over Europe knows the difference between propaganda and agitation, but it recognizes the difference between stable capitalist society and a society in collapse. It repudiates the idea that the masses do not want to hear about socialism today, and whenever Hitler, Laval, or any of the other Quislings or German Gauleiters makes national addresses to the people about socialism, it unhesitat- 373

ingly seizes the opportunity to explain to the masses of the people what socialism really is, its perversion by Fascism, and will show that the Fascists pervert and appropriate the term socialism in order to prevent the European masses from carrying out not only what is dear to their hearts but what is the only means of saving Europe from ruin.

The vanguard to the best of its ability, places before the people not only the classical formulae of socialism, but outlines the first stages of the economy, the press, education, etc. under socialism. In this way the instincts of the masses are concretised.

The vanguard is small but in the present crisis it will constantly remember the words of Marx after he dissolved the First International: "The international activity of the working-class does not by any means depend on the existence of the International Workingmen's Association. This was only the first attempt to create a central organ for that activity." This is a profound warning. Neither on the national nor the international field is the working-class helpless until it is instructed by a few theoreticians. We have seen in Poland and in Germany the working-class instinctively laying the basis for the new international order. The vanguard must build a revolutionary instrument suitable for the tasks of the proletariat. But it can do so only if it so elucidates the concrete situation so as to make the most advanced and resolute participants in the struggle recognize that a vanguard does not only fight for the tasks of the moment. It is in the efforts of the vanguard to develop the elements of the new society emerging in the concrete struggle of the masses that the advanced workers recognize both the role of the proletariat and the role of the vanguard in the creation of the new society.

## V.. Revolutionary Perspectives

### The Dual Power

The fundamental weakness of the European proletariat is the absence of any trained and organized revolutionary party. For this reason the conscious seizure and consolidation of power by any section of the proletariat, immediately succeeding the national liberation, is by all historical precedents and present prospects extremely unlikely. The most reasonable expectation is that at the end of the war the proletariat through its factory committees, peasant committees, soviets, and other organs of resistance should seize the property of the collaborators, establish workers control in all factories and, in a manner similar to the Catalonian revolt in 1936, actually form what will be de facto governments over large sections of the continent. The returning bourgeoisie will then try to regain possession of the countries. This will inaugurate the period of dual power.

The Marxian terminology must be here defined with some rigidity in order to avoid confusion. The bourgeois-democratic regime is the regime in which the workers have not created organizations to challenge the power of the bourgeoisie. There is only a single power, bourgeois power, and the working-class organizations, trade unions, labor parties, etc. are recognized by the bourgeoisie and in turn submit to it. The dual power begins when the workers have created factory committees or soviets which openly contend with the bourgeoisie for the whole or part of the power. If these organizations are beaten down, the

bourgeois regime, with or without democracy, is once more re-established.

If the first eruption of the European proletariat takes place in Germany with the full participation of the imported European workers, the dual power in the occupied countries will assume a particularly sharp and unbearable intensity. American imperialism and European socialism will stand face to face. If the German revolution lags behind the others or does not take place at all, the dual power in the occupied countries is likely to be of an entirely different character. The task here is not speculation about unpredictable things but to teach the proletariat by word and deed the importance of the German revolution.

The second stage of the proletarian revolution depends upon many factors besides the relation of forces established by the action of the proletariat and the consolidation of the vanguard. The course of the war is not purely a military question. Ideas become a force when seized upon by the masses, and the idea of the masses all over Europe that the decisive clash is near is a powerful factor forcing the situation to a climax. Owing to the very weakness of the vanguard, however, the future revolutionary course depends heavily upon the military decisions of the imperialist war, upon the points chosen for attack by the Allied imperialists, upon the disposition of the forces at the moment of victory, on the character of the decisive defeats inflicted and sustained by Germany (and not any temporary arrangements preceding those "military decisions of a violent nature,") on the particular moment when the break in the morale of armies and civilian populations takes place. These factors are so unpredictable in themselves and so closely intertwined that an examination of possibilities can only return to the starting premise of any national liberation in the coming period. At a particular stage German Fascism will collapse and the European proletariat will face the problem of power against the American bourgeoisie pushing in front of it its European satellites. The question of the subordination of revolutionary detachments to Anglo-American imperialism is a concrete question which can only be dealt with on the spot and in any case is strictly subordinate to the main political question, the mobilization of the masses for the seizure of power.

The American bourgeoisie is undoubtedly preparing to seize all strategic positions on the continent. It will bring much-needed food and clothes and medicine. It will be welcomed at first. The chief enemy of its early success here is the revolution in Germany. It is this revolution leading Europe which can unite the European proletariat, sharpen appreciation of America's role, and do more than anything else to awaken the proletariat of America, Britain and Stalinist Russia. But the more clearly one visualizes the enormous counter-revolutionary potentialities of the American bourgeoisie and of Stalinism, the more urgent it becomes to place before the proletariat, today, the necessity to struggle for workers power and proletarian unity in the present stage. It is on this theoretical basis that the European vanguard party can be founded. It can be founded on no other.

#### The Creation of a Party

The vanguard is in no way cast down by the small and disorganized character of its forces. 1943 is not 1917. It knows that there are hundreds of thousands of old revolutionaries and fresh elements in Europe

who are or will be galvanized into action by the historical crisis. It indulges in no speculations as to whether a party can be built in time but sets to work. The vanguard above all is careful not to make any practical opposition between or two separate entities of the objectively developing revolution and the subjective necessity which expresses itself in the creation of a revolutionary party. It repudiates that distortion of Leninist doctrine which teaches that in Europe today the vanguard cannot agitate for the seizure of power "because there is no party." The vanguard works on the principle that the more powerfully the vanguard, on the basis of the concretely developing situation, directs the workers toward independent organization and a revolutionary workers government built upon these organizations, the more easy and rapid becomes the creation of the revolutionary party.

The vanguard, both in Europe and elsewhere, must guard against sowing and therefore against cultivating unhistorical illusions. In the enormous complexity of the European situation, comprising hundreds of millions of people, in the greatest crisis of history, it is salutary to remember that the essential movement of life takes richer and more unexpected forms than can be embraced in any theory. But for that very reason, difficult as it is with the material at hand, it is necessary to map the theoretical chart with all possible exacting care so as to avoid the danger of losing orientation in the swirl of events. So great a change as faces Europe is not accomplished in a day or in a year without advances and setbacks. The Russian Revolution has given us a false conception of the rapidity of revolutionary development. The French Revolution lasted for years. The workers, as so often in a revolutionary crisis, may need a period of rest and a physical, mental and political reorganization immediately after their first torrential outburst. The European workers have passed through much. During this period, they will hope to safeguard the essential positions that they have gained. However, after their experience during the last four years, they will hold the center of the European stage.

European society will see many strange changes unpredictable at the present moment. American imperialism may find itself in the first stage compelled to enter into direct cooperation with the proletariat. The proletariat in a particular country may decide, in the absence of a full-fledged revolutionary organization, to follow some dictator who promises far-reaching economic measures at the price of some of its liberties. Whatever the forms, they will revolve around the proletariat until its eyes are gouged out, its hands tied and its legs broken. Unshakeable in this confidence, the vanguard today will only be a vanguard if, while acting with the workers, it points out to them that in the approaching culmination of bourgeois bankruptcy, power will be in the streets, could be theirs if only they seize it, and that without proletarian power there is no future for Europe. These are the fundamental historical truths of the present period and these must guide the vanguard in its immediate actions and its plans and hopes for the future.

## VI. The Tasks of the American Party

The revolutionary vanguard in America is not at all a passive or even merely a sympathetic spectator of these events. It must enter into them actively and with the fullest consciousness of the role that it has to play. The American bourgeoisie being the main obstacle in the path of the successful socialist revolution in Europe, the American

party must see its tasks clearly and act upon them methodically and with vigor.

- 1) It must show to the advanced workers that in the same way that the defeat of the German proletariat has resulted in such a catastrophe for Europe and the world, so the defeat of the European socialist revolution by American imperialism must have ultimately disastrous consequences for the American workers. At the same time it must constantly bear in mind and by precept and example show to the American workers that the only possibility of active intervention by the American proletariat depends upon the stage of hostility which the proletariat as a whole has reached in regard to the American bourgeoisie on issues that affect it on a national scale. The vanguard points out to the advanced American workers the extreme political backwardness of the American proletariat and emphasizes to them that the free and untrammelled development of the European revolution is the most powerful potential force for raising the political consciousness of the American proletariat. Thus it will be able to meet internal reaction and prepare for its rightful place as the leader of world socialism. Nevertheless, while the revolutionary upheaval in Europe will assist the American proletariat to recognize its historic tasks, the best assistance the American vanguard and the advanced workers can give to this revolution is the relentless prosecution of the class struggle in America.
- 2) The vanguard must at the same time, however, counter the cloud of lies and confusion about the European situation so unceasingly manufactured by all organs of bourgeois opinion. This it can do most clearly and convincingly by following the European situation with the interest and attention that it would give to a revolutionary situation in Mexico or Canada. By its own deeply-felt interest not so much in the national and international maneuvers of the bourgeoisie but in the strenuous study and analysis of the actual struggles of the workers for independent action, it can stimulate and impregnate the advanced workers of America with the ideas and give them an invaluable concrete education in the true meaning and historical significance of the concepts: class struggle, independent action, international solidarity, socialism or barbarism; to give them an invaluable concrete training in the apparent simplicity but profound complexity of the Marxist method.
- 3) It has a special responsibility to take the offensive on behalf of the German proletariat and the tortures which American imperialism is preparing for it. This, the defence of the German proletariat, is an urgent and necessary task far transcending in importance any other particular task which falls upon the party in connection with the national question and the socialist revolution in Europe. The fate of the German proletariat is and must be seen to be our special concern. The German people and the German vanguard need this and will need it for years to come.
- 4) In its presentation of the national aspirations of the European peoples oppressed by Hitler, it takes care to place this always in its proper European perspective and to make clear that the national revolutions in Europe today are merely the form assumed by the advancing socialist revolution.
- 5) It undertakes a special agitation a) among the seamen and b) among the various language groups in the United States and seeks to create

here a unified sentiment favorable to the struggle for the Socialist United States of Europe, hostile to the barbarous nationalism of bourgeois society, and ready to intervene against the American counter-revolution both here and abroad.

6) The party acts in the knowledge that many Americans will play and are already playing a positive role in the present and coming events in Europe, a role which may in certain areas and at critical moments be decisive.

7) To these ends the party builds a campaign, within the party and without, around this resolution and the ideas contained in it.

July 20, 1943