

Fourth International

Zionism or Socialism— Which Way for the Jews?

1. **The Middle East at the Crossroads** *By T. Cliff*
2. **The Jewish Question** *By Leon Trotsky*

German Prisoners of War in the United States

By **EUGENE SHAYS**

***Editorials on French Elections—British Nationalizations—
Roosevelt's Secret Preparations for World War II***

December, 1945

25 Cents

Manager's Column

Robert Birchman's article "Class Struggles in Nigeria" which appeared in the October FOURTH INTERNATIONAL was reprinted in full in the November 3rd issue of The Greater Omaha Guide, a Negro weekly with a circulation of 14,000. To our knowledge, Birchman's article is the only full account published in the American press of the important anti-imperialist struggle in Nigeria.

Another F. I. article on colonial struggles, which has been in great demand because of interest in the Indonesian struggles for independence, is "The Dutch East Indies" by P. Van Vliet, which appeared in the May 1943 issue. Sylvia Stein, New York Educational Director of the Socialist Workers Party, reports that educationals on Indonesia have been given in three of their branches. The speaker obtained background material on the economic conditions, the rise of the Nationalist Movement, and the trade unions in Indonesia from this article.

As a result of recent reviews of F. I. articles in *The Militant*, we are receiving more and more requests for our magazine. From Solway, Minnesota, comes a request from a *Militant* reader for the October F. I., containing the article on the "Situation in the Far East" by E. R. Frank. R. E. W., Milwaukee, also sent us 25c for this same issue, mentioning Frank's article. Two other readers of *The Militant* one from New York, another from Hamilton, Ohio, ordered the November issue.

We now have an agent in Baltimore, Dorothy Lessing. In requesting a regular bundle order, she says "I am hoping that by December we can raise the order, but for the present do not want to take more than we can use and pay for."

Patrick O'Connor, our agent in Akron, sent us an analysis of newsstand sales for the first nine months of 1945. Sales reached their peak with the July issue. This issue was so much in demand that we have not one copy left in our files. We would like our agents and readers to send us any copies of the July issue they can obtain. They will be very much appreciated.

From Chicago comes a request from Hildegard Smith for additional copies of the October issue. In this city too, newsstand sales are on the increase.

* * *

Many readers have enquired about

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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Managing Editor: E. R. FRANK

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the illustration on the cover of the November F. I. The painting reproduced is by Diego Rivera. It depicts the Red Army passing in review before Lenin and Trotsky. It commemorates the annual parade in Red Square which is held in honor of the October 1917 Revolution.

We have received favorable comments on the brightening up of the magazine with Laura Gray's drawings. Her cartoons are already familiar to readers of *The Militant*.

Letters from our readers at home and abroad: D. S., New York, writes at length about Trotsky's article in the September F. I., "Nationalism and Economic Life": "It contains a lucid Marxist analysis of such basic problems as the meaning of nationalism, fascism and imperialism. The bourgeoisie is breaking its neck on the basic problem of our epoch—the profound conflict between the ever growing forces of production and the national econ-

omy which is too small for these productive forces. Trotsky points out the only real solution—the organization of the world under the leadership of the world proletariat, which liberates the forces of production in a Socialist United States of the world.

"Trotsky's prediction, made in 1934 when this article was written, that if this was not done in time, mankind is bound to go through another world war, has horribly come true.

"The F. I. is to be commended for reprinting this invaluable document."

From Britain: "I write to you on behalf of a small group of Fourth Internationalists in South Wales. We send our greetings and best wishes.

"It is with great interest we read of your activities in the stronghold of capitalism, and feel sure you have a tremendous part to play, and will play it in the class struggles which are already shaking the fabric of that capitalism.

"America has become the leader of world capital superseding Great Britain, but we in this country have an equally great part to play particularly when one remembers that it is the workers here who must lead the European workers in the coming period; the Social Revolution in Europe will need the fullest possible support from us.

"We have been fortunate in getting a few copies at various times of your fine magazine FOURTH INTERNATIONAL and odd copies of *The Militant* which have been of great help to us. The material in the F. I. in particular is very valuable in view of the shortage of theoretical material available here, and we look with envy at the lists of books you have published, above all those of Comrade Trotsky."

An Argentine subscriber writes: "Every day we are more active in the unions. The work of two years is now showing results. The contact with the workers is closer every day. Some new leaders, genuine representatives of the working class, are arising."

J. W., in India, requests a subscription to the F. I.: "I have been in India for a few months now," he continues, "and would have written sooner but this is the first regular address I have had. The 'Socialist Appeal' and other Revolutionary Communist Party publications arrive here safely and I receive regular news from comrades of activities in England. The F. I. will fill in the gap in theoretical discussion."

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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME 6

DECEMBER 1945

NUMBER 12

REVIEW OF THE MONTH

Political Trends in the French Elections—

British Nationalization—How Roosevelt

Prepared for World War II

The French Elections and Their Significance

REFLECT DEEP SOCIAL CRISIS

The October elections in France and the Constituent Assembly arising from the elections reflect the continuing deep social crisis in that country. The crisis itself had its origins in the gaping contradiction between the relatively weak economic position of French capitalism and its tremendous imperialist ambitions on the European continent as well as overseas. The Second World War laid bare this contradiction for everyone to see. Capitalist France was reduced overnight to a secondary power, a satellite of the mightier imperialist blocs.

The collapse of its military establishment in 1940 aligned French capitalist economy within the framework of German imperialism. Under the Nazi occupation the bulk of the French bourgeoisie, rallying to the regime of Marshal Petain, revealed itself as thoroughly "collaborationist" while the masses came into constant and growing conflict with the invaders. When, after Stalingrad, the Nazi military machine in 1942-43 began to reveal symptomatic cracks, the bourgeoisie, particularly its decisive finance capital sector, began a turn-about-face: the switch-over to the side of Anglo-American imperialism. Shortly after the Allied invasion of North Africa, French capitalism proceeded to shift its support from Petain in Vichy to de Gaulle in Algiers.

D-Day in 1944 found the French masses in open revolt against the police-dictatorship of Marshal Petain. The Vichy regime evaporated into thin air. Faced by the armed mass movement of the people, the Anglo-American invaders at once gave up as hopeless the idea of utilizing the Vichy government apparatus which they had previously contemplated. While the treacherous Stalinist and Socialist parties with their People's Front "Resistance" policy prevented the workers from seizing power, the Allied militarists quickly installed de Gaulle, who had previously appeared too independent to them, at the head of the *de facto* government in Paris in August 1944.

DE GAULLE'S DICTATORSHIP

Resting on Allied bayonets and aided by the perfidious leaders of the workers' parties in disarming the masses, de Gaulle proceeded step by step to lay the groundwork for *his own* military-police dictatorship. The General began to rebuild the French Army with Vichy officers and American materiel. He reconstructed the French police system and its

secret service. The goal of all these undertakings was to establish a regime whose first loyalty was to de Gaulle. For its part the French bourgeoisie has been quite content to abdicate its political prerogatives to the General as the surest means of continuing its profits.

In the sphere of foreign policy, de Gaulle attempted for a time to play off the major powers in the Allied camp against each other in an effort to revive the imperial "grandeur of France." But the pact with Russia only obtained for him limited domestic gains, the uncertain support of the Stalinists under Thorez. At the diplomatic conferences, however, the Kremlin showed no inclination to favor his imperialist aims. On the other hand, his overtures to Anglo-American imperialism against the USSR gained him only one place among many in the "Western Bloc" it is anxious to build up in Europe. Thus, in actual effect, de Gaulle has merely replaced Petain as a tool of the big imperialists. The French bourgeoisie has exchanged "collaboration" with Nazi Germany for "collaboration" with the Anglo-American imperialists.

In the domestic field, de Gaulle's provisional government has not solved a single one of the harrowing economic problems. Industrial production shows only slight gains and still remains in a state of chaotic paralysis. The transportation system, although the complete breakdown created by the havoc of the war has been repaired, is still far from serving the needs of the country. Agricultural output, in turn, has suffered a further decline. The toiling masses, facing hunger, cold and disease, are in a state of constant unrest.

MASSES WANT SOCIALISM

It is against this background that the elections to the Constituent Assembly must be viewed. Although his military-police state apparatus has advanced considerably since August 1944, de Gaulle has as yet no stable base among the masses. The overwhelming majority of the latter follow the Communist and Socialist parties. More than five million workers have flocked into the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), the revived trade unions. The Communist Party itself numbers close to a million and virtually controls the CGT. Such a mass force cannot be put down by the routine action of a military-police apparatus. A stable organized following among the masses is necessary for the General, if he is to carry out the domestic program—the preservation of capitalism—as well as the foreign policy—the "Western Bloc"—of the bourgeoisie. That is why the Bonapartist regime has been obliged to play around with parliamentary maneuvers.

The bourgeoisie wants a "strong" capitalist regime. The working masses want socialization. The peasants and the petty bourgeoisie cherish illusions about a "new" democracy, a Fourth Republic. Open police-dictatorship has been discredited under Vichy. Obviously, de Gaulle must pursue his aims with great agility. Elections to a Constituent Assembly had to be agreed to. At the same time the elections also had to be given a typical Bonapartist stamp. That is why the provisional government attached a "referendum" to the elections.

The referendum served in reality as a cover for a plebiscite. The first part of the referendum asked: "Do you want the Assembly to be a Constituent Assembly?" That is, do you want a new constitution as against a return to the old "Third Republic"? The second part asked: "If the majority has voted Yes on the first question, do you approve that—until the constitution goes into effect—public authority should be organized in accordance with the Government's project?" The "project" called for an Assembly limited to seven months during which time the government is to retain a "certain" independence of the Assembly.

The second question was couched in purposely ambiguous language to dim its real Bonapartist character. In calling for a "Yes" vote also on the first question, government spokesmen camouflaged their references to the Assembly as a "sovereign" constituent. Thus, by urging a "Yes" vote on both questions, they made a verbal concession to the democratic sentiments of the masses while aiming to obtain a vote of confidence for de Gaulle.

ELECTIONS ARE CONTRADICTIONARY

The results of the elections of October 21, held under this smokescreen, were contradictory in character. While the de Gaullist version of the referendum, supported by the Socialists under Leon Blum, was carried by a large majority, the composition of the Assembly discloses an absolute majority for the traditional workers' parties, with the Communist Party emerging as the strongest single party. Thus, the question of power has not at all been resolved by the vote. On the contrary, it has been sharpened by assuming "constitutional" form. The Communist Party, which agitated for a "No" vote on the second question, with its 152 mandates stands out as the biggest winner in the elections. Yet, a "Yes" vote on this question carried by an overwhelming majority. Both the Bonapartist regime of de Gaulle and the forces arrayed against it registered "successes."

One thing, however, was revealed with absolute clarity. The so-called Radical-Socialist, the big liberal party of the French bourgeoisie associated with the entire history of the Third Republic, suffered a total eclipse. Out of an Assembly of 585 deputies, it elected only some 25. The Radical-Socialist party was the main force calling for a "Yes" vote on the first question, that is, a return to the Third Republic. The small support it received for this position shows how thoroughly the old-line capitalist politicians have lost their hold and how hopelessly compromised they are in the eyes of the masses.

The bourgeoisie rallied, instead, to a new label, the *Mouvement Republicain Populaire* (Popular Republican Movement). The MRP was a relatively unimportant Catholic group in the underground movement. But its link with the Catholic Church imparts to it a deep-rooted conservatism which offsets the radical veneer lent it by participation in the "Resistance." The bourgeoisie was quick to grasp the importance of both these facets in looking for replacements to serve for the shop-worn attractions of the Radical-Socialists. Within the past year it has

concentrated all means at its disposal to build up the MRP as the heavy counter-weight to the mass parties of labor.

MRP GROWS RAPIDLY

The story of the swift rise of the MRP deserves a quick recapitulation. Immediately upon being installed at Paris by the Allies, de Gaulle at once filled three important posts in his provisional government with leaders of the MRP, the Ministries of Justice, Information and Foreign Affairs. In the latter Ministry, the MRP's outstanding "Resistance" figure, Georges Bidault, has been a permanent fixture.

The growth of the MRP, beginning with this government patronage, is most marked in the Paris region. According to Francisque Gay, editor of its paper *L'Aube* and now a Minister of State, here are the figures. In the municipal elections in April, the MRP got 14 out of 90 seats, or *one-sixth* of the votes. In the cantonal elections in September, it got 14 out of some 56 seats or *one-fourth* of the vote. Finally, in the elections to the Assembly in October, MRP got 17 out of 53 Paris mandates, or *one-third* of the vote. In the country as a whole, in the cantonal elections of September, only 234 seats out of 3,000 went to the MRP, while in the constituent elections in October 143 MRP deputies were elected out of a total of 585. While the Radical-Socialists virtually disappeared and other old capitalist groupings fell to a shadow of their former selves, the MRP grew into the third largest party in the country. Obviously all of bourgeois reaction was swept into support of the "new" party.

The MRP in turn, despite its long-time flirtation with the Socialists and the Communists in the "Resistance," pledges its first allegiance to the apprentice Bonaparte, de Gaulle. It not only supported his plebiscite in the election. It has openly declared that it will serve only in a cabinet headed by the General. While it continues to pay lip-service, together with the two workers' parties, to the "nationalization" program adopted by them jointly under the auspices of the People's Front "Council of National Resistance," it insists that such a program must be carried out only as the General sees fit.

As against the MRP and the remnants of the old bourgeois parties, the Socialists and the Communists have an absolute majority, (nearly 300 out of 585 deputies) in the Assembly, with a popular vote of about 10,000,000 backing them. There is, therefore, not even the technical pretext of the pre-war social reformists for a refusal by organized labor to assume government power. The constitutional 51 percent, so cherished as a democratic token of sovereignty, has been handed to them. Why then, don't the two workers' parties form a joint government and nullify once and for all the Bonapartist game of de Gaulle?

STALINIST BARGAINING

The 146 deputies elected as Socialists and the 153 as Communists know that the tremendous majority of votes cast for their parties are a sure indication that the masses want a labor government, that the masses want socialism and look to them for a solution of the social crisis. In other words, that the masses want a revolutionary change. But it is precisely the revolutionary action of the masses which could force a break with the capitalists that the reformists and Stalinists fear above everything else. That is why they cling so tenaciously to the coat tails of their bourgeois partners to the right.

The MRP will not serve in a cabinet unless it is headed by de Gaulle? Very well, the Socialists will not join a govern-

ment without the MRP. As for the Stalinists, they bluster about a government without de Gaulle and without the MRP—but only as a bargaining point for a few ministerial posts. In reality, they are just as anxious to hold on to the government chain that begins with the Bonapartist General as Blum's reformists.

The election results give an indication of the confusion wrought by the policies of the two workers' parties. The Socialist Party openly supported the plebiscite for de Gaulle, while denying its Bonapartist character which even old-line bourgeois politicians pointed out. (For instance, Paul Bastid, writing from Paris for the New York French weekly *La Victoire*, Nov. 17, said: "There can be no doubt that a sort of masked Bonapartism pervaded this election.") The Communist Party, on the other hand, while opposing the plebiscite, carried on its propaganda with such equivocation that in many cities the "No" vote on it was much smaller than the Communist vote. The people voted for de Gaulle, for Thorez, and for Blum, all at the same time.

Although the elections showed that the CP was the strongest single party in the country, and above all, the party supported overwhelmingly by the working class, an analysis of the statistics indicates that this result was by no means one-sided. Such an analysis appears in an article by Comrade Albert Demazieres in *La Verite*, organ of the French Trotskyists, in its Nov. 9 issue. It shows that there are numerous signs of great unrest and dissatisfaction with the Stalinist policy among important sections of workers. The real gains of the CP were among a different layer of the population—among the peasantry, which elected 77 CP deputies.

In Paris and its industrial suburbs the CP even suffered a relative decline compared with the cantonal elections. Thus, in the Seine department, which includes this area, the CP vote, with a 20 per cent increase in the electorate, was 814,639 votes in October as against 750,869 in September. The SP, on the other hand, obtained a total of 509,949 votes as against 304,818 in September for the same area. The Socialist gain was therefore 204,947 votes as against only 63,790 for the CP in this citadel of French Stalinism. A similar development is noted in other proletarian districts of the country such as Lyons, the North, and the Pas-de-Calais districts. It is particularly clear in Lens, where the CP was recently engaged in breaking a miners' strike.

IMPORTANCE OF TROTSKYIST VOTE

Of great importance for the future was the Trotskyist vote, details of which are given elsewhere in this issue of *Fourth International*. Under extremely adverse conditions the Trotskyist *Parti Communiste Internationaliste*, nevertheless registered 8113 votes in the very heart of the Stalinist stronghold in Paris. Its main election slogan was "For a Socialist-Communist-CGT Government! Break the Coalition with the Bourgeoisie!" *La Verite* reports that many posters carrying this slogan had been "corrected" by CP militants who crossed out the word "Socialist." The Trotskyist vote, small though it is in relation to the figures obtained by the big parties, cannot be overestimated as a profound symptom. It signifies that among the most advanced workers in France there is a distinct shift to the left in the direction of a genuine revolutionary solution.

How the Stalinists react to these signs of revolutionary ferment among the advanced workers was revealed in the government crisis that broke out immediately after the convening of the Constituent Assembly. Since the elections, contradictory as they were in their results, left open the key question of control

of the State, the opening of the Assembly was a signal for a contest of power. In his radio speech on Nov. 13, the President-General cryptically remarked: "We are going to make a decisive test of the representative regime."

De Gaulle, upon being confirmed as interim president by the Assembly without opposition from the CP, proceeded to the formation of a cabinet, meeting with the leaders of the three largest parties. The Stalinists immediately bid for one of the three major posts—the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, War, or Interior. The General refused to accede to this demand, tendering his resignation to the Assembly and broadcasting over the radio an explanation basing his refusal on the attachment of the Stalinists to the Kremlin and its foreign policy. In reaction to this move, the Stalinists, making a hullabaloo over the implied "insult" to their patriotism, for the first time openly denounced de Gaulle and called for the formation of a Socialist-Communist government.

Fevers ran high. In the United States, this line of the French Stalinists was given particular prominence by Paris dispatches to the "Daily Worker." The whole Bonapartist course of de Gaulle became the subject of exposure and condemnation of Stalinist propaganda. As against the reported aim of the General to let a left wing government take power and discredit itself, the CP assured the country that a government of Socialist and Communists, together with the trade unions, could take power, hold it and do credit to itself. The cooperation of "all classes" in the "swift building of Socialism" was proclaimed as an illusion. The capitalist class, the workers were warned, would not give ground "one inch" without a fight. As a concrete proposition in the Assembly, the Stalinists put forward its Socialist president, Felix Gouin, as candidate against de Gaulle for the presidency of the Republic.

THE REFORMISTS "CHOOSE" DE GAULLE

The pressure from below probably grew in the Socialist party as well. The reformist leaders could not fail to feel it. It was reported that they had decided to abstain in the Assembly when the candidacy of de Gaulle came up again. But, involved in the crisis was the question of foreign policy. The Stalinists had a pro-Kremlin orientation. In his speech of Nov. 17 de Gaulle explained that he could not place a Stalinist in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs because "France was interested" in maintaining an "equilibrium between the two great powers" in the world. De Gaulle was oriented toward the "Western Bloc" desired by Anglo-American imperialism. The Socialists under Leon Blum were committed to the "Western Bloc." In a joint government with the Stalinists a "Western Bloc" orientation was unthinkable. Their commitments to Anglo-American imperialism were weighed against the pressure of the worker masses who had elected them. The reformist leaders tacked and veered. Finally they made their "choice": they voted for de Gaulle after all and the Gouin candidacy never materialized. De Gaulle was given a vote of confidence by the Assembly against the votes of the Stalinists alone and once again took up the task of forming a cabinet.

But in voting for de Gaulle and thus indicating that the "Western Bloc" was the paramount consideration for them, the craven reformists, fearing the loss of the worker support which invests them with importance, had to insist that they would not serve in a cabinet without the CP. De Gaulle was once again faced with the same thorny problem. However, the Stalinists came to his aid. Feelers were thrown out in their press that with a few face-saving concessions, they would not

prove "unaccommodating." De Gaulle was quick to take the hint. Taking over the War Ministry himself as a revamped Ministry of Defense, he gave the Stalinists a sub-ministry of "Armaments" in it, along with four other posts. The Stalinists immediately grasped at the concessions, capitulated, and the cabinet crisis was over.

All these events ran a course of some seven days, from November 15 to November 21. The deep aspirations of the masses for a labor government, for genuine socialization, for a revolutionary solution of the social crisis were merely exploited by Thorez and the Stalinist gang in the game of obtaining ministerial posts. Once the Stalinists obtained the desired ministries, the whole dangerous Bonapartist course of de Gaulle was immediately forgotten. "All classes" can again "cooperate" in the "swift building of socialism." The capitalist class yielded more than "one inch": a whole sub-ministry!

In spite of the craven role of the Socialists, in spite of the miserable capitulation of the Stalinists, this "solution" of the cabinet crisis is not likely to prove very enduring. The social crisis persists. The equilibrium of the present governmental combination is extremely unstable. Even in the distorted form of inner-government maneuvers, the clash of the contending class forces is bound to make itself felt continually.

The Nationalization Measures of the British Labor Party

THE BANK OF ENGLAND IS "NATIONALIZED"

The British Labor Party was elected to power on an ostensibly socialist program.

Just how far has the Labor government proceeded in that direction since it took office four months ago?

This question is extremely important not only for England. The victory of the Labor party in July has been duplicated by the tremendous vote for the French Socialists and Stalinists in October. The programs of the victorious working class parties in France also call for the nationalization of credit, of the coal mines, of iron and steel and other key industries and services. Similar trends are observable in Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway and other countries. Thus an examination of the actual policy pursued by the Labor government in regard to nationalization provides significant clues to the coming course of political events in the whole of Western Europe.

In line with its announced policy Britain's Labor government has already passed through the House of Commons legislation nationalizing the Bank of England. The government has informed parliament that its civil aviation policy will be based on the principle of complete public ownership, that it has decided to nationalize British and Empire cable and wireless communications, and has promised that the coal mines will be nationalized before Christmas.

It is therefore clear that, albeit slowly, nationalization is proceeding from the stage of campaign promises to government acts. Does this mean that the reformist leaders of the Labor Party, who have so long served as faithful servants of British capitalism, have had a change of heart? Does it mean that, while they are continuing the murderous imperialist foreign policy of Churchill under Bevin and hurling tanks, planes and rocket bombs at the insurgent colonial peoples, they are at the same time undertaking an assault on the ruling class at home? Can it be that, at the very time they have done everything in their power to break the great Dockers' strike, they have actually begun to carry out a workers' program in industry?

NO REAL PARADOX IS INVOLVED

This apparent paradox is dispelled at once when we scrutinize the one concrete measure of nationalization they have already effected, the legislation applying to the Bank of England. Since it is the first act in the nationalization program, it can be presumed that it will serve as a precedent for the rest.

What does the legislation nationalizing the Bank of England reveal in detail?

In the first place it compensates the stockholders with *four* government bonds at 3 per cent interest for every bank share they hold at 12 per cent interest. The stockholders are thereby assured of the same rate of interest on their investment as before. This provision is applied in the name of "fair compensation." But since government bonds are quoted on the stock exchange at par, while Bank of England stock during the war years has been quoted at an average of 360 as against its par of 400, the stockholders stand to realize a handsome profit in the bargain. No wonder there was a boom on the stock exchange the day after these terms of the Act were made public. *This* kind of "nationalization" was indeed welcome to the capitalists. For it places the financial resources of the country, with its growing indebtedness, more completely at their disposal than ever before.

Secondly, the legislation provides that Lord Catto, the Governor of the Bank, remain as chairman of the Board of Governors. Thus the highest representative of British finance capital, with all his know-how of the secrets and tricks of monopoly swindling directed against the people, is kept at the helm to carry out the program of the "socialist" government. Small wonder the press reported that "the financial interests have been reassured."

Thirdly, the "big five" Joint Stock Banks, the real money power in England, who direct a large part of the flow of capital, own a considerable share of British industry and draw dividends on "paper" loans which represent nine times the amount of actual cash deposited with them, *are not covered by the act of nationalization*. The nationalization applies only to the Bank of England, whose strength on the market is primarily due to its position as banker to the government. In other words, the measure is in actual effect tantamount to establishing a British equivalent of our own Federal Reserve System.



ATTLEE

There is, to be sure, a clause in the legislation imposing on the nationalized Bank of England the duty of insisting that the Joint Stock Banks carry out state financial policy. But Dr. Hugh Dalton, the Labor Chancellor of the Exchequer, was quick to assure the Commons that the application of this clause was completely at the discretion of Lord Catto.

It thus becomes clear that *in practical application* the nationalization program of the Attlee government is not as paradoxical as it seems. Undertaken to appease the workers' demands for socialism, it turns out that these measures actually benefit the increasingly bankrupt capitalist class.

Why then do the capitalists evince so much concern over the wave of nationalizations? The Tories under Churchill fought bitterly against every nationalization bill introduced into the House of Commons. A dispatch to the Nov. 5 *New York Times*

from Zurich reports that in regard to the nationalization of the Bank of England "apprehension is felt at what might be the ultimate consequences in Europe."

First of all, the nationalizations threaten to reveal the true face of the capitalists as a completely parasitic social group. As Friedrich Engels pointed out many years ago in *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*: "If the crises revealed the incapacity of the bourgeoisie any longer to control the modern productive forces, the conversion of the great organizations for production and communication into joint stock companies, trusts and *state property* (our italics) shows that for this purpose the bourgeoisie can be dispensed with. The capitalist has no longer any social activity save the pocketing of revenue, the clipping of coupons and gambling on the stock exchange, where the different capitalists fleece each other of their capital." This acknowledgement of their uselessness tempered the plutocrats' joy at the exceedingly generous compensation they received.

In the second place, they fear that Labor government control over the banking system will lead to the exposure of their cherished "business secrets," those carefully concealed mysteries which cloak their operations of robbing and fleecing the people. The Tories fought most vigorously against clause 4 of the Bank bill which empowered the Treasury to give the Bank instructions and to authorize the Bank of England to demand from commercial banks information about the conduct of their own business. The *Times* dispatch from Zurich explains why: "Because through the Bank of England the Treasury could thus force the commercial banks to divulge information about the private affairs of their customers."

But have not the accommodating Labor Ministers promised to leave the execution of this clause in the hands of the trusted Lord Catto? Here we penetrate to the heart of the question. "Emphatic assurances from the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Dr. Dalton)," the same dispatch continues, "that these powers would never be used except in an emergency are not reassuring except in regard to the near future. Any subsequent government might make very drastic use of the powers conferred by law."

WORKING MASSES WANT SOCIALISM

Pitiful, inadequate, restricted as the nationalization measures are, they are nevertheless initiated and enforced by a *Labor* government which has been swept into power by an overwhelming vote of the working masses. These masses want socialism. They want to impose their own class control over the country's economic life instead of remaining at the mercy of the profiteers. If Attlee's government doesn't produce satisfactory results, these radicalized masses may force the installation of a "subsequent government" more in line with their desires. That is the danger the capitalists foresee and fear.

The working masses can transform the present sham "nationalizations" into real and lasting nationalizations only by awakening to their own power and forging that power into independent class action. The program of the Revolutionary Communist Party, British section of the Fourth International, points out the path they must take.

"Nationalization of the land, mines, transport and all big

industry without compensation as the prerequisite for planned economy and the only means of assuring full employment with adequate standards of living for the workers; and the operation of the means of production under control of workers committees.

"Nationalization of the Bank of England together with the Big Five and all financial institutions without compensation, confiscation of all war profits, all company books to be open for trade union inspection; control of production by workers' committees to deal with the financial and economic sabotage of Big Business and vested interests."

Roosevelt's Secret Preparations to Enter World War II

ROOSEVELT'S WAR-PLOTTING

Now that hostilities have been concluded, significant facts are beginning to come to light concerning the hitherto hidden history of Roosevelt's preparations for U.S. participation in World War II. A considerable portion of the vital information about the secret actions of the administration remain under lock-and-key, withdrawn from public inspection. But even although many pieces are still missing, from those already in our possession it is possible to reconstruct the main outlines of the pattern of the war-plot perpetrated behind the backs of the American people by the former occupant of the White House.

In the October issue of *Fourth International* Li Fu-jen gave a political analysis of the Pearl Harbor reports that uncontestedly established the following conclusions regarding Roosevelt's policy in the Pacific. 1. President Roosevelt, while proclaiming his love of peace and hatred of war, was embarked on a deliberate course of war with Japan long before Pearl Harbor as the conscious policy of his administration. 2. Roosevelt systematically exerted diplomatic and economic pressure to force the Japanese imperialists to commit the overt act which would touch off the long-prepared conflict in the Orient.

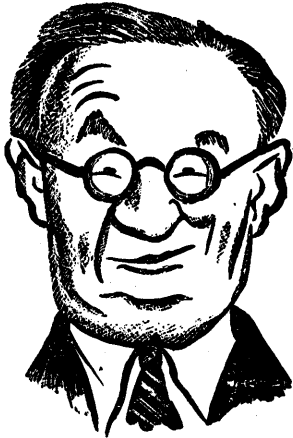
Since then additional information has been made public showing that Roosevelt was no less consciously preparing to intervene in the impending European war as early as the fall of 1937. These facts, based upon a study of official government documents, were first published by Thomas F. Reynolds in the September 29 *Chicago Sun* and reprinted in the Congressional Record for October 15. They reveal the inside story of how Roosevelt and his underlings conspired and maneuvered to drag the American people into World War II without their knowledge and against their expressed will.

"QUARANTINE THE AGGRESSORS"

The story begins in the fall of 1937 when Roosevelt began his propaganda preparation for the coming bloodbath with his Chicago speech on "quarantining the aggressors." This bellicose proclamation, however, met with an apathetic response. It failed to inflame the people with the required degree of war-fever. Congress refused to vote the huge sums needed for the vast military budget envisaged by the plans of the administration.

Roosevelt, however, was determined to go forward with his projected military program regardless of the sentiments of the nation. Calling together his associates, he discussed with them his plans and perspectives. Here is how Reynolds describes what went on behind the scenes at the White House.

"A careful review of hitherto censored memoranda reveals that the late Herman Oliphant, then general counsel for the Treasury, first sounded the administration alarm on produc-



BEVIN

tion difficulties inherent in the threat of war which Mr. Roosevelt had pointed out to the nation.

"That was in the spring and summer of 1938—even before the late Neville Chamberlain, then British Prime Minister, had made his deal for 'peace in our time' with Hitler at Munich. Oliphant was encouraged to put a staff to work on those long-range problems by Mr. Roosevelt and the then Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, Jr.

"Key man on this staff was a young lawyer, Oscar Cox, who later was to draft the Lend-Lease Act. In the fall of 1938, Oliphant came up with data to show that if war did break out, this country would have to assume that sooner or later it would be involved. On this data, Oliphant concluded that the only possible insurance policy would be to step up airplane production to 50,000 planes annually.

"THE TIMING WAS WRONG"

"Morgenthau, Oliphant, and Cox, by memoranda and personal conversation, put the 50,000 plane idea before Mr. Roosevelt. He was impressed, and consented to permit work on it to continue. But he told the planners that it would be impossible for him to make any such proposal at that time to a Congress which even then was trimming minor defense appropriations."

"*The timing was wrong,*" he said. Thus the war-mongering Roosevelt was obliged to postpone the realization of his unprecedented arms program until a more favorable opportunity for pushing it through Congress presented itself. He did not find that propitious moment until two years later. Roosevelt hesitated even after the war in Europe had broken out, so powerful was the resistance of the American people to participation in the conflict.

The long-sought-for occasion came with the alarm created when the German Wehrmacht ran wild through France in May 1940. This mounted to panic proportions in America's ruling circles as France capitulated, leaving England open to invasion. Roosevelt extracted the ready-made project for 50,000 planes a year from his portfolio and rushed it through Congress. This and similar measures were pictured at that time by the capitalist press as masterful and ingenious improvisations and sold to the American people on that basis. In reality, however, the military, industrial and financial aspects of U.S. intervention in the European war had been carefully worked out far in advance of the date when they were announced to the world.

The work done by Oliphant's staff formed the genesis of Lend-Lease which was designed to service the Allied powers and build up U.S. military might without open entry into the war. Roosevelt had been Assistant Secretary of the Navy during the First World War and was familiar with the problems his predecessor Wilson encountered in acting as a belligerent while technically remaining "neutral." His subordinates devised Lend-Lease as a means of getting around these legal and financial difficulties.

LEND-LEASE OPENS WAY

Oliphant's staff pioneered the way into purchasing by Anglo-French air missions which began buying planes here when the war broke out in September 1939. It went to work on problems of standardization of certain plane models to enable producers to swing toward mass production. It took up the problem of ammunition for small arms.

When Great Britain was in desperate need of arms in 1940 and was running short of dollars to pay for American-made

weapons, Cox dug up an old 1892 statute which permitted the Secretary of War to lease certain properties for five years. Although that made certain limited types of war materiel available to Britain, this country's neutral status still blocked the way to large-scale aid.

The State Department ruled that the United States could not provide arms to Britain because this country was still neutral and to do so would violate international law. But the same State Department obligingly pointed out that it was perfectly legal for private firms to sell arms to another country. So the supplies of weapons in the government arsenals were turned over to the munitions corporations who shipped them at a handsome profit to England.

This scheme served additional purposes. Since many of the guns on hand were growing aged, the War Department was pleased to have the material replaced with new ammunition and weapons. The supplies of weapons in the warehouses were therefore traded in to private companies such as United States Steel Export and others, which undertook to replace them for the War Department with new weapons.

U.S. SPEEDED INTO THE WAR

This arrangement satisfied everyone concerned. Britain obtained much-needed arms; the War Department was enabled to modernize obsolete military equipment; the armament corporations received lucrative new contracts. But even this proved insufficient to meet the demands of large-scale warfare. In the fall of 1940 Roosevelt ordered Morgenthau to move full speed ahead in arming the United States to the teeth and eliminate all remaining restrictions upon the shipment of arms and ammunition.

The original Lend-Lease Act was thereupon drafted in twenty minutes and hurried from department to department by messenger within a few hours in one day. "Then," relates Reynolds, "it was rushed to the White House. President Roosevelt studied it for ten minutes, then leaned back in his chair and slapped his desk. 'Boy—that's it,' Mr. Roosevelt said."

After all preparations had been made to line up Congress, Roosevelt personally took over the task of selling Lend-Lease to the American people on the false pretext that it was insurance against American participation, although he was well aware it meant complete commitment to the war. In December 1940 he called the correspondents to the White House to launch the final drive which led a year later to full-fledged participation in the world conflict.

This account of steps taken by Roosevelt from 1937 to 1940—a full year before Japan's attack upon Pearl Harbor—serves to demonstrate how his administration proceeded toward war behind a veil of secrecy in brazen defiance of the people's will for peace. When imperialist purposes dictated, the governmental deputies of Wall Street did not hesitate to violate the laws they had been sworn to uphold or to unscrupulously get around them.

ROOSEVELT BETRAYED AMERICAN PEOPLE

These officially verified facts brand Roosevelt as a double-dealer and betrayer of the American people. While he ran for a fourth term in 1940, declaring his hatred of war and promising not to send American boys to fight overseas, he not only knew that full-scale American intervention was inescapable. Since 1937 he had stealthily and steadily steered the United States along the road toward war and by 1940 had already heavily committed the nation to participation in the slaughter.

Roosevelt had to lie and deceive in this fashion in order to

overcome the opposition of the American people to the imperialist war and to camouflage its real reactionary and predatory aims with phrases about "the Four Freedoms." Washington propelled the country into World War II under relentless pressure from Wall Street which sought to amass colossal profits, crush its imperialist rivals, and gain mastery over the world and its wealth.

It is true that Hitler, Mussolini and the Mikado dragged their helpless countries into war for equally reactionary ends.

But the Allied rulers cannot absolve themselves from their rightful share of war-guilt by unloading all responsibility upon the Axis leaders. The butchers of the second imperialist war will not succeed in transforming Hitler and his gang into scape-goats for their own sins. Both sides were equally responsible for unleashing the bloody conflict. Both must answer to the peoples for their crimes. Not least among the war-conspirators must be placed the arch-hypocrite in the White House who preached peace while preparing for war.

The Middle East at the Crossroads

By T. CLIFF

The following, written by a Palestinian Trotskyist, is the first section of an extensive survey of the present turbulent situation in the Middle East. Subsequent articles will deal with the role of Zionism and the policies of the various working class parties in that critical zone of world politics. The translation is by R. Bod.

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The events of the last few weeks in the Middle East have drawn the attention of the whole world to what is happening in this region. The terroristic acts of Zionist military organizations, the strikes and demonstrations of the Arab masses in Cairo, Alexandria, Damascus, Beirut and Baghdad against Zionism, and the concentration of British troops in Palestine has aroused numerous questions whose answer will demand an uncovering of the socio-economic roots of the tangle in which this part of the world is involved.

Let us begin, then, with a discussion of the factor which until now has had the last word in the Middle East—imperialism.

The Imperialist Stake in the Arab East

The Arab East is important to the imperialist powers for four main reasons: first, as a route to other regions—India, Australia, China, etc.; second, as a source of raw materials; third, as an important market for manufactured goods; and fourth, as a field for capital investment. It is self-evident that there is a close connection between these four aspects.

The importance of this region as a route is well-known. The Suez Canal shortens the way from Europe to the East tremendously and through it vital products pass (90-100 per cent of the total British import of jute, tea and rubber, 70-90 per cent of hemp and manganese ore, 40-65 per cent of rice, wool, coffee, zinc ore, lead, etc.).

The Arab East also constitutes a region through which land routes pass. Germany under the Kaiser planned to construct a railway which would connect her with the Persian Gulf, the Berlin-Baghdad railway. This plan was one of the main immediate causes of the First World War. Germany's defeat put an end to it. Instead Britain constructed a long railway route connecting nearly all the British colonies in Africa (the Cape-Cairo line) which links up with a network of railways connecting the countries of the Arab East: the Cairo-Haifa line, the Haifa-Beirut-Tripoli line (this line connects up with Anatolia and Istanbul), the Haifa-Hedjaz and Haifa-Baghdad lines. These railways constitute an iron hoop which consolidates and binds together the British Empire.

With the rise of the airplane, the ownership of bases in the

Middle East becomes an important weapon in the struggle for air supremacy. The air route from London to Bombay, Singapore, Hong Kong and Australia passes through Haifa. The beginning of the air route which passes through the length of British East Africa to Cape Town starts in Cairo. The French air route to Saigon before the war also passed through this region: Marseilles-Beirut-Baghdad-Bombay-Saigon.

The great importance of the Arab East as a route was one of the main reasons for the struggles between the European Powers during the last century—Napoleon's expedition, the war against Turkey in 1832, the Crimean War, and the conquest of Egypt were all connected with this—and also one of the main immediate causes of the First and Second World Wars. Transport routes connecting countries and peoples are not, under capitalism, means for international cooperation, for peace, but for imperialist rivalry, for war.

Renan was most decidedly correct when he mentioned the classic saying, "I come not to bring peace, but a sword," when welcoming Ferdinand de Lesseps, builder of the Suez, to the French Academy in April 1885: "This saying must frequently have crossed your mind. Now that you have cut through it, the isthmus has become a defile, that is to say a battlefield. The Bosphorus by itself has been enough to keep the whole civilized world embarrassed up to the present, but now you have created a second and much more serious embarrassment. Not merely does the Canal connect two inland seas, but it serves as a communicating passage to all the oceans of the globe. In case of a maritime war, it will be of supreme importance, and everyone will be striving at top speed to occupy it. You have thus marked out a great battlefield for the future."

The digging of the Canal turned the Arab East into a large battlefield, but the growth of air transport has thrown and will throw fuel on the fire of the struggle between the powers.

The most important raw material in the Arab East is petroleum. Until now only a tiny portion of the oilfields has been investigated, and it seems as if all estimates regarding oil reserves in the Middle East tend towards underestimation. In a report prepared for the United States Petroleum Resources Corporation the oil operator, E. DeGolyer, says: "The centre of gravity of world oil production is shifting from the Mexican Gulf and Caribbean area to the Middle East-Persian Gulf area and is likely to continue to shift until it is firmly established in that area."

The truth of this statement is borne out by estimates of Middle East oil resources, one of which says that Saudi Arabia alone can satisfy the total world demand for fifteen years. It is

assumed that the quantity in Iran and Iraq is not smaller than that in Saudi Arabia.

At present England has a decisive position in oil production in the Middle East as may be seen from the following figures of its distribution among the different interests. (Figures given are in 1,000 barrels.)

	Iraq	Bahrein	Saudia	Egypt	Iran	Total	Percent
Britain	13,067	...	...	9,125	75,000	97,192	79
USA	6,533	7,300	5,475	...	...	19,308	16
France	6,533	...	...	...	...	6,533	5
Total	26,133	7,300	5,475	9,125	75,000	123,033	100

There is no doubt that with the increase in the exploitation of the oilfields in Saudi Arabia and Bahrein, the weight of the American companies in the production of oil in the Middle East will grow tremendously. Harold Guise, writing in "The Wall Street Magazine" for March 3, 1945, is not blind to reality when he says: "The Whole Middle East area today resembles a huge chess-board for economic and political maneuver seldom matched anywhere else. . . . The complex struggle for postwar economic and political power is nowhere potentially so disrupting as in that part of the world."

Another important raw material which this region supplies is cotton. In face of the USA's nearly complete monopoly of the world cotton supply (producing about two-thirds of the world's cotton and manufacturing only half of her production) and in face of the ousting of Lancashire by the industries in India, Japan, Canada, Brazil, etc., especially in the field of cheaper cotton goods, it became vitally necessary for the English capitalists to keep a monopolistic hold over Egyptian cotton which is of high quality and as such vitally necessary to Lancashire which produces better class goods.

Other raw materials such as potash, bromine, magnesium ore, etc., are produced in large quantities in this region. The potential value of these chemicals is much greater even than their actual value has been, as according to monopolistic international agreements a policy of "organizing scarcity" has been ruthlessly followed in the East.

The importance of the Arab East as a market is also not to be overlooked as, despite the advance in industrialization, its imports before the war amounted to 78-80 million pounds—quite a substantial sum.

But the greatest importance of this region is its wide field for investment of capital.

Imperialist Capital Dominates the Arab East

Egypt, which contains the majority of the Arab inhabitants of this region, has been up until now the richest country in the region. For this reason imperialist capital's attention is drawn especially to it. For dozens of years the main investments have been the loans to the Egyptian state, which kept its formal independence. This was a very tidy source of plunder. Thus during the years 1883-1910 the interest alone on a debt of 95 million pounds amounted to 105.6 million pounds. It is interesting to note that Egypt received only 60 million pounds of this debt, the rest being taken by different financial manipulations, so that for 60 million pounds Egypt paid interest of 105.6 million pounds and after this had a debt of 95 million pounds. During the same 28 years the Egyptian fellah paid a sum of 30 million pounds in order to maintain the occupation army in Sudan for the sake of the English plantation companies.

At the same time English, French, Italian, Belgium, Ger-

man and other contractors were wringing millions of pounds out of the Egyptian people by the construction of works at very exaggerated prices. Thus for instance, the Assuan dam, which according to the estimate of Sir William Willcocks, the British irrigation expert, should have cost 2.5 million pounds, actually cost 7 million pounds, excluding the 1.2 million pounds for repairs. During these same 28 years when foreign capitalism sucked out of Egypt a sum of about 200 million pounds, the Egyptian Education Department received the almost infinitesimal sum of 3.6 million pounds (less than 130 thousand pounds a year) and the Ministry of Health 3.4 million pounds. Could there be any better proof of the civilizing role of imperialism!

In the last few decades there has been a change in the direction of imperialist capital investment. The place of state loans has been taken by investment in railways, trams, light and power, water, banks and industry, etc. Today all key positions of the economy of the Arab East are in the hands of foreign capitalists.

In Egypt, according to an estimate made by French circles ("L'Egypte Independante par le Groupe D'Etudes de L'Islam" Paris, 1938, pp. 144-5), foreign capital in 1937 amounted to 450 million pounds, the entire wealth of the country being estimated at 963 million pounds, which means that foreigners owned 47 per cent of it.

According to another estimate, capital investment, besides land, in the same year amounted to 550 million pounds (A. Bonne, "The Economic Development of the Middle East," Jerusalem, 1943, p. 73). Seeing that the price of land is estimated at 500-600 million pounds (and according to another estimate 670 million pounds) the total property of Egypt amounts to 1,000-1,100 million pounds. According to another estimate of 1937 based on English calculations, foreign capital invested in Egypt amounted to 500 million pounds. Thus the property of foreigners constitutes 40-50 per cent of Egypt's total property, which sum does not differ from that arrived at by the French experts.

As far as land is concerned, foreign capitalists have direct proprietorship over 8 per cent of the cultivated land of Egypt, i.e., land worth 50 million pounds. If we deduct this sum from the total of foreign capital invested in Egypt, we get, according to one estimate, 400 million pounds, and according to the other, 450 million pounds.

Taking Bonne's estimate of capital investment, besides land, we see that foreign capital accounts for 73-81 per cent.

Thus *foreign capitalists own nearly half the total property of Egypt and about three-quarters of all property besides land.*

The situation in Palestine is not different. Here, too, imperialist capital has overwhelming weight. This is revealed clearly by the census of industry of 1939. This showed that the concessions had 53.2 per cent of all the capital invested in industry and 74.9 per cent of the motor power, despite the fact that some of the biggest enterprises belonging to foreign capital (such as Haifa Refineries, Steel Bros., etc.) were not included. If all enterprises belonging to foreign capital were included, it would be clear that at least three-quarters of the industrial capital of the country is imperialist capital, and at least nine-tenths of the motor power is concentrated in its enterprises.

In Syria foreign capital owns a slightly smaller proportion of the wealth of the country. In Iraq practically 100 per cent of industry is in its hands.

With the realization of the giant American petroleum plans in the Middle East—to build pipelines, refineries, etc.—which, according to the most conservative estimates, will demand the

investment of at least 300 million pounds, the subjugation of this region will be very substantially increased.

Imperialist capital desires to monopolize the markets of the Arab East for its industrial development there and especially to prevent the rise of a machine industry which would make for economic independence. Seeing that the profits of imperialist capital are dependent on the low wages paid to the Arab workers and the low prices paid for the products bought from the peasants, imperialism is interested in keeping the countryside in the most backward condition, so that it will be an inexhaustible reserve of labor power and cheap raw materials. Imperialism is further interested in this for socio-political reasons: first because only backward, illiterate, sick masses dispersed in tiny villages far away from one another can be ruled easily, and second because its most faithful agents in the colonial countries are the feudal landlords. Thus imperialism is inextricably involved in the agrarian question.

The Agrarian Question

Three-quarters of the Arab population lives in the country, subjugated to a tiny handful of big landowners. In Egypt 0.5 per cent of the landowners have 37.1 per cent of all the land while 70.7 per cent have only 12.4 per cent of the land. 331 men have three times more land than 1½ million poor peasants and there are more than a million land cultivators who have no land of their own whatsoever. One plantation company alone owns such a large area of land as to employ 35,000 workers. The king's estate covers a similar area and maintains about 30,000 small peasants. A calculation of Emile Minost, director general of Credit Foncier Egyptien, a bank connected by every fibre with the existing economic and social order and therefore not likely to exaggerate the extent of exploitation of the masses, gives the division of the net income from agriculture as follows:

	Percent
To taxes	6.3
To large landowners	56.6
To merchants	12.1
To fellaheen	25.0
	100.0

Thus a few thousand landowners receive twice the sum that three million fellaheen receive. On an average a poor peasant before the war did not earn more than 7-8 pounds a year. During the war his nominal income rose, but the cost of living rose even more, and his real income therefore decreased. The agricultural worker received even less. The daily wage of a male agricultural worker before the war was 3 piasters (7.2d), of a female, 3 piasters and of a child, 1-1½ piasters. Furthermore, they were subject to extended periods of unemployment every year as the season of work lasts 6-8 months. Even a foreman did not receive more than 2 pounds a month, a clerk 3 pounds, and a cart driver 1-1.2 pounds. Although during the war wages about doubled themselves, the cost of living rose much more; and there are places where even today the wage of a male agricultural worker does not reach one shilling.

With such low incomes, the food position is obviously terrible. As a matter of fact it is comparable only with that of the Indians. It has been calculated that the consumption of the average Egyptian, which is of course much higher than that of the poor peasant and worker, is only 46 per cent of the optimum in wheat, 25 per cent in sugar, 23 per cent in meat and fish, and 8 per cent in milk products. Furthermore the nutritional value is not improving but steadily deteriorating.

Because of the terrible poverty of the masses, their health conditions are very bad, and the mortality rate is tremendously high, as indicated by the following table, compiled in 1938:

	Mortality per 1,000	Mortality of infants under 1 year of age (for every 1,000 born alive)
England	11.6	52
Belgium	13.0	73
Poland	13.8	140
India	24.3	167
Egypt	26.4	163

Only India approximates the death rate of Egypt!

Besides "normal" deaths, famine and epidemics take their toll of life. Thus during 1944 malaria managed to wipe out tens of thousands of fellaheen in Upper Egypt, whose bodies, weakened by continued hunger, were susceptible to the disease in its severest form. According to one estimate which we may be sure is not exaggerated, 140,000 died of malaria (*Al-Ahram*, April 14, 1944). 500 workers of the land company Kom Ombo alone died (*Al-Ahram*, March 1, 1944).

Because of the poor conditions of health, the life expectancy is very low: for males, 31 years and females, 36 years. In the United Kingdom the life expectancy is 60 years for a male and 64 for a female. Those who live to be adults are very weak. Among those conscripted from the villages in 1941, only 11 per cent were medically fit for army service. 90 per cent of Egypt's population suffers from trachoma, 50 per cent from worm disease, 75 per cent from bilharzia, 50 per cent from ankylostoma. The number of people who are afflicted with tuberculosis exceeds 300,000.

Poverty is inevitably accompanied by ignorance, which in Egypt reaches fearful dimensions. Some idea of its extent may be gained from the very succinct remark of el-Mussawar when discussing the results of the 1937 census (Aug. 28, 1942): "We have 30,000 holders of diplomas as against 14 million who know neither how to read nor write."

Ignorance is the product of the existing social system, and also one of its pillars. The ruling class knows very well that the illiteracy of the masses is one of the greatest assets of the regime. Thus a certain Egyptian senator thanked God that his country took first place in ignorance (*Al-Ahram*, July 7, 1944).

Riches, pleasures and hilarity of some tens of thousands of Egyptians and foreigners on the one hand and hunger, disease and ignorance of the millions on the other—this is the picture of agricultural Egypt!

The agrarian problem in the other Arab countries is not substantially different to that in Egypt. Thus in Palestine about half the lands are in the hands of 250 feudal families. The feudal lords, being at the same time the usurers, have tremendous power, as has been shown by a British official in these words: "In one Area Officer's charge extending over three sub-districts there are fourteen government tax collectors; one moneylender alone in one of those sub-districts was said to employ 26 mounted debt collectors." (L. French, "Reports of Agricultural Development and Land Settlement in Palestine, Jerusalem, 1931-32," London, p. 77.)

According to the "Report of a Committee on the Economic Conditions of Agriculturists in Palestine" commonly called the Johnson-Crosbie Report, only 23.9 per cent of all produce of the fellah remains in his hands, while 48.8 goes in taxes to the government, rent to the landowner, and interest to the usurer. In order to understand how low the standard of living of the Arab cultivator is as a result of the backwardness of his econ-

omy, his exploitation by different parasites (who constitute the main hindrances to the development of the economy) I have made the comparison between the diet of a fellah and that which the government is supposed to give to convicts (though naturally a large part of this goes into the pockets of the prison officials). I assume that a fellah and his wife are in prison, and that four of his children are in a "Boy's Reformatory School":

	Family in Prison	Fellaheen
Wheat and millet	15.1 pounds	10 pounds
Olives and olive oil	3.8	3
Vegetables, lentils and dairy produce	12.9	4
Rice, sugar and other products bought by the fellah outside his plot	4.7	1
Meat	6.7	Almost nothing
Total	43.2	18

(As prices in Egypt are much lower than in Palestine, the figures cannot be used as a basis for comparison between Egypt and Palestine.)

Although this calculation is by no means precise, it nevertheless gives some indication of the terrible conditions endured by the masses of the fellaheens in Palestine.

Conditions in Syria and Iraq are not different. In the latter country there are feudal lords whose estates cover areas of tens of thousands of hectares. Thus the major part of Muntafiq district which covers an area of 6,260 sq. kms. is owned by one family. The income of the fellah in this area is 7-8 pounds a year.

The conditions of the urban masses are not less difficult than those of the agricultural population.

The Conditions of the Masses in the Towns

Under the double pressure of concentrated imperialist capital and feudalism, because of the small development of industry and the low standard of living of the agricultural toilers in the villages, open and hidden unemployment is very widespread and the conditions of the town workers are very bad. This can well be exemplified by describing the conditions of work in one big industry. Let us take the spinning and weaving works of Mahalla el Kubra, which employs 26,000 workers and 3,000 clerks, inspectors and managers. Beginners receive 1/6 a day, experienced workers 2/7, skilled workers 10 pounds a month. The workers have one day of rest a fortnight and work a ten-hour day. There is no social service and the doctor is there only to give permission for sick leave. Discipline is kept according to a military system. There are also constant fines which cut into the workers' incomes. As far as the housing conditions of this enterprise are concerned, fifteen workers live in one room sleeping in three shifts on five mattresses (*Al-Ahram*, December 21, 1944). In other industrial enterprises the conditions are the same.

Obviously the low wages and high prices seriously impair the health of the workers. Thus it is revealed that of 6,000 printing workers in Egypt 62 per cent suffered from diseases of the digestive system, 85 per cent from anemia, 45 per cent from lead poisoning (*Al-Ahram*, February 23, 1944). Two incidents bear witness to the extent of the poverty in Egyptian towns: in September 1943, four people were trampled to death when alms were being distributed and in March 1944, an Egyptian woman sold her daughter to a merchant immediately after birth—for 20 pounds.

The conditions of the masses in Jaffa and Haifa, Damascus and Beirut, Baghdad and Basra, is a little, but not much, better than in Cairo and Alexandria.

The Relation of the Ruling Classes To Imperialism

Imperialism could not fortify its domination over the colonial millions if it did not find support in the upper classes of these nations. From what has been said above, it is clear what causes the feudal class to be the agency of imperialism. What is the relation of the Arab bourgeoisie to imperialism?

In order to answer this question it must first be stated that the Arab bourgeoisie is not a homogeneous class. Commercial and banking capital intertwines with different modes of production. In the colonies the major part of this capital is connected with the feudal mode of production, enterprises of foreign capital or the import of commodities from abroad. All these sections of the bourgeoisie identify themselves with feudalism and imperialism. The minor part of the Arab bourgeoisie is the industrial bourgeoisie. It rises at a time when the world economy ruled by concentrated finance capital is in decline. It cannot build up its industry, stand in competition with the industries of the "mother" country, accumulate sufficient quantities of capital and so on except by the harsh exploitation of the workers and peasants and the purchase of cheap labor and raw material, which is made possible for them as the result of the existence of feudalism and imperialism.

This framework of the rule of finance capital on the background of declining world capitalism together with the existence of feudal property relations also determines the weakness of the colonial industrial bourgeoisie and its dependence to a major extent on foreign capital. This is shown in partnerships of foreign and local capital and the dependence of local enterprises on being financed by foreign banks. The existence of the colonial bourgeoisie, the industrial bourgeoisie included, is therefore conditioned by the *super-exploitation* of the workers and peasants—which is the result and the *sine qua non* of imperialism—and by direct economic dependence on foreign capital and imperialism. The colonial bourgeoisie is not the antipodes of imperialism and feudalism, but the antipodes of the workers and peasants. The connection of the colonial bourgeoisie with foreign capital and feudalism on the one hand and the class struggle of the proletariat and peasantry on the other (which two factors are mutually dependent) determine the limits of the struggle of the colonial bourgeoisie for concessions from imperialism.

The Arab bourgeoisie in Palestine is in a special, peculiar position. Here the junior partners of imperialist capital are not the Arab bourgeoisie but the Zionist bourgeoisie. The secondary positions of the economy—such as light industries—are not in the hands of Arab capital as in Egypt or Syria, but in the hands of Zionist capital. Thus according to the 1939 census of industry, the industries of Palestine were distributed thus:

	Value of capital investment Percent	Horsepower of engines
Arab and other non-Jewish	6.5	2.2
Jewish	40.3	22.9
Concessions	53.2	74.9

As has been stated the concessions exclude some of the important enterprises of foreign capital. On the other hand some

enterprises belonging to non-Arabs are included in the first item. If we correct the table, therefore, we find that foreign capital has at least three-quarters of the capital invested in industry, Jewish capital a fifth and Arab capital only 2-3 per cent.

But this position of the Arab bourgeoisie in Palestine does not make it anti-imperialist, but on the contrary urges it to make efforts to oust the Zionist bourgeoisie in order that it may become the agent of imperialism.

The Arab bourgeoisie cannot and will not wage the anti-imperialist struggle. Despite its wrestling with imperialism for some concessions for itself it is clear that the fate of the bourgeoisie is bound up with that of imperialism.

Problems Facing Arab Ruling Classes With the End of the War

With the end of the Second World War British imperialism is confronted with very serious difficulties in the East and needs to adopt extreme measures to protect its interests. The Arab exploiting classes stand before similar difficulties connected with those of imperialism. An understanding of this calls for a description of the socio-economic situation during the war.

During the war the capitalists and especially the big foreign companies active in the East made tremendous profits. Whereas in the last war the British army spent 45 million pounds in Egypt, in this war the amount is much greater. The war income of Egypt in 1940 was estimated at 34 million pounds, in 1941 at 100 million pounds, and in 1942, '43, and '44 it was at least as much as in 1941. The *Times* of September 20, 1943 estimated that the army expended 200 million pounds a year in the Middle East. The bourgeoisie has enjoyed extraordinary profits. Thus the big Egyptian sugar company (a French company) ended the year 1941 with 266,000 pounds; 1942 with 1,350,000 pounds. The National Weaving Factories paid 11 per cent dividends in 1938 and 22 per cent in 1942. Misr Weaving Factories in Mahallah paid 7 per cent dividends in 1938 and 28 per cent in 1943. Misr Weaving Factory in the village Dawar paid 12 per cent in 1941 and 20 per cent in 1943. The Marconi Broadcasting Company paid 7 per cent in 1935 and 25 per cent in 1940. Egyptian Hotel Companies paid 10 per cent in 1938 and 25 per cent in 1941. The number of millionaires in Egypt before the war was fifty, and in 1943, four hundred.

The bourgeoisie made tremendous profits in commerce too. Thus in the three years 1941, 1942, 1943, the merchants in Beirut made profits of 16 million pounds, 10 million pounds of this went into the pockets of ten merchants, 2 million pounds went into the pockets of another 20 merchants, and the other 4 million into the pockets of hundreds of smaller merchants.

The banks also enjoyed great prosperity. In all commercial banks in Egypt deposits increased from 44.8 million pounds in 1939 to 116.6 million pounds in 1942. In the Lebanon during the same period it increased from 26.5 million pounds to 84.5 million pounds and in Syria from 6.1 million pounds to 36.4 million pounds. The Arab banks in Palestine paid a dividend of 20 per cent in 1943.

At the same time the suffering of the toiling masses increased very much. The result was a tremendous sharpening of the social tension, which reached its climax in Egypt. Already in January 1942, a bourgeois member of the Egyptian Chamber of Deputies said: "We have already stood on this platform before and warned the government of the danger of hunger, and we then remarked that he was right who said that hunger

is a heretic which knows no compromise or manners. He who looks into history will know that hunger was the cause of many revolutions. And if history tells us that the revolutionary people in one of the biggest states in Europe cried from the depths of their hearts, 'We want bread,' then we heard a similar rebellious cry of the same tone before the last 'Feast of Sacrifice' in the streets of Cairo, a cry that was heard from the mouths of the hungry people attacking the bread vans, in order to snatch bread." The speaker later described the situation in the country as a "revolutionary situation" (*Al-Misri*, January 6, 1942).

Another senator in March 1943 described the situation in these words: "The war has brought about a concentration of capital in the hands of a few hundreds. The wealth of the rich has increased while the poor have been forced down into more terrible poverty; the gulf between the classes has deepened. The social system is shaky and grave dangers threaten it. A good future cannot be prophesied for the country."

The peace means a great increase in the sufferings of the masses. The authorities' purchase of products to the extent of tens of millions of pounds will cease, which will lead to the dismissal of about a quarter of a million workers employed in industries supplying the army. The great majority of the 800 thousand workers employed directly by the army will also be discharged. Even industries producing for the civil population will be confronted with grave difficulties in the form of foreign competition which during the war was nearly non-existent, difficulties in the renewal of machinery, etc. The ruling classes are preparing to roll the burden of the crisis onto the backs of the workers and peasants, and make no secret of their intentions. Thus, Fouad Saraj ed-Din, a large landowner who was Minister of Agriculture, Internal Affairs and Social Welfare, said that in order that Egyptian cotton be able to compete with Indian, Chinese and Brazilian cotton, with artificial silk and nylon, the rise of wages in agriculture must be stopped. Hafez Affi, director of the big bank, "Misr," also stated that the rise of wages deprived the Egyptian industry of the possibility to compete with foreign products. The paper *Al-Ahram* of July 19, 1943 stated that the workers were getting a high wage which accustomed them to luxuries (sic!)

Increasing Antagonism Between Bourgeoisie and Imperialists

At the same time the antagonism between the Arab industrial bourgeoisie and imperialism is increasing. There are two main bones of contention: first the problem of the defense of the existing industries from the competition of foreign goods, and second the problem of Britain's tremendous debt to the Eastern countries (to Egypt 350 million pounds, to Palestine—here mainly to Jewish capitalists—100 million pounds, to Iraq 60 million pounds). The position of the sections of the Arab bourgeoisie regarding these questions is different. The comprador bourgeoisie is much more interested in trade with overseas than in the development of the local industry.

On the other hand the industrialists insist on raising the customs tariffs and are also more assertive as regards the British debt, for they badly need its repayment in order to renew their worn machinery. Thus at the session of the senate on January 20, 1945, Senator Ahmed Ramzi Bey said that the currency restrictions meant that Egypt could not get dollars and buy in the USA, but only in England, and this was a serious handicap. He proposed that England supply dollars or even hand over to Egypt some of her shares in companies in Egypt,

such as those of the Suez Company, Anglo-Egyptian Co., etc. He also mentioned the decline in practice, if not in theory, of the value of the Egyptian pound compared with the pound sterling. *Al-Ahram* of April 19, 1944, states that the United Kingdom's debt to Egypt is the debt of the strong to the weak, and of course it was dependent on the will of the strong whether and how to pay. A week later the same paper quotes Senator Mohamed Barakat Pasha as stating that the United Kingdom would not be able to pay her debts and advising Egypt to leave the sterling bloc. The same theme of leaving the sterling bloc and transferring Suez and other shares to Egyptian hands repeats itself over and over again in the Egyptian press.

The Arab bourgeoisie in the neighboring countries is weaker and therefore less insistent. The position of the Arab exploiting classes may be summarized thus: *all* of them turn their faces towards the cutting of the standard of living of the masses. Some of them, the industrialists, want to use pressure on Britain in order to wring some concessions. But nevertheless one thing must be absolutely clear. Even for the Arab indus-

trialists the first factor takes overwhelming precedence over the second.

In the face of the deep abyss between the masses of workers and peasants and imperialism, the latter is interested, and will be more so in the future, to divert the ire of the masses into a misleading side-track. The majority of the Arab exploiters—the feudal lords, the comprador bourgeoisie, the merchants and usurers—identify themselves in this matter completely with imperialism. (It must not be understood that this means necessarily British imperialism. It may just as well be another, i.e., American.) The industrial bourgeoisie will perhaps try to make use of the masses' ire in order to wring some concessions from imperialism, but before long it is sure to join hands with it in an effort to direct the movement of the hungry masses away from the national and social liberation struggle into a side channel—one of chauvinistic-communal riots.

Jerusalem, November 12, 1945

(To be continued)

German Prisoners of War in the U. S.

OBSERVATIONS OF A SOLDIER

By EUGENE SHAYS

German Prisoners of War in the United States amount to over 350,000 men. Representing a cross section of the army, they also represent a cross section of the German people. Although isolated from the continuity of life of the German community generally, and their respective class particularly, they nevertheless react to their present environment and to the historical events of the present (as experienced by them or as reflected by news reports) in a way conditioned by their specific backgrounds.

Although rigid divisions in the social composition and political tendencies of PW's do not exist, the latter are nevertheless, for the sake of clarity, presented here in categories and sub-categories.

1. Nazis

They are not a homogeneous group; they have various degrees of conviction and dissimilar backgrounds. Once they were the exponents of a fairly large mass movement; but today they are completely without popular support. Hence they have, as a group, the appearance of a clique.

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Among the officers it is, generally, the young ones (23-32) who may be classed Nazis by conviction and upbringing. They come from middle class homes which could usually afford to give them a higher education, thus enabling them to get the "higher" type of jobs (professional, executive, technicians, etc.) Such jobs were not as plentiful during the Weimar period as they were under the Four Year (preparedness) Plans of the Hitler regime; nor was there the security which seemed to attach to them after 1933. These men were thoroughly indoctrinated with Nazi theories in the schools, universities and professional organizations. The Nazi theories were nothing but modifications of ideas which had already taken a historical position in the ways of thinking, the standards and customs

of the German middle classes. Hence the young Nazi officers were not just indoctrinated from the "outside" but they brought along the background which acted as the fertile soil upon which Nazi doctrine could bear rich fruit.

The older officers are not the mystical fanatics which their younger colleagues are inclined to be; but they nevertheless identified themselves with or followed the Nazis because of the latter's aims and principal points of program. They may not have agreed, for instance, with the persecution of the Jews or the treatment of the Poles but these were "minor" points to them. They were unable to regard such points as symbols of major significance. Being conservative members of the middle class, they often identified the Nazi ideas with the idea of the German nation; they are apt to identify themselves with society *per se*.

There are, of course, dissidents among these officers, most of them young ones. Since they, too, were considered as belonging to the ruling class, their freedom of expression inside the compounds (PW barbed wire enclosures) was even more restricted than the highly circumscribed freedom of expression among the enlisted men. They belong, as a group, to a type of anti-Nazi which will be treated below.

The defeat of Germany has, so far, little affected the social outlook of the German officers generally. Rather, their psychology is, to some extent already and will increasingly be, that of the upper classes of a nationally oppressed people. (Their subtle arrogance, their pride, alert to any invidious comparison of "national" achievements; their attitude of "the end justifies the means"; i.e., they have no scruples about being "immoral.") They feign cooperativeness with the western Allies, based on a presumed common antagonism towards the USSR. Where they have personal contact with American officers, this contact is, generally, on the basis of fraternal class relations. German officers are known to have enjoyed the generous confidence, sometimes even hospitality, of American officers.

Under the Geneva Convention, privileges are extended to them which take cognizance of their class status, making the most rigid distinctions between them and enlisted men. Nevertheless, as members of their class, they are aware of America's role in their native country; and although regarding her as protecting Germany from "Bolshevism" (i.e., the USSR), they are bent on regaining their old position of leadership in Germany by appearing cooperative, knowing that American authorities do not want "chaos" and "revolution" which would take the place of the ruling class. It is significant that, lacking popular support to realize their aspirations of leadership in Germany, they bank upon the Americans to assist them.

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The Nazis among the enlisted men amounted, prior to V-E day, to about 20 to 25 per cent of PW's interned in the average PW camp. Of these no more than 50 per cent were hardened Nazi elements; i.e., the kernel of the Nazi movement. The rest were followers, "Schlagwortnazis" (men taken in by mere slogans). It was the NCO's who made up the bulk of the hardened Nazis. When speaking of Nazis, reference is made to this kernel and to the officers spoken of above.

A large part of the Nazis come from rural communities. It seems that they were not directly farmers (excepting those from East Prussia and the more prosperous farms of northern Germany); rather that they were employed by small industries located in rural districts. There are groups which were students until drafted; others who held minor executive positions in a shop, business (chief clerks and the like), or party formations. They are politically backward elements (excepting the officers who are quite class conscious), often opportunist, usually good soldiers. Many professional Army and Navy men can be found among them.

It may be mentioned incidentally that most enlisted men of the German Navy seem to come from rural districts; i.e., they belong to the politically most backward layers of the German people. Since the German Army and Navy were merged under one high command and transfers from one to the other of the two services were routine matters, it is not impossible that the design behind the social composition of the Navy was to lessen the chances for a repetition of the revolts in the Navy of November 1918.

Those elements of the population who are ignorant and have an archaic distrust towards anything foreign often are Nazis. However, most of the Nazis are made up of men with an average education.

The Nazis often form cliques in the compounds. Before V-E day they strove to terrorize their fellow PW's into accepting their ruthless control over the compounds. As indicated above, many of them held positions as NCO's in the Germany Army, and since American authorities retained them in these positions, they had (and to a great extent still have) virtual control over all the activities of PW's; i.e., they organized and ran educational and recreational programs; they made up the rosters assigning work details, which is a most effective lever of control since they assign "soft" and "dirty" jobs. They drafted lists of PW's to be transferred to other posts, these lists being merely formally approved by an American officer. Thus they were able to get rid of "troublemakers."

Until recently they "censored" the news and sabotaged the distribution of newspapers. They were in a position to terrorize their fellow PW's into conforming with Nazi ideas and phony exhibitions and demonstrations of patriotism. It is safe to say,

that it was the mass of PW's and the pressure they brought to bear upon American authorities, and not the latter, who broke the control of the Nazis in the compounds.

2. The Non-Nazis

The bulk of the German soldiers are non-Nazis. They can be generally divided into men with a petty bourgeois background, and men from working class families.

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The former usually come from homes whose livelihood depended on a small business or a clerical or academic position. It also includes small-scale peasants and lesser civil service employes.

It is these people who took some pride in stating that they had never been active politically. They kept themselves "neutral." At one time or other they may have derived a small gain from the existence of the Nazi regime; and for a short while they have become interested in one of the many Nazi party, sub and sister organizations. Such an interest ceased to be genuine when the squeeze in which they found themselves became unbearable (except that in the presence of the Gestapo it had to be bearable). Then they sought refuge in abstaining from politics completely. This group is the most terrorized of all non- and anti-Nazi groups. Abstention from political thinking, years of black insecurity and of the Nazi police boot, making it impossible to form even the tiniest cell of opposition, have resulted in a loss of character, of moral fiber, of the ability to think critically, especially in the more educated. Today their hopes are concentrated upon the Americans; often they are servile and opportunistic to a pitiful degree.

Nevertheless, although they are not the ones who will make a revolution, they will certainly follow it, deeply frustrated and discontented as they are. It would be incorrect to say there are no valuable elements among them.

As is known, the professions in Germany were utterly corrupted by Nazism. Most of the older academicians, though inwardly disagreeing with the Nazis, rarely quit their positions, accepting all the restrictions imposed by the Nazis upon their various fields (mainly in the liberal arts, of course; science being, on the one hand, incompatible with, on the other, indispensable to Nazism). Usually however, the sons of these people did not take to Nazi doctrine the way other young Germans did; and they (the sons) have often retained a relatively amazing degree of critical faculty.

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The men with a proletarian background are the least affected by Nazi doctrines, and appear to be the most open to the influence of Marxism. They are not politically conscious; in the early months of their captivity they seemed to be indifferent to politics but to-day they are incomparably more alert, and, as will be shown below, they are groping for political ideas which would show them a way out of the blind alley in which they find themselves.

The younger ones come from working class homes where the father may often have belonged to the Communist or Social Democratic parties or labor unions. They went to work in the shops, and the educative influence of 8 hours of mechanical work, the cooperation in a modern plant and mixing with the older workers tended to offset the indoctrination during their time off. This is not to say that the Nazis did not have any success in impressing their ideas upon these men; they had a

monopoly on ideas as well as on education generally. Nevertheless, my impression has been that the young workers are not vitally poisoned by Nazi ideology; the reality of their daily lives was not conducive to this.

Those from 18-20 have hardly been touched by Nazi doctrines. It is from this age group that the "Edelweiss" organizations arose, which translated the passive opposition of German youth to the compulsion and iron-bound discipline of the Hitler Youth into active resistance by breaking up meetings, stealing weapons and using them on the more brutal Hitler Youth leaders, etc. The "Edelweiss" was mainly a working class youth movement, and its centers were to be found in the industrial sections of Germany. From the age of 20 the curve of susceptibility to and digestion of Nazi ideas goes upward and reaches its zenith at the age group of 27 to 28. Then it declines again until at the age group of 30 to 31 it is at the approximate level of the first age group.

The older workers (those above 31) are practically unimpressed by Nazi propaganda. What erroneous views they still hold with regard to some apparently beneficent Nazi policies (the "Strength through Joy" movement and the like) are of no vital import whatever in the general picture of their half-neutral, half-hostile attitude toward the Nazis. Most of them had to suffer chicanery, constant "supervision" by minor Nazi bosses, endless deductions from their pay, and—especially those from the Ruhr and Saxony industrial districts, hotbeds of radical working class action—searches for subversive literature and concentration or work camps. Their organizations and therewith their massed power, had been destroyed. With a family to feed and a job to risk it would have been ludicrous to put up the kind of opposition which the liberals and newspaper editors of Allied countries thought in the safety of their offices to be the only token by which the German people could show their hatred of Nazism.

In my many talks with German workers, now interned as Prisoners of War in this country, I often wished that some day a book would be written, something on the line of Dos Passos' "U.S.A." It would tell of the thousandfold instances of small groups of courageous workers resisting their Fascist oppressors; getting together to take up collections for the Spanish Civil War, to fraternize with non-German slave workers by giving them food and cigarettes (this is confirmed by these slave workers themselves), buying demonstratively from Jewish stores, staying away from work by reporting sick. Such a book would tell why the Nazis had to increase their police forces from month to month and year to year; why they had to add concentration camp to concentration camp; why they had to limit learning to a bare minimum; why they had to send men to prison for staying away from the job as little as two days. The German people were held in terror by a police force unsurpassed in ruthlessness, lawlessness and ubiquity. That would scarcely have been necessary, had the masses loyally supported their government as the present hate campaign in the Allied press would have us believe.

The workers, both young and old, and most of the young PW enlisted men generally, have few illusions left. The older age groups tend to regard the western Allies as liberators, much in the fashion of many French, Italians, etc. The youth is more or less indifferent to Allied occupation (at this stage). To almost all of them Fascism has completely discredited itself. Nationalistic ideas and the idea of "following the leader" have practically died out, and, at the present, it seems impossible that they could ever regain a hold in the minds of these Germans.

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There is another group of non-Nazis. They are the Poles, Austrians, Sudeten Germans. The former two usually come from rural areas and are politically either indifferent or very backward. Some of the Poles are Nazis, but this is of no significance in the face of the heroic struggles the Polish people fought against the Nazis. Among the Sudeten Germans are a number of Social-Democrats. However, the bulk of them appears to have been nationalist Germans, inclined to accept the Nazis as their saviors. As is well-known now, the Czech government discriminated against the German minority in Czecho-Slovakia, attempting to relegate them to an inferior economic status. This accounts for the large following of the "Sudetendeutsche Volkspartei" (of which Henlein was the leader), which later merged with the Nazi party. Especially the unemployed seemed to adhere to the Volkspartei and since, with the annexation of the Sudetenland to Germany, they were finally given jobs, it is not surprising if the Nazis found some of their staunchest supporters among them.

It can be said about the non-Nazis generally that, if they are poisoned by any Nazi doctrines, they do not appear to be poisoned with that of racial superiority or with anti-Semitism or with any degree of chauvinism. Only upon the Russians do they look with an air of cultural superiority not unmixed with a fear that has been drilled into them for years and which is not totally unjustified in the face of what is happening today in Russian-occupied territories. Almost all German troops have occupied, at one time or other, any one of the score of foreign countries that suffered German imperialism. And nothing could and did more easily dispel among German soldiers the gospel of racial superiority and chauvinistic hatred preached to them for years than this day-to-day contact with foreign peoples, not excepting those of the USSR. The vast efforts of a dictatorial government proved fruitless in the face of the reality of human life.

3. The Anti-Nazis

After what the German people have been through, most of them are anti-Nazis today. The term, as used here, applies to the *politically most conscious* layers of anti-Nazi PW's.

They fall, generally, into three groups: The non-Germans, the disgruntled petty bourgeois and the radical working class elements. There are opportunists among them, especially among the second group.

Anti-Nazis were usually separated from other PW's when they asked American authorities for protective custody. (Special enclosures were provided for this.) They did this especially when their lives were in danger from Nazi gangs in the general compounds. In the months preceding the capitulation of the German armies, it had, of course, become increasingly safer to speak up among the other PW's when the Nazis uttering dire threats of terrible retribution were shut up with increasing firmness by PW's less convinced of the righteousness of the Nazi cause. Groups of anti-Nazi PW's met right under the noses of SS gangs. After V-E day anti-Nazi PW's in the general compounds could not afford to be any less cautious than before since American authorities by no means hurried to remove the more vicious Nazi elements and hence did not create the necessary conditions for a free exchange of ideas. This free exchange grew only after the PW's generally had overcome the terrific shock of the final defeat and had begun to ask questions. Once at that stage, Nazism became utterly discredited and the few who still advocated its doctrines experienced ridicule.

As will be described below, the anti-Nazis consist of various class elements among the German and other European peoples. They have only one common characteristic politically: They are anti-Fascists. The special compound (mentioned above) reflects, therefore, the following phenomenon. Very real tensions exist between Catholic centrists and communists, socialists and Stalinists, Austrian Social Democrats and the followers of the Schuschnigg regime. During the anti-Nazis' confinement to the general compounds, where the Nazis exercised control, all these tensions remained under an iron lid of suppression of all political discussion. Once freed from this terror and given ample "democracy" to express themselves, all the contradictions of German and Austrian political life, of class interests, rose to the surface, and sharp clashes often occurred. Thus the once common anti-Fascist tendencies quickly disintegrated once Fascist terror had been removed.

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The non-Germans consist mostly of Austrians. There are also Poles, Russians, Czechs and Dutch.

The Austrians were considered as Germans by the German Army. Nevertheless, they feel that they are a nation apart from the Germans. The impossibility for Austria to exist as an independent nation, separated as it was by the treaty of Versailles from Serbia, Hungary and other Balkan countries with which its economy was vitally bound up, was reflected by the desire of the Austrian masses to unite with Germany. This desire was supported by German and Austrian Marxists in the interests of a more powerful proletariat of German nationality. The annexation of Austria to Germany in 1938 indeed promised a higher standard of living to Austria.

However, the Nazis treated the country like foreign conquerors, creating a bureaucratic apparatus there as a means of providing positions for their stooges and filling the more important posts with Germans. They exploited its resources for their war machine and moved large amounts of its products to Germany. In other words, they failed to integrate Austrian and German economy, thus exercising an imperialist rule over Austria.

Hence, many even of those people who had enthusiastically acclaimed Anschluss in 1938 grew to hate the Germans as oppressors and at the present time the Austrian masses are unquestionably in favor of sovereignty for Austria. The Allies are taking advantage of this sentiment which serves to weaken the working class of German nationality and make the recovery of Austrian industry practically impossible. Nevertheless, a large number of Austrian PW's favor the independence of Austria.

The Poles and Czechs among the anti-Nazis are mostly working class people who participated in one form or other in their respective resistance movements. The Czechs as well as the Dutch have vague ideas about going back to what used to be before 1938 (at which time the living standards of both peoples were relatively high). The Poles are disillusioned, they care less about what happens than any of the others. Many of them have lived the life of slaves for the past 7-8 years. They would serve in the Polish Army, fighting the Germans, would be taken prisoner, would be released to work in German labor battalions in Russia. Later on they would be pressed into the German Army under penalty of death if they refused and would finally be captured by the Americans to face another two, three years of captivity. Soon they will be "repatriated," only to face a very dark future.

The Dutch PW's appeared to be least backward, both politi-

cally and in intelligence. They appeared to be very international minded and to have no illusions about the nature of this war. Nor do they think of the United States the way the Czechs and Austrians think about it. Much of this is due to the way they were treated by the U.S. Army. They were civilian laborers for a Dutch firm, working under contract on German defense projects along the channel coast when they were captured, and they were given no consideration because of their presumed status as Allies. Instead of being sent to the American rear, awaiting speedy repatriation, they were sent to the U.S. and locked behind barbed wire.

About the Russians I met I can say little, due to language barriers. The Germans succeeded in getting quite a few of their Russian prisoners of war to volunteer for service in the German army. Most other Russian prisoners, however, worked in labor battalions. They generally give the impression of being backward peasants. However, since most of the skilled and semi-skilled industrial Russian workers were kept in Germany proper no general conclusions should be drawn from this impression.

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The second group consists of German petty bourgeois elements. They are the same types as have already been described under the heading "non-Nazis," only that these men are more rebellious than the others. A great number of them are Catholic small peasants from southern Germany; others are the sons of lesser civil servants and independent handicraftsmen (the latter are especially militant since their economic independence had been shattered by Nazi decrees) from the Rhineland, Bavaria and central Germany (Saxony). They have always upheld the Allies as fighters for freedom and they have deep-seated illusions in this respect. When they propagate their views—in a typically petty bourgeois individualistic fashion, giving vent to emotions of rabid hatred in front of hostile or indifferent, politically backward PW's—they disregard that some of the Nazi propaganda, despite its aims, was based on facts, such as the strangulation of Germany by British and American capitalism, British suppression of colonial masses, etc. The other PW's could not be convinced that this war was a fight for freedom; as little can they be convinced of American democracy while stationed in the South. The anti-Nazi petty bourgeois are not, generally, politically minded in the sense of adhering to a definite party or program. Today, their illusions about the Allies are slowly giving way to confusion on what to think of the Allied role in Europe. It is becoming increasingly difficult for them to answer the many questions of their fellow PW's.

About the anti-Nazi officers the following may be said. Forced, as they were, to constantly live together with the most outspoken and conscious Fascists and to abide by the latter's codes and concepts of the German officer, they experienced the reality of the terroristic system of Nazism. The intensive academic training which many of them received, the clandestine methods they used in maintaining contact with each other and the psychological effects of the intellectual struggle against Fascist ideology, which, in the most guarded and devious ways, they had to wage, if only to save themselves from succumbing to Fascist poison, matured them to a higher degree than the average PW of petty bourgeois origin. They appear, generally, never to have been affiliated with political parties; some of the older ones were followers of the Social Democrats.

They are rabid anti-communists. In the case of the older ones this attitude stems from their fear of the drab masses of

men they saw demonstrating many a time in their native German cities before 1933; the younger ones, unburdened by the concreteness of such fears, identify (as do most non- and anti-Nazi PW's) communism with Stalinism and its terror. Many of these men have been selected by the American government for jobs in the administration of Germany. However, they are "troublemakers," they do not appear to be amenable to executing "soft" policies. Many of those selected may compromise in view of the prestige and advantages of their position. But the stronger elements will not. They constitute a potentially most valuable part of a reconstituted German workers' movement.

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The third group consists of radical working class elements. Those not segregated into the anti-Nazi special compounds sometimes expressed their opinions quite openly to fellow PW's. There are such factors as class loyalties at work among PW's, which often cause them to protect their less restrained fellows from the ill will of Nazi bosses. The German Army used to induct known communists and other enemies of the German government, taking able-bodied men from the concentration camps because of the growing man power shortage. The induction of these elements took place from early 1944 onwards before which they had been barred from military service. The German army did not promote these men but otherwise did not bother them so long as they did not engage in subversive activities.

Most of these men were industrial workers in the shops of the industrial centers of Germany. Usually they devoted their spare time to functionary work in the Communist, Social-Democratic or Socialist parties or their youth organizations. Their age is, generally, above 32. Some of them have spent long years in concentration camps and this has left indelible marks upon them. Those I have met are neurotic, unbalanced personalities, incapable of thinking in clear terms, to say nothing of assuming positions of leadership—for the present time. Given favorable conditions, there is nothing that would prevent full or partial recuperation, of course.

They impress one as having been isolated for years, unable to associate with fellow thinkers, misinformed, confused by Stalinism, unable to evaluate correctly. Even now it is not easy for them to discuss freely and keep company. They have obviously borne the brunt of the Fascist repression.

Some of those who formerly were Communists have ceased to support the USSR, fearing and hating Stalin quite as much as Hitler. They as well as the others are vaguely thinking of a Socialist Germany. But to them the Allies are the liberators from nightmarish terror. They do, to be sure, recognize the Allies for what they are: imperialists, acting solely in their own selfish interests. But these politically conscious anti-Nazi workers saw no other way out of the huge Gestapo prison which Germany was, except through the military defeat of the Nazis. They reflect a hopelessness which the German proletariat must have experienced during the latter war years under the impact of increased Nazi terror and merciless bombings. PW's describe the devastated cities of Germany: how men and women suffocated, burnt, were blown to bits; how a friend was sent to a concentration camp because, looking at the charred remnants of his bomb-struck little house, he swore at the Nazis; how they would push a bicycle over narrow paths, winding their way between huge piles of debris. Listening to such stories, it is easy to understand why the German workers—who, unlike the bourgeoisie, were compelled to remain in the cities and

could not quickly evacuate them by car like the Nazi bosses—accepted in despair the Allies as liberators from war and the Nazis.

As indicated above, these anti-Nazi workers have no basic illusions about the Allies but they were willing to fight with them, like other anti-Nazis, since they saw no other way of destroying Fascism. It was mainly the refusal of the Allies to accept them as fighters on an equal basis that baffled them.

These men remain militant and courageous anti-Fascists; but they have become *less* radical, not more. Although they are recognizing the Allies for what they are, they accept the future of the German people as necessarily dominated by the Allies, since only their troops, so they reason, could keep the Fascist elements from regaining power. For the present, at least, they have lost faith in the potential strength of the German masses. They are aware of this. But they do not consider themselves revolutionists anymore in the sense of translating their political ideas into organizational work and action. They are tired and disillusioned. Their state of mind seems to reflect the state of mind of the *older* age groups of the betrayed German working class. The Stalinists among them looked upon the USSR as the liberator; and they seemed to judge only that small part of the German proletariat which was communist, capable of fighting Nazism. Today the Stalinists are quieting down, are beginning to doubt their convictions with regard to Russia. The newspapers do not bear out their hopes of a proletariat liberated by the Soviet Union.

After years of concentration camps, persecutions, fears and drab hopelessness, these men appear to have little spirit left to contribute much to the German revolution by way of leadership, theory or heroic example. Fascism has weighed too heavily upon them.

* * *

It is the youth of Germany which is the hope and future of the German revolution.

It has been implied above that differences in class, hence backgrounds and aspirations, are as distinct among young PW's as they are among the older ones. The important difference is that the former are not as conscious of this as the latter. Another difference is that the distinction between working class and petty bourgeois youth is diminishing, due to the increasing proletarianization of the German and Austrian lower middle classes. In the older PW's this distinction is necessarily more marked.

What Nazism has "done" to German youth deserves some careful research, as do the innumerable contradictions between its educational policies and ideals, and the realities of the military necessities regarding human material of a modern, mechanized mass army. I have mentioned above that the chauvinistic teachings of Nazism completely lost their effect when German troops were in contact with "enemies" for any period of time. So did the ideals of the "fighter," by which was meant the medieval knight rather than the modern, strictly matter-of-fact soldier, to whom cooperativeness is of necessity, second nature. The "morals" of German youth, i.e., standards of honesty and decency, are quite as high as those of any other army—again, this is necessarily so. You can't live together in close quarters any other way, and the habits thus acquired are not abandoned outside of one's own group. When they are, they suffer general deterioration which necessarily affects the individual's life within the group. None of this, of course, can apply to the special SS troops serving as occupational police, etc. They are in no way representative of the composition of the German army.

Final defeat was, of course, a terrific shock, especially to

young PW's, even though it had been expected for months. The Nazis, having learned from propaganda policies in the last war, understood how to teach the soldiers to believe in victory. But events themselves caused many doubts among these men, and after they had witnessed, through the media of newspapers and radio, the debacle of the most respected Nazi leaders betraying them and their people, it was like standing before an abyss.

They did not become "anti-Nazis" by any means. But they began to be interested in political ideas. Their interest in them has grown into a voracious hunger for newspapers, magazines, books written by anti-Nazis and anything that would help them in gaining consciousness of their own position in human society. This, of course, is a broad generalization. Their immediate interest is in information. Why had things happened this way, what were the causes, what can be done now? Wendell Wilkie's book "One World," translated into German, and, together with a very few other books by anti-Nazi authors, made available to them through their canteens, was sold out in a few days. Newspapers are studied, rather than read, and it seems as though the amount of (German-language) newspapers delivered into the compounds is ever insufficient.

The term "democracy" is, more or less, new to them; hence they are unable to understand it in the formal, parliamentary sense. To the embarrassment of American authorities, they have applied it to some concrete issues, such as the highly preferential treatment accorded German PW officers. (The antagonism between German enlisted men and officers is, of course, as old as the German Army. But it was doubly sharp during the war when officers had, as usual, the best of everything, meting out sternest punishment, often in camps as bad as concentration camps, trying to earn laurels at the enlisted men's expense, etc.) Thus with repatriation impending, the U.S. Army brass hats have ruled that German PW officers, who during the entire period of their captivity have been exempt from doing as much

as one day's work (but nevertheless received from \$20 to \$40 in pay), who have lived in clean single rooms and have quite often enjoyed a most generous interpretation of the Geneva Convention by American officers—these people, among whom are to be found the worst and most vicious types of Fascist, are allowed to take with them 175 lbs. of baggage.

On the other hand, PW enlisted men, who have had to work for 80 cents a day doing the hardest kind of common labor, subject to ruthless repression in case of refusal or strike ("administrative punishment" the Army calls it, consisting, among other things, in putting a whole compound on hunger rations of bread and water), living in crowded barracks and often receiving scant food rations—these men, most of whom were the victims of Fascism, are allowed to take along but 55 lbs. of baggage (plus 10 lbs. which may consist only of "re-educational" literature, issued through the War Dept.) Thus they are forced to give up the few objects of small value they had bought through their canteens from their hard-earned dollars. They have voiced their protests to American authorities, pointing to the glaringly unjust discrimination against them. These protests have of course been quite futile. But the tone in which they are made or written up in letters to the administration, show that the term "democracy" exists only in its concrete meaning to the PW's making them. It is pretty safe to say that these men will apply the term to spheres of life other than their existence behind stockades.

Naturally they are all very eager to get home, and to rebuild Germany and Europe on a sound foundation. They are searching for the political concepts by which to formulate a program according to which they might best realize their aspirations. Everything they have experienced has readied them, has made them receptive to the teachings of the Fourth International and therefore they present, as does German youth generally, a most fertile field for us.

Newsletter from Argentina

To have a broad understanding of what is happening in Argentina, it is necessary to sketch in a few words its history for the last 15 years.

The Uriburu revolution in September 1930 pulled down the Radical party boss Hipolito Yrigoyen, leader of the flourishing commercial and industrial bourgeoisie of Argentina. Uriburu handed over the power to a conservative government (Justo) of land-and-cattle lords who were strongly bound to English imperialism, their main customer. Amidst all the political seesawing, the latter maneuvers to maintain its privileged position in the market here and to resist all attempts of the United States to take its place. The political fights in Argentina are understandable only if they are linked up with the inter-imperialist struggle.

British imperialism owns the transport trust, a good part of the meat-packing industry, controls the banking system (from its foundation in 1935 the Central Bank of the Republic has been tied to British finance) as well as many other important industries. The United Kingdom is the premier customer of and seller to the Argentine Republic.

American imperialism ranks second only to the United Kingdom in the external trade of Argentina. It is the owner of the electrical trust in the country (with the notable exceptions of Buenos Aires and Rosario which are in the hands of the Anglo-

Belgian SOFINA), controls mines, oil fields, meat packing, textiles and chemical industries. Up until a few years ago, the Argentine Republic, which is a great exporter of meat and cereals and importer of manufactured goods and raw materials for its industry and transport, depended upon its foreign trade with the imperialist powers.

In the 1938 elections the Ortiz-Castillo combination won out, deposing General Justo by fraud and violence, the usual means of winning elections in Argentina. Ortiz, a former liberal, tried to approach the Radical (liberal) party and had promised clean elections against the strong resistance of the agrarian obligarchy. He died and his successor, Castillo, took the old path again.

In the meantime a new power had been emerging, the industrial bourgeoisie which was still without much of a party of its own but growing stronger every day. It wanted to obtain tariff walls and a cheaper government, that is, less direct taxes. From 1939 on Argentine industry grew up enormously, favored by the Second World War, which practically interrupted importations and opened some markets in Latin American and South Africa to Argentine products.

Since 1935 the industrial proletariat has grown quickly. From 471,000 workers in that year, it has jumped to 1,000,000 in 1945. In addition, there are more than a half million work-

ers in the transport corporations, the rural proletariat, etc. One extremely important fact is the very great industrial concentration: within a radius of 100 kilometers of Buenos Aires there are 900,000 workers. The Argentine proletariat is new and young, and the union membership is very weak (about ten to twenty per cent).

The possibilities of development and the attempts at independence of the industrial bourgeoisie found an indirect advocate in the brass-hats, who are interested in having a heavy industry. Furthermore, the strong financial resources and continuously favorable trade balance put the Argentine bourgeoisie as a whole in a good position to fight for its "sovereignty."

Peron's Maneuvers

The Rawson-Ramirez revolt of June 4, 1943 was the final consequence of this process. But the initial unity of the military caste, which was obliged to satisfy simultaneously the needs of the industrial bourgeoisie, the English and American imperialisms, the middle class, the agrarian obligarchy and the proletariat, quickly melted away. Colonel Peron, the "gray eminence" of the military clique, found it easy to take advantage of this situation and climbed rapidly upward in a typically bonapartist campaign.

In studying the case of Peron, it is necessary to remember the South American "caudillo" tradition, which made possible political maneuvers difficult to carry on in more advanced countries. In December 1943 Peron took into his hands the National Board of Labor and transformed it into a Secretary of Labor and Social Welfare, which is now the center of his presidential campaign. He turned to his account some wage increases won by the workers (which, without Peron's intervention, would have been much greater), speeded up the formation of yellow unions (now strong enough), tried to destroy the independent unions, and used a cynical demagogic language among the less advanced sectors of the urban and rural working class.

In a speech delivered at the Buenos Aires Stock Exchange in September 1944 Peron said to the Babbitts of this country: "If you want social peace, you have to know how to handle workers. You must walk through the plant, amicably tapping the workers on their shoulders and kindly asking about their family. At the end of the year, give them a bond as a gift. . . . They say I am an enemy of capitalism. It's not true. There is no better supporter of capitalism than I. But . . . but . . . it's better to give a thirty per cent now, then to be forced to give it all afterwards." This characteristic speech, published by every newspaper in the country on September 3, 1944, has some points in common with the meeting at which Hitler was presented to the German industrial barons and promised them to be their faithful servant.

Peron's plan of penetration into the working class was facilitated by the great disorganization prevailing in most of the unions owing to a great extent to the Stalinist policy of "national unity." But Stalinism has lost a lot of prestige among the militant rank and file. The general strike of 80,000 metal workers in 1942, betrayed by the Stalinist leadership, the Avelaneda-Berisso meat-packing general strike of 50,000 in November 1943, when the Stalinist leader Peter was carried from a concentration camp in a military plane in order to break the strike, the annihilation by Peron's police of the Stalinist-dominated Textile Union, have dealt strong blows to the Stalinist influence in the unions.

Now the Communist Party is more and more followed by the petty-bourgeoisie, but it does not attract the proletariat in the same way. The Peronist workers attack the Stalinists, say-

ing they are "on the capitalist side." Peron has neutralized the Stalinist influence over the masses to an extent unknown in other countries. It is quite impossible to elaborate correct tactics in the mass movement without fully understanding this capital point.

The Socialist Party of Palacios and Repetto is very weak in the union movement. The Anarchists have some strength in small independent unions, but they are only a shadow of what they were 25 years ago, when the FORA had 300,000 members. This relationship of forces, the great importance of the industrial proletariat and the continuous increase of its class consciousness creates extremely favorable conditions for the expansion of the Trotskyist movement.

The Trotskyist UOR (Union Obrera Revolucionaria) has already set into motion an independent group in the Metal-Workers Union which is very active and well-organized. It is gathering around it a number of new leaders, genuine representatives of the working class. The following open letter to the Executive Board of the Workers Syndicate of the Metallurgical Industry, written by one of these leaders, provides a good example of its program and activities. In this syndicate the Local Workers Union is controlled by the Communist Party.

Letter Presents Demands

Buenos Aires, September 14, 1945

"Comrades: The Assembly on September 12 enthusiastically applauded my suggestions to complete and improve the list of union demands. However, I was accused of being 'provocative' and 'peronista,' that is, an ally of Peron, without any proof. I tried to defend my position but was bluntly prevented from appearing on the platform.

"For that reason I address this open letter to you in behalf of myself and the Agrupacion Metalurgica Independiente (Independent Metal-Workers Group). The AMI has been formed in order to defend a particular union policy within the Workers Syndicate of the Metallurgical Industry. This policy is expressed in the 5-point declaration we distributed during the Assembly. Here they are:

"1. We call upon every metal worker of Buenos Aires and its suburbs to affiliate themselves with the Workers Syndicate of the Metallurgical Industry, the only one that really represents the legitimate interests of our guild. *Not one worker outside of the Syndicate!*

"2. The increase in the cost of living reduces real wages to hunger levels. To fight this we demand: *A Rising Scale of Wages!*

"3. The interruption of armament production and the renewal of the importation of metal products may create unemployment in our industry such as has never before been seen. To fight this we demand: *A Sliding Scale of Working Hours!*

"4. Speculation and inflation, inevitable evils of the capitalist system, daily threaten the living standards of the working class. Women, workers and union members ought to unite and organize People's Committees to check the cost of living.

"5. To strengthen the union we ought to form committees in the neighborhoods and internal committees in the factories and workshops, where every worker may freely present their problems and thoughts. *Wide Union Democracy!*

"In these five points there is nothing 'provocative.' Moreover, the rising scale of wages was recommended by the Local Workers Union to which our union belongs.

"The new proposal for our industry is the sliding scale of working hours. What does this mean? If there is unemployment,

there must be solidarity among the workers, both employed and unemployed. Henceforward in each factory, workshop and department the work to be done will be shared without preference among the workers and jobless, *without reducing wages.*

"Instead of working 48 hours, work 30 with the same pay. Somebody may tell you that this is a very 'advanced' demand. This is not true! The solution suggested by the Local Workers Union, to subsidize every jobless worker, is much more 'advanced.' This subsidy would be paid by the State, that is, in the last instance, paid by the working people through taxes.

"The sliding scale of working hours is a genuine subsidy. But it will be paid directly by the industries. If they were enriched in the past good years, it is not fair for the workers alone to pay for the consequences during the bad years.

"We must be realistic. The workers have very sad prospects confronting them. I am not against the list of demands, because I think we need to improve our situation. But I affirm that without the rising scale of wages and sliding scale of working hours, it will be useless.

"Why is there such a small attendance at the Assembly? There were only 2,000 workers while we are 70,000. The answer is: the list of demands are not satisfactory. We need a bolder program.

"They accused me of being a 'peronista.' They beat me over

the head but, being a militant worker, I do not care. But let us see what Peron did. He raised wages—but at the same time raising the cost of living.

"Our union seeks to raise wages. Just the same, comrades, you are doing the same thing that Peron did. But I would not call you 'peronista' or 'provocative.' I will tell you that you are wrong. We are against the mistakes, not against you, comrades. That is why we fight as an organized group inside the union.

"The time of monolithic parties is over. We are now in a period of trade union democracy. It is necessary to talk and let everybody talk. Necessarily there are differences of opinion in our union. If we call those who do not think like the leaders do 'peronist,' 'provocative,' and 'fascist,' then we are playing the game of the bourgeoisie.

"I hope our comrades of the Executive Board will think this over very carefully."

This open letter was given out at the factory gates. Through such work we are getting excellent results. In the coming months we anticipate that the Union Obrera Revolucionaria and the entire movement of the Fourth International will acquire an exceptional force which will have as its immediate consequence the formation of the revolutionary party.

Buenos Aires, October 1945

Lessons of the 1919 Seattle General Strike

By WILLIAM SIMMONS

The Seattle general strike stands out to this day as an important signpost in American labor history. It was the first general strike on the American continent. Extending to the nearby cities of Tacoma and Aberdeen, it tied up an entire fair-sized city from 10 A.M. Thursday, Feb. 6 until 12 noon on Tuesday, Feb. 11, 1919.

At the time this strike was proclaimed by big business newspapers from coast to coast as an attempt at revolution. Bolshevism, they said, had made its first actual appearance in the Northwest. Businessmen in Seattle took out riot insurance on their warehouses, and purchased guns. Just before the strike the local capitalist press, headed by the Hearst-owned *Post-Intelligencer*, made appeals in threatening undertones to the workers to state "which flag they were under, and, if under the American flag, to put down Bolshevism in their midst."

Of course, the Seattle general strike was not an attempt at revolution. Nevertheless, it was thoroughly permeated by the revolutionary spirit of the time of which it was itself a product. Above all it was permeated by the spirit of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia and the subsequent revolutionary upheavals in Europe. The names of Lenin and Trotsky, the unfamiliar terms of Soviets and Bolsheviks, were then well-known to the Seattle workers. And in the minds of most of them these names, these terms, became associated favorably, though as yet not very clearly, with their own most cherished aspirations. Workers' power in place of Czarist corruption, capitalist oppression and exploitation: that seemed to them to signalize a better world in the making.

In part this general spirit appeared in the pages of the

Seattle *Union Record*, a daily paper published by the Seattle Central Labor Council, and enjoying at that time the largest circulation of any paper in the northwest. The day before the strike it said editorially:

On Thursday at 10 A.M.

There will be many cheering and there will be some who fear.

Both these emotions are useful, but not too much of either.

We are undertaking the most tremendous move ever made by LABOR in this country, a move which will lead—NO ONE KNOWS WHERE!

We do not need hysteria.

We need the iron march of labor.

The editorial then referred to the Wall Street agents, including Charles Piez, Director General of the Emergency Fleet Corporation, who provoked by remote control the original strike issues which arose in the shipyards:

The closing down of Seattle's industries, as a MERE SHUTDOWN, will not affect these Eastern gentlemen much. They could let the whole Northwest go to pieces, as far as money alone is concerned.

BUT, the closing down of the capitalistically controlled industries of Seattle, while the WORKERS ORGANIZE to feed the people, to care for the babies and the sick, to preserve order—THIS will move them, for this looks too much like the taking over of POWER by the workers.

After 10 A.M. on Thursday not a wheel turned in any of the industries employing organized labor and in many others which did not employ organized labor. 65,000 workers, members of 110 different, regular AFL unions, all of organized labor in the city, came out solidly after a referendum vote car-

ried by overwhelming majorities. They were joined by Japanese unions, by IWW local unions and by numerous unorganized workers. Headed by a General Strike Committee, composed of three delegates from each local union, plans were laid, and executed, concerning not only the immediate issues of the strike but the important affairs of the city as well. Under the management of the culinary trades 21 large eating places were established feeding about 30,000 people daily. For admission to the especially low-priced meals IWW cards were recognized as well as AFL cards. Within their own ranks the strikers maintained perfect discipline and order in their own way through their own Labor Guard. Persuasion was the only weapon employed by them. Nothing else was required inasmuch as the stern, overwhelming power of the complete tie-up made idle and deeply-awed onlookers of the regular police and its reinforcement of 600 brand-new cops together with 2,400 specially deputized thugs, all armed with rifles or shotguns. It was no secret either that a large contingent of soldiers, fully equipped, had been brought into the city from Camp Lewis. But commanding officers kept them discreetly in the background.

Police Provocations Fail

As a matter of fact the large police force was called into provocative duty only once and that effort fell flat. One of the daily capitalist papers, *The Star*, managed, with the help of printers ordered back to work by an international union official, to get out a small single sheet on the second day of the strike. Police cordons were drawn up at both ends of the street. Armed deputies attempted to pass out the sheet. But, outside of the "better" residential district where deliveries were made by machines full of armed guards, it found so few takers that the strikers dubbed it the "Shooting Star." It appeared no more during the strike.

Heads of the city departments, including the mayor himself appeared before the General Strike Committee to ask for strike exemptions for various city institutions. Such exemptions were granted, for example, to hospitals for necessary deliveries, light, heat and repair; for city firemen; for drug clerks, to fill prescriptions only; for city garbage collectors, to pick up only such garbage as might otherwise cause disease, etc. Requests for exemptions from commercial institutions were rejected.

Wherever exemptions were granted the specific handling of each problem was turned over to the union concerned. The leadership could well afford to do so because the membership of every union was wholeheartedly in the battle, felt themselves an integral part of it, and, besides, the union men of each separate trade knew their own problems best. In some cases an ingenious system was worked out. Milk drivers, for instance, assigned to supply milk for infants and for the strikers needs, ignored the bosses' organizations, collected their supply from small dairies outside the city and maintained firm control of distribution of 3,000 gallons daily through 35 stations established by the union. Members of the culinary trades were assigned to certain specified union shops and commissary stations where they worked voluntarily, their wages being deducted from the price of meals to the strikers. All exemptions carried large signs of authorization by the General Strike Committee.

No other authority had any real force during the fateful five days. No other power really prevailed but that of the strike. And while no attempt was made to dislodge the mayor or any of his councillors from their official seats the General Strike Committee was the city government in fact.

Thus, while the strikers serenely carried out their demonstra-

tion of solidarity, of power and of determination the mayor, Ole Hanson, found himself in such a dilemma that he finally wound up in babbling and impotent rage. Starting out as a patent-medicine salesman who did well for himself, it was said, with his Kikapoo Indian Saga, he was known before the strike as a rather jovial mayor, a miniature pork-barrel politician who attempted to play both sides. He was a man of limited vision and less integrity.

When the strike paralyzed the city his type of politics came face to face with the stern realities of the class struggle. At first Ole Hanson assumed the mediator's role. However, to remove all doubts on this score the head of the local banking fraternity, J. W. Spangler, curtly informed the mayor that there would be no mediation. He said that "his people" took the stand that this strike was a revolution and they would not deal with revolutionists.

The mayor responded quickly. The next day, Friday morning, he issued a proclamation to the citizenry calling upon them to resume their business under his protection. From the labor movement he demanded peremptorily that the strike be called off by Friday noon or he would declare martial law. Later he demanded that it be called off Saturday morning, renewing the threat of martial law. Nothing happened. Saturday saw the strike still in full swing. Against the power of labor these threats were unavailing.

Equally futile, though far more bombastic, was the mayor's account to the nation:

"We refused," he said, "to ask for exemption from any one. The seat of government is at the City Hall. We organized 1,000 extra police, armed with rifles and shotguns, and told them to shoot on sight anyone causing disorder. We got ready for business.

"I issued a proclamation that all life and property would be protected; that all business should go on as usual. And this morning our municipal street cars, light, power plants, water, etc., were running full blast.

"There was an attempted revolution. It never got to first base."

Seattle learned about this piece of bravado only at a later date. It was not meant for "home consumption." In fact the light and water never had been shut off. The only visible effect of the mayor's proclamation was that seven street cars attempted to start a run on the city's one municipal car line and got stranded.

How the Strike Ended

How then did the Seattle general strike come to an end? Clearly, a strike of such a nature, paralyzing a whole community, had soon to find the limit of its duration in one way or another. After all, the general strike was a sympathy action in support of the struggle of some 35,000 shipyard workers for higher wages. Working under a closed shop and a single blanket agreement for all of the unions in the yards the Metal Trades Council, which was the bargaining agent, had sought an upward revision of wages particularly for the lower-paid and less skilled trades. The Metal Trades Council requested the general strike.

As could be expected, the more conservative and timid local leaders, who dreaded the whole idea, attempted vainly to fix a time limit to the strike at its inception. Failing then, they soon renewed their effort, spurred on by the tremendous pressure from international union officials. On Saturday afternoon the Executive Committee of Fifteen brought into the General Strike Committee a nearly unanimous resolution fixing 12

midnight that same Saturday as the time for the general strike to come to an end.

All that afternoon and night the debate raged in the General Strike Committee. Finally, at 4:12 in the morning the vote of this general body showed such an overwhelming defeat for the resolution that it was unanimously decided to continue the strike. The larger committee of the rank and file had showed its greater fortitude and greater determination.

At Monday morning's roll call, however, some unions were missing. Those affiliated with the Teamsters Joint Council had been ordered back to work on instruction of their International Auditor Briggs. Some of the printing trades had returned to work as a result of severe pressure from their international officials. Rump local executive board meetings of the street carmen, the barbers and the newsboys had taken similar action on orders from higher-ups. In no instance did any one union desert as a result of action taken by the membership. On the contrary, in every one of the unions reported as returned to work, information was sent that they had called special membership meetings and were ready to come out again on an instant's notice in response to whatever the General Strike Committee would decide. And they did respond readily and completely when this leading body decided practically unanimously at its Monday session that they should come out again so that all would return to work unitedly with ranks closed on Tuesday at noon. The solid ranks of the workers were entirely restored, thus bringing to a magnificent close one of the great chapters of American labor history.

What was the Seattle general strike intended to be? What were its aims and objectives? What lessons can be learned from it? As the American working class at this moment faces problems which will inevitably come to a head among other forms, in a gigantic strike wave, questions such as these assume prime importance. Strikes, whether won or lost, convey valuable lessons. The present generation of trade unionists can learn from the experiences, the successes as well as the mistakes, of the past.

Insofar as Seattle was concerned, it was at that time one of the best organized cities in the United States. Trade unions had made numerical gains throughout the country during the war years, rising from a total membership of 3,104,600 in 1917 to a peak of 5,110,800 in 1920 before the decline set in which reached its lowest point during the great depression. The Seattle unions had, however, made relatively greater numerical gains due to the heavy concentration of shipbuilding there. Not less than 26¼ per cent of all ships built for the United States Shipping Board was built in the Seattle yards alone. From the relatively small numbers existing before the war the union membership in the yards rose to 35,000, all solidly knit together in the Metal Trades Council.

The general strike came in the wake of war demobilization. Industrial activity, however, was still at a high level with the employers' "open shop" offensive clearly in the offing. War restrictions were relaxed. All the pent-up restlessness and dissatisfaction generated by these restrictions came into head-on collision with the budding "open shop" campaign. The clash came quicker and earlier in Seattle than elsewhere because the labor movement there found itself in the position of a strong outpost. The conviction took hold among its membership that they had to meet the preliminary assault and defeat it.

At the same time they were neither prepared nor eager to advance too far ahead of the movement in the rest of the country. Union consciousness and union solidarity had reached a high level in Seattle. Nevertheless these workers had no illu-

sions that the general strike could stand or fall on the concrete issue of winning the wage demands of the shipyards unions. Their real purpose was to make a powerful demonstration of solidarity. Since it was necessary to make a test of strength, these unionists were ready to show that labor dared, to show that labor would fight it out.

True Significance of the Seattle Strike

It is in this connection that the stimulus given by the stirring events taking place abroad stands out in its true significance. The Seattle workers were also inspired by the great idea of struggling for a new and better world. They definitely considered their general strike as a contribution toward this end. But, in contrast to Europe, their generally awakening class consciousness had not yet reached beyond these more modest objectives.

Seattle had long been a rendezvous for lumberjacks and loggers of the Northwest. Among these largely unskilled migratory workers, radical and revolutionary ideas, mostly disseminated by the IWW, had made considerable headway. Their militant struggle for human conditions in the lumber camps had its repercussions within the Seattle labor movement. Seattle was also the shipping port for rugged proletarians migrating annually to Alaska, not to stake gold claims, but to toil in the fisheries, canneries and mining ventures of a virgin territory. Their return with experiences of bitter exploitation also made its impact.

These factors contributed to the existence of numerous radical elements and large-scale left-wing influence within the Seattle unions. It was of a definitely Marxist trend, coming in part from the Socialist Party and in part from the IWW. In justice to the latter it must be said that there they were not too strongly influenced by syndicalist ideas nor did they conceive themselves too definitely as builders of a union in opposition to the AFL. Rather, they accepted the role of a militant minority carrying the message of revolutionary industrial unionism. For purposes of practical activity they carried the membership cards of both organizations.

This somewhat inchoate left-wing movement was at best only loosely organized. It made up in fervor and zeal for what it lacked in ideological training and experience. *It lacked a revolutionary program of action. It lacked a revolutionary party.* The Socialist Party had then just begun the process of producing the left wing which later led to the organization of the American Communist Party. Despite all of these shortcomings, due entirely to the immaturity of the revolutionary forces, the influence exerted by them had struck deep roots. The Seattle labor movement would never have reached its high level of union consciousness and development without them.

One result of this left-wing influence was manifested in the organization of the Seattle Workers and Soldiers Council. Ideologically the idea was inspired, of course, by the Russian Soviets. Practically it found good solid ground in the war demobilization, the closing-down of war industries and the return of soldiers and sailors. This experience graphically illuminates the temper of the Seattle trade unionists at the time.

Agitation for a Workers and Soldiers Council received great impetus from the general strike. The idea took hold within most unions of the city and became a movement. In fact it became so powerful that local conservative leaders stepped right into the middle of it, if not to behead it, then at least to regulate it and keep it "within bounds." The agitation came to a head first in a large mass meeting called by the Central Labor Council. One of the largest halls in the city was jammed while

some of these leaders in drooling monotonous extolled the virtues of the Soviets. But the rank and file impatience with such a performance turned into enthusiastic acclaim when left-wing elements sprang to the platform and gave the idea flesh and blood by proposing steps toward concrete action. The ensuing conference that formed the Workers and Soldiers Council had an attendance of more than 300 local union delegates.

Of course this venture had its grotesque side in the amateurish attempts to transplant not merely the spirit but the body of the Bolshevik revolution so mechanically to American soil. A resolution was introduced calling for the creation of a Red Guard which was to receive pay only during actual hours of drill and active duty. But more realistic intentions predominated. Gropingly the left wing elements had sought means for better expression, for greater influence and leadership. They did not have illusions that the Workers and Soldiers Council could become a Soviet in actuality. But it did become the publishing medium for a considerable length of time of a weekly paper of revolutionary contents. *And it did become an important medium to bring returned soldiers and sailors together to fight shoulder to shoulder with their fellow workers.*

Lessons of the Strike

For us today there is a serious lesson in that latter fact alone. Now the organized trade union movement has become a much more complete expression of American labor. Problems growing out of World War II demobilization are far greater. At the same time the ranks of the American Legion are swelling to huge proportions. Its potentialities as an anti-labor instrument are well-known. And as yet, the trade union officialdom has remained criminally negligent in the face of these problems.

The Seattle developments also demonstrate how, due to active left-wing influence within the labor movement, international solidarity and concrete support of labor's international struggles can take on real meaning. Toward the fall of the year of the general strike trainloads of ammunition arrived destined for Kolchak's counter-revolutionary army in Siberia. The Soviets were very hard pressed at the time. The steamer *Delight* came into port to take the ammunition aboard. However, the longshoremen said "NO." The steamer eventually pulled out—but with other cargo.

While this left-wing exerted an important influence within the Seattle labor movement, *it was not the leadership.* We all understand the determining role of policy and leadership in all labor developments. In a strike situation it becomes particularly acute and immediate. In regard to this problem also the Seattle workers enjoyed certain advantages. Over a long period of time the Central Labor Council had built up considerable authority and prestige. It functioned in actuality as a centralizing and guiding force. Delegates rarely failed to attend its meetings and to participate in the lively debates which sometimes ran into the late night hours.

City officials and city educators would often appear in the gallery reserved for the public. All important questions of policy and action were brought to the Central Labor Council for discussion and decision. And with the priceless aid of a daily paper, published under its ownership and control and enjoying a circulation at that time larger than any daily paper in the Northwest, its influence extended throughout the city and beyond. It was primarily through this local central body that the left-wing functioned most effectively, articulating the interests and aspirations of the rank and file and seeking to influence the council decisions.

Thus a broad representative leadership had been established

which was progressive in nature and enjoyed the confidence of the membership. While the general strike set up its own special and immediately directing organ, the previous integration of the various important elements remained in effect. By and large this accounts for the unity, determination and breathtaking power of the general strike.

Only in this way could the difficulties of a strike involving one whole community have been overcome. They were indeed complex. Imagine joint action by 110 different local unions, all subject to the arbitrary rule and avarice of almost as many sets of more or less reactionary international officials. These were the serious limitations of an antiquated form of organization. Yet the unity of purpose was complete from the beginning to the end. It defeated intervention to the contrary from above. For the official record shows that in each case where influence from international officials was exerted it was against the General Strike Committee, against working class solidarity and on the side of the bosses. Whereas decision by membership vote in each case showed overwhelming support for the strike, and for its leadership, even to the point of overriding the intervention of the high moguls.

It is true that the significant events of the general strike took place so swiftly that this official hierarchy did not have much chance to interfere. That itself is an important consideration in a strike situation. Once decisions are made, swift action is essential. Equally important is the democratic procedure of the unions. Preservation of democracy throughout made it possible here for the rank and file to assert its will. In practical experience this had proved to be an integral part of the larger and broader struggle for labor's democratic rights.

To the credit of the Seattle trade union movement, its leadership included, it must be said that it remained ever vigilant about labor's rights in this broader sense. One instance alone will illustrate the point. Soap-box orators had held forth regularly on a large space at Fourth Ave. and Virginia St., when suddenly—not during the five days of the general strike—the police violently broke up a large gathering. The Central Labor Council immediately decided that this constituted an infringement on the rights of free speech. It voted full support and set a date for a test of the validity of this constitutional right. Many thousand workers turned out and thereby fortified effectively the already established tradition.

Aftermath of the Seattle Action

The aftermath of the general strike led to another even more telling example. No sooner had business activities been resumed than the county authorities raided the IWW and Socialist Party headquarters and held a number of IWW members on charges of being "ringleaders of anarchy." The Central Labor Council responded quickly and effectively. Naming this "an invasion of fundamental rights," it adopted a resolution practically unanimously: "That the Central Labor Council immediately take up the defense of these men, in order that the fundamental rights involved in these cases which are necessary to our own existence shall be preserved."

The Seattle general strike also had its weak points and its mistakes. I shall mention here only one which, however, is of singular significance because of the lesson it conveys. It concerns the all-important medium of publicity—in this case the *Seattle Union Record*.

When the general strike began the Executive Committee of Fifteen took upon itself to decide that this daily paper would suspend publication for the duration. A small strike bulletin was to appear in its place. No other motivation was given for

this decision but the namby-pamby one about fairness to competing dailies closed down by labor. An overwhelming protest from the strikers followed. The *Union Record* was "their paper." Despite their desire not to give excuse for any incident arising from mass demonstrations, thousands of them jammed the streets surrounding the office of publication on the first day of its absence. The craving for news, for strike publicity, was almost greater than that for food. So on Saturday the General Strike Committee directed the *Union Record* to resume publication. The successful conduct of the strike had itself made that imperative.

The lesson is clear. An army fights well only when it is conscious of its aim. That is especially true for an army of strikers. But its aim must be clearly stated; the reasons must be given as clearly and precisely as possible. Every related event, every important development of the strike, must be made known and publicized as broadly as possible, especially to those who carry the burden of the fight, in order to keep them aware, to keep them alert, and to maintain the necessary con-

fidence between the leadership and the ranks. That is why publicity by and for the workers becomes the life blood of a strike. It is one of the strikers' best weapons. The lesson of the mistake made in suspending labor's own paper was learned quickly in Seattle.

Viewed in retrospect the Seattle general strike signaled the appearance of a new labor generation. It was the first step taken toward breaking the deadly grip of the Gompers regime. Greater labor battles followed in a whole chain of events that passed through peaks of prosperity and depths of depression, until today the American labor movement stands out as a good deal more mature. The battles it now faces are far more gigantic and far more serious. Yet the experiences of the past retain their full validity. This brief account of the Seattle general strike can be appropriately concluded with a quotation from its Official History Committee. The Seattle workers, it said, were "glad they had struck, equally glad to call it off, and especially glad to think that their experience would now be of use to the entire labor movement of the country."

From the Arsenal of Marxism

On the Jewish Problem

By LEON TROTSKY

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

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

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

On the other hand the Jews of different countries have cre-

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

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

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

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

On Biro-bidjan I can give you no more than my personal evaluations. I am not acquainted with this region and still less with the conditions in which the Jews have settled there. In any case it can be no more than a very limited experience. The USSR alone would still be too poor to resolve its own Jewish question, even under a regime much more socialist than the present one. The Jewish question, I repeat, is indissolubly bound up with the complete emancipation of humanity. Everything else that is done in this domain can only be a palliative and often even a two-edged blade, as the example of Palestine shows.

January 18, 1937

-II-

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

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

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

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

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

1937

* * *
-III-

Dear Friend:

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

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

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

can provoke a change in the relation of forces, stop the world wave of fascism, and open a new chapter in the history of mankind.

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

December 22, 1938

-IV-

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

July, 1940

Facing the New Revolutionary Period in Spain

We publish below the first section of the thesis approved by the Internationalist Communists, Spanish section of the Fourth International, at their conference in May 1945. The full text was published in the June 1945 issue of "Comunismo," theoretical organ of the Spanish Trotskyists.

This political document constitutes an important step forward in the elaboration of the revolutionary strategy and tactics of the prole-

ariat in the revolutionary epoch now opening up for Spain. The general line presented in this thesis coincides with the positions expressed in the resolution on the "European Revolution and The Tasks of the Revolutionary Party" adopted by the Socialist Workers Party convention in November 1944.

This document was translated from the Spanish by Chris Andrews. The remaining sections will appear in subsequent issues of Fourth International.

I. The Transformation of the Imperialist War into Civil War

1) Like the war of 1914-1918, the second imperialist war is above all the brutal manifestation of the revolt of the productive forces against the form of private property and the narrowness of the National State which destroys the organic unity of the world market—and against the anarchic functioning of the capitalist economy.

The immediate origin of the Second World War had its roots in the change in the correlation of imperialist forces which no longer correspond to the division instituted by the Versailles Treaty.

In a much greater stage of decomposition of the capitalist regime, the second world war broke out at the moment in which, on the one hand, the whole capitalist world was threatened with a new economic collapse, and in which the growth of military preparations constituted the only artificial market capable of replacing the lack of a real market; and in which, on the other hand, the revolutionary threat, the principal obstacle to the outbreak of the war, had just been liquidated in France and Spain.

Pushed by the internal logic of their own development, the American, German and Japanese imperialisms entered the struggle to fight for the markets and wealth of the world; at the same time for capitalist penetration into the USSR for suitable profit.

The English and French imperialisms entered the battle to guard the fruits of their previous

robberies. The other imperialisms, dominated by the force of these five great powers, have seen themselves relegated more and more to a secondary role.

Continuing its efforts for economic reconstruction, the USSR developed a defensive war against the pressure and attacks of the different imperialisms.

Only the renegades in the workers' movement can preach the concept of a war for the liberation of the peoples and against Fascism, thus covering up this most brutal expression of the decay of capitalism, which is at the same time the expression of a future of decomposition awaiting humanity if the proletariat does not manage to destroy the system and vanquish its defenders.

2) As was summed up in the Theses of the European Conference of the Fourth International (February 1944) "with inexorable necessity, the imperialist war transforms itself into civil war." In June 1944, the English and American imperialists discontinued their waiting attitude and hurled in force their armed masses upon the fields of Europe, in order to smash German imperialism and at the same time definitely repress the revolutionary movement; also to neutralize the influence of the USSR in hope of attacking her in due time; to consolidate their dominant positions in this manner. Anglo-American imperialism has come in order to substitute itself for Hitler in his role of gendarme of Europe.

The counter-revolutionary character of their intervention has been evident in the different European countries, now shaken by the first struggles of the proletarian revolution (Italy, Belgium, Greece). No difference exists on this plan, not only between the Allies and Berlin, but also between England and North America, who have opposing material interests in the entire world, to the degree that the expansion of American imperialism will not be able to develop except to the great detriment of the British interests.

3) The counter-revolutionary policy of the Allied imperialists is aided to the extent that it can count on the aid of the Socialist and Stalinist leadership. Both are rivals in hiding the true plans of the bourgeoisie from the masses, participating in the governments of Sacred Unity, betraying the first revolutionary eruptions of the masses and the colonial peoples. The bourgeoisie accepts the services of the reformists and the Stalinists while it prepares new totalitarian solutions.

4) The Kremlin bureaucracy has shown itself definitely no less hostile and opposed to any revolutionary development in the international situation. In the countries occupied by the Red Army, the capitalist regime is maintained; the national military apparatus continues to maintain its prerogatives and even the Fascist generals that took part in the war against the USSR, continue to participate in the different ministerial

combinations, at the side of the Stalinist ministers.

Having elevated its privileged position in the USSR upon the basis of the isolation of the Russian revolution, of the degeneration and defeats of the international revolution, having physically liquidated the old revolutionary cadres, and having abandoned all Marxist politics in a development from the reactionary theory of "Socialism in one country" up to the dissolution of the Third International, the Soviet bureaucracy reaches today the apogee of its treachery, blocking the international proletariat from its class objectives and cancelling the efforts of the Red Army soldiers.

5) The experience of the liberated countries, demonstrates that the bourgeoisie in the present historical conjuncture, cannot give the masses any true concessions. The era of a relatively long, stable, "democratic" period up to the decisive triumph, either of the Socialist revolution or a new Fascism, is revealed as impossible. This impossibility does not exclude, nevertheless, "democratic" maneuvers, in operation alongside of the revolutionary offensive of the masses. These

maneuvers are destined to have an episodic and limited character within the framework not only of the continuation of the imperialist war but also of the liquidation and ending of military hostilities.

6) If the tactic of a revolutionary party must be based on the most exact appreciation of the conjunctural changes that occur in each situation in order to adapt to them the propaganda and action of the Party, the strategy must be firmly grounded, not in exceptional circumstances, that can permit certain countries to go through the experience of a "democratic" regime for a limited period, brought about by the pressure of the masses, but on the general line of the bourgeoisie toward dictatorship and in the instinctive orientation of the masses toward its class revolution.

We are at present at the opening of a vast revolutionary period that will extend for months and perhaps for years through a series of struggles that will objectively pose the problem of the seizure of power by the proletariat, within the perspective of the international revolution.

2. Characteristics of the Spanish Social Structure

7) The dominating characteristic of Spanish capitalism resides in the great quantity of feudal vestiges that persist in the midst of a full capitalist regime. The Spanish bourgeoisie, born historically very late and very weak, was not able to carry to the end, nor even to the degree attained in the great imperialisms, its own bourgeois-democratic revolution. The backwardness stems from the peculiar development of the Spanish bourgeoisie. The great extension of the Empire overseas, offered to the monarchy by an historical accident, augmented the economic forces of the dominant feudalism. It offered a safety valve beyond the narrow limits of the national framework to the energies of the growing bourgeoisie that otherwise would have clashed more directly with the apparatus of absolutism.

This fact, added to certain natural characteristics of the Iberian Peninsula (lack of essential raw materials, geography, etc.) not conducive to a strong economic development, retarded the growth of a strong bourgeoisie in Spain, in the period when world capitalism was ascending. The natural riches of the colonies on the one hand and the loss of the merchant fleet on the other hindered industrial development of the metropolis from attaining the level of other countries.

8) But to deduce from this that the bourgeois-democratic revolution has not yet been realized in Spain would be to demonstrate a total ignorance of the dialectical law of the transformation of quantity into quality. Although obviously the democratic revolution was not completed, a sufficient number of its tasks have been accomplished so that these can be considered the determining factors: the regime in Spain is capitalist and not feudal.

The contrary theory that the Spanish regime is predominantly feudal has been contrived by the Stalinists and Social Democrats in order to theoretically justify their treacherous and shame-

ful collaboration with the bourgeoisie against the proletarian revolution.

Such a theory is not based in any way upon economic reality in Spain. Nor can one hold, for example, that agriculture is backward and "feudal" in regard to its methods of exploitation. The land has been bought, sold, mortgaged just like any other resource for two centuries. Therefore, the problem of the land in Spain is a problem of the capitalist type. The question of an exact definition of the Spanish regime is of first-rate importance, since from this definition will have to be deduced the general line of all revolutionary Spanish politics in the period which we are now facing. It is the touchstone; and to permit the slightest inexactness or error on this problem will again prove fatal for the revolution.

9) The regime of large estates, the economic influence and power of the Church, the preponderant role of the Army and the social roots of its commanding cadres are a number of the feudal vestiges which remain in the midst of the Spanish social structure. The permanence of these feudal vestiges during the epoch of the Republic is conclusive proof that the bourgeoisie, even though it solved those problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution of which it was capable in the period of capitalist decline, cannot advance further in the solution of the remaining ones. Only the proletariat is capable of solving the problems which are still contained in the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. That is to say: the proletarian revolution will have to carry them to their end at the same time that it undertakes the tasks of the socialist revolution.

10) The incapacity of the bourgeoisie to fully resolve the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution was clearly shown during the Republican epoch of 1931-1936.

The land question, that is to say, the liquidation of the great landholders' property, lay from

In spite of the weakness of the workers' vanguard, the struggles and experiences of the masses will teach them to discard the traditional bureaucratic leaders, and will orientate them toward the proletarian insurrection and the taking of power, on condition, of course, that they secure in their experience and struggles the aid of a party and of an International that is truly Communist and internationalist.

If, during this period, the proletariat and its vanguard do not manage to find for society the road to workers' power and the Socialist United States of Europe, and later of the world, it is undeniable that imperialism will again lead the peoples to new imperialist wars, will liquidate the nationalized and planned economy in the Soviet Union, causing it to retrogress to capitalism, and will sink humanity, Europe first of all, into the most frightening barbarism, destroying the very bases of industrial civilization.

It is from this general perspective that affects all peoples equally, whether or not they were dragged into this war, that we must approach the problems and tasks of the new revolutionary period in Spain.

a formal point of view, within the framework of the Republican-Socialist bloc. This problem was absolutely shunted aside and canalized into the dead hands of the "Institute of Agrarian Reform," with its bureaucratic expedients, its expropriations with indemnification, and—what is worse—with its policy towards the peasants, who were constantly under threat of being despoiled of their miserable piece of land if they did not appear at the time fixed for the payment of the debts contracted through the State. The so-called policy of intensified cultivation was negated by the lowering of agricultural prices, which aggravated even more the economic situation of the farmers, small proprietors and tenants. By not being resolved in a revolutionary manner, the land problem presented a series of questions (revision of rents, cancellations of contracts of tenancy, regulation of partnerships) which the Republic attempted to solve, now in an empirical manner, now by a generalized policy, all of which made more evident the injustice to the peasants.

Always shunting aside revolutionary solutions of the agrarian problem, the Republic found it necessary, under the pressure of the masses, to provide employment in public works to the immense population of agricultural workers without plan or method, or in agricultural work which was imposed principally upon the small proprietors and middle tenants with the sole aim of reabsorbing the unemployed. The loans in cash or in kind forced from the small urban petty bourgeoisie in order to relieve the crisis accelerated their economic ruin and caused the petty bourgeoisie to consider itself apart and in opposition to the interests of the working class.

11) The same impotence of the Republic as in the land problem was revealed in the question of the Church, in the timid measures with which it tried to solve it.

What gives the Church and the religious congregations all their power is their immense economic strength. All measures to counterbalance this power are sterile unless they include the expropriation of the ecclesiastical riches. The Republic of the Republican-Socialist coalition was more fruitful in anti-clerical demagoguery than in practical and consistent accomplishments.

12) The impotence of the Republic of April 14 was further demonstrated in its handling of the problem of the Army. The weakness of the Spanish bourgeoisie shows itself most nakedly in the frequency with which it is obliged to have recourse to the power of the Army, which has its roots in the semi-feudal remains of the Spanish social structure. The Spanish Army has played the role of the executioner's arm for the bourgeoisie, which for its part has employed all its zeal to defend it.

One of the first measures of the Republic should have been the dissolution of the military caste, which could not reconcile itself to any other regime than that which gave it its character of a predominant and parasitic caste. But such a measure was only conceivable within the framework of a policy of arming the masses,

basing oneself on the people, on the revolutionary workers and peasants; a policy of organizing militias in the cities and towns, and of raising to the commanding posts new military cadres, taken from the ranks of the soldiers, the lower ranks of the officers, etc. The Republican-Socialist coalition attempted contrariwise to solve the problem by separating from the active Army all those generals and officials who so requested, while maintaining all their rights.

13) The centrifugal tendencies existing in Spanish society, and which have been concretized in the problems of the nationalities, likewise reflect the decay and putrefaction of Spanish society.

The struggle of the industrial bourgeoisie against the centralization of power, a centralism which bore down on the nationalities, was abandoned by this sector of the bourgeoisie as soon as the popular masses made their own the slogan of the self-determination of peoples. The struggles of the masses, through its own internal logic, went beyond the confines of the democratic state for solution of the problem, thereupon causing the bourgeoisie to attach itself to centralized power.

14) The impotence and collapse of the Republic is also the expression of the incapacity of the petty bourgeoisie to play an independent revolutionary role.

The struggle of the intellectual liberals against the Church; that of the tenants against the landlords, and, in general, the struggle of the Spanish peasants for the land; the protest of the small artisans and shopkeepers against the domination of the great monopolies; all these saw their aspirations realized for the first time in the early period of the Civil War of 1936. That is to say, the period in which the proletariat—and not the radical petty bourgeoisie—was holding the power *in fact*.

But the workers' movement did not stop there but simultaneously attacked its class enemy. The factories, the transportation system, the great city properties, the big gas, electricity, and navigation companies, the publishing houses, the broadcasting stations, passed into the hands of the Workers' Committees and the Trade Unions. With that history affirmed the socialist character of the Spanish Revolution and the leading role of the proletariat.

3. The Workers' Organizations and the Spanish Revolution

15) The lack of a revolutionary proletarian leadership has made itself felt through the whole course of the Spanish Revolution, so that the working class missed the opportunities in which it was possible to take the destiny of society into its hands, to destroy the State apparatus and replace it with the power of the proletariat in arms.

From 1917 to 1923, from 1931 to 1939 power has been at times within the reach of the proletariat. The reformist and anarchist leadership, and later the Stalinist leadership, turned the working class aside from its historic objective.

The Downfall of Anarchist Ideology

16) The test of the Spanish Revolution brought about the downfall of anarchist ideology and its offspring: anarcho-syndicalism. Both represent the punishment that the proletariat pays for the faults of its reformist leaders. Anarcho-syndicalism developed as an instinctive revolutionary reaction of the working class against the reformist policy of the Spanish Socialist Party. But it was only a reaction "against," that is to say: with no constructive, consistently revolutionary perspective. Through the whole process of the Spanish Revolution has been seen this lack of perspective, this absence of viable principles. The exaltation of violence for the sake of violence and the condemnation of *all* politics, reflects the myopia which characterizes anarchism and reveals its inconsistency.

17) Its ultra-leftism of the 1931-1933 period (the adventures of Figols, Andalucia, Rioja) made manifest the heroic capacity of the CNT (Federation of Anarchist-led trade unions) workers; but nothing more. Their fighting abilities were dispersed in gestures that did not go much

beyond revolutionary infantilism. The radicalization that surged in Spain after 1933 exercised considerable influence in the CNT ranks. The Regional Section of Asturias Leon affiliated with the *Alianza Obrera* (Workers Alliance) while the rest of the Sections of Spain retained their traditional policy of indifference to political struggles. The electoral abstention in 1933 helped the reaction, just as the abstention in 1934 from the political struggle against the bourgeois reaction, caused the CNT to play the game of the counter-revolution in deeds, by ordering the calling off of a strike in Barcelona "that they had not ordered," while the Asturian miners—and among them members of the CNT—continued the struggle against the Army and set up workers' power in the mine pits.

18) The consequences of the proletarian insurrection of 1934 left their mark on the CNT. The incorporation of the Regional CNT into the Asturian *Alianza Obrera* revealed that in decisive moments the non-politicalism of the anarchists is an empty phrase. Sooner or later they are forced to adopt a positive policy: that of the working class in the case of Asturias, or that of the bourgeoisie, in the case of their participation in the government from 1936 to 1939.

In spite of their change of attitude in the elections of February 1936 made with the justification—as always for sentimental reasons, even if political—that is, because of the amnesty, the CNT held to a position, which, although not correct, at least did not mix them up with the counter-revolutionary amalgamation of the Peoples' Front. The masses separated the CNT from the infamous Republican-Socialist alliance in the election voting.

The CNT appeared before the eyes of the workers at the time of the military-Falangist uprising

as the only force not involved in the guilty complicity of the Peoples' Front and its men with the reactionaries.

From that came its preponderance in the first months of the movement; the largest part of the proletariat came into its ranks, and its revolutionary influence stood out above all other parties.

19) Sentimental motivations, no matter how fine they may appear, are insufficient for conducting the proletariat to victory. The lack of a clear vision, of an understanding of the situation, and of political perspective carried the Anarchist movement from failure to failure—sometimes drifting, sometimes in the role of collaborator of the counter-revolution. Such is the role that the "non-political" CNT and Anarchist Ministers played in Largo Caballero's government, in the first tasks of rebuilding the bourgeois state and in maintaining the Assault Guards, the Carabineros, the installation of Tribunals which displaced the class justice set up by the Committees of July 19. All this within the framework of the international policy of the League of Nations; in order later to play the game of the bourgeoisie more completely with the attitude adopted by the CNT leaders towards the proletarian insurrection in Barcelona of May 1937 and against the violent and desperate reaction of the worker fighters of Madrid who fought the armistice with Franco in March 1939 (Junta Miaja-Casado).

Combining sectarianism and opportunism, the CNT leaders, pushed by their unprincipled and blind "anti-Stalinism," stood at the side of the capitulators of the Miaja-Casado Junta, without the slightest understanding of the fundamental difference between the reaction of the rank and file fighters against the capitulators—facts to which every revolutionary organization must ad-

just its conduct—and the political designs of the Stalinist leadership.

With such a position, the CNT leaders were incapable of giving any orientation in these last struggles of the proletariat, and lacking, as always, their own line, were unconsciously converted once more into an auxiliary agent of bourgeois politics.

20) The May Days in which a great number of militants of the CNT and Anarchist Youth rose up against the latest counter-revolutionary acts of the government put in sharp relief the gulf that existed between the most conscious part of the anarchist movement and the anarchist leaders who were participating in the (bourgeois) government. The great mass of anarchist workers contributed in these days their heroism. The non-politicalism of the anarchist-sindicalist leaders consisted in serving the interests of the bourgeoisie, giving the order to cease fire, in a struggle described by them as "fratricidal."

Despite the efforts of the young "Spanish Bolshevik-Leninist Group," the absence of a revolutionary Party prevented the differentiation between the advanced elements of the CNT and its leaders being brought to a break, which would undoubtedly have altered the correlation of forces in the workers' camp and thus opened up new revolutionary possibilities. The nucleus, which by the lesson of this experience, turned toward a policy that approximated the Bolshevik position, recognizing the necessity for the dictatorship of the proletariat ("Friends of Durruti Group"), only had a brief life. The ebb of the revolution and later, illegality and exile, are the reasons why these two minority groups were not able to crystallize, lacking the necessary self-criticism.

21) The contradiction of the "theoretical" disquisitions of anarcho-sindicalism with the concrete reality of events have made evident the incapacity of the anarchist leadership to carry the working class to power.

The establishment of the Republic had previously provided the opportunity in Barcelona for the first idyll of the CNT leadership (Pestana-Peiro) with the Generalidad. Afterwards, the split of Pestana, the constitution of the "Treintista Group" and of the "Syndicalist Party," collaboration with the government in 1936 and the present policy of the incorporation of the CNT into the Council of Liberation in France, and to the "National Alliance of Democratic Forces" in Spain, are clear examples of the gap between the conceptions of Anarchist communism and reality.

Social-Democratic Reformism

22) The Spanish Socialist Party had a predominantly working class composition but it never had—and that has also characterized all the other sections of the Second International—the support of qualified Marxist theory.

The diverse currents (not factions, since they did not have that organizational form) were expressed not by principled differences but in badly drawn political positions, "provisionals," which reflected the instinctive expression of the masses.

The Caballero current—as the left wind tendency was denominated—is the result of the

radicalization of the Spanish Social Democracy after the collapse of the collaborationist experience of the two-year Azana government. This radicalization coincided with the same phenomenon in the European Social Democracy, after the collapse of "evolutionary" methods came to its climax in Germany in 1933. The Vienna insurrection, carried to a head by the Austrian Socialist Party in 1934, revealed the existence of a centrist current in the midst of Social Democracy through which the rank and file cadres were instinctively orienting themselves toward Bolshevik positions.

23) In Spain the radicalization of the Social Democracy was shown in the insurrection of October, 1934, challenging the advances of the counter-revolution under a defensive slogan wherein the masses revealed their combative capacity and their instinctive impulse toward revolutionary positions.

It can be said that the Spanish Social Democracy saw itself *obliged*, by the pressure of events and the masses, to participate in this revolutionary struggle, but without possessing a clear perspective of the organic development of the insurrection and of its dynamic drive toward the taking of power.

Incidental positions that do not rest upon a solid principled position but have been determined by the pressure of a situation, disappear at the moment that this pressure leaves off. But not without leaving traces. This trace was manifest in the suspicious attitude displayed by the socialist masses toward their leaders, who persisted in renewing the alliance with the republicans through the formula of the Popular Front. All the bureaucratic and coercive power of the socialist leaders was necessary, as also the campaign for the amnesty of the 30,000 prisoners, in order to stem the non-collaborationist attitude of the great mass of the Spanish Socialist Party and of the UGT (Socialist-led trade unions), in the absence, we repeat, of revolutionary leadership.

The Policies of Stalinism

24) The period opened up by the proclamation of the Republic in 1931 should have provided great perspectives of growth to the Spanish Communist Party. On condition, naturally, that it defend a policy inspired by the lessons of Bolshevism and the Russian Revolution and that it base itself on the objective conditions in the situation.

But in 1931 the Communist International was nothing but a monstrous bureaucratic deformation of Bolshevism. In 1931 the Spanish political situation was characterized by the necessity of resolving the demands of a democratic character: the land, the nationalities, the Church and the Army. Confronted with these problems, a true communist policy would involve presenting oneself as the most firm and consistent defender of such demands; and thus to aid the masses through experience to realize as rapidly as possible the impotence and treachery of its traditional leaders and make the proletariat understand that only its armed power would be capable of realizing and assuring such demands. Only through such an experience could the masses be won to the conceptions of Bolshevism and the

proletarian dictatorship. That was the position maintained by the "Left Communist Opposition," which upheld the necessity of combining the democratic demands with those of a transitional character, a policy which was determined by the nature of the complex and varied problems bequeathed by the past.

25) Instead, throughout this period, the Communist Party oriented its policy by the slogans: "Down With the Republic," "All Power to the Soviets," "Social-Fascism," "Anarcho-Fascism," and "the United Front Only From Below." The Stalinists opposed the Workers Alliance of 1934, calling it "the Holy Alliance of the counter-revolution and Fascism," only to end by adhering to it much later under the pressure of the masses.

The about-face from the ultra-leftist policy to the political opportunism of the Peoples Front, at a time when the masses were beginning to assimilate the experiences of 1931 to 1935 and were instinctively orientating themselves toward class struggle solutions—this completed the counter-revolutionary policy of the Kremlin bureaucracy. The policy of the "Peoples' Front," of subjecting the proletariat to the leadership of the Republican petty-bourgeoisie took on a more cynically reactionary character in Spain because of the fact that it followed the experience of independent action and unity in struggle of the *Alianza Obrera*.

26) During the period opened up by the military-Falangist uprising, the Spanish Communist Party was in the front rank of the opposition to the revolutionary conquests of the proletariat, thus serving not only the interests of the Moscow bureaucracy—opposed to all proletarian revolution—but, definitely, the interests of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie did not hesitate later in directing its fire against the very same Communist Party, once it had saved them from the revolution.

27) The counter-revolutionary policy of the Communist Party naturally strengthened world imperialism which was heading toward a conflagration. One should not deduce from this that there do not exist fundamental divergences between imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy, derived from two distinct and opposed economic systems, whatever may be the deformation suffered by the October Revolution. The contradictions between imperialism and Stalinist policy are overcome by the reciprocal coincidence of opposition to the proletarian revolution. These contradictions come to the surface when the revolutionary threat disappears. This was made manifest at the end of the Spanish Civil War when the frictions between the Moscow bureaucracy and British imperialism showed themselves openly. While the Stalinists strove for a foreign policy of the Republican government favorable to Stalinist policies, English imperialism, having drawn all possible profit from the counter-revolutionary services of Stalinism, developed its own policies, which were translated into the attempt to form a Besteiro government without Communist participation, and later in the Miaja-Casado Junta, a clear example of "democratic" intervention to definitely liquidate the Spanish Revolution of 1936-1939.

(To Be Continued)

Inside the Fourth International

France

The French Trotskyists, *Parti Communiste Internationaliste* (Internationalist Communist Party) scored a signal success in the October elections to the Constituent Assembly. Against tremendous odds, amidst persecution, semi-illegality and with little preparation, with only two lists presented in two election districts and only sixteen candidates put forward as against some 580 seats balloted for, the PCI received 10,817 votes.

Of these 8,113 were cast for the list in the 1st election district in Paris headed by comrade *Albert Demazieres*, general secretary of the PCI and 2,704 for that in the Isere Department headed by comrade *Raffin-Dugens*, an old communist militant who participated in the Kienthal conference with Lenin in 1916 and joined the PCI only recently. *La Verite*, the central organ of the PCI which has not as yet obtained legal status, comments as follows on the election results in its issue of November 9, 1945:

"The elections have revealed a new fact of the greatest interest: the existence of a revolutionary current as yet not fully manifest but very powerful and of great consciousness. Two tests made—in two parts of the country very distant from each other—have revealed the striking force of this as yet subterranean current. Due to the anti-democratic and heavily-taxed voting procedure, we were only able to present two lists. In Paris, in the 1st Election District, we received the following votes:

5th Arrondissement	929
6th "	686
7th "	573
13th "	1783
14th "	1625
15th "	2517
—	
Total	8113

"These figures constitute a remarkable result for the proletarian *arrondissements* (districts), especially if we bear in mind the tremendous difficulties we encountered: the difficulty in collecting the 200,000 francs (\$4,000) required by the regulations, which caused us to start our campaign very late; the fact that our party had only just come out of six years of illegality, was presenting itself for the first time in elections and could publish only an internal bulletin; government sabotage which prevented the issuance of our first circular; the fact that in the 13th *arrondissement* practically not a single voter received our circular or election literature, which was the case, to a lesser degree, in practically all the other *arrondissements*; the systematic destruction of our election posters by the Fascists and by specially organized gangs of Stalinists; the torrent of lies poured out against our party by the most powerful party in France (the French C.P.) disposing of enormous means and utilizing the state apparatus in which it collaborates; the systematic disruption of our meetings in the 13th and 14th *arrondissements* by special brigades of Stalinists; the very spirit in which we undertook this campaign, in which we

called not only for votes but for active struggle with us for our program; the defeatist atmosphere which the bourgeois press deliberately cast over our candidates; the widespread opinion among workers agreeing with our program that by voting for the PCI they did not have any chance of electing a Trotskyist and that consequently it would be better to vote for a Stalinist or a Socialist in order to prevent a reactionary candidate from being elected.

"Under these conditions the 8,113 votes are indeed a remarkable result. Remarkable because it is only an indication of the wide-spread sympathies which we have acquired in the working class. It is noteworthy to mention, for instance, that in the polling station in Kuss Street, set up for a housing project in which many workers of the Gnome et Rhone factory live, there were 50 Trotskyist votes to 400 for the Stalinists, although we did not have a single meeting in that part of the city. We are infinitely more confident over this indication of a change in the relation of forces than the French C.P.

"It is clear that in eight months (when the next elections are scheduled for), if our comrades in these districts know how to 'capitalize' on the results, if we prepare ourselves seriously for the coming struggles, there will be at least one Trotskyist deputy returned from the 1st election district in Paris. And perhaps more than one.

"The other test we made is no less encouraging. We refer to the results in the Isere. There our comrades received 2,704 votes. At La Mure we received 104 votes, for instance, as against approximately 400 for the French Communists (Stalinists). At Vienne we got 80. At Grenoble 364, etc. Moreover, it must be noted that in this part of the country the election list of a very leftist resistance group (Farge list) undoubtedly drew a few thousand votes that would otherwise have been cast for us.

"The prohibitive financial obligations imposed in the election procedure permitted us only to make two tests. But it is already clear that there must be hundreds of thousands of workers throughout France who are ranging themselves on our side. We know the value of those who have made their decision already. It is a guarantee that in the coming struggles the working class will learn to find its road to emancipation. It is a guarantee that the *Parti Communiste Internationaliste* will be the revolutionary leadership of tomorrow. The task of all our friends who understand the necessity of this struggle is to join the PCI ranks, to build the great revolutionary party which the working class needs to lead it to victory.

"Forward to the building of a powerful Internationalist Communist Party."

* * *

La Verite of the same date also reports some highly successful election campaign meetings, despite attempts of the Stalinists to disrupt them. In the Paris region 4,000 workers, gathered in schoolyards at the call of the PCI, voted for a resolution demanding immediate legalization of

La Verite and other suppressed proletarian papers. They also passed a resolution calling for the break-up of the coalition and the establishment of a "Socialist—Communist—CGT (Trade Union) Government without de Gaulle." In the town of Quimper, in Brittany, the PCI held a meeting on October 18 with 1,100 workers present. The following day a PCI meeting held in nearby Concarneau, the hometown of our martyred comrades Bourhis and Gueguen, had an attendance of 1,200 workers.

The PCI also announces that on September 13, *Paul Fabre*, municipal councillor of the city of La Mure in the Isere Department, resigned his post upon issuing a declaration that he was leaving the Communist Party of France and joining the Trotskyist party. In his declaration comrade Fabre denounces the betrayals of the Stalinists and calls upon the communist workers to join en masse the PCI "the vanguard party of Marxism-Leninism."

Belgium

The *Parti Communiste Revolutionnaire* (Revolutionary Communist Party), Belgian Section of the Fourth International, held its Fifth National Congress in Brussels on November 1, 2 and 3. The congress, attended by 24 voting delegates and delegates from the European Executive Committee and from the Trotskyist parties of France, Great Britain and Germany, concentrated on a program for the organizational strengthening and expansion of the party. It adopted political resolutions on "The Advance of Barbarism and the Perspectives of the Proletarian Revolution," on "The Present Situation in Belgium and the Immediate Tasks of the Party" and on the situation in the USSR and the countries occupied by the USSR. In coming numbers we expect to publish these resolutions in whole or in part.

The PCR has been conducting a particularly successful campaign for solidarity with the German workers. Its central organ *La Voie de Lenine* (Lenin's Road) was banned last spring for publishing an appeal for such solidarity. But despite this and other reprisals undertaken by the Government against the PCR, the campaign is meeting with wide-spread success.

Thus, at Anderlues, a mining town in the Centre basin, German prisoners of war working in the mines joined the strike of the Belgian coal diggers there in the struggle for holiday-pay, upon an appeal from the union officials. In the mining town of Trieu-Kaisin, Belgian, Polish and Spanish miners went out on a protest strike when the company failed to send an ambulance in time to take care of a German prisoner injured in a fall. Fraternalization in the whole province of Hainaut has been so wide-spread that the Governor of the province, a Social Democrat, found it necessary to publish a proclamation, posted on all walls, calling upon the Belgium population to desist.

The PCR is also carrying on an active campaign in the renewed crisis over the monarchy under the slogan: "For the Republic! For the Defense of the Workers' Interests!"

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