

**The New** \_\_\_\_\_  
**INTERNATIONAL**

December . 1942

*NOTES OF THE MONTH*

**AFTER PEARL HARBOR**

**Analysis of Russian Economy**

*By F. Forest*

**FACTS ABOUT JAPAN**

*By Francis Taylor*

**Discussion on the National Question**

*By F. W. Smith and Europacus*

**Archives**

•

**Miscellany**

•

**Book Reviews**

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## Wartime Censorship

On Saturday, December 19, the Labor Action Publishing Co. was informed by the postal authorities that the December 21 issue of *Labor Action* was ordered held up from mailing until Washington officials examined its contents and decided upon its mailability. Since then the paper was released for mailing, but officials have informed the publishers that all forthcoming issues of the paper will be held up for similar examination and that the second class mailing privileges of *Labor Action* were dependent upon a weekly examination of the paper by the postal authorities in Washington.

The purpose of the Post Office action is to destroy the effectiveness of a weekly newspaper, since the delays necessitated by such examinations last anywhere from three to ten days. Mailing of the paper following such examinations means that a weekly newspaper reaches its readers from one to two weeks late.

The decision taken against *Labor Action* is not an isolated instance. It follows closely on the heels of similar action against *The Militant* and the *Fourth International*. The foregoing procedure has been in effect against *The Militant* many weeks; only last week we were informed that the same decision was taken with the *Fourth International*.

These events are a serious symptom of the rising tide of censorship and threat to the right of free press. If allowed to go unnoticed a series of suppressions may take place which will deal a serious blow to the labor and workers' political movement. Once the ball of censorship and suppression gets rolling there is no limit to its direction. It will first strike the smaller papers and magazines and then widen its terrain to take in all non-conformist periodicals. Special interest groups, reactionaries of every variety, snoopers of every sort, will enjoy a hey-day if these symptomatic actions against *Labor Action*, *The Militant* and the *Fourth International* go unnoticed and unopposed.

## Editor's Note

With this issue we close out the year 1942. It was a year of enormous and significant events and we have tried to keep abreast of a rapidly changing world, adhering to our revolutionary Marxist principles and seeking to explain the international and domestic situation by the yardstick of Marxist analysis. We did not succeed in all our plans, but this was primarily due to factors beyond our control.

The coming year will witness an intensification of an already charged world. The NEW INTERNATIONAL will do its utmost in furtherance of its aim, to present articles of current political and theoretical interest, as well as discussion articles, archives, book reviews and other important topics.

For the January issue of the new year we already have the following articles in preparation: The Beveridge Plan, an Autopsy, by Albert Gates; China in the World War—III, by Max Shachtman; the Current Labor Situation, by David Coolidge; a review of Froelich's *Rosa Luxemburg*, by Reva Craine, and other features. Insure your copy by subscribing now to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

## THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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Editor: ALBERT GATES

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# THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

VOLUME VIII

DECEMBER, 1942

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## NOTES OF THE MONTH

### After Pearl Harbor

One year has passed since the surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and America's military participation in the Second World War. Theretofore, the nation was a non-belligerent supporter of Great Britain and her allies; today all the resources of the country, material and physical, are mobilized for the prosecution of the war.

There is a vast difference in the preparations of the country prior to entrance in the present war and 1917. Then it was necessary to build an army and to organize industry for war production simultaneously with and after the declaration of war. Thus, it was only at the Armistice that the country was fully mobilized to wage battle. The greater part of the time was spent in preparation.

On December 8, 1941, the Administration and its War and Navy Departments had two years' experience under its collective belt—the experience of Britain and her allies. But more important than that, American industry had been largely converted to the production of war materials, or was prepared for a total transformation. In addition, the Roosevelt Administration was politically prepared for participation in the war and had in a measure readied the entire country for eventual entry. From the time that the President made his "quarantine the aggressor" speech until Pearl Harbor, it was a foregone conclusion that the United States could not stay out of the war. The only question that remained was the date and manner of such entrance.

When Roosevelt proclaimed that it was the task of American industry to act as the "arsenal of democracy," he did two things: first, he provided the material basis for a continuation of the war by the Allies, and second, he provided the basis for an enormous extension of the productive capacity of American industry to a point where it could conveniently and quickly take on the added responsibility of producing for American armed forces. A great loss of time was therefore avoided, since the most important period of experimentation was carried through in the two years during which American industry produced for Great Britain, France, China, et al. Moreover, these experimentations carried on in the field of production were largely paid for by these nations. Thus, experience in the utilization of new materials and new methods of production were acquired almost without any cost to American financiers and industrialists.

Long before war became a reality for Americans, Roosevelt had successfully campaigned for a universal registration and conscription of manpower. Many millions were made available for military service. At the time of the declaration of war, the Army had almost two million trained and partially trained and equipped soldiers ready for battle. In addition, the other services were greatly expanded and strengthened,

especially in the development of an enormous air force. No one really knows how large these forces will become. Estimates of the authorities range anywhere from seven and a half to fifteen million. Naturally, this question is entirely dependent on the fortunes of war on the numerous fronts; yet without a thorough knowledge of its needs, the Administration has an over-all armed force of more than six millions, twice as many as were employed in the First World War. This single fact has already had a sharp effect upon economic and social developments in the nation. The situation will be accentuated by the end of 1943, when an additional two to three million men will have been inducted.

### What the Bourgeoisie Foresaw

The fundamental basis for the war preparations made by the American bourgeoisie was its recognition that the future of its rule was entirely dependent upon a victory of the United Nations, more properly, upon a defeat of Germany. It should be abundantly clear, and it was pointed out by Marxists long ago, that the fundamental antagonism between Germany, riding the crest of victory in Europe, and the United States, seeking to solidify its predominant world position, must lead to armed conflict.

The war has amply demonstrated the structural weaknesses of a declining Great Britain and its empire. The first shots in the war proved that while she could and would put up a magnificent defense of her particular world position, in the larger and fundamental sense she had lost the war before it began. British investors in Latin America, the United States and in the Far East have suffered enormous losses. The loss of important territories has materially affected London. Losses in the war, of men and material, and the heavy demands of the conflict which require England to defend an empire stretching around the globe have already had a disastrous effect upon her economic and political position in the world. Most important of all, she had lost her dominant place in the world market, a situation which can be repaired only by a future struggle against the United States.

But for the British Empire it was either complete annihilation at the hands of the Axis, or a bad bargain with a powerful ally. While Britain's bourgeois leaders know there is nothing to be gained from the other warring camp except abject surrender, they still hope that the fortunes of war will permit her to circumvent the gains already made by her American "friends" and prevent a further diminution of her colonies, her investments, her material resources, in a word, regain her pre-war position.

Irrespective of the outlook of the British ruling class, the American bourgeoisie has never been concerned with how to cope with that country. But the power of a renascent German imperialism was an entirely different story. On the basis of a conquered Europe and a defeated England, Germany would have become a most formidable foe, and the outcome of a struggle with her would have been in great doubt. It became an urgent necessity for American capitalism to enter this war to insure the defeat of the Third Reich.

### **The Role of the Pacific War**

The war with Japan, important as it is, remains secondary. The American bourgeoisie understands this perfectly and will brook no departure from its present strategy of concentrating the main fire in the European theater of the war. A victory over Germany would guarantee an eventual victory over Japan, no matter how difficult that struggle might be. But the concentration of the war effort against Japan might well exhaust the American war machine to the point where victory over Germany would become impossible. The tactics in the Pacific and the Far East therefore are calculated as delaying actions to keep Japan from further expanding and exploiting its present gains until such a time as the full force of the United Nations can be directed against her. This general strategy has always been implicit in the conduct of the warring staffs of the two leading members of the United Nations, Great Britain and the United States.

The Allies suffered enormous defeats in the initial stages of the war with Dai Nippon. In steady sequence they lost out in Indo-China and Thailand. They lost Malaya and that "impregnable" fortress, Singapore. They lost Burma and suffered the closing of the Burma Road. They lost the Netherlands East Indies and a number of Pacific islands, including the Philippines. Hawaii, Alaska and Australia were threatened and it was even believed at one time that the Japanese might chance an invasion of the Pacific Coast. No matter how rapidly and far the Japanese advanced, the strategists of the Allies would not change their fundamental outlook.

As we look over the multiple fronts of the greatest war in history we are struck by its magnitude in the employment of men and material, by the extreme distances traversed by the military machines and by the number of countries ravaged in the seeming endlessness of the whole senseless and destructive venture. When will this bloody holocaust end? This is the question which everyone asks. Yet there is nothing on the horizon to warrant any justification in believing that this war can be brought to a close in any foreseeable future.

It is true that the involvement of the United States as a military factor in the war has greatly strengthened the Allied camp. It has brought to its side many millions of soldiers, sailors and airmen. The growth of production on the Allied side is giving it a material preponderance which it had only in a potential sense when the war began. But the war will not be brought to an end in a substantially shorter time. No one can foretell its length, and the judicious leaders of the warring countries evade giving any reply to this question.

The invasion of North Africa and the rout of General Rommel's Afrika Korps have strengthened Allied arms, improved the Allied position in the Mediterranean Sea and prepared the basis for a possible invasion of Europe from the South. But the victory in North Africa only presages a more intensified stage of the war, the preparations on all sides for spring offensives. The outcome of the offensives of 1943, whether it will be recognizable or not, *may* determine the length of the war, and it *may* point to the eventual victors. But whatever the result of this intensified warfare, it will unquestionably be followed by a long period of warfare by attrition. The principal reason for this lies in the inability of the United Nations to fight any but a purely military war against the Axis.

### **Prospects in Europe**

The continuation of the war will only add to the terrible misery of the suffering millions in many countries. Its intensi-

fication will bring the war to new areas and new peoples, as it has already done in North Africa. Even without this prospect, large areas have already been devastated. Casualties in soldiers and civilians have run into millions. Many more millions are starving and homeless; they are without adequate clothing and housing. Yet, there is literally nothing they can long forward to except the continuation and intensification of the war, a worsening of their already low material level of existence.

For Europe, the war is well in its fourth year. Hitler's armies dominate the whole Continent. On the basis of this domination and enslavement of Europe, his régime has been able to retain itself in power and carry on the war. All the material resources of this great area, its industry and agriculture, its manpower and the many points at which an invasion of the Continent is possible are at the disposal and under the control of the Gestapo and the German general staff.

In order to realize the benefits of this control over Europe, Hitler is compelled to enforce his demands at the point of the sword, to keep an eternal vigilance over the masses of workers and peasants lest the whole enterprise blow up in his face. He has had no trouble with big capitalists in the occupied countries. They reconciled themselves to his victories and made admirable adjustments, continuing to make profit even though the real orders and directives come from Berlin. But that is of little concern, say the European bourgeoisie, so long as we make a profit, and better a little profit with Hitler than no profit without him. Hitler at any rate has solved their labor problem; they do not have to dicker with the workers, they do not have to contend with the trade unions: the Gestapo has solved this little problem with the gun and the concentration camp.

The millions of peoples in the occupied countries, however, have never reconciled themselves to German rule. There are daily reports of clashes between the authorities and the workers or other sections of the population. These clashes take place in the shops, in the food lines, in rural communities. The wonder is not that the European masses have failed to revolt long ago, it is that despite the brutal régimes of German fascism, despite the stringent controls of a highly experienced and organized police régime, despite the betrayals of these people by their former governments, their political parties and their labor leaders, they are fighting desperately against their new oppressors.

### **The Rise of Nationalist Movements**

What we see in Europe is a reawakening of the struggle for national liberation in the conquered countries. Thus, a phenomenon which appeared historically outlived at the close of the First World War has been replaced by the unforeseen developments in the years since the outbreak of the Second World War. These movements, as they seek to free their countries from the yoke of Nazi rule, are fighting for national independence and they involve all classes, including sections of national bourgeoisies. Despite their illegality, for they are entirely underground, and despite the absence of clarity, they are the only movements which contain inherent qualities of developing into a mass revolt against one camp of the war, at least in its first stages. The nationalist movements of liberation and independence are progressive movements under the given world conditions and out of them the organization and struggle for socialism and a United States of Socialist Europe can arise. Certainly the European masses, while they seek their liberation from Hitler, are not seeking to reestablish

the pre-war status quo, the bankrupt régimes of the so-called "free" governments of incompetents who, when they had the power, were utterly impotent to solve a single one of the problems which faced them or their peoples.

The strategists of the United Nations would like to utilize these movements to bring a speedy end to the war. They are aware too, that the German masses are becoming war-weary, are losing their confidence in the invincibility of the Nazi régime and German arms and that a large residue of the socialist working class only awaits a more favorable conjuncture in the war to make their hatred of fascism felt in concrete ways. But they are in holy fear of these mass movements because they may take on a social character and bring about the real liberation of Europe. They fear these movements because their revolts may develop from anti-Hitler to anti-capitalist movements. While vocal support is given to the nationalist movements of the people, the leaders of the United Nations prepare post-war governments which, while non-fascist, are nevertheless reactionary.

### **Allied Policy in the Far East**

We have already had a sample of the ideological war in the Far East. When the fight against Germany was completely defensive, when it was necessary to win the undivided support of a people unenthusiastic about the war, intensely suspicious of their governments, or even opposed to the war, it was necessary for Roosevelt and Churchill to lay heavy stress on the ideological war against Hitler, to emphasize that the struggle of the United Nations was a struggle for the freedom of all the peoples of the world. But when the first test of the Atlantic Charter came in the Far East, the Indian masses, for example, were informed that the Four Freedoms had no application to them. It also had no application to Burma, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. For the right to free speech, the right to free organization, the right of national independence, the right to establish one's own government, would mean the end of the colonial empires of all countries, especially those which make up the United Nations.

Obviously this is not what was meant by the Atlantic Charter. The Atlantic Charter applies expressly to Europe, "to the white world," as Lin Yutang has expressed it, referring to the imperialist powers. When representatives of the Pacific countries asked for a Pacific Charter they were told by the President that, in his opinion, it was unnecessary because the Atlantic Charter applied to them also. If it has any application to Asia, everything that has happened since the war broke out there belies that claim. The colonial peoples are fully cognizant that the war in Asia is merely the struggle between two powers for control of the great resources of their country and for the right to exploit them. Their vain hopes that a victory of the United Nations would free them have vanished and given rise to mixed feelings of doubt and anger. They realize that they have again been used against themselves, for the pretentious ideological war of the Allies, the much heralded war for "freedom and democracy," has now settled down to its own level of a military struggle between imperialist rivals.

### **The Year at Home**

The transformation of America's rôle from the "arsenal of democracy" to belligerency has finally brought the real war home to Americans. One year has passed and already the war has been sharply felt by the people. American economy has

been on a war basis for some time; now the transformation from peacetime production is complete.

The armed forces have already been engaged on several fronts. Their size has been greatly increased and now numbers over six million for the Army, Navy and Air Force. The nation-wide draft, drawing from a pool of many millions, will take an additional three millions in 1943. Industry is operating at full blast and there is a growing shortage of workers. The same situation obtains in agriculture. Everywhere a shortage of manpower manifests itself and results in a greater state control over the movements and activities of the people. Job freezing has already been inaugurated in certain areas of the country and it threatens to become a national phenomenon.

The New Deal has been partially dead for a long time; the WPA was buried with formal rites by presidential action. This was the final official notification to indicate that the War Deal cannot be a half-hearted effect. As a result of this economic transformation great social changes have taken place. The national market has greatly diminished since the government has become the main receiver of goods produced. A special kind of "planned economy" exists, i.e., production is planned and organized by the war administration on the basis of its military needs. As the arsenal for the United Nations, industry in this country is living through another technical revolution and has reached unprecedented heights of production. The most immediate effect of this intense economic activity has been the virtual liquidation of unemployment.

The great rise in employment has resulted in an enormous growth of the national income among all classes. But this very growth in the national income produced a sharp contradiction in economy. The disparity in the production of war and consumers' goods lays the basis for an inflationary spiral which threatens to grow beyond control. Despite the many measures of the Administration to control the inherent "imbalance" of the war economy, it continues to pursue its logical way. Price controls, rationing and priorities have not been effective means to curb the widening contradictions created by the demands of the war. This is especially true since the organization of these controls have been essentially directed against the workers, that is, the mass of the people.

One cannot lose sight of the fact that the war economy has been achieved under the complete domination of the monopolist-imperialist big business men. They control production, they issue contracts, they set the percentage of profits in war contracts. The Roosevelt Administration is completely dependent upon big business to carry through the economic part of the war effort. Through the dollar-a-year men they have a death-like grip on the war economy. Moreover, the needs of the war make it inevitable that the powers of big business are strengthened and by its control over the production program its enrichment is insured.

The enormous costs of the war are already placed on the back of the American people. A heavy taxation program, rationing of consumer goods, destruction in the quality of existing goods, rising prices, completely out of line with wages earned, long hours of toil under deteriorating conditions of employment, are taking a heavy toll of the masses.

### **Concretizing the War Economy**

Concretely, what the continuation of the war will mean at home can be ascertained from the following facts: According to the *United States News*, the war cost, which is currently \$80,000,000,000 a year, will, beginning with the new

fiscal year (July 1, 1943), rise to \$100,000,000,000 out of a total national income now estimated to reach \$135,000,000,000. From December, 1941, to the end of the next fiscal year, July, 1944, the cost of the war, at the present increasing rate of expenditures, will reach the astronomical total of \$200,000,000,000. In order to realize its significance, this figure should be compared to the \$26,000,000,000 spent from 1917 to 1919 in the First World War.

It can be readily seen that forthcoming expenditures will leave only a fourth of the total national income for the civilian population. Increased taxation to meet these costs, in addition to the existent heavy tax program, will undoubtedly be proposed by the Administration.

One must add to this financial burden the fact that the war will eat up two-thirds of the national economic effort. In one year it will absorb a hundred billion dollars' worth of fuel oil, gasoline, food, clothing, metal, transport, rubber and kindred indispensable materials formerly used up by the people.

In addition to the precipitate decline in the production of consumer goods, inventories will be quickly absorbed. The net effect will be that the masses will have to divide what is directly left over from war production, with no further possibility of looking toward piled-up goods to reinforce their needs. Widespread rationing must and will follow. Whereas the rationing of goods is as yet confined to several major products, rationing in the coming year will spread over many vital commodities necessary to the well-being of the population. There will be a more stringent control over all types of fuel and a reduction in the consumer's share of gasoline and fuel oil. Drastic cuts in meat allowances are scheduled with the latest estimate suggesting that less than two pounds of meat per person will be allocated. Moreover, the trend will be downward. Rationing will take place with milk, butter and canned goods.

In contrast to the enrichment of American financiers and industrialists, there is the steady but unmistakable destruction of small business and the middle class. Thousands of small businesses have been liquidated. The intellectual and professional groups are faced with similar prospects of elimination and ruination. But above all, it is the working class which carries the brunt of the war. In addition to the fact that it alone makes the war effort possible, high prices, the absence of indispensable goods, worsening conditions of labor, it is faced with the prospect of a reduction of its living standards, forecast by Leon Henderson, to reach the depth of the crisis in 1932. Thus, within one year, the pattern of American development, except in degree, approximates the course of development in other warring countries.

### **Big Business Threatens Labor**

The American bourgeoisie, taking advantage of the war and a weakening of the organized strength of the labor movement, made possible by the abject surrender of its labor leaders, has chosen this occasion to open up an offensive against the workers designed to destroy their organizations, their wage levels and their working conditions. Through the kept press and with the aid of the political reactionaries in both parties, the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce have mobilized their enormous resources to carry through their fight. Using the no-strike agreement imposed upon the labor movement, they have kept up a steady barrage against the workers and their unions. The

labor-management committees have been employed for the same purpose.

The reactionary congressional leaders will seek to offset the mounting dissatisfaction of the people by turning the congressional halls into a meeting ground for organizing reaction against labor. Everything that is wrong with the war effort, i.e., the existence of capitalism, will be blamed on the union movement with its ten million members. The new Congress has not met but already the signs are unmistakable as to the intentions of these lackeys of big business. They are seeking two immediate things: control over the trade unions by control of their finances, and legislative cancellation of the forty-hour week. The passage of two such measures will lead to a witchhunt within the unions, the aim of which will be to destroy the effectiveness of organized labor. Powerful forces, led by the large daily newspapers, stand ready to unloose one of the most thoroughly organized anti-labor campaigns ever known.

The workers are fighting back in the form of a rank and file revolt. Where they cannot force their leaders to take action against the reactionary drive of the bosses, they act without them. The workers were never greatly enthusiastic about the war. But they accepted a *fait accompli* and were prepared to do "their share." They do not, however, propose to allow the monopoly capitalists to use the war as a lever to destroy the labor movement and the gains won by it after years of long and difficult struggle.

The recent elections, which demonstrated this sharp right turn in bourgeois politics and a general resurgence of the reactionary forces of the nation, was accompanied by an almost total distrust and disinterest on the part of the working class. Although the desire of the workers for independent political action has again been stifled by their misleaders, they demonstrated their genuine feelings by refusing to participate in an election campaign to choose one or another of the reactionary candidates of the bourgeois parties.

Thus, in two important respects, economic and political, the American workers exhibit great unrest and a desire to march in an independent class direction. This will have important implications for the future of the American union and political movement of the workers. For the last word has not been said in the increasing conflict of the two main classes in American society.

### **Collapse of the "Free World"**

The main offensives of the Allies are not yet in full motion, but the first casualty—for those who took the ideas, speeches and writing of the liberals seriously—is Vice-President Henry A. Wallace's "Century of the Common Man." No one doubts the sincerity of this liberal and mystic. But we pointed out, at the time Wallace was making his perorations about this war being fought to guarantee every man, woman and child of this world a quart or a pint of milk every day, that his speeches were errant nonsense, that the real war had nothing to do with Wallace's idealism, and that before long it would become clearly evident to every man, woman and child that even a modest quart or pint of milk was too much for them to expect from imperialist capitalism.

On almost every front, Wallace and his reformist Board of Economic Warfare face a fight for life. While he and his organization exist for the purpose of preparing plans for post-war reconstruction, the real powers in the war administration carry on an incessant campaign against the "expensive experiments" of this "visionary." Thus, in South America, where

hard-fisted American financiers and industrialists are seeking to organize production with what amounts to slave labor, Wallace and the BEW have to wage permanent warfare to prevent the complete ruination of the "Good Neighbor" policy. In the Far East, in Europe and in South Africa this body meets the cry of "military exigency" which frustrates every liberal plan that its representatives seek to enforce under the illusion that they are the ideological arm of the United Nations. Disillusionment sets in everywhere because the war itself has nothing in common with the aims of the BEW, and the real directors of the war will not countenance such liberal nonsense.

The war administrations, the military staffs, the Prince Ottos and the Admiral Darlans, these are the real figures in the war. Freedom and democracy mean exactly what Lin Yutang said it *appeared* to mean: freedom and democracy for the Occidental powers (read: freedom and democracy for the ruling classes in these countries). Pearl Buck, whose long residence in China has made her a champion of the independence of the colonial peoples, is neither a Marxian socialist, nor anti-capitalist, but she has already publicly declared, in vigorous speeches and articles, that the "war for freedom has already been lost" and that a third war for freedom will have to be fought.

The "awakening" of such liberals to the real state of the war merely reflects in modified form a situation that is far worse than appears on the surface and one which we indicated in the foregoing.

Nor is there a single force associated with the warring governments, the Soviet Union included, which offers the slightest hope that this war may, after all, turn out differently from the last. Stalin's speech on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the October Revolution made little or no reference to the greatest event in modern history. The socialist aspirations of the Russian masses and the new Soviet state were little if at all mentioned. His speech, in the manner of a bourgeois diplomat, was merely an assurance that the proper revenge would be taken upon Germany and that his Russia, the Russia of the counter-revolution, would join its British and American allies to restore pre-war Europe and the world, upon the defeat of Hitler. There is absolutely nothing to distinguish the Soviet Union from Great Britain or the United States. Only the most rigid reactionaries, the most ignorant and short-sighted of the bourgeoisie, still retain fears of Stalin and the Soviet Union. For this they are regularly chided by the "more far-sighted leaders of finance and industry" and the *New*

*York Times*, which recognizes counter-revolution when faced with it.

On the other side of the coin we have tendencies within the workers' political movement which are completely disoriented by false theoretical and political concepts, whose ideas are extremely harmful to the cause of international socialism. The most blatant violator of the best interests of the revolutionary socialist movement is the Cannonite group, which at its last convention adopted a resolution stating: "*The war of the Soviet Union is our war, the war of the workers everywhere. . . . Only traitors to the working class can deny support to the workers' state in its war against imperialism. . . .*" The vigorous language employed in this resolution is merely subterfuge to hide the politically impermissible and factually false separation made between the Soviet Union and its allies. To these people the Russian front has no relationship to the war on the other fronts; the alliance of Stalinist Russia with Great Britain and the United States is a matter of convenience arising from the needs of the "defense of the Soviet Union" having no real significance, and finally, the Stalinist régime is an abstraction when measured against the "reality of the workers' state." Obviously, when compared to this tendency, the vision of the *New York Times* is crystal-clear.

### **Talk of Reconstruction**

The new wave of confidence in victory by the United Nations has already led to a great deal of discussion about post-war reconstruction, and here again the dispute between the war leaders and the reformists will become extremely sharp. The pro-capitalist reformists are staking everything on a post-war international New Deal administered by the United Nations as a means of fortifying their military victory and bringing about a measure of economic revival through a "benevolent" exploitation of the peoples of the world.

The Beveridge Plan in England and the unpublished but oft-referred-to super-Beveridge Plan which Roosevelt is said to have ready, proceed on what they consider to be an acknowledged fact: that capitalism cannot provide for the people and has outlived its progressive historical function. These plans are therefore predicated upon reforming capitalism by a world system of social insurance but retaining the basic features of capitalism, the private ownership of the means of production, i.e., the profit system.

We shall return to this subject in the immediate future.  
A. G.

# **An Analysis of Russian Economy**

## ***The First of Three Articles***

### **I—The Approach**

In this study of Russian industrialization, 1928-1941, a period encompassing the First and Second Five Year Plans and that part of the Third Plan which preceded the present war, my fundamental purpose is to analyze the *direction* in which Russian economy has proceeded during that period. Is the direction of its growth—the preponderance of means of production over means of consumption, the high organic composition of capital and the rapid deterioration of

the living standards of the masses—merely an accidental tendency, or is it the inevitable consequence of the law of motion of its economy?

First of all it is necessary to analyze the progress of Russian economy during the entire period covered by this study. I'm not concerned primarily, however, with a mere statistical measurement of this development because the degree to which the goals established under the plans were or were not achieved have no direct relevance to my thesis. But so extrava-

gant has been the publicity which the proponents of the Soviet have given these data that the view is widely held that the allegedly phenomenal rate of industrial growth in Russia is the criterion of a unique form of economy. Therefore, in order to clear the decks for a basic approach to the subject, it is necessary to deal with this contention.

Russian economists refer to the purported 650 per cent increase in the value of all industrial production from 1928 to 1938 as a phenomenon that could not be surpassed, or even matched, except under socialism. They point with pride to that record as one far exceeding the accomplishments of the great capitalist nations in their palmiest days: the highest increase of industrial production in England was 29 per cent for the decade 1860-70 and for the United States it was 120 per cent for the decade 1880-90. It should be obvious, however, that the rate of economic development of a nation inevitably depends upon a number of circumstances (1) The level *world-wide* technological development when the nation embarks on industrialization. Russia in 1928 need not await the tedious process of discovery and invention, as did other nations at the dawn of the industrial revolution, but could draw upon the accumulation of centuries of industrial capitalism; (2) the extent of the natural resources available to the nation. Russia, one of the most favored of all lands in natural resources, containing in its borders all the essential materials of industry, is at a decided advantage compared to the nations less well favored by nature, as, for example, Japan; (3) the base from which the achievements are calculated. Clearly, it is easier to attain an annual rate of increase of 100 per cent when the base is one automobile or fifty than when it is one million or fifty million. Furthermore, the sheer bulk of capital goods in an advanced industrial society impedes the rate of technological progress because of the enormous expense and difficulty of replacing obsolete equipment; and (4) the measure of control which may be exerted over the component parts of the economy.

Russian statisticians and their apologists have a "preferred" method of proving Russia's unprecedented rate of development: they use as their base the year 1929—on one hand, the year of world prosperity preceding the depression and, on the other hand, the first year of the Five Year Plan when the Soviet Union had just regained the pre-war levels of production. Thus they more easily can show a sharp upward trend in Russian production and an equally sharp decline in world production.

Presumably, it was because Japan was not among the highly industrialized nations that Russian statisticians, who so impartially compared the Russian growth to that of the advanced nations of the capitalist world, did not include "feudal" Japan in their comparison. We must, however, pause here and note that not only "socialist" Russia but also "feudal" Japan showed a tremendous rate of growth during that period. If we take a comparable period of development, say 1932-37, we find that the total value\* of the output of Soviet heavy industry was 23.2 billion rubles in 1932 and 55.2 billion in 1937, the value at the end of the Second Five Year Plan thus being 238 per cent of that in 1932.

Japan,<sup>(1)</sup> also passing to a more rationalized economy, had an index of 97.9 for heavy industry in 1932 and 170.8 in 1937,

\*Measurements of growth by value of output is, of course, an entirely spurious method, although, for reasons best known to themselves, very commonplace with Soviet statisticians. Since later sections treat the subject of the inflated ruble at length, I shall leave criticism of this method aside for the moment.

or 176 per cent of the 1932 figure. Moreover, Japan, poor in materials of industry, was compelled to travel long distances to import 85 per cent of its iron ore and 90 per cent of its crude oil and was far short of being self-sustaining in copper, lead, zinc, tin and other essential industrial metals. Furthermore, were we to take Japan's high point of industrialization, August, 1940, as the criterion, we would see that Japan had achieved a 253.5 per cent growth in the means of production, as compared to the index of 1931-33. Such a comparison then robs much from the contention that the rate of growth in Russia is either completely unprecedented or evidence of "socialism."\*\* In and by itself the rate of economic growth in Soviet Russia, as compared with rates of economic growth under other forms of economy, is not of definitive importance. To a Marxist the criterion of transcendent importance in investigating the nature of an economy is the intrinsic *law of motion* of the economy. With that criterion as our guide, let us review the achievements of Soviet industrialization.

## II—A Statistical Abstract of the USSR

The only available index of total production in the USSR is that of the ruble value of all industrial output. Although the value of the ruble is fixed by the Soviet State bank at 19 cents (\$1.00 equals five rubles and thirty kopeks), it is utterly useless as an index of production or purchasing power in the internal economy. (See section on turnover tax in next installment.) Neither has it any value on the international market.

An index of total industrial production which carefully weights each element in the economy in order to arrive at a statistically valid index of the volume of production, has never been prepared by the Russian economists. This task, never easy under ordinary circumstances, is especially difficult in the case of Soviet statistics, which are concealed or perverted to prove the correctness of "the general line." Under these circumstances the best available gauge is that of comparing physical output of selected sections of both heavy and light industry as well as agricultural production, against a background of statistics on population and national income. Below is an abstract of the USSR prepared by me to illustrate the course of development of the whole economy from Czarist times through 1940. Figures for the year 1922 have been included in order to show the accelerated pace of the growth of production from the year of ruin following the end of counter-revolution and famine to the eve of the First Five Year Plan. All data are from official state documents in the original Russian: 1913, 1922 and 1928 figures from *Gosplan: State Planning*

(1) For studies of Japan, see: *Industrialization of Japan and Manchukuo, 1930-1940*, by Schumpeter, Allen, Gordon and Penrose; *The Economic Strength of Japan*, by Isoshi Asahi, and *Industrialization of the Western Pacific*, by Kate L. Mitchell, 1942.

\*\*Colln Clark (cf. his *Conditions of Economic Progress*), a bourgeois economist sympathetic to the Soviet Union, estimates that the most rapid advance in economic progress, from the turn of the century to 1940, was made by Japan.

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Commission for the Development of the National Economy of the USSR: *The Five Year Plan*; 1932 and 1937 figures from *Gosplan: Results* (of respective plans); 1940 figures from reports to the eighteenth conference of the Russian Communist Party, appearing in *Pravda*, February 18-21, 1941:

Here we note a phenomenon characteristic of the whole contemporary world: the preponderance of the means of production over means of consumption.

Was the manner in which the economy developed bureaucratically desired? Was a different course open to it? In order

STATISTICAL ABSTRACT, 1913-1940

Item	Unit	1913	1922	1928	1932	1937	1940
<b>HEAVY INDUSTRY</b>							
Electricity	Billion kilowatt hours	1.9	1.0	5.0	13.0	36.4	39.6*
Coal	Million tons	28.9	11.0	35.4	65.4	127.9	164.6
Petroleum	Million tons	9.3	5.0	11.7	21.3	30.4	38.0
Pig iron	Million tons	4.2	—	3.3	6.2	14.5	14.9
Steel	Million tons	4.2	—	4.0	5.9	17.7	18.4
Metal working lathes	Thousands	1.5	—	3.8	18.1	36.1	53.9*
Tractors	Thousands	0.0	0.0	1.3	51.6	80.0	176.0
Combines	Thousands	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	43.9	—
Length of railroads	Thousand kilometers	59.0	71.0	77.0	83.4	84.9	93.0
Freight traffic	Million tons	132.4	58.0	156.2	267.9	517.3	536.6
<b>LIGHT INDUSTRY</b>							
Cottons	Million meters	2224.0	0.6	2742.0	2417.0	3447.0	3491.0*
Woolens	Million meters	95.0	22.0	96.6	88.7	108.3	114.0
Linen	Million square meters	219.0	93.0	165.0	135.0	285.2	272.2
Paper	Thousand tons	197.0	—	284.5	479.0	831.6	834.0
Sugar	Thousand tons	1290.0	211.0	1340.0	828.2	2421.0	2530.0
Leather footwear	Million pairs	60	29.6	60.0	84.7	164.3	—
<b>AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK</b>							
Total area sown	Million hectares	105.0	77.7	112.9	134.4	135.3	141.2
Amount grain harvested	Million quintals	801.0	503.1	733.2	698.7	1202.9 (2)	—
Yield of crop	Per hectare	8.5	7.6	7.9	7.0	10.4 (2)	—
Horses	Million heads	35.8	24.1	35.9	19.6	16.7	17.5**
Cattle	Million heads	60.6	45.8	70.5	40.7	57.0	64.6**
Sheep and goats	Million heads	121.2	91.1	146.7	52.0	81.3	111.6**
Pigs	Million heads	20.9	12.1	26.0	11.6	22.8	32.5**
<b>POPULATION AND NATIONAL INCOME</b>							
Population,	Millions	139.3	133.3	152.3	165.7	(3)	170.5**
of which:							
Workers and employees (4)	Millions	11.2	—	11.5	22.8	27.0	30.4
National income,	Rubels, per capita	52.0	—	56.0	95.0	198.0	—
of which:							
Nominal wages	Rubles, per week	6.0	—	14.0	—	—	78.0***
Real weekly wages	In percentage to 1913: (5)	—	—	125.0	—	—	62.4

There is one other factor in the development of the Russian economy—a most essential effect of its evolution—to be considered and which the Abstract did not deal with: the relationship between the production of means of production and the production of the means of consumption. Since it is purely for the purpose of contrast and the same basis is used in both instances, the estimates may be made in terms of rubles. The value of gross industrial production (in billions of rubles, fixed 1926-27 prices) reveals the following proportional development between the means of production (Group A) to the means of consumption (Group B) since the initiation of the First Five Year Plan:

	1928		1932		1937		1940	
	Value	Pct.	Value	Pct.	Value	Pct.	Value	Pct.
Group A	7.0	44.3	23.2	52.3	55.2	57.5	83.9	61.0
Group B	8.7	55.7	20.3	46.7	40.3	42.5	53.6	39.0

\*1938 figure; \*\*1939 figure; \*\*\*approximate, computed from 18th party conference report.

(2) This is not based on the unit which was used for previous years since, in 1933, for reasons best known to the Russian state and unrevealed to the public, a measure known as the "biological yield" was adopted. This standard of measurement meant the grain is estimated on the stalks in the field before harvesting, and a 10 per cent deduction is allowed for waste. All agricultural economists, with the exception of the Stalinists, of course, agree that such an estimate does not account for actual waste. Prof. Prokopovitch discounts an additional 10 per cent, or a total of 20 per cent, for waste; other bourgeois economists discount as high as 30 to 40 per cent. However, this abstract reports official figures only.

(3) 1937 census was destroyed and data were not made available to public.

(4) Russian statistics lump workers and employees in one category; or when they separate them into two categories they lump rural and urban workers in one category and rural and urban employees in another; the above figure represents urban workers and employees.

(5) Author's own estimate; cf. section on Standard of Living, 1940.

to be able to answer these questions and fully to understand the Abstract, it is necessary to analyze the data in the Abstract, not so much from the point of view of mere volumetric increase, but, again, from the perspective of the law of motion of the economy. The volumetric comparisons will be considered only because they offer a clearer view of the *direction* in which the economic structure was evolving. With this as our perspective, we turn to an analysis of the individual Plans.

### III—Plans and Accomplishments

#### 1—First Five Year Plan, 1928-32

The Gosplan brazenly proclaimed, whilst a famine was raging in the country, that the First Five Year Plan was 93.7 per cent fulfilled—just that precisely 93.7 per cent. That much publicized figure was based upon the *value*, and not upon the *volume* of production, and furthermore was derived in the following manner: (1) by using the worthless standard of the inflated ruble to measure the value of industrial output; and (2) by vulgarly computing an "average" between the "103 per cent" overfulfillment of Group A to the "89 per cent" fulfillment of Group B industries. There is, of course, no doubt whatsoever about the tremendous strides made in heavy industry during that period but in no case does the value of output present a true picture of industrial production, as can be seen from the following table of actual physical output of major items of heavy and light industry<sup>(6)</sup>:

(6) 1928 figures: *Gosplan*, State Planning Commission for the Dev. of Nat. Eco., 1930; 1932 figures: *Gosplan*, Results of the First Five Year Plan, 1933, both in Russian. The results are also published in English.

MEANS OF PRODUCTION		Planned	Accomplished	Pct.
Item	Unit			
Electrification	Million kilowatt hours	22.0	13.1	59.5
Petroleum	Million tons	22.0	21.3	96.8
Coal	Million tons	75.0	65.4	87.2
Iron	Million tons	10.0	6.2	62.0
Steel	Million tons	10.4	5.9	56.7
Tractors	Thousands	55.0	51.6	93.8
Length of rds.	Thousand kilometers	90.0	83.4	92.7
MEANS OF CONSUMPTION				
Cotton materials	Million meters	4700.0	2417.0	51.4
Woolens	Million meters	270.0	88.7	32.8
Linen	Million square meters	500.0	135.7	27.1
Paper	Thousand tons	900.0	491.2	54.6
Sugar	Thousand tons	2600.0	828.2	31.9
Leather footwear	Million pairs	145.0	84.1	58.4
Rubbers	Million pairs	75.0	64.8	86.4

As we can see from the above table, the actual production, based on *volume*, is far short of the 93.7 claimed as accomplished, based on the *value* of production. Even the percentages of accomplishment in the above table, however, are an *overestimate* because, although we have changed the basis from value to physical output, we still have retained the Soviet method of including the level of *past* production as part of the present accomplishment.\* To illustrate what we mean, let us take the example of what happened to the railroads. Seventy-seven thousand kilometers of railroads were in operation in 1928 and ninety thousand were planned for the end of the First Five Year Plan. Actually, 83.4 thousand kilometers were in operation in 1932. Since the seventy-seven thousand kilometers in operation before the plan was included in the "accomplishment," the plan was "92.7 per cent" completed. Obviously there is something wrong with a method that considers performance before the Plan as part of the accomplishment under the Plan. The correct method of computation is to determine the percentage of *actual* increase to *planned* increase for the years covered by the Plan, and none other. The planned increase is thirteen thousand kilometers, of which only 6.4 thousand were actually laid. Thus the Plan regarding the railroads was 49 per cent, not 92.7 per cent, accomplished. Carrying this method through, we find the following to be the true percentages of actual increase compared to the planned increase:

Means of Production	Unit	1928	Plnd.	Accd.	Pct.
		Level	Incr.	Incr.	Accd.
Electricity	Billion kwt. hrs.	5.0	17.0	8.1	47.6
Petroleum	Million tons	11.7	10.3	9.6	93.2
Coal	Million tons	35.4	39.6	30.0	75.7
Iron	Million tons	3.3	6.7	2.9	43.3
Steel	Million tons	4.0	6.4	1.9	29.7
Tractors	Thousands	1.3	53.7	50.3	93.7
Length of rds.	Thousand kmts.	77.0	13.0	6.4	49.0
Means of Consumption		Percentages			
Cottons	Million meters	2742.0	1958.0	-325.0	-11.8
Woolens	Million meters	96.6	173.4	- 7.9	- 8.2
Linen	Million sq. meters	165.0	335.0	- 29.3	-27.9
Paper	Thousand tons	284.5	615.5	206.7	33.6
Sugar	Thousand tons	1340.0	1260.0	-521.8	-39
Leather footwear	Million pairs	60.0	85.0	24.7	29.0
Rubbers	Million pairs	37.0	38.0	37.8	73.2

The above tables are a true balance sheet of the accomplishments of the First Five Year Plan. Particularly poignant is the record of how the production of means of consumption

\*The credit taken for past performance is particularly ludicrous in the instance of the railroads. This was the only item which, for the year of ruin, 1922, revealed a tremendous growth. This was due to the effective work of Trotsky, who was charged with responsibility for restoring railroad transportation. (Cf. Part Two, section on trade union dispute.)

not only failed to meet its goals, not only showed no increase in production, but starkly reveals a *decrease* from even the 1928 levels. Moreover, the annual curve of production reveals that light industry was progressively deteriorating:

	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932
Cotton, million meters	2742.0	3068.0	2351.0	2272.0	2417.0
Woolens, million meters	93.2	100.6	114.5	107.9	88.7

It should also be remembered that neither the annual curve nor the percentage of fulfillment takes cognizance of the extremely large amount of "defectives," admitted to be as high as 30 per cent in many instances. Although disposed of as trash, they are nevertheless quantitatively counted toward the "fulfillment" of the Plan.

The best proof of the worthlessness of the standard of value output is that it not only fails to reveal the downward curve, but, by inflation, makes the reverse seem true. Thus the gross output of articles of consumption is valued as follows (in billions of rubles):

1928	1929	1930	1931	1932
8.7	10.8	12.5	14.9	16.3

Needless to say, the drastic slaughter of livestock (greater than the decrease due to war, revolution, civil war and famine in 1914-20) was likewise not taken into account in arriving at the glorious "93.7 per cent" completion of the Plan. After all, the decrease in livestock was "no part" of the Plan.

Neither was it part of the Plan—and this is of the essence of things—to achieve the relationship of production of means of production to articles of mass consumption which resulted. As a matter of fact, the bureaucracy had planned an increase in production of articles of mass consumption. However, the manner in which heavy industry developed forced a different course upon the economy. For instance, 4.4 billion rubles was planned as capital investment in the production of means of consumption. However, only 3.5 billions was expended. This failure is even greater than appears on the surface because, in the intervening years, 1928-32, the ruble experienced further inflation. For the moment we leave that feature aside in order that our attention will not be diverted from the actual course of the development of the means of production. There was the necessity of producing machinery with the most modern technique. The low productivity of Russian labor conflicted with the high productivity of international labor. Consequently, the reality of the world market and world prices constantly forced the state to increase the amount of capital investments going into the production of means of production. At the end of the period, planned capital investments for this end, which were to have been 14.7 billion rubles and were to have achieved a "balance" between the production of means of production and that of means of consumption, were actually 21.3 billion rubles, with a concomitant reduction in capital investments in the production of means of consumption. This resulted in a complete reversal in the planned relationship between Group A and Group B industries. This relationship was to be further aggravated by the progress of the Second Plan, although the announced purpose of the Plan was "to achieve a yet better improvement in the living standards of the masses."

## 2—The Second Five Year Plan, 1932-37

In the final year of the Second Five Year Plan, the controlled press published no announcement from the Gosplan in regard to the state of completion of the Plan. The press was busy in describing in glowing language the witch-hunt

the state was staging; the infamous Moscow Frame-up Trials. It took two years for the Gosplan to regain its voice. In 1939 it pronounced the Second Five Year Plan to have been successfully—and timely—accomplished. The “timely” referred to the year 1937, although no explanation was made of the overly-belated pronouncement. Let us scan the results, comparing the actual with the planned increase<sup>(7)</sup>:

Means of Production		1932	Plnd.	Accd.	Pct.
	Unit	Level	Incr.	Incr.	Accd.
Electricity	Million kwt. hrs. ....	13.0	25.0	23.4	93.6
Petroleum	Million tons .....	21.3	26.2	9.1	34.7
Coal	Million tons .....	65.4	87.1	62.5	71.8
Iron	Million tons .....	6.2	11.8	8.3	70.3
Steel	Million tons .....	5.9	13.1	11.8	90.0
Combines	Thousands .....	10.0	240.0	190.0	79.2
Tractors	Thousands .....	51.6	124.8	115.1	92.2
Length of rds.	Thousand kmts. ....	83.4	10.4	1.5	14.4
Means of Consumption					
Cotton	Million meters .....	2417.0	3833.0	1030.0	26.9
Woolens	Million meters .....	88.7	181.9	19.6	10.8
Linen	Million sq. meters ..	135.0	465.0	148.8	32.0
Paper	Thousand tons .....	479.0	521.0	352.6	67.0
Sugar	Thousand tons .....	828.2	1971.8	1592.8	80.7
Leather ftwr.	Million pairs .....	84.7	165.3	84.4	51.

The lamentable showing in the production of articles of mass consumption was, again, contrary to the original Plan. The Seventeenth Congress, which approved the Second Plan, specified that there should be “a more rapid rate of development in the production of manufactured articles of mass consumption, not only in comparison with the First Five Year Plan... but also in comparison with the rate of development of the production of means of production during the Second Five Year Plan period.” However, the high organic composition of capital on a world scale imposed\* this law of motion on the Russian economy. Even the more rapid development of the means of production at the expense of the means of consumption did not gain for the Soviet Union an illustrious place in a setting of the production of the advanced capitalist countries:

PER CAPITA WORLD PRODUCTION IN 1937 (8)

Item	Unit	USSR	USA	Germany	Japan
Electricity	Kilowatt hour .....	215	1160	735	421
Coal	Kilo .....	757	3429	3313	643
Pig iron	Kilo .....	86	292	234	30
Steel	Kilo .....	105	397	291	62
Cement	Kilo .....	32	156	173	60
Paper	Kilo .....	5	48	42	8
Soap	Kilo .....	3	12	7	—
Sugar	Kilo .....	14	12	29	17
Cottons	Sq. meter .....	16	58	—	57*
Leather footwear	Pair .....	1	2.6	1.1	—

As we see from the above table, the Soviet Union, at the end of the Second Five Year Plan, “when the first phase of communism, socialism, was irrevocably established,” had not only not outdistanced but was a long way from “catching up” with the capitalist world and compares not too favorably with “feudal” Japan.

(7) Planned figures computed from: *Gosplan*, The Second Five Year Plan for the Development of Nat'l Eco. of the USSR; accomplished figures computed from *Gosplan*, Results of the Second Five Year Plan, 1939; both in Russian. There is no English edition of the results; there is one of the Plans, but it varies considerably from the figures in the Russian edition.

(8) Table by Molotov in speech to the 18th Congress, RCP, March, 1939, with exception of starred figure, which is from *Problems of Economics*, No. 8/39, in Russian.

\*That the bureaucracy became the wiser because of this “imposition” will be seen in the section on “Ending Depersonalization and Creating Stakhanovism.”

It was in the year 1939, after the results of the Second Year Plan were first published, when the Third Five Year Plan<sup>(9)</sup> was officially approved and had supposedly been in operation for over a year, that Molotov “suddenly” remembered that it was not so much the rate of growth, or even the volume of output, as the *per capita production* that defined the real state of development of a national economy. In presenting the Third Five Year Plan, he stated:

People here and there forgot that economically, that is, from the point of view of the volume of industrial output *per capita* of the population, we are still behind some capitalist countries... Socialism has been built in the USSR but only in the main. We have still a very great deal to do before the USSR is properly supplied with all that is necessary... before we raise our country economically as well as technically to the level not only as high as that of the foremost capitalist countries but considerably higher.

Thus the slogan of the First Five Year Plan, “To catch up with and outdistance the capitalist lands,” still remained as the task of the Third Plan.

### 3—The Third Five Year Plan and Labor Productivity

The press followed up Molotov's discovery that in the matter of *per capita production*, Russia was still far behind the advanced capitalist countries by systematic “revelations” of the low productivity of Russian labor. *Industry*, the organ of the Commissariat for Heavy Industry, reported in its issue of March 24, 1939, that for a capacity of 1,000 kilowatt hours the USSR employs eleven people but for a similar capacity in Europe and America only 1.3 people are used. The official organ proceeded to say that the example cited is not the exception but the rule; that, for instance, when an electric plant in South Amboy, N. J., is compared with a similar plant in the USSR, it is found that whereas in America 51 people are used to run the plant, 480, or 9.5 as many people, were used in Russia. *Planned Economy*, in its issue of December, 1940, emphasized that, despite Stakhanovism, a Russian coal worker produces 370 tons, whereas in Germany the worker averages 435 tons and in the USA 844 tons. Likewise, whereas production in a U.S. coal mine is three times as great as that in a comparable Russian mine, the latter uses eleven times as many technicians, twice as many miners, three times as many office workers and twelve times as large a supervisory staff! The official organ of the State Planning Commission concludes that Russian labor productivity amounts to only 40.5 per cent of American labor productivity!

Despite high mechanization, labor productive on the agricultural front\* shines no brighter. The January, 1941, issue of *Problems of Economy*, issued by the Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Economy, carried an article on labor productivity in Agriculture in the USSR and the USA which included the following table:

Number of times the productivity of agricultural labor in the USA exceeds that of the Russian kolkhoz.

Wheat .....	6.7 times
Oats .....	5.7 times
Corn .....	4.1 times
Cotton .....	1.8 times
Sugar beet .....	8.1 times
Average for agriculture .....	3.1 times
Milk .....	3.1 times
Wool .....	20.1 times
Average for livestock .....	6.7 times
Aggregate agricultural average .....	4.4 times

(9) Those who wish to see the Third Plan can consult: *Gosplan*, The Third Five Year Plan for the Dev. of the Nat. Eco. of the USSR, 1939 (Russian); no English edition was published.

\*Cf. Section on collectivization for more detailed treatment of agricultural front.

In 1937, the article continues to sum up, the per capita value output of the Russian worker was \$166, or *only one-seventh* the value of output in the USA.

Previous attempts to relate labor productivity to *per capita* production had resulted in an article in *Planned Economy* for October, 1940, which included the following table:

*Relationship of Industrial Level in the Development of Russia and Capitalist Countries; Per Capita Production of Russia in Percentages as Compared to the USA and Germany*

	USA	Germany
Industrial production of a whole	24.8	28.4
of which: <i>Heavy Industry</i> :		
Electricity	18.5	28.4
Machine building	31.6	56.4
Ferrous metals	27.6	36.3
Sulphuric acid	25.6	32.3
Cement	20.6	18.6
and automobile, which are less than 1 per cent of U.S. production..		
<i>Light Industry</i> :		
Cotton	27.6	---
Wool	21.4	---
Leather footwear	38.5	90.9
Paper	10.4	11.9
Soap	25.0	---
Sugar	116.6	---
Gramophones	89.0	---
Agricultural production as a whole	54.4	123.4

The above *official* table reveals that, instead of being in the position of one of the most economically advanced countries, *Russia is still a backward country industrially*. It is interesting to note that for the period 1929-40, when, in Russia, Group B industries (means of consumption) fell from 55.6

per cent to 39 per cent of total production, while Group A industries (means of production) increased from 44.4 per cent of total production to 61 per cent, Japan's heavy industry likewise increased from 33.7 per cent of total production in 1929 to 61.8 per cent in 1939, while light industry declined from 55 per cent to 38.2 per cent of the total economy. The fact that is of utmost importance is that, despite the comparative backwardness of both Russia and Japan, both countries reflect the high organic composition of capital characteristic of *all* important industrially developed countries. The Russian rulers were neither blind to this development nor undecided about which road they would follow in order to expand their industries. Listen to the chairman of the State Planning Commission:

The plan for 1941 provides for a 12 per cent increase in the productivity of labor and a 6.5 per cent increase in wages per worker. This proportion between the increase in labor productivity and average wages furnishes a basis for lowering production costs and increasing socialist accumulation and constitutes the most important condition for the realization of a high rate of extended socialist reproduction (10).

We have followed the direction of Russian industrialization and arrived at "socialist accumulation." Voznessensky hid nothing from us when he mapped the main road for achieving "socialist reproduction." Besides the chief sources of life—the relationship of wages to labor productivity, more commonly known as exploitation—"socialist accumulation" grew fat on other fare. Let us discover what kind of manna that was, for it will help us considerably in understanding Russia's economic structure.

F. FOREST.

# The National Question

## Two Discussion Articles

### De Gaullism and Socialism

In a time of reaction it is common that those who have seen the workers' movement crumble everywhere are on the lookout for forces which would be able to defeat the onrushing tide of totalitarian slavery. They are ready to cling to any hope which seems to present itself to further these aims. Some discover the democratic virtues of Roosevelt and Churchill, others think that Stalin is not so bad after all. Still others, who have kept intact their revolutionary spirit and are opposed to all imperialist powers, have discovered . . . the national question. And now, armed with many learned quotations from Lenin, they are allowed once more to be "on the side of the masses."

It is hard to swim against the current; it is unpleasant to know that one represents a yet infinitely small current in a world which today moves in the opposite direction. How much more comfortable is the situation of those who have the feeling that they are—in spirit, if not in fact—again members of a great mass movement. Nevertheless, it seems to us that at this moment the only possible attitude of revolutionaries is to swim against all existing great currents. It is not the task of revolutionaries to run to the support of *every* movement which has stirred the masses. Their first step must be, quite the contrary, to analyze the contents of these movements with

the yardstick of Marxian measurement. Revolutionaries cannot say: "Is this a mass movement? If so, we are with it." But rather: "Is this a movement which is not opposed to independent class action by the proletariat? Is this a movement in which are to be found the first seeds for the development of a Third Camp of workers' activity? Or, is it predominantly an extension of the military activities of one of the great imperialist blocs?" The fact that masses participate in a movement is not in itself a criterion of appreciation. Large masses, even of socialist workers, enthusiastically followed the lead of their imperialist warlords into the slaughter of World War I. And so were the fascist movements large mass movements.

### What the Nationalist Press Writes

Comrade Smith's two articles in *The New International* are chiefly characterized by a complete lack of analysis of the national movements in Europe fighting Nazi oppression. He talks as if there were no difference between, for example, the Polish movement, in which large sectors of the working class are participating, and the French movement, largely organized by de Gaullists. Smith dispenses with an analysis of the ideologies and concrete aims of these social forces. He thinks it is sufficient to put forward an abstract policy on the national question, which he takes nearly word for word from Lenin's theory as applied in the years during and preceding World War I.

(10) Voznessensky: *The Growing Prosperity of the Soviet Union*.

Smith's polemic, therefore, is surrounded by a certain veil of unreality. He talks a lot about "national resistance," "mass movement," etc., but he is extremely discreet about their concrete manifestations and their ideological content. But it simply will not do to speak of these movements as if they were only spontaneous mass movements without ideology. Their press is a fairly good mirror of their real content. It might be worth while to quote some excerpts from the French underground nationalist press, which may help us to descend from the heaven of Smith's abstractions to a more earthly foundation. All these papers proceed unanimously from the assumption that the movement for which they speak is a part of the Allied war effort against the Axis; all these papers, whether directly de Gaullist or not, consider the movement they represent the spearheads of an Allied invasion of France. These papers do not chiefly advocate independent action against the Nazis, they adhere to every move by Roosevelt and Churchill. One of them is outspoken enough to say that it would consider a proletarian revolution in France at least as great a calamity as the present occupation!

*Le Coq Enchaîné*: "Roosevelt said it clearly: America will furnish arms to the oppressed people of Europe the day their liberation will begin. . . . It will be the honor of France to be the beach-head. At the first debarkation on our shores, at the first landing of airplanes, the patriots will assemble around the Allied soldiers. . . . Today the French are unable to liberate themselves from the yoke. . . . but they wait for the hour when they will be aided by the intervention from outside."

*Le Franc-Tireur*: "We express our gratitude and admiration to our American friends, who, together with the English, will help us to regain the liberty for which we all fight."

*Libération*: "Have no fear. You will have arms and you will have leaders. You will have the assistance—finally in full swing—of your Allies. And do not forget that in Europe alone 150,000,000 men will rise like you, supported by Anglo-Saxon and Russian armies with their tanks, their airplanes, which, after having crushed the last German offensive, will give the death blow to the exhausted enemy."

It would be tedious to continue. All these papers say substantially the same thing. But one quotation from *Le Coq Enchaîné* seems important: "If tomorrow, in 1943, the war still continues, then the general famine will create anarchy. And the whole of Europe will know the situation of Russia in 1917-18. Whoever would bind his hopes to this would be a fool and would only run into disaster and into his own loss."

What are the conclusions to be drawn from quotations like these? They seem to be quite obvious. Since there is no workers' movement worth mentioning, the nationalist middle class masses and even a great part of the workers look desperately for outside help on which to lean. Some hope for the Russian miracle, others pin all their hopes to an intervention by the Allies. They do not consider themselves independent movements but rather spearheads of the Allied offensive. And these are the strange allies with whom revolutionary socialists are supposed to associate. . . .

### The Tasks of Socialists

Smith will undoubtedly reply that these are expressions of the imperialist agents among the movement, but that the masses which constitute this movement think differently. He will be unable to prove this conclusively. But I too am unable to point to concrete evidence to the contrary. We are therefore compelled to rely on our general estimate of the

forces which move in history without empirical material at our disposal. Now, then, when and where have there been movements involving large masses of the middle class (and those of peasant origin) who by themselves evolved in a revolutionary direction? Has not history proved over and over again that these movements were unable to evolve independently for more than an instant? Have they not always been attracted and directed by the decisive class influences and power blocs which are active in our period? There is no important workers' movement anywhere in Europe (except possibly in Poland); on the other hand, there is the powerful imperialist Anglo-American bloc, allied with Stalin's totalitarian state. The native bourgeoisie has lost much of its powerful position. Is it therefore not obvious that a "national movement" as such must of necessity turn to outside help?

What we are able to gather from written expressions of these movements and from an analysis of similar movements in the past, we are forced to the conclusion that they cannot but evolve more and more into an auxiliary force of the Allied war camp, lest there be a workers' movement capable of attracting and influencing it. Our chief aim therefore must be to build the workers' movement anew, to build it around proper socialist ideologies, around the leading idea that only independent class action can bring about liberation for the workers and all other oppressed classes. Does this mean that we ought to "ignore" the national struggle, as Smith so persistently wants us to say? Quite the contrary. Socialists will have to stand in the first ranks of the struggle; moreover, they must not only come forward with their own slogans, their own socialist ideology, but also with an unsparing criticism of the ideology which now grips these movements. It will not do for them to take part in the struggle merely because they must "be with the masses"; they will have to expose the leadership, their activity and their aims; they must not make a single concession to the ideology which reigns in the nationalist ranks. They must persistently criticize and attack all those who conceive of this struggle as a spearhead of the Allied invasion; they must have their proper organization.

The building of such an organization, even at the risk of appearing momentarily isolated from the main current, will be far more important than participation in this or that vast nationalist manifestation. The immediate objective is to have the workers regain their self-reliance and the self-confidence which they lost through successive defeats. Our guiding principle must be to find ways and means for regaining and strengthening proletarian class-consciousness. In this way, they will participate in a manifestation for the preservation of some remnants of trade union liberty or their standard of living. Should they, as Smith proposes, accept *the* national movement as a global thing, anxious not to lose contact with the masses, they will be condemned to remain eternally a left tail of this movement without any real influence on it.

Smith likes quotations. Why didn't he let us have some by Trotsky on the Popular Front policy? He might be able to find some rather fine ones there. In fact, what else is Smith's proposed policy than a repetition of the Popular Front, "national" brand? Trotsky did not propose to "stand on the sidelines," as certain opportunists tried to reproach him. He was for most determined action, to be carried on under a clear-cut socialist ideology, and was opposed to any muddled alliance with the "liberal" bourgeoisie under the pretext of not losing contact with the masses.

We wish to finish this part with a quotation from Walter Lippmann, which in fact seems to us to convey a much better

idea of what the "national movement" actually is than all of what Smith has told us: "The military forces which are preparing to enter the continent or its approaches must aim to make a sure contact with the French and the other people within and behind Hitler's lines. When the action is committed, *then the military operation from the outside and the national uprising from the inside will be like the two blades of the same scissors.*" (Emphasis mine.—E.)

### Smith and Lenin

Smith is quite right that there are very many similarities between the situation with which Lenin was faced when he elaborated his theories on the national question and the situation we have to face now. Yet he omits one little fact which seems to be unimportant for him: Lenin was elaborating a tactical approach to the national problem for the existing proletarian movement. But the situation in Europe is dominated by the fact that there exists no proletarian movement (except for Poland). How can it be that, in spite of this, our approach should be practically unchanged? Surely this is possible when we argue in the lofty atmosphere of theoretical abstraction, but, unhappily for Smith, the reality looks utterly different. We are faced with one prime task in Europe, and that is to find the means and possibilities to resuscitate the workers' movement. If this is our chief aim, the core of all our thinking and acting—and we are sure Smith will not disagree on this—then our attitude toward the national problem must be quite different from Lenin's.

Today we cannot deal with the proper means which the proletarian movement has to use in order to influence, win over, or at least neutralize large middle class nationalist masses; our problem is rather how to make it possible that the proletariat as such will again be an organized factor capable of attracting these masses. Smith puts the cart before the horse. His well meant theoretical advice on how the proletarian movement should behave toward nationalist middle class masses are very good indeed, save for the "little" fact that this proletarian movement does not as yet exist.

It is obvious indeed that this movement will not be built by "ignoring" the nationalist movement, and I insist that nobody who has any sense at all could very well advocate such a thing. But it is not the question of participation which we are discussing, but rather *how* to participate and with what ideology. Smith himself says that if he were in Europe he would perhaps lay more stress on the socialist aspect of the fight than he does now. We completely fail to understand his reasons. Since when does a theoretical analysis take into consideration the geographical position of the author? And, furthermore, it is just in this country that the "nationalist" phraseology seems to be flourishing more than anywhere else. It is impossible to open a newspaper or turn on the radio without finding long stories about the national struggle and the different national governments; there is an over-production of books and articles on the different "national" struggles.

But Smith not only does not seem to think it very important for us to know what the ideologies of the various national movements are; he does not seem to think it necessary to elaborate a little on the domestic policies which quite a number of these "national" leaders have in store for their country. He has never thought that the only real fascist French movement, for example, can only grow out of the ranks of the actual national movement—just as the Nazi movement, as noted by

Jackson, got much of its strength and many of its leading men from the nationalist movement against the Ruhr occupation in 1923. The fascist movements the Nazis now try to start are obviously only tools of the Nazis, without any real mass following. But a genuine fascist movement can very easily arise once the Nazis are defeated, and many of its members will be able to prove that they have stood in the first ranks of the movement for national liberation. Does it not seem worth while to Smith to consider this possibility and to put the workers on guard against pure nationalism while it is not too late?

It might be worth while to consider what has often happened to national movements in the epoch of imperialism. Out of the Czech national movement emerged the Czech Legion, which fiercely fought against the Russian Revolution and constituted a kind of Elite Guard of White Terror. Out of the Finnish national movement emerged a régime of bloody terror against communists which ended in the wholesale slaughter of thousands. And, lastly, the Polish national movement, even in spite of the fact that large masses of workers opposed it, bred the particular brand of nationalism which led to the Pilsudski régime, the war against the Soviet Union and the reactionary dictatorship of the "national" army and landowners. Surely this is a record worth thinking about.

### Are the German Workers Less Oppressed?

Smith wants to make us believe that there is a principled difference between the oppression of the German workers and of those in the occupied countries. Here Smith moves on extremely dangerous ground. Of course, nobody will deny that there are differences in the living standard of German workers and those of the occupied nations. This fact will ask for a different tactical approach when dealing with the concrete problems of struggle in these countries. But is this to say that there are principled differences?

If we are not mistaken, Smith agrees with us that in the totalitarian countries the workers have not the limited liberty which consists of offering their labor force to the highest bidder on the labor market. Is not this the by far most important fact about the workers in Europe, outside and inside Germany? Or does Smith want to make us believe that a few crumbs of bread, a little higher ration, make the important difference on which his whole theory is built? The difference between Southern and Northern workers, between Negroes and whites in this country, for example, is far greater, because here it is not only a question of higher standards of living but, above all, of political and civil rights.

The quotations from Lenin which Smith refers to says specifically: "Politically the difference [between the workers of oppressed and oppressing nations] is that the workers of the oppressing nations occupy a privileged position in many spheres of political life compared with the workers of the oppressed nations." We would be extremely anxious to know Smith's proofs that such a privileged political situation exists in Germany. When Lenin expressed the above idea, he thought of the possibilities for trade union and political organization of the English workers as opposed to the Indian or other oppressed colonial slaves. But the supreme fact of our time is that the situation of the workers, where they have been crushed by the totalitarian machine, is alike. They are all without any political rights; they are all, in this respect, in the position of the Indian workers in Lenin's time. There does not now exist the distinction which existed then.

## The Real Situation

But Smith goes further—he wants us to believe that since nothing is heard of any passive resistance, sabotage, etc., inside Germany, it follows that the German workers are less oppressed. This is an argument really unworthy of a Marxist. Since when is the degree of oppression to be judged by the degree of resistance at any particular moment? From this argument it would follow that the African Negroes are among the least oppressed in the world and the automobile workers in Detroit among the most oppressed. There is no relation between the degree of oppression and the degree of mechanical resistance. Resistance depends above all on two factors: the degree of class-consciousness and organizations of workers and the objective possibilities to fight against the class enemy. The German workers are faced with the most efficient machine of oppression and terror the world has ever known. Thousands of them have fallen victims to this machine and tens of thousands are rotting in concentration camps and prisons; hundreds have died under the executioner's block. The history of the German underground movement in recent years is a history of unending heroism. In the occupied countries, the Gestapo apparatus, moving on unknown soil, has never been able to work as efficiently. This is the most important reason why reaction is outwardly dissimilar. Furthermore, we find it extremely false to compare the reaction in occupied countries after two years of Nazi oppression with the situation in Germany after nine years of undaunted terror.

Smith's argument is not only superficial and unworthy of a Marxist whose first duty is always to make an analysis of the concrete situation before making a comparison, it is also extremely reactionary because from this, even if this is not Smith's intention, it will easily be concluded that the German workers and exploiters have interests in common as opposed to the other nations. Against this reactionary theory the only revolutionary conclusion which can be drawn from an honest study of conditions in Europe is that everywhere the difference between slaves and slavedrivers was never as clear-cut.

EUROPACUS.

## Some Views of Marx

Karl Marx did not leave behind a systematic elaboration of his views on the national question. That, of course, does not mean that he had never occupied himself with this problem. He lived in an epoch in which the large nations of Europe constituted themselves, united and built up the modern European states. As sociologist, as practical politician, and as leader of the first international socialist organization, Marx continually was confronted by questions of national economy, politics and culture. And he was not the man to use general phrases about "the national question being outmoded," in order to escape reality and a concrete position on his part. He took a position on the effort of the Germans and Italians to achieve national unification, on the struggle for national independence of the Poles, the Irish, the Hungarians and the Czechs—all the national movements of the nineteenth century are mentioned in his works.

Just as one can still learn a lot from Marx's *Capital*, in spite of the many changes since the period of liberal capitalism, so are Marx's remarks about the national question still of great value. Their importance lies not so much in their

concrete content, which in many cases might be outmoded, but in his method and manner of approach.

The only difficulty lies in the fact that no *Capital* exists on that topic. Marx's remarks about the national question are scattered over a period of forty years, in numerous articles, books and letters. Some of them are of casual character and the author would object to any hasty generalization; in others, however, one can clearly recognize the principled position. To collect all this material, to arrange it and to develop from it a rounded picture of the views of the founder of scientific socialism—that is not an easy task. It demands a thorough study of all of Marx's works; a reliable knowledge of the circumstances which brought about the different remarks; a general understanding of Marxist theory. As far as I know, there exists no systematic study of Marx's views on this question; there, too, the vulgar "defenders" of Marxism together with the vulgar revisionists outdo each other in their ignorance of Marx's works.

In this case, it is a merit in itself to give a serious presentation of the "national implications" of Marxist theory, as Sol F. Bloom has undertaken.\* And even if one cannot, in many instances, agree with the author's presentation and interpretation, nobody can deny that we are dealing with a serious attempt. The man *knows* his Marx and has succeeded in treating the vast amount of material which he had collected in a scientific manner, without making the book unclear or difficult to read.

The author of the slogan "Workers of the World, Unite" was undoubtedly, throughout his life, a true internationalist, who placed the interests of humanity above the interests of any individual nation. The class struggle, which with the development of world economy took on a more and more international form, occupied the most important position in his theoretical and practical work. However, Marx did not forget for a minute that humanity still consists of French, English, Germans, Americans, Hungarians, Poles, etc., and that nations still have to play an important rôle in history; for those people who would like to "do away" with the national question with a stroke of the pen he had only mockery and contempt.

Today it is still instructive to read how, on unmasking the apparently radical "anationalism" of the French followers of Proudhon he discovered a naïve chauvinism, which claimed that "the great nation" alone will make the revolution, while all other nations should just sit tight and then receive the finished results served on a silver platter. The denial of the national question means, in effect, as Marx so ably pointed out, the absorption of all nations by the French model nation. Lenin, too, remarked once that the conviction of some revolutionaries that their nation alone will decide the fate of the revolution, is nothing but a sublime form of national prejudice. Neither Marx nor Lenin suffered from this weakness; with Lenin's epigones, however, it supplied the transition to vulgar Stalinist nationalism.

## Marx and the Nation

To Marx, the nation represented an organic—and transitory—creation of history. It did not mean an individual society, which "by nature" is made up of the same blood or the same race; the conception of a nation could also not be limited to the bonds of common language, for there are nations in which several languages are spoken, and there are areas in

\**The World of Nations*. A study of the national implications in the works of Karl Marx, by Solomon F. Bloom. Columbia University Press, 1941.

which one common language is prevalent, although they consist of several nations. Although we can find nowhere in Marx's works a specific definition, his characteristics of a nation are similar to Otto Bauer's ideas which he has embraced in the words "fate community." Bloom says:

The "nation" of Marx may be described as an individual society which functions with a considerable degree of autonomy, integration and self-consciousness (page 17).

The class struggle had to develop at first within the so-called national societies. The *Communist Manifesto* dismissed the common taunt that the socialists proposed to abolish nationality as unworthy of serious consideration. The proletariat had the task of "raising itself to the position of a national class, and constituting itself as a nation." On the other hand, the victory of socialism could be possible only in an international sense, with the coöperation of the proletariats of, at least, a few large progressive nations. And Marx was firmly convinced that the rule of the proletariat would largely do away with "national peculiarities and contrasts" of the various nations. As Bloom points out correctly, there is no contradiction between these two thoughts. The class struggle begins within the national boundaries and has to solve a series of "national tasks," then inevitably outgrows the national boundaries and leads to international fraternization. The "national peculiarities and contrasts" cannot be ignored; they must be overcome organically through socialism.

But what should be the position of socialists on national peculiarities and struggles for national independence before the achievement of the international proletarian revolution? Should they ignore these problems and wave them aside contemptuously in the name of the coming socialist revolution?

The answer to this can be found by studying Marx's position on the Irish question. Marx, as a well-matured man, believed that the Irish people should have the right of self-determination and that they should separate from England, even if, later on, a voluntary federation should take place. He demanded self-determination in the interests of the Irish as well as the English people. And I think that Bloom in general estimates his reasons correctly, when he states:

His opposition to national oppression was not unaffected by ethical and humane motivations. He was also moved by other considerations: the idea of the interconnection of all forms of oppression and their basis in class exploitation; the belief that human society could not permanently attain true tolerance in one realm if it denied it in another, somewhat in the spirit of the statement of Lincoln that a nation could not endure half slave and half free; and the realization that the technique of power was such that instrumentalities devised for one end could easily be turned to another. The result was a strong conviction that no nation could be free unless it allowed other nations to live freely as well. Marx appealed to the history of Rome and Great Britain as witness that "the people which subjugates another people forges its own chains." It seemed to him that the English Republic of the seventeenth century had sealed its own doom when it reconquered Ireland. He interpreted the foreign policy of the Germany of the Old Régime in the same sense. Forces employed abroad were available for action against lower classes at home. Freedom was indivisible for social, political and philosophical reasons (pages 196-97).

It seems that in another case, however, Marx's attitude is in direct contradiction to his principles. In 1848, he was, as is well known, opposed to the self-determination of the Czechs and the Suedslavs. Bloom accounts for this position mainly because of Marx's conviction that these groups were insufficiently large, compact and advanced to establish modern economies and states. He concludes from this that Marx favored

only the self-determination of large nations, capable of leading a more or less independent existence.

It may be that Marx, who had seen in Western Europe with his own eyes how the language groups of the Bretons, Basques, Wallons, etc., had been absorbed by the English and French nations, merely underestimated the ability of the Slavic groups in Austria to participate again in cultural life.

### Lenin's Addition to Marx

Yet the Hungarians, whose struggle for independence Marx supported so enthusiastically, were neither a large nor an economically progressive people. And the same is, after all, true about the Irish. I think, therefore, that Marx's above mentioned position was interpreted more correctly by Lenin, who devoted to this question a chapter of his work, "The Results of the Discussions About Self-Determination."\*

Lenin holds that the main reason for Marx's position against the Czechs and the Suedslavs (this, by the way, was also mentioned in Bloom's book) was brought about by the circumstance that these peoples were at that time on the side of the Czar and on the side of the Austrian monarchy—in short, on the side of the counter-revolution. According to Lenin, this means "no more and no less" than that Marx placed the interests of democracy in Europe as a whole above the individual (in itself democratic) demands for self-determination of a few small peoples. Says Lenin in this regard:

The individual demands of democracy, among them the right of self-determination, are not absolute; they are only a *small part* of the universal democratic (now universal socialistic) *world* movement. It is possible, in some concrete instances, that the interests of the part are opposed to the interests of the whole; in this case one is obliged to disregard the interests of the part. It is possible that the republican movement in one country is nothing but the tool of a clerical or finance-capitalistic intrigue of other countries. In that case, we cannot support this given concrete movement. It would be absurd, however, for this reason to oppose the existence of the republic in the program of international social democracy.\*\*

In any case, this example teaches us that demands for national independence did not represent something absolute to Marx or his disciples, but had to be subordinated to the progress of humanity, on the road to socialism.

These are just a few of the problems which are brought up in Bloom's book. In the light of the present time, when national struggles again play such an important rôle, they help to make the book twice as interesting. Special chapters, devoted to Marx's position on the national problems of England, France, America, Germany, Russia and India illustrate the application of Marx's principles to concrete cases.

There is one chapter that finally I would like to emphasize. Bloom begins the book with the statement that at the basis of every social philosophy lies a certain conception of human nature. Nobody, of course, was more aware of this fact than Marx, namely, that social-being influences human nature and that historical circumstances constantly change it. In the struggle against utopian systems, Marxism was, of course, forced to emphasize historical conditionality. For that reason many have forgotten that Marxism, just like every other socialist theory, is based on the conviction that man, provided social conditions are favorable, is a progressive, social being, capable of living happily and making other people happy on this earth. In the nineteenth century, when every-

\*In *Sbornik Socialdemokrata*, October, 1916, Ges. Schriften XIX, page 298ff.

\*\**Ibid.*, page 319.



body believed in progress, it was not necessary to emphasize this particularly. However, it is all the more important now, when the general misery creates all kinds of theories which set about to prove the "natural impossibility" of democracy, classless society, and harmonic development. I just wish to remind the reader of the theory which claims that, because of human nature, every type of organization necessarily has to lead to oligarchy and suppression (R. Michels); the idea that every social overturn inevitably brings with it a new exploiting "elite" (Vilfredo Pareto); Freud's theory of the "longing for death," to explain psychologically the eternal social evil

—all these are modern variations of the ancient doctrine of inherited sin and of the vulgar petty bourgeois theory that master and servants always have and always will exist. I don't know if Bloom consciously emphasized the importance of Marxist optimism, especially today. He does not speak of these theories which I mentioned above. But this chapter, serving as an introduction to his study of the national question, sums up so well the Marxist views of the ability of human nature to progress and to be happy, that it contributes no little to the value of this book.

F. W. SMITH.

# Facts About Japan

It is better for women that they should not be educated, because their lot throughout life must be in perfect obedience; and the way to salvation is only through the path of three obediences—obedience to a father when yet unmarried, to a husband when married, and to a son when widowed. What is the use of developing the mind of a woman or of training the power of her judgment, when her life is to be guided at every step by a man? . . . For her no religion is necessary either, because her husband is her sole heaven, and in serving him and his lies her whole duty. (*The Greater Learning for Women* (17th Century Japan), quoted in *Year of the Wild Boar*, page 257.)

The destinies of imperialist Japan and imperialist America are interwoven in most curious fashion. In Japan, a nation whose structure and civilization are diametrically contradictory to that of our country, history is reckoned from a *Before-Perry or After-Perry standpoint*, signifying the symbolic meaning of the opening of that country to the capitalist world by the Admiral. In America, embracing Japan in a struggle to the death, history is now reckoned from a *Before-Pearl Harbor or After-Pearl Harbor standpoint*. The Japan of gay kimono, exotic Geisha girls, cherry blossoms, snowy Mount Fujiyama has become a land of sadistic beasts, grinning toothy apes and sly monkeys swinging from jungle trees. When business, to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of oil, scrap, machinery, gasoline, munitions, etc., was good, we were fed the first portrait; now it is the second. Both, of course, are typical imperialist frauds and deceptions.

But Japan is still somewhat of a mysterious place that, apparently, resists even the penetrating tools of Marxist materialist analysis. The reason for this has become clearer in recent years. Japanese imperialism, the last and most recently-born of the modern imperialist states, so uniquely illustrates the Marxian law of irregular and uneven historic development that, accustomed as we are to drawing analogies and making comparisons between the different great powers, we have forgotten the flexible facet of the law which demands

that we seek the peculiarities and specific features of Japan.

In one respect the "mystery" of Japan is easily explained. Japanese imperialism, resting upon a materially impoverished base and with a state structure burdened by feudal survivals and hangovers, is a power desperately in need of foreign conquests and expansionist victories. The dictum of "expand or die" applies with categorical force to Japan. It accounts for the especially vicious and exploitative character of Japanese rule, once conquest has been achieved. In the famous (and rarely read) document of Baron Tanaka, known as the Tanaka Memorial, we have the following passage illustrating the brazen, cynical and ruthless nature of this imperialism.

When Koreans come into this region (Manchuria—H. J.) we should finance them through our trust and other financial organs with a view to gaining for these organs the actual ownership while the Koreans may satisfy themselves with the right of farming only. Ostensibly the ownership of land must reside with the Koreans. It is a convenient way of securing rights from the Chinese government. Henceforth the trust companies and financial organs should give them full backing when our own and Korean subjects wish to gain land ownership. . . . Unnoticeably we shall gain control of the better rice fields which we may give to our own immigrants. They shall displace the Koreans, who in turn may go on opening new fields, to deliver to the convenient use of our own people. This is the policy with respect to the colonization of rice fields and bean farms. As to the policy for herd farming, the Development Company would be especially entrusted gradually to expand, eventually placing all the wealth of herds at the disposal of our country. This same company may also take care of horse breeding and select the best out of Mongolia for the use of our national defense.

The more one studies Japan, the more he will understand that the peculiar savagery and militarism associated with this power flows from the weakness of its entire economic structure. Japan, much like a weakling who attempts to cover up and conceal his weakness by bluff and play-acting, hides itself from the world through the mask of super-racialism and imperialism. It plays the politics of conditioned compensation, that is, compensation for its inferiorities.

The Tanaka Memorial is a brilliant illustration of this. In our opinion, its true nature has not been accurately described. It is generally summarized as a document expounding the thesis and program of world domination as the aim of the Japanese ruling class. It is true that Baron Tanaka does utter some sweeping remarks about conquest of Alaska, California, India, etc. It is even true that the document, in a general way, describes the path of conquest followed by Japan—subjugation of North China and Manchuria, the overrunning of China proper and then the turn southward to the

**THE TANAKA MEMORIAL.** International Publishers, 47 pages.

**THE JAPANESE ENEMY,** by Hugh Byas. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. 116 pages.

**YEAR OF THE WILD BOAR,** by Helen Mears. J. B. Lippincott Co., publishers; 346 pages.

**WHEN JAPAN GOES TO WAR,** by O. Tanin and E. Yohan. The Vanguard Press, publishers, New York; 271 pages.

South Pacific isles. This general line of expansion could have easily been foreseen by anyone understanding the organic weakness of Japanese economy and is, indeed, explain in the document itself:

(a) Japan, lacking a base of raw materials, must first create one for itself. This was done by winning Korea (coal and iron ore); Manchuria and North China (coal, ores, food, etc.)

(b) This accomplished—that is, the raw material base now organized—these supplies must be shipped home to Japanese mills, factories, etc., to be converted into finished commodities.

(c) These commodities must have a market—the great, undeveloped land of China with its 425,000,000 people. Just as industrial England needed India, so industrialized Japan needed China to exploit.

(d) But modern Japan, beset by stream-lined American and British competitors, must have other raw materials in addition to those of the industrial period of capitalism. Oil, rubber, aluminum, modern ores, tin, more food, etc. Therefore, finance-capital Japan launches its drive for the Far Eastern sections of the British, French and Dutch colonial empires.

All the above is clearly stated in the Tanaka Memorial. But this occupies only a minute section of the lengthy document.

The greater part of its space is devoted to a detailed and exhaustive plan for the exploitation and development of Manchuria. Rarely has imperialism so cynically and barbarically planned the ruination of tens of millions of people as did Japan lay its plans for the tens of millions of Koreans, Manchurians and North Chinese. Railroads, financing, trade, crops, mining and industrial enterprises, the use of one racial group against another (we have given an example of this in our previous quotation from the document), administration and general supervision. Hardly a thing is missing from the plan of Dai Nippon's imperialists, militarists and administrators. The general schema is clear: Manchuria must become the proxy base for the island kingdom; in its rich resources and reserves must be found the life-fluid of Japanese imperialism, a constant flow of which is required to keep the mainland alive. This is the true face of Japanese economy, the weakness and impoverishment of its economic base that forced it, from birth, on the imperialist road.

As Byas points out in his brief book, although the Japanese militarists and leaders may be fanatics as individuals, as a group they are "*cautious, calculating and deliberate.*" The Memorial illustrates well this division of labor and proves how carefully Japan inched forward before embarking on major undertakings. The care with which matters were planned in Manchuria likewise indicates how vital a blow to Japanese imperialism would be a colonial revolt in that territory; it would play the rôle of a super-Irish Rebellion and would stagger Japan to its knees. It is worth nothing, as an aside, how little Washington understands this. It is not even worth Roosevelt's trouble to demagogically encourage the Korean People's League, whose bourgeois spokesmen plead, in vain, to Washington for recognition. Is it because Chiang Kai-shek wants Korea back as a part of post-war bourgeois China?

In many other respects Japanese imperialism also follows the traditional line of imperialist policies. The M-Day-like plans for war drawn up by the military agencies and described at great length by Tannin and Yohan, Soviet journalists, in their book, *When Japan Goes to War*, follow a familiar pattern. Undoubtedly the major reason behind the fierce driving power of Japanese aggression has been the preparedness of its heavy industry for war; the channelizing long ago of con-

sumers' commodity production into the stream of war production (at the expense of reducing living standards to a semi-colonial level) and the systematic accumulation of war stocks and equipment. So carefully did this imperialism plan its future that during 1937 a trial, one-month period of industrialization was held. During this test period, industry was given additional, surplus war orders, imposed upon its regular production program, and forced to carry out the government contracts. Of course, the results were achieved by the expedient of lengthening the working day (from ten to twelve hours), but this "dictatorship of finance-capital merged with military dictatorship" (Tannin and Yohan) has only succeeded in advancing itself precisely through such totalitarian methods.

So much for the elements of Japan's economic structure. As Trotsky once remarked, the Western world forced capitalism on Japan and thereby created an imperialist Frankenstein, caricatured in its own image.

### What Makes Dai Nippon Run?

We have in my country a genuine anachronism. There is our mythological Japan, a deeply rooted agricultural civilization; and then, there is also a small concentrated twentieth-century mechanized civilization that is using mythological Japan for its own ends. (*Year of the Wild Boar*, page 207.)

But the inner failings of Japanese economy are not enough to explain its imperial successes and its strength. In a previous article (*The NEW INTERNATIONAL*, May, 1942) we have tried to explain these successes by drawing a comparison (in goals and content, not in form or methods) between the Nazi Party of Germany and the organized, secret societies of the Japanese militarists, aristocrats and oligarchic feudalists. Hugh Byas speaks of the "five-fold expansion" of Japan's economy in the last forty years (during and since the Russo-Japanese War). It is true that the economic force behind this rapid expansion was the primitive accumulation of capital arising from the nation's swelling international trade and commerce and that the "Five Families" of Japanese capitalists (Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, etc.) which had already seized power over the new capitalist state stood behind the drive, pressing forward by means of a super-exploitation of the Japanese people. But something additional was needed, and here we come to the problem of Japan's peculiar super-structure: the ideological set-up of its régime.

Miss Mears' book, *Year of the Wild Boar*, furnishes us many clues to this problem and is, indeed, rich in sociological insight, regardless of her inability to grasp the relationship between the Japanese state and the imperialist-capitalism upon which it is based. This book, describing a year's stay in 1935 of the author and her association with Japanese middle class and intellectual elements—interspersed with social research into Japanese farming and factory-labor conditions—is by far the most valuable of the books listed above, with the possible exception of the revealing Tanaka Memorial. The author tries to understand the Japanese people, the inculcation of ancient mythology and racialism, the superficial "Westernization" of the Japanese petty bourgeois intellectuals, the reactionary doctrines of Japanese imperialism.

At the time of Japan's first contact with the Western capitalist world—less than 100 years ago—a section of the old *Samuraï*, feudal ruling class realized that Japan must either continue its hermetically sealed state or seek to catch up and outstrip the capitalist nations. For many years Japanese ruling

circles were torn apart between the new bourgeois groups and those who fought to remain as before. The rising Japanese bourgeoisie, however, did not win a clean-cut victory over the feudal elements, but deliberately and consciously compromised with the reactionary groups by taking over their feudal, religious and racist ideology and converting it to its own purposes. That is, there was no completion of the bourgeois democratic revolution, but rather an installation of capitalism (from the start it had a statified, monopolist character) with a perverted feudal superstructure. This transition was effected with relative ease, particularly since a substantial section of the *Samurai* class became converted into—business men! This is what is meant when “two Japans” are spoken of. The modern, imperialist, finance-capitalist Japan, with its feudal ideology. In order to make effective this preachant and glorification of the dim, backward past some peculiar twists were necessary—with equally queer results.

1. First of all, *clique, family and parental authority* are played up beyond one's imagination. In the family proper, it is the father; in the family clan, it is the elder; in the factory, shop or office, it is the boss; in the state apparatus, it is the bureaucrat or official; in Dai Nippon, the Empire, it is the Emperor—father of his people. Thus runs the hierarchy of authority. Tribal, clan, dynastic and heavenly sources are cited as authority.

2. Poverty, the “natural” poorness of the country, its bad climatic conditions, its limited variety of food, resources, etc., are all turned into “virtues.” Here, perhaps, lies the origin of Japanese Oriental “fatalism” and the delicate artistic sentiments of the Japanese people. “We must make the best of everything.” Everything is done on a small scale, cut down to every material possibility of the tiny islands on which 75,000,000 people dwell.

3. *Japanese mythology*—distinguished by its emphasis that all that one imagines as existing actually exists (a refusal to differentiate between myth and reality)—fits neatly into this material poverty. As Trotsky once explained the attraction Hitler has for every petty bourgeois German by pointing out that Hitler personifies what he, the frustrated petty bourgeois, would like to be, so Japanese racial psychology and mythology conjure up dreams of glory for the repressed Japanese urban middle class and intellectuals. “The four corners of the earth under the Emperor!” We do not have rice to eat, says the Japanese farmer starving on his one-acre holding, then we shall have an elaborate rice-ceremony—as our forefathers did—as a substitute. It is noteworthy that, as Japan's involvement in world affairs increased and as the war dangers grew, the Japanese government began to lay growing emphasis on Japan's past, *shokun* (custom), the dream-world of the nation's mythological creation. This is why, when one meets Japanese students or intellectuals, he has the impression of dealing with an unreal being, with his feet in this world (imperialistic, racially arrogant, bureaucratic), but with his mind deep in the past (feudalistic, religious in the mythological sense).

4. We said above that the behavior of Japan's ruling circles is deliberately conditioned to conquer the environment it lives in. This implies, of course, an inhibited ruling class, conscious of its historic frustration, and leading to a “politics of desperation.” Unfortunately, for too long and perhaps for years to come, this perverted spawn of Oriental capitalism has spoken and acted in the name of the Japanese masses, including the workers and peasants. The backwardness of the Japanese people, from the viewpoint of its lack of modern culture and class consciousness, cannot be better illustrated than

by pointing to the fact that no one has ever made a first-hand, intimate study of the industrial proletariat of Japan, nor the agricultural laborers. No one could ever get that close to them! The Japanese bourgeoisie still sits tight upon the lid of the box within which they have been corked up. Still greater experience must be undergone by these submerged workers and peasants before they will be able, for the first time in their history, to act under their own initiative and break loose from the narrow militarists, bigoted feudalists and thwarted imperialists who stand at the head of the Japanese Empire.

To summarize, then, the books upon which this article is based:

1. *The Tanaka Memorial*—This classic document of imperialism must be read by every student of modern capitalism; it is right out of the horse's mouth!

2. *When Japan Goes to War*—It gives a good statistical estimate and description of Japan's war industries, but it is written around a strategic axis whose failure to materialize invalidates much of the book.

3. *Year of the Wild Boar*—By far one of the most valuable and penetrating studies of Japan; even though lacking a mass of statistical data (and Japanese statistics are highly deceptive), it goes far deeper than abstract studies in explaining the Japanese petty bourgeois and the lot of the workers and farmers.

4. As for the superficial, journalistic pot-boiler of Hugh Byas, written in an excited moment after Pearl Harbor, we need but quote the author to the effect that “Marxist ideology . . . produced the military socialism which today rules Japan” (page 21). Mr. Byas also thinks that the Japanese Army is a reactionary, anti-Marxist group in the country. He has a reactionary, anti-Marxist axe to grind and tediously does so, using one of the scimitars of the ancient *Samurai*.

FRANCIS TAYLOR.

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# The Socialist Ideal in the World Crisis

## *Projecting Some Personal Views*

The continuous defeats of the international Marxist movement during the past twenty-five years could not have passed without leaving their mark, not merely on the interpretations of the major strategical tenets of Marxian ideology, but also on what might at first glance appear to be the one constant factor within the Marxian system: the socialist ideal itself. This was inevitably so. The social decay of capitalist civilization has been so sharp and catastrophic since the First World War that even the most intransigent revolutionary movements could not fail to be affected by it—and that, not merely in their derivatory methodology but in the very heart of their existence as well: the character of their announced purpose.

True enough, the effects of this social disintegration on the basic perspectives of socialism have not been as glaringly evident as the effects on its political strategy; it is easier to observe that adherence to the theory of socialism in one country or to popular frontism is a betrayal than to see how the socialist perspective of a movement becomes warped and withered. The contemporary Marxist movement is chock full of annihilating polemics against revisionist or Stalinist deformations of Marxian policy; but it has failed to attack with equal vigor and wrath the at least as dangerous violence committed against the basic ideal of socialism in the minds of the working class—and in the minds of the most militant and revolutionary workers as well. But this failure of perspective can be understood only against the background of our movement's failure adequately to view the present.

• • •

In his volumes on the Roman Empire, the historian, Rostovtzeff, remarks that hardly a person then living realized the extent of the decline of the Roman Empire, that it was almost impossible for a person suffering from the immediate and surface effects of that decline to realize its full extent. It is only from the vantage point of historical perspective that it is possible to see that the Roman Empire during its last days was, despite the faith which so many of its citizens still placed in its invincibility, a gaudy façade beneath which a thousand fissures were swelling, soon to erupt and destroy its whole structure.

### **A Propagandistic and Agitational Crisis**

Much the same situation exists today. Not even the boldest and most sincere revolutionists have fully absorbed into their consciousness the extent to which our society has decayed. We are the adherents of the world thesis which states that capitalism is in its "death agony" but we cannot, to some degree because of the very nature of the circumstances themselves, appreciate the *literalness* of that slogan. We cannot fully appreciate the social and cultural correlatives implicit in the concept that society has entered the period of *counter-revolution in permanence*, the decline of the West. Our imaginations cannot grasp that which our intelligence dictates. The alternative, socialism or barbarism, is not an exhortative admonition; it is a grisly fact. And yet, in this greatest human crisis since the capitalist merchant towns began to grow along the Italian coast, revolutionary Marxists, who alone have the

only proper method for analyzing modern society and who alone have the only programmatic answer to its crisis, have failed to express in condemnation of what exists and especially in vision of what should exist, the gravity and urgency of the situation.

This is not, of course, merely a problem of propaganda efficiency—although it is that, too. Marxists, who rightly pride themselves that in a period of universal desertions to the latrine-society of capitalism, they have maintained their revolutionary devotions, have had their visions dimmed and hopes cheapened because they, too, have been victims of the effects of capitalist decay. And how could it be otherwise? How could a movement, tortured, betrayed, crushed and beaten as the Marxist movement has been in the past twenty-five years, come out of this ordeal (which it has not even yet done!) with its faith as pure, its morality as noble and its program as untarnished as when Marx and then Lenin first rang out the call to revolt?

Marxism is paying the price for the betrayals of Social-Democracy and Stalinism in more ways than one. Not only does capitalism owe its continued existence to them, but many of the present crises and deficiencies of the movement today are the results of subtle hangovers from those twin betrayers.

The most striking manifestation of this situation is the failure of revolutionary socialist propaganda to emphasize the **TOTALITY** of the world crisis. What began as a valid and necessary tactical approach—the need for emphasis on the immediate and concrete daily problems of the American working class as a means of reaching some common grounds of articulation—has grown to the point where the critique of capitalist society is hopelessly atomized and partial. Who is not familiar with the articles in the revolutionary press lengthily attacking some minor deformation of capitalist society and then lamely ending with the suggestion that this problem can be solved only by establishing socialism—some vague but, it is hoped, magically evocative chimera.

More and more, however, the problems of modern society become interdependent and intertwined. The simple economic demand of yesterday involves the gravest class struggles and threats to the structure of the state today. But, I wish to emphasize, my major purpose here is not to discuss the inadequacies of socialist propagandists, but rather to point out that these inadequacies are partially the result of the corroding effects which the decay of capitalist society has had on the movement—in this case, on the picture of what capitalist society is.

### **"Counter-Revolutionary Workers' State" Theory**

If the inability to graphically transmit abstract understanding of the present situation of capitalist society has had harmful effects on the movement, then how much more harmful have been the effects of the well nigh universal deterioration of the socialist ideal. A whole generation of workers has been poisoned by the Stalinists and fascists. Millions associate socialism with personal despotism; millions think of communism and fascism as being twins; millions think of socialism as being the antithesis of democracy. The Trotskyist

movement has long labored under the tragic delusion that it had but to convince the Social-Democratic and, especially, the Stalinist workers of the validity of its *method* of achieving socialism and the job would be done. But the fact is that Stalinism deformed and distorted the ideal of socialism in the mind of its followers beyond recognition, just as social-democracy diluted it beyond recognition. Millions of people could think Stalinism and fascism twins because in so many important political respects they are twins. And millions of people could think socialism synonymous with personal or bureaucratic despotism because the Stalinist regime, which the propaganda agencies of the GPU, Gestapo and democratic capitalism united in labeling socialism (and which we, until recently, called the "counter-revolutionary workers' state!") was actually synonymous with that kind of despotism.

That poisonous distortion of the socialist ideal crept into our system—and its main vehicle was the theory of Stalinist Russia as a workers' state. Perhaps no more decisive proof of this can be cited than by quoting from a recent article of George Collins, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party (Cannonites) which is the most graphic available example of the situation we have discussed in the previous paragraphs.

Writes Collins with regard to the resistance of the Russian armies at Stalingrad: "But the workers and Red soldiers of the Soviet Union fight with a bitterness unmatched in this war because they are defending the socialist achievements of a workers' revolution. Factories, mines, mills, railroads, workshops belong to those who work them. The soil belongs to those who till it. A man who will not defend such treasures is either a coward or a traitor; a man who fights to the death for them is more than a hero—he is a socialist worker."

We may well ask ourselves after reading this: Just what is the vision of socialism of a man who believes that in Stalinist Russia today (which is characterized by his own colleague, John G. Wright, as a "jail" in which the workers serve a "life-term imprisonment"), that in this despotic, bureaucratic oligarchy, in *Stalinist Russia* "the factories . . . belong to those who work them," that "the soil belongs to those who till it"? And that this is, to top it off, nothing more nor less than . . . a "treasure"!

Is it impolite—or undialectical—to then ask how this "treasure" can also be a "jail"?

### How Stalinism Corrodes Socialist Thinking

It is clear, I think, that a man who can write such sentences, regardless of his subjective integrity, has more than a little of the Stalinist virus in his political makeup. He is incapable of presenting the distressed workers of the world with a program for liberation and a vision of a new and better world because his own vision of that new and better world has been befouled with Stalinist excrement. Those who camouflage jails as "treasures" can hardly be expected to usher in a new era of world history!

But more important than this extreme manifestation of the Cannonite susceptibility to the Stalinized version of socialism is the basic theory from which it partially flows: the theory that Stalinist Russia is a "degenerate, counter-revolutionary workers' state." It is only now, in retrospect, that it is possible to see the politically and morally corroding effects which this theory has had on the revolutionary movement.

It seems almost like a nightmare now to recall that the revolutionary movement could have labeled this bureaucratic despotism as a workers' state. (It is interesting to note that

while the defenders of this theory called Russia a workers' state, they never called it a dictatorship of the proletariat!) Now it is possible to see what an ideological buttress this theory was to the basic premises of Stalinism. The term "workers' state" which had always been associated with a great, *conscious* seizure of power by the masses, a constantly increasing hold on the political and economic centers of power by the masses, a gradual destruction of bureaucratic forms, a continued rise in mass initiative, a gradual destruction of all inequalities until society would glide into socialism—this term was now associated with what the advanced workers could see as a monstrous despotism. The term "degenerate workers' state" which Lenin had applied to the Russia of 1923, when he was insisting that "every charwoman should learn to conduct affairs of state," was now applied to what John G. Wright has so aptly called the "prison state." Once this basic concession was given to Stalinism, once we allowed that the concept and the contradictory reality could be coupled together, then we had fallen into the Stalinist trap. And then, the crowning absurdity of all was the discovery that while Russia was a workers' state it was also a "counter-revolutionary workers' state." Now, while it is possible to admit that there will never be a workers' state as pristine in its purity as we should wish, that there will even be workers' states which for periods of time will become "degenerate workers' states" (such a one was, as Lenin correctly pointed out, Russia of 1923), the term "counter-revolutionary workers' state" is self-contradictory, the product of a movement whose concept of socialism and the transition thereto has been compromised and sullied.

And that is why, for the followers of the Trotskyist movement, the ideal of socialism tended to become not a goal of a classless society in which for the first time the human personality would find a fertile arena for expression, in which genuine human relationships would first begin to blossom and in which, as Marx wrote, the period of human history would first begin; but rather a kind of more or less benevolent police state (with the Stalinist version cast as the least benevolent) built on the treacherous fetish of nationalized economy. Nationalization of the means of production gradually became to be viewed as an end in itself, rather than as the Marxist movement had always seen it previously, as a means toward the socialist end. This political and moral degeneration was greatly retarded when Trotsky was alive by virtue of his incomparable revolutionary personality and his scrupulous morality, which often prevented the workers' state theory from being developed to its logical conclusions. But now that Trotsky is gone, his Cannonite epigones have developed the workers' state theory to its reactionary and absurd conclusions, of which the previously quoted Collins article is but one instance.

### An Evolution in Cannonite Thinking

During the factional fight some two years ago in the Trotskyist movement, the Workers Party developed the opinion that Russia should not be supported in the present imperialist war. Trotsky was of the opinion that the question of the class character of the Stalinist state was the main issue facing the movement and that the question of defense or non-defense was purely derivatory. It was insisted then, and rightly too, that the immediate issue at stake was the question of political attitude toward the rôle of Russia in the war, which could be decided without a discussion of the class character of Russia.

For it was possible to consider Russia either a workers or non-workers' state and still be either for or against its defense in the war. The question of its class character was used by the Cannonites as a red herring to obscure the immediate political issue at stake. But Trotsky was right in at least this: With characteristic perspicacity he saw that beneath this struggle on an immediate issue (though, in our opinion, not congruent with it) there was brewing a difference of opinion of the most basic and serious nature. That difference has now come to full light. It is my opinion that the Cannonite movement is in the process of developing the full and disastrous politics of this theory, as well as its moral effects on the organizational life of that party. It can now be seen, I believe, that the separation from the Cannonites raised an increasingly broad and serious issue, more important than any of the secondary tactical issues about which our debates take place. Separating us now is, I believe, a wide difference as to *what the socialist perspective itself is*. Theirs has been corrupted and distorted by their unquestioning adherence to the workers' state theory which has served as the vehicle for the corruption of their socialist perspectives; and it has, together with certain other factors deriving from the native background of the Cannonite organization, gone a long way toward the corruption and Stalinization of their organizational life.\*

### On the Class Character of the Soviet Union

Now, too, we can see how false was the opinion held by many that the whole question of the class character of Russia was unimportant, that what was essential was the question of defense or non-defense. After all, they said, we all agree as to what exists in Russia; what is important is not what name one gives, that is merely a question of political semantics; what is important is what attitude one takes toward its rôle in the war. This approach, too, is radically false. For the purposes of the specific discussion two years ago it mattered little whether one considered Russia a workers' state. In general, however, it is a question not merely of semantic interest; the motives behind the label are of basic importance. Though we and the Cannonites may agree on every detail of the organizational structure of the Russian economy, the different values which are placed on them reflect the most vital differences of attitude.

If then, as I believe, the movement is working around toward a restatement of the socialist ideal, untarnished by the social-democratic and Stalinist filth, but rather fresh and vigorous in its emphasis that the revolutionary and democratic aspects of socialism are inseparable, that socialism and the workers' state which is the *transition* to it, is something more,

\*An interesting and extremely significant instance of this corruption of the Cannonite organizational life is the fact that for the first time in the history of the Trotskyist movement, the Cannonites boasted that their recent convention was marked by "unanimity." Aside from the question of whether or not this is accurate, there remains the fact that such boasting is a disgrace to the revolutionary movement. Since when has "unanimity,"—especially by the methods with which the Cannonites obtain it!—been an aim of any revolutionary movement? And listen to the bureaucratic voice of Cannon:

"Our unity is somewhat disturbing to certain people... the medicine men of petty bourgeois radicalism... They are greatly worried about the fact that we have so much unity in our ranks, that we are free from crises and factional fights and feverish struggle over conflicting programs. These quack doctors don't understand that we are well... because we cured ourselves of the petty bourgeois sickness in good time. We had the good fortune to have an *anticipatory* crises... We secured our internal peace by a timely *preventive* war."

Where have we heard this before? Is it not the voice of Stalin explaining the newly-found unanimity of the Russian party because of its purges of the "counter-revolutionary Trotskyists" and "liquidated Bukharinists"? The voice of the bureaucrat pompously, and falsely, boasting of "unanimity" is recognizable no matter in which organization it is heard.

something finer than that hell which exists in Russia today, then it is necessary to attempt publicly to state it, to reorientate our propaganda so that our friends and sympathizers will begin to see where we are driving. And though it is simple enough to see the basic situation I have tried to describe above, there is really little to say when it comes to practical conclusions. Once the understanding of the general problem seeps in, then writing and speaking will gradually be transformed. It will take on some of that inspiration and idealism which characterized the great Marxists, the writings of Lenin and Trotsky, because we will not have to indulge in tortuous rationalizations about "counter-revolutionary workers' states," but will rather be able to present the socialist ideal in the attractive form which it really is.

I know that talk about idealism and ethics and the like are looked upon with some suspicion in the revolutionary movement these days. And not without reason. Every scoundrel, every chicken-hearted turncoat who, at the very depth of capitalist degeneration, deserted the movement to return to the folds of Mammon and Babbitt, used those very words against us. But that is really no reason why we should surrender these words, and the concepts behind them, especially when we are most entitled to use them.

Our propaganda needs a new infusion of socialist idealism. That is now possible for us because we have thrown off the stifling bonds of the workers' state theory. And it is eminently practical today as well. More and more, people think not merely in terms of the immediate partial problems which they face, but in terms of the world problem as a whole. One of the beneficial results of the world tragedy through which we are living has been to demonstrate to even the most insulated provincials that the problems of our world are indivisible. The returning soldiers of tomorrow will be attracted to our banner only if we can show them that we are out to build a completely new and finer world, that we make no compromise with any of the existing forms of reaction, that we alone bear the banner of uncompromising struggle.

This emphasis on the totality of socialism, on its promise for a better world, on the fact that it bears no resemblance whatever to the despotism which exists today in Russia, can help us rebuild that Marxist movement which alone points the direction out of the desert.

R. FAHAN.

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# An Answer to Stalinist Critics—III.

[Continued from Last Issue]

We repeat once more: *it is a question of internal forces and not of the dangers connected with abroad. It is therefore a question of the character of the revolution.* (Bucharin, No. 19/20 of *The Bolshevik*.)

The character of our revolution, independent of international relations! Since when has this self-sufficing character of our revolution existed? I maintain that our revolution, as we know it, would not exist at all but for two international prerequisites: firstly, the factor of financial capital, which, in its greed, has fertilized our economic development, and secondly, Marxism, the theoretical quintessence of the international labor movement, which has fertilized our proletarian struggle. This means that the revolution was being prepared, before 1917, at those cross-roads where the great forces of the world encounter one another. Out of this clash of forces arose the great war, and out of this the October Revolution. And now we are told to abstract ourselves from the international situation and to construct our socialism at home for ourselves. That is a metaphysical method of thought. There is no possibility of abstraction from world economics.

What is export? An internal or an international affair? The goods to be exported must be produced at home, thus it is an internal matter. But they must be exported abroad, hence it is an international transaction. And what is import? Import is international! The goods have to be purchased abroad. But they have to be brought into the country, so it is a home affair after all. (Laughter.) This example of import and export alone suffices to cause the collapse of Comrade Bucharin's whole theory, which proposes an "abstraction" from the international situation. The success of socialist construction depends on the speed of economic development, and this speed is now being determined directly and more sharply than ever by the imports of raw materials and machinery. To be sure, we can abstract ourselves from the shortage of foreign securities, and order more cotton and machines. But we can only do that once. A second time we shall not be able to accomplish this abstraction. (Laughter.) The whole of our constructive work is determined by international conditions.

If I am asked whether our state is proletarian, I can only reply that the question is out of place. If you do not wish to form your judgment on two or three words picked at random from an uncorrected stenographic report, but on what I have said and written in dozens of speeches and articles—and this is the only way in which we should form a judgment on one another's views—if we do not wish to trip one another up with an uncorrected sentence, but seek to understand one another's real opinions, then you must admit without hesitation that I join with you in regarding our state as a proletarian state. I have already replied by several quotations to the question of whether this state is building up socialism. If you ask whether there are in this country sufficient forces and means to carry out completely the establishment of socialism within

thirty or fifty years, *quite independent of what is going on in the world outside*, then I must answer that the question is put in an entirely wrong form. We have at our disposal adequate forces for the furtherance of the work of socialization, and thereby also to aid the international revolutionary proletariat, which has no less prospect of gaining power in ten, twenty or thirty years, than we have of establishing socialism; in no way less prospect, but much greater prospect.

I ask you, comrades—and this is the axis upon which the whole question turns—what will be going on in Europe while we are working at our socialization? You reply: We shall establish socialism in our country, independent of what is going on all over the world. Good.

How much time shall we require for the establishment of socialism? Lenin was of the opinion that we shall not have established socialism in twenty years, since our agrarian country is so backward. And in thirty years we shall not have established it either. Let us take thirty to fifty years as a minimum. What will be happening in Europe during all this time? I cannot make a prognosis for Europe without including a prognosis for Europe. There may be some variations. If you say that the European proletariat will certainly have come into power within the next thirty to fifty years, then there is no longer any question in the matter. For if the European proletariat captures power in the next ten, twenty or thirty years, then the position of socialism is secured, both in our country and internationally. But you are probably of the opinion that we must assume a future in which the European proletariat does not come into power? Otherwise why your whole prognosis? Therefore, I ask what you suppose will be happening in Europe in this time? From the purely theoretical standpoint, three variations are possible. Europe will either vacillate around about the pre-war level, as at present, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie balancing to and fro and just maintaining an equilibrium. We must however designate this "equilibrium" as inconstant, for it is extremely so. This situation cannot last for twenty, thirty or forty years. It must be decided one way or the other.

Do you believe that capitalism will find a renewed dynamical equilibrium? Do you believe that capitalism can secure a fresh period of ascendancy, a new and extended reproduction of that process which took place before the imperialist war? If you believe that this is possible (I myself do not believe that capitalism has any such prospect before it), if you permit it even theoretically for one moment, this would mean that capitalism has not yet fulfilled its historical mission in Europe and the rest of the world, and that present-day capitalism is not an imperialist and decaying capitalism, but a capitalism still on the upgrade, developing economics and culture. And this would mean that we have appeared too early on the scene.

Chairman: Comrade Trotsky has more than exceeded the time allotted him. He has been speaking for more than one

and a half hours. He asks for a further five minutes. I shall take your vote. Who is in favor? Who is against? Does anybody demand that a fresh vote be taken?

Comrade Trotsky: I ask for a fresh vote.

Chairman: Who is in favor of Comrade Trotsky's being given five minutes more? Who is against? The majority is against.

Comrade Trotsky: I wished to utilize these five minutes for a brief summary of conclusions.

Chairman: I shall take the vote again. Who is in favor of Comrade Trotsky's time being extended by five minutes? Those in favor hold up their delegate's tickets. Who is against? The majority is in favor. It is better to prolong the time than to count votes for five minutes. Comrade Trotsky will continue.

Comrade Trotsky: If it is assumed that during the next thirty to fifty years which we require for the establishment of socialism, European capitalism will be developing upward, then we must come to the conclusion that we shall certainly be strangled or crushed, for ascending capitalism will certainly possess, besides everything else, correspondingly improved technics of war. We are, moreover, aware that a capitalism with a rapidly rising prosperity is well able to draw the masses into war, aided by the labor aristocracy which it is able to create. These gloomy prospects are, in my opinion, impossible of fulfillment; the international economic situation offers no basis. In any case we have no need to base the future of socialism in our country on this supposition.

There remains the second possibility of a declining and decaying capitalism. And this is precisely the basis upon which the European proletariat is learning, slowly but surely, the art of making revolution.

Is it possible to imagine that European capitalism will continue a process of decay for thirty to fifty years, and the proletariat will meanwhile remain incapable of accomplishing revolution? I ask why I should accept this assumption, which can only be designated as the assumption of an unfounded and most profound pessimism with respect to the European proletariat, and at the same time of an uncritical optimism with respect to the establishment of socialism by the unaided forces of our country? In what way can it be the theoretical or political duty of a communist to accept the premise that the European proletariat will not have seized power within the next forty to fifty years? (Should it seize power, then the point of dispute vanishes.) I maintain that I see no theoretical or political reason for believing that we shall build up socialism with the cooperation of the peasantry more easily than the proletariat of Europe will seize power.

No. The European proletariat has the greater chances. And if this is the case, then I ask you: Why are these two elements opposed to one another, instead of being combined like the "two conditions" of Lenin? Why is the theoretical recognition of the establishment of socialism in one country demanded? What gave rise to this standpoint? Why was this question never brought forward by anyone before 1925? (A voice: "It was!") That is not the case, it was never brought forward. Even Comrade Stalin wrote in 1924 that the efforts of an agrarian country were insufficient for the establishment of socialism. I am today still firm in my belief that the victory of socialism in our country is only possible in conjunction with the victorious revolution of the European proletariat. This does not mean that we are not working toward the socialist state of society, or that we should not continue

this work with all possible energy. Just as the German worker is preparing to seize power, we are preparing the socialism of the future, and every success which we can record facilitates the struggle of the German proletariat, just as its struggle facilitates our socialist progress. This is the sole true international view to be taken of our work for the realization of the socialist state of society.

## Conclusion

In conclusion I repeat the words which I spoke at the Plenum of the CC: Did we not believe that our state is a proletarian state, though with bureaucratic deformations, that is, a state which should be brought into much closer contact with the working class, despite many wrong bureaucratic opinions to the contrary; did we not believe that our development is socialist; did we not believe that our country possesses adequate means for the furtherance of socialist economics; were we not convinced of our complete and final victory; then, it need not be said, our place would not be in the ranks of a Communist Party.

The Opposition can and must be estimated by these two criteria: it can accept the one line or the other. Those who believe that our state is not a proletarian state, and that our development is not socialist, must lead the proletariat against such a state and must found another party.

But those who believe that our state is a proletarian state, but with bureaucratic deformations formed under the pressure of the petty bourgeois elements and the capitalist encirclement; who believe that our development is socialist, but that our economic policy does not sufficiently secure the necessary redistribution of national income; these must combat with party methods and party means that which they hold to be wrong, mistaken or dangerous, but must share at the same time the full responsibility for the whole policy of the party and of the workers' state. (The chairman rings.) I am almost finished. A minute and a half more.

It is incontestable that the inner party contentions have been characterized of late by extreme acuteness of form, and by the fractional attitude. It is incontestable that this fractional aggravation of the contention on the part of the Opposition—no matter by what premises it was called forth—could be taken, and has been taken by a wide section of the party members, to mean that the differences of opinion had reached a point rendering joint work impossible, that is, that they could lead to a split. This means an obvious discrepancy between the means and the aims, that is, between those aims for which the Opposition has been anxious to fight, and the means which it has employed for one reason or another. It is for that reason we have recognized this means—the fraction—as being faulty, and not for any reason arising out of present consideration. (A voice: "Your forces were inadequate; you have been defeated!") We recognize this in consideration of the whole inner party situation. The aim and object of the declaration of October 16 was to defend the views which we hold, but to do this under the observance of the confines set by our joint work and our solidarity of responsibility for the whole policy of the party.

Comrades, what is the objective danger involved in the resolution on the social democratic deviation? The danger lies in the fact that it attributes to us views which would necessarily lead, not merely to a fractional policy, but to a policy of two parties.

This resolution has the objective tendency of transforming both the declaration of October 16 and the communiqué of



the CC into fragments of paper that with satisfaction . . . (A voice: "Is that a threat?") No, comrades, that is no threat. It is my last thought to utter any threat. (A voice: "Why raise that again?") You will hear in a moment. Only a few words more.

In our opinion the acceptance of this resolution will be detrimental, but in so far as I can judge of the attitude of the so-called Opposition, especially of the leading comrades, the acceptance of this resolution will not cause us to depart from the line of the declaration of October 16. We do not accept the views forced upon us. We have no intention of artificially enlarging the differences, or of aggravating them and of thus preparing for a relapse into the fractional struggle. On the contrary, each one of us, without seeking to minimize the existing difference of opinion, will exert every endeavor to adapt these differences within the confines of our continued work and our joint responsibility for the policy of the party.

LEON TROTSKY.

## MISCELLANY

### Return of a Scoundrel

The degeneration of the Communist Party is not a new phenomenon and reports of its varied conduct are often passed by without comment because it is no longer strange or evidence of a *tendency*. For the counter-revolutionary degeneration of the American Stalinist party is complete. In its transformation it has merely followed the pattern laid down by its tutor, the Russian Stalinist party. Yet from time to time something happens which does not escape the eye, but is cause for comment.

In scanning the columns of the *Daily Worker* of November 29, we ran across an interview between Seymour Stedman and a Stalinist hack writer, one Milton Howard. The report stated that Seymour Stedman, "running mate of Debs," joined the Communist Party of America. Howard proceeds to write a running account of his interview with Stedman, which reads like a tabloid society reporter spreading his good fortune upon meeting some nonentity from the social register in the lavatory of a Fifty-second Street night club.

For the uninitiate, the story may or may not have significance, for Seymour Stedman has practically disappeared from the labor movement. He has been in retirement for a number of years and a whole new generation of revolutionary socialists and militant trade unionists have never even heard of his name. But Seymour Stedman is well known to the older generation of revolutionary socialists, the early communists, the reformist socialists, the right wing trade unionists, and a host of others, not the least being the state's attorney's offices in Chicago and Detroit and the old officials of the Department of Justice.

#### The New Stedman

Howard's interview refers to Stedman as Debs' co-worker, a founder of the Socialist Party and vice-presidential candidate on the Debs ticket in 1920. The opening paragraphs of Howard's sophomoric panegyric read as follows:

A small, thinnish man, vigorously wielding an ever-present cigar (!), whose very much alive light-blue eyes make it hard for you to realize that he is almost seventy-five years old—

Whose talk is nimble, alert and filled with irrepressible ardor for human liberty.

Howard quotes this man who was "vigorously wielding an ever-present cigar":

*Tell them that I am a Communist Party member today. Tell them that this gives me joy, and the only regret I have, the thing that really hurts, is that I cannot actually get into the fight.* (Emphasis in original.—S.A.)

The rest of the story is a report of Stedman's great admiration for the "keen reasoner." Earl Browder, his love of the Communist Party, how he was converted, and his record in the old Socialist Party in Chicago. But this is only part of the story. We propose to tell the rest of it, and it is the story of a reactionary social reformist whose chief enemy was and is the revolutionary party and the struggle for socialism. It is the story of a man who was a social patriot all his life, an enemy of the Russian Revolution and the Soviet state of Lenin and Trotsky, a court prosecutor of the left wing during the Palmer raids and finally an official of a small neighborhood bank in Chicago, where he was indicted on a charge of mal-practice.

#### . . . And the Old

The writer very well remembers the years 1917-20 even though he was only a young lad then. Brought up in a socialist home, resident in the famous socialist 15th Ward on Chicago's Northwest Side, we remember attendance at many election campaigns and celebration meetings of the Socialist Party, held in the Old Style Inn and Wicker Park Hall. The name of Seymour Stedman was then the most popular of all the socialist leaders in Chicago and he was the party's outstanding spokesman. But the writer remembers too that when the split with the left wing came, Stedman was absent from the left wing meetings and celebrations of the Russian Revolution. He also recalls, though he did not understand it then, the debate between Stedman, speaking for the right wing, and Dennis Batt, representing the Michigan left wing. The strongest memory of that meeting, gained from a seat on the stairs of the podium, is Stedman's anger throughout the discussion, and the laughs of the audience at his discomfort from the debate. For Stedman was violently against the Russian Revolution and the proletarian state.

At the time of the left wing split in the post-war period, he was its most vicious opponent, never missing the opportunity to call upon the aid of the police in those political struggles, or going to the bourgeois courts for legal redress against the "communists." There are two famous events in the struggle between the right and left wing and in both of these Stedman played a leading, though ignominious rôle.

On the morning of August 30, 1919, the Socialist Party emergency convention was scheduled to meet. There the issue between the revolutionaries and the right wing leadership was to be resolved. It was apparent even before the convention that the left wing would have a majority and so the right wing, under the leadership of Adolph Germer, Julius Gerber and Seymour Stedman, called upon the police to insure their control of the party. The scene on the morning of the convention opening is vividly described by William Bross Lloyd in his "Convention Impressions," published in *The Class Struggle* of November, 1919:

. . . As I came into the building where the Socialist Party emergency convention was to be held, I met a crowd of delegates coming down from the convention hall. They were the left wing delegates thrown

out of the hall by the police acting under order of Adolph Germer and Gerber. . . . No delegate could get into the convention hall on credentials signed by his state officials. A special card of admission had to be procured from Germer's minions in the national office. The card was white, historically symbolic of the work of Finland's White Guard, and her bloody field and streets, of Berlin's streets red with workers' blood spilled by our "comrades," Scheidemann, Ebert and Noske; symbolically prophetic of the part for which the Socialist Party of America has cast itself. *Later in the convention, in response to a question I could not hear, the chairman, "Comrade" Seymour Stedman Noske, raised his impassioned voice above the tumult: "Chief of Police Garrity has his orders and when the time comes, he will obey them."* One cannot help wondering whether the police who shortly before beat up the striking IWW restaurant workers were also following Comrade "Noske's" orders. Truly, when the police cooperate with our "comrades" and take their orders, the revolution must have come to pass. (Emphasis mine.—S. A.)

### The House of the Masses Case

Robert Minor, leading Stalinist potentate, should well remember Stedman. He once wrote a scathing indictment of the gentleman in a pamphlet called *Stedman's Red Raid*, which dealt with the latter cooperation in the campaign of Palmer's raiders and the Michigan state authorities in their efforts to wipe out the left wing in that state during the year 1920.

We have reference to the case of the "House of the Masses." The story is a simple one. The proletarian Socialist Party of Michigan, overwhelmingly left wing, established a large headquarters which it used for meetings and for the formation of one of the finest Marxist schools in the history of the American revolutionary movement. Upon its expulsion by the right wing the Michigan organization took the name "Communist." This left wing, in the early days at least, made enormous political and organizational progress. It received great impetus from the Russian Revolution and the growth of its party during those days led to its purchase of the "House of the Masses." The money was obtained from its members and sympathizers and was established on a cooperative basis. Since under the Michigan laws a political party could not own property, they formed the "Workers' Educational Society" but declared that only members of the Socialist Party for three years preceding could be members of the association.

Under the influence of the Russian Revolution, the "House of the Masses" became a discussion center of all the revolutionary problems of the workers' movement, the proletarian seizure of power, the character of the state, the building of a new international, general tactics and strategy of the proletarian party. Because of its mounting revolutionary influence, the Department of Justice, under Palmer, and the Michigan state authorities engineered their reign of terror. Left wing leaders were arrested by the score and imprisoned without trial. Scores of members were likewise arrested in the dead of night and held for deportation. The aim of the authorities was to wipe out the movement in Michigan and especially in Detroit. This is where Stedman and the right wing leadership of the Socialist Party came in.

The state criminal syndicalist law had charged the left wingers with violation of the law, "advocates of the overthrow by force or violence of the government of the United States or all forms of law; aliens who disbelieve in or are opposed to all organized government; aliens who advocate or teach the assassination of public officials . . ." and so on, repeating the usual content of criminal syndicalist laws.

Seizing the opportunity occasioned by the state prosecution of the Michigan socialists, Stedman entered his own bill of complaint in the name of three right wing members of the

Workers' Educational Association, thereby hoping to seize the property from the WEA. Stedman's bill of complaint repeated all the charges of the authorities. It stated, among other things, that the left wing socialists:

... Are known and style themselves as "Communists" and "members of the Communist Party." That the Communist Party has committed itself to the program as set forth in its manifesto and program on page 8, in the following language:

"Communism does not propose to 'capture' the bourgeois parliamentary state, but to conquer and destroy it. As long as the bourgeois state prevails, the capitalist class can baffle the will of the proletariat."

The complaint went on to state that the defendants were "expelled from the Socialist Party of the United States because, among other things, they advocated the use of direct or mass action as the primary and principal means of securing a change or destroying the 'capitalist system' and the present form of government of the United States; that the said defendants and their associates and agents still advocate the use of said direct or mass action . . . that the use of the hall (House of the Masses) on the premises of the said plaintiff (the right wing socialists in whose name he filed the suit) for advocating direct or mass action for overthrowing the present form of government constitutes a continuous nuisance and irreparable injury to the plaintiff herein." (Emphasis mine.—S. A.)

There was a nation-wide revulsion in the labor movement over Stedman's strike-breaking conduct. He sought to excuse himself on the ground that this was the only way in which he could get the property for the almost non-existent right wing in Detroit. But this did not stop him from following the line of his bill of complaint during the examination of the witnesses.

It is true that in all these affairs Stedman acted in the name of the right wing leadership of the Socialist Party, but it took a certain type of personality, a man devoid of principle and basically reactionary to carry out such a decision of the Socialist Party National Committee. Seymour Stedman was perfectly suited to the rôle and he carried out his miserable task with the considerable legal skill for which he was noted.

Stedman went into an eclipse following his "police" activity. He was heard from years later as vice-president of a bank on Chicago's Northwest Side. The bank failed and Stedman was among those indicted for mismanagement. The writer lost track of that trial and heard no more of Seymour Stedman until the *Daily Worker* saw fit to do itself proud with a scoundrel.

Rereading the bill of complaint which Stedman filed against the Michigan "communists" we can understand why he waited until 1942 to join the Stalinist Party. It has long since ceased to be a revolutionary party; it cannot be charged with the "crimes" of the old left wing. A counter-revolutionary party, it has plenty of room for the Seymour Stedmans. The war brought him out into the open and to find his way home. And it is entirely fitting that such a party should welcome him to membership. Only age would keep him from repeating the years 1917-20.

SAM ADAMS.

## N.I. Down Under

A few days ago we received a letter from an Australian correspondent, who informed us the *The New International* was quoted in a Senate debate by the Labor Minister for Aircraft Production, Senator Cameron. The minutes of the senatorial debate were forwarded to us. Upon examination of the remarks it appeared that Senator Cameron was engaged in a debate in defense of labor against the wartime encroachments of big business and the profiteering of the ruling classes in all countries.

Referring particularly to the black market conditions in Great Britain, where inequality in rationing was rampant and where big-time speculators were amassing fortunes from the misery of the people, Senator Cameron quoted from the statistical evidence contained in an article in *The New International* of June, 1942. Said Cameron:

"I quote now from the issue of June, 1942, of *The New International*, published in America. The reference there to black markets is brief, but very significant."

The quotation cited by the senator and reproduced here is from the article, "England's Political Crisis," by Henry Judd:

The black market in England has become a gigantic war racket by means of which the rich manage to retain fairly well their pre-war standard of luxury. It is estimated now that the black market has a yearly cash turnover amounting to \$60,000,000—and this business is definitely on the up-and-up! All sorts of foods, clothing, textiles, gasoline, cigarettes, whiskey, cooking fats, etc., are handled on the black market. Naturally, the prices are prohibitive to the working class (cigarettes, 50 cents a pack; a bottle of Scotch, \$7.00, are a couple examples). One of the cleverest (and these British aristocrats are clever) means devised to evade the stringencies of rationing is *hotel life*. A member of the English bourgeoisie, with money, can live almost in accord with his customary standards by moving to a hotel "for the duration." The hotels have become a beehive of black market and illicit sales activities. In addition, the characteristic pleasures of the British ruling class, dog racing, horse racing, fox hunting, boxing, etc., have been restricted and curtailed, but not liquidated. All in all, the Tory set thrive infinitely better when it comes to eating, housing conditions, entertainment and special privileges.

There is an interjection:

Senator Leckie: "That is an American authority?"

Senator Cameron: "Yes; British authorities have reported similarly. . . ."

## Enquiry: Into What?

The *Call*, weekly paper of the Norman Thomas party, has never been noted for its theoretical articles. The sermons of Thomas himself are half meaningless nonsense, half dissertations on the theme "Socialism in Retreat"—with Thomas leading. Lillian Symes' contributions are as haphazardly written as Eleanor Roosevelt's *My Day*. She has several times begun a topic, discussed something else, and ended with the observation that here it is the end of the column and I haven't said what I wanted; guess it will have to wait till next week. Paxton, who was spread all over the front page of several issues as the new Far Eastern expert, is now dishing out the straight Churchill line on India for the *New Leader*.

The theoretical weakness (a charitable word!) of the party is even better revealed in its monthly magazines. For years, while they was not official magazine, the *Modern Monthly* (later *Quarterly*) served the purpose. Increasingly in its later issues this reflected more and more the personally charming but politically amorphous personality of Calverton, its ed-

itor, and when he died it died with him. The *Socialist Review*, edited by Herbert Zam, ex-Clarityite leader, was from the beginning pathetically weak and died even before its editor withdrew into political inactivity. For several years now the Socialist Party has had no theoretical organ, either official or otherwise.

Late last month there appeared the first issue of *Enquiry*, a *Journal of Independent Radical Thought*. It is a pocket-size, twenty-page magazine, at least two of whose four editors are SP members. The editorial statement speaks of a "revolutionary outlook," which can mean anything, but lays emphasis on "a thoroughgoing concern for the maintenance and the extension of the procedures and institutions of democracy. . . . We want to put democracy *first*: before class privilege, before appeals to patriotism, before party banner. . . . We do not mean by this to cut ourselves off from all those who believe that an Anglo-American victory is . . . preferable to one by the Axis. Verbal commitments one way or another are not in themselves decisive."

This air of democratic indecision is carried throughout. The one point the magazine makes is that its editors are in a dilemma. "The dilemma of democratic leftist politics then lies in the fact that having repudiated the Jacobin concept of the seizure and maintenance of power in a revolutionary situation by a small determined minority (not merely as a matter of ethics but as a matter of long-range practical politics) the leftist finds himself in the midst of a world-revolutionary period (there seems general agreement on this) while he must await the development—for it certainly cannot happen overnight—of a type of political organization which, historically, should have developed in a period of capitalist expansion." So writes Symes. Even the style reflects her dilemma. Even she considers the organization of a social democratic party, somehow lacking the faults of all past social democratic parties, "a large order to be placed so late on the calendar of history." What to do?

"It is," writes Philip Selznick, "as if we dared not do anything at all, in the fear that anything we may do will bring unintended evil in its wake . . . a source of frustration which cannot be gainsaid . . . prolonged soul-searching. . . ."

An adherent to this mish-mash of Michels and Dewey, not mentioning Marx, specifically denouncing Lenin and Trotsky, is reduced inevitably, in this period, to inaction. The butt of the argument is "democracy," as understood by this group of ineffective well-wishers. "Democracy can survive," says Selznick, "only when the concentration of power in the hands of a single social force is avoided, when factions and interests vie for power." A revolutionary party must forego the doubtful benefits of being democratic by this definition. Small in numbers, harried on every side by reaction, the party today can find its only strength in unity. It cannot afford the luxury of—say, Symes, a top national leader of the SP, berating it in an "independent" journal for its almost complete lack of clarity of purpose, of an understanding of its rôle and of the objective situation, berating it for—indeed—"refusing to face the logic, as well as the possibilities, of its size."

"So long as centrifugal society divides men into classes, so long as exploitation persists, a mass base will be at hand. . . . In the adding up of pros and cons, it is evident that the greatest weakness of the mass democratic movement is that of leadership." Here, in their own words, is the answer to this group of weak-kneed fence-sitters. Democracy and dilemma begin with the same letter, but they are not the same.

E. W.

## Financing Big Business

**FINANCING THE WAR, A Symposium. The Tax Institute, Philadelphia. 336 pages and Index.**

This book is a symposium on a subject of interest to everyone in the country. The mass of workers have become tax conscious—most of them will be paying an income tax (or the five per cent victory tax) for the first time next year (and expect to have additional tax obligations thrust upon them, perhaps as “forced loans”). They know that this is equivalent to a wage cut, or what is the same thing, a rise in the cost of living as effective as that which would follow an inflationary rise in prices.

In fact, that, and not the raising of revenue, is the main reason for including the lower-income brackets, that is, the workers, in the new income tax law. The same aim—the reduction of the purchasing power of the masses in face of a declining output of consumer goods and an increasing production of war materials—lies behind the drive among the workers to obtain their purchase of war bonds.

Through taxation and borrowing, as we are told in the first chapter in the volume under review, the state has taken over the distribution of national income and the allocation of national output. More exactly, these techniques of war finance are the “pecuniary counterpart” of the war economy supplementing and complementing such methods as priorities, allocation, price and wage controls and rationing.

What are the objectives of war financing policy? The chief objective is the diversion of the resources of the country for the production of war materials. To this is added the objective of so distributing national income “as to cause a minimum of impairment of the existing pattern of the social structure—the so-called national culture or ‘way of life’—the preservation of which is the presumable objective of the military effort.” And here is the key to any discussion of war finance.

### PRESERVING THE BOURGEOIS PROFIT SYSTEM

The existing pattern of the social structure, that is to say, capitalism, the private monopolistic ownership of the productive resources by big business and the gross inequality of income, must be preserved whatever the emergency measures undertaken. If the old “price system” is replaced by state control of the economy, the old property relations and the old increasing inequalities must be maintained by the state through war finance.

The contributions to *Financing the War* are therefore discussions of the various methods of best achieving these ends. From this viewpoint they are by and large interesting and informative. The most valuable chapter is the one on the “Influence of Excess Profits Taxation on Business Policy,” contributed by Frank E. Seidman, a certified public accountant. While the recent tax bill has resulted in increased excess profits tax rates, the basic features of the act are the same as those considered by Mr. Seidman.

It is not surprising to learn that “one immediate effect that this program had on business was almost completely to cure the unemployment problem among lawyers and accountants”! Examples of how these experts advised the big corporations to comply with the law and avoid or minimize excess taxes are given by Mr. Seidman. For example: under the law

the invested capital of a corporation includes not only the amount paid in for its shares, but accumulated earnings as well. Corporations adopting the invested capital method paid out less of their profits in dividends, thus accumulating greater profits, increasing the “invested capital” and thereby decreasing the tax. Or then again the law permits 50 per cent of borrowed capital to be included in invested capital and allows the interest on the non-included debt as a deduction in arriving at excess profits income. Dividends for preferred stock are not deductible for income or excess profits tax. So many corporations replaced their preferred stock, and in some cases common stock as well, by bonds in order to reduce their excess profits tax obligations. They further borrowed money at low interest rates even though they did not actually need the money for business. (The new excess profits tax provisions now encourage the unloading of these bonds and debts—obtained to avoid tax payments under the old law—by permitting corporations to use the 10 per cent credit of their excess profits tax payments for liquidation of these debts!)

### BIG BUSINESS IS THE WINNER

One more method employed by the big corporation to avoid paying excess profits taxes should be mentioned. “One of the most popular indoor sports in recent months, however, is that of acquiring more or less defunct corporations that have large initial capital investments. Under the law, an operating deficit of a corporation does not have to be taken into consideration in computing invested capital. Thus, if a corporation has \$10,000,000 of capital originally paid in and \$9,900,000 of deficit, its invested capital is not \$100,000, but \$10,000,000. Furthermore, if such a corporation has sustained operating losses during the past two years, these losses can be carried forward and applied against subsequent earnings. Also, if a corporation has not absorbed its excess profits tax credit in the past, these too can be carried forward and applied against subsequent earnings. It can be readily seen what tremendous tax appeal a corporation in this position may have.”

Mr. Seidman’s conclusions are worth quoting. He writes: “The major fault with the present act is that it literally writes profiteering into law. This is accomplished by giving corporations the option to establish unusually high deductions in computing excess profits taxes. As I have already indicated, the tax rates only begin to operate after profits have passed the average earnings in the four-year base period, 1936-39, or if earnings have passed an eight per cent return on the first million dollars of invested capital and a seven per cent return beyond that amount. The way this formula works out, the strong corporations inevitably will become stronger and the weak ones weaker.

“Corporations that were fortunate enough to make large earnings in the pre-emergency period earn big profits without paying any excess profits taxes. This means that the railroads, the heavy industries and many other ‘war baby’ corporations, which are really getting the major benefits of war orders, escape this tax almost completely. Thus, for instance, United States Steel, whose profits in the preceding four years had averaged about \$46,000,000, had a net in 1940 of \$102,000,000 and did not pay a penny in excess profits taxes. Republic Steel, with a four-year average of \$7,000,000, passed a \$21,000,000 net in 1940 and went excess profits tax free. The railroads, whose profits have enormously increased as a result of the defense program, have to date escaped the excess profits tax almost completely. . . . It is an amazing situation in view of the anti-war-millionaire label that was attached to this tax.”

J. C.

# The Nazi System

**BEHEMOTH, the Structure and Practice of National Socialism,**  
by Franz Neumann. Oxford University Press, 549 pages, \$4.00.

Franz Neumann, a German social-democratic refugee, has written a study of Nazism in the grand manner. It is serious and thorough; it is carefully documented with several hundred references to original sources as well as innumerable quotations from political theorists of all ages; it contains much valuable descriptive material; and it has that indispensable Germanic professorial style that makes each sentence taste like a chunk of raw cowhide. Nonetheless, *Behemoth* is a book of very uneven quality. Part of the major theoretical premises are, in the opinion of the reviewer, untenable, and this despite the excellence of many of the book's sections.

Neumann believes that Nazism is a "non-state, a chaos, a rule of lawlessness and anarchy, which has swallowed the rights and dignity of man, and is out to transform the world into a chaos." It is a society which has lost the compensating factors of even the most reactionary of all previous capitalist societies: rationality of social functioning and rational generality of codified law. It is a society which is marked by arbitrariness in its behavior toward the ruled classes and even toward subordinate sections of the ruling classes. Germany, Neumann claims, retains all the essential economic characteristics of capitalism; it has in fact an imperialist economy *par excellence*; but it marks a rupture with all previous capitalist societies because socially it marks a complete turn toward the "chaos of a non-state"! What is more, Neumann believes that "it is doubtful whether national socialism possesses a unified coercive machinery" since there are four conflicting social groups—the state bureaucracy, the party bureaucracy, the army leadership and the capitalists—all of whom are conducting an internal struggle among themselves which merely contributes toward the "chaos of the non-state." We are not told how this "chaos" is capable of conducting such an immense venture as the present war, how this internal jungle succeeds in presenting such a dreadfully orderly and efficient front to the rest of the world. Germany, Neumann believes, is no longer a state. He writes on page 467:

If a state is characterized by the rule of law, our answer to this question (Is Nazism a state?—R. F.) will be negative, since we deny that law exists in Germany. It may be argued that state and law are not identical, and that there can be states without law. States, however... are conceived as rationally operating machineries disposing of the monopoly of coercive power. A state is ideologically characterized by the unity of the political power that it wields... I doubt whether even a state in this restricted sense exists in Germany... There is no realm of law in Germany... The monopolists in dealing with non-monopolists rely on individual measures and in their relations with the state and with competitors, on compromises which are determined by expediency and not by law. Moreover, it is doubtful whether national socialism possesses a unified coercive machinery... The party is independent of the state in matters pertaining to the police and youth, but everywhere else the state stands above the party. The army is sovereign in many fields; the bureaucracy is uncontrolled; and industry has managed to conquer many positions. One might say that such antagonisms are as characteristic of democracy as they are of national socialism. Granting that, there is still one decisive difference. In a democracy and in any other constitutional system, such antagonisms within the ruling groups must be settled in a universally binding manner... If it is necessary for the state to coordinate and integrate hundreds and thousands of individual and group conflicts, the process must be accomplished in a universally binding manner, that is, through abstract rational law or at least through a rationally operating bureaucracy. Under national socialism, however, the whole of the society is organized in four solid, centralized groups, each operating under the leadership prin-

ciple, each with a legislative, administrative and judicial power of its own. Neither universal law nor a rationally operating bureaucracy is necessary for integration. There is no need for a state standing above all groups; the state may even be a hindrance to the compromise and to domination over the ruled classes. The decisions of the leader are merely the results of the compromises among the four leaderships... It is thus impossible to detect in the framework of the national socialist political system any one organ which monopolizes political power.

And in order to understand something of the basis of this amazing theory, it is necessary to quote Neumann's concept of law:

The average lawyer will be repelled by the idea that there can be a legal system that is nothing more than a means of terrorizing people. He will point out that hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of transactions in Germany are handled according to calculability and predictable rules...culturally indifferent rules of a predominantly technical character... Do we really mean such technical rules when we speak of law, however? Law... is a norm, comprehensible by reason, open to theoretical understanding, and containing an ethical postulate, primarily that of equality. In other words, the formal structure of the law receives a significance independent of its content (page 440-41).

It is the doctrine of positive law which states that only a law which has a general character, applicable to all is a law, which Neumann adheres to, and since there is no general character to Nazi law, therefore there is no law in Germany at all.

It is then a lawless, stateless chaos, with four powerful sections of the ruling class competing for power and possessing parallel coercive apparatus in a word, a "chaos."

It should be obvious that we are here dealing with a mind in which the cobwebs of legalism have gained a firm grip. Despite this, it is necessary to note that there is intermingled with this fantastic theory some very important insights. It is both true and important that fascism represents, *socially*, a qualitative change from previous forms of capitalist society. All pretense of equality, of the general welfare as a purpose of societal existence, of even formal rights, are destroyed. Socially the totalitarian structure of the Nazi society is comparable only to some of the ancient oriental despotisms when they were already reaching the stage of decay. This point is of great importance, since it serves as the most dramatic possible indication of the state of decay of the capitalist system, which does still exist in Germany. And to the degree that Neumann describes this, his book is valuable and worthy of study.

## THE NATURE OF LAW

But the basic premises of this theory are clearly unacceptable. Law is not merely a codification which is general and universal; such a concept is completely the reflection of bourgeois democracy since general and universal law was first accepted, on a decisive scale, only with the advent of bourgeois democracy, which used it as a means of hiding its class structure and furthering its pretensions toward being a classless or supra-class society. As far as Marxists are concerned, law in its decisive aspects is merely the codification of the supremacy of the ruling class, regardless of whether it is universally applied or not and regardless of whether it also includes technical rules for the convenience of all (garbage collection, water supply). The law of the French monarchs was neither universal nor general yet it was certainly law. Nor is there ever a situation in which a society hesitates to go beyond the boundary of its formal law if it feels itself in danger. Whenever there is an element of grave stress within an existing society, that society abandons the usual rules of its procedure and dominates by open might; yet even within that "lawlessness"

there is still a considerable element of formal law. There is law wherever there is organization; the content of law is determined by the class content of the social organization. That holds as true for Germany today as for any other class society, even though that law no longer makes the pretense to universality and generality.

#### IS THERE A STATE IN GERMANY?

Nor can we subscribe to the notion that there is no longer any state in Germany today, that there are four parallel ruling groups coëxistent and sometimes conflicting. Neumann is in error when he places the capitalists, the army leadership and the state and party bureaucracies on the same plane. The capitalists are a social class; the others are social groups within or dependent upon the capitalist class. It is impossible for the army bureaucracy to have as much social power as the capitalists; in point of fact they do not have that power, they seldom challenge that power and are in reality its supporters. As for the state bureaucracy, that is a parasitic organism swelling up on the basis of the needs of a completely centralized, monopolistic capitalist economy. This is especially true in Germany. As for the Nazi Party bureaucracy, Neumann himself admits and proves in his section on Nazi economy that the party bureaucracy is fast becoming absorbed in or dependent on the capitalist class and that the conflicts between them are decreasing.

There is a state in Germany today; it is a capitalist state; the capitalist class is the decisive ruling group, even though many of its secondary political functions have been taken over by the Nazi bureaucracy. In fact, then, not only has the state not disappeared; it has become more powerful as the German imperialist machine geared itself for total war. It has become more centralized, rather than diffused; only a many blinded by legal obfuscations can say that in Germany today there is "no unified coercive authority."

What, then, is the purpose of these theories? Why are they presented? The answer lies, I believe, in the tender spot which Neumann retains in his mind for the Weimar Republic with its "pluralistic" (read: class collaborationist) approaches. For it is apparent that everything which Neumann says Nazi Germany does not have (the state as arbiter of social groups, universal law) did exist under Weimar. Clearly then, what is needed in Germany is a real "state" which will restore the checks and balances with which Weimar "restrained" the monopolists. The political program of our author is hardly more attractive than the theoretical mechanism with which it is justified.

#### GERMANY CAPITALIST CHARACTER

All that remains then, is the second section of the book describing the capitalist economy of Nazi Germany. This is by far the best part of the book. It is thorough and detailed; it contains excellent analysis of the structural development of German monopoly capitalism in the direction of continued centralization and cartelization. Especially excellent are those chapters describing the preparations of German business for the present war. Neumann has digested, in this connection, an immense amount of statistical material and has correlated it into an excellent picture of the present functioning of German capitalism.

"National socialism," he writes on page 360, "has coördinated the diversified and contradictory state interferences into one system having but one aim: the preparation for imperialist war. . . . Preparation for totalitarian war requires a huge expansion of the production-goods industry, especially of the

investment-goods industry, and makes it necessary to sacrifice every particular economic interest that contradicts this aim. This means that the automatism of free capitalism, precarious even under a democratic monopoly capitalism, has been severely restricted. But capitalism remains."

One remark, however, in connection with the reasoning which Neumann uses against those who hold that Germany is no longer capitalist. If, he says, the means of domination in Germany have become purely political, since the laws of capitalist economy no longer function and the economy is run as part of the job of the state apparatus, then "we must also conclude that nothing but a series of accidents can destroy such systems. If the systems are held together only by political ties and not by any inescapable economic necessity, only political mistakes can destroy them. But why should political errors occur?"

I think this mode of reasoning is fallacious. It is reminiscent of the arguments used by those who believe Russia to be either a "workers" or capitalist state. "If the laws of capitalist society, which explain why capitalism is doomed to inevitable crisis, no longer apply, then what laws do apply and what is the driving force, if any, that leads Russia (substitute in this case, Germany) to crisis?" That question is difficult to answer and it may be impossible because of the immaturity and national uniqueness of the Russian bureaucratic collectivism. If Germany were no longer capitalist, it would also be difficult to answer that question about Germany. But merely to pose the difficulty is not to prove that Germany remains capitalist, or that Russia remains a "workers" or capitalist state. These questions must be decided on an empirical basis, by examining the economy of the countries concerned. If we are convinced that the economy of Germany is no longer capitalist or that of Russia no longer "workers" or capitalist, but that one or the other of them is a new society, then it is truly difficult to present immediately the laws of its functioning and crisis. But Germany is a capitalist society, not because of the difficulties of a theory of non-capitalism, but rather because a concrete examination of German economy reveals it to contain the basic characteristics of capitalism.

R. F.

## Stalinism with Fables

INDIA WITHOUT FABLE, by Kate L. Mitchell.  
Alfred A. Knopf, publisher; 308 pages.

This book had us in a puzzled and bewildered state, up to the last chapter on the "Aftermath of the Cripps Mission." Then we understood the fraud and swindle its "liberal and scholarly authoress" was attempting to put over.

The puzzle stems from the vigorous and uncompromising (so it would appear) analysis and description the author gives of British imperialist rule over India. True, it lacks any originality or imaginative approach and depends entirely upon familiar sources (not too often given appropriate or proper credit). But, nevertheless, we are given an accurate portrayal of British conquest, British exploitation, British super-profits, British holdings and control, etc. Even the political parties are more or less accurately (even in the Marxian sense) described. The Congress and its leader, Gandhi, are placed in their proper setting as organizational forms and expressions of the native bourgeoisie; the pro-British rôle of the Moslem League is made clear. True, here too, the authoress falls into several errors, such as, for example, crediting the British with

improving the land irrigation system and with "bringing" political consciousness to the people.

As to the first "fable," we recommend that Miss Mitchell read *Kisan Speaks* by Professor Ranga, head of the All-India Kisan Sabha—a book that explodes this myth at some length. Her second contention is a meaningless one since it merely describes an objective result of British rule; if the statement is not meaningless then it is vicious, since it is a left-handed justification of imperialism—it brought political consciousness to the people of Poland.

But despite all this, the factual and historical aspects of the book are ably and accurately presented and merit the attention of those looking for a text-book of an elementary character. All of this, however, is only to lead up to the distortion and swindle interjected by the writer at the very end.

Why this attack on the British, especially from an American liberal, the reader asks himself? Where is it getting us? Is the author *really* for the Indian people in their struggle against imperialism, will she side with their current fight for freedom?

Not at all! It's all a cheap political fraud, for, as the author approvingly writes on page 279: "... any immediate revolutionary action against Britain would play directly [*sic*] into the hands of Japan and Germany." It all becomes clear at the end. *Here is a "Popular Front" Stalinist intellectual posing as a left-wing liberal.*

All you have to do to prove our point is to compare this line with the present line on the "Indian Question" of the American Stalinists and their openly strike-breaking brothers in India itself. Do these people give their full approval to Churchill and his terrorist repressions? Oh no, they are far too clever for that. They are "against imperialism, against Churchill," it goes without saying. A plague on both your houses, they say. Gandhi, the Congress leaders and the workers and peasants who refuse to allow them to compromise—they are too adamant, say the Stalinists. So are the Churchill

Tories. But Gandhi, the "defeatist," and the militant workers are the greater plague since their "irresponsible" behavior plays into the hands of the Tory reactionaries. What is needed, continue the Stalinists, is compromise, an end to violent struggle, American intervention, settlement, order and peace so that the Indian people can prepare to die in greater quantities for the benefit of Russian defense and the restoration of Burma to the empire.

Miss Mitchell gives an outworn, but no less contemptible twist to the familiar line that Gandhi is a reactionary in his methods and social aims. By insisting upon a struggle (that is, by realizing with far greater profundity than Mitchell or Nehru what was the actual temper of the people) Gandhi runs the risk of causing their defeat, since his "non-violent, non-coöperation" methods cannot win. How solicitous of "the people" are the Stalinists and their sympathizers. How much better it would be for the people to quietly remain as before, rather than run the risks of open struggle. This is the familiar argument of every slave-apologist. Unfortunately, Miss Mitchell could not know that the workers, as they have demonstrated, have passed beyond the stage and methods of traditional Gandhism and have set their course on the revolutionary road.

Like all the liberal-Stalinist type, Miss Mitchell has no place for the independent action of workers and peasants in her neat little schema. Her book, written just before the present struggle began, blatantly predicts (page 288) there will be no struggle. She does not understand that when the Indian people have reached that historic stage in their development when they can challenge the outmoded methods of Gandhi, it is even more simple for them to foresee the traps set by the Stalinists and others who play the game of British imperialism. For a subtle weaving of the Stalinist snare we could not recommend more beguiling pages than the last part of this book.

F. T.

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