
December, 1941

Fourth International

CAPITALIST FRAME-UP -- 1941 MODEL

By William F. Warde

Politician of the Golden Mean

By Leon Trotsky

Democratic Illusions *Editorial*
On the War Fronts *By Joseph Hansen*
Priorities and Unemployment *By C. Charles*

An Answer to Ex-Ambassador Davies

Twenty Cents

Manager's Column

By the time this issue of **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** reaches our readers, the Minneapolis "Sedition Trial," involving at this time 23 militant working class leaders, will have ended.

Every person interested in the trial must have been impressed with the deliberateness with which the publications of American capitalism have avoided presenting the issues involved. Especially in the latter phase, during the period in which the defense presented its case, have the newspaper lackeys of capitalism displayed a silence as profound as their ignorance of the forces concerned in the trial of a group of labor organizers on a charge of "sedition" during peace-time.

We are, however, as we always have been, proponents of the Dialectic and we therefore find the above-cited not an unmixed annoyance. The paucity of information on this most important American political trial in two decades has put us in the position of being the only complete source of information available today.

The publications of the Socialist Workers Party, **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** and **THE MILITANT**, have published to date a far more complete record of the Minneapolis "Sedition Trial" than was ever printed during the

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course of any of the outstanding labor trials in American history.

It pleases us to contemplate what a rare service we have done for those research specialists of the future who will be privileged

to see this trial in its true perspective in relation to the struggle of the American working class for freedom. But, more practically, we are proud to be able to offer to our present read-

ers an opportunity not only to follow the trial to its close but to judge with us the implications of its outcome.

On this page will be found an advertisement for a joint subscription offer, made by us and our brother weekly publication, **THE MILITANT**. We urge every reader, for the sake of having his own file of the proceedings of the trial from now on, to take immediate advantage of the offer.

The recently launched drive for subscriptions to the **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** and **THE MILITANT** has, in the few days it has been under way, brought a good response from several centers. The industrial city of Flint was able to send in a total of sixteen new subscriptions in this period, topping even New York which runs behind with ten subscriptions.

One of the most encouraging evidences of stability in relation to our publications is displayed in the fact that Minneapolis, despite the great burdens that the trial has placed upon the shoulders of the members there, has maintained without the slightest interruption both the distribution of the magazine and payments on its account. We have every reason to believe that our supporters in any other part of the country would face an extraordinary responsibility in the same way.

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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME II

DECEMBER, 1941

NUMBER 10

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Biggest Murder Machine in History

Congress, under Roosevelt's pressure, has repealed the Neutrality Act and approved the arming of the American merchant marine. The undeclared naval war is on; the all-out "shooting war" is in the offing. Carl Vinson, Chairman of the House Committee on Naval Affairs, declared on Navy Day, that "the United States is committed to the defeat of Hitler and his associates." *The Quarterly Forecast* of Thomas Gibson, Inc., which is circulated chiefly among financial circles, seems indifferent to the question whether the war will be "declared or undeclared . . . to the realist it is clear, as it has been since June 1940 that the United States is at war." It adds that no matter who strikes first "the irrepressible conflict is at hand." What will it take to "defeat Hitler and his associates"?

The aggressiveness with which Roosevelt has implemented the war aims of America's ruling Sixty Families in the Atlantic and Pacific only foreshadows the future war moves now being shaped in Washington.

With 71 per cent of American exports proving inadequate to guarantee Churchill's forces victory, Roosevelt asked the British and American general staffs to present him with a *realistic* estimate of what is required from American imperialism to crush Hitler. Such an estimate was drafted. It is now being studied by Roosevelt and his advisers.

According to the October 20 issue of *Barrons*, one of the leading financial journals of the country, this estimate calls for the lifting of the already cyclopean production of war goods by "four to five times."

A glimmering of what is entailed can be gained from the production of huge bombers which—after terrific efforts—was scheduled to reach 5,000 between now and the autumn of 1943.

The estimate calls for this production to be jacked up to 20,000 or even to 25,000!

Full details of the blown up program have not yet been made public. *Barrons* of October 27 reports that news of this colossal step-up in the armament program will be unfolded "in part, by special memoranda from the President" and will be "outlined in full in the annual message to Congress early in January."

The partial unfolding of Roosevelt's plans for further expansion has already been made public by declarations of Roosevelt spokesmen that the armament program is "to be doubled" and that this will require raising the national debt limit up to \$80 billions or \$100 billions.

The *Army and Navy Journal* for November 1 declares that present authorizations for the war program amount to \$60 billions and that the "doubled program" will cost more than \$100 billions while the national income for this year will be but "between \$90 and \$100 billions." This, it must be

emphasized, is only the opening shot of Roosevelt's full program.

Further revelations were made in *Barrons* for November 10 with the indication that "we shall unquestionably create a huge army, and probably an expeditionary force, or several of them, for use possibly in such diverse places as Africa and Siberia as well as in Europe. . ." *Barrons* adds a bit fearfully that we shall become "a nation with ten million of its best men. . . on army pay. . ."

According to Admiral Harold R. Stark, in the *Army and Navy Journal* of October 25 it would be only "wishful thinking" to count upon the British Navy to act in the future "as a restraining factor in the Atlantic." Hence the naval building program alone will be stepped up to such a degree that the United States fleet will outmatch in fighting strength "any power or combination of powers now existent, whether the threat comes from the Pacific or the Atlantic or both."

With grandiose plans such as these, American imperialism is mapping the organization of expeditionary forces to conquer all the continents of the world. It plans the slaughter of tens of millions of human beings. For the United States it plans to grind into the dust all democratic rights under the iron heel of militarism. Before our eyes we see American imperialism setting out with the aim of achieving its manifest destiny on the bloody path predicted by Trotsky in April 1940: "Apparently only the United States is destined to surpass the German murder machine."

Whitewashing Stalin's Crimes

While the agents and emissaries of Roosevelt and Churchill have thus far failed to supply the Soviet Union with any substantial material aid, they have been rendering the Kremlin invaluable aid in covering up its crimes and trying to rehabilitate the prestige of their new-found ally.

In the years of the Moscow trials, Stalin could obtain no voluntary assistance from bourgeois—"democratic" circles to whitewash his infamous frame-ups. His attorneys and apologists came either directly from the ranks of the GPU or from such professional friends of the Kremlin as Messrs. Duranty, Pritt, Feuchtwanger, *et al.* It was universally recognized that Stalin had dealt himself and his regime an irreparable blow by the trials and the monstrous purges which preceded and followed them.

During the Stalin-Hitler pact there was no epithet too harsh for the most responsible representatives of "democracy" to apply to Stalin and his regime. In particular, at the time of the Soviet-Finnish war, Roosevelt-Churchill and Co. condemned and characterized Stalin as a "bloodthirsty oriental despot," etc., etc.

New times, new tunes. Now that Stalin has come crawling before the "democratic" imperialist powers, these hypocrites are engaged in a "re-evaluation" of Stalin's past, in

which his vices become transformed overnight into virtues, and his bloodiest crimes become converted into his most signal services to the Soviet Union.

The "Democrats" Whitewash Stalin

Mr. Harry Hopkins, Roosevelt's personal emissary to the Kremlin, returned after a three days' trip not only with glowing accounts of Stalin's "modesty" and "simplicity," but also with the GPU line that the frame-ups and the purges had in reality destroyed the "fifth column" in the USSR. Joseph E. Davies, former ambassador to the Soviet Union, now also sees eye to eye with the GPU. In the December issue of the *American Magazine*, he rushed into print to declare his complete conversion to the GPU charges against the defendants in the Moscow frame-ups. Davies is not embarrassed by the fact that his own reports to the State Department written during the trials said just the opposite. To believe Mr. Davies, it was the re-reading of these reports that confirmed him in the present opinion that Trotsky and his followers were agents of Hitler and the Mikado. He forgets to mention the real cause of his change of mind: Stalin's change of alignment. Davies closes his article by recommending that the "democracies" emulate the Kremlin's frame-ups against political opponents.

The behavior of the masters has found simultaneous echo in the ranks of the flunkies, who, like well-trained poodles, respond to the merest gesture. Ralph Ingersoll, editor of PM, returned from a flying visit to Moscow and his interview with Stalin with the new-found assurance that the purges, while taking a toll of some innocents, were on the whole highly beneficial. Like a medieval surgeon, he now argues that a little bloodletting really improved the health of the patient.

The Liberals Follow Their Masters

In a special issue devoted to "Russia Today," the *New Republic*, which could find no other apology for Stalin in the days of the Moscow trials than to declare that "the truth might perhaps be known in a thousand years," has assembled a group of liberals who contrive either to forget about the trials and the purges altogether or to offer some apology for Stalin's crimes. Thus Miss Vera M. Dean, who apparently still finds it a bit awkward to peddle the full GPU line, declares that the purges were really due to "xenophobia—mistrust of all foreigners." John Scott, who was summarily expelled from Moscow a short while ago, finds it necessary to provide two different explanations. So far as the Soviet administrators were concerned they were murdered, Scott suddenly discovers, for having disagreed with Stalin's policy on industrializing the regions east of the Volga: "I am convinced that many of those high, top-flight functionaries who disappeared between 1936 and 1938 got into trouble because of their failure to agree with Stalin's far reaching and ruthless plans for industrialization."

As for the others, Mr. Scott associates himself directly with the GPU executioners: "One of the most important accomplishments of the Soviet administrative system has been the elimination of enemy fifth-columnists. . . . These were eliminated by systematic vigilance on the part of the Soviet people, the Communist Party and the NKVD."

It is not accidental that all these gentlemen from Hopkins-Davies to Scott make no reference either to Trotsky's refutation and exposure of the frame-ups or to the findings of the Dewey Commission. On September 21, 1937, the Dewey Commission, after an all-sided investigation into the Moscow

trials, stated among other things the following: "Trotsky never instructed any of the accused or witnesses in the Moscow trials to enter into agreements with foreign powers against the Soviet Union; on the contrary, he has always uncompromisingly advocated the defense of the USSR. He has also been a most forthright ideological opponent of fascism represented by the foreign powers with which he is accused of having conspired." The Kremlin, too, has preferred to "ignore" the findings of the Dewey Commission. All the more so, since in the days of the Stalin-Hitler pact, Moscow was accusing the Trotskyists of being agents of Anglo-American imperialism.

The Motives for the Whitewash

There are serious political motives behind this campaign to rehabilitate Stalin. Stalin is now the captive of Churchill and Roosevelt. They have a stake in maintaining his prestige not only before the Soviet masses but before the Communist parties under his control. By absolving Stalin of his crimes, they not only repair his prestige but also facilitate their own attempts to persuade the masses that they are waging a democratic war against fascism in the interests of the working class. Their service to Stalin is in reality a service to themselves. Moreover, by discrediting the opponents of Stalinism, they thereby deal a blow to the only force in society today which all of them, together with Stalin, really fear—the extreme left wing of the labor movement represented by the Trotskyists.

The justification of Stalin's crimes is also a preparation for transplanting Stalin's frame-ups of political opponents to their own soil. They are preparing to railroad and exterminate every opponent of their imperialist war program as a "fifth columnist," an "agent of Hitler and the Mikado," a "wrecker, diversionist and saboteur," etc., etc.

These frame-ups will be employed primarily against the labor organizations, and the government will be aided and abetted above all by the local Stalinists. We sound a solemn warning to the labor movement to be on guard against this extension of Stalin's frame-up system to the United States.

Democratic Illusions

The war is taking a toll not only of countless human lives and immense material riches but also of the mental faculties of many people. Among the victims of the war are those who have been engulfed by the tide of bourgeois public opinion. All over the world many groupings, which until yesterday proclaimed themselves to be revolutionary and even repeated Lenin's formulas, have passed, one after another, into the camp of Anglo-American imperialism. A new school of sophistry has been begotten in order to justify this abandonment of principles which have been established and verified by an experience so dearly paid for.

The first and most popular assertion is that the present war is not a repetition of the first imperialist slaughter of 1914-1918. Certainly there is a difference between the two wars. The present war is not merely a repetition of the first one, but a continuation and, therefore, an extension and a deepening. For one thing, world imperialism has travelled far on the road of degeneration since 1914. Bourgeois democracy with all its parliamentary institutions is manifestly bankrupt. Again, in this war, the aggressive role of German imperialism is far more apparent than it was in the last war. The victory of 1919 left the conquerors the undisputed masters of the world. Vanquished Germany was thrown far back.

She had to start over again under enormous handicaps. The explosive role of German imperialism, in contrast with the conservatism and inertia of England, is self-evident. The rivalry between satiated and hungry imperialisms stands out more clearly in 1939 than it did in 1914. Several other differences may be cited. But are these differences fundamental? Do they change the character of the war? Has the struggle ceased to be imperialist? This is what needs to be proven, but the neo-chauvinists do not even try to do this. They are only too well aware that all such attempts would be doomed to failure, because the struggle remains, in its entirety, a struggle of imperialist rivalry.

Sated vs. Starved Imperialisms

There has arisen lately a relatively numerous group which argues somewhat as follows: Yes, we know all that. Yes, the war is an imperialist war. But England, you see, is an old imperialist country. She has committed no few crimes in the past, but now she is an old lion whose senile fangs are no longer to be feared. Germany, on the other hand, is a young and hungry tiger that will spread terror all over the world.

It goes without saying that the German ruling class is prepared, in case of victory, to add its share to the long history of imperialist crimes. But right now England is oppressing and exploiting throughout the world three times as many human beings as is Hitler in Europe. English methods in India and Africa are in no way distinguishable from Nazi methods. As a matter of fact, Hitler merely borrowed and extended to the European arena the methods of the colonial slave holders. England's senile gentleness expresses itself, when it comes to her rebellious slaves, in the shape of aerial bombs. This is the reality of the situation. Everything else is the shoddy product of hypocritical casuistry.

One need only emulate those who repeat the sophistry concerning the old, tired lion versus the young rapacious tiger in order to concoct a score of other sophisms, not inferior in quality, to justify support of Hitler. Goebbels does nothing else day in and day out. He promises the German workers an era of prosperity, if only they annihilate the plutocrats who have monopolized the riches of the earth, etc. Whether they work for one camp or the other, the makers of sophisms carry out the same assignment: the enchaining of the peoples to imperialism.

"Democracy" Against Fascism

But after all, England—is Democracy! Hitler—that is Fascism! Doesn't that mean that the struggle is being waged for the defense of democracy? By no means! England's rulers permitted Hitler to crush bourgeois democracy on the continent bit by bit. They permitted this destruction so long as they thought their interests could be safeguarded by compromises at the expense of democracy. England entered the war when her empire and not her democracy was menaced. She is waging a struggle entirely for imperialist profits.

But may not democracy be a necessary by-product of English victory? Not at all. Whoever spreads this lie is blinding the masses to the fact that in the grip of the post-war crisis—and even in the course of the war itself—England (and this applies to America as well) can become rapidly fascist, if the proletarian revolution fails to intervene. On the continent of Europe, the governments which will supersede Nazi oppression need not of necessity be democratic as a result of the "victory of democracy": their form will de-

pend as it always has primarily on the relationship of forces between the classes in each given country.

So far as England is concerned, she is indubitably capable of establishing on the morrow Bonapartist or fascist governments throughout Europe, in order to crush any and every revolutionary manifestation. Who could doubt this, after the experiences of the last post-war epoch (1918-1920)? The same aviators who are today defending "democracy against fascism" will be sent on the morrow to bomb those cities in Europe where the workers take power. This will happen without fail, so long as the English workers continue to follow their social-patriotic leaders. There is not the slightest political or logical, or any other kind of connection between England's victory and the re-establishment of democracy, even bourgeois democracy. So far as the establishment of proletarian democracy is concerned, this cannot be achieved otherwise than against capitalist England.

England's Victory and the Revolution

The new panegyrists of British—and U.S.—imperialism resort to a very cunning and insidious argument: shouldn't we admit that a victory for England, that is Germany's defeat, would facilitate the proletarian revolution, independently of Churchill's or Roosevelt's desires? and shouldn't one therefore support England in her struggle? In such a case, it would be necessary to make a reservation at the very outset. According to this reasoning the victory of England would facilitate the revolution, but only in Europe. What possible answer, then, can be given to the pariahs in Bombay's spinning mills or the Bantus in Johannesburg mines who could with perfect justification use the same argument, but in its inverted form? Why shouldn't they listen to Goebbels who tells them that they must support Hitler in order to get rid of their English oppressors? This road leads to the end of proletarian internationalism.

To illustrate the absurdity of this type of "reasoning" let us for a moment grant to our adversaries that the revolution in the colonies has to be sacrificed for the sake of the European revolution, and that England must be supported because her victory would stimulate the outburst of revolutionary situations in Europe. But who will be there to make use of these revolutionary situations? A revolutionary party is indispensable to lead the masses to victory. How will a party which preached and maintained an alliance with Anglo-American imperialism, be able to guide the inevitable struggle of the masses against this very imperialism and its agents? The history of the last war and the events of the quarter of a century that has since elapsed demonstrate irrefutably what happens to such parties. We can state with complete certainty that those who are today calling for a national front against fascism, in the name of the alleged revolutionary interests of the proletariat, will on the morrow support imperialism against the masses, if and when the Anglo-American brigands will take into their hands the job of policing the entire world.

In the countries of the "democratic" camp, support of the English and American bourgeoisie, in the name of a "joint struggle" against Hitler, signifies the direct abandonment of the revolution. In the countries occupied by Hitler, any support of the Anglo-American camp cannot fail, even now, to play a reactionary role. Speeches about the liberating role of England can—if they have some influence—tend only to paralyze the self-action of the masses, and hinder the growth of a revolutionary party. The counter-revolutionary role of

any kind of solidarity with Churchill-Roosevelt appears most clearly if we consider the problems of the German revolution. Every bond that ties the proletarians to their masters in either camp, helps the rulers in the other camp to maintain their authority over the masses there. The English "socialist" leaders, who serve their imperialism zealously, help Hitler impose upon the German workers his nationalistic ideas. An intrepid revolutionary struggle in one camp helps and prepares the same struggle in the other camp. Support of imperialist England—regardless of the pretexts or the forms—means placing "national" interests above class interests, it means paralyzing the revolt of the workers. It is the betrayal of socialism.

It is argued that only the blind can fail to see the necessity for the military defeat of Germany. According to those who consider Lenin's teachings as outmoded or too "mechanical," a Nazi invasion would mean servitude for the English people. They overlook a trifle. They forget when they pose the problem in this way that the Nazi leaders, unfortunately, can and do offer the very same arguments to the German workers: Just think of what your fate would be like, if England and America win the war!

We Tell the Whole Truth

Both assertions are correct: Hitler will oppress the English people if he wins; Germany and all Europe will be pushed into a quagmire, if Churchill-Roosevelt are victorious. Nothing is more mendacious than a half-truth; it proves to be the biggest lie. Our task is not to weigh one half-truth against another, but to tell the whole truth: without a proletarian revolution, the victory of Churchill will be no less terrible for Europe and for all mankind than that of Hitler. There is no way out for society except through the proletarian revolution. But it is necessary to prepare for this revolution. In order to fulfill this task, we must show the workers of every country that the key to the situation lies in the hands of neither Hitler nor Churchill but in their own hands. We must explain and clarify to them the unity of the revolutionary interests of the proletariat. Workers' solidarity with their imperialist masters breaks this unity; such solidarity is reactionary because it is an insurmountable obstacle to the only progressive solution to the crisis which mankind is now facing.

Sometimes there is to be heard such reasoning as this: Churchill's military resistance to Hitler, "despite himself," "objectively," "whatever his own intention may be," serves the interests of the revolution. Those who repeat these banalities go too far, or say too little. If they mean thereby that

Churchill's struggle, as opposed to Hitler's, possesses a certain progressive character for society, they go too far and overstep the boundary of truth; for the present war, whether it is waged by Hitler or by Churchill is, in point of fact, a reactionary enterprise. If these seekers for objectivity wish to say that England's military resistance can prepare the revolution, then they do not go far enough. Were it possible for Churchill to make peace with Hitler, were all the imperialists able to get along with one another, were capitalism able to exist without war, then the chances of revolution would assuredly be diminished. If, in the interests of preparing the revolution, anyone desires to bestow some "merits" on Churchill for waging the war, then "objectivity" constrains us to point out the fact that Hitler has at least equal "merits" and even, in view of the circumstances, slightly superior ones. Assuredly, these seekers for objectivity say too little. Unlike them we do not say that Churchill is serving the revolution despite himself. Instead we say: out of this war the revolution can and will arise.

The great imperialist wars of modern times are wholly reactionary, in respect to their objectives, their methods and their results. But out of these wars can come progressive upheavals. The first imperialist war of 1914-1918 provoked the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian empire, precipitated the Russian revolution, accelerated the industrialization of colonial countries, intensified the struggle for national liberation in the colonies, etc. But the collapse of Austro-Hungary, the oppressor of many nationalities, in no ways justified the *union sacree* which the French and English social patriots made with their bourgeoisie. Similarly, the German social-democrats had no right at all to support their imperialism, although in retrospect a sophist might supply them with the pretext that "objectively" the Kaiser's struggle against the Czar hastened the Russian revolution. The present war, too, can and will inevitably produce certain progressive upheavals; there will be revolutions in Europe, India and elsewhere. In a certain sense it is possible to say that these are the "effects" of the war. But, in the first place, this does not and cannot change the character of the war which is a reactionary, imperialist enterprise; and, in the second place, this does not and cannot confer any special "merit" on either camp or its agents and supporters. Both camps bear equal responsibility and are entitled to the same "merits" for the war and for its consequences. Both camps must be given their due, that is to say, they must be swept into the dustbin of history by the world working class.

Theory Among The Anglo-Saxons

Jeremy Bentham is a purely English phenomenon. Not even excepting our German philosopher, Christian Wolff, in no time and in no country has the most homespun commonplace ever strutted about in so self-satisfied a way. The principle of utility was no discovery of Bentham. He simply reproduced in his own untalented way what Helvetius and other Frenchmen had said so spiritedly in the 18th century. To know what is useful, say, for a dog, one must study dog-nature. This nature itself is not to be deduced from the principle of utility. Applying this to man, he that would criticize all human acts, movements, relations, etc., by the "principle of utility" must first deal with human nature as modified in each historical epoch. But for Bentham these questions are inconsequential. With the dullest naiveté he takes the modern petty-bourgeois philistine, especially the English philistine, as

the normal man. Whatever is useful to this queer variety of normal man, and to his world, is useful in and for itself. This yardstick, then, he applies to past, present and future. The Christian religion, for example, is "useful," because it forbids in the name of religion the same faults that the penal code condemns in the name of the law. Artistic criticism is "harmful," because it disturbs worthy people in their enjoyment of Martin Tupper (the Edgar Guest of his day—*Ed.*) et cetera. With such rubbish has the brave fellow, with his motto, "*nulla dies sine lineas*" (let no day pass without writing your quota), piled up mountains of books. Had I the courage of my friend Heinrich Heine, I should call Mr. Jeremy a genius of bourgeois stupidity.—Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, vol. I. Footnote to Chapter XXII.

Capitalist Frame-up: 1941 Model

By WILLIAM F. WARDE

The Government has concluded its case against the leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and of Local 544-CIO. The presiding judge discharged five of the defendants on the ground of insufficient evidence. He refused to free the entire 28 as the defense attorneys requested.

For, in their haste to smash the progressive union movement headed by Local 544-CIO and to jail the revolutionary opponents of their war policy, Roosevelt's agents have not even bothered to contrive a credible case nor to conceal the crudely reactionary character of their frame-up.

The Judge Upholds the Prosecution

In denying the defense motion to dismiss the case, Judge Joyce upheld the contention of the prosecution that, as revolutionary socialists, the men and women on trial were "outside the law" and were not entitled to any of the rights and protection guaranteed to all citizens by the Constitution. He stated that, under conspiracy statutes, "it is not necessary to prove that the defendants actually agreed in terms to adopt the unlawful purpose and to pursue it by common means. . . ." The mere maintenance of their political opinions is cause for conviction. Finally, in language more familiar to Moscow than Minneapolis, Judge Joyce compared the Socialist Workers Party to Hitler's followers. These remarks, read from a prepared statement which completely disregarded the defense attorney's arguments, indicated the spirit in which Judge Joyce intends to instruct the jury.

The Federal prosecutors represent two different types of officials in the Roosevelt bureaucracy. One, the local prosecutor, Victor A. Anderson, is an aggressive and unbridled reactionary. Some of the defendants have confronted Anderson before in this same Minneapolis courtroom during the trials of WPA workers who struck for higher relief in 1939. The other is Assistant Attorney-General Henry A. Schweinhaut, sent from the Department of Justice in Washington to direct the prosecution. Like his boss, Francis Biddle, Schweinhaut used to masquerade as a protector of civil liberties. He was formerly the chief of the Civil Liberties Division of the Department of Justice, which was nominally set up to guard against violations of the Bill of Rights. What better person could Roosevelt call upon to strike this blow at civil liberties than this ex-liberal? Schweinhaut showed his true colors when he repudiated the liberal doctrine of "clear and present danger" advocated as the test of free speech by Justices Holmes and Brandeis against reactionary Supreme Court opinion.

The defense attorneys were not permitted to question the talesmen for prejudice. Most of these middle-class citizens, including big and small business men, come from the rural districts outside of Minneapolis. There is not a trade unionist or industrial worker amongst them, although Minneapolis is a strongly organized city.

Months before, Biddle promised "startling revelations" regarding the defendants' armed plot to overthrow the government, "which goes far beyond public knowledge." These were not forthcoming at the trial. Instead, as newspaper commentators pointed out, the government's evidence was distinguished above all by its dullness. The bombshell of sensational revelations which the government promised to set

off fizzled out at the trial. The government presented no more about the ideas and activities of the defendants than was already matter of common knowledge. It was no secret that the Socialist Workers Party was a revolutionary socialist political organization, based upon the teachings of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky. The only "startling" revelation was that this could be considered proof of "seditious conspiracy."

Biddle and his associates had previously boasted that they possessed ample proofs of overt acts on the part of the defendants and that no restriction of civil liberties was involved or intended. The blunt-spoken Anderson swept aside this pretence in his opening statement to the jury by declaring that the prosecution was not obliged to prove the commission of any overt acts in order to establish that the defendants had engaged in "seditious conspiracy." In plain language, they could be convicted for the mere expression of their opinions. The very existence of the Socialist Workers Party, its propaganda and work for socialism, constituted a plot against the U. S. Government. According to the government's own statement, the constitutional rights of free speech, free press, and freedom to assemble were to be explicitly denied to the people on trial, and their exercise of them constituted a criminal offense.

Expression of Opinion Is— "Seditious Conspiracy"

This was made plain as Prosecutor Anderson cited the allegedly criminal activities of the defendants. They organized an avowedly revolutionary socialist party; "it was a part of the plan and purpose of this party to appeal to mass groups and psychology, largely among the workers, the more unfortunate workers. . . and farmers who were small operators, to join this party." They carried on all the normal functions of a political organization; collected dues, had headquarters, held public meetings, ran candidates for office, etc. The members of the S.W.P. were instructed to be active in the trade unions. They believed that organized labor had the right and duty to defend itself from fascist attacks whether they came from at home or from abroad. They therefore advocated the formation of union defense guards and military training under the control of the trade unions. All this, according to the prosecutor, formed the basis of their plot to overthrow the government by force.

Their crimes did not stop there. The S.W.P., the prosecutor charged, was inspired by the teachings of Leon Trotsky and of "the first executive head of the Soviet Union, V. I. Lenin, and wanted to establish a workers' state not only in the former Kingdom of Russia and its possessions but throughout the world." The party also espoused not only the doctrines of Marx, but those of "a more recent writer by the name of Engels." As Fourth Internationalists, they sought to "further the international revolution against organized society."

Not least of their misdeeds was the fact that some of the defendants had visited Trotsky in Mexico City and furnished protection to him. That is, they were guilty of helping to prolong Trotsky's life against the attempts of Stalin's assassins.

The anti-labor character of the prosecution was laid bare as Anderson climaxed his charges by accusing the defendants of the "crime" of urging workers to distrust arbitration and to demand higher wages. "Every time there was an arbitration, labor surrendered something and labor should never surrender," Anderson said of the Trotskyists, "that was a part of the program for carrying on successfully the program of this Socialist Workers Party—labor leaders should always demand, demand, demand. For instance, if it was a question of labor pay per hour, ask for an increase; if that was received, then don't stop there. . . . Always agitate and demand to cause a condition of unrest in order that there might be a breach between the employing class and the employed."

Union Activity Now a Crime

The scope of the alleged conspiracy is wide enough to embrace all the ordinary activities of organized labor as well as the ideas of the revolutionary and socialist movement. All the democratic rights guaranteed under the constitution, all the hard-won rights of union labor embodied in the Wagner Act and other recent labor legislation are trampled underfoot by the government prosecutors.

If a trade union should ask for improved working conditions or strike for higher wages, this can hereafter be construed as a conspiracy to overthrow the government. If a labor organization should try to defend itself against unlawful vigilante attacks, then its members can be accused of armed insurrection. If anyone should venture to criticize Roosevelt's war policies or to call his regime imperialistic or capitalistic, he can be liable to 10 years in jail and \$10,000 fine. Even a proposal for a popular referendum vote on war similar to the Ludlow Bill was admitted as evidence of "sedition" by Judge Joyce on the ground that such a demand was not meant seriously since it could only be obtained by armed force. There is hardly a labor activity or progressive and radical idea which could not be outlawed by convictions in this case. This prosecution is a gigantic conspiracy on the part of the Roosevelt administration against the Bill of Rights and the rights of American labor.

The 23 on trial are only the first Roosevelt's witch-hunters will place on trial for their activities on behalf of the working class. The Southern Poll-Tax Congressmen who accused the striking shipyard workers of San Diego of trying "to overthrow the Government by force and violence," and the errand boys of the steel magnates who are branding John L. Lewis a "traitor" for insisting upon a closed shop agreement in the captive coal mines are preparing the political atmosphere for further prosecutions of this type. In the eyes of the imperialist war mongers and the profiteers, whoever defends the interests of the workers today is an enemy of the state, and must be punished accordingly.

Chief Defense Attorney and defendant Albert Goldman spoke out boldly for the defense. He stated that a political movement was on trial and that great principles and great social theories were involved. It was true that the members of the Socialist Workers Party were disciples of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, but it was false that the Marxist movement was in any way a conspiracy. This was impossible, for the S.W.P. aimed to win through education and propaganda a majority of the people of the U. S. to its program. Socialism was the sole solution for the ills of mankind.

Goldman reaffirmed all the principal points in the program of the S.W.P.: its opposition to the imperialist war, its struggle for democracy in the trade unions, its policy of military training under trade union control, its international-

ism, its advocacy of union defense guards, its approval of the workers' revolution of 1917, etc. He denied that the Socialist Workers Party practices sabotage or advocates insubordination in the army, and declared that the prosecution's attempt to depict the union defense guard as an armed band for overthrowing the government was "nothing but a frame-up." He denied that the defendants advocated the violent overthrow of the government. The S.W.P. members preferred a peaceful transition to socialism, but on the basis of their scientific knowledge of the class struggle in modern society, they predicted that the reactionary minority would employ force to prevent the majority from establishing socialism.

"We had a constitutional and legal right to say what we said and to do what we did," Goldman concluded. "And we did everything openly. The evidence will show that we still continue our meetings, that we still publish and distribute our papers. It is a peculiar kind of criminals that you have, who insist upon their rights to do what they are doing and to say what they are saying."

Marxist Classics Now Evidence of "Conspiracy"

A considerable part of the government's evidence consisted in the introduction of the classic writings of the Marxist movement, beginning with the Communist Manifesto and rounded out with the current pamphlets and publications of the Socialist Workers Party. These writings were all openly distributed and publicly sold. They can be found in most libraries and book stores. They are discussed in thousands of class rooms, forums, and constantly referred to in the press. Suddenly, in 1941 these writings become converted into flaming bombs for blowing up the Capitol at Washington! Thus the Roosevelt regime joins the procession of reactionary capitalist governments which have proscribed the theories, history and principles of the revolutionary socialist movement. The Smith Act is the American equivalent of the Japanese law forbidding "dangerous thoughts." While Roosevelt is about to war upon Hitler, who burns the works of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, and upon Mussolini, who bans them, he duplicates their destruction of the democratic rights of free expression.

When a benighted Tennessee legislature tried to outlaw Darwin's doctrines of organic evolution in the notorious Scopes "Monkey Trial," the liberal world shivered with horror and indignation. The Minneapolis "Sedition Trial" is a far more serious threat to progressive thought. This time, not an isolated group of hill-billy Baptists, but the United States Government is seeking to suppress all radical social criticism and to set back the scientific knowledge of society a century or more. The Roosevelt administration will have a capitalist Index to place beside the Catholic Church Index. The writings of the masters of Marxism upon social and political subjects, hitherto regarded as indispensable to modern education, are to become contraband, and their possession and circulation a criminal offense, punishable by 10 years in jail and \$10,000 fine. This is evidence, not of the defendants' guilt of the charges against them, but of the thoroughly reactionary and repressive character of their prosecution.

The only other evidence introduced by the government to back up its contentions was presented by witnesses who gave accounts of alleged private conversations with the defendants. It is important to note the character of the 35 witnesses called by the government. Only seven came from outside the opposition group to the 544 leadership in its inter-

union struggle with AFL Teamsters President, Daniel J. Tobin. Two of the seven are FBI agents. Sixteen government witnesses were members of Tobin's Committee of 99, six or seven more are relatives and friends of Committee members. About a dozen of these are on Tobin's pay roll. One of the witnesses was employed by the bosses' association, Associated Industries, which since 1934 has tried to smash Local 544 and frame up its leaders. It is these hostile witnesses with material interests at stake or with personal grudges against the defendants who provided the main testimony against them.

Frame-up Artists at Work

Most of these carefully coached hirelings of Tobin stated at some point that they had held private conversations with one or another of the defendants when no one except themselves was present, and that they were then initiated into the secret aim of the party to overthrow the government by violence. According to the government's star witness, James Bartlett, V. R. Dunne kept pulling him aside into a corner of a dark room and repeating the parrot-like phrase: "We must overthrow the Government by force and violence." Walter Stultz, another government witness who had clashed with Al Russell as an ex-official of the Omaha Teamsters Union, declared that Russell once confided to him: "We have to grab a rifle and go after it." Obviously, since these confidences were imparted in private, they had to remain uncorroborated. In fact they are sheer lies.

Here we see the classic formula of the frame-up in operation. The pattern is always the same. The technique of Roosevelt's frame-up is no different from Stalin's. The prosecutors claim that the defendants did and said one thing for public consumption while they meant and did the opposite in private. In the Moscow trials, for example, Trotsky, who worked openly for the international socialist revolution and advocated the defense of the Soviet Union, was accused of secretly plotting the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union in alliance with Hitler and the Mikado. So the Trotskyists on trial in Minneapolis were supposed to have camouflaged their real activities and hidden their true views. The S.W.P., according to the prosecution, participated in political campaigns not to win people to its program but as a blind for armed revolt. The party inspired the organization of union defense guards, ostensibly to protect the union against vigilante attacks, but actually to march on Washington and take over the government. The party advised its members to submit to conscription but only the better to foment discontent in the armed forces. All this is to be believed upon the unsupported testimony of hostile witnesses, most of whom are materially dependent upon Daniel J. Tobin, the original instigator of the prosecution and its immediate beneficiary!

A Man Named Rube

One witness gave the slightest substance to the government charge that the S.W.P. was preparing an armed uprising. A pathetic individual of subnormal mentality who worked on Tobin's goon-squads, John Novack, testified that a fellow named "Rube" told him: "We have guns and ammunition planted in the walls of churches; we have bullets that will go through an inch and a half of armor plate, which is better than the U. S. Army can do." He couldn't, however, recall what Rube's name was, where he met him or when. Nor did the government produce a specimen of these marvelous bullets. The best they could produce, after this, was an even

more degraded witness whose testimony was so completely irrelevant that the Judge ordered it struck from the record.

The government witnesses said far more to support the position of the defense than the charges of the prosecution. There was almost unanimous agreement that the Union Defense Guard was organized against the "real and present danger" of Silver Shirt attacks. *This is the defense explanation of the formation of the Guard.* The witnesses testified that they had never heard any incitement to armed rebellion at S.W.P. meetings nor read any such advocacy in the party literature. All understood by the so-called "armed revolt" simply the Marxist prediction concerning prospective social revolution when the masses would be driven to adopt the socialist program as a result of the horrors of war and economic catastrophe.

Several of the government's own witnesses paid tribute to the irreproachable character of the defendants. Thomas Smith, ex-secretary-treasurer of the Omaha Teamsters Union, testified that he joined the S.W.P. because "I saw the good work of Local 544, the leaders were labor-minded; they helped out the smaller locals and were for the poor, so I figured that if the Socialist Workers Party produced those kind of people it was good enough for me!"

Under cross-examination, some of the principal government witnesses became entangled in direct contradictions and obvious lies. Typical of many such instances was Novack's assurance that he had discussed the armed conspiracy with defendant Ed Palmquist in August 1940, although Palmquist was in Sandstone Prison at that time.

The government failed utterly to show that the S.W.P. engaged in any action tending to subvert the loyalty of the U. S. armed forces. This was one of the two main charges in the indictment. Not a single member of the armed forces was placed upon the stand to testify that the party had urged him to overthrow the government. However, it should be remembered that under the Smith Act, incredible though it may be, the government need not prove that any one in the armed forces had ever read any of the party's literature, become convinced by it or acted upon it for the defendants to be found guilty. The mere expression of criticism of the armed forces or the publication of revolutionary ideas are in themselves evidence of incitement to insubordination. Under this law, CIO President Philip Murray could be indicted for his statement in the *CIO News* of Nov. 17th: "There is widespread and wholly justified discontent in the army" and urging higher wages for American soldiers. Negro leaders could likewise be jailed for protesting against discrimination in the armed forces.

The Tobin-FBI Conspiracy

Under skillful cross-examination, Defense Attorney Goldman exposed one of the most sinister aspects of the government prosecution—the conspiracy between Tobin, Biddle and the FBI against the leaders of Local 544. Time and again Biddle has declared that the Department of Justice and the FBI acted independently of Tobin who played no part in promoting the prosecution. But the secrecy which up to now had screened the actual mechanism of collaboration between Tobin, Biddle and the FBI was shattered by the government's own witnesses.

The Committee of 100 (later the Committee of 99) was the agency Tobin organized and used in his fight to oust the leadership and gain control of Local 544. Herbert Harris, one of Tobin's lieutenants and a government witness, revealed that this Committee was organized in consultation with

the FBI. The Committee of 100, said Harris, "went to the FBI when the fight started in the union," last December or January. Tommy Williams, leader of the Committee of 100, instructed Harris to admit agent Thomas Perrin of the St. Paul office of the FBI to the first meeting of the Committee at the Hotel Nicolette. Perrin sent Harris to Carl Skoglund, Ex-President and Trustee of Local 544, with an offer to obtain citizenship for Skoglund if he "would break with the Dunnes and side with the Committee of 100." Skoglund rejected the government's bribe. For refusing to sell out the Minneapolis drivers for the sake of personal security and become an informer for the FBI, for refusing to kneel down before Dictator Tobin, Skoglund was not only indicted along with the others but later arrested and held for deportation.

Here is disclosed the filthy role of the FBI acting under cover as provocateurs and as frame-up artists against honest trade union leaders. After such disclosures, can there be any doubt about the identity of the real conspirators in this case? They are not the 23 working men and women on trial but Roosevelt's lackey Biddle, the FBI and Tobin who schemed in secret to frame them up and railroad them to jail!

The fantastic nature of this frame-up and the discharge of five defendants by no means signifies that there will be no convictions. The cases of Tom Mooney, Sacco and Vanzetti, the Scottsboro boys and others demonstrate that the mere exposure of a frame-up is insufficient to prevent it from being put over.

The Minneapolis trial is not an ordinary criminal proceeding; it is from start to finish a political prosecution. These working men and women are being tried in a capitalist court under reactionary anti-labor laws for daring to oppose Roosevelt's war-policies and for defending the rights and interests of the working class. Their struggle against the official forces of reaction is an integral part of the fight of the American people and of organized labor to maintain their democratic rights. Only the mass protest of labor backed up by the pressure of liberal opinion can force the government to free these victims of capitalist persecution and prevent further assaults upon labor organizations and the Bill of Rights.

On the War Fronts

By JOSEPH HANSEN

I. The Soviet Front

Winter swirling down from the Arctic is freezing Hitler's armies poised before Moscow, Leningrad, and Rostov; and bringing intense suffering to the beleaguered divisions of the Red Army as well as to the German forces. Desperate sorties have brought no relaxation of the Nazi stranglehold. Moscow is still in great danger and will remain so, according to one dispatch passed by the censor at Kuibyshev.

On the southern sector, the Nazis have continued to capitalize on the Stalinist lack of leadership and the Kremlin's rejection of the methods of revolutionary warfare. They have forced the narrow Perekop Isthmus, swept over Crimea, and have seized Kerch, springboard to the Caucasus oil region. They control the Sea of Azov and have gained the possibility of taking Rostov through a double envelopment. Sevastopol, most important base of the Black Sea fleet, is under bombardment. The siege of Sevastopol on top of the loss of such major bases as Odessa and Nikolayev have so reduced the effectiveness of the Soviet fleet as to bring perilously near Nazi control of the Black Sea. Not only are the oil lines from the Caucasus now seriously endangered by these new gains of the Nazis, but also the lines of communication over which military supplies can reach the Red Army.

How long can the Soviet Union continue to absorb the blows of Hitler's armies? The answer to this question is of vital importance to every class-conscious worker passionately defending the Soviet Union. From an opposite point of view it is also of keen interest to the big bourgeoisie of the Allied powers who are struggling with the German bourgeoisie for domination of the earth but who fear socialist revolution far more than they do a possible German victory. Undoubtedly it was precisely this question which was uppermost in the minds of the Allied diplomats and militarists who met with representatives of the Stalinist regime at Moscow to determine to what extent Allied aid should be given the Red Army.

Whatever doubts the Allied chancelleries may still entertain as to the possibility of Stalin arriving at a new deal with Hitler, he clearly convinced them—if they were not already convinced—that so long as he remains in power revolutionary methods of struggle are completely excluded. In return for material support for his regime, Stalin guarantees to the Allied bourgeoisie that he will not raise among either Hitler's troops or Red Army troops Lenin's and Trotsky's revolutionary call to build the Socialist United States of Europe. This is at the same time the guarantee of certain defeat for the USSR, for Stalin has surrendered the country's most powerful weapon, the international class struggle.

Stalin has reduced the struggle to a single combat between the Red Army and Hitler's troops. And on this plane, it is only a question of so much time in the eyes of the Allied bourgeoisie before the Soviet Union goes down. As Roosevelt's Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox, puts it, "Only a miracle seemingly can prevent a collapse of Russia's organized military strength..." In case a miracle should occur the possibility is always open to the Allies, however, of arriving at a truce with Hitler at the expense of the Soviet Union.

"Defeat on Every Battlefield..."

The probability of a military miracle has been estimated by the Allied command as very slim. In the November 1 issue of the *Army and Navy Journal* an article signed by "Strategicus" and entitled "What May America Expect from Russia?" draws a military balance of the Nazi-Soviet struggle. "Strategicus" appears to represent the views of the highest military authorities in the Roosevelt regime. He begins by paying tribute to the resistance of the Red Army:

"Nothing has astonished the world more in recent years than the now four months old struggle of the Soviet. . . . Defeat has been the lot of the Soviet marshals on every battlefield of the past summer, but even defeat after defeat has not yet crushed the fighting spirit of the Red Army. Today one would be a rash military critic who would not predict at least an eight months further resistance by the Soviet army. . . ."

The Degree of Resistance

But in granting this period of resistance, the author warns that there are various degrees of resistance. What must be determined is not the willingness of the Red Army to continue its resistance—that is already proved—but the degree to which it can continue to offer resistance. This can be judged, in the opinion of "Strategicus," by weighing the still unconquered industrial capacity of the Soviet Union against the industrial capacity available to the Nazi troops:

"The Russian evacuation of the western and southern Ukraine, together with the imminent conquest by the Axis armies of the South, of the rich Donets basin, has or will inflict shortly upon Russia the loss of approximately 70 per cent of her coal, 60 per cent of her iron ore and 50 per cent of her facilities for producing steel. The encirclement of Leningrad has deprived her of about 18 per cent of her plants producing finished manufactured articles. If Moscow is lost as well (and the probability of this loss must now be reckoned with) another serious industrial blow will have been struck by the Axis. Around Moscow has been concentrated the bulk of the aviation industry of the Soviet and a large proportion of the factories producing tanks. Not less than 70 per cent of all the nation's airplane factories are actually situated in a circular area extending 100 miles in all directions from the Kremlin. Thus the capture of Moscow by the Germans would be a military catastrophe for the Russians of the first magnitude. The industrial losses already sustained, and the prospective losses now impending, will inevitably diminish Russian capacity for further resistance. The Ukraine, Leningrad, Moscow; these are three pillars of the Soviet industrial effort. Without these pillars, no such military effort can be made by Russia next year as astonished the world in 1941."

"Strategicus" estimates the capacity of other industrial areas of the Soviet Union, first those he believes are certain to remain in Soviet hands for the coming period. These are the Baku oil fields which lie south of the Caucasus mountains, and produce 85 per cent of Russian petroleum, but which have a few armament plants; and the Ural-West Siberian industrial area 1,500 miles away. If these units were close geographically as a combined unit they would represent "probably 30 per cent of Russia's total industrial power." The author assigns 20 per cent of this total as the share of the Ural region and 10 per cent as that of the South Caucasus.

The Industrial Capacity Left the USSR

He considers it very probable, however, that "before winter sets in, the Axis armies of the South will interpose themselves between the Urals and the Caucasus and limit all Russian communication between these areas to that which the Caspian shipping can provide." Should this occur:

"It will force lowering of the estimate of the industrial power of these two regions from 30 per cent to only about 22 per cent of the pre-war figures for Russia as a whole. This 22 per cent it will be noted is just about the same figure as that estimated for the Ural West Siberian region by itself. This is indeed a very low figure compared to that which provided the sinews of war for the Russian armies in 1941."

However, "Strategicus" holds open the possibility that certain regions now in the "doubtful" column may be retained by the Soviet Union, which would raise the power of resistance:

"The first, that of Ivanovo-Nijni Novgorod, is by far the most important as it contains a whole series of arsenals, airplane factories and textile plants. The second, Stalingrad, also is an important industrial asset and possesses one of the largest steel works in Europe, while the third, the North Caucasus contains a series of minor oil fields and a fairly diversified industry."

If these regions remain in Soviet hands during the winter and if the ability of these regions to communicate with

one another is maintained, the author believes that "our estimate of Russian industrial power as a whole will have to be lifted to 35 per cent of the pre-war total."

But the keystone of the Soviet Union's 1942 war effort, in the opinion of "Strategicus," will be the Ural Siberian region:

"In 1917 its industry could not have furnished the supplies for even a single Russian division. Now, the factories of the Urals and Siberia account for approximately 20 per cent of the whole Russian industrial production. This is truly an imposing success of Communism, and one which stands her now in good stead in her hour of trial."

However, the industry in this region is not well rounded. There are "endless coal and mineral mines; there are large modern steel works, but there are also only a few automobile, artillery and airplane factories." Nor has this weakness been made up, as the Stalinists are boasting, by the transfer of factories from the conquered regions:

"Undoubtedly in the past months some machinery has been shipped by the endangered factories of western Russia to Siberia . . . but in view of the recent heavy traffic burden imposed by the war on Russian railways, the volume of such shipments cannot have reached large proportions."

To this it must be added that if Lenin in 1917 envisaged retreat to the Urals where "industry could not have furnished the supplies for even a single Russian division," he had in mind not the transportation of the factories of Leningrad to that region but the possibility of saving the workers' state from the imperialist onslaught by calling on the workers of the world to rise up and cast off their chains. Stalin long ago renounced this method of defense.

Military Prospect of 1942

The reduction in industrial capacity entails a corresponding reduction in the number of effective soldiers the Soviet Union can maintain in the field. In Siberia, "Strategicus" reports, the Red Army has stationed 25 divisions (unless some have been withdrawn to the Moscow front) with enough supplies for perhaps a three months campaign before it would become necessary to draw from European and Western Siberian factories. If Japan attacks, the picture will thus immediately become much blacker for the Soviet Union even if Japanese troops are held off successfully for some months.

"Strategicus" concludes his analysis by predicting that next Spring the German armies will cross the Volga in a drive to destroy Russian industry in the Urals:

"The Axis army of next Spring will be definitely superior in numbers and material to any army which weakened Russia can then put into the field without outside aid. Certainly, this superiority will reach the ratio of three to two. Possibly it may attain a ratio of two to one. At any rate a Russian defeat will be inevitable unless German strength is drawn off to western Europe, or unless Anglo-American supplies reach the Russian armies in large quantity and thus permit the Russians to increase the number of their divisions. There can be little hope for a successful Russian defense in 1942, unless the Soviet can place in the field 175 divisions. Hence the complete supplies for from 50 to 75 divisions (1,250,000 to 1,875,000 men) must be furnished by England or America. Tanks and airplanes will have to be supplied in yet larger quantities, as, if Moscow falls, Russia will lack all but a fraction of its manufacturing capacity of these two types of weapons. If these supplies are not delivered to Russia this winter, then, England will have to attack the continent, or sit idly by and witness the complete destruction of its ally. . . ."

"Strategicus" does not analyze the possibilities of supplies for such an enormous number of soldiers actually reaching the Soviet Union within the time specified. However, to determine these possibilities it is sufficient to recall that of

the available routes over which supplies could be shipped, Murmansk is ice-bound in winter, Vladivostok must be approached through Japanese-controlled waters, and Soviet connections with the single track railroad which comes up 900 miles through the mountains of Iran are now within striking distance of the Nazis.

"Felicitations" from Roosevelt

It is in the light of the above balance sheet of the military situation drawn by his own military analysts that we must consider Roosevelt's telegram to Kalinin extending his "felicitations" on the 24th Anniversary of the October revolution. Both the telegram and the proffered billion dollar loan were designed to keep Stalin on his present course and to bolster up his regime against the possibility that the Soviet people might overthrow him in order to establish a regime which would pursue the revolutionary policies of Lenin and Trotsky. With the same aim in mind, Roosevelt supporters such as Davies, former Ambassador to the Soviet Union, have lately attempted to sprinkle the encrusted blood of the Moscow trials with whitewash. To make this job easier, Stalin has sent Litvinov—"democratic" mannequin of the Comintern—to replace Oumansky, who as an old GPU careerist and as head of the Soviet Embassy in Washington was in charge of the organization of Leon Trotsky's assassination. Stalin is thus able to point to his new powerful allies in justification of his policy of betrayal and defeat and say, "See, Wall Street is loaning us a billion dollars without any interest!"

What proportion of this billion dollars will reach the Soviet Union? According to the protestations of the Roosevelt administration, shipments of supplies to the Red Army are proceeding at maximum capacity. Statistics, released by the United States Department of Commerce, show that shipments to the Soviet Union in August, the latest month for which figures are available, amounted to \$9,038,000—three times the shipments for July but something less than 2 per cent of the total exports for the month as compared with 71 per cent going to the British Empire and Egypt. At this rate it would take more than *nine years* to ship one billion dollars worth of goods to the Soviet Union, if all the present avenues were kept open.

Nevertheless Stalin in his November 7 speech wherein he admitted that the Soviet Union could not survive without outside aid, accepted Roosevelt's fraudulent offer "with sincere gratitude" as "unusually substantial aid."

Day by day it becomes clearer that Stalin's whole policy is preparing the certain defeat of the Soviet Union.

No power can really aid and save the Soviet Union other than the power of the world working class. But to release that power, to raise up the mighty hosts of the international proletariat against the menace of fascism it is necessary to call forth the revolutionary slogans and the revolutionary methods of warfare taught by Lenin and Trotsky. The German workers will not remain cold. Once they are convinced of the possibility of uniting with the Russian workers to spread socialism throughout Europe and the world they will put an end to Hitler's regime. But the time is growing short. The fatal policies of Stalinism have brought the USSR to the brink of the abyss. To save the Soviet Union it is necessary to replace the Stalinist regime of betrayal and defeat with a new regime of revolutionary struggle. It is necessary to replace the Stalinist policy of slavish bootlicking of the Allied bourgeoisie with the Leninist policy of irreconcilable opposition to their war aims. It is necessary to replace the blind faith of Stalinism that some imperialist miracle will save the USSR with a

firm and conscious faith in the revolutionary power of the proletariat. Above all it is necessary to replace the Stalinist slogan of opening up an imperialist front in Western Europe—a slogan which can lead only to further slaughter in the interests of imperialism—with the slogan of Trotskyism: Open up the class front in Western Europe!

II. Powder Keg in Far East

"Out westward, the Orient is like a vast powder keg—potentially ready to explode with a roar that will be heard all the way across the Pacific." In thus describing the tenseness of the Far Eastern situation, Frank Knox might well have added that the Roosevelt Administration is doing its utmost to bring about an early explosion.

That this powder keg may go up at any moment is indicated by the orders to Navy personnel in Guam to send their families home, and by the orders to Marines in China to leave that country. Evacuation of Japanese nationals from the United States has proceeded concurrently with evacuation of American nationals from Japan. On November 2 General Sir Archibald Wavell, Commander of the British Indian Army, who has directed the armies on the African and Middle East front, arrived at Singapore to check up on the military defenses of that strategic naval base. Transports of British troops have been arriving at this port for months. The government of Panama, which is a puppet of the Roosevelt Administration and which last January revised its constitution to provide for racial exclusion of the Japanese, cancelled all business permits held by Japanese residents on one day's notice, facing them with expulsion.

Winston Churchill climaxed these warlike moves on November 10 by declaring that in the event of war between the United States and Japan "the British declaration will follow within the hour." Two days later British troops began the "most extensive maneuvers yet held" in Northern Malaya. By November 16 Chinese forces in Kwangsi and Yunnan provinces bordering French Indo-China were blowing up bridges and destroying roads for a depth of many miles from the frontier. Chinese troop reinforcements were pouring into this strategic area while the construction of pill boxes and other defense works proceeded feverishly in preparation for a possible Japanese thrust at Burma and the Burma road.

The Japanese government is likewise making last minute preparations for the conflict. Like the other imperialist powers, Japan has been watching the German-Soviet conflict with the closest attention. When the Soviet Union becomes sufficiently weakened from the blows of Hitler, Japan would feel free to move. Many observers saw in the fall of the Konoye ministry and its replacement by the Tojo ministry an indication that the Mikado had given his divine sanction to the Army belief that the historic hour had arrived.

Although more than 70 per cent of the national income is now being spent by the government, still more staggering tax burdens were prepared for enactment by the Japanese Parliament.

On November 1 the Bangkok press estimated that some 10,000 Japanese tourists, all males of military age, had entered Thailand. Japanese cruisers moved southward off the coast of Kwangtung Province, South China. Japanese residents in India and other British colonies as well as the Netherlands Indies began taking passage home. According to Chinese military intelligence reports, 20,000 Japanese troops were massed on the Yunnan border, with 10,000 additional moving toward the Burma border, and with tens of thousands more being shifted southward from various Chinese ports.

The Japanese press, which is rigidly controlled by the government, has at the same time conducted a virulent war-mongering campaign, demanding that Roosevelt meet Japanese terms and threatening immediate action on the part of the Japanese Army and Navy.

Through these lowering war clouds flew Saburu Kurusu, Special Ambassador to Washington, bearing according to the Tojo Ministry Japan's "last offer" of an amicable understanding. He arrived at the White House on November 15, precisely the same day that the Japanese Diet opened its special session in Tokyo with nothing else on its real agenda except the question of war.

In view of the fundamental clash in the war aims of American and Japanese imperialism, both of whom require domination of the fabulous wealth and natural resources of China, the Malay Peninsula, and the Netherlands East Indies, it is excluded that these two gangs of imperialists can arrive at an agreement of any lasting character. Since both Tokyo and Washington understand this thoroughly, there is considerable speculation as to the purpose of Kurusu's flight.

It may be solely a diplomatic move on the part of Japan to retain the cloak of "peacemaker" in any conflict with the Anglo-American powers for the sake of publicity among the Japanese masses. The longing for peace on the part of the Japanese people hangs like a nightmare over the Imperial government. The flight can also serve as camouflage for the impending military thrust.

There is reason to believe that Kurusu may be a courier in Hitler's behind-the-scenes campaign for a general agreement among the imperialist powers at the expense of the Soviet Union and China. On November 1, a few days before Kurusu's trip was announced, the *Japan Times Advertiser*, which usually reflects the views of the Japanese Foreign Office, declared that "Japan is ready to undertake mediation of the Russo-German war if the opportunity can be found." This semi-official paper added that "The United States would be wise to support such a move as an opening for general mediation of the world conflict."

According to Pertinax, who generally expresses the unofficial views of the State Department, Washington can expect from Japan, when the "long-expected German peace offensive" begins, a simultaneous attempt "to get rid of the problems that harass them today."

Japanese bargaining efforts rest on the assumption that the Soviet Union faces certain defeat and that Hitler will be so enormously strengthened by the conquest and subsequent exploitation of the Soviet Union's industry and natural resources that the Anglo-American powers will be forced to make concessions to Japan. The Mikado would offer a truce in the Pacific in return for Chinese and Siberian territory and a guarantee in some form that strategic war materials such as rubber, tin, oil, etc. would be made available.

Roosevelt's moves in the Pacific indicate that American imperialism believes it cannot postpone the conflict.

Edouard Herriot, Politician of the Golden Mean

By LEON TROTSKY

This article was written by Leon Trotsky in 1935 at the beginning of the revolutionary crisis in France. French bourgeois democracy then seemed to be the most stable in Europe. Herriot was its typical representative. Trotsky's analysis aimed at demonstrating the utter bankruptcy of the politics and politicians of the Golden Mean, those pillars of the democratic regime.

The further developments of the crisis (the strangulation of the revolutionary movement of the French masses through the combined efforts of the People's Front headed by the Stalinists, Socialists and the Radicals, the outbreak of the second World War and the debacle of the Third Republic) have served to confirm Trotsky's prediction that the politics of the Golden Mean promoted by Herriot would not only be incapable of coping with fundamental social problems but would itself be swept into oblivion.

Herriot is not a purely French phenomenon. The politicians of the Golden Mean still flourish, although with increasing difficulty, in Britain and the U. S. But they, too, have arrived at the same impasse as their predecessors in France. They cannot survive the war.

The English and American workers can avoid the chains imposed upon their European brothers only by understanding the perfidious and impotent role of the democratic capitalist politicians of the Herriot-Roosevelt type.

The persecution of Leon Trotsky by the French authorities prevented at the time the publication of his article on Herriot. It is now being published for the first time in any language.—
THE EDITORS.

* * *

Edouard Herriot, Mayor of Lyons, minister without portfolio, is today the central figure in the political life of France. He occupies this position not so much by virtue

of his personality as by the political function he fulfills in his party, and his party in the country. Tracing their genealogy to the Jacobins (one of their many misconceptions!), the Radicals represent the middle classes of France, i.e., the predominant mass of the population. The social crisis that broke out in France later than in other countries implies primarily a crisis of the middle classes, and consequently a crisis of their political representation: this constitutes the real basis of the crisis of parliamentary democracy. The middle classes are dissatisfied, even exasperated. At the top they are pulled toward fascism, the nether strata pull to revolution. The position of the Radicals is becoming increasingly more unstable.

The Equivocal Position of the Radicals

But, as is well known, the fire flares most brightly just before flickering out. Today, more than ever before, the Radicals are at the focus of politics. They are being courted persistently and even importunately by the Right and the Left. The Radical leaders sit in the Laval government and affix their signatures to the Draconian financial decrees. At the same time, the Radical party as a whole participates in the "People's Front," which hurls bolts of rhetoric against the Laval government and its decrees. The conservative and semi-official *le Temps* issues daily appeals to Herriot's patriotism and his tried and tested sagacity. *L'Humanite*, the organ of the Communists—very prudent, very moderate and very patriotic communists—with equal directness chants

hymns in praise of Herriot's democratism, his republican trustworthiness, and his friendship to the Soviet Union.

Herriot indubitably finds the praise of *le Temps* very soothing and cannot help frowning at the clumsy praise of *l'Humanite*. But there are two wings in his party. One ascends to the banks, the other descends to the peasantry. Edouard Herriot is compelled to "keep up a good front while playing a poor hand." But, will the equivocal game long continue? Will the Mayor of Lyons long remain the central political figure in France?

Herriot as Orator

The oratorical art of France is so rich in classical models, ready-made formulas, and traditional associations as to make it very difficult to distinguish oratorical individuality against the solid background of national traditions, and, especially, from out of revised and semi-moribund records. After the death of Jaurès, the athletic and impassioned master who sought to bring ideals from philosophic heavens down to the crime-splotched earth, Briand, the "charmer," who used to justify himself by flattering the vices and weaknesses of others, was considered the best orator in France. As for Herriot, who after the death of Briand is assigned by many the first place, he has neither the devastating pathos of Jaurès nor the wheedling persuasiveness of Briand. The orator honestly reflects the "Radical" politician, he is prosaic. His eloquence strides in slippers—indeed, substantial ones—rather than on stilts. Satisfying his higher spiritual needs in the sphere of literature and music, Herriot keeps his common sense free for politics and even for the tribunal. If this orator has a pose, it is a pose of simplicity, not credulous, but not openly perfidious either.

Common sense, however, would prove much too vapid, were it not seasoned with sentimentality. Herriot readily invests his arguments with the semblance of a personal confession, and never forgets reminders of his own sincerity. If he resorts to irony, he so mitigates it with qualifications as to make it appear a form of good nature. Witnesses have remarked that Herriot, in case of need, can draw tears, including his own. But these are tears which, after relieving the soul, dry up opportunely. His whole style is indelibly colored with an imposing, though not very self-confident, tint of the Golden Mean. Undoubtedly, an outstanding parliamentary orator, but not a great one.

Herriot takes his position consciously and persistently upon the terrain of common sense. Not without good cause does he see—at least he saw until yesterday—the mainspring of his power in his ability to think and feel as "all" do—discounting, of course, those who think otherwise. He is the "average Frenchman," but on a larger scale, so to say, the foremost of his peers, endowed with the gift of precise exposition, with a many-sided and preeminently humanistic education, a powerful voice and a physique that inspires confidence. These are no trifles. But, perhaps, all these are not quite enough.

The best pedagogue is not he who descends to his pupils from the heights but he who rises to new levels together with them. Herriot's power as orator consists of such pedagogic directness of intercourse with his audience. Its secret, however, lies in the fact that Herriot lacks utterly any kind of social insight or political perspective. Together with his audience, with the resourceful aid of common sense, he strives to find a way out of difficulties, and it must often seem to his listeners as if their leader were thinking out loud for them.

Herriot's Logic

No doubt, Herriot is sincerely convinced that the logic of a civilized petty bourgeois is a logic common not only to all Frenchmen but to all mankind. He reasons in such a manner as if it were possible to reduce all contradictions to a common denominator by means of arguments. He sermonizes and lectures. "We are no longer school children!" Tardieu once flung at him. And the impolite truism was met with bellows of approval from the benches on the Right, where much better knowledge obtains of what is wanted. Politics would be a very simple matter indeed were it reducible to a system of logical arguments. As a matter of fact, politics consists of clashes between social and national interests. But here the prerogatives of common sense cease, as well as Herriot's persuasiveness as orator.

In the struggle to gain the confidence of the average Frenchman, Herriot is most concerned lest he be taken, because of his reputation as a Leftist, for an improviser, a dilettante, or, worst of all, a dreamer. Says he, "As for myself, I have very little taste for synthesis. . . . In the face of all complications, the true method to apply is the method of analysis which articulates and which is native to Frenchmen." This philosophic tirade rang in its time like an unfriendly dig at Briand who put instinct in place of analysis of problems. Herriot indubitably imitates Poincaré in his diligent assortment of quotations and classification of documents. But the numbered arguments of a notary, the beloved manner of Poincaré, have little in common with the school of Pascal and Descartes: that is not analysis as yet. Besides, politics, in contradistinction to exercises in seminaries, is not exhausted by analysis and synthesis; politics is the art of making great decisions. Analysis and synthesis serve only to orient the will. But it is obvious that the orator cannot supply what the politician lacks: the will to action.

Often, after appealing either to his political or his personal conscience, Herriot adds, on occasion, "Incidentally, that is one and the same thing." Is that the case? As a matter of fact, the politics of Radicalism is the politics of perpetual internal conflict; its words diverge from its actions, the intentions from the results. The cause for this duality, however, lies not in the "personal conscience" of leaders but in the character of their social support.

Between Right and Left

Passing on one of its wings into the big bourgeoisie and descending on the other to the proletariat, petty-bourgeois radicalism is doomed to the role of an unstable center. The very objective contradictions that it seeks to overcome are those which rip asunder its own ranks. Within the Radical party, Herriot himself seeks to maintain as in the past the post of center. Thanks to this he becomes the fulcrum of the centrifugal forces of modern society. Afraid of sliding to the Left, he unequivocally pulls to the Right. But all the places there are already occupied by parties and politicians in whom the big bourgeoisie puts more trust than in Herriot. At the Left, stand the Socialists in close collaboration with faded Communists.

A few years ago, Herriot was compelled to put aside his good nature and to engage in a violent battle with his Socialist "friends" in order to assure himself, as mayor, a small majority in the municipality of Lyons. In parliament, the Socialists gave the Radicals equivocal support with the aim of pushing them out of the villages as they had already pushed them out of the urban centers. From the Right wing incessant

invitations came to Herriot to join the ranks of the bourgeois concentration. But Herriot at first tried to resist: for the aim of the "national" invitations, which are the specialty of *le Temps*, is "to encircle the Radicals and strangle them."

"I say to you, without animosity,"—Herriot used to address himself to the Right sector of the Chamber, before he had allowed himself to be "encircled"—"that you are mistaken." And immediately thereupon, the orator would turn to the Left wing with "And I say to you in all friendliness that you, too, are mistaken." Such is the symmetry of the Golden Mean. But it is unstable, in our epoch which abhors symmetry. Herriot had only to appear at a session of his own fraction to be once again obliged to turn his face alternately to each wing, primarily, by the way, towards the Left, with the words, "You are mistaken." A politician of the middle line, he would be unable to find himself unless he veered away from the flanks.

Upon diverse occasions, not always fortuitous, Herriot is given to calling upon his opponents, to admit that he and his party are not lacking, at any rate, in "virility." Again, illusions! If by virility is understood not personal courage but political resoluteness for great actions, then French Radicalism is a direct negation of virility. Here, too, the cause lies outside of isolated individuals: the characters of leaders are selected, educated and formed in conformance with the historical cause they serve.

Radicalism and Finance Capital

The social relations in France seem, especially alongside those of Germany, to be very stable. Kaleidoscopic as they are, the policies of the Third Republic long remained equal to herself. The cause of this stability lies in the feeble movement of her economic life and population. France hoards, accumulates, puts money in circulation but does not change her productive base. During months and years of prosperity, she extends her golden antennae far and wide, but only in order to withdraw them the moment that alarm is felt in the world atmosphere. This wisdom is negative and defensive, and besides, it comes into an ever greater contradiction with the European hegemony of the nation. The international politics of France are above all the politics of finance capital. The average Frenchman who entrusts his vote to the Radicals, and his savings to the banks, feels helpless in the ocean of world politics, with its flood and ebb tides, cross currents and whirlpools. Here, the bankers and the industrial magnates have the decisive word. Coming into conflict with them, Radicalism loses its last vestiges of virility.

Upon assuming power in 1924, and finding himself subjected to a cruel fire from the benches of the parliamentary Right, especially on the part of heavy industry and banks, Herriot placated them and justified himself with: "I place the interests of the nation above any theory." From the scientific standpoint, this formula is astounding in its naiveté. "Theory," i.e., the program of a party, is intended to be nothing else than a thoroughly worked-out expression of the "interests" of the nation. By counterposing theory to "interests," Herriot admitted ten years ago that the program of the Radicals, with all its moderateness, could find no place in the post-war reality.

The crisis of the franc and state finances in 1924 immediately placed the Radical administration face to face with the entire system of finance capital. The Bourse pretended to be in extreme terror of the Radicals. In reality, it was Herriot who felt mortal terror of the Bourse; that is why he pleaded with it not to take his program seriously. In the end, Herriot yielded his post to Poincaré. Together with

his enemy Tardieu, Herriot spent two years in the "concentration" ministry, which he subsequently left only upon the categorical insistence of his party, against his own will, "with death in his heart." Herriot's entire constitution is such that he prefers having the authoritative representatives of big business not in the opposition but rather in his own administration. The difficulty, however, is that the Bourse's politicians prefer to have *their own* administration once more, with Herriot a hostage as in 1926-1928, rather than a super-arbiter vacillating between the interests of the big bourgeoisie and the illusions of the petty bourgeoisie, as in 1924 and in 1932.

The fact that, at the critical moment, Poincaré represented the banks so authoritatively has forever established his authority in the mind of Herriot. The leader of the Radicals has subsequently allowed no opportunity to pass by without reiterating, sometimes two and three times in the same speech, his profound reverence for Poincaré. Is it possible to conceive a Jacobin who would bow respectfully before the authority of... a Necker? Yet Herriot continues to consider himself a Jacobin.

Appealing in December 1932 for the payment of the installment due on the American debt, Herriot stressed that he was only under compulsion to bear the consequences of somebody else's policy. When the Chamber of Deputies went on record for non-payment, Herriot exclaimed: "Tomorrow somebody else may perhaps be able to tie the threads together. I shall assist him from without." But the task of "tying the threads together" fell upon Herriot himself. Whether in questions of foreign or domestic politics, Herriot as a short term Minister and Chairman invariably began by referring to the situation which he had inherited and which predetermined his course as if someone else each time decided for him what must be done. The key to the riddle is simple: the logic of French imperialism is mightier than the sympathies of the "average Frenchman." Upon assuming power, the Radicals are compelled to defend the self-same interests that are also served by the national bloc. They retain only freedom to choose the phraseology.

Herriot's final argument against those who balked at paying the installment due was: "You are ready to disrupt the concord of Liberty against dictatorship for the sake of 480,000,000 francs." This does not ring at all badly in the political sound-chamber of France. But the concord between "the three great democracies" remains only a pious hope of the Radicals. The reality at that time—and it is still a reality today, though somewhat warped—was that France stood in alliance with three reactionary dictatorships, Poland, Roumania and Jugoslavia. The pacifist lawyer or school teacher is doomed to carry out policies as Minister different from those his heart desires. Hence, it is quite natural that the Radical deputies feel displeased with their Ministers and the Radical voters with their deputies. No less natural is it that the displeasure of both is doomed to impotence. Reducing the complex mechanics to its simplest formula, we must say that in all major questions the petty bourgeois is under the fatal necessity of bowing to the big bourgeois.

Platonic Ideals and Political Realities

Shortly after the fall of his second Ministry, Herriot disclosed to the Athenian Telegraph Agency the ultimate meaning of his politics: "What I defended in my last speeches—is the morals of Plato." In the figure of "passionately beloved" Greece, Herriot greeted the birthplace of his doctrine: "I sacrificed myself in order to remain true to my

ideals." In reality, his sacrifice was not so tragic in character; pressed by the Socialists and by his own faction, Herriot chose to be defeated honorably upon an international issue, in expectation of the inevitable time when the Chamber of Deputies cooled off from the last elections and shifted its center of gravity to the Right. At first glance, it might appear paradoxical that this gospel of philosophic idealism should be addressed to the Greece of Venizelos and Tsaldaris which hardly serves as a model in the question of paying debts. But it is impossible not to admit that Herriot's good intentions towards Wall Street did actually remain on this occasion their Platonic character.

It would be a mistake to consider this excessively exalted motivation for a parliamentary defeat to be nothing more than an unsuccessful turn of phrase. No, The philosophy of absolute values enters as a necessary element into Herriot's spiritual economics. Bowing to yesterday with purely conservative humility, Herriot reconciles in the astral voids of philosophy the contradiction between his "theory" and the policies foisted upon him; this method has the added advantage of not increasing the overhead expense. Just as the cult of pure ideas did not hinder Plato himself, the "divine" broad-shouldered idealist, from trading in olive oil and dealing with slaves as beasts of burden, so the worship of eternal morals does not hinder Herriot from supporting the Versailles system. It is the merit of Platonism that it permits double-entry bookkeeping, one entry for the spirit, the other for the flesh. Were it not for fear of offending the Voltairean and the man of good morals in M. Herriot, we could say that he is motivated in the last analysis by the self-same psychologic forces that impel certain Catholic ladies in high society to divide their activity between adultery and the Church. Herriot treats history in somewhat the same manner as he does philosophy; he derives moral solace from it rather than lessons for action. Doubtful as it may seem, such a method enables him to trace his genealogy from the revolutionists of the year 1793.

The Radicals believe that of the traditions of the Jacobins they have most completely assimilated their anti-clericalism and patriotism. But anti-clericalism has long ceased to be a militant doctrine; this business has been reduced to a peaceful division of labor between the secular Republic and the Catholic Church. As for patriotism, in the case of the Jacobins it was inextricably bound up with the proclamation of a revolutionary principle and its defense against feudal Europe. Herriot's patriotism proclaims no new idea but clings closely to the patriotism of Tardieu. The shades of Robespierre and Saint-Juste have been invoked in vain. Not for nothing did Poincaré himself say patronizingly of Herriot, "National reactions are peculiar to the man."

Herriot's reference to the Jacobins have always had an incorporeal character. When in need of historic examples, he quotes more readily from the "great liberal" Lamartine and even Count de Broglie. In one of his parliamentary speeches Herriot quoted a banal statement of Louis XV as proof of... the peace-loving quality of the "French spirit"! Idealists generally treat history as a wholesale warehouse of moral tracts. Lack of discrimination in the choice of authorities to them appears to be objectivity. Least accidental, by the way, are the references to Lamartine. This peacock of a poet was not only the false historian of the Girondists but also their epigone in politics. Herriot's Radicalism has nothing in common with the Mountain; it is the self-same Girondism, but a Girondism that passed

through the fires of 1848 and 1871, and in them burned up the remnants of its illusions.

Herriot undoubtedly would have made an ideal French mayor had he not been handicapped by world contradictions, wars, and threats of war, reparations and debts, German and Italian Fascism, in short, by everything that goes to make up our epoch, not to mention the crisis, unemployment, the dissatisfaction of the functionaries, the dictatorial aspirations of Tardieu, the armed detachments of Colonel de la Rocque, and the perfidious friendship of Blum.

The Politics of Perplexity

Herriot's positive program, which he himself so easily disavows, consists of the withered principles of liberalism in a dilute solution of "socialism": private initiative and personal liberty—first and foremost; but—"within a social milieu harmonized by the State"; "the producer and the consumer must understand that there is a solidarity of interests between them"; "the peasant and the worker are—brothers." Add free education, secularization of the schools, and the program of domestic policies is well nigh exhausted. Upon this foundation rises the radiant idea of "Progress," and the image of France, torch in hand.

In the domain of foreign politics, Herriot's policies are even less definitive—if that is conceivable. "Concord between the three great democracies"; "peace is created by having faith in peace"; "from discussion is always born conciliation"; "we do not need general ideas—what we need is to study the facts." Behind such aphorisms the average Frenchman presupposes a program of action; as a matter of fact, nothing exists behind them save perplexity in the face of the complicated world situation.

It would be vain to seek for creative thought from the Radical leader whose religion is watchful caution. Briand managed splendidly without the categorical imperative, and without philosophic ideas in general; but his ready wit provided him in case of need with broad elastic formulas, if not with creative ideas. It is sufficient to recall—and today, it already sounds like a historic anecdote—that on September 15, 1929, during a diplomatic luncheon at which the representatives of 27 nations were gathered, Briand proposed to initiate work for the creation of the United States of Europe. There is a gesture of which Herriot is incapable! Not that he would be averse to the idea of a United States of Europe, or, if it suits you—of the whole world. A beautiful idea! An exalted idea! But much too exalted to mix with practical politics.

The theatrical post-war diplomacy with its unending personal interviews sped by airplanes, with its discussions at Geneva barren of results but brimful of plaudits, seems to have been specially created for the purpose of diverting attention away from the knots that are being drawn ever tighter. Herriot placed the greatest political importance upon his personal meetings with the former British premier, MacDonald; it was thus that "mutual understanding" was being created and renewed. The more the exalted interlocutors refrain from drawing their thoughts to their conclusion, the oftener they refer, sighing, to parliaments and public opinion, all the more do they defer questions to the next occasion, all the more do they feel constrained within the three-dimensional confines of empirical politics. MacDonald sought solace in the Old and New Testaments; Herriot, in the secular theology of idealism.

An observant foreigner cannot fail to feel amazed at the undue expansiveness reached by the vows of love for

France in the speeches of French politicians of all tendencies. Given the greatest mastery of language, it is difficult each time to find a new expression for one and the same idea; small wonder that the repetitious patriotic avowals fatigue one with their monotony. Once, Herriot found it necessary to declare that his love for France was "a profound but hidden and chaste emotion." The minutes record, "Laughter from the Right." Indeed, it is difficult to consider an emotion as hidden, if its chastity is certified from a political tribunal.

These patriotic harangues, which do little honor to French taste, so refined as a rule, spring not so much from legitimate pride in the great role France has played in the history of mankind—indeed, such an emotion could be more restrained—as from alarm for the present international position of France which is obviously not commensurate with its actual forces. Historical remembrances serve only as a source for patriotic rhetoric; the exposed nerve behind it is the unquenched and acute alarm which cannot be concealed by mutual appeals for coolness and self-control.

Herriot, of course, always stood for disarmament. But material disarmament must be preceded by moral disarmament. Besides, genuine peace can be established only upon security. And security demands a strong French army. Until a rational reduction of armaments is achieved, the people must see the guarantee of peace in the weapons of France. Anyone failing to agree with this, thereby discloses his malice.

Imperialist Roots of Herriot's Pacifism

An extremely restrained orator as a rule, Herriot is unable to find words harsh enough to denounce those disbelievers who have doubts about the peaceableness of France and its government. We, on our part, do not doubt for a moment the genuineness of Herriot's pacifism. We must only add, it is the pacifism of a conqueror. If we disregard the warlike nomads, the conquerors have always inclined to pacifism, all the more decisively the greater their victory and the sacrifices paid for it. The formula of satiated pacifism is a simple one: the vanquished must reconcile themselves to their fate and not seek to hamper the victor from enjoying the fruits of victory. After every new successful campaign Napoleon wanted to be left in peace. If he had to return to the wars again, it was only because those whom he had crushed refused to reconcile themselves to the tyranny of the conqueror. Had the Little Corporal been less contemptuous of ideology, he would have had little difficulty in placing his concern for peace under the aegis of Plato.

At the Disarmament Conference—in which century was it?—Herriot announced solemnly, "We have come here to proclaim our aversion to all imperialism, whether open or masked." These words would ring more convincingly had the orator taken the pains to explain what he meant by imperialism. We shall not go into theoretical definitions, but confine ourselves merely to recalling the least disputable features of imperialism. Holding backward countries by force in the status of exploited *colonies* is the most patent, though far from only form of imperialism. To our knowledge, Herriot has never undertaken to renounce the colonial possessions of France. France's opposition, backed by force, to the unification of a nation within the boundaries of a national state (the questions of *Anschluss*, and of the Polish Corridor); the strengthening of her own hegemony by giving military and financial support to outright anti-people's

governments in other countries (Poland, Roumania, Serbia)—if all this is not imperialism, then there is no such thing as imperialism in the universe.

Territorial seizures and violence cease to be seizures and violence for Herriot once they are sanctioned by the past, or better still, by international pacts. Moral and philosophical precepts are not decisive, patriotic interests are. Imperialism is everything that runs counter to the interests of France. Imperialists therefore are to be found always outside her frontiers.

The less Herriot tends toward practical concessions to the defeated enemy, all the more generous he becomes in the sphere of philosophic reparations. Thus, during the self-same conference he quoted Immanuel Kant as having foreseen in his project of the eternal universe . . . the League of Nations. One would indeed feel very sorry for the sage of Koenigsberg had he foreseen nothing better than this. But the appeal to Kant is very characteristic: the question is transplanted as usual from the realm of reality into the transcendental sphere, and besides, the reference to a German classic should stir the Germans to peaceableness. Unfortunately, left unexplained is the question of whether Kant, in his system of an eternal universe, had likewise foreseen the Versailles Treaty.

The philosophic quotation, however, proved of no avail. Hitler entrenched himself upon the ruins of the Weimar democracy. Germany's program of arming entered as a terrible reality into the artificial regime of the Europe of Versailles. British diplomacy lifted its head, feeling itself again in its favorite role of arbitrator. Mussolini, using Hitler's rearming as a club, presented France with an ultimatum; a free hand in Africa, as a pledge of friendship. Laval agreed to the concession. However, before the Italo-Ethiopian conflict succeeded in terminating Ethiopia's independence, or, on the contrary, in extracting the tusks of Italian Fascism, it dealt a cruel blow to the international position of France. A question mark was immediately placed over her continental hegemony. France's scurrying between Italy and England laid bare the international dependency of French imperialism with its far too narrow a demographic and an economic base. The crisis in the international position of France complicates her already profound internal crisis, tearing the ground from under the feet of Herriot's imperialist "pacifism." But maybe Moscow could provide a firmer support?

Herriot's Attitudes Towards the USSR

After the Bolsheviks had repulsed all attempts at intervention and had overcome their internal enemies, Herriot's interest in the Soviets became tinged with his remembrances of the epoch of Jacobin terror. During his visit, in 1922, to the Soviet republic, Herriot talked with the Bolsheviks—not as a co-thinker of course, but almost as a well-wisher, as one of the heirs of the Mountain, capable of "understanding" the Bolsheviks. He was interested in the economic and cultural measures of the revolution, but especially in the successes of the Red Army. On the Soviet calendar there still remained at that time one more very difficult year, but the Civil War had ended, and the stricken country was already on the upgrade. The army, whose numbers had been greatly reduced, cleaned and spruced itself, and appeared presentable enough, at any rate, in Moscow, to be shown to a foreign guest. As I recall, Herriot visited military schools and barracks. Politics is inconceivable without guile, so orders had been issued in advance

that during Herriot's presence in the Commissariat of War the regiment on duty should march by singing beneath the windows of the office where the reception was to take place. I must say that the regiment which was under the special supervision of the then Commander-in-Chief S. S. Kamenev, a great lover of army songs, was considered a model unit. We were not mistaken in our appraisal of the "national reactions" of the democratic politician. When the window panes rattled from the initial blast of soldiers' voices, Herriot pulled his heavy body from the armchair and displayed immediately his familiarity not only with the melody but also with the words.

In the years that followed Herriot's relations with the Soviets worsened gradually. During his years of collaboration with Poincaré he severely censured the regime that refused over so long a period to renounce the methods of dictatorship. However, in proportion as militant nationalism grew stronger in Germany, Herriot tended to become again much better disposed toward the Soviet Union. "As a democrat, and a great-grandson of the Revolution which at times steeped its hands in blood, I refuse to fling curses and satire at Russia, now at work creating a new regime." Let it be known, incidentally, that he, Herriot, was as far removed from Communism today as he had been from Czarism previously; but he had no doubt that the Bolshevik regime would ultimately create petty peasant proprietors. And France would be able to lean for support upon their army. This is the task to which world history is ultimately reducible.

Thus, Herriot became a cautious but persistent apostle of military friendship with the Soviet Union. It should be said bluntly that he did so without enthusiasm, rather constrained by bitter necessity. The big bourgeoisie finally allowed a Franco-Soviet agreement within a framework which would make it tolerable for England and yet not conflict with Italy's friendship. The future will demonstrate what this means in action. In any case, the Mayor of Lyons does not assume the title "Friend of the U.S.S.R." without

guile. To be sure, the collectivization of the peasantry has dealt a certain blow to his conservative hopes of a strong peasant; but Soviet diplomacy has instead become much wiser, more cautious, and more solid. And in the wake of the Soviet diplomacy—the French Communist Party as well. At the last Congress of the Radicals Herriot spoke demonstratively about his friend Litvinov ("Yes, my friend Litvinov"). This does not prevent him, however, from remaining in the ministry of Laval who with much greater assurance, and justification speaks of "his friend Mussolini." It is not excluded that Herriot may become Laval's successor, and carry on the friendship with Mussolini on his own account. But for how long?

It is not in place here to enter into political speculation, all the more so because the question of what will happen to Herriot personally is inseparable from the question of the future of France and of Europe as a whole. However, one can state with assurance that the political extremes will continue to swallow up the center in the future as well. The Radicals were able to assure the equilibrium of the parliamentary see-saw only so long as the country preserved a relative social equilibrium. These happy days have gone beyond recall. Herriot's victory at the elections (May 1932) has served only to reveal the utter incapacity of his party in the face of the impending domestic and foreign catastrophes. The Radical leaders replaced one another only to reveal more and more clearly the pathetic helplessness of all groupings in the party. On February 6, 1934, Daladier, the extreme "Left" among the Radicals, ingloriously capitulated to the street demonstration of the Fascists and Royalists. He, you see, did not want a civil war. In reality, he opened wide the gates for it. The language of facts is incontestable. At a slower pace than other European countries, France is heading towards great convulsions. Radicalism will be the first victim. Whatever aspect the coming epoch may assume, it will not be the epoch of the Golden Mean.

November 7, 1935

Who Are Hitler's Agents in Russia?

An Answer to Ex-Ambassador Davies

By G. MUNIS

In the December number of *The American Magazine* an article appeared written by the ex-ambassador of the United States to the Soviet Union, entitled "How Russia Blasted Hitler's Spy Machine," designed to utilize the semi-official prestige of a member of the United States' diplomatic corps to place a stamp of approval on the Moscow trials of 1936-38, the thousands of executions carried out without trial, and by inference the crimes committed abroad.

When a reader not well acquainted with this old issue stumbles across it again, he asks himself: Why was it necessary for a prominent American diplomat to take upon his shoulders the defense of Stalin who bears responsibility for the shooting of thousands of men? Observant though a diplomat may be, the government which ordered the trials should have at its disposal much more material and a far greater abundance of proofs and facts to demonstrate its correctness. Instead of the semi-official prestige with which Mr. Davies sallies forth to break paper lances for Stalin, the latter could have himself ventured out through Soviet diplomatic chan-

nels. Neither the United States government nor the press which supports it would have the least objection to this since it is a question of learning from the dictator of the Kremlin how to exterminate the "Fifth Column." Why does not Stalin himself or his government come forward to defend themselves in the American press? For the very simple reason that *no one would believe them*. It was necessary to grant them a vote of confidence in the public forum through the intervention of a high functionary of the American government—a vote which would be equivalent to implying that the functionary expressed the tacit approval of the government itself. If Stalin's defenders have had to offer the public a defense that is sugar-coated with American diplomacy, this only proves conclusively that from his own mouth, Stalin's words completely lack credibility.

When, at the beginning of the German-Soviet war, Mr. Davies was asked about "fifth columnists" in Russia, he responded like a Merlin sure of his magic: "There aren't any—they shot them." Now imagine an ideal country where there

remains not a single Hitler agent, where, according to the official propaganda, nothing less than socialism reigns and which, to again quote the same propaganda, possesses the most powerful army in the world. Enter the brigands of Hitler—a dictator hated even in his own country, representative of a capitalist nation, whose stage of production is very inferior to that of socialism and, in less than four months, he occupies a zone greater than the territory of France, Spain and England together; in addition, this zone includes the most industrialized portion of the country and the area richest in food and natural resources. *A priori*, without analyzing the trials and assassinations of 1936-38, anyone would conclude: neither have they shot the fifth columnists in Russia nor has socialism been achieved.

No New Proofs Whatever

By studying the trials and infamous purges more closely, one sees that this conclusion finds a basis in material evidence. Mr. Davies contributes no new data that would aid in understanding the trials, much less can he offer palpable proofs that were not presented at the trials. His sole contribution is—the confessions of the original defendants! But the truly amazing part, incredible for a layman, is precisely that despite so many defendants having confessed, the government that accused them could not present even the most insignificant scrap of material evidence. Not a letter, not a plan, not a document that would prove the connection of the accused with the Nazi or Japanese General Staff; not one authentic Hitler spy who was surprised in connivance with them. In no session was circumstantial or detailed evidence brought forth. The two “facts” that constituted the base of the main accusation, Piatakov’s trip by plane from Berlin to Oslo to receive instructions from Trotsky, and the interview of Holtzman with Trotsky’s son, Leon Sedov, in Copenhagen were revealed as false upon the first effort to investigate them. The Norwegian government declared that during the entire month mentioned by Piatakov, no foreign airplane arrived at the Kjeller airport, the only one near the city of Oslo; the interview of Holtzman with Leon Sedov in Copenhagen was no less spectacularly false. The accused “confessed” that it had been held in the lobby of the Hotel Bristol... but this hotel was torn down in 1917. Documentary proof and other testimony exist and have been published in the reports of the John Dewey Commission. No one who pretends to arrive at an honest judgment about the Moscow trials has the right to disregard the work and findings of this commission. Trotsky publicly offered to deliver himself to the GPU if he was found guilty in the judgment of an impartial commission in which the Stalinists could be represented. The latter could not accept this challenge because they did not have an iota of proof in their hands nor was it possible to refute those proofs that have accumulated against them. Nor should Mr. Davies ignore the fact that the Soviet government refused passports to a French Social-Democratic Commission that wanted to go to the USSR in order to judge the validity of the trials. Among them were persons who today are under arrest by the Vichy government in response to Hitler’s pressure. Were these people also Nazi spies?

Formerly Convinced Trials Were Frame-ups

Like everyone else, Mr. Davies was convinced, until a few weeks ago, of the falseness of the trials. “We knew that Trotsky had a great many followers in Russia, and we regarded the treason trials as Stalin’s method of de-

stroying his internal enemies,” he says in his article. He did not protest publicly, or perhaps he was happy at the shootings and purges, as were Hitler and Mussolini in their press, because the destruction of revolutionists is considered a boon by Mr. Davies’ co-thinkers. How then is he now able to convince himself suddenly of Stalin’s “amazing farsightedness”? The “confessions” of the accused that speak in Stalin’s favor are the same today as four years ago. At that time, attending the sessions of the trial personally, observing the men that confessed, everything appeared to him to be a stratagem of Stalin’s to destroy his enemies; today, Mr. Davies casts a glance backwards and suddenly sees the contrary of the statement referred to above: “I watched the defendants’ faces, studied their conduct on the stand and I arrived at the conclusion that the state had unquestionably proved its case.” We must observe that the conclusions of a diplomacy with such slow reactions can only be taken with several grains of salt.

But let us grant for a moment that Mr. Davies has been finally convinced by Stalin after four long years. Stalin, then, has always spoken the truth and Trotsky was nothing but a spy and a chief of spies. Very well, Mr. Ambassador; you have forgotten that Trotsky has been accused by Stalin not only of having been sold to the German General Staff. Much more recently, until the eve of the Nazi attack on the USSR, Stalin accused Trotsky of being in the pay of Roosevelt and Churchill. These accusations are to be found by the score in the *Daily Worker*. The letter by Trotsky’s assassin, Jacson, gave as the reason for his crime the alleged alliance of Trotsky with the government in Washington. Pretending that Trotsky had wanted to send him to the Soviet Union to carry out acts of sabotage and to assassinate Stalin, he said: “...he (Trotsky) expected to count not only on the support of a great nation but also on the support of a certain foreign parliamentary committee.” The Dies Committee is clearly referred to here. Siqueiros, the assailant of the 24th of May, 1940, stated before the Mexican Court that Trotsky was visited by the American Consul in Mexico. This time it is Mr. Davies’ job to present documents that reveal how, when, why, for how much, Trotsky or his followers sold themselves to the United States or to England. Prove it, Mr. Davies, prove it and everyone will believe that he could certainly also have sold himself to the German General Staff! If you do not prove it—and you will not prove it—you will have demonstrated beyond question that you are lying in order to do Stalin a political service.

Davies Refutes Himself

The service involved is revealed in Davies’ article as designed to calm an extremely conservative public, implacable enemy of the Russian revolution. To those who, in 1928, proposed that Trotsky be prosecuted for treason, Stalin, according to Mr. Davies, replied: “No, we must not do that. When the leaders of the French revolution began to kill each other, it was the beginning of the end. The Soviet revolution must not ‘chew up its own children.’ We will not do it.” And the author added a transparent thought: “From 1927 to 1935 that policy was sustained. But it was changed suddenly when the Russian leaders learned of the activities of the Fifth Column, and there followed the trials, purges, and executions, which were pressed with the greatest vigor and relentlessness.” In writing this paragraph, the author has tried to suggest to his public—the enemies of the socialist revolution, we repeat—that the revolution had already “chewed up” its own sons. Stalin’s mouth still gleams with the blood of the old Bolshe-

vik leaders. The American millionaires have no cause to be uneasy about an alliance with him. Neither can it be doubted for one moment that this is the real reason for Mr. Davies' consenting to defend him now.

Mr. Davies' own words demonstrate the fraud of an accusation which attempts to picture Trotsky and the defendants in Moscow as simple adventurers. "As a reward," the article declares, "the conspirators were to be allowed to take over a smaller but technically independent Soviet state, which would turn over White Russia and the Ukraine to Germany, and the Maritime Provinces and the Sakhalin oil fields to Japan." And the author continues, trying to bestow graphically some truthfulness on the confessions of Moscow: "It was as if Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau, Secretary of Commerce Jones, Under-Secretary of State Welles, Ambassador Phillips, Ambassador Winant, and Secretary to the President Early confessed to conspiring with Germany to cooperate in an invasion of the United States." Exactly. But, who would believe that Messrs, Morgenthau, Jones, Welles, etc., would sell themselves to Germany or any other power to receive as payment the posts of Treasurer, Secretary of State, Ambassador, etc., of a small state "technically independent" that would be confined to the limits of the state of Oklahoma? The high position which the defendants occupied, presented by Mr. Davies as an argument in favor of Stalin, is what makes the confessions absolutely improbable. Still more: the inexact and unproved form of the accusations, and the men who intervened as accusers give the Moscow trials no other odor but that of falsification. The main accuser was Vishinsky, a White Guard during the revolution of 1917 who was attacked personally by Lenin; the accused were Bolsheviks, Lenin's collaborators. Following Mr. Davies' scholastic procedure, it is necessary to say: "It is as if" General Grant, commander of the armies fighting against slavery during the war of secession in the United States, had been accused years after the peace by General Lee, commander of the Southern Armies, of conspiring with England in order to re-establish slavery. Lee would have been able to make Grant confess, this is only a problem of technique, as police all over the world know; but the United States would continue to believe in Grant and to hate Lee. This is precisely what occurred in the Soviet Union with Stalin and the accused Trotsky occupying the principal roles.

The resistance of the Red Army is also posed as an impressive argument. These people have become so panic stricken and impotent before fascism that any resistance seems to be a success! This argument is more unbalanced than is a drunkard. If a resistance that has lost almost 500,000 square kilometers a month is a success and a proof of excellent morale, those who maintain this must affirm by deduction that the morale of the German Army is the best in the world—something very far from the truth. Yes, the resistance of the Red Army and the Soviet people has been heroic and highly impressive because of the difficult conditions under which they have had to face the Nazi war machine. Their will to fight is firm, is valiant. But how can this prove what Mr. Davies maintains, that Stalin was in the right against the thousands

of men and leaders of the army whom he killed? On the contrary, when with excellent morale, a firm will to fight and armaments quite comparable to the German in quality and quantity, the army forever retreats before an enemy which takes over the most important industrial and agricultural zones, populated with 70,000,000 inhabitants, one can only conclude that this magnificent people has no leadership.

The Real "Fifth Column"

Mr. Davies is between the devil and the deep blue sea. Either he must admit that the Soviet people has no leadership, that it has the worst of leadership; or, if he still insists that the leadership is good and competent, he is forced to say that the failures are due to demoralization of the people and the army. We are convinced in advance that he is capable of accepting the latter, tacitly or explicitly so as to justify Stalin—not out of personal sympathy, we recognize that, but because Stalin represents the interests of capitalism. Mr. Davies does no more than express the hopes of the upper classes in the United States and England, that Stalin will put an end to the "excesses" of the Soviet Union. In more current phrases, the excesses are the remains of the October revolution which, naturally, tends to extend itself to the rest of the world. Not for nothing does Mr. Davies begin by telling his public that Trotsky wanted to extend the revolution over the entire world but that Stalin does not. However, Mr. Davies would do well to remember that in restoring capitalism in the USSR the United States and England are competing with Hitler. Stalin may still negotiate with the latter. If this happens, we will see what his present defenders say.

Here is the nub of the question. Stalin has developed a policy which, unfolding uninterruptedly, paves the way for capitalism. For this reason he shot or assassinated, after defaming them, the revolutionists who could have checked him and who certainly would have checked him. The struggle against Hitler and fascism is essentially a problem of revolutionary capacity to organize the poverty-stricken masses against him. Thus, the Bruening democracy, like that of Reynaud-Daladier and the Popular Front in Spain, worse than being powerless to stop Hitler, were his accomplices. Stalin has done Hitler a favor by killing the Bolsheviks in the USSR and by killing the old revolutionary ideas in the Communist International. In this sense Stalin has been and is Hitler's fifth column in Russia and in all Europe. Today he has at arms' reach the possibilities of victory over Hitler; it would be enough to re-establish Soviet democracy, to liberate and give the rights of workers' democracy to the tens of thousands of revolutionists whom he has imprisoned and to carry out intensive propaganda among the German people for the social revolution. Hitler can resist the English and American bombs for years, but he could not resist the revolutionary barrage proceeding from a revolutionary Russia for more than a few months. To have the defeat of Hitler in one's hands and not to take the necessary measures to achieve it is to act as his fifth column.

November 15, 1941

Leon Trotsky on the Jewish Question

The attempt to solve the Jewish question through the migration of Jews to Palestine can now be seen for what it is, a tragic mockery of the Jewish people. Interested in winning the sympathies of the Arabs who are more numerous than the Jews, the British government has sharply altered its policy toward the Jews, and has actually renounced its promise to help them found their "own home" in a foreign

land. The future development of military events may well transform Palestine into a bloody trap for several hundred thousand Jews. Never was it so clear as it is today that the salvation of the Jewish people is bound up inseparably with the overthrow of the capitalist system.—*From the archives of Leon Trotsky.*
July, 1940.

Priorities and Unemployment

By C. CHARLES

With 75% of the war orders in the first year of the "defense" effort in the hands of 56 corporations, with more than 30% in the hands of six corporations, with these concerns receiving priority in the allocation of raw materials, with non-military establishments being shut down or their operations curtailed due to lack of raw materials, the grim problem of priorities unemployment is facing the workers of the country.

On July 15, 1941, Leon Henderson, Price Control Administrator, painted a dark picture of "factories made idle by lack of raw materials to turn out civilian goods; of men made idle by lack of materials to work with; of single industry towns blighted."

Causes of Priorities Unemployment

The country is just beginning to enter into the period of priorities unemployment. All industries that use raw materials needed by the war industries are forced to give way before the inexorable demands of armament. The present limited supply of steel is being absorbed for guns, tanks and other military equipment, and less and less remains for cars or refrigerators. The workers occupied in manufacturing cars or refrigerators find themselves jobless until the plants are retooled for defense, or until additional supplies of steel are forthcoming.

Besides steel, among the other industries affected are those that use aluminum, iron, copper, zinc, brass, nickel, rubber, tin, silk, cork and chemicals. Plastics, held out to the manufacturers as a substitute for the deficient raw materials, is itself becoming subject to priorities regulation and allocation.

The fact that ships and trains are carrying the materials for war purposes means that these facilities are unavailable to transport material not judged vital to the war effort, and this acts to aggravate shortages.

Tens of thousands of silk workers were thrown on the streets when the government banned further imports of silk in an attempt to place pressure on Japan.

Priorities unemployment affects not only workers directly involved in production, but also ever broader circles of those workers employed in transporting, selling and warehousing.

Fears of Post-War Crash Hamper Production

The shortages in supplies of various raw materials can be directly traced to the economic crisis of 1929, when no expansion in plant capacity took place in the basic industries which were running at a low percentage of potential capacity.

Even with the beginning of the armament program, and to this day, the various trusts did not and do not want to endanger their monopoly profits by a program of expansion. For example, the Aluminum Company of America at the start of the armaments program insisted that it could produce enough aluminum not only to supply the war needs, but also civilian and British requirements. A few months later aircraft plants engaged in military work were limping along due to a shortage of aluminum. Of course, aluminum workers producing articles for civilian use have been made jobless be-

cause of lack of raw materials.

The *Fortune Magazine* of August 1941, states:

"It is now obvious that expansion of productive facilities for steel, electricity, aluminum and other essentials should have been undertaken as soon as the defense emergency was realized. But the advisers closest to the OPM . . . reflected the fear of their several industries that the creation of vast new plant capacity would present a *threat of post-war competition*." (Our emphasis.)

On July 28, 1941, the *New York Times* correspondent from Pittsburgh wrote that "certain steel authorities still hold to the view that there really is no practical need for wholesale increases in capacity."

Mr. Thurman Arnold, Assistant Attorney General, in a speech in Boston on October 7, asserted that there were concerted attempts on the part of basic industries to hamper any expansion which would interfere with their domination of industry after the war.

As *Fortune* describes it, Washington is divided into several factions: the "expansionists" who want increased plant facilities and the "non-expansionists" who fear "what is to happen when the show is over and the nation faces . . . a new world with huge capacities and no notion of how to convert or distribute them." Fears concerning the post-war situation harass the capitalist class.

The course of the government is to tread cautiously between these two schools of capitalist thought; to set up new plants only after assuring the capitalists affected that these new plants would offer no threat to their profits at present or in the future. The new plants are financed either with government aid or completely by the government. In those few cases that it keeps the ownership of the plant that it had financed, the government hands them over to the monopolies to operate at a substantial profit for the latter.

Effects of War Effort and Priorities

Without doubt the long range effect of the war effort will be the concentration of industry in ever fewer hands. There are certain important technical factors that aid the large corporations in securing war orders. Small firms are as a rule technically unable to handle defense work because of lack of machines. These machines can be secured only from machine tool companies which have huge backlogs of unfilled orders. The large corporations operate their own machine making departments. The large corporations, with their own sources of supply of raw materials, their own transportation and their own plants, have no difficulty in continuing operations. The small establishment, dependent on others for raw materials, equipment, etc., often finds itself crippled.

Furthermore, large corporations are able to buy up a large part of the available supply of raw materials and to hoard this material. In the meantime, the small concern cannot place its hands on any raw material.

In England, 40,000 small concerns went under in the first 16 months of the war. In the United States, defense officials have estimated, according to the *CIO Economic Outlook*, that at least 20,000 businesses may be destroyed by the dislocation of the army program.

If the belated program of expansion even now meets bitter resistance from the capitalist class, the program of sub-

contracting and thereby "rescuing" small business faces the same obstacle.

The powerful large corporations do not want to save small business. On the contrary they want to keep all the lucrative war work under their control, and to freeze the independent business man out. According to Mr. Arnold (in his already-cited statement on October 7), this is a deliberate scheme of combinations which seek to dominate the market.

A few crumbs will be tossed to small business, but on the whole, the liberals will be even less successful in their present limited program of subcontracting than they have been in their previous "trust-busting" campaigns.

How the Workers Are Affected

The ranks of the unemployed are swelled by those unable to find jobs. It is estimated that priorities unemployment will add from 1,500,000 to 3,000,000 workers to the ranks of the unemployed, bringing the total unemployed to between 6,500,000 and 8,000,000 according to the most conservative estimates.

On September 5, 1941, the *New York Times* correspondent in Washington declared:

"Some officials believe the total of idle may go as high as 2,000,000 workers in the next few months as material shortages force drastic curtailments in the production of non-defense durable goods."

Mr. Walter B. Weisenburger, executive vice-president of the National Association of Manufacturers, asserted on September 23, 1941, that nearly 3,000,000 employees in small non-military manufacturing plants face loss of employment within six months as a result of priorities.

During the year ending June 1, 1941, 3,365,000 workers were re-employed in industry. During these months plants hitherto idle or on part time went into full production.

Now capacity operation has itself become a limiting factor in certain basic industries. Aluminum is running at 100 per cent of capacity; steel at practically 100 per cent; there is a shortage of copper as well as of other basic commodities. Apart from such developments as the subcontracting of war orders to small plants, the rate of future advances in production and re-employment depends primarily on the completion of new plants. This means that increases in operation and employment will be spasmodic; employment will rise only as new plants are completed.

The workers now thrown out of work by priorities unemployment can be reabsorbed into industry slowly. In the case of the big corporations, with their large defense orders, the period of unemployment may be comparatively short depending on the time necessary to change the industry from a peace to a war time basis. In other cases, it will be many seasons before the workers made jobless by priorities unemployment will find work. In the very process of losing jobs in small plants and being rehired in large-scale industry, a certain proportion of the workers will be left out of work, due to greater use of labor-saving devices in the large-scale industry. A WPA research division estimates that not more than 1,500,000 can be expected to be rehired during the year ending June 1, 1942.

In addition to a decline in the income of the working class due to increased unemployment, a further decline of living standards is inevitable because of the soaring of the price of consumers' goods as the supply dwindles.

Union Plans to Solve Priorities Problems

Brought face to face with the acute problem of priorities unemployment, certain labor leaders have been occupy-

ing themselves with plans to avoid or alleviate priorities unemployment and step up war production. President Murray has formulated his CIO plan; Walter Reuther of the Auto Workers has issued a plan which was the center of considerable attention about a year ago; the United Electrical Workers has developed a plan for their hard-hit industry as has the Aluminum Workers Union; there are other plans, including the Buffalo and Flint plans. President Green has likewise proposed a plan in the name of the AFL.

These plans have the following features in common:

1. Government-employer-labor boards to run the industry;
2. Increase of production by organization of the industry as a unit instead of numerous independent plants;
3. Maintenance of seniority for workers now on the job when the shift is made over to war work;
4. No curtailment of civilian work until war work is secured.

The Reuther plan was among the first proposed. By the plan Reuther hoped to alleviate the seasonal character of the auto industry and also hoped to avoid mass layoffs when the steel for autos would be rationed. His plan was based on the idea that auto workers and the present auto plants could be used in building planes. Reuther proposed to achieve the production of 500 planes daily in the Detroit area.

His plan technically was based on two proposals: 1. That a survey of the automobile industry in and around Detroit be made to show the plant and machine capacity available for airplane work; 2. That the blue print of a plane should be broken down into its component parts and these parts be assigned for mass output to the plant which the survey showed was best able to handle their manufacture. Finally, the various parts would be assembled in a central hangar.

The cynical reception this meek plan met by the capitalist class is extremely symptomatic and revealing. The organ of the machine tool industry, the *American Machinist*, in its issue of April 2, 1941 said:

"The CIO Reuther (500 planes a day) plan to use Detroit capacity for aircraft has been definitely rejected. It was rejected squarely on its essential features, treatment of the auto industry as one firm with work parcelled out in a semi-compulsory fashion and labor participation in management, rather than on the rather irrelevant arguments as to whether the plan could actually produce 500 planes a day."

Capitalist concepts of "relevancy" and "irrelevancy" speak clearly and loudly what the war effort means: Planes may or may not be produced, but the only relevant argument is that the rights and profits of the capitalists must be assured.

Fallacies of Union Plans

The fallacies in these timid plans are easily discernible. First fallacy is that they are based on the misconception of the role of the government, which according to those who drew up the plans, represents a neutral group representing the nation "above" both the workers and capitalists. Bitter and long experience has shown that the government, far from being a neutral in the struggle of the classes, is in reality a representative of the ruling class. Labor will find itself a prisoner on these boards, caught between two expressions of the same capitalist class—the capitalists themselves and their government—and would be outvoted on all decisive questions. Recent experiences with the National Defense Mediation Board in connection with the miners' struggle are most educative.

Second, the big capitalists do not want to and will not

organize industry as a whole, they do not want to subcontract work but are coldly planning to insure profits for themselves with big backlogs of orders; they want no interference with their management of industry; they are not interested in production but primarily in maintaining their monopoly position.

Fallacy number three of these plans is that labor would take responsibility for production for the war effort of a war fought in the interest of imperialism, and from which the workers have nothing to gain.

Some of the formulators of these plans imagine that it is possible to have the war effort and also maintain the level of consumers' goods production. This is still another error of the plans.

They demand that raw materials be made available to the plants now occupied in producing consumers' goods, until these concerns receive military orders. In the meantime, if their idea were adopted the plants at present working on war work would have to curtail expansion. They think that the war effort can stop or slow up at their request or desire. This is an illusion.

The transition from peace-time production to war industry is as irresistible in its character as the transition from handicraft to manufacture and machine industry. The war is as necessary to decaying capitalism as the introduction of ever-improved machinery was to capitalism when it was still progressive. Modern capitalism cannot exist without inflicting hardships on the workers.

To be sure, these plans are in many cases based on a

healthy suspicion that capitalist management of industry is inefficient, wasteful and concerned solely and exclusively with profits.

Marxists are very often obliged to pass with the workers through experiences, even though the experience itself is doomed to failure. This may be the situation in many of the unions in regard to the plans. But the workers can only gain from such experience if the Marxists in their ranks constantly explain their criticism and advance their own program. The logical course to pursue is therefore to advocate a program, not of doctoring capitalist management, but of replacing it with workers' control of production. From the sound idea that capitalism is interested only in its profits, flows the program of expropriation of the large-scale industries.

The attitude of Marxists toward the war program including priorities unemployment, the rising cost of living and the union proposals, is based on the fundamental idea that labor is not responsible for the war and its conduct. Labor can defend its living standards not through class collaboration but only by continuing the class struggle. We fight for the slogan of the sliding scale of hours as an effective measure against unemployment; and for the rising scale of wages so that the living standards may be maintained at least at their present level, if not improved, in the face of unemployment and rising costs of living.

At the same time, the problem of priorities unemployment offers an excellent opportunity for explaining to the workers our complete transitional program.

Stalin's Pre-War Purge

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

Precisely during the period of the Stalin-Hitler pact, which the Kremlin and its hirelings now claim had been utilized as a breathing space to strengthen the country, the basic plants of the USSR were operating at two-thirds, one-half, two-fifths of their capacity, and even below these levels. In a previous article (*Fourth International*, November 1941), we adduced, from Stalin's own official data, incontrovertible proof of this catastrophic condition of Soviet industry.

Stalin's Secret Purge of 1940-41

Stalin sought to emerge from the crisis in his customary manner—through new repressions and purges. The Kremlin's sole concern on this as on all other occasions was to unload its own responsibility on scapegoats. Sufficient data are now available to demonstrate that the little-known and "bloodless" purge which was unleashed by Stalin toward the end of 1940 and which continued throughout the first part of 1941 assumed proportions second only to the monstrous blood purges of 1936-1938.

The signal for this purge came with the call for the Eighteenth Party Conference which convened in Moscow in February 1941.

A partial list of the People's Commissariats that were decimated during the "discussion period" in the months prior to the Conference follows:

- The People's Commissariat of Ferrous Metallurgy
- The People's Commissariat of Coal
- The People's Commissariat of Oil
- The People's Commissariat of Non-Ferrous Metallurgy
- The People's Commissariat of Light Industry
- The People's Commissariat of Defense Industries

- The People's Commissariat of Ship-Building
- The People's Commissariat of Transport
- The People's Commissariat of Building Industry
- The People's Commissariat of Communications
- The People's Commissariat of State Planning
- The People's Commissariat of Domestic Trade
- The People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade
- The People's Commissariat of Health
- The People's Commissariat of Justice
- The People's Commissariat of Cinema
- The People's Commissariat of Art, etc., etc.

At the Conference itself six members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (among them Maxim Litvinov), 15 alternates and 9 members of the Central Auditing Commission were expelled on the charge of "incompetence" and "failure to fulfill their duties." The People's Commissars of Agriculture, Medium Machine Building, Timber and Defense Industry were purged. Immediately after the Conference the ax fell on the Commissariats of Aircraft, Munitions, Electrical Industry, Chemical Industry, Marine Transport, River Transport and Fishing Industry.

All this was only the beginning. The Moscow press, issues of which are finally available, reveals conditions that verge on the incredible. *Pravda* from March 2 to March 27 reported further "reorganization" in the following Commissariats:

- The People's Commissariat of State Control
- The People's Commissariat of Medium Machine Building
- The People's Commissariat of Light Industry
- The People's Commissariat of Munitions
- The People's Commissariat of Defense

The People's Commissariat of State Control, Personnel Division
 The State Planning Commission
 The Council of People's Commissars
 The People's Commissariat of Timber Industry
 The People's Commissariat of Oil Industry
 The People's Commissariat of Non-Ferrous Industry
 The People's Commissariat of Agriculture
 The People's Commissariat of Electrical Industry
 The People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (the GPU)

The People's Commissariat of Textile Industry

The Kremlin's average during this period was approximately a Commissariat a day. Many of the Commissariats were purged several times during the month of March alone. Over and above this the columns of *Pravda* in the space of a little more than three weeks in March contain reports of the prosecution of Soviet industrial and administrative staffs on *criminal charges* in the following key industrial areas: Gorky, Kursk, Novosibirsk, Moscow, Stalingrad *oblast* (province), Dnepropetrovsk *oblast*, Kemerovo and Novorossisk *oblasts*, Sumsk *oblast*, and so on—in short, from one end of the country to the other.

The Official Explanation for the Purge

The purge reached its peak in the months of April and May, i.e., on the very eve of Hitler's invasion. Official confirmation of this is contained in the *Bolshevik*, the "theoretical" organ of Stalin's Communist Party. The leading editorial in the March issue of the *Bolshevik* is in effect an order to "cleanse" the primary organs of the party, under the guise of "elections" scheduled for the months of April and May.

"The elections of party organs in the primary organizations," declares this editorial, "must assist us in uncovering the actual state of affairs in every enterprise. Bold Bolshevik criticism can be of decisive help in laying bare all the inadequacies, in lashing the uncouth attitude toward carrying out the entrusted tasks, and in exposing the do-nothings, babblers and ignoramuses who are acting as a brake on our progress" (*Bolshevik*, March 1941, No. 6, pp. 4-5).

In the period of the Moscow frame-ups which preceded the Stalin-Hitler pact, the Kremlin labelled its victims and scapegoats as "enemies of the people," "spies," "wreckers," "saboteurs," "diversionists," etc. The formula for the 1940-41 purge reads: "do-nothings," "babblers," "ignoramuses." By the admission of the Kremlin, this was the kind of "leadership" it had itself foisted upon Soviet industry as a consequence of its monstrous purges. This is how Stalin "strengthened" the Soviet Union by his purges! Naturally, we shall wait in vain for an explanation from such gentlemen as Davies, Hopkins, Ingersoll, who together with the liberals in the *New Republic*, have at this late hour jumped forward to whitewash Stalin.

The direct connection between this drive against "do-nothings," "ignoramuses," etc. and the crisis in Soviet industry is explained by the editors of *Bolshevik* as follows:

"The elections of party organs must demonstrate whether or not the party organizations and their leaders are fighting daily and consistently to fulfill the decisions of the Eighteenth Party Conference; whether or not they have begun everywhere to penetrate in essence into production and to interest themselves in questions of new technique and technology, in the organization of production, in the proper placement of individuals and their utilization, in the basic costs of production and the quality of production" (*idem*, page 5).

If these words have any meaning at all, they mean that Soviet industry had been left in charge of people who were least concerned with and least qualified to deal with its func-

tioning and its most elementary problems. And as if to leave no room for doubt on this score, the editors of *Bolshevik* flatly declare:

"Unfortunately there are still not a few leaders—both in the party and industry—who concern themselves with production only superficially; they do not penetrate into the economy of their enterprises; they try to evade responsibility by mouthing meaningless common-places. One need have no doubt that such leaders will be subjected to severe criticism and that they will not be entrusted with the leadership of party work."

What safeguarded these "leaders" from criticism all this time? How did they come to be "entrusted" with leadership in the first place? Who is really responsible? On these as on all other questions, there is only silence from the Kremlin and all the hired and voluntary apologists of Stalin and Roosevelt.

The Kremlin's "Leaders" of Industry

The editors of *Bolshevik*, who speak only on Kremlin's orders, return again and again to the impermissible state of affairs in the industrial "leadership."

"There still remain not a few leaders," they keep harping, "who do not understand the need of widening their knowledge and their horizons and who think that they can get by with common-places, hollow phrases and superficial administration. Such leaders must be reminded... by communists that the party will not stand on ceremony in dealing with them. Babblers and ignoramuses who refuse to study modern technology, who refuse to penetrate into economy and production cannot remain at the head of plants, factories and railways: they are acting as a brake on our further development."

The Kremlin which itself placed "babblers" and "ignoramuses" in charge of plants, factories and railways would have the world believe that the real trouble was this, that these same babblers and ignoramuses "refused" to study (modern technology!) and proved themselves incapable of "penetrating" (into production and economy!); and that they must now be reminded of this by "communists." Beneath contempt are those people who are trying today to embellish such self-confessed bankrupts and criminals, and their "horizons."

Having presented this self-indictment, the editors of *Bolshevik* conclude:

"People who are incapable of living things, people who have broken away from the masses, who do not penetrate in essence into industrial and party work, who refuse to broaden their political and technico-economical knowledge and their horizons will be removed from party leadership as a result of the elections. Communists will elect to their leading organs people who understand the political line of the party and are capable of realizing it in practice" (*idem*, page 9).

The turn-over in the "leadership" of the primary party organizations (which are entrusted with the direction of the country's economic life) assumed fantastic proportions long before Stalin had issued his orders for the mass purge.

Thus, according to the *Bolshevik*:

"During the year 1940 in Kalinin *oblast* (province) 645 secretaries of primary organizations had to be relieved; and in the Ivanovsk *oblast* there were 665 replacements. Many of them turned out to be worthless, poorly prepared for leadership and incapable of coping with their duties" (*idem*, page 9).

If such conditions prevailed in relatively unimportant regions as Kalinin and Ivanovsk, what must have been the situation in the key areas?

The collapse of the technical and administrative apparatus and the extent of the purge can be gauged by the warning to the top layers of the bureaucracy that they must supervise the removal of the bankrupts and the appointment of new "leaders."

"Higher party organs—the district committees, the city committees, the *oblast* (province) committees of the party," instructs the leading editorial in the *Bolshevik*, "must provide a day-to-day direction of the elections of party organs, and assist the primary party units in ridding themselves of worthless, weak and spineless workers, babblers and ignoramuses; they must advance to leadership people who are unswervingly devoted to the cause of the party of Lenin-Stalin."

Stalin's Policies Assured Hitler's Successes

It should be borne in mind that the Kremlin's implacable censorship succeeded in hiding the true conditions from the masses inside and outside the USSR. But Hitler and his General Staff were fully informed. They struck at the Soviet Union while the country's economy was being disrupted internally and while the bureaucracy was once again devouring its own ranks. What more propitious circumstances could the enemy have asked for?

The conclusion is indisputable: *Hitler and Hitler alone gained from his pact with Stalin.* Over and above the fact that Hitler protected his rear in the initial phases of war, isolated the USSR, and assured himself of the broadest possible military arena from which to launch his attack, he obtained through this pact not only political support but also aid from the Kremlin in the shape of foodstuffs, raw materials, oil, et cetera. While Soviet economy was declining,

enormous quantities of these vital materials were being pumped by Stalin into Germany. As a matter of fact, the Kremlin has reiterated time and again that it had fulfilled to the letter all its obligations to the erstwhile ally.

It can be said without any fear of exaggeration that Stalin's policies served only to guarantee all the advantages to Hitler. This was the case *before* and *during* the Stalin-Hitler pact. The very same thing is true today, when Stalin's policies, translated to the military arena, have brought the USSR nothing but defeat after defeat.

Stalin's bureaucratic apparatus had cracked on the eve of the invasion. The war has acted to speed up this process of disintegration. Every defeat recalls more and more sharply to the minds of the Soviet masses the fact that the military reverses are inextricably bound up with the entire previous course of the Kremlin, above all the monstrous purges which beheaded the Red Army and Soviet economy. To remain in power Stalin must at all costs restore his waning prestige. He can hope to refurbish his prestige only from the outside. He has now found new apologists in the ranks of the "democratic" imperialist bourgeoisie and their liberal camp-followers. They are crawling out of their skins to perform this service for the Kremlin. But they cannot and will not succeed. Stalin's own admissions give the lie direct to the claims that his purges and his regime had "strengthened" the defensive power of the USSR.

Capitalist Economy in War

By MARC LORIS

The striking military victories of Germany and above all the collapse of France have engendered a host of improvised theories, which sprang up like mushrooms after a rain. These theories, diverse though they are, united in positing the birth of a new social system. The point of agreement among these innovators is that fascism is moving toward a social system which is no longer capitalism. While the changes in the political map of Europe explain psychologically the appearance of new theories, they are nevertheless incapable of providing them with a logical foundation.

A difference in military strategy manifestly provides little ground for inferring a difference in social systems. In reality, each social system has diverse strategies corresponding to the diverse stages of its development, or, more precisely, corresponding to the ability of the political and military leaders to adapt the science of war to each new phase of this development.

Aside from the new strategy, it is German economy since 1936 which furnishes the improvisers with their most fertile stock of arguments. Hitler has, you see, expropriated the capitalists, the old system is dead, etc. The method is simple. It consists in viewing present-day German economy entirely apart from what preceded it, and thereby its features are so distorted as to appear "non-capitalist," and finally a sonorous name such as "bureaucratic collectivism," or any other label that strikes the fancy, is pasted on the improvisation.

To solve a problem of such scope as the succession of two social systems it is imperative to avoid taking too brief a period of history. It is dangerous to determine a curve by simply extending a very short segment. To know where we are and where we are heading we shall begin by a brief review of the past. In particular, an examination of the first

great imperialist war will teach us exactly what are the novel features of the present struggle.

A Brief Historical Review

In 1914 the major powers entered the war prepared for a short conflict. The measures taken in the economic sphere scarcely exceeded the acquisition of stocks of boots and munitions. But the initial months of war brought two great surprises. First, the war refused to end quickly; and second, the consumption of armaments confounded the imagination—in a few hours munitions were exhausted which had required many months to store up. Confronted with a tremendously increased demand, industry soon found itself in a bottleneck. The entire economic organization threatened to collapse. The state had to intervene and issue rude commands in order to emerge from chaos. In all the chief belligerent countries the same phenomenon was manifested, in France, in England, in Germany.

But it was in the latter that it assumed the most finished form. The fundamental reason for this was the central geographical location of Germany; the difficulty of her communications with the world market in time of war, her lack of access to sources of raw materials in the colonies, and then, the British blockade. The country became a besieged fortress. In addition to raw materials the necessities of life soon grew scarce. Prices skyrocketed. The government fixed maximum prices and fought against speculation and hoarding, but met with little success and in a short time was forced to requisition all supplies and apportion them on the basis of individual rationing. Under state initiative and control corporations were formed for each food product; they bought up the entire output at a price fixed by the government and portioned

it out at a price likewise fixed. To regulate raw materials the government sought to utilize the existing cartels and industrial syndicates, to promote new ones and later even to compel their formation (*Zwangssyndisierung*); and the government itself formed corporations for the allocation of certain basic industrial materials. Foreign trade became the function of a governmental bureau; foreign exchange was similarly controlled. Consumption of non-military nature was rigidly restricted. Middlemen and merchants in general saw their role diminish enormously. The Reichstag heard innumerable complaints from liberals frightened by this intrusion of the state, while social democrats, anxious to justify their submission to the imperialist state, saluted the arrival of "state socialism."

With the end of the war the system of state regulation disappeared, in Germany as well as in the other countries. This does not mean however that capitalism emerged from the war in exactly the same shape as it had entered. Far from it! State intervention in economy took new forms on which we need not dwell here. The essential point is that the state mobilization of economy which had assured a formidable output of armaments proved incapable of surviving the war, let alone raising the level of the productive forces and leading capitalism out of his blind alley.

How does the war economy now reigning in Germany differ from that of 1915-1918? Four important differences appear: first, economy was put on a war footing toward the end of 1936, three years before the formal declaration of war; second, the German state apparatus is in the hands of the Nazi party; third, state control of economy is more thorough-going than in the last war; fourth, capitalism is twenty years older. Let us examine attentively each of these differences.

State Intervention in 1915-1918

The introduction of war economy (*Wehrwirtschaft*) in peacetime, as early as the end of 1936, is quite an important political problem. But it has been clear from the beginning that the war was the sole object of the *Wehrwirtschaft*. In war it has found its logical continuation and without war it would have been inconceivable. Consequently when the issue involves so fundamental a question as the nature of a social system, this difference from the first World War takes on an episodic character, especially if one keeps in mind the fact that the Europe of 1936-1939 was in a latent war stage.

Consciously or unconsciously, the gospel of a "new order" in Germany owes much of its popularity to the wielding of state power by a fascist party. Anti-capitalist declarations were not lacking in the jumble of Nazi demagogy before 1933. Would not the "revolution" of the middle classes which carried Hitler to power have an economic basis? And is not this "revolution" precisely the regimentation of capital by the state which we are now witnessing in Germany? Even a cursory examination of German economy from 1933 to 1941 deals an irreparable blow to this fable. The concentration and centralization of capital have proceeded apace since 1933. The large corporations have grown at the expense of the small. Retail trade remains in the condition of a man sick with galloping consumption. The Nazi state has intervened actively to accelerate economic evolution, for example, by hastening the transformation of thousands of handicraftsmen into factory workers or soldiers. But aside from such direct measures the entire state control of economy acts in favor of the big as against the little capitalist. The Nazi bureaucracy acts far more arbitrarily and independently toward the small capitalists (not to mention the handicraftsmen) and is far more "accommodating" in the presence of the big ones. The regulation of foreign trade has greatly favored the big companies

and has enabled them to crush their small and middle-sized competitors in this field. State centralization has been combined with economic centralization—the same phenomenon which was to be observed during the first imperialist war. This process is a direct refutation of Nazi "anti-capitalism" which supposedly was to profit the middle classes who brought the party to power. Under the cover of demagogic phrases the Nazi bureaucracy plays the same role as did the traditional bureaucracy of the bourgeois state.

Other improvisers depict differently the origin of the "new order": The Nazi party, financed and called to power by big capital, has freed itself from its master just as the broom did from the apprentice-sorcerer. Nazism has undertaken to eliminate the capitalist bourgeoisie in favor of its own aggrandizement. It "controls" the property of the latter, which means that in reality it disposes of that property. Here the basic flaw in the method of improvisation stands out most glaringly. The improvisers take private property as it is legally defined, *jus utendi et abutendi*, the right to use and abuse, and they oppose this definition to the actual situation. The divergence is so marked that they rush to conclude that private property has been abolished. In reality all property is social in character, and capitalist property more than any previous forms. A capitalist can "use and abuse" his capital not as his whim dictates but in a certain well-defined manner, otherwise he is liable to an immediate penalty, namely, bankruptcy. He cannot use his profit as he likes. He must accumulate to improve his equipment and expand his enterprise. Otherwise he loses not only his profit but also his original capital. At a certain stage competition forces him even to abandon the individual ownership of his business and to enter into a corporation, and later into a cartel. Finally, he is compelled to wage war, to devote to that purpose an increasingly larger portion of his profits and to endure the haughty intervention of militarists and bureaucrats. All this proves that capitalist property is a contradictory phenomenon, self-devouring in character. And this we have known since the time of Marx. In a war economy the contradictions of capitalist property appear in their most aggravated form, but capitalist property is by no means abolished thereby: the clearest proof of this is the war itself.

We now come to the third difference from the first imperialist war. Does not the present state control constitute such a difference in *degree* as to justify the conclusion of a difference in *kind*? Such an inference is entirely groundless. In the production of consumers' goods, food in particular, state regulation in 1918 was hardly less rigorous than now. In heavy industry (armaments and means of production) the current methods of control avoid such nakedly violent measures as the requisition by seizure of certain factories in Germany which were imposed by the army in the last war. Thanks to past experience and to long preparation the activities of the state now penetrate economy in a more organic, and on the whole, more thorough fashion than in the last war. Finally, it does seem that in the sphere of credit, state control has made measurable progress. But while the Nazis have perfected the technique of control, they have not made any great innovations, and it is manifestly impossible to infer the birth of a new social order unless one is prepared to recognize that this order was already born in Germany in 1915.

Repetition does not at all signify identity. The capitalism of 1941 is no longer that of 1916. It had passed through the first war, the shocks of the post-war epoch, the great depression. Herein lies the sharpest difference between the two wars. Concurrently, the present conflict imposes still more

profound demands on the economy. Every country, victor and vanquished alike, will emerge from the slaughter with their economic systems much more debilitated than was the case in 1918. Can one expect an appreciable upsurge of the productive forces to follow the war? Until now at any rate no indication permits us to entertain such a hope. State intervention in German economy is fulfilling the same task as before: it mobilizes all the national forces for the duration of the struggle only to leave the economy all the more feeble and prostrate. With the exhaustion of all society it is quite possible that after this war forms of state control which disappeared at the end of the last war may be perpetuated. But it is clear that this can be only the means of organizing mass misery. What we have before us is not a new system capable of carrying humanity forward but a form of stagnation and decline of the old capitalist system.

What Is the Nature of German Economy?

To determine the actual condition of German economy we must do more than oppose to it the serene tableau of a perfect (and unreal) free-trade economy. Above all we must delineate the forms and character of state intervention. German economy is a war economy, designed for war and engaged in war. Its cardinal command is "Guns instead of butter." Curtailment of consumption is a fundamental trait of the *Wehrwirtschaft* and in Germany it has been pushed to the extreme. This is directly linked with the limitation of new investments. The object of these measures is to divert all the resources of the nation (capital, labor power, raw materials) from the production of consumers' goods and to direct them into the production of war materials. The state is, at the same time, enabled to mobilize by loans all the purchasing power which remains unabsorbed because of the lack of consumers' goods. War which cut off economy from the world market imposed an additional restriction. Autarchy originally engendered by the crisis was transformed directly into military autarchy.

If we examine these measures, they appear in and of themselves, as well as in their translation into the language of decrees and regulations, to be restrictive and negative rather than constructive and positive. The state imposes certain limits on economic activity, these limits being dictated by the necessities of war (or by the preparation for war). But within these limits capitalist profit still retains its motive force. One need only pick up one of the official Nazi economic reviews to encounter innumerable references to capitalist initiative. This is no empty rhetoric. If tomorrow Hitler were to state-ize industry, that is to say, sever the bond called property between the capitalists and the means of production, and undertake to run the economy with the aid of state employees, the quantity and quality of armaments production would immediately decline.

An important characteristic of German economy is its system of price control. At the end of 1936 prices were "frozen" by the government. This measure was a direct consequence of the need to finance rearmament. Without it inflation was but a step away. At bottom it represents a new manipulation of money rather than an attack on the capitalist character of the economy. The latter moreover did not fail to make its presence felt. The quality of merchandise, particularly consumers' goods, began to deteriorate at a rate which quickly approximated a rise in prices of 40 to 50 per cent. Prices themselves have not ceased to rise slowly. But even without taking these manifestations into account, one can say that this regulating mechanism did not shatter the framework of private profit. The high priests in charge of

price regulation often repeat that "Costs are not Prices" (*Kosten sind keine Preise*). They mean by this dictum that the prices fixed by the state cannot be determined by the cost of production, nor by the cost of production plus a percentage of profit. This statement is interesting because it recognizes, first, the existence of profit; and second, the absence of any official and automatic rate of profit. Prices (and profits) rise with official sanction, as the demand markedly increases. But it is still more important to understand the justification of this principle by the official commentators. One of them declares: "If the entrepreneur is guaranteed his costs he is no longer forced to seek out and introduce more efficient methods to lower the expenses of his business with respect to wages and raw materials and he is no longer forced continually to invest new capital toward this end" (*Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv*, 1940). Here, clearly expressed, is the entire difference in the views of the capitalist entrepreneur and the state functionary.

Many improvisers invoke Hitler's second four-year plan to discover a "planned" economy in Germany. Manifestly this is to follow the Nazis in their abuse of language. The difference between the Soviet Five-Year Plans and Hitler's four-year plan is apparent at a glance. The Soviet plan undertakes (more or less capably) the construction of the whole economy. Hitler's plan is not a plan in the precise sense of the term but a program, and, besides, rather a vague one, as much political as economic. The first measure was to centralize state control of economy in the hands of Goering, who proceeded to promulgate, since the end of 1936, decrees which are in general restrictive and prohibitive. Whenever the situation in this or that branch of industry became particularly grave, the state made its authoritative voice heard. This is not a planned building of economy but a kind of police supervision which terminates with a club the first conflict that threatens to stop the functioning of a machine geared to the limit of its capacity. All of Goering's regulations are not constructive and positive but essentially negative in character. This characteristic of the Nazi "plan" is especially clear in the field of investments. The state restricts investments in certain branches in order that funds may flow into others. The state has a positive and detailed plan only for financing a few infant industries which represent a negligible fraction of the national economy, and this has always been one of the functions of the capitalist state.

Present-day German economy can by no means be characterized as "planned" economy. The Nazis themselves quite frequently employ the expression "*gesteuerte Wirtschaft*" or "guided economy." This is far closer to the truth. The state orients all the national forces in a single direction: the military struggle. Incontestably this imparts to economy certain specific characteristics. But private initiative, channelized into the dikes of state control, still plays far too great a role to even talk of planning. Finally, the idea of planning implies a harmonious development of the productive forces, whereas the military orientation of German economy creates major disproportions. It is also necessary to call attention to a point which the improvisers often pass over in silence. This orientation of the economy is determined in the long run not by the form of political power but by the nature of the economic system itself. Unless one subscribes to the "bad man" theory of history, the explanation for the war lies not in Hitler's evil character but in the fact that the contradictions between the developed forces of production and the outmoded productive relations, in the absence of proletarian revolution, find their only outlet in war. The state merely

aids in the attempted solution of this task imposed upon it by forces beyond its control.

The Formulas of the Improvisers

Among the improvisers who seek to deny the capitalist nature of German economy, a few have hastily read Marx in order to cull from his works some definition of capitalism which is no longer applicable to the Third Reich. In the main their procedure comes down to defining capitalist economy as a "market economy." Then they conclude: Since prices in Germany are determined not by the automatic laws of the market but by state decrees, therefore the economy is no longer capitalist. To be sure, the intervention of the state into the sphere of circulation affords certain supplementary channels for the manipulation of prices. But there is essentially nothing new in this. For almost half a century monopolies and cartels have precisely set themselves the task of converting free trade into its opposite. Are monopolies then "non-capitalist" enterprises? The formula of the improvisers is false because they attempt to define capitalism by seeking its essential characteristics in the sphere of circulation.

Marxism teaches us that a correct definition of capitalism can be established only by seeking out the essential relations in the sphere of production, which, in turn, determines those in the sphere of circulation.

To what extent is it correct to speak of "fascist economy"? If this is intended to establish an all-inclusive correspondence between fascism and the type of economy existing in Germany, then the expression is erroneous. Fascism is essentially a political phenomenon. The economic measures applied by fascism have their parallel elsewhere. Under its heavy feudal shell, the Japan of the Mikado is far closer in its political regime to the Russia of the Czars than it is to Hitler's Germany. Yet Japan approaches the Third Reich more than any other country in her state control of economy. On the contrary, Franco's Spain, fascist in the proper sense of the term, by no means follows Germany in the economic field. Finally, the "democratic" United States, not to mention Great Britain, is building her war economy by adapting to her own needs Hitler's methods. It is clear that war economy adjusts itself most readily to the totalitarian political regime which fascism brings it. Conversely, war tends to render all regimes totalitarian. But fascism remains a specific political phenomenon. The expression "fascist economy" which in effect identifies the political superstructure with the economic foundation can produce only misunderstanding and confusion.

A precise definition would read that it is a capitalist war economy in the epoch of decaying imperialism. If this definition seems less "original" than that of the improvisers, it has the inestimable advantage of being scientifically exact, and providing a reliable guide to our action.

The improvisers either imply or flatly declare that the state control of war economy in Germany represents a certain progress, just as the trusts and cartels of a few decades ago were progressive. They forget a trifle. The concentration and centralization of capital which reached its peak in the form of cartels, trusts, etc. led to a colossal development of the productive forces, and, literally, brought society to the very threshold of socialism. State control represents nothing of the sort. In wartime it pushes the national productive forces to their extreme limit, only to leave the country devastated and ruined in the end. What country's economy will emerge stronger from this war than it was before the war? Where then is "progress"?

Lenin paid the greatest attention to the intervention of the state in economy during the last war. He termed this phase of capitalism as state-monopoly imperialism. He demonstrated its continuity in the development of imperialism, and underscored that it constituted the aggravation, in a sense, the culmination of all the tendencies of the latter. In 1916, he pointed out certain progressive features in this phenomenon. Regulation of economy was of enormous educational value for the masses. It foreshadowed, to a greater degree than did the trusts, the future socialist organization; it represented the peak of the entire process of centralization of capital, and was a direct invitation to the proletariat to take into their own hands the direction of economy.

But we are no longer living in the year 1916. Since then, society has passed through the Russian revolution, the post-war crisis, the great pre-war depression, the Soviet planned economy, and finally entered the second World War. The methods of control employed in Germany and other countries teach us nothing new after the experiences of the last war and especially after the Soviet planning. The application of these methods far from having any salutary effects on economy, lead directly to vast disproportions and result in the end in a frightful destruction of the productive forces. Finally, we must underscore again the profoundly degenerate character of our epoch. Capitalism has passed its zenith. The defeats of the proletarian revolution, due to the betrayals of the Second and Third Internationals, and its consequent tardiness have not opened any new roads for capitalism but merely extended its period of decay. Society is not only ripe for socialism, but overripe and has begun to rot because of the delay. State intervention no longer appears as the culmination of the dynamics of the preceding development but as the reactionary reorganization of a declining society. That is why it is unpardonable to speak today of its "progressive" character.

Occasionally it is stated that the Nazis are building a "transitional" order. Historical materialism has long ago taught us that all regimes are transitional. To invest this statement with any meaning it is first necessary to specify the starting point and the destination of the transition. What the improvisers really mean to say is that present-day Germany constitutes a transition between capitalism and socialism. Is fascism a transition to socialism in the political and social sense? One can reply only in the negative, unless one accepts Nazi ideology. Does the affirmation carry more weight in the strictly economic sense? State intervention in economy, in and of itself, is by no means a socialist tendency. In the march to socialism, economy must necessarily pass through state-ization. But this does not at all mean that every state-ization is necessarily socialist in character. It is still necessary to answer two more questions: Who carries out the state-ization? And for what purpose? Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that German economy is far from state-ized. Control of economy by the imperialist state, in itself and in its consequences, cannot carry the productive forces forward but can only plunge them into ruin. Far from being a transition to socialism it represents a retrogression into barbarism.

All improvisations on the subject of the "non-capitalist" character of German economy, the progressive aspects of Nazi regimentation, its being something "new," etc., etc., only represent in the last analysis a capitulation to Nazi demagoguery. They are one of the by-products of our period of reaction which has taken its toll in destruction not only of lives and material values but also of men's capacity to think.

November, 14, 1941

MARXIST REVIEW OF BOOKS

Death-Rattle of French Democracy

By LARISSA REED

SCUM OF THE EARTH, by Arthur Koestler. 287 pages. Macmillan Publishers, 1941. \$2.50.

Koestler's latest narrative deals with the fall of France. It gives a first-hand account of the individual and mass misery which follows the collapse of a "democracy." But this book is also, quite without intention, the story of the political decomposition of a "man of the left"—Arthur Koestler.

Stalinism and the "Men of Good-will"

Between the great depression of 1939 and the opening of the second World War, Koestler and his generation of "radical-intellectuals" passed through a political cycle, and ended where they began; the only difference being that they return to their starting point in a more advanced stage of decay. Frightened on one hand by the economic collapse of the capitalist democracies and on the other by the swift rise of fascism and its potential menace to their own skins, they stampeded into the Communist Party—blindly, unquestioningly, uncritically. Without understanding fundamental social problems, without firm faith or interest in the workers of the world, they sought for some miracle to save them from catastrophe.

For seven years Koestler remained a member of Stalin's Communist Party and then became disillusioned after his experiences in the Spanish Civil War. As a result he abandoned not only Stalinism, but the working-class revolutionary movement, the only social force capable of smashing fascism, to return to—the bosom of capitalist "democracy."

The impotence of this generation of demoralized intellectuals is sharply drawn in Koestler's book, in which he offers capitalism as the only salvation of mankind while at the same time devoting 287 pages to expose the leprous sores, disintegration and finally death of one of the last three remaining "democracies"—France.

"Stalinism had soiled and compromised the Socialist Utopia," apologizes Koestler; "... Trotsky, although more appealing as a person, was in his methods not better than his opponent . . . the central evil of Bolshevism was its unconditional adaptation of the tenet that the End justifies the Means." To this ex-Stalinist, the means used by Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks to build the first workers' state in Russia are exactly the same as the means employed by Stalin who throttled the revolution in Russia and the rest of the world in order to secure power and privileges for himself and his bureaucracy. From this point the next step is easy. He concludes that ". . . all parties of the Left had outlived their time and that

one day a new movement was to emerge from the deluge, whose preachers would probably wear monks' cowls and walk barefoot on the roads of a Europe in ruins." Koestler wants to return not only to a dying "democracy" but also to a defunct religious mysticism of the Middle Ages.

Having lost confidence in great social ideas, Koestler's only remaining concern is his own precious self. He seeks personal escape in a world that has grown so small there are no places left for escapists. He does find temporary refuge in a picturesque house in an Alpine village where, together with a sculptress companion, he attempts to pursue an intellectual and pastoral life. "We were very happy," he says, "writing novels and carving stones and cultivating our garden, like sensible people should do during their short stay on this earth." But social forces relentlessly pursue him. The fever of the approaching war hangs in the air and the "Sleeping Beauty" of the countryside is being awakened by noisy and crowded garrisons of grumbling soldiers. "They were sick of the war before it had started," writes Koestler. They were sick of being torn away from their homes and families for months at a time with each war crisis; cynical about their rulers, about the lies printed in their newspapers. They wished only to "put an end to it once and for all," by which they meant not so much the extermination of the Germans as the elimination of the instability and insecurity of their own lives. Most of all they were sick of another impending world war. These inarticulate French workers and peasants, thrown into the army, understood instinctively what a tourist-intellectual could not understand: that the French ruling class was less fearful of the Nazis than of its own proletariat and the threat the latter represented to its own power. The French workers were asking intelligent and probing questions, as Koestler shows by citing a letter written to him by a young worker named Marcel.

"Democracy" and the Anti-Fascists

The great French Democracy was complaining, wrote Marcel, that all the disasters were the "fault of the few reforms towards a more human life which the French working class had achieved after decades of struggle. Well, the 40 hour week was gone and the 1936 tariffs were gone and if the war for liberty were a question of sacrifices the French working class had paid more than its share; but so far the rulers had failed to

explain to them what their share of the victory was to be . . . nobody in France bothered even to hint at what the social order would be after the war. Daladier had come to power in the Popular Front . . . and had crushed the general strike in 1938 by unconstitutional methods. Then there was the reign of the police, the concentration camps, the censorship. For years the *Populaire* (the organ of French 'socialists') had denounced Hitler's concentration camps as a blot on European civilization and the first thing France had done in this war against Hitler was to imitate his example. And who were in the concentration camps? The fascists, perhaps? No, Spanish militiamen, Italian and German refugees, those who had been the first to risk their lives against fascism. But the worst was that whenever they tried to prove France was fighting a war for democracy it sounded as if an old pot-bellied comedian tried to act the part of Brutus."

Yes, this French worker knew what the workers wanted to fight against—fascism and its annihilation of the workers' trade unions and their democratic rights. "But what are we fighting for?" he asks, "for the preservation of a world which burns its stocks of coffee and corn while millions starve? . . . for the democracy of Stavisky, Bonnet and the Two Hundred Families? . . . Can one fight without a banner to fight for?"

The French ruling class, as Marcel charged, had no explanation to offer the French workers for this state of affairs; they left that dirty job to their liberal lackeys who volunteered for this service. Koestler's reply to Marcel is typical: "Yes, repeatedly in history men have had to fight a merely defensive battle to preserve a state of affairs which was bad against a menace which was worse."

Even as he wrote this, the "democracy" he was so piously upholding, was cracking down on Koestler in a most undemocratic manner. From the moment of his arrival in Paris, when he was secretly informed that the police were looking for him, there began a long and fantastic series of persecutions against him and he could discover no persons directly responsible for his arrests. Together with hundreds of others he was simply sucked into a bureaucratic morass of red tape and terror, which became more and more destructive as France staggered from pre-war crisis to war crisis to capitulation.

As a "neutral" visitor he attempted to leave the country but was refused a visa; as a supporter of democracy and a well-known fighter against fascism he offered himself for arrest if there were charges against him,

but was scornfully rejected at the police station. For thirty nights he lived in a state of suspense with a packed suitcase next to his bed—and then “they” came for him. During this period, when all around him there were “inexplicable arrests of apparently harmless people dragged off at night from their beds,” a friend whispered a kind of explanation to him: “There is a sort of silent pogrom going on against people of the Left . . . but that is only one side of the matter—they try to put things on people who belonged to the anti-Munich camp.” Koestler bitterly reflects that there seems to be no place for an anti-fascist fighter in a “democracy” about to engage in a war against fascism.

In the concentration camps Koestler met men of all political shades and tendencies. When the Stalin-Hitler pact was signed, the rank-and-file Communists in the camp tottered under the blow. Most of them, who bore the mental and physical marks of years of punishments and imprisonments, asked: Had their sacrifices been in vain? Were they leaderless?

For Koestler, this meant merely “an historic opportunity for the French nation to regain control of their *enfants terribles*; they had but to revive the three words, *Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite*, from their heraldic petrification,” and enlist the support of these men in a “war against fascism.” But these ancient bourgeois-revolutionary slogans could not be revived in the France of 1940. “It was suicidal selfishness on the part of the French ruling class to prevent the war against fascism from becoming an anti-fascist war,” mourns Koestler. “Both in 1792 and 1870 the French ruling caste had betrayed the nation and preferred the Prussians to revolution. In 1940 there was no danger of a revolution; the proletariat was tired and apathetic . . . it was an unreal drama of shadows; the ghost of the French ruling class committing suicide, scared by the specter of revolution.” Koestler is all the more mournful because he is sure that no one could or should remain a revolutionist now.

How “Democracy” Produces Its Scum

Since the days of the Communist Manifesto, the European ruling classes have been “scared by the specter of revolution.” In the decades since then, there have been many revolutions, including the first victorious proletarian revolution in history. In 1940, a Koestler could see no “danger of a revolution”; the French ruling class was more far-sighted and more experienced. Revolution was no “unreal drama” to them. It was a dreadful and imminent catastrophe. They knew that the main enemy was their own proletariat; the foreign enemy of Nazism was “the lesser evil.”

This did not become evident to Koestler even after he was thrown into Le Vernet concentration camp, with its sub-human living conditions. With the intellectual’s capacity for separating events from their causes, he vividly depicts life in this concentration camp of a “democracy.” The living and

hygienic conditions in this camp were lower than in the most infamous of the Nazi camps—Dachau. True, in Dachau the men were subjected to a variety of sadistic tortures. The 2,000 men in Le Vernet were not tortured in this manner—they were merely compelled to work 12 or 14 hours a day at forced labor with practically no nourishment until they reached a “state of semi-consciousness and numb idiocy,” or death. Koestler was luckily pronounced a “heart” case and so lived to tell his tale.

“The camp was run with that mixture of ignominy, corruption and *laissez-faire* so typical of the French administration,” writes Koestler, and then gives a picture of capitalist class divisions on the lowest and most vicious level—in a “democratic” concentration camp. “The nourishment provided by the camp was just sufficient to keep a man alive in a state of permanent, aching, stomach-burning hunger with constant day-dreams of food. Yet in the same barrack, some of the crowd fed on tinned meats, sausage, bacon, butter, chocolate and fruit. The contrast between rich and poor reached the pungency of a social satire. The dark tunnel of our barrack became a nightmarish exaggerated model of human society, a kind of distorting mirror.” As a result, “capitalist corruption and decay took its inevitable course.” A few cigarettes, bits of food, became the medium for bribery. Prostitution—here the prostitutes were only male—appeared, just as its counterpart does in society outside. Political corruption and favoritism sprang up in the elected “*chef de groupe*,” who had power to settle minor disputes, distribute vacant places, and had custody of the lists of those excused temporarily from work. Presently the “capitalists” secured special compartments, acquired a mattress, small table, stool, a few candles. And even, in some cases, “valets” to serve them! For the mass there were no such comforts. They slept packed like lifeless carcasses on hard boards in conditions that were “dirty and oppressing, the air unbreathable, for men smell worse than horses.”

And below them, like the derelicts of society, there was a still lower tier—the “social lepers.” Their barrack was a “real inferno,” infested with vermin and disease. Its inmates, after working hours, did odd jobs for the others, washing their linen, mending shoes, in return for a few pieces of bread . . . “even the most wretched in the other huts looked upon these with a mixture of horror and dismay.”

Koestler became embittered because these men of the “Leper Barrack” were the remnants of the International Brigades, the militant vanguard of the left-wing movement. They had been doubly betrayed and now, like the “scum of the earth,” they were “thrown on the rubbish-heap like a sackful of rotten potatoes, to putrefy.” This is the price they paid for fighting for “democracy” in Spain under the banner of Stalinism. Koestler invites others to reserve their places in the “Leper Barrack” by fighting under the banner of Stalin and Churchill and Roosevelt.

Koestler’s influential friends finally suc-

ceeded in releasing him from the camp. The others were handed over to the Gestapo when the French Democracy finally concluded its deal with the Nazis. They were “handed over complete, all accounts properly made out, all confidential records of their past (given trustingly to the French authorities) neatly filed. What a find for Himmler’s black-clothes men! Three hundred thousand pounds of democratic flesh, all labelled, alive and only slightly damaged!”

At this point Koestler lost his faith in capitalist democracy—of the French variety. It was a stinking corpse despite all his efforts. He then proceeded to offer himself to English “democracy,” which was just as reluctant to receive an anti-fascist as had been the French “democrats.” “In the first days of the war I had applied for a visa and permission to enlist in the British Army,” complains Koestler; “it had been refused. When I was released from Vernet, I made a new application; it was turned down again. Meanwhile, England had proceeded, *imitating the French example*, to the wholesale internment of political refugees. Even should I succeed in getting out of France and crossing the Channel, I would be put behind barbed wire again. *Anti-fascists were obviously a great nuisance in a war against fascism.*” (Our emphasis.)

Again and again these facts are forced upon Koestler, and again and again he evades their implications.

After his second arrest in France, he abandons “democratic” legalistic behavior and resorts to fraud and deception. He thus narrowly escapes the jaws of another concentration camp, just before it is turned over to the Gestapo. He joins the French Foreign Legion and thus hides his dangerous identity as a supporter of “democracy.” Finally, via Africa and Lisbon he escapes to England.

Koestler Prepares the “Leper Barracks” of Tomorrow

Koestler concludes his book with two letters. The first is a servile Thank You to the British ruling class for making a feeble attempt to distinguish itself from the traitorous ruling class of French “democracy.” He has learned nothing from his French experiences—he persists in identifying his own fears with the aims of the British ruling class: “In this fight against the common enemy we are tied to you in life and death,” he states. By common enemy, he means fascism. But the ruling classes everywhere in the capitalist world have a different common enemy—the proletariat of their own country. If they can profit by going to war against a rival ruling class, they will deceive the workers about their “democratic” aims, and the workers will die on the imperialist battlefields. If they can do better by making a deal with a rival ruling class, they will turn the workers over to be crushed and enslaved by the foreign master—just as in France. The ruling classes abhor no means by which they can maintain all or part of their power and privileges. When the workers find the revolutionary road again, the

ruling classes will set aside their immediate rivalries and combine against their common foe—the proletariat.

Koestler's second letter is a rebuff to the "men of the Left." Now that Stalin has betrayed the revolution, they are to turn back and support British "Democracy," shutting their eyes to its similarity to the French "Democracy" which has just delivered their brothers over to the Nazi murder machine.

"A third way may exist theoretically," admits Koestler, "but for all practical purposes there is none." Koestler has forgotten,

if he ever learned, that the first proletarian revolution was led to victory by a Bolshevik party which did not divorce practice from theory.

In conclusion Koestler offers his own "unique and ultimate war aim." This is: "To teach this planet to laugh again."

What does he wish the workers to laugh at? At the depressions of peace times with their unemployment, humiliation and misery? At a succession of World Wars, with the destruction of millions of lives and the accumulated wealth of centuries of labor?

At another betrayal and crushing of French workers or another Versailles Treaty and a smashing of German workers? The workers of the world would perhaps like to laugh no less than Koestler, and to "cultivate their gardens like sensible people," but first they must learn how to struggle against those who are destroying every possibility for laughter and gardens. They will not learn this from the lackeys of capitalism, like Koestler; from him they hear only the hollow laughter of a political ghoul.

Marxist Theory and the Proletariat

In his article on "Feuerbach," Engels formulated the essence of philosophy as its attempt to answer the eternal question of the relationship between thinking and being, the problem of human consciousness in an objective material world. If we transfer these concepts of *being* and *thinking* from the abstract world of nature and individual speculation, i.e., from spheres where philosophers by profession operate, into the sphere of social life, then the same thing can in a certain sense be said about socialism that Engels said about philosophy. From ancient times socialism has been the search, the groping for ways and means to harmonize being with thinking, that is to say, to harmonize historical forms of life with social consciousness.

Marx together with his friend Engels was destined to discover the solution to this problem over which men had wracked their brains for centuries. Marx discovered that the history of all previous societies was *in the last analysis* the history of the relations of production and distribution in these societies, and that the development of these relations under the rule of private property manifests itself in the sphere of political and social institutions in the form of the class struggle; and by this discovery Marx laid bare the most important motive force in history. At the same time an explanation was discovered for the necessary disharmony in all societies existing up to now between consciousness and existence, between the desires of mankind and the social reality, between intentions and results.

Thus, thanks to the ideas of Karl Marx, men learned for the first time the secret of their own social progress. Over and above this, the discovery of the laws of capitalist development likewise pointed out the road along which society is moving—from the spontaneous and unconscious stages during which men made history in the same manner as bees construct their hives, to the conscious, creative and genuinely human historical stage, that stage when the will of society and social reality shall for the first time be harmoniously correlated with each other, when the actions of the social man will for the first time produce *precisely* the results he *will desire*.

In Engels' words, this final "leap from the animal kingdom into the domain of human freedom" will be achieved for society as a whole only with the accomplishment of the socialist overturn; but this is already being accomplished within the framework of the *existing order* through the social-democratic policies. With the Ariadne thread of Marx's teachings in its hands, the workers' party is today the only party which, from the historical point of view, is conscious of what it is doing; and by virtue of this is *doing precisely that which it desires*. This is the whole secret of the power of social-democracy (revolutionary Marxism was known by this name in Rosa's time—Ed.).

The bourgeois world has long been astonished by the extraordinary, insuperable and constant growth of the social-democracy. Now and then, isolated senile or infantile naive minds are to be found, who, being blinded by the extraordinary moral successes of our politics, advise the bourgeoisie to take us as an "example" and to drink deeply of the mysterious wisdom and idealism of the social-democracy. They are incapable of understanding that what is a source of life and vigor, a fountain of youth, for the developing working class is for the bourgeois parties—mortal poison.

And indeed what is it that gives us moral strength, courageously and laughingly to undergo and free ourselves from the cruelest repressions, such as the current twenty-year law against the socialists? Is it perhaps the stubbornness of paupers seeking petty improvements in their material conditions? The modern proletariat is not a shopkeeper, not a petty bourgeois ready to become a hero for the sake of miserable day-to-day comforts. The lack of idealism, the sober narrowness of the English trade unions demonstrates how little capable of creating a high moral upsurge among the proletariat is the mere calculation for petty material boons.

Is it perhaps the ascetic stoicism of a sect like that among the early Christians—a stoicism which flares all the more brightly the more it is persecuted? The modern proletariat, as the heir and foster-child of bourgeois society, is far too much a born materialist, far too much an individual of flesh and blood and healthy instincts to draw its strength and devotion to ideas, in accordance with the morale of slaves, from sufferings alone.

Or, finally, is it perhaps the "justice" of the cause for which we are fighting that makes us unconquerable? The cause of the Chartists and of the followers of Weitling, the cause of the utopian socialist doctrines was no less "just" than our cause. Nevertheless all these doctrines were shattered against the obstacles of modern society.

If, contrary to all the efforts of our enemies, the modern labor movement marches triumphantly forward, its head raised high, then it owes this first and foremost to its calm understanding of the lawfulness of objective historical development, its understanding that "capitalist society with the inevitability of a natural process creates its own negation, namely, the expropriation of the expropriators, the socialist overturn." In this, its understanding, the labor movement sees a reliable guarantee of its final victory. And from this same source it draws not only its ability to surge forward but also its patience; not only strength for action, but also the courage to stand firm and to endure.—Rosa Luxemburg, *On the Twentieth Anniversary of Marx's Death*.

Emergency Appeal!

Today, in the Federal Courtroom at Minneapolis, 23 men and women are standing trial, each facing 16 years in prison and \$10,000 fine. They are officers of Motor Transport and Allied Workers Industrial Union, Local 544-CIO and leaders of the Socialist Workers Party.

Prosecutor Anderson's opening statement to the Jury constituted the most sweeping assault upon civil liberties and labor's rights in American legal history. He declared that, regardless of overt acts, their opinions alone could prove the defendants guilty, citing, as evidence of "seditious conspiracy," the expression of socialist doctrines and trade union demands for higher wages. There is hardly a progressive activity or idea which could not become outlawed by convictions in this case. Precedent would be set for further government prosecutions against other trade unionists and minority groups.

This prosecution has been vigorously condemned by the CIO, Labor's Non-Partisan League, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Workers Defense League, the United Auto Workers, the NATION, the NEW REPUBLIC and other leading labor and liberal spokesmen.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENSE COMMITTEE, AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEFENDANTS, NEEDS \$7,500 IMMEDIATELY TO PAY COSTS OF THIS TRIAL. We must provide food and relief for the defendants and their families, pay heavy court costs and legal fees, and prepare an appeal to the Supreme Court, if necessary.

The Minneapolis Federal Courtroom is now the main outpost in the right to maintain civil liberties and labor's rights in the United States! We urge you to contribute immediately to our Defense Fund. The prosecution is trying to rush the case through to convictions! We must rush aid to stop that attempt!

Sincerely yours,

JAMES T. FARRELL
Chairman

GEORGE E. NOVACK
Secretary

SEND ALL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE

CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENSE COMMITTEE

160 FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK CITY