

The New _____ **INTERNATIONAL**

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THE GERMANIES

A Social, Political and Economic Survey

By Henry Judd

James T. Farrell:

Literature and Morality

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Jack Weber:

The Great Conspiracy

•

E. Germain:

SECTARIANISM AND THE DEMOCRATIC DEMANDS

•

F. Forest:

**LUXEMBURG'S THEORY OF ACCUMULATION
PART II**

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TWO LETTERS FROM PARIS

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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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THE GERMANIES

A Social, Political and Economic Survey

"... there were some other Societies which were formed with a wider and more elevated purpose, which knew that the upsetting of an existing Government was but a passing stage in the great impending struggle, and which intended to keep together and to prepare the party, whose nucleus they formed, for the last decisive combat which must, one day or another, crush forever in Europe the domination, not of mere 'tyrants,' 'despots' and 'usurpers,' but of a power far superior, and far more formidable than theirs; that of capital over labor." ("Revolution and Counter-Revolution, or Germany in 1848," Karl Marx)

The long and tortured history of the German nation is replete with abortive historic events; movements that began but which, for varying reasons, were never fulfilled—the Peasant War of the 1500's, the struggle for unification against Napoleon, the revolution of 1848, the Bismarckian and post-Bismarck drive for world imperial power, the 1919 revolution against the Kaiser, etc. But finally, ironically enough, it must be recognized that an historic "event" so profoundly reactionary in nature that the like of it has never before been seen (except for the Nazi régime itself), is being imposed upon the German nation, and that this event, or action, is being fulfilled to its lowest, vilest and most humiliating depths. We refer, of course, to the Four Power occupation and destruction of Germany, an action whose course and meaning we wish to describe in some detail.

Why should we study the details of the German occupation? Because it adds to the mounting weight of material explaining the true purposes of those powers that participated in the war, banishing forever the myth of a democratic "rehabilitation" of the German people; because it indicates the "retrogressive" depths to which capitalist imperialism and barbarism must plunge conquered nations and peoples in its wars; because the tragic fate of whole nations and even continents, in future wars, is already pictured for us in the fate of Germany, and because, in this study, we may find indicated the difficult road the German people must labor up, if they are to free themselves. And finally, each of the occupying powers (France, England, America and Russia), in the section of Germany allotted to its peculiar form of occupation, clearly mirrors and reflects the nature, problems and contradictions of its own internal, home régime. French-Germany, English-Germany, American-Germany and Russian-Germany are in a sense, images of present-day France, England, America and Russia, each extending its policies and economies to its German colonial possession.

Under the Nazi régime, all centralizing trends within Germany reached their highest possible development, within the grasp of the super police state. This condition has been described in many studies. In May, 1945, the Nazi state structure lay inert on the ground, a twisted mass of iron and steel without any frame. Nothing arose within Germany itself to replace it; not a single "dual power" tendency came forward. Into this emptiness rushed the Allied and Russian military forces, imposing their military will upon the former German nation, now without any economic, political or administrative machinery.

After almost a full year of occupation, we offer the following overall description of its results: The only adequate terms to describe Germany today would be those employed by medical science in detailing the condition of a paralytic. Atrophy of organs, lassitude and general feebleness, muscular degeneration and breaking down of cell life, with a general trend to sink lower and lower. What are some of the symptoms of this German paralysis?

The Physical Destruction

First and most obvious is the physical destruction of the basic industrial plant and the key cities. These plants, market and transportation centers remain as they were; heaps of rubble. Nor does shoveling rubble into neat piles on sidewalks revive the life of modern cities. Secondly, the major industrial centers, as we shall see when we examine the specific areas of occupation, remain largely silent and idle. Saar mining, Ruhr production, Berlin electric power, etc., have experienced a revival, but completely inadequate for needs. Whatever coordination existed between sectors of economy—peacetime industry, or the highly developed war planning of the Nazis—has, of course, been entirely broken. This massive breakdown really explains the paralysis of production. In general, the agricultural east has been shut off from the industrial west (despite clauses of the Potsdam Agreement), while a further breakdown exists within these two basic regions—agrarian Bavaria (Bavaria) has no economic exchange with the Ruhr industrial areas; the Saar and Ruhr are in limited contact (both have no ties with eastern Silesia). Canal, river, motor and rail transportation are so slight as to further accentuate this isolation and stagnation of the separate production centers.

The results of this process, in all areas, are apparent: production of machinery, capital goods or reconstruction has virtually ceased. Consumer's production (soap, matches, cloth-

ing and textiles, canned foods, etc.) is minute and not near 5 per cent of needs. Raw materials are not used, with the exception of coal; plant equipment rusts away, with the exception of small plants handy for occupation use. The only real production in Germany today is agricultural; it is the only real production planned for the future. Some roads have been repaired, some bridges rebuilt (if they lie along military supply lines) and rubble has been shoved on the sidewalks. The rest is paralysis. Germany's present living standard is closely approaching that of Europe's most devastated areas, and steadily falling. Accumulated stocks of food, clothing, tobacco have already been dispersed. Money is meaningless—there is nothing to purchase.

In many respects, the Anglo-American occupation of Germany is quite peaceful, moderate and even tolerant. There is no open "terror" against the people (this, of course, does not hold for the Russian or French zones, as we shall see below), no concentration camps, beatings, etc., to affect the civilians. The elementary, physical fears of the German have largely vanished. The bulk of the British and American forces have been withdrawn, except for the actual occupation forces. Within his city or town, the average German goes about as he pleases, except for the 5 or 6 hours of nightly curfew. He may travel about freely within the zone, with nothing but his regular identification papers. No travel permit is needed. He has his radio and some newspapers, and movies have reopened. Many elementary schools and half a dozen universities have also reopened. The soldiers walk freely about, without weapons, and mingle in quite friendly fashion with the Germans. Many Germans work alongside of the occupation troops, in bureaus, army installations, repair gangs, etc. There is little or no trouble. Political parties, meetings, concerts, organization of trade unions are now, by official Military Government proclamation, permitted. Even the released German war prisoners go about their business unmolested. Certainly these people have no feeling of direct "oppression," or "fear," in the usual sense of the word.

The Economic Life

It is in the sphere of economic life that Germany feels, and will continue to feel, the harshness of the punishment imposed by the Allied-Russian powers. This takes place in many ways, of which the following are most important. These methods fall into two general categories, direct seizures and expropriations; methods partially veiled in the processes of production and finance. It is well to bear in mind that the popular belief (even held by some Germans!) that the Potsdam reparation terms are lighter and "softer" than the terms of the original Versailles Treaty—that this belief is absurd. On the contrary, they are infinitely harder! This notion is based upon the fact that Potsdam reparation terms are stated in generalities, with no round, sum total figures; while Versailles terms were stated as blunt figures. The Germans are discovering their illusion.

"Static" Reparations:

(a) Material wealth (cattle, grain supplies, stored foods, jewelry, furniture, radios, etc.) openly taken or consumed by the occupying armies. Most important, of course, in the Russian, Russian-Polish and French occupational zones.

(b) Factory equipment (tools, machines, plans, etc.) merchant ships, locomotives and rolling stock, raw material stock piles, etc., distributed outright among the "Big Three."

(c) Distribution among the "Big Three" of German foreign assets (investments, raw material sources, stocks and cash).

(d) Distribution of additional German capital goods and equip-

ment among the 14 "small" nations who filed claims at the Small Powers Reparations Conference.

(e) Seizure and freezing of all German funds, savings, "big industry" accounts, Nazi organizations and party member holdings and wealth. Ultimate disposition of these vast funds is unknown as yet, but will be worked into the general reparations scheme.

(f) Devaluation of German mark and *de facto* liquidation of German national debt.*

"Productive" Reparations:

We intend the "tapping of German production for perhaps six years." (Mr. Pauley, American representative to Reparations Commission.)

The "victors" utilize:

(a) The labor power of approximately 4,000,000 German prisoners of war, working in Germany and a dozen other nations, for their food. This all-European reserve pool of labor is used and shifted about at will.

(b) The breakup and paralysis of heavy industry has thrown hundreds of thousands of proletarians and skilled workers out of industry and, through the pressure of unemployment, forced them into the desired channels of light industry, agriculture and employment by the occupation powers.

(c) Current production of the extractive industries (coal, iron ore, all mined raw materials) are mainly distributed among the armies of occupation, and the European nations. Except for public utility needs, Germany receives nothing.

(d) Entire production of finished light industry products, or remnants of heavy industry, goes to occupational forces (synthetic oil and gasoline; photographic lenses and porcelain ware; films and cameras; leather goods; truck and car assembly; toys and gifts, etc.). This also consumes current commodity-material stock piles.

(e) German labor and German factories directly producing for the occupational forces, under their direct management (in military installations bureaus, road and engineering projects, etc.).

(f) German payment for above production costs and costs of occupation. German labor directly employed by occupational forces is paid out of local, town, city or district funds raised by taxes, or taken from treasury surpluses. Bills and claims of factory owners, in addition to all property-damage or injury claims against the occupants, are turned over to Military Government for payment by local or higher German authority. In other words, the Germans themselves pay! When treasury funds are exhausted, frozen funds of "big industry" and Nazis will provide a further source.

Such are the realities of the occupation of Germany. When we examine the various areas of occupation we shall learn more details of this unprecedented (except by the Nazis themselves) robbery and exploitation of peoples. Its effect upon living standards is obvious. Labor rates and prices are similar to those that prevailed under the Nazi government. Yet, in effect, rates and prices in destroyed Germany are meaningless categories. The real value of the marks received for labor is determined by what they can buy. At present, and for a long period to come, purchasing power of the Germans will remain at the same dead-level, sub-standard; that is, rations to enable them to exist from day to day. Money has largely lost its meaning. Every German—"rich" or "poor"—working or unemployed—is able to draw his daily rations in exchange for his paper marks. Food received is enough to enable him to survive and continue working; his fuel is hauled from the local forest (sufficient to have heated one room during this past win-

*Allied Military Government and the Russians claim to have prevented inflation, rise in prices and the runaway panic of the 1920's. By this superficial claim is meant that the entire process of inflation and drastic deflation after the last war—a process of several years' duration—was accomplished this time by decree within a space of three months! Actually, the devaluation has been even more drastic, since middle class savings (bonds, forced governmental savings) have been entirely destroyed, and the important companies and industries that managed to revive after the uncontrolled inflation of the 20's have this time ceased to exist! The German middle class and the small business man are infinitely more "deflated" now than at the end of their previous experience. The German mark (devalued from 2½ to three to a dollar, to ten to a dollar) therefore now has 25 per cent or 33 per cent of its pre-war value.

ter), and on rare occasions he may obtain one or more of those commodities assumed necessary for life comforts. (There is no soap, few matches, no toilet articles, no new shoes or clothing, no furniture, no luxury item.) The German rationing system is the world's simplest, applied only to standard foods, such as bread, meat and fats. Whether one produces or not, he lives essentially the same.

Effect Upon the People

Such a disaster could not have overwhelmed any people, let alone a great nation of 75 millions, without the most profound political and moral effects. Beginning with Hitler's 1933 successes in overcoming the working class parties and institutions, along with every remnant of progressive thought and action, this ideologic decline continued until it reached its low point in the apathetic collapse of the nation before the invading armies. The Nazi régime had steadily lost support in the years of its decline, but the fact remains that the German masses struck not a single blow against the régime during its greatest crisis. It is this weariness, confusion of mind and thought, social and political atomism, that has colored the whole reaction of the German people to defeat and occupation. It has meant, up till now, a continuation of the same apathy and intense individualism that prevents any formation of definite German trends.

The German bourgeois, or capitalist, where he has not been arrested or done away with, has placed himself at the disposal of the occupant and tries to retain some power through an essentially Quisling role. If one can speak of the German bourgeoisie as a whole, it is only in the sense of a colonial, "*compradore*" bourgeoisie, thoroughly subordinate to the master. The highly diversified German middle class (petty bourgeois) has reacted with characteristic bewilderment, but essentially seeks to find a new life within the occupation fold, with a "perspective" based upon growing differences between the master powers. That is, the petty bourgeois in the Russian area searches for a place in the new administration (or the Communist Party) while the petty bourgeois in the American zone sells his possessions and his soul to the Black Market and prays for war with Russia.

"We knew nothing; we just believed; had we only known; how we have been betrayed." Every hope and emotion they had seen embodied in Hitler has now come home to roost, and the German petty bourgeois is filled with lamentation, remorse and self-pity. Despair is their lot, abasement their future and grovelling support to the powers-that-be is their present. Pastor Niemoller is their popular preacher; Professor Jaspers of Heidelberg their metaphysical theologian. Repentance, guilt, acceptance and subservience are their themes. *But such moods cannot last long and will vanish with the first stirrings of national and revived political life.*

The German *Frau*, the older German woman—those who are (or were) married, who have children; those past 30 and approaching middle aged—form a distinct and substantial stratum of the population. They are found in the remains of the Ruhr cities, in Berlin, in Nürnberg, Kassel, Breslau, Dresden; out on the farms and in the small villages. There are many millions of them and they have already borne the burden of the failures of the Weimar Republic, the years of war preparation and then the war itself. Now they must bear the burden of the occupation. Probably no group heretofore has undergone what these women have gone through—the years of endless labor, the struggle to keep families alive, the bombings and now the daily fight for food, winter fuel and material to patch up homes in

the destroyed cities. For many of them, their men are gone forever. They are among the 4 million estimated German dead. They will never remarry, since estimates already show approximately 2½ women for every German man. They continue their lonely existence primarily for the sake of their children. All forms of work and labor are familiar to them. They are the bulk of the farm laborers; they clean the streets of the bombed cities; they participate in the slight rebuilding; they stand on the long bread lines; they go into the forests for wood and pull back the carts. . . . The bulk of their labor is unpaid for, except rations for themselves and their children. They are the women of Käthe Kollwitz's famous lithographs, whom may simply say, "Mein Mann ist in Russland gefallen," or "In Frankreich vermisst," or "In Kriegsgefangenschaft."† But they will be of major importance in any future German freedom movement.

The Young Generation

By German *youth* we do not mean any fixed category since many soldiers and young workers belong in its ranks. Nevertheless, the young German boys and girls form a distinct stratum of German society, largely based on those remnants of the systematic Hitler indoctrination, with its simple slogans and fixed prejudices. The social vacuum in which this youth lives in all zones*** has its obvious results in the continuation and festering within the minds of German youth of these Nazi doctrines. How significant is it that the first "opposition" to the occupation comes from these demoralized young people and takes on the most reactionary, chauvinistic forms! Its main thesis is condemnation of any and all forms of fraternization between the German people and the foreign soldiers, under the leadership of ex-Gestapo and Wehrmacht officers. In the general misery that envelops the country, the new masters have failed to revive the educational system (only the first four grades of elementary school and a few theological and medical universities are open); have failed to open a professional or career outlet to the intellectual youth; have failed to create clubs, sport associations, etc.; and have failed to offer anything to the youth wandering through the cities and countryside. The most shameful moral indictment of all against the régime of occupation is, it goes without saying, what has happened to the young German girls. They have reached the lowest level, at the greatest speed. The story is too well known to need repetition, except to emphasize the fact that the many thousands of military government officers (particularly the Americans and Russians) are the guiltiest among the guilty. "The rehabilitation of German society!" The false method of resistance already employed by small sections of the German youth is a condemnation in itself of the entire occupation, but also a bad sign for the future of Germany's liberation movement.

The German Veteran

Great masses of German soldiers have already been released from the prisoner of war camps. Although millions still remain, particularly in Russian and French hands, the German veteran is another distinct stratum.

He has found his way home, or to what remains of home. But many have remained in farm areas, preferring this drudg-

† "My husband was killed in Russia," or "missing in France," or "a prisoner of war."

***In the Russian zone, the Communist Party appeals to the former *Hitlerjugend* to join the young Communist organization; an appeal that has no political content to it but is aimed as a mere substitution of one movement for the other.

ing life (where food is available) to returning to ruined cities, or the Russian occupation zone. Of all groups within Germany, the former Wehrmacht soldiery is the most difficult to penetrate or understand. The rank-and-file veterans are silent and opposed to any and all political parties, political activities and political thought. Only the former officers or army leaders have recovered to the extent of proclaiming some thought or program. This we shall consider later, but the real point is that the weary, exhausted and ragged veterans are still passing through that stage of weighing and evaluating the meaning of what has happened. As the inevitable regrouping and reorganization of German life proceeds, it is impossible to know or predict what paths these men will follow.

The German Workers

Much has been written of the German worker; the former Social-Democratic or Communist proletarian. American CIO and AFL labor leaders have toured the country and, basing the entire problem around the question of "growth of German trade unions," have rendered optimistic or pessimistic reports, depending upon their eyesight. But this superficial nonsense is not confined to the liberal, or labor-bureaucratic press, unfortunately. The *basic* fact that there is today no German labor movement, in a political or organizational or ideologic sense, must first be grasped. The reconstituted political parties (see below) must not be confused with the tremendous task confronting the German working class—that is, wiping out the effects of Nazism within its ranks, reviving free and democratic trade unions and organizing a revolutionary, internationalist vanguard not bound by the Social-Democracy, or to Stalinism. In the February *NEW INTERNATIONAL* Comrade Johnson writes, "The German workers failed to achieve a coordinated revolt. The exact reasons for this we do not know and doubtless before very long they will tell us for themselves." This wishful thinking belongs to the field of subjective mysticism, not clear analysis. The contention that the German working class, as a whole—that broken, ground-down, atomized and confused mass of workers now endeavoring to pull themselves to their feet—is capable of consciously analyzing its great failures and defeats simply ignores what has occurred and in no way aids the problem. Furthermore, the reasons for this failure to "revolt" are well known and have been written about for years. They are rooted in the process of fascism itself and in the nature of the war just concluded, in which the bourgeoisie succeeded, thanks primarily to the Stalinist movement, in keeping the world proletariat sharply divided.

In a previous article we described what has happened to the German working class and the point at which it resumes its historic life. It is worth a brief repetition. The German proletariat was mobilized and fought in the war, including its best sections (miners, steel workers, machinists, etc.). It suffered enormous casualties in dead, wounded and those who remain as prisoners. In the physical destruction of German industry, large numbers of workers were scattered about, in towns and villages, away from their factories. Most of them remain there still. They have become farm hands, along with their families; or handicraft workers. This tendency, this drop in the ranks of German proletarians, can only increase with the application of the Potsdam agreements. Only coal, iron ore and railway workers remain in any substantial, organized numbers. The rest are engaged in light, domestic industries. As to the new unions, we shall discuss below their real nature as instruments of economic class struggle. Meanwhile, let us

not place impossible tasks before this proletariat. Its problems are on a much lower level. Those who, as Johnson apparently does, still consider Germany the "key to the European situation" are worthless counsellors to those German socialists and revolutionists who are seriously attempting to answer the problem of how to revive the German labor movement.

The Political Parties

But what about, we may be asked, the various political parties? Is there not an active German political life, party discussions and conventions, campaigns and elections, newspapers and platforms? As with the trade unions, which bear only a nominal resemblance to the class struggle trade unions of pre-Hitler days, the newly revived German political parties only caricature their former selves. We refer not merely to size, membership, influence and resources, but primarily to their strictly limited role in German life.

Since the Potsdam Conference decided that political parties may operate legally in all occupied sections, thus extending the Russian method to the Allied zone, four political parties have been organized, operate openly and participate in elections. Political contact between these parties in the various zones, at first very slight, has now increased. The four parties are: (1) The Liberal-Democratic Party—a small party of traditional German liberals, professionals and business men; (2) the Christian-Democratic Union (primarily in Bavaria)—an openly conservative party of the Catholic Church, landlords and peasant proprietors, guided by experienced civil service functionaries; (3) the Social-Democratic Party and (4) the Communist Party. In most small towns and cities these parties have no actual organization, being confined largely to the big centers.

Formally speaking, the four parties have essentially the same program. The Communist Party works for a "united people's Germany"; the Social-Democratic Party for "... a parliamentary-democratic Republic, with all democratic rights and freedoms for the German people" (*Bayrischer Tag*), and the two bourgeois parties are also "for democracy." Formally speaking, furthermore, all parties agree on the following basic points:

- (a) Germany must accept, collaborate with and assist the Allied-Russian occupation, the Potsdam agreements and any and all additional burdens imposed upon the country.
- (b) The German people, as a whole, are "war guilty" and must accept the consequences of this "guilt."
- (c) No drastic, radical measures of "nationalization of industry" shall be advocated; a slow evolution of the people toward a "democratic régime," under Allied-Russian guidance.

Such is the formal basis of the present four-party agreement. It need hardly be added that not a one proposes an end to the occupation, proclaims Germany's right of self-determination, protests against the reparations proposals, or advocates methods of economic struggle to the new German "trade unions." Henry Morrison, in the March *NEW INTERNATIONAL*, has described in detail the politics of these parties, although we cannot accept his implied preference for the Social Democracy. The point is that not one of these parties represents anything but capitulation, humiliation and quisling subordination on the part of the German people to their present oppressors. The bourgeois parties represent the remnants of the German bourgeoisie, capable of only a "compradore" role in German life; the Social Democrats serve the Allied occupants as political stooges, while the Communists are, of course, the

despicable quislings of the Moscow oppressors. All alike offer no hope for the nation.

The German people are well aware, of course, of the manner in which each of these parties, lacking a genuine independence and program, is tied down to one or another of the occupying powers. This explains the slight effect, or interest, their activities have upon the masses. This indifference is not due solely to the preoccupation with the problem of food and elementary survival. Since in no sense of the word do the Germans consider themselves "war guilty," it is clear that they reject, psychologically, the spirit of meek resignation and passivity implied in the activities of the four parties. Refusing to enter the Sacred Convent of Repentant Peoples and don the Veil of Guilt, but finding no other home offered to them at present, they stand still. The four parties bore and annoy them (particularly with their newspapers). Only the old folks derive interest from this so-called party life. The youth, ex-soldiers and workers are thoroughly uninterested.

The SP-CP Merger Question

But one significant political issue has arisen in which there is undoubtedly widespread interest and concern. That is the effort of the Communist Party to merge with the Social Democracy, or rather, to swallow up the Social Democracy after a shotgun wedding. C. L. Sulzberger writes in the *N. Y. Times*, "In the Soviet-occupied zone of Germany tremendous pressure has been brought on the Social Democrats to favor the merger with the Communists. Certain Social Democrat leaders opposing this have disappeared. Communists and pro-Communist Socialists have received special favors and rations." The Russian military governors have even hinted at an easing of the occupation and withdrawal of large forces, provided the merger goes through shortly. On the other hand, they have bared their criminal fists by reopening old concentration camps, to house unwelcome opponents of the merger, including many who have spent years in the concentration camps of Hitler.

Such a merger would and could have only reactionary consequences, both for the possibility of independent political life and for the Russian-occupied zone. It would make firmer the totalitarian control of the Stalinists, destroy the Social Democratic party and provide Russia with an effective, quisling-like, method of maintaining its control over half of Germany *even after* the withdrawal of its troops. The struggle against such a merger with Stalinism* is the first progressive political step toward revival of an independent, class-conscious labor movement. The 2,500 delegates at the Berlin Social Democratic congress who voted 80 per cent against their leader who had proposed it were, in effect, taking the first step forward of the German working class, notwithstanding the fact that the anti-merger movement is led by Social Democrats who prefer to serve the Anglo-Americans. The Social Democratic workers are moved by a concern to maintain the independence of this movement, even if more concerned with national than class independence.

We must conclude that today, as has been the case since the 1933 capitulation of the German Communist Party before Hitler, the German working class has no political, vanguard

*It is important to distinguish between the role of the German Communist Party in the Russian zone, and its role in the Allied zone. In the former it is, of course, a pure quisling, bureaucratic setup; in the Allied zone it is an *opposition* party, opposing the military government setup and demagogically critical of everything. But, of course, the Party functions as a united Party under centralized leadership from Berlin.

leadership. It is a class without a representative party, and this fact must be the starting point in our analysis of how to reconstruct the German labor movement. *Neither* the Social Democracy nor Stalinism, both basically committed—although to lesser degrees—to quisling rôles in German life, will serve the beaten working class of Germany. A quisling rôle means approval of national oppression and foreign enslavement, concretely. This fact alone is sufficient to damn them in the eyes of the proletariat. But there are today no other working class parties to which they can turn.

The Zones of Occupation

In similarity of methods, the occupation forces fall into two categories—the Russians and French; the British and Americans. In harshness, primitiveness of method and brutality, the Russian and French administrators stand closest together, although here the similarity ends. Both employed, particularly at first, the same technique of plunder, looting, raping, open confiscation of wealth and factories, living off the population and its land, etc. A report from the French zone states, "The French administration is a definitely rightist régime. Almost the entire officer corps consists of adherents of the Vichy régime, of royalists and members of the *Croix de Feu*. A German Nazi is much nearer to many of them than a left-wing Frenchman. This the local Nazis understood quite well. Few of them fled. Many are leading a conspicuous existence in the smaller cities and are holding offices in the administration." A long trip, by the writer, through the French zone in late 1945 verified this, plus the additional fact that reconstruction (elementary repair work) has been at a minimum. The Saar district, principal French occupation area, is in a miserable state of semi-starvation and low productivity. The French occupation has well been compared with the colonial, imperial system of the Romans, with its overbearing administration of French *praetors* and proconsuls. It reflects the most savage form of French imperialist bourgeois spirit of revenge and expansion, and is guided by the policy of annexation of the Rhineland, Ruhr and the Saar (or as much as can be obtained with American approval). It is the frankest and most avowed of the capitalist-imperialist occupation zones.

Russian Occupation Policy

The methods employed by the Russians in their occupation of half of Germany are now familiar to all, and have often been described. Its barbaric and criminal character, including the forced migrations of millions, on a scale not even employed by the Nazis, has silenced all but the most blind defenders of the theory that Russia is, despite all, a "Workers' State," and that its seizure of enemy territories will be accompanied by popular risings and revolutionary waves. But silence, of course, explains nothing and it is more than ever incumbent upon these comrades to explain themselves and their illusions. The truth is that the greatest and most intense hatred against the occupying forces exists in the Russian zone. At every opportunity, the population (particularly the workers) demonstrate their hatred of the Russians and what they have done. The workers, at present, can only demonstrate their attitude in the trade unions, where they defeat the Stalinist candidates at each chance, and in the Social Democratic party, in the struggle against unification. In this sense, the struggle against the merger has a national character.

But what of Russian social and economic policy? Despite the totalitarian set-up in the zone, isn't this progressive? Isn't "socialization of industry," destruction of Junkerdom and the

bourgeoisie, etc., a step forward? Perhaps the German workers and peasants are too backward and under Nazi influence to appreciate what is being done for them! What can be wrong, then, if the Russians impose "socialism" (with all its benefits) upon them?

The theoreticians of the "Workers' State" theory are, perhaps, toying with such treacherous concepts (else, why should they continue their silence on this question?). All the more reason to state firmly that not only does Russian occupation policy have nothing whatever in common with socialism, but it has not the slightest "progressive" content and is, on the contrary, reactionary and against every interest of the German workers and peasants.

Why do we say this? To begin with, socialism requires the elevation and expansion of the productive forces. That is basic. Russian imperialism loots, destroys and *lowers* the productive forces of the occupied nation. "Reports from the Russian occupied zone of Germany indicate that a second wave of dismantling industrial plants is under way by Soviet Military authorities, the first having taken place last summer. In the latest instance the stripping of machinery and equipment from plants for shipment to the east has concentrated especially on sugar refineries adjacent to Magdeburg, said to be the largest in the world . . . *Six hundred plants* are said to have been marked for transfer . . ." (*N. Y. Times*, March 23, 1946) When the Germans protested, they were informed that the Russians, under Potsdam, were entitled to much more and they, the Germans, should be content that the rest had not been taken! The grand total of means of production stolen, looted, destroyed and "legally" acquired under Potsdam is not known, but an authentic guess would place it at about 50 per cent of the total in the zone. Its social effect upon the German working class, now deprived of their means of livelihood, is clear. Perhaps the "Workers' State" defenders will tell us that the "progressive" nature of this imperialist robbery lies in the fact that these former private means of production now become collective, in Russia!

But what of Russian land policy, what of the "socialization" of those factories and mines that remain? What of the administration being created? Is it not a fact that the historically reactionary Junker landlord class has been wiped out, along with substantial sections of the German bourgeoisie in the occupied zone? A recent report describes how a plebiscite, to be held shortly, will decide on the "nationalization" of 3,600 industrial establishments (size not given) out of an estimated 4,000 in the whole area. Coal mines in Sachsen (Saxony), textile mills, electrical works, etc., are taken from their former owners (without compensation), and turned over for control and operation by the new state apparatus. A law "promulgated by the Soviet Military Government and covering the socialization of industries" will shortly be published. 7,000 large estates, totaling 4,000,000 acres, have been distributed to date among 270,000 peasants and share-croppers, with the process continuing. Junkerdom and capitalism are finished in Russian-occupied Germany! Is this not social revolution?

To begin with, the action of breaking up the Junker estates and dividing them among the peasantry, is not a socialist measure, but one familiar to many types of bourgeois-democratic or Bonapartist movements. (Cardenas in Mexico; Peron in Argentina, etc.) Particularly under the given circumstances in Germany today, where it is apparent that a later development toward socialist collective farming is out of the question (due to the low industrial productivity that will prevail in the zone), the whole action takes on a dubious character.

"Even Communist organs have come out with the statement that 200,000 of the 270,000 new farmers have been left in the air, without the wherewithal to get going." (*N. Y. Times*, Dec. 20, 1945.) Despite the destruction of the Junker class, this action, under bureaucratic aegis, without the mobilization of the peasantry into democratic committees, with no prospects of procuring machinery and industrial products, but a distinct prospect of violent grain requisitioning, this dividing up of the large estates has little in common with the "land to the peasants" slogan of the Russian Revolution. Above all, it shows little prospect of moving along the line of more productive, collective farming.

Nationalization of industry by decree has the same non-socialist character. The exact nature and conditions of this nationalization are not known, but it has nothing in common with workers' control, management and regulation. The whole process is imposed from above, by the Soviet military authorities, who fix wages and labor conditions, then announce production goals! The German workers do not participate in this act, and their unions—dominated by Stalinist leadership—have as little to say as the unions in Russia proper. The setup is totalitarian, by decree; there is not a tinge of workers' democracy in it. Particularly must be borne in mind the fact that the production of these nationalized industries falls into Russian hands, through outright appropriation, or commercial action. For the Russian masters, this so-called nationalization is a method of obtaining the fruits of that German industry upon which they have not yet laid their hands. That capitalism, as we know it, has been destroyed (or so limited that, in effect, it doesn't exist) is undeniable. That a reactionary totalitarian economy, centered in a new state apparatus controlled in turn by a foreign power, has replaced it is likewise undeniable.

What is the nature of Russian-occupied Germany? It is a semi-colony of Stalinist, Russian imperialism. The phenomenon of Russian imperialism, something distinct from Anglo-American imperialism, is new to us. It is in a state of flux and development and therefore not readily describable, like the older, classic imperialisms. But it is far more than a mere system of robbing and looting capital goods, and wealth in general. Classic British imperialism, in its early days of primitive robbery and accumulation, was represented by the East India company, but soon learned that a more organized, systematic method must be adopted. The same holds true for neo-Russian imperialism. In Germany, its first stage of naked plundering is finished and it is now organizing for systematic exploitation. It is developing new methods, but obeys the general law that a state-apparatus most easy to control, and parallel to the state-apparatus at home, is the most effective of methods. The British imperialists in India had their princes, landlords and "compradore" bourgeois; the Russians have their ex-Nazi "technicians," civil service bureaucrats and above all, their Communist Party. The methods of British imperialism flowed from the nature of British finance and industrial capitalism; the methods of Russian imperialism (strategic, economic and political in character) flow from the nature of Russian bureaucratic, state collectivism. Just as the Indian masses became the slaves of foreign imperialism, so will the German workers and peasants become the slaves, under a totalitarian state system, of Russian imperialism, *provided* the Russians succeed in completing what they are now in process of erecting. But that process is far from complete.

HENRY JUDD

Luxemburg's Theory of Accumulation - II

Market, Crises and the Breakdown of Capitalism

The dispute between Marx and Luxemburg is not confined to the limits of the formulae. That is only the outer shell of the inner core of the essential question of the breakdown of capitalism, or the creation of the material foundation for socialism. Throughout her criticism of the formula in Volume II, Luxemburg maintains that Volume III contains "*in implicite*" the solution to the problem posed "but not answered" in Volume II. By the "implicit" solution Luxemburg means the analysis of the contradiction between production and consumption, and between production and the market. That, however, is *not* what Marx called "the general contradiction of capitalism."

The "general contradiction of capitalism,"²⁷ writes Marx, consists in the fact that capitalism has a tendency toward limitless production "regardless of the value and surplus value incorporated in it and regardless of the conditions of production under which it is produced." That is why, in "Unravelling the Inner Contradiction," Marx places in the center of his analysis, not the market, but the "Conflict between Expansion of Production and the Creation of Values."

The constant revolutions in production and the constant expansion of constant capital, writes Marx, necessitates, of course, an extension of the market. But, he explains, the enlargement of the market in a capitalist nation has very precise limits. The consumption goods of a capitalist country are limited by the luxuries of the capitalists and the necessities of the workers when paid at value. The market for consumption goods is just sufficient to allow the capitalist to continue his search for greater value. *It cannot be larger.*

This is the supreme manifestation of Marx's simplifying assumption that the worker is paid at value. The innermost cause of crises, according to Marx, is that labor power *in the process of production*, and *not in the market* creates a value greater than it itself is. The worker is a producer of overproduction. It cannot be otherwise in a value-producing society where the means of consumption, being but a moment in the reproduction of labor power, cannot be bigger than the needs of capital for labor power. That is the fatal defect of capitalist production. On the one hand, the capitalist must increase his market. On the other hand it cannot be larger.

Luxemburg, however, is so blind to all this, that she insists that it is not the problem that is insoluble, but Marx's premise which makes it so. She is prevented from seeing what is most fundamental to Marx because, on the one hand, she has excluded crises as being merely "the *form* of movement but not the movement itself of capitalist economy."²⁸ On the other hand, because she abandoned Marx's basic premise, she looked at the market not as a manifestation of the production relationship, but as something expendable *outside of* that relationship. To Marx, however, the "market" that can be enlarged beyond the limits of the working population paid at value is the capital market. Even there the constant technological revolutions make the time necessary to *reproduce* a product tomorrow *less* than the time it took to *produce* it today. Hence there comes a time when all commodities, *including labor power*, have been "overpaid."

The crisis that follows is not caused by a shortage of "effective demand." On the contrary, it is the crisis that causes a

shortage of "effective demand." The worker employed yesterday has become unemployed today. A crisis occurs not because there has been a scarcity of markets—the market is largest just before the crisis—but because *from the capitalist viewpoint* there is occurring an unsatisfactory distribution of "income" between recipients of wages and those of surplus value or profits. The capitalist decreases his investments and the resulting stagnation of production appears as overproduction. Of course, there is a contradiction between production and consumption. Of course, there is the "inability to sell." But that "inability to sell" manifests itself as such *because of the fundamental antecedent decline in the rate of profit, which has nothing whatever to do with the inability to sell.*

What Marx is describing in his analysis of the "general contradiction of capitalism" is (1) the degradation of the worker to an appendage of a machine, (2) the constant growth of the unemployed army, and (3) capitalism's own downfall because of its inability to give greater employment to labor. Since labor power is the supreme commodity of capitalist production, the only source of its value and surplus value, capitalism's inability to reproduce it dooms capitalism itself.

Thus the three principal facts of capitalist production which are reaffirmed not merely "implicitly" but *explicitly* in the real world in Volume III are: (1) decline in the rate of profit, (2) deeper and deeper crises, and (3) a greater and greater unemployed army.

One by one Luxemburg rejects these, either in part or in full, either implicitly or explicitly. As we have seen, she has entirely excluded any consideration of crises from her analysis of accumulation. She now dismisses the decline in the rate of profit as symbolic of capitalist collapse. She states that the tendency for the *rate* to decline is, if not entirely negated, at least strongly counterbalanced, by the increase in the *mass* of profit. Therefore, she concludes, we might as well wait for "the extinction of the sun"²⁹ as to wait for capitalism to collapse through a decline in its rate of profit. On the contrary, she writes, the historic process will reveal the "real" source of capital accumulation and hence the cause of capitalism's downfall when that source will have been exhausted:

From the historic point of view, accumulation of capital is a process of exchange of things between capitalist and pre-capitalist methods of production. Without pre-capitalist methods of production, accumulation cannot take place. . . . The impossibility of accumulation signifies from the capitalist point of view the impossibility of the further development of the productive forces and consequently the objective historic necessity for the breakdown of capitalism.³⁰

Here again Luxemburg was betrayed into this position by the one and only fundamental error she made to start with—the counterposition of "reality" to theory. This leads her to so fully depart from the Marxian theory of accumulation that she finally denies Marx the right to assume that labor power will always be on hand for purposes of expanded reproduction *simultaneously* with assuming a closed capitalist society. "Reality" would show, she writes, that it is the non-capitalist societies which are the "reservoir of labor power."³¹ By denying Marx that right she is denying the Marxist theory of population. With a single stroke of the pen Luxemburg frees capitalism from its "absolute general law"—the reserve army of

labor—which, says Marx, is all-dominant even when the entire social capital has been concentrated in “the hands of one single capitalist or one single corporation.”³² That is the blind alley to which Luxemburg was led by the phenomena of imperialism which had driven her to substitute “reality” for theory.

2. Once Again, Theory and Reality

Theory and reality are not separable. Marxist theory is the conscious expression of the unconscious historic process. Distinction between the real world and general theory is false. The real world has significance only if you see it in relation to a certain theory. Essentially there can be only two modes of thought in contemporary society: bourgeois or proletarian-Marxist. If you develop consistently away from the Marxist you must inevitably fall prey to the bourgeois theory. That is what happened to Luxemburg. That is what happens to anyone who comes unarmed by Marx's fundamental premise into the broad sphere of exchange and consumption where the capitalist hides behind the guises of “consumer,” “buyer” and “seller.”

Wherein lay the importance of the imperialist phenomena that Luxemburg said contradicted the Marxist theory and diagrammatic presentation of accumulation? Obviously in the fact that the phenomena brought into view “not only” a closed capitalist society and its contradictions, “but also” the non-capitalist strata and societies and its relation to them. And not merely “also,” but “first of all.” And from this “first of all” Luxemburg did not hesitate to draw the logical conclusion that accumulation was “inconceivable in any respect whatever” without these third groups. But if accumulation is “inconceivable” without this outside force, then it is this force, and not labor, which will bring about the downfall of capitalism. The historic necessity of the proletarian revolution falls to the ground.

Luxemburg, the revolutionist, feels the abysmal gap between her theory and her revolutionary activity, and comes to the rescue of Luxemburg, the theorist. “Long before” capitalism would collapse through exhaustion of the non-capitalist world, writes Luxemburg, the contradictions of capitalism, both internal and external, would reach such a point that the proletariat would overthrow it.

But it is not a question of “long before.” No revolutionist doubts that the *only final* solution of the problem of expanded reproduction will come in the actual class struggle, on the live historic stage, as a result of class meeting class on the opposite sides of the barricades. The question *scientifically* or *theoretically* is: does the solution come *organically* from your theory, or is it brought there merely by your “revolutionary will.” In Marx the granite foundation for socialism and the inevitability of capitalist collapse come from the very laws of capitalist production: capitalism produces wage labor, its grave digger. The organic composition of capital produces, on the one hand, the decline in the rate of profit, and, on the other hand, the reserve army of labor. The inability of capitalism to reproduce its only value-creating substance sounds the death-knell of capitalism.

With Luxemburg, on the other hand, death comes not from the *organism* of capitalism, but from an outside force: “non-capitalist strata and non-capitalist societies,” while the revolution is dragged on by her indomitable revolutionary will. The socialist proletarian revolution, which, with Marx, is rooted in the *material* development of the conflicting forces of capital and labor, here becomes a wish disconnected from

the increasing subordination of the laborer to, and his growing revolt from, the capitalist labor process.

3. A Single Capitalist Society and “A Different Distribution of National Capital”

Lenin, in his voluminous writings in defense of the abstraction of a closed capitalist society, wrote that not only had Marx the right to his assumption, but that it was the *only scientific* method possible to illustrate (1) the law of realization, which held true “whether we take one nation or the whole world,”³³ and (2) to prove that distribution was *not* the problem. By projecting an ideal capitalist society in which the capitalist has absolutely no headaches about markets—everything produced is “sold”—Marx proved, says Lenin, that the capitalists' search for markets is motivated by the search for greater profits, and not because it is absolutely impossible “to realize” the goods produced within the capitalist society.

“Under a *different* distribution of the national capital,” writes Lenin, “the same quantity of products could be realized within the country.”³⁴

When Engels had postulated a similar “distribution of national capital,” he too had done so without changing the basic capital-labor relationship:

The modern state, whatever its form, is an essentially capitalist machine; it is the state of the capitalists, the ideal collective body of all the capitalists. The more productive forces it takes over, the more it becomes the real collective body of all the capitalists, the more citizens it exploits. The workers remain wage earners, proletarians. The capitalist relationship is not abolished; it is rather pushed to an extreme.³⁵

Because this capitalist relationship would not be abolished but would rather be “pushed to an extreme,” Marx would not budge from his premise of a society consisting only of workers and capitalists. By being solidly based on the capital-labor relationship Marx sees that the decline in the rate of profit cannot be obviated either by an increase in the mass of profits or by an increase in the “effective demand” for the extra products created. No matter what the market is, the technology of production is such that the capitalist needs relatively less workers to man the new and ever larger machines. Along with the technology of production, the production relationship is such that surplus value comes only from living labor (variable capital in the process of production), which is now an ever smaller part of total capital. Hence the tendency to decline reveals ever clearer the *law of surplus value* behind that tendency.

The logical development of this tendency, writes Marx, will reveal that ultimately *not even the full twenty-four hours of labor* would produce sufficient surplus value to turn the wheels of expanded reproduction on a *capitalist* basis:

In order to produce the same rate of profit when the constant capital set in motion by one laborer increases ten-fold, the surplus labor time would have to increase ten-fold and soon the total labor time and finally the full twenty-four hours a day would not suffice even if wholly appropriated by capital.³⁶

We have reached the theoretic limit of capitalist production. It is as inextricably connected with labor as is the theory of the abolition of capitalism with the proletarian revolution. That is why an organic part of Marx's theory of accumulation is the mobilization of the proletariat for the overthrow of capitalism. That is why Marx would not be moved from his premise of a closed society. It was the basis not only of Volume II of *Capital* but of Volumes I and III, as well as of his *Theories of Surplus Value*. Moreover, it was the basis not only of his entire theoretical system but also of his whole revolutionary activity.

4. The Breakdown of Capitalism and the Decline in the Rate of Profit

Marx developed his analysis of capitalist production on different levels of abstraction. In Volume I of *Capital*, the most abstract of the three volumes, he projects the ultimate development of the economic laws of capitalism, the concentration and centralization of the means of production until they reach the limit, "the concentration of the entire social capital in the hands of one single capitalist or one single corporation."

This single capitalist society becomes the ideal capitalist society which is the premise of Marx's famous formulae in Volume II. Even in Volume III, where we are introduced to the "real" world, with its bogus transactions, credit manipulations and all other complicating factors of a complex society, Marx's vantage point remains the sphere of value production of a closed capitalist society. The main conflict in society, as in production, remains the conflict between capital and labor. It becomes aggravated, not modified, with the expansion of production and expansion of credit, and none of the laws of production whether reflected in the declining rate of profit, or in the reserve army of labor, are attenuated by market manipulations. Rather the abstract laws themselves come to full fruition.

Today we can see that clearer than ever. Even should, for instance, Britain and France nationalize production and take complete control of credit, that being a *given* capitalist society, i.e., a society existing within the environment of a world market, the fundamental factor remains the labor-capital relationship over which the law of value dominates. Atomic energy may be the secret discovery of the United States, but France must follow suit or perish. The given society is subject to any technological revolutions, no matter where these originate. The capitalist of the given country remains the agent of value production and is caught in the vise of value production. On the one hand, the only source of value and surplus value is living labor. On the other hand, his method of production is such that he constantly uses less living labor in relation to dead labor (machines). These highly contradictory laws are inextricably connected. When the capitalist—whether he is one, one thousand or one single corporation in any given country—obeys these laws, he is subject to the decline in the rate of profit—ratio of surplus value to total capital. Yet the disobedience of these laws would only bring about his downfall the sooner. Supposing that the single capitalist society tried either to give greater employment to labor or to raise the standard of living of the worker, who, being paid at value, becomes a cheaper commodity the more commodities he produces. The moment it attempted to give the worker a value for labor power greater than is *socially* necessary for its production, the cost of *all* commodities would go up. The amount of value above value, or the surplus, therefore, would get less and the single capitalist society, existing in the environment of the world market, would be made to understand that it is part of a value-producing "one world" and must obey its laws or perish—either in competition or on the battle fronts.

Marx considered the theory of the declining rate of profit to be "the *pons asini*" of the whole of political economy, that which divides one theoretic system from another.³⁷

The protracted depression following the 1929 crash silenced the vulgarizers of political economy, who denied that there is such a tendency. However, it was inconceivable to this "new political economy," as it is to all bourgeois, that the decline

in the rate of profit comes from the very vitals of the productive system. Marx, based as he was on the capital-labor relationship, saw the decay in capitalist production in the tendency in the *rate* of profit to decline despite the growth in its *mass*. The bourgeois economists, on the other hand, see the decline in the rate not as a result of the organic composition of capital, reflecting the relationship of dead to living labor, but as a result merely of "a deficiency in effective demand."

Paul Sweezy, a "Marxist" professor tainted with a good deal of Stalinism, thinks that, although Marx wrote some 4,000 pages on the capitalist method of production (*The Theories of Surplus Value* were written as Volume III of *Capital*), and must be considered as part of the monumental work), he was all the time feeling his way to an under-consumption theory, without having had a chance to develop it. However, even Sweezy has to admit that as Marx's work stands, his theory of the falling rate of profit is opposed to the under-consumptionist theory. He correctly summarizes the differences in the two positions:

It is important to grasp the difference between the crises associated with the falling tendency of the rate of profit and the realization crises. . . . In the one case, we have to do with movements in the rate of surplus value and the composition of capital, with the value system remaining intact; in the other case, we have to do with as yet unspecified forces tending to create a general shortage in effective demand for commodities, not indeed in the sense that the demand is insufficient to buy all commodities offered, but that it is insufficient to buy them at a satisfactory rate of profit. The starting point of the crisis is in both cases a decline in the rate of profit; but what lies behind the decline in the rate of profit in the one case requires a very different analysis from what lies behind the decline in the rate of profit in the other.³⁸

Simply stated, it all boils down to this. Either the decline in the rate of profit results from the preponderance of constant capital over variable and is incapable of resolution except through the abolition of this capital-labor relationship. Or it is due to an external force, effective demand, and thus can be doctored up *outside* of the production relationship of capital to labor.

Such a theory is an absolute necessity to the bourgeoisie. Capitalism not only centralizes the means of production, it socializes the labor process. Capitalism not only degrades the worker to an appendage of a machine, it also disciplines him. Capitalism not only throws the worker out of employment, it also prepares him for revolt. Capitalist rule is becoming unacceptable to its wage slaves. Hence the bourgeois theorists, faithful servants to the bourgeois class, comes to its rescue with a theory that the worker need not revolt. The evils of capitalism, they say, can be eliminated and the capitalist production system can be doctored up to work.

Needless to say, Luxemburg was not seeking means to doctor up capitalism. Nevertheless, such is the logic of thought that, once she denied the Marxist theory of accumulation, she was forced to come to a conclusion which anticipates the latest *bourgeois* economic theory! Where the bourgeois economists look for a rising standard of living to supply "the effective demand" and thus stifle the decline in the rate of profit and "induce" the capitalist to increase his investments, Luxemburg, being a Marxist and *taking for granted* that the laborer can present a demand for *no more products* than those equivalent to his being paid at value, looked for a "non-capitalist milieu" to supply the "effective demand." What is common to both these theories is that both look *outside* of capitalism's direct exploitative process, outside the process of *value* production. That is why the modern economists seized upon Luxemburg's theory. A leading British economist informs us that

Luxemburg "most clearly" developed "the under-consumption element in Marxist theory."³⁹ Although this worthy bourgeois admits that among Marxists Luxemburg is regarded as "heretical" on this question, she nevertheless hopes through this connection to give underconsumptionism a "Marxist" flavor.

IV—Conclusions to Be Drawn

Luxemburg began her *Accumulation*, which she considered a "supplement" to Marx's *Capital*, by abandoning Marx's premise. The latter, however, is the foundation of Marx's entire theoretical system. Rejecting it, Luxemburg must reject his whole method of political economy. Her book is the first attempt to give a Marxist flavor to a distribution theory. The tendency has existed before, but it is only after the appearance of her book that it has gained theoretic credentials. *Luxemburg's Accumulation of Capital is not a supplement to, but a revision of, Marx's Capital.*

Luxemburg's work is a theoretic test for revolutionary Marxism's ability to answer the challenge that has appeared from within its own ranks. It is also a theoretic test for Luxemburgians who contend that hers is the only revolutionary solution to the problem of expanded reproduction.

How has Luxemburg's theory stood the test of time? On the one hand it has served to disorient the Marxist movement. In his Introduction to *Imperialism and the Accumulation of Capital*, Bukharin states that he was prevented from writing the draft of the CI program because of the Luxemburgians' insistence that her theory of accumulation become the theoretical foundation of the program of the Third International. Hence, he had first to expose her errors. On the other hand, Luxemburg's theory of accumulation, a misnomer for "realization," is being used by underconsumptionists for a Marxist decoration.

Surely Rosa must be tossing restlessly in her grave at the sight of bourgeois economics embracing her theory. Unfortunately, she herself never made clear how she reconciled her theoretic and revolutionary positions. This has not become clearer in the narrower vision of her disciples. They can do no more than point to her revolutionary martyrdom, although one has been so bold as to say that her theory of accumulation has solved a problem which "had exhausted even Marx's huge powers" and that only with her book, "the idea of socialism had shed the last vestige of Utopianism."⁴⁰

It is not insignificant that the anti-Leninist Luxemburgian, Paul Mattick, has nothing to say about the acceptance by bourgeois economists of Luxemburg's underconsumption theory, although this runs directly counter to his curious theory, to wit: although Lenin was right, he was wrong, and although Luxemburg was wrong, she was right because her theory led to "truly revolutionary conclusions."⁴¹ The truth is that no matter what revolutionary conclusions she drew, her theory that expanded reproduction depends upon effective demand rhymes precisely with the current theory of bourgeois economics.

The Stalinists, who have in the past boosted the Keynesian theory, now, in their new-found desire for "socialism," find it necessary to oppose it. In the *Daily Worker* of January 15, 1946, "a letter from a comrade" is published demanding that the Keynesian theory of political economy be exposed for the dangerous fraud that it is. With the new turn, the American Stalinists are recognizing the necessity for restoring "Marxist"

education to their armory of corruption of the working class. At the same time, their masters in Russia, who have no necessity for even pretending to be revolutionary, have entirely abandoned the Marxian theory of value.⁴²

Rosa Luxemburg was a revolutionary. Her great services to the movement and what Trotsky called her luminous mind will always remain the indestructible heritage of the Fourth International. Precisely for this reason, however, it has been necessary to disentangle the error she has committed on the theory of accumulation from her revolutionary activity and her fight against reformism. Only a clear exposition of her erroneous theory will prevent the Stalinists from using the mistake of this revolutionary martyr for their own nefarious purposes.

F. FOREST.

27. *Capital*, III, page 292.
28. *Accumulation*, page 6.
29. *Anticritique*, page 441, footnote.
30. *Accumulation*, page 297.
31. *Ibid.*, page 259.
32. *Capital*, I, page 688.
33. *Collected Works*, II, Lenin, page 451 (Russian edition).
34. Cf. translation of the first chapter of Lenin's *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* in the December, 1943, *NI*, page 349.
35. *Anti-Duhring*, page 349.
36. *Capital*, III, page 468.
37. Cf. *Marx-Engels Selected Correspondence*, page 224 and *Capital*, III, page 250.
38. *The Theory of Capitalist Development*, Paul M. Sweezy, page 145.
39. *An Essay on Marxian Economics*, Joan Robinson, page 86.
40. Cf. *Rosa Luxemburg*, Paul Frohlich, page 185.
41. Cf. *International Correspondence*, No. 8, July, 1936, where Mattick in his article on "Luxemburg vs. Lenin" writes: "In his writings against the Narodniki, Lenin had already anticipated many of his arguments against Rosa Luxemburg's conception. There is no doubt that Lenin's conception is much closer to the Marxian than is Luxemburg's... Lenin's arguments against the Luxemburgian conception were sound and so far as they went completely in harmony with Marx; nevertheless, he evaded the question as to whether capitalism is faced with an objective limit... His theory, while more correct, did not lead to truly revolutionary conclusions. Rosa Luxemburg's theory, even though false, still remained revolutionary."
42. Cf. *Political Economy in the Soviet Union*, International Publishers.

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A Comment on Literature and Morality*

A Crucial Question of Our Times

In recent years there has been a growing emphasis on the moral questions in all kinds of discussions; journalistic, political, literary. Such widespread interest in and discussion of many types of issues from a standpoint of morality should help to suggest the moral impasse into which the entire capitalist system, and with it the Soviet Union, has sunk. Briefly, the modern world has fallen into a moral abyss. In the light of this condition, it is obvious that discussions of morality deal with matters which are undeniably serious. However, the seriousness of a subject or of an issue does not mean that all those who discuss it are equally serious. To the contrary, there is almost a pathos of pettiness in the lack of seriousness with which a number of writers—ex-Marxists, journalists who have been styled “one-man revolutions,” literary critics included—have tried to discuss serious moral questions while they, at the same time, have been so unserious.

In dealing with the moral question here, two counterposed approaches can be cited, the approach which emphasizes social morality, and that which stresses personal morality. A social morality conceives the basic cause, the basic conditions which permit or delimit practices which are condemned on moral grounds as derivable from the structural character of society itself. In consequence, the aim of social morality in changing and lifting moral practice to a higher level is that of changing society, or eradicating those conditions which sanction and which contribute in manifold ways to practices that are open to condemnation because they result in social harm, in the deformation of human personalities and in the oppression of groups, classes and nations, let alone individuals. To rephrase this aim, a social morality conceives social change as the means of helping to create better moral conditions. The real core of any social morality, the most clear theoretical establishment of the premises of such a social morality, is to be found in revolutionary Marxism. For it declares decisively and without equivocation that the major factor in sanctioning harmful practices that can

be morally condemned is to be seen in the exploitation of man by man.¹

The recent recrudescence of moral interest, real and verbal, has been partly manifested in a moral critique of Marxian morality. The criticisms of and attacks upon Marxism, from the moral standpoint, have, however, been of varying seriousness, of variable importance and of differing merit, often from case to case. In some instances, to cite an example, these attacks have been upon the practices of individuals or organizations which are organized within the historical tradition of Marxism. In the case of such criticisms, some have been on the ground that Marxists, or so-called Marxists (if one will) have violated in practice their own moral standards: other criticisms have been to the effect that immoral practices, real or alleged on the part of Marxists, have been a consequence of the essential ideas, the basis, the seemingly ineradicable character of Marxian theory and practice itself. However, it is rare that critics, well intentioned or otherwise, intelligent and informed, or obtuse and trivial, have attacked the premise upon which a Marxian, a socialist, moral conception is and must be built—its condemnation of the exploitation of man by man. Here, where I speak then of Marxian morality, I do it on the basis of this premise. The major reason for immoral practice in modern society is, directly or indirectly, a consequence of the exploitation of man by man; this, in turn, means the exploitation of social classes by other social classes, in order that the exploiting classes can reap something of the share in the fruits of what the exploited class produces, so often produces under conditions which barely permit much more than a subsistence living. For the purposes of this article, subsidiary questions, questions of the practices of Marxians, criticisms of the methods of certain organizations which are or which style themselves Marxian, are not at issue and do not bear directly on the points of this discussion. Hence, I do not take them up in detail.

Counter to a conception of morality which is social is a conception which is individual and which assumes that, when looked at morally, the major problem facing man is that of the regeneration

of the individual rather than that of changing society. There are a number of varieties of this attitude, various Christian attitudes, such as that of the Catholic Church, which holds that the purpose of life is death and the aim of a good man on this earth should be that of saving his soul in the next world—that of Tolstoyism, which preaches passive resistance, pacifism, a-politicalism in general, and sexual abstinence (although it is rare to find a Tolstoyan who accepts this feature of Leo Tolstoy's morality)—that of various anarchists, Platonists and pseudo-Platonists, ex-Marxists, psychiatrists who conceive the curing of psychoneurosis as the major problem facing man, and so on. I don't wish arbitrarily to equate these various doctrines, based on one or another form of personal or self-regeneration. However, it should be clear that they can be grouped together in the sense that they present the problem of the individual as prior to the social problem.

Social and Personal Morality

There is no necessary polarity between a moral code based on what I here call social morality, and one based on personal morality. When separations are made, these are a consequence of bifurcation, of separating of the individual and of society. Man—and this is also stressed in Marxian writing—lives out his personal drama on the plane of society: man's very self and his personality are socially directed, socially delimited, socially organized. The self is a social product, not an individual entity which is superior to, anterior to, separable from society. A bifurcation of society and the individual, and the establishment of moral premises on the basis of either aspect of this bifurcation, is misleading. To treat society—in other words—as outside of man, superior to man, the sole responsible agent for what is called immoral action, is to confuse the issue. To consider and to condemn immoral action on the ground that the individual, and the individual alone *qua* individual, is solely responsible for the action so condemned, and that, in no way, is the society in which he lives also responsible, is equally to be seen as misleading. In consequence, a social morality should not and cannot base itself on such a bi-

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furcation. When this social morality is premised on the fact of the exploitation of man by man it should, however, be obvious that such a morality is not guilty of the aforesaid bifurcation. The law, the standards, the moral sanction, the mores of capitalist society sanction exploitation, grant to individuals with money the legal right to exploit others. But when a man is exploited he is not exploited by society in general: he is exploited by individual men. Furthermore, a careful reading of, say, Marx's *Capital* should make it clear that Marx definitely indicates, and implies, that a society based on exploitation, such as is capitalist society, creates the conditions whereby both exploited and exploiter are deformed in their very selves, and that, thus, they pay a moral price. Something of their human nature is deformed. Other writers, besides Marx, have made the same kind of a point, and this point has been dramatized in fiction. Thus it can be shown I believe that this is one of the motifs of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*;² also, it is, I hold, possible to demonstrate that this same motif, in the context of the conditions dealt with in the novel, is centrally involved in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain.³

A social morality should not conceive society as undynamic; it should not view society as a responsible agent in itself when divorced from the men who live in that society, affirm or attack its sanctions, live by, in spite of, or in opposition to its values, and make up the human beings who form that society. If this is done, social morality is rendered *arbitrary*. And such an arbitrary social morality can often serve the means of turning morality into merely sentimental and innocuous humanitarianism which preaches, but does not practice. It can, and has been, turned into a philosophy of social service in which social service, social work, is made into a substitute for political action, for independent political action on the part of the workers, on the part of all the oppressed and exploited. But, on the other hand, a morality that is solely premised on a conception of personal and self-regeneration is usually limited at best and most often it is, besides being inadequate, a means of evading many issues, a means of expressing moral snobbery and moral priggishness, a means of moral escape and inactivity.

Morality and Literature

The problem of literature and morals

is complicated and is—at least it can be—a serious one. For moral conceptions, moral judgments concerning literature are ultimately inescapable, even if these judgments are made on the basis of merely the satisfaction of needs which give pleasure, and the escape of pains which cause suffering. Simply put, morality deals with what is considered to be either good or bad, and good or bad are determined, absolutely or relativistically, in terms of some set of values, attitudes, standards. We all make moral judgments, and we make moral judgments, at times, when we discuss literature. Recently the re-establishment of problems of literature and morality has been one of the manifestations of the alleged moral renaissance of our times. This problem has been posed and dealt with differently by various literary critics and writers.⁴ The current revival of Henry James, the establishment of James (in fact) as what amounts to a cult figure has also restated problems of literature and morality. Some of the James enthusiasts have, in fact, presented James as a moralist. But there are moralists and moralists. In James, morals and manners become intermixed, and we can see this simply and clearly in one of his best stories, *Daisy Miller*. Daisy, a delightful, spontaneous and wholly attractive American girl in Europe—a characterization which, if nothing else could be cited, would be more than enough to establish James as an artist of perception and extraordinary adroitness—faces dual dangers. The dangers she faces flow out of the fact that, in matters of social relationships, her spirit is democratic, and that, in general, she is direct, frank, honest. These dangers are (a) the possibility that she may lose her virginity, and this is, in the world in which she lives, synonymous with ruin and degradation, and (b) the danger that she will compromise herself and cause her social ruin by associating with men in public in a way that is not prescribed by the code of etiquette that prevails among the socially acceptable people with whom she comes in contact. In James' work, there is often such a mixture of morals and manners. James was not a moralist in the sense that Tolstoy was. James did not write with an urgency, even a pitiless consistency, urging change, urging it as a demanding necessity, defending a code of morals which he saw as higher than that prevalent in his times and, at the same time, condemning the code prevalent in his times and all of the evils that flowed out of it. Morality in James' writing is

merely reflected. As the consequence of a tight moral code and also as the consequence of an inhumanly stuffy set of principles of etiquette, there are deforming consequences to be seen in the lives of various Jamesian characters. This is what I mean by saying that in James' world morality is merely reflected.

When James, then, is used as an illustration of the connection between literature and morality, this point must be stressed. If it is not, confusion is created. And the confusion created is as unfair to the reputation of James as it is to the reader, especially to the reader who is not very alert, and who has not, in his own mind, clearly posed and considered these problems. And it is this aspect of the present revival of interest in the works of Henry James which is most open to criticism. For the creation of such confusion creates additional ones. The moral problem is in this way turned into a personal problem and, as such, it becomes a means of evading the problems of social morality. At the same time, the moral problem is confused with problems, if they be called such, of good manners. This kind of confusion is seemingly *au courant*; it is one of the newest things; it is to be found in the work of critics and writers who are, presumably, the most culturally advanced people in America.⁵ The seeming newness of this stylized and estheticized morality makes it appear as part of the tone of the times. But actually it is an attitude which is one of the stalest of all reactionary tricks. Until reaction is forced out into the open, where it must be nakedly violent, it needs to rely on all kinds of subterfuges, and these subterfuges appear in literature, in literary criticism, in philosophy, in ideology in general. The full or the partial equation of morals with manners, the stylization of morals into an esthetico-moral attitude, the snobbery that grows out of this so that special appreciators of literature, of cultural value, become advanced people—how common, even how banal, this is! In passing, I would remark that a parallel attitude in politics was one of the major ideological weapons of the rebellious slave owners who tried to destroy the American Union in 1861, and to establish in perpetuity a slave owners' republic in America. And the ideologists of the slave owners said that their cause would win because Jefferson Davis was more educated than Abraham Lincoln, that he had better manners than the rail splitter and that—to cap the climax—he was also the better looking of the two

presidents.⁶ I cite this example, not to equate the ideologists of the slave owners with some of our current, advanced, educated, genteel and undeniably competent literary people of the hour, but, rather, to point out by illustration that there are various manifestations of this reactionary subterfuge.

This estheticized morality on which I have commented is a variation of the moral attitude which demands personal regeneration in place of social change. But at best it is a morality in only the most tenuous sense. It is not robust, it is not all-inclusive. It is, largely, literary. And it functions, more or less, by dealing with moral reflection, as this is to be grasped in the reading and the analysis of works in literary art. However, there is something else to be said concerning works of literature which deal with moral problems in terms of personal experience. Two writers who, in my opinion, are of lasting significance in world literature have dealt with moral problems in works of art. I cite them—Dostoevsky, Ibsen.

Dostoevsky's Approach

In Dostoevsky, a moral problem is dealt with from the standpoint of personal experience, in the case of the chief protagonist, or of one of the chief protagonists. The moral problem usually results from an act or acts on the part of a hero who, by this act, causes serious and even irreparable injury to another human being or else the wish to commit such an act. Thus, Raskolnikov commits a murder. Thus, Ivan Karamazov wishes for the death of his father and acts on this wish by speaking with high suggestiveness to Smerdakakov, who is the actual murderer: Ivan, then, goes off so as to be away from the scene at the time that the murder—if it is to be committed—will be perpetrated. An action of this kind, for Dostoevsky, then poses directly a moral problem in the mind of the hero. This problem becomes obsessive. It is expressed in a need for change, a need for confession, a need for a relaxation of a disturbing, a painfully recurring, a demanding sense of guilt. Dostoevsky, thus, deals in moral problems in terms of consequences on others as well as on the agent who commits such an act. And these problems are the result of actions presented in his narratives, actions which are central in his stories. He meets moral problems head-on. Furthermore, Dostoevsky, directly and by unmistakable implications, identifies himself with sinners, with crimi-

nals, with the suffering, with the unfortunate. He was explicitly reactionary, but he never masked this fact. And explicitly reactionary though he was, he nonetheless identified himself not with those who benefited from their advantageous position in reactionary Czarist society, but those who suffered most, those who punished themselves and others. And this work, at the same time, expressed an urgent need for change, for psychological change which he perceived as a process of purgation and regeneration. Thus, it is to be noted that at the end of *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov, a convicted and confessed murderer, is described as bound for Siberia, and the author states that this sets the stage for a possible drama of Raskolnikov's regeneration. Finally, it can be seen in Dostoevsky's writings that the moral problem posed involved the hero, the chief protagonist. I remark on this fact because one can now note how in this new tendency of stylized literary morality, the moral problem is posed in terms of the spectator who doesn't act, who doesn't have to make decisions.

Ibsen's Approach

For Ibsen, a recurrent problem was that of conscience. A representative Ibsen character, such as Mrs. Alving or the wife of John Gabriel Borkman, is haunted by ghosts. The ghost symbolizes a feeling of guilt that resides in the conscience, and that continuously poisons the existence of one or more persons in the present. The actions of some person in the past have seriously affected the destinies of people, and by these actions, the sins of the fathers, as it were, are visited on the children: this happens not as a result of any general moral law of the universe or because of the Will of God, but, rather, as a result of connected circumstances and relationships. The guilt for this past action, the visitation of the ghost of conscience comes about because of immediate and direct consequences which are perceivable in the life of one or more persons who is a victim of these past actions, who suffers in consequence and who is in one way or another, unfree. The yearning and manly urge for freedom expressed in Ibsen is a desire to be free of these ghosts. Further, these ghosts are intimately associated with bourgeois morality. In Ibsen's world it is a bourgeois who has been guilty of the actions in the past which cause serious problems in the present. It is more favorably situated persons, in Ibsen, who suffer moral guilt. In this connection, one might pass-

ingly remark that Ibsen does not throw the major burden of guilt on Jacob Ingrstrum, and on his daughter, who, in *Ghosts*, is a maid in the Alving household. These two characters, both of them lower class in status, are shown as being more or less like they are as a consequence of actions of their superiors, and these actions of their superiors were—this is unmistakable in *Ghosts*—possible because of the superior class and social position of the Alvings.

In general, it can be observed that in many works of the past which deal with morality from the standpoint of personal experience and of personal problems, there are parallel features to those which we have briefly noted in the case of Dostoevsky and Ibsen. The artist does not reveal these moral problems from the standpoint of the upper classes. He does not present the upper classes as morally superior. Rather, he deals with the moral problems, and the moral consequences which must be posed by those who have a relatively favored position in society.

A Current Example

In *Partisan Review*, Fall 1945, there is a story by Lionel Trilling, *The Other Margaret*, which will throw light on these problems. It can be accepted as a representative literary expression of the stylized literary-moral tendency which exists in advanced cultural circles of contemporary New York. The chief protagonist of Mr. Trilling's story is named Mark Jennings: he is a cultivated scientific publisher; he's married, and he has a thirteen-year-old daughter, Lucy, who obviously goes to a progressive school. Mark lives in the East Nineties, and the best feature of the story is the manner in which Trilling recreates the genteel, cultivated wistful atmosphere of an educated family living in such a section of Manhattan. Mark, a man of taste, is first seen buying a reproduction of Roualt. He can be described as a seeker after wisdom, and early in the story, he recalls that in high school, a teacher had read to his class, the following sentence from Hazlitt: "No young man believes he shall ever die." Then, Mark didn't understand the wisdom of this sentence fully; but now, at the age of forty-one, he does understand this sentence. Wisdom is, thus, the knowledge of death. He is wistful, gentle, and he has wisdom as well as taste. In addition, Mark perceives what is presumably the moral problem of the present time, and this moral problem, tendentially posed and

described, is at the heart of Trilling's story.

The moral problem presented in this story concerns the question of responsibility. Is the individual responsible for his actions, or is society responsible? And further, as Mark sees this problem from the vantage point of a moral spectator, this problem arises in class terms. In the course of the story, three important incidents, which afford data concerning this moral problem, are related. As Mark rides home on a Fifth Avenue bus, an Irish conductor is nasty to a small boy of the well-to-do classes, a small boy who might be as Mark was in the days when he didn't truly understand the wisdom of that sentence—"No young man believes that he shall ever die." Then, when Mark arrives home with his reproduction, and his daughter, Lucy, ritualistically prepares his pre-supper cocktail for him, Mark's wife, Margaret, happens to tell how she was riding on a bus, and she heard another conductor speaking to a Jewish person with anti-Semitic innuendoes. Further, the Jennings are having difficulties with their colored maid, who is "The Other Margaret." (This explains the title of the story.) "The Other Margaret" is very unpleasant. On this day, she has not shown up for work. Mrs. Jennings has to cook dinner.

While she does this, Mark has his drink. He shows his Roualt reproduction to the daughter. She doesn't like it. Father and daughter discuss morality. The daughter disagrees with Mark concerning the conduct of "The Other Margaret." Lucy declares that she isn't to be blamed for her rudeness. At school, Lucy has a liberal teacher who tells the children that society is responsible. Mark, wistfully tolerant, doesn't press his objections to his daughter's view too strongly. But it is clear that he doesn't accept it. He points out to her how they had a previous maid who had to borrow money in order to go South because of family sickness. This maid paid back the money she borrowed, and thus, she—while of the lower classes—is different from "The Other Margaret." Also, at school, Lucy has modelled a toy lamb which is to be given her mother as a birthday present. She shows this to her father. He is pleased. The mother sees it, and she is touched.

The other Margaret unexpectedly appears to serve dinner. She is again very rude in her work. But this rudeness doesn't change Lucy's view that society is responsible. However, after dinner, "The Other Margaret"—as is her wont—

breaks things. One of the things she breaks is the personally precious lamb which Lucy has made for her mother. When this happens, the daughter cries in anger. She denounces "The Other Margaret." She declares that the maid did this on purpose, and out of hatred for herself, Lucy. In consequence, the claim that society, and not the individual, is responsible is refuted: Lucy's liberal teacher is shown to be wrong on the basis of evidence to be found in personal experience. Lucy is hurt, and she cries. Mark gives her what comfort he can, but this is not sufficient to heal the wound she has received. And this wound is, additionally, revealed as one of the scars of growing up. Like her father, she, also, must bear the pains of growth and discovery, those pains which mark the journey through life whereby the child becomes the youth, the youth who believes that he will never die, and the youth goes on into the maturity of middle age and there, he begins to attain wisdom. The attainment of wisdom is painful, and it teaches us that we die, that we are responsible agents, and that we must accept our responsibility. This in substance is the theme of Trilling's story.

Story Is Tendentious

On the one hand, this story has been conceived and written with adroitness: on the other hand, it is highly tendentious, and its tendentiousness is revealed in the careful selection of incidents. Thus, all of the middle class people in this story are kind, civilized, tolerant. They want to be fair. To the contrary, the workers, the lower classes, appear in the image of a bus conductor and a colored maid. They are insulting, rude, and cruel. The rudeness of the lower classes is seen in the sphere of home life, of personal experience, and of passing incidents of the streets. This rudeness is not called for if one considers the kindness of the middle class Jennings and the inoffensiveness of the boy whom the bus conductor insults. These incidents are used as data of experience on the basis of which a conclusion is to be reached concerning the moral problem of the contemporary period. The moral view of Mark Jennings is that the individual is responsible: the opposite view is presented as the claim that society is responsible. This alternative view is presented in the words of an inexperienced thirteen-year-old girl who is still too young to appreciate the painting of Roualt. She has learned this, as if by rote, from an off stage teacher who never appears

directly in the story. In addition, this social view of morality is presented in a few generalized sentences. Opposed to the child who defends the ideas of social morality, we have the moral spectator, the man who has grown to wisdom, Mark Jennings. At the same time, Mark is not really called upon to act morally. He is one who perceives the data of experience necessary for the drawing of moral conclusions in much the same manner as he tastefully appreciates the work of Roualt.

There is in all this a truly high-faluting triviality. Trilling wastes his genuine skill and cultivation on such triviality, and he masks it by so organizing the story as to be able to draw an almost all-encompassing moral conclusion. At the same time, this generalized moral is the projected concealment of a guilty sensibility. Mark Jennings' wistfully sad feeling about the rudeness and brutality of the world—as this is shown by bus conductors and maids—what is this, if it isn't the attitude we find in contemporary criticism, in the Henry James cultists, in those critics and writers who were the literary Marxists of yesterday? Furthermore, the triviality of this story is to be found in the relative pettiness of the incidents and the relative grandeur of the conclusion. For the conclusion of this story affirms nothing less than that man is a free agent. For to be a free agent is the sense of the claim that the individual is responsible. Thus, while we can recognize the skill with which this story is written, and while we can, at the same time, see that it has the merit of picturing a certain cultivated *milieu* of the present, it is also necessary to point out that it is a story which is cleverly organized in such a way as to persuasively present a reactionary moral view. It seems that the very needs of the story, then, will explain its tendentiousness. This tendentiousness is to be found not in overt statements, but in the very selectivity of the story. The rude lower classes are described by conversation, or else, they are seen in action, offending children. The cultivated intellectual of the middle class is presented as a thoughtful man, a tolerant man, and his consciousness is penetrated by the author. Further this man is not an exploiting capitalist who brutally grinds down the workers: he is a man who performs a valuable social function: he publishes scientific books. His way of life and his way of feeling is that of the intellectual: in fact, he could even be a literary critic, for the style and tone of his thoughts suggest

the man of literary rather than of scientific cultivation. He is curious about aesthetics, about morals, and he is truly a seeker after wisdom. But his curiosity does not reach to the point where Mark would pose, for himself, the question as to what conditions in the life of bus conductors and maids might contribute, at least, towards a rudeness, a rudeness which we are not here trying to defend? If this question were posed, it would lead to other questions and problems. One of these is that of identity. How might Mark be like and how might he be different from the rude representatives of the lower classes who insult children? Is his cultivation something which makes him more tolerant, and if so, how did he attain it? These and a number of

other questions might be asked. It is legitimate for us to present them here in the analysis of a short story for, let me repeat, this is a short story which aims to enforce an all inclusive moral statement; again, the aim of this story is to prove that man has free will. Finally, it needs to be stated that the setting, the incidents, the characters do not warrant the author's conclusion. The story is, in reality, not what it seems: it is an expression of the moods, the retreat from Marxism, the growing moral snobbery of the advanced and cultivated New York intellectual. As such, it is a revealing account of the escape of what we might here call *The Partisan Review* intellectual. It demonstrates what we may expect in the way of creative liter-

ature from those of literary sensibilities who mix up morals and manners, and see morality, more or less as a kind of literary stylization.

In conclusion, such attitudes, such writing might be contrasted with the morally vigorous work of the Ibsens, the Dostoevsky of the past! How the contemporary intellectual is sinking, declining! This fact alone should be sufficient to warn the most sensitive, the most alert, the most rebellious spirits of the younger generations of intellectuals away from such tendencies. For here we see is the high road that leads to the realms of the most cultivated banality.

JAMES T. FARRELL.

1. Cf. my letter of discussion in *Politics*, March, 1946. In the early portion of this essay, I am restating some of the points which I made in that letter.

2. Cf. my article, "Tolstoy's War and Peace as a Moral Panorama of the Czarist Feudal Nobility," the *University of Kansas City Review*, summer, 1945.

3. Cf., for my view of this, my book, *The League of Frightened Philistines*, New York, 1945.

4. In my title essay to *The League of Frightened Philistines*, I have discussed my views on the way in which critics, such as Van Wyck Brooks, J. Donald Adams and Archibald MacLeish have moralized about literature, and will not repeat here.

5. I hope that it is needless for me to point out that the magazine *Partisan Review* has taken the lead in expressing this kind of esthetic-moral evasion.

6. Southern literary Confederates, such as Allen Tate and Donald Davidson, persist in the expression of this attitude. The movement in letters which they sponsor, and which is expressed in their books and in *The Sewanee Review*, edited by Mr. Tate, can be boiled down to the claim that these literary Confederates have ideas which make better personalities than is the case with the Yankee writers of the North who are forever mixing into the affairs of the South and,

thereby, challenging various forms of the expression of the doctrine of white supremacy.

7. In *The Nation* for April 20, 1946, Lionel Trilling contributed a long attack on Dreiser titled "Dreiser and the Liberal." I urge the reader to peruse this article in connection with the story. If this is done, one can see what kind of an alternative literature Trilling can offer to that of Dreiser. This attack is mean-spirited and unfair. He refers to the question of anti-Semitism and treats Dreiser as an anti-Semite. It is true that some years ago letters of Dreiser were published in *The Nation* which gave definite warrant for such a charge. However, the sentiments of these letters can nowhere be found in the fiction of Dreiser. Trilling writes of *The Bulwark*. Like the previous novels of Dreiser, this work has nothing to do with the Jewish question. But Trilling introduces anti-Semitism as a means of criticizing the fiction of Dreiser, and he does this without evaluating the full career of Dreiser. Also, he mixes up the work of Dreiser with the favorable views of Dreiser expressed by some critics, and attacks both as if they could always be equated. In general, he writes this article in the true spirit of a Matthew Arnold of the radio program, "Invitation to What is." He criticizes Dreiser's thinking, but he does not show what is the real relationship between Dreiser's thinking and his novels. He stands at the door of culture, guarding it from such a barbarian. Inside of the doors of culture we should presumably be able to find many more works on the level of *The Other Margaret*.

The Great Conspiracy Against the Revolution

The Evolution of a Great Lie

It is far from coincidence that the lurid volume called *The Great Conspiracy* appears just after the announcement that Trotsky's book on Stalin would appear this April. The Stalinists had their copy of the work on Stalin when it was first issued for review and then withdrawn. It was easy for them, with their connections in the publishing field, to secure foreknowledge of the exact date of release of the book that was banned by the State Department for four years.

*The Great Conspiracy** is hardly the work of Sayers and Kahn alone. They had every kindly assistance from the GPU. The book is a calculated attempt once again to confuse public opinion. Its

**The Great Conspiracy*, by Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn. Little, Brown & Co., \$3.50.

obvious intent is to counteract beforehand the profound effect that Trotsky's new exposure of the totalitarian dictator in the Kremlin must inevitably create. The Stalin work, soberly based on the most critical analysis of real documents, not blatant frauds, will be the best answer to the GPU and its hacks. The dispassionate, scientific spirit evident in the writing of Leon Trotsky, even when he deals with Stalin, the most sinister and terrible figure in all history, dissolves into nothingness the transparent attempt to characterize Trotsky as almost demented in his "personal" hatred of Stalin. Sayers and Kahn write: "He wrote articles asserting that the Soviet leader derived sadistic pleasure from 'blowing smoke' in the faces of infants. More and more, his consuming, personal hatred of Stalin became the dominating force of

Trotsky's life. He sets his secretaries to work on a massive, vituperative 1,000-page life of Stalin." No, the dominating force of Trotsky's life was to guide the working class toward the achievement of socialism and to help it on this course by means of complete truth and clarity.

These Stalinist word-men attempt to mask their major objective by appearing to deal with a broader theme, the secret plotting of war and intervention against the Soviet Union during the last twenty-five or more years. This affords them the opportunity to "set the stage," to heighten the atmosphere to the proper degree of saturation with intrigue, assassination and betrayal. The fetid breath of the underworld of imperialist politics is breathed on the Moscow Trials in a vain effort to give them life. Trotsky and the Old Bolsheviks are bracketed on the one

side with the British agent, Lockhart, the "master spy," Reilly, the White Guardists, Kolchak, Denikin, Wrangel and Yudenitch; on the other with the Nazis and fascists and imperialist reactionaries of all lands. The Stalinists dare not desist in their clumsy effort to force a vast and fantastic amalgam down the throat of history.

Scholarly Research—Stalinist Style

How can one doubt when there is such an air of scholarly research about this *Great Conspiracy*? Just look at the staggering load of books, papers, documents that went under the heavy mental press of the authors to be so richly condensed! There are those delightful footnotes too that do not disturb the even flow of the "main theme" (the complete Stalinist line to date), and yet add just the right pinch of "fairness" in alluding, in small print to be sure, to works that utterly refute the text on the Moscow Trials. With what an engaging air of bland innocence do the writers inform us: "None of the incidents or dialogue in *The Great Conspiracy* has been invented by the authors. The material has been drawn from various documentary sources which are indicated in the text or listed in the Bibliographical Notes." This list includes official records of the United States State Department, hearings and reports of Congressional committees, official British documents, biographies, newspapers, books and—"the verbatim reports published by the Soviet government of the proceedings at the espionage, sabotage and treason trials which have taken place in Soviet Russia since the Revolution."

Taken as official documents, after all, are not those of the Soviet government just as good and authentic as those of other governments? That naïve logic will influence, of course, only naïve people. The truth of any document rests on itself and all its relations to facts, events and other documents. The Sisson documents became for a brief spell official United States affairs—until their fraudulent nature became so obvious that they had to be thrown out as forgeries. Those documents—what irony in relation to the Moscow Trials!—purported to show that both Lenin and Trotsky were mere German agents. To this day the trial records exist showing the conviction for murder of Sacco and Vanzetti. Yet not a single thinking person accepts their conclusion, although on their basis these two martyrs were executed. The Mooney trial is another case in point.

The Dreyfus affair is also part of history. Yet objection will be made that there were no confessions in these trials. But the history of the Inquisitions presents the most fantastic confessions of all time and who today, including the fathers of the Church, would quote as truth those old "official" documents. Indeed the nearest analogy to the Moscow Trials is precisely that of the Witch Trials of the Inquisition. Sayers and Kahn mention but completely ignore the conclusions of the Dewey Commission that all the Moscow Trials were false and an attempt to frame up Leon Trotsky. These Stalinist scholars, in short, make not the slightest faint effort to analyze or sift or weigh the documents that they choose to present. Their assigned task is to narrate the proper versions.

We readily agree that the Stalinist writers did not invent anything themselves. They merely use the inventions of Stalin and his GPU from start to finish. But if they are ordinary copyists in this respect, they have nevertheless the proper light-fingered touch in their use of material. A minor detail will reveal that "slant" on "documents." They quote Lenin at the Congress of Soviets in December, 1920, as calling for the New Economic Policy and then advocating the speedy electrification of the country. "There was a huge map of Russia on the platform. At a signal from Lenin, a switch was touched and the map was suddenly illuminated. It showed the Congress how Lenin envisaged the future of his country. Electric lights sparkled on the map." This scene is taken "verbatim" from a motion picture of rather late Stalinist vintage. It never existed in this form and is obviously entirely out of keeping with Lenin's simplicity. The mind of Lenin needed no "shows"!

The Lie Spread Backward

Stalin has carried "The Lie" back so as to make it appear that the struggle against his Thermidorean apparatus was the continuation of an older struggle carried on against Lenin. Trotsky is to be exiled, if Stalin has his way, not only from Russia but from all history. Thus they would like to make it appear that Trotsky was opposed to Lenin on the New Economic Policy. In reality it was Trotsky who had first proposed such a change to Lenin a year before its adoption. The authors repeat with their instructors: "When Lenin announced the 'temporary retreat' of the New Economic Policy, Trotsky exclaimed: 'The cuckoo

has cuckooed the end of the Soviet government!'" Trotsky's speech shows that he, with Lenin, considered the move a temporary retreat. The expression is evidently torn out of context and given a distorted meaning, for Trotsky understood that the Whites abroad would hail the new policy as the end of the régime. It was they would would "cuckoo" the end of the régime, not Trotsky.

The greatest contempt for the reader is revealed in the deliberate confusing of terms and times, indicating the reliance of the Stalinists on sheer ignorance. The word "opposition" is made a catch-all to link together all the oppositions that existed at various times on different issues and with different persons involved. Specifically the attempt is constantly made to link up every other opposition with the Left Opposition which was established on the eve of Lenin's death not as an opposition to Lenin (as Stalin wants it to appear) but, on the contrary, to become the instrument of both Lenin and Trotsky against Stalin. Lenin died before the fight to remove Stalin (as proposed by Lenin to Trotsky) could be started. Trotsky then continued the struggle through the Left Opposition as a faction within the Communist Party. Sayers and Kahn commit the fraud of insinuating and then accepting as authentic the identity of the Left Opposition with the Left Communists who opposed Lenin during and after the peace of Brest-Litovsk, and with other oppositionist groupings that existed before Lenin's death. This projection backward in history is the rotten fruit of the later Moscow Trials in which all the oppositions, right and left, are lumped together and made to appear as a united group from the very start, fighting first Lenin and then, by inheritance, Stalin. One form of The Lie is given as follows: "First as Foreign Commissar and then as War Commissar, Trotsky was the chief spokesman of the so-called Left Opposition within the Bolshevik Party." The Left Opposition led by Trotsky did not exist when he was Foreign Commissar and began only after Lenin died. History is thus again and again ante-dated in accord with the needs of the later frame-ups.

The Will of Lenin

The question of "inheritance" brings to mind the famous "will" of Lenin. The authors, in line with the needs of *The Great Conspiracy* against Trotsky and Bolshevism, arrive this late at the denial that such a testament existed. Naturally,

since it is so damning to Stalin's pretensions at being the follower and disciple of Lenin. The teacher took exceptional care in this instance to disown the "pupil"! There is the letter in which Lenin broke off all relations with Stalin. There is also the testament urging the party to remove Stalin as general secretary. These scribblers know how to omit real documents and to hide the fact that Stalin was forced to produce the testament and have it read before the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party in 1927. More flagrantly they leave in darkness Stalin's own admission published in the official organ of the Comintern, the *International Press Correspondence* for November 17, 1927. A speech of Stalin's is there quoted as follows: "It is said that in the 'testament' in question Lenin suggested to the party that it should deliberate on the question of replacing Stalin and appointing another comrade in his place as general secretary of the party. This is perfectly true." The other comrade was to be one whose qualities Lenin posed in sharp contrast to those of the "rude and disloyal" Stalin.

You will look in vain in this "historical study" for the replica of another document in which Lenin showed such complete trust in the Commissar of War, Trotsky. It was given without request during the Civil War when Trotsky was meeting with opposition engineered from behind the scenes by Stalin. Trotsky never used the document which was a blank sheet of paper with an endorsement at the bottom signed by Lenin, as follows:

Comrades: Knowing the strict character of Comrade Trotsky's orders, I am so convinced, so absolutely convinced, of the correctness, expediency and necessity for the success of the cause of the order given by Comrade Trotsky that I unreservedly endorse this order.

This simple document is enough in itself to refute all the frauds and forgeries attempted by Stalin in his desperate effort to besmirch the name of Lenin's co-worker. The totalitarian dictator uses all the weight of the government, all the power of the reactionary bureaucracy, to recreate history in his own fell image. Psychologists of the future will be faced with the problem of explaining why Stalin found it necessary, after usurping the power of the October Revolution, to try to have attributed to himself all the great deeds of Trotsky while, on the contrary, attributing to Trotsky all the murderous deeds of Stalin. *The Great Conspiracy* is but a new effusion devoted to this ignoble task. Its shoddy

structure can be readily demolished by the truthful use of actual documents. The very breadth of the fraud it attempts to perpetrate involves so many contradictions internally as well as with well-established facts that it is all the easier to expose.

Trotsky as Pictured in the Frame-Ups

How could Stalin rest with the Moscow frame-up trials which tried to picture Trotsky as plotting at one and the same time with France and England, and with Germany and Italy against the Soviet Union, and yet leave alone the Trotsky of the Revolution and the Civil War? Trotsky himself predicted that the "plotting" attributed to him would be carried back further and further to show him as a foreign agent even under Lenin. Stalin found this all the more necessary in order to convince the world that the struggle against him was really the continuation of the same struggle against Lenin. Thus we have a hobgoblin parade of bizarre fantasies, insinuations, innuendos, distortions. What an amazing man, this Trotsky of the Great Stalin Conspiracy! At one and the same time he is the agent of Germany during Brest-Litovsk and yet plots with Anglo-American imperialism through Lockhart and Reilly, not merely for intervention as against Germany, but for outside aid in overthrowing Lenin! He is in conspiracy with all of the defendants of the Moscow Trials at one and the same time—with Bukharin and Rykov on one side, with Zinoviev and Kamenev and Radek on the other, and with the Social Revolutionaries of Left and Right, not to mention the White Guards and Mensheviks. And all this support remains secret; it is never out in the open. The Stalinists never stop to explain how such a Trotsky needed anything more to displace Lenin, had he so desired, but the majority in the ruling institutions of the period. The figures later done to death by Stalin formed a majority of the Executive Committee of the party as well as of the Soviet. There is one explanation, one which casts shame on Lenin. Stalin pictures him as a dictator who, like himself, kept all in check!

The startling talents of the imaginary Trotsky pictured by people apparently suffering from nightmare, are shown after he has lost power and is in exile. Let us quote from the Sayers-Kahn condensation:

From the moment Trotsky left Soviet soil, agents of foreign intelligence services had been eager to contact him and to make

use of his international anti-Soviet organization. The Polish Defensive; the Italian fascist Ovla; the Finnish Military Intelligence; the White Russian Emigrés who directed anti-Soviet secret services in Rumania, Yugoslavia and Hungary, and reactionary elements with the British Intelligence Service and the French Deuxième Bureau were all prepared to deal with Russia's "Public Enemy Number One" for their own purposes. Funds, assistants, a network of espionage and courier services were at Trotsky's disposal for the maintenance and extension of his international anti-Soviet propaganda activities and for the support and reorganization of his conspiratorial apparatus inside Soviet Russia.

A powerful man, indeed! All the governments of the world ready to support him in all kinds of ways—except one! A trifling detail. They all unanimously declined to provide him with so simple a thing as a haven, a refuge from which to carry on such multifarious activities! England never invited him. He was driven out of France and Norway after very brief sojourns. Germany allowed him in neither before nor after the advent of Hitler to power. Only little Mexico permitted his entry, and that under the exceptional period of Cardenas' rule. Trotsky was and remained a man without a passport. Is it possible, we ask somewhat timidly, in the light of the mass of "evidence" so lavishly supplied by the GPU, that all these governments had an even greater fear than Stalin of the power of the revolutionary ideas of the co-founder of the October Revolution?

Study in Innuendo

We highly recommend the book of the two historians of conspiracy to every student of law as a source book in the study of innuendo. Examples tumble over each other. Trotsky is quoted from the Dewey Commission Report, *The Case of Leon Trotsky*, as follows: "Monsieur Thome and Monsier Cado, the general secretary of the police and the prefecture of the Department of Charente Inférieure—all the summits of the police were very well acquainted with my situation. It was the secret agent of the police who was informed of every step of mine." Clearly here is the admission of a link with the secret police of France! The unsuspecting reader would never know that Trotsky was forced to agree to report his every whereabouts to the French police in order to be permitted to stay in France. Nor would it be inferred from the quotation that Trotsky had demanded in his defense that the French police make public all that they knew of his itinerary while in France precisely in

order to refute the charges hurled at him during the Moscow Trials. Finally, let it be remembered, it was precisely the Franco-Soviet Pact in existence during the trials that kept the mouths of the police firmly shut in aid of the "ally" of France, Stalin.

There is unconscious humor in the purported conversation of Rakovsky with a Japanese Intelligence officer in Japan, and in the pictured plight of Ambassador Yurenev. The officer supposedly says to Rakovsky: "I must ask you to write to him (Trotsky) that our government is dissatisfied with his articles on the Chinese question and also with the behavior of the Chinese Trotskyites. We have a right to expect a different line of conduct on the part of Mr. Trotsky. Mr. Trotsky ought to understand what is necessary. There is no need to go into details, but it is clear that an incident provoked in China would be a desirable pretext for intervening in China." Sadly the Moscow Trial of Rakovsky does not relate just how Trotsky changed his writings on Japan and China to suit the Mikado. It is, of course, a matter of record that he firmly supported the Chinese against Japanese imperialism and predicted the defeat of Japan. The innuendo in the quotation, as used, does not concern Trotsky's writings. It is rather the slur cast on the Chinese Trotskyists that they somehow or other (the details are unnecessary!) created the pretext for the Japanese penetration of China. These drops of poison are never distilled any further.

Rakovsky supposedly reports these matters to Ambassador Yurenev. By this time the stories concocted (at Moscow, not in Tokyo) have reached such fantastic proportions as one lie piles up on the other like a ship wrecked on the rocks, that comment on the contradictions become unavoidable. The prosecutor therefore has a "depressed" Yurenev saying to Rakovsky: "We have gotten into such a mess that sometimes one does not know how to behave! One is afraid that by satisfying one of our partners we may offend another. For instance, here at present antagonism is arising between Great Britain and Japan in connection with the Chinese question, while we have to maintain connections both with the British and the Japanese Intelligence Services. . . . And here I have to find my bearings in all this!" Neither Vyshinsky nor Stalin could help them out of such a mess—of lying testimony!

Laying the Foundations— After the House Is Built

The real service performed by this Stalinist manual lies in the fact that it tries to bridge the glaring gaps left from one trial to the next. Thus the evolution of *The Lie* becomes quite apparent. Each trial witnessed "full and honest confessions" on the part of the defendants brought into court. Yet each new trial went back over the previous one to show that the confessions bringing convictions, even of death, had not been one-tenth enough. This peculiarity of the trials needed explanation. The explanation, need we say, we usually even more fantastic than that which needed explaining. The trials therefore present the appearance, with all the clever workmanship of the writers after the fact, of constructing a house starting with the roof and working down deeper and deeper into the foundations. Sayers and Kahn try to correct this weirdness by recounting the "relevant" parts of the later trials before presenting the "verbatim" accounts of the earlier ones. How stubborn real time can be in refusing to reverse itself at the behest of the all-powerful GPU!

We are here concerned with the eight trials based on the Kirov assassination in 1934. The previous trials of the Industrial Party and the Mensheviks showed the same elements of frame-ups and preparation for the later ones. The Menshevik Trial also reversed the time order by showing "witnesses" meeting with two persons long dead. It showed Abramovitch ignoring the laws of space by appearing in Moscow when even the Soviet press had his picture as being in Brussels. These are minor details which Sayers and Kahn feel no need to discuss since they do not appear in the "official" versions of the trials.

The eight trials were those of Nikolayev and others in December, 1934; that of Zinoviev-Kamenev in January, 1935; the trial of Medved and other GPU men in January, 1935; that of Kamenev and others in July, 1935; the retrial of Zinoviev-Kamenev in August, 1936; the Novosibirsk trial of November, 1936; the Pyatakov-Radek trial of January, 1937; and the Bukharin-Yagoda trial of March, 1938.

The assassination of Kirov was followed by the death of 104 "white guards." The public was given to believe that the whites were responsible for the plot. It came out in the course of the Nikolayev trial, however, that he

was a member of the Communist Youth organization. The minutes of his trial were never published, but not a single word at the time attempted to link the others with the plot. A frame-up was tentatively tried, but quickly dropped. The indictment stated that Nikolayev had been approached and helped by a Latvian consul, Bisseneks. This consul offered to transmit a letter abroad to Trotsky, with whom he claimed to be in touch. Nikolayev did not write. Bisseneks disappeared abroad and was never heard of again. Wisely, Sayers and Kahn ignore him completely. The GPU touch was too obvious.

Stalin next brought Zinoviev and Kamenev to trial in January, 1935, for the same assassination. They were made to confess "moral guilt" in helping to create an "atmosphere" in which terrorism could breed. Not a word was said about actual complicity with Nikolayev; not a word about terrorist plots; not a word about sabotage; and not a single word about links with foreign governments. There followed the trial of some Leningrad GPU men who had known about the plot to kill Kirov in advance, but had failed to take proper precautions. The minutes of this trial never appeared and it is not even mentioned by our two scribblers. What did appear in no way implicated the GPU officials of having participated in the actual plot. That came later.

Introduction of Sabotage

Kamenev was dragged back from prison in July, 1935, to face trial on the same issue. This time he was accused of a terrorist plot against Stalin. Nothing was published on this trial at all. Sayers and Kahn do not mention it. It was a mere rehearsal for the later trials. Zinoviev and Kamenev were again haled to court—from prison—in August, 1936. By this time they were ready to confess—no evidence ever appeared, new or old—that they had participated in terrorist plots, including that against Kirov. They were sentenced to death. Here again not a single word appeared on sabotage or on links with foreign governments to bring about intervention, etc.

Accusations of sabotage appeared for the first time in connection with the Old Bolsheviks in the Novosibirsk Trial of November, 1936. Pyatakov appeared as defendant in this trial and in the later one of January, 1937. The last two trials added confessions not merely about the defendants then alive, but also for the men already killed, Zinoviev, Kamenev

and others. They were charged after their death with all the other crimes "admitted" for them by apparent co-conspirators who had not even been tried with them. Pyatakov, Bukharin, Radek "confessed" terrorist plots as in the previous trials, but added sabotage, wrecking activities, treason abroad.

The Great Conspiracy is an addition to the trials. It relates them backward, giving the final version as an introduction to the very first one. Its function becomes quite understandable. The trial of Nikolayev is given in a single paragraph. Then we find the following: "The Military Collegium sentenced Nikolayev to be shot. Nikolayev did not divulge the fact that Zinoviev, Kamenev and the other leaders of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite terrorist center had been directly involved in the plot to murder Kirov." Such a statement might strike one as a queer description of a trial if there had not appeared on the preceding page a portion of the "testimony" of the later trials used to link them together. Bakayev in the 1936 trial "explains" this as due to instructions from the ill-fated Zinoviev: "The principal task is to organize the terrorist work so secretly as to preclude our being compromised in any way. . . . When under examination, the main thing is to persistently deny any connection with the organization. If accused of terroristic activities, you must emphatically deny it and argue that terror is incompatible with the views of Bolshevik-Marxists." If this "explains" Nikolayev's silence, how does it explain why Bakayev, released from all vows since Zinoviev and Kamenev had confessed to their terrorist center themselves, did not reveal still more? This contradiction at a later date required the invention of a still more secret "parallel center" not mentioned at all in the earlier trials.

The fore-shortened description of the first Zinoviev trial is followed by its explanation:

The trial had only scorched the surface of the conspiracy. Among the many facts which the Leningrad trial failed to bring to light, perhaps the strangest were these: When Zinoviev and Kamenev were arrested, four agents of the Soviet secret police had brought them to NKVD headquarters. The agents were Molchanov, chief of the secret political department of the NKVD; Pauker, chief of the operations department; Volovich, assistant chief of the operations department; and Bulanov, assistant to the chairman of the NKVD. In arresting Zinoviev and Kamenev, the four NKVD men acted in a most extraordinary fashion. They not only failed to search the apartments of

the suspects for incriminating material; they actually permitted Zinoviev and Kamenev to destroy a number of incriminating documents. . . . Still more remarkable were the records of these four NKVD agents. Molchanov and Bulanov were themselves secret members of the Trotskyite-Right conspiratorial apparatus. Pauker and Volovich were German agents. These men had been specially picked to make the arrests by Henry G. Yagoda, the Chairman of the NKVD.

Need we add that this "information" came at the later trial of these GPU men and that Yagoda was tried only still later in March, 1938?

It is a tenet of science to accept the simplest explanation, the one involving the fewest number of assumptions. Stalin and his GPU, unfortunately for their trials, paid not the slightest heed to this well-recognized doctrine. That is why the trials left so sour a taste and could not be swallowed by the world at large. The trials were characterized by Trotsky as "conversations about conversations." Not a scintilla of actual evidence was ever produced. The "links" between trials were intended as answers to world criticism on this and other scores. The attempts to allay world suspicion in this fashion were themselves so obvious and so bizarre that they served to confirm suspicion all the more. The hypothesis that the trials were GPU frame-ups conformed too well to the known facts to be swept aside. The defendants are all dead, Trotsky murdered in Mexico by a tool of the GPU. The Stalinist need to have the world accept the verdict of the trials remains. *The Great Conspiracy* against Trotsky and the other leaders of the October Revolution continues. But its brazenness is far from carrying conviction. The repetition of the exploded lies concerning Pyatakov's flight to Norway in an airplane that never existed; the lies concerning a meeting between Trotsky and Romm in Paris, when Trotsky proved he had not been in Paris at the time; the lies about meetings in a Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen that no longer existed at the time, etc.—all this calculated, bare-faced effrontery convinces nobody.

Nobody? There are the Stalinists and their close collaborators, the Browders, the Sayers and the Kahns. Browder, even after his expulsion from the Communist Party, finds it necessary to reaffirm his belief in the Moscow Trials. Sayers and Kahn have every confidence in their verdicts, or so they say. These people should be the very first to welcome every new opportunity to secure new, objective corroboration of the trials. Such an op-

portunity presents itself at this very time. The defendants at the later trials confessed that they had made contact with the Nazis through Hess, Rosenberg and others. They gave "testimony" that Trotsky and his son had met with Hess and plotted with the Nazis for war against the Soviet Union. The Nuremberg Trials offer a new ground for a test of the Moscow Trials. Not only are all the Nazi leaders, and particularly those involved in the "confessions," in the hands of the Allies, but even better, all their archives seem to have fallen intact into the hands of the Court. Will not Browder, Sayers, Kahn and all the Friends of Stalin join in requesting the questioning of these witnesses and the production in open court of all relevant documents? It has been made clear through what has been produced, that the Nazis, true Germans in this respect, kept the most meticulous records of conversations and agreements. Why not ask the defendants whether there ever were such records, and if so, what became of them?

Not the Stalinists have made this request. They have remained as silent as the grave on this matter, showing how much real confidence they have in the possibilities of producing proof. It has remained instead for the English section of the Fourth International to make demands of this kind on the Court at Nuremberg. It has remained for men like H. G. Wells and Arthur Koestler, James T. Farrell, Oswald Garrison Villard and Norman Thomas—all of them disbelievers in the Moscow Trials—to challenge the Russian prosecutor and the Russian judge who form part of the Nuremberg staff, to produce proofs. There are those who fear that the Russians may make a "deal" with the Nazis on this score. We fear nothing that the Stalinists can do, for everything can be subjected to the same scientific, critical analysis to which was subjected the material or rather lack of material of the trials themselves.

The Stalinists must of necessity pile fraud on fraud to cover up all the lies of the past. *The Great Conspiracy* is evidence that they are impelled to drown with noise and bluster, with calumny and innuendo—and with murder when no other remedy suffices—the voices of truth and honesty. Let no one think that we speak here of the Nazi scoundrels in the criminal dock at Nuremberg! Those beasts deserve the death that will be meted out to them. But it is nonetheless

important that they be questioned before their sentence. The Stalinists have too black a record for the suspicion not to arise that after the death of the figures mentioned at the Moscow Trials, documents will not be forged as the "proof" completely lacking at the trials themselves. That is why it is necessary to demand that questions be put to the men in the dock before their death. Every bit

of their testimony can be subjected to scientific analysis and judgment, including anything they may say about documents bearing on the case.

The world cannot forget the Moscow Trials. Their infamy remains a dark blot on the conscience of humanity. The real verdict can only come with the end of a regime, the regime of the totalitarian bureaucracy headed by the Kremlin

dictator. History will vomit forth with the bloody clique that usurped the October Revolution, its own image of fraud and frame-up as painted by itself in the Moscow Trials. The vindication and victory of the Bolsheviks will be the resurgence of the proletarian revolution dammed up by the Stalinists.

JACK WEBER

March 15, 1946

Sectarianism and the Democratic Demands Parliamentarism in Western Europe Today

The following article by E. Germain, secretary of the Belgian section of the Fourth International, is reprinted from L'Avant Garde, theoretical organ of the Belgian party, as a contribution to the discussion of the relationship of democratic demands to the struggle for power. We append to this article a resolution on this question adopted by the Belgian party at its congress last year. THE NEW INTERNATIONAL regards both documents as an excellent contribution to the struggle against sectarianism which has had such dire effects upon the development of some of the most important parties of the Fourth International. The entire international movement has been dividing up in the last two years into two general tendencies on this crucially important question. The one tendency represents a doctrinaireism which, in some respects, borders upon Bordigaism on the question of democratic demands. Its most influential representatives are to be found in the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party of the United States (Cannon faction). The other tendency represents an attempt to apply the principles of the movement to the political reality of today in the tradition of Lenin's policies during the Russian Revolution and the political line adopted by the Fourth International under the guidance of Trotsky in Germany, Spain, France and other fluid political situations in the decade of 1930-40. The latter tendency finds an able advocate in the Belgian section. The Workers Party of the United States is not only identified with this latter tendency, but is proud of its record in discharging its international responsibilities by taking a lead in working out a realistic strategy for revolutionary Marxists at a time when the European comrades were handicapped by the isolation and illegality imposed by the Nazi occupation. The point of view expressed in the following documents is entirely consistent with the position established by the WP in its resolution on the national question in Europe (THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, February, 1943).—Editors.

* * *

It is the lag of consciousness behind reality which is found at the root of the crisis of humanity. The world is more than ready for socialism,

but the great majority of humanity has neither understood the necessity for the proletarian revolution, nor discovered the only road to bring it about. The Fourth International has posed as its task the solution of this contradiction by showing the masses through their own experience that no other means exist for hurdling this impasse than the taking of power by the proletariat. That is the essential function of its Transitional Program; its slogans become understandable to the masses at a stage determined by their evolution, which permits mobilizing them in action, its *unrealizable* character within the traditional limits of capitalism at the same time allows involving the masses beyond these limits, and of making them place their first stakes on the revolutionary road.

The Bordighists, who are in general honest people but wretched revolutionaries, do not understand the fundamental problems of our epoch. Identifying their own experience with that of the masses, they think it will suffice to proclaim ceaselessly "the necessity" of the socialist revolution in order eventually to lead them to its attainment. As always, shortsightedness goes together with sectarianism, and the Bordighists declare democracy and fascism "equivalents." They do not distinguish between Van Acker and Degrell, Franco and Caballero. Twice before in history, ideas of this type have tripped up the sectarians and pushed the proletarians into the worst defeats. "Refusing" in practice to make a distinction between fascism and the decadent parliamentary régime of 1921-22, the Bordighists attached no importance at all to preparations for the fascist *coup d'état*, did not mobilize the masses in order to oppose "the march on Rome"—and shortly discovered the "difference" in a physical fashion. Re-

peating most of the sectarian errors of the Bordighists, the German CP thought similarly, in 1932, that with Von Papen fascism "had already triumphed." At the same time, they rejected in practice, like the Bordighists in theory, the Leninist theory of the united front with the Social Democracy. But Hitler did not delay while they learned that one could not play hide 'n' seek with the burning tasks of the moment. Yet the Bordighists claim for themselves the doubtful honor of never learning, although history offers living proof.

In looking through No. 13 of *L'Internationale* ("The Fourth International and the Reconstruction of Capitalism") the Bordighists discover that the Fourth International participates in the struggle for the reconstruction of capitalism when it advances its program of transitional demands, an old sectarian argument against Leninism. The author of the article clearly states the principle that the transitional demands are *realizable* under capitalism since the Trotskyists do not speak of the "preliminary" seizure of power. He doesn't yet understand—and it is really necessary to ask oneself whether the Bordighists will ever understand anything about Leninist politics—precisely what it means to lead the masses *toward* the seizure of power; that the masses will never break away by themselves under the slogan "Long Live the Revolution," but that they well can set themselves into motion for transitional demands which necessarily lead them beyond the limits of capitalist property and the capitalist state. It follows from this line of thinking that "Lucain" thinks of the "realization" within the "framework of capitalism" of workers' control of production, expropriation of the banks and of the workers' militia as a serious attempt at the reconstruction of capitalism. . . .

The Constituent Assembly

The confusion does not stop there! Not having understood the real character of the transitional demands, he sets out to fight against the slogan of a constituent assembly which he evaluates in the same light. Now, it is a question here of an *immediate* demand, but the Bordighists attach only slight importance to these "distinctions." The demands in general interest them very little. They prefer to proclaim the "necessity of the socialist revolution." Nevertheless, the slogan of the Constituent Assembly was correct in Russia "at a time when the bourgeoisie was still capable of playing a revolutionary role"! Returning to the Menshevik conception of the Russian Revolution, Lucain neatly demonstrates how much of the theory of the permanent revolution is foreign to him. He understands neither the counter-revolutionary rôle of the Russian bourgeoisie in 1917, nor the bourgeois struggle *against* the Constituent Assembly which was, during the three Russian revolutions, a slogan not originating with the bourgeoisie but with the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat. If he took the trouble to reread any history of the October Revolution, he would have known that the very call for the seizure of power by the Petrograd Soviets was formulated in this sense: it is necessary to counteract the counter-revolutionary intrigues which tend to obstruct the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. For Lucain today this slogan is outmoded because we are "in the period of the decline of capitalism." Citizen Lucain, were we in a period of the ascendance of capitalism in 1917?

The Bordighist solution of the problem of the Constituent Assembly is very simple: it is necessary to "abstain" from the elections. Cannot we justly say that the Bordighists "abstain" from all the problems that have immediate interest for the working class? Evidently, to profit from the election for the Constituent Assembly, in order to spread propaganda for a Socialist United States of Europe through press, posters, meetings and radio; to appeal to the French stevedores by radio to refuse to load ships destined against Indo-China—all this constitutes a "bourgeois function" (?), the significance of which is to prepare "The decapitation of the proletariat."

Parliamentarism Re-emerges

We understand that the root of the problem is simple. Before the general

crisis of the bourgeois system the large mass of laborers and petty bourgeoisie aspire to profound changes on the political and social scene. But at the same time, the Nazi occupational régime in Europe and the long years of open dictatorship develop again strong currents among the masses in favor of parliamentarism. It is a question of proving again to the masses through their own experience the fake character of democratic parliamentarism. But it is, at the same time, a question of profiting from the profound but confused revolutionary aspirations of the masses *to question again*—on the electoral plane which remains temporarily the only level on which the masses understand these problems—all the fundamental bases of the bourgeois state and of capitalist property. And the bourgeois itself understood that very well, in Greece, as in Italy, as in France, where it did its utmost everywhere in a most energetic fashion to postpone to the ever distant future the elections for the Constituent Assembly. One year ago, the French sectarians ridiculed the Trotskyists because the latter advanced the slogan for the Constituent Assembly, which according to them was understood by no one; but a year later, the masses had forced the bourgeoisie to capitulate before their unanimous will. It is clearly understood that the question of knowing what class will profit by the elections will be decided, aside from the Constituent Assembly, by the alignment, spirit and direction of class forces involved. But let us always remind our sectarians that the elections of 1936 played an equal part in precipitating June 1936!

Is it necessary to add that a section of the Fourth International never advances the slogan of a Constituent Assembly in an isolated fashion? That it always ties it up with the demand for a government of the workers parties and the struggle for all the transitional demands? That it puts the masses on guard against the illusion, from the very first, that they can realize this program on the parliamentary level? That it moves them forward in order that *class action* forces the Constituent Assembly to take a position on all the important problems? That thanks to the inactivity and to the numerous betrayals of the leaderships of the old workers parties, their break with parliamentarism and their coming over to the revolutionary party and struggle is immensely facilitated? For a Bolshevik Party, that is the height of the signifi-

cance of the experience of the masses as regards the slogan "Constituent Assembly" and "Break with the Coalition!" For the Bordighists this experience is meaningless. They have for a long time known that "the reformists are traitors." Their own experience is amply sufficient for them. But it is a question for us of winning over the masses, and for that ranting is not enough. One is astonished that the Bordighists, who continually speak of "purity," have believed it necessary to mix infamy of the purest Stalinist style with their confusion and sterile sectarianism. For Lucain, "submissiveness" (sic) of the Fourth International "to the reconstruction of capitalism, permits them to put out propaganda over the government radio of the capitalist state." If one wanted to follow them on this path one could say that the total impotence of the Bordighists to threaten the capitalist "order," such as it is, permitted them to make their papers appear legal when *La Voix de Lenine* and *Le Pouvoir aux Travailleurs* were banned. But we prefer not to follow that path, because it leads nowhere.

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The Importance and Scope Of Democratic Slogans

(Resolution adopted by the Revolutionary Communist Party of Belgium, Section of the Fourth International, 1945)

1. Ever since "liberation," the situation in every country of Western Europe, has been objectively pre-revolutionary. Successive political crises, the well-known incapacity of the bourgeoisie to restore these countries from their ruins and to stabilize its state power in the slightest degree, could have given a tremendous impulse to the revolutionary crisis. This impulse has been delayed and continues so because of the lack of political maturity of the masses and the extreme weakness of the revolutionary vanguard. The failure of a German revolution to take place following the long years of occupation has had the following consequences: 1) the overwhelming majority of the toiling masses still follow the reformist and Stalinist parties, 2) they are still filled with democratic illusions once more infused with life by the occupation and they see unclearly the solution to a series of vital problems which are posed to them through a new democratic parliamentary experience, and 3) they are not yet thinking of the passage to the open revolutionary struggle for POLITICAL power (creation of soviets, overthrow of the state).

2. The bourgeois democratic régime has lost all its material bases in Western Europe. In these countries the bourgeoisie cannot hope for the slightest "restoration" of its shattered economy or for the reconquest of its share of the world market except by throwing the whole burden of the war, the destruction, etc., on the back of the working class. The main perspective of the European bourgeoisie is to set up "strong" régimes, more or less bonapartist in character resting primarily on the most reactionary forces and apparatus available: the monarchy (Greece, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Belgium, Italy, Spain), the army (France, Spain, Italy, Greece), the Church (Spain, France, Belgium, Italy). This tendency is counteracted or neutralized by the pressure of the WORKERS who are defending what they consider to be the most important gain from the "liberation": the restoration of democracy. This conflict may result in open

or latent civil war, the former as in Greece, the latter as in Yugoslavia, or in a series of violent political crises as in France, Italy. But one thing is clear: *"The bourgeois democratic" regime unlike the period of 1918 is no longer imposed by the bourgeoisie on the proletariat struggling for soviets. On the contrary, it is the pressure of the working class which is now imposing the "bourgeois democratic" regime on the bourgeoisie which requires a dictatorship. Of course democratic phraseology still is a means whereby the bourgeoisie tries to "canalize" the revolutionary tendencies of the proletariat. But the struggle for democratic objectives assumes a clearly revolutionary character, and carried to its conclusion, destroys the bases of the bourgeois regime.*

3. Two factors, the revolutionary temper of the masses and the absence of the material bases of bourgeois "democracy" give exceptional importance to democratic slogans in the present situation. These slogans, in one form or another, are the principal or in any case, one of the principal points of departure for the agitation of the revolutionary parties. The *immediate goal* of this agitation must be to lead the working class to *break with the reformist-Stalinist parties.*

Linked to SP-CP Government

This break can pass to another stage only through the experiences of the masses with a government composed solely of representatives of these parties. The slogan, *break the coalition, socialist-communist government*, is now the central slogan in most countries of Europe. Now it is an agitational slogan, which must be advocated in a concrete way daily, on all questions that stir the masses. What are the possible *points of departure* for advocating this slogan? First of all, it goes without saying, every burning economic and social question. But that is not enough. The primary task of the revolutionary party is clearly to *politicalize* the demands and actions of the masses. Can we demand of the reformist and Stalinist leaders that they break the coalition with a bourgeois party in order to—build soviets and proclaim the proletarian republic? Sure-

ly not. It is clear that the masses of socialist and communist militants, can consider the question of the "proletarian republic" only as a purely propagandistic question, concealed in the fog of the future. If this were not so they would not follow parties, up to their neck in "ministerial collaboration." But on the basis of democratic slogans we can and must demand of the reformist and Stalinist leaders that they break the coalition with the bourgeois parties. This is possible because the masses, of their own will, attach tremendous importance to these slogans; because they are able to send their masses into action; because they are in fundamental opposition to bourgeois politics and attack the most important pillars of the bourgeois state already deeply undermined (the monarchy, army and church). The SP and CP have inscribed in their program "Republicanism." They have practically denounced all the rottenness of the monarchy. The masses which still follow these parties can immediately grasp the meaning of the slogan: *Break the Coalition*. They can also understand that if their parties are really against the King, then they must break the coalition with the royalist parties. That is especially true for Italy, but nonetheless for Belgium, Greece, etc.

4. While advocating the slogans "Republic" and "Constituent Assembly" we do not assign goals but only points of departure for the action of the masses. These slogans are algebraic formulas. They can acquire entirely different meaning and contradictory content according to the concrete situation arising out of the fight for these objectives. At the present stage we are *deliberately* leaving open the question *what kind of a republic or constituent assembly do we want?* To proclaim the slogan "Proletarian Republic" is to isolate oneself from the action of the masses. No part, not even the smallest is ready, ready now, to struggle for this objective. Not to advocate the slogan, from a constitutional point of view, signifies abstaining in practice from participation in the struggle of the masses. By advocating the slogan of *republic* our intent is to facilitate a break from the leaders of the SP and CP and to set the masses into action. At a later stage when for example, the leaders of the SP-CP should proclaim a bourgeois republic we would denounce the reactionary character of this act, to which we would oppose the program of these parties.

3. For the democratic slogans really to be motive forces of the mass movement, they must be advocated under the following conditions:

(a) Not isolated but in *connection* with the principal transitional slogans and even *not* in the sense that conquest of the republic and constituent assembly could guarantee in any form whatever the sliding scale of wages or workers control of production; but *only* in the following sense: breaking with the bourgeois parties over the question of a republic. The Socialist and Communist government must be forced by mass action to carry out the sliding scale and worker's control.

(b) While advocating democratic slogans the party must always be careful to put the masses on guard against any *illusion* that their lot can be improved. We must always clearly state that only the *action of the masses* can change the situation, and that a bourgeois republic would not be essentially different from a bourgeois monarchy. But we are very well aware that when the masses are mobilized for the slogan of a *republic* and when they see they cannot gain this objective, they will not stop at that point but will go ahead.

(6) It is false to oppose democratic slogans to class or revolutionary action. The masses are by no means confronted with the alternative: *either* struggle for the republic or for the revolution. The real alternative with which they are confronted is the following: passively to sit by while a more or less camouflaged bourgeois dictatorship is set up because of the capitulation of their leaders and be enticed by the ritualistic proclamations of the ultra lefts for socialism; or to undertake revolutionary action—any broad action of the masses directed against a bastion of the state or capitalist property necessarily assumes this character in the present crisis—taking as a point of departure, the struggle for an objective they understand fully, the republic. The democratic slogans are not “derivative” of the action of the masses, but only the contrary, objectively as well as subjectively *its point of departure*.

Its Point of Departure

7. It is just as false to oppose the slogan of soviets to democratic slogans. The soviets or other organs of political power of the working class (for example, the committees of militia in Spain) always spring up on the basis of a struggle for immediate democratic objectives. In

the beginning they are organs of the *united front* of the different working class parties for a common struggle—abolition of czarism, struggle against fascism, etc. It is precisely out of a mass action for democratic slogans, an action into which other working class parties can be drawn under the pressure of the masses, that soviets can and must be born. (For instance, L. D. Trotsky's position toward “the committees of the Popular Front” in France: drive out the heads of the radical party, brings into them delegates from the factories and neighborhoods, and you will have soviets. The Revolutionary Communist Party had an identical policy toward the “Committees of Vigilance” and the “Committees of Democratic Alliance.”)

8. In his book *The Third International After Lenin* and in very many of his writings since, Leon D. Trotsky relentlessly combatted the narrow and mechanistic theory of Stalin-Bukharin that certain slogans could “only” have value for fixed categories of countries, that certain countries might be “ripe” for one slogan and other countries for another. This theory has now been taken over by the document of “Against the Stream.” It maintains that democratic slogans cannot be advocated in countries where the bourgeois democratic revolution “has been achieved.” This constitutes a complete revision of traditional

Bolshevik-Leninist conceptions. In fact, L. D. Trotsky in the past defended the application of democratic slogans:

(a) In 1930-31 before and after the beginning of the revolution in Spain (*The Spanish Revolution in Danger*).

(b) For Italy (*The Spanish Revolution in Danger*)—a polemic with the Bordighists (Transitional Program).

(c) For Belgium where he advocated the slogan of the republic in 1934-36.

What is more, there is a document published by the International Communist League in 1934 “after the vote granting full powers,” the organization in which the leader of “Against the Stream” took part and a document which he in all likelihood wrote himself.

In the same way Rosa Luxemburg in 1919, at the Congress of Spartacus, defended the slogan of Constituent Assembly against the ultra left wing which unfortunately controlled the organization. All these countries where the slogans of *republic* and *constituent assembly* were applied are countries where the bourgeois democratic revolution has long since been “achieved.” The choice of slogans must not be determined by some “historic nature” of the country but by the objective conditions which prevail there and by the temper of the masses. These are the points we have tried to emphasize in the preceding.

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Germany - - Still the Key

A Pre-Convention Discussion Article

Germany is the heart of Europe. It is not only that it is the center of European economy. Until recently it was the centralizing and unifying force of the entire industrial and commercial system of that continent. Germany monopoly capitalism achieved a unified Europe by military conquest and counter-revolution. This was the inevitable result of the failure of the European proletariat to unify Europe by socialist revolution.

Today, no revolutionary situation exists in Germany. But those who think that thereby the German question can be dealt with episodically, only show their fundamental misconception of the stage of development reached by European capitalism. Germany is still the heart of Europe. It is the basis for rapacious imperialism on the continent. From this center, imperialist political and military intervention can be directed against the proletariat of any European nation. As long as Germany remains under the heel of foreign conquerors, it is a threat to the revolution in any European country. From their control of Germany, the imperialists control the economic development, in fact, the day-to-day existence of the individual European countries. Moreover, Germany contains the boundary at which the chief imperialist antagonists of today conflict with one another. The German working class must today oppose with all its strength both imperialist camps, just as yesterday the whole European proletariat had to oppose the Axis and Allied camps. The principled and practical struggle against all imperialism continues. Our task, in this pre-convention discussion and as a guide to clear perspectives in the coming period, is to evaluate the political positions of the past two years in the light of events and as a guide to a perspective for the coming period.

The effective mass insurgence of the German working class was the link missing in the revolutionary wave over Europe with the end of the war. Greece, Italy, France, Holland, Belgium, Poland — the armed working class of these countries in the critical stages of the war cooperated with their own bourgeoisie and the Allied imperialists, to whatever degree and for whatever length of time, on the grounds that oppressive Nazism had to be defeated. A working class upheaval in Germany would have torn through the fabric of this argument, already weakened by the distrust of the European proletariat in bourgeois democracy and its hatred for its own collaborationist and escapist bourgeoisie. It would have immensely sharpened the underlying class character of the national struggle in the occupied countries. It would have won the sympathy and support of the European masses for the German proletariat which, many of them recognized, was also under the heel of Fascism. The Allied imperialists strove with might and main to isolate the

German proletariat from the European masses by denigrating the German proletariat, by linking the German workers with the German fascists and by linking the national struggle to the imperialist war camps. The political struggle for the European proletariat revolved around these two perspectives. Either the imperialist perspective for the isolation of the German proletariat from the European revolution, the perspective endorsed and stimulated by the Stalinists and the Social Democracy. Or the revolutionary perspective of the German revolution under the unifying formula of the Socialist United States of Europe. Thus the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe was brought closer and not further away from the tasks of the day by the revolutionary wave of the national resistance movements.

Today, how shall the German workers defeat the oppression and dismemberment by the four imperialist powers? The German workers will carry on their struggle in a Europe filled with social turmoil and consistently disturbed by a working class, more class-conscious, more socialist-conscious than ever before in its history. The struggle of the Italian and French workers against their own bourgeoisie must become fused with the struggle of the German workers against their imperialist oppressors precisely because the native bourgeoisie cannot defeat the revolutionary proletariat except with the aid of the imperialist conquerors. Germany is the geographic, the economic and the political link between the countries under the brutal Russian occupation and those countries which are in the orbit of Anglo-American imperialism. If yesterday, there was no way to save the German proletariat from imperialist occupation except the revolution on a European scale, today there is no way for the European proletariat to save itself from the counter-revolution except the struggle for the socialist United States of Europe with Germany as the center.

The political program for Germany must be based on the *stable* elements of the objective situation.

1. The defeat of German imperialism by Allied imperialism has not only smashed Germany physically but it has dealt the German bourgeoisie a mortal blow. This leaves the German proletariat, however disorganized, as the greatest social force in Germany today.

2. The proposed deindustrialization of Germany is not a settled question. The bourgeoisie itself balks before the consequences. France wants an industrial Ruhr. Britain increases steel production, Russia loots factories but at the same time initiates production. The political jockeying in preparation for World War III involves the industrialization of Germany. Such is the nature of modern war.

Russia has had to encourage the organization of the working class in the Communist Party. Britain has countered by sponsoring the Social-Democracy. Sidney Hillman arrived from the United States to strengthen German trade-unionism. The imperialists connive for the support of the proletariat because they know very well that there is no other class in Germany today with potential social power. There have been other indications. Food riots in Hamburg, the continuous crisis of the American military machine, the growing demand by German parties and leaders for national unification. This does not mean that the revolution will take place tomorrow. But any program for the national reunification of Germany which does not base itself on the stage of class relations between the German bourgeoisie and the German proletariat, and on the general revolutionary situation in Europe will in effect propose a defeatist perspective for the entire European revolution. In that sense it will only be a continuation of the absence of a revolutionary perspective which, despite vacillations, characterized the position of the Workers Party majority during the war.

Tendencies in Fourth International

The errors of the Workers Party majority, unless consciously recognized and repudiated, form the premise for future disorientation.

The disputes in the Workers Party before the 1944 convention on the program and perspectives for Germany demonstrated the confused but nevertheless obviously negative position of the Workers Party majority on the relation of Germany to the European socialist revolution. Though Germany was objectively the key to the European revolution (as explained above), the Majority Resolution (NEW INTERNATIONAL, February 1943) failed to contain the semblance of a program or perspective for the tens of millions of German workers. Not even by a phrase were the German workers distinguished from the Nazi overlords.

Under pressure from the minority and the beginning of the Italian Revolution, an attempt was made to correct this revealing omission in a supplementary resolution (November 1943). After describing the "active intervention of the Italian masses in the political scene" the Supplementary Resolution continues: "A similar intervention by the German masses may be expected . . ." But then the German workers are merely advised to solidarize themselves with the workers from other countries struggling for their freedom from German imperialism. As if any revolution was ever made by the proletariat of an "oppressing country" on the slogan of national independence for the oppressed countries!

The majority thereafter continued to vacillate on the German question. The victorious proletarian revolution will not, it is clear, directly replace the fallen Nazi re-

gime" (NI, August 1944). Here the perspective of mass revolutionary action is confused with the prospect of victorious revolution. But on the previous page, the same editorial declared (in regard to the conflict between Hitler and his generals):

"If the crisis endures, the rift at the top becomes a breach which widens down to the bottom. The masses, yesterday silent, docile, passive, depressed, impotent—at least apparently—change overnight, and pour through this breach with irresistible force. The régime crumbles. The people are masters of the street and the palace.

"With one change or another, this is the way the history of the coming German revolution will write itself." (NI, Aug., 1944, p. 245.)

The majority is the victim of its own contradictions. It attempts to maintain some semblance of revolutionary policy while repudiating in advance the inevitability of proletarian revolution and emphasizing instead the inevitability of counter-revolution. It is not only a question of expecting setbacks and retreats, an expectation which is inseparable from the process of development of a revolution. It is rather a timidity about proposing revolutionary policy because of a conviction that the proletariat is impotent without a revolutionary party and therefore is certain to be defeated.

The incapacity of the majority to pose the German question was merely an expression of its blindness to the developing revolutionary situation in Germany and a tacit acceptance of the concept of the German proletariat, later elaborated by the German retrogressionists.

Listen to the retrogressionists: "Germany received an especially unfavorable place in this [retrogressive] movement, which deprived it of any immediate revolutionary perspective and kept the masses in political paralysis." (NI, Oct., 1945.)

Now on the eve of a new convention the comrades of the Workers Party majority and the IKD triumphantly repeat: "There was no German revolution. This is conclusive proof that Johnson was wrong and that the majority policy was correct." Which policy? The entire negative policy that the revolution would not come!

The Founding Conference Theses asserted that the Soviets would be organized before the Reichstag would be reconvened. This prediction has not yet been fulfilled. But those who consider this a triumph for their own political positions are playing with the very foundations and methods of Marxism. They are calling into question the very nature of the vanguard's role in striving to utilize every crisis of bourgeois society for the advancement of the proletarian revolution.

Fascism could not be destroyed by parliamentary negotiations but by shock and violence. Such is the nature of our epoch. Military defeat for Germany offered an objectively revolutionary situation for the German masses. And it is obligatory for the revolutionary to propose revolutionary policy for an objectively revolutionary situation. The military blows shattered the German state, disorganized the economy, broke the masses from the Nazi ideology and hierarchy. It was the most genuine opportunity

for revolutionary action which had arisen in Nazi Germany for twelve years.

Comrade Morrow shares the opinion of the Workers Party majority on this question. To both of them we recommend as our own position in this matter the following statement by the Secretariat of the Fourth International. It repeats from its 1945 resolution:

"Contrary to our optimistic prognosis—issued on the eve and at the beginning of the new imperialist carnage—relative to the latter's probable duration which we deemed would be brief, and the reaction of the masses which we deemed would be far more rapid and far more efficacious, this war, despite the colossal havoc it caused and despite the unprecedented sufferings it inflicted upon the masses, lasted much longer than the war of 1914-18 and terminated in Europe only in the total military destruction of one of the belligerent camps....

"Another important factor which has conditioned the development of the revolutionary crisis in Europe, its scope and its tempo, is the partial destruction of the material and human premises for the German revolution....

"One cannot count on the revolutionary action of the German proletariat until material life is reorganized in Germany and until several million prisoners are able to find their place in the country's economic life."

Commenting on this excerpt from the resolution, it goes on to say:

"Comrade Morrow is not satisfied with this self-criticism. He desires a precise condemnation of the errors committed in the 'earlier documents,' that is to say, the February, 1944, theses of the European Conference and the January, 1945, resolution of the EEC.

"It is difficult to understand exactly what 'errors' are referred to here. The elucidations provided by Comrade Morrow up to now are not sufficiently clear to us. On the other hand, his manner of conceiving the relationship between the objective and subjective premises of the revolution renders spurious, in our opinion, his criticism as a whole."

What alternative policy to the policy of the Fourth International and the Workers Party minority could have been proposed for the period between the imminent collapse and the full consolidation of imperialist occupation? Passivity? Receptivity to the invaders? Struggle for democratic rights? Abstention? In reality there were only two alternatives. Self-reliance and revolutionary activity by the German proletariat or capitulation to the invading imperialists while waiting for a reconstruction of the labor movement and the re-foundation of the Trotskyist party.

Comrade Johnson repeatedly warned against the confusion between the revolutionary prognosis and perspective and the actual working out of events. In the 1943 resolution (p. 15), he wrote:

"Indispensable to the vanguard for an understanding of its own tasks, the analysis is in no way to be confused with prophecy. Some of the trends may overshoot their mark, some may stop short. The question is to recognize them and work con-

sciously in the direction to which they point."

Johnson only reiterated the remarks of Trotsky: "A prognosis is not a promissory note which can be cashed on a given date. Prognosis outlines only the definite trends of a development.... All those who seek exact predictions of concrete events should consult the astrologists. Marxist prognosis aids only in orientation."

Lenin was even more forceful. "Revolutions such as Turati and Kautsky are 'ready' to recognize, i.e., revolutions for which the date and chances can be told in advance, never happen. The revolutionary situation in Europe is a fact. The extreme discontent, the unrest and anger of the masses are facts. It is on strengthening this torrent that Revolutionary Social Democrats must concentrate all their efforts."

It is not only the question of a German revolution which failed to come. If that were all, the whole business might be forgotten. It is that the method to which the majority have been committed is thereby strengthened and carried over not only to Germany today but as we shall see, affects its policy in every field.

So much for yesterday, but what of tomorrow?

For the clearest expression of the majority analysis and perspectives for Germany, we must look at "In the Land of the Political Vacuum," by Roger Judson. (NI, Oct., 1945.) (And no article contradicting Judson's has yet appeared.)

Judson employs the most superficial journalistic impressionism in order to reach the most profound conclusions. Judson sternly warns (p. 217) that "the left-wing and democratic press" is overestimating the recuperative powers of the German workers.

"The German worker is a worker only in memory.... He is an atom, moving from one day to the next.... He is, in a word, just another German." This is a most astonishing statement. Do the university professors in Germany go into the coal mines or do the railway workers consort with the American officers of occupation?

But Judson is not through yet. There may be perhaps German workers who remember Liebknecht and Luxembourg, or the intermittent revolutionary battles between 1918 and 1933. Against them, Judson aims his heaviest blows. The German trade unions are "the first halting step in that lengthy process... the hesitant step of a baby... they will develop but at an extraordinarily slow speed." "The German workers... are beginning all over again, from scratch, to crawl up the road of democracy and independent action."

The climax of Judson's psychoanalysis of the German people is his insistence that the German worker "or what remains of him" is devoid of political ideas. "To live" (food, money and shelter) "that occupies exclusively the mind of the German worker." How painful it is to have to correct such a departure not only from Marxism but from even bourgeois common sense. Is it not precisely in order to "to live" in the Germany of today, that the German masses will be forced to organize themselves and take political action? And isn't it precisely because Germany is in the condition that

it is today that the German workers from the very beginning of their resurgence are faced with the most fundamental questions?

Judson's concentration on his subjective impressions of the German proletariat leads to a complete blindness as to the real situation in Germany today. In class terms the German proletariat is the leader of the German nation. That is where the Marxist has to begin. The Allied imperialists know that. The revolutionists, therefore, must base themselves upon this premise: that any serious struggle in Germany today or tomorrow or whenever it does come, for the most elementary democratic rights, for national independence, for food and clothing, must be led by the German proletariat. Therefore it is the first task of the Fourth International to make clear to the German proletariat that the future of Germany must be a proletarian future, i.e., no return whatever of the German bourgeoisie and the German capitalism which have so ruined Germany during the past forty years.

The Method

These comrades of the IKD and the Workers Party majority have consciously or unconsciously departed from the Marxist method which fundamentally asserted that the very decay of bourgeois society is what gives birth to social revolution. This is the class analysis of the law of motion of bourgeois society. Instead they base themselves on a new law of motion of social development, the ruination of all contending classes, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The crisis of bourgeois society is synonymous with the atomization of the proletariat. That is what Judson means when he says that the German worker is not a worker at all but "just another German." In the prevailing misery and decay, he sees not the decisive impetus to proletarian action culminating in the proletarian revolution, but the paralysis of the class struggle. Judson never poses the relation of the German proletariat to the German bourgeoisie. It is outside of his consideration.

Once you lose the firm ideological basis of class relation and class struggle, your method degenerates inevitably into the methods of the pre-Marxian, i.e., the pre-scientific socialists. These methodological tendencies can best be understood and checked when seen in relation to their historical development.

Marx wrote of the Utopians:

"...they see in misery nothing but misery without seeing in it the revolutionary, subversive side, which will overthrow the old society." (*The Poverty of Philosophy.*) Engels carried this further:

"The proletariat, which then for the first time evolved itself from these 'have nothing' masses as the nucleus of a new class, as yet quite incapable of independent political action, appeared a suffering order, to whom, in its incapacity to help itself, help could, at best, be brought in from without, or from above." (*Socialism, Scientific and Utopian.*)

The IKD and the Workers Party majority are not relying upon the bourgeoisie to "help" the proletariat. Therefore only one political alternative is open to them—"help (that) could, at best, be brought in from

without." To compensate for their depreciation of the revolutionary capacity of the masses, these comrades must exaggerate the role of consciousness, i.e., the party.

The Role of the Party

The comrades of the IKD, famous for the thoroughness of their errors, have persistently confused and interchanged the absence of a mass revolutionary party with (1) the non-existence of the labor movement and (2) the disintegration of the proletariat as a class. Comrade Morrow, while not guilty of this type of historical sweep, expresses accurately the opinions of the Workers Party majority when he asserts: "The absence of the revolutionary party transforms the conditions which otherwise would be revolutionary into conditions in which one must fight, so far as agitation is concerned, for the most elementary demands." (*FI*, March, 1946.) Morrow's phrase, "as far as agitation is concerned," can not save him from total confusion on the relation between objective and subjective factors. Our program, analysis, perspectives and demands, are now to be based not on the developing objective situation but on the size of the vanguard. More than that, there is a tendency to judge the temper of the masses by the size of the vanguard.

Trotsky, who recognized very well not only the Marxist method and revolutionary line but also the dangerous alternatives, warned well in advance: "The orientation of the masses is determined first by the objective conditions of decaying capitalism and second, by the treacherous politics of the old workers' organizations. Of these factors, the first, of course, is the decisive one. The laws of history are stronger than the bureaucratic apparatus."

The Founding Conference Program stated definitively the relation of the proletariat to its leadership.

"The economy, the state, the politics of the bourgeoisie and its international relations are completely blighted by a social crisis characteristic of a pre-revolutionary state of society. The chief obstacle in the path of transforming the pre-revolutionary into a revolutionary state is the opportunist character of proletarian leadership, its petty-bourgeois cowardice before the big bourgeoisie and its perfidious connection with it even in its death agony."

It is significant that it is precisely along these lines that the European Secretariat has replied to Morrow (*FI*, March, 1946). They write:

"...it seems to us puerile to repeat that the Fourth International proposes to solve the crisis of mankind which coincides in our epoch with the crisis of the revolutionary leadership, precisely by building such a leadership..."

Then, after quoting from the transitional program, they go on to say: "Comrade Morrow will therefore not find it so secondary a matter that we, having understood once and for all that our principal task is to build revolutionary parties, seek to discern in the objective development of the situation factors favorable to the accomplishment of this task."

The small vanguard party cannot push nor drag the whole working class into mo-

tion. Its point of departure is the revolutionary yearnings of the masses and the inevitability of socialist revolution which arises from the bankruptcy and perplexity of the bourgeoisie. The absence of a mass revolutionary party or the size of the party can only decide the nature of the actions which the party can lead in its own name. The primary task of the vanguard is to teach the proletariat the methods of revolutionary struggle for whatever demands are current and immediate and which will most speedily and effectively tear them away from their repressive labor leadership and set them onto the road of social revolution.

This is the role of the party in the present pre-revolutionary period which began after the First World War. The struggles of the working class go through various phases in this period, advances and retreats, explosions and stagnation, isolated struggles and unified actions. It may be more visible in certain countries than in others. The contention for supremacy by the opposing classes can continue for an indefinite length of time. But the pre-revolutionary period becomes non-revolutionary only by a definitive victory over the proletariat by the counter-revolution. *The serious danger exists that the defeats of the past will become the premises for anticipation in advance of defeat in the future.*

The German Question and The American Question

It is when we look at the position of the Workers Party majority in relation to the United States (see Bulletins of the Workers Party, VI, Nos. 5, 8, 9) that we see what is for us the most serious example of what has distinguished its analysis of Europe in general and Germany in particular.

Whereas the European workers have retrogressed from their advanced position, the American workers have never even advanced to political understanding. Just as a "democratic interlude" was discovered as an arena for the reorganization of the European labor movement, an independent Labor Party is needed as an arena for revolutionary propaganda. Rather than scientifically analyzing the objective development, the Workers Party majority seeks indices to the mentality of the American workers. The tremendous revolutionary potential of the Negro masses is deprecated because the Negroes are struggling consciously not for socialism but only for racial equality; not in the trade unions but in their independent organizations. As a result, the struggle of the Negro masses is in effect ignored because they have unfortunately not yet achieved trade union consciousness. The revolutionary instincts, pressure and initiative of the trade union masses, both black and white, are deprecated because they have not yet built an independent Labor Party. When the Labor Party is built, the inference is open that this only demonstrates how deeply rooted are the reformist illusions of the masses. Every social phenomena, no matter how transitory, superficial or illusory, becomes a confirmation that the social revolution is not nearer but further away.

Trotsky, we are told, made a mistake in

analyzing the situation in the U. S. as pre-revolutionary. The vanguard party must wait for the very eve of the revolutionary situation before it tells the masses that they are living in a pre-revolutionary situation. And if there is a pre-revolutionary situation, it exists elsewhere, not in the U. S.

The hesitations and vacillations of the Workers Party majority today on the question of putting forward revolutionary socialist propaganda to the militant American workers is thus rooted in the same false conceptions which governed its approach to the whole German question.

We can summarize the basis for a serious analysis of the American question as follows:

1) The blight upon all aspects of bourgeois society which renders the bourgeoisie incapable of solving all problems of present-day society, creates a pre-revolutionary situation.

2) The labor leadership does not represent the sentiments of the masses who are impelled toward a reconstruction of society.

3) The party can only build itself if it recognizes this objective situation and seeks to develop the instinctive revolutionary strivings of the masses against the imposition of bourgeois reformist ideas by the labor bureaucracy.

4) This demands that the party in the United States above all represent itself as a revolutionary socialist organization, using the day-to-day events as a basis for teaching "the truths of communism and the methods of social revolution."

5) To recognize this is merely to recognize the principles of the Founding Conference of the Fourth International as applied to the American scene.

It is of the utmost importance to realize that those who oppose the minority position on the German and the European question must naturally find themselves in opposition to these ideas on the American question. That is why we have posed the German question in particular as an exemplification of the need today in the Workers Party for a strategic reorientation.

RIA STONE,
WILLIE GORMAN.

Correspondence . . .

Dear Friends:

Big news for us last week—our paper, *La Vérité*, is now authorized! It is a result of our great campaign. We collected as many signatures as we could, protesting against the illegality and the seizure of *La Vérité*. There were many American signatures. In the Marne, we collected 85 signatures of political and union leaders. It is a great victory for us. It is very important for the coming electoral campaign, this June. But now the great question is the financial one!

The financial bill, which will be voted soon, declares that all parties must present candidates in 20 departments of France, at least—i.e., 20 lists containing, according to the populations of the department, three, four, five or more (up to ten) candidates per list. Every candidate must pay a security fee of 20,000 francs. We must find 3,000,000 francs! We are beginning a great campaign for donations.

Regarding the arrest of the 32 Trotskyists at the conference in Paris, the story is very curious. They were released several hours after, or the day after. The French police said officially there was a mistake—they believed they were "pimps"! Indeed, it seems the police found no reason to hold these comrades under arrest and the great protests frightened the police.

Regarding the question of the American parties and their unity, during the convention of the French Party (PCI), a speech was delivered on the situation of the International by the Executive Secretary and he spoke of this question (in the same spirit as the SWP), but many delegates said they wanted unity. And also many (a large majority) said the French party must study the Russian question because they acknowl-

edged they have not a clear view of this question. For that, the latest copy of *La Quatrième Internationale* was devoted to this question. They present the official thesis "unconditional defense" and "degenerated workers' state." I think many comrades are not content with this. I think a large discussion will take place about that, between the elections and the next convention and this next convention will make, perhaps, new slogans. I am in support of you for the slogan, CP-SP-CGT government, and the great danger of the Stalinist party. Actually, the Stalinist party operates today with a great penetration into all fields: state administration, education, police, etc. They try to put their "faithfuls" everywhere. They have the greater part of the union and the CGT directorship (the proportion is five or six Stalinists for one reformist). This policy is very skillful... but the masses are tired and troubled. In the unions, the present slogan is: "Politics out of unionism—independence of unionism—no deputy leaders of unions." This slogan has majority support in the unions of C—, and we support it, with the addition "The unions must come back to a class struggle unionism and must support only a class government, if it has a class policy." Many people agree.

On the question of the MRP-de Gaulle: it is very intricate. The present political situation is as follows: the three parties wish to remain in the ministry all together, until the elections. They each hope to have good election results and to maintain their positions: the MRP at the head of the former or new right-wing parties; the SFIO (Socialists) ahead of the radical-socialists, which is awakening, and the centrist group (republicans, socialists, democrats and de Gaullist elements), and the Communist Party at the head of all the others, and us! But

in every party, some leaders do not agree (especially in the MRP and the SFIO). The convention of federal delegates of the SFIO (one each department, minimum) gave a left direction to the SFIO leadership policy—no revision of the party statutes and the Marxism contained in them; unity of action with the Communists. Some leaders of the MRP want to quit the ministry to take an opposition attitude—against the André Philip financial policy, against the "nationalizations," against the educational policy and to reform the de Gaulle policy.

During the last two weeks, papers speak much about a great crisis and a possible departure of the MRP ministers from the government. But all was settled. There was also a crisis about the nationalization of electricity. The Socialists refused to vote for the bill of Paul (Communist). The ministry accepted and want to vote for the bill of Ramadier (Socialist), which was also supported by the Constituent Assembly commission. All was again settled, but it is really the "Entente des Trois Grands"—like the other Big Three!

As for General de Gaulle—he is silent, like the grave. Sometimes a follower speaks for him, as when Gouin announced he would go to Strasbourg. M. Capitant, ex-Minister of Education, said to the Strasbourgeois—you must welcome Gouin with cries of "Vive de Gaulle"! As an answer to this, Gouin visited in Strasbourg, the bishop and the cathedral, and said: "We do not abandon our position on the Ruhr question (and Ruhr coal)." A new party has appeared: the "Republican Party of Liberty." Its leaders are the old fascist leaders of the February 6, 1934, affair—the French fascists. It has plenty of money and huge placards. It is for "liberty," against the nationalizations, against the three big party dictatorship, etc. Until now, it cannot hold a meeting because, each time, left militants prevent its speakers from speaking and drive them away from the hall. At Paris and in the provinces, it is always the PCI that is in the first rank of these fights—with the Young Socialists (youth of the SFIO) and also, sometimes, young Communist Party youth. What results will this fascist party have at the elections? I think it will get some seats in place of the MRP.

As for an attempted *coup d'état* of de Gaulle, I have no idea at this moment. All the militants are on their guard. The right wing leaders openly avoid speaking about him. Let us wait!

Fraternally yours,

R—.

France, March 26, 1946.

Dear Comrades:

At the moment the great problem is the legalization of our paper, *La Vérité*. Last week it was attacked by the UJRF (Communist Party Youth Union), supported by the police. We are making a great campaign throughout the whole country to obtain legalization. (*La Vérité* published last week a letter signed by some political figures in America, among them Max Shachtman.) We try to get as many men as possible to sign for us. It is very impor-

tant for us to have a paper before the elections (they are not yet fixed—maybe June 9th).

We pursue our work in C..... Meetings at the "Bourse du Travail," work in the unions, etc. We are now known as militants in C..... and in R....., where we have found some valuable comrades.

You will see in *La Vérité* some resolutions adopted by our party convention. The minority position has lost. It thinks that the French (and world) situation was objectively a backward one, and we must therefore adopt democratic slogans. They said the French proletariat has lost much of its class-consciousness because of the war, the misery, etc., and we must come down to its level by transforming our slogans into democratic slogans. I will send you some parts of these resolutions in my next letter...

I do not agree with these positions—certainly, the general class-consciousness seems somewhat lower. But it seems to me these resolutions omitted the importance of a subjective fact: the strength of Stalinism. When we discuss with workers at the "Bourse du Travail," we are right up with them about all questions—necessity of strikes, inability of the present workers' parties; inability of the present government; necessity of a Communist-Socialist government; necessity of great actions by the masses (strikes with occupation of factories, birth of factory councils, women's councils for food, etc.). They are agreed that the government and the bureaucrats of the CGT and the workers' parties are wrong in neglecting the question of factory councils. They are demoralized; they have lost their faith in those organizations because those organizations (comités d'entreprise, for example) they have established are without power. If we speak a "democratic" language, they do not see the difference between us and the other parties. On the contrary, if we speak a revolutionary language to them they are disturbed. They continue for the moment to follow their old organization, but with a critical spirit...

I received the copy of *Labor Action*, dated January 28, containing the editorial "Policy Statement on France." I am in agreement with the greatest part of it. The explanation of a Socialist-Communist-CGT government is nearer to ours than to the party minority, which says: "Socialist Party-Communist Party-CGT—take power with your program, the program of the CNR and the 'délégations gauches,'" which is a petty bourgeois program. The French workers do not believe in that program. They have lost their faith because the workers' parties have had no more enthusiasm and no action to propose to them. I think the next elections will be a step backward for the Communists—to the advantage of new, pro-fascist parties. I think the Communist Party will lose because it is condemned to have a democratic-petty bourgeois policy and many people—first of all, the petty bourgeoisie—have enough of this "democratic" policy, which is a deflation policy, with low wages and high prices. We are ripe for fascism!

But we can also go to socialism, with our party.

If we can run some candidates, we will obtain many votes and probably some deputies. The Stalinists know that—they are conducting a great campaign against us, with the aid of the bourgeois police. Yesterday, thirty-two militants at the international meeting of the Fourth International at Paris were arrested! The CP tries to forbid us to present candidates, by all means. A 20,000 franc fee for each candidate, etc. We demand the aid of the Socialists and centrists against those totalitarian measures. The next two months will be very important. Some newspapers begin to speak in our defense—(*Franc-Tireur, Combat, Liberté*...)

The departure of Léon Blum to the United States is a very comic dance (I go; I don't go). It is slightly ridiculous. The Socialists say: quick elections, then the U. S. will have confidence in us. But they also say the U. S. will have confidence if France has a right-wing, moderate government. Then, according to that logic, quick elections and vote for the right-wing parties!

Fraternally yours,

C.

France, February 28, 1946.

Dear Comrade:

I was overjoyed about your (R. Phillips') letter "To the Editors" in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL (Jan., '46). With this answer, I hope to clear up a few definite misunderstandings and to put aside certain obstacles.

Your letter starts with the statement that "the 'retrogression theory,' which is the basis of the analysis of the article, has never been adopted as the position of the party, or even discussed to any extent" in the WP.

This statement is undoubtedly correct. You are therefore of the opinion that the article in question should not have been printed "without any comment from the editors."

In the meantime, however, the correction you ask for has already been made and the article has been declared a *discussion article* in two issues of the NI (Nov. and Dec. '45). The "Editorial Note" of Dec., '45, states: "It is primarily in so far as Comrade Arlins' article deals with the theory of retrogression that the 'Correction' (of Nov. '45) referred to it as a discussion article."

If the formal part of the objection is thus answered, the actual justification for it is yet to be proven. What I challenge here is the charge that the retrogression theory is the basis of the analysis in the article. You and the editors of NI have missed the point of the question entirely. In reality, the retrogression theory does not even play the smallest part in the article. Insofar as the retrogression theory is mentioned at all, it is in relation to facts which exist independently of it. It is therefore possible to leave out all passages that mention the retrogression theory, without changing the content of the article.

What Is in Question?

You reproach me for having rejected the theses laid down by the Fourth Internation-

al, which includes the "Transitional Program" upon which the WP stands.

In our opinion, however, the great fault of the Fourth is precisely the fact that it *has totally neglected the transitional program*. If the fight in the last few years was about anything at all, then it pertained to those tasks which had some connection with the direct *preparation* for the revolution or with the *practical application* of the transitional program. The substance of our struggle is best expressed in the following sentence: Whereas we (in collaboration with the WP) have demanded a concrete carrying out of the transitional program and a *realistic policy*, the "official" Fourth has answered us passively, that is, with abstract phrases about the abstract proletarian revolution. As you know, the fight has centered around the so-called "national question," which (as long as the revolution is not victorious) is only an especially important case of the democratic transitional program. In other words, we have not in any way attacked the transitional program, but rather we have defended it against the stupidity of the "official" Fourth. In this connection alone, have we (for which you reproach us again) characterized the theses, resolutions, etc., of the "official" Fourth as "simply a dead alphabet for the feeble-minded." In relation to the above, it should be understood what is meant by the "official Fourth" and its theses, etc. I think I have expressed myself in this connection often enough, but if an especially precise definition is needed to prevent any further misunderstandings, I shall furnish it gladly. I say therefore:

By the "official Fourth," we mean all those *majority* groups that were created in the most important sections, after Trotsky's death. In contrast, we think of ourselves, the WP and certain minorities as the "unofficial Fourth." The point of departure is a purely political one and means that the differences of opinion are not about the programmatic documents, the transitional program, the principles, etc., but rather about the rubbish which has been produced by the majorities during the past few years. As does the WP, we also consider the Cannon-fraction as the decisive majority, and therefore hold it responsible for the miserable condition of the Fourth.

Where Is the Difference?

In the above outline, it is true that we reject the theses, resolutions, etc., of the "official Fourth" and that we used very strong words. In any case, we tried our best to show the political confusion, the sterility, the word-juggling, etc., in a series of concrete examples. (By the way, whatever has been published about it in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, is by far not all of it.) This, I think, distinguishes us *radically* from the Cannonites and other opponents, who work with falsification, lies and calumny, instead of political arguments. Have we ever complained when we were called "revisionists, opportunists, lost emigrants, pessimists," etc.? No! the one and only thing we complain about is this—we are slandered and called all sorts of names, without any attempt to justify any of the accusations factually. You write for instance: "His (Arlins') blindness is caused by the reactionary-pessimistic tint of the glasses

through which he looks at the development of the workers' revolution."

You will certainly admit, that *blindness* and *reactionary-pessimism* are not "mild" expressions. If taken personally, they are on the contrary the worst injury one could inflict on a comrade that has been in the movement for close to 29 years. You are perfectly right in using these expressions, and I would only feel silly, if I were to charge you (as you have charged me) with using an "uncomradely tone" or with "psychological" suspicions. All things must be taken concretely; there is a tremendous difference between you and (let us say) an E. R. Frank. Where you have an honest opinion and good reasons for your sharp verdict, an E. R. Frank has always proven himself to be an imposter and an intentional slanderer. You see, it does not matter to me whether your judgment is correct or not. I often say in a joking mood: "To err is to be human; and the more you err, the more human you are." So, no matter how wrong you are in my opinion—as long as your judgment is based on honest conviction, it is all right with me. For this reason all these people, who supposedly have a "strong conviction" but dare not make any definite decisions, should be eyed suspiciously by revolutionaries. One cannot discuss fruitfully with such people. They have no character and refuse the responsibility to let themselves be taken at their word. As I mentioned above, you criticize me harshly in an "uncomradely tone," proceed to pass a sharp judgment upon me, view me without the encumbrance of conciliatory considerations and demand in consequence that the party clearly separate itself from us. I consider this as a good sign, and consequently it is your courage that I admired so much in your letter. You are insisting, as we are, to work out the differences to a finer degree—we can therefore discuss profitably.

And so, the "Editorial Note" of December which corrected the "correction" and my critique of the political course of the Fourth, regardless of their severity, have established a community of interest.

In other words, if you compare carefully, you will find that there isn't the slightest difference between our findings and those of the WP.

A General Conclusion

In reality, therefore, your reproaches have only served to make an exception of us, in as much as you are silent as far as Shachtman is concerned, while at the same time you criticize us harshly for the same "offense." The same is true of our "position" in regard to "Trotsky's example," the French organization and the English section. In order to realize that, I repeat, it is only necessary to compare carefully, although I am still not discussing the question as to whether our position (and that of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL) is right or wrong. I am therefore leaving the real political question which your letter raises for another time. I beg of you to follow the clarification of these problems in my "Answer to Comrade J. R. Johnson," which has now become due because of his critique of our study of "Barbarism or Socialism." In this,

I shall also take up those problems, which are merely misunderstandings due to the fact that they had been presented without the necessary context. Of all that we attempted to clarify here, there is one general conclusion:

Criticisms of "tone," "attitude," "style," etc., are in themselves generally unfruitful and untenable. What is up for judgment is only the actual content, whose inherent truth we have to establish. Every other "approach" leads objectively (as our example shows) to nothing but unwarranted partiality or to the beclouding of facts and differences of opinion.

And so, even the most negative has its positive angle. If your letter then contributes to this general conclusion, it has served a good purpose and we have advanced quite a bit.

Fraternally yours,

A. ARLINS

March 4, 1946.

Dear Comrade Shachtman:

Some of our IKD comrades published an article in the theoretical organ of the English section under the title: "Problems of the European Revolution" (*Workers International News*, July-August, 1945). This article was a contribution to the discussion on the national question and expressed (in a generally correct framework) certain opinions which were, without doubt, erroneous. Comrade T. Grant polemized for the English section against the article of our friends and his polemic is now reprinted in *Fourth International* (we never wonder why this paper has nothing to say of its own, except for the "summarizing" calumnies of the unspeakable E. R. Frank). Naturally, the false position on the national question which the English section has in common with the SWP in no way improved by the mistakes of our friends, but the mistakes none the less should be openly acknowledged. This is what our comrades recognized for themselves (they have already corrected their position in an answer to Comrade Grant) when they wrote to us in a letter of Dec. 26, 1945:

"Incorrect formulations in our contribution to the discussion of the national question are not so much a matter of incorrect formulations. They are much more the result of an overly summarized and 'mechanical' generalization of fundamental tendencies, i.e., the result of an incorrect and, therefore, false interpretation of the development in its concrete course."

Since the polemic of Comrade Grant was reprinted in the *FI* in order to spread confusion about the official position of the IKD, I would like to say to the leadership of the SWP by means of this letter:

a) You intended to discredit the IKD as a whole by using (out of context) the polemic against an article for which the AK (Committee Abroad) of the IKD was not responsible. Good!—Everybody acts according to his needs and his politico-moral level (that which Comrade Cannon calls his "standards"). But the SWP level can be greatly improved if you, the leadership of the SWP, take the IKD as a model. Our

friends know how to correct their own errors freely—they display a remarkable skill in finding the real source of these errors. Read carefully the above quoted paragraph and you will see: They are interested solely in advancing our common cause—they do not live in fear of losing "prestige." *Nota bene*: This is the standard of the IKD, who will in one way or another, invariably lose "adherents" who do not possess that skill shown by the authors of the article in question. Consequently:

b) To improve at least the level of the *FI* it would be very good if you would also publish the answer our friends have written to Comrade Grant. We shall forward you a copy, and if you decide to publish it, your readers will be surprised to see that there exists nowadays such a thing as political honesty in your magazine. To be sure: Given our past experiences I don't believe that our moral standards go so high as to permit such an act of honesty at all.

* * *

So far, dear Max, my direct message to the Cannonites. Have you noticed that Pierre Frank (the twin brother of that other specimen, E. R. Frank) opens in the same *FI* an attack against the IKD? We have, this time, committed the "crime" of being for freedom of religion. Terrible as it may seem to such "Marxists" as we have in the SWP and its international factions: Yes, we defend the freedom of religion (100 per cent guaranteed under the proletarian dictatorship!) and we share this crime with poor men like Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, etc. If Trotsky were alive, the editors of the *FI* would be astonished at what he would tell them... exactly as he did in 1935 when he defended our position on the church struggle in Germany against this same Pierre Frank and other "radicals" (we had not to withdraw a single comma!). If Comrade Johnson will permit me: What a "retrogression" since the days when the German Social Democracy (in her glorious period) defended "even" the Jesuits against Bismarckian oppression! This defense was then simply "self-evident." But cast aside the history of the German Social Democracy—if only they would learn something from their beloved "Bolshevism." Objectively they support the calumnies about Bolshevism, for these calumnies say that Bolshevism is a totalitarian monster suppressing all kinds of individual liberties, especially in regard to religion.

With warmest greetings,

Yours,

A. ARLINS.

London, March 21, 1946.

Dear Friends:

Reading Cannon's book has left me wondering whether I haven't had a complete misconception of the nature of history and of "a history." Is a history book properly an attempt to assemble in some coherent pattern the many elements of which any group's story is composed? Or should it be a kind of gossipy old wives' tale, with thumbnail portraits of a character here and there, brief sketches of a scene here and

there—just as events or people happen to strike the author's fancy or illuminate his political theses?

Cannon's history—even when one remembers that it was delivered as a series of lectures—is certainly of the second type. That is surprising, for he had before him a great model of intelligent, coherent and "objective" history in Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*. It is safe to assume that Cannon knows it well, but he appears to have learned little from it about how to write history. It isn't only the genius that is lacking, it's the character. What purports to be history is in reality only ill-documented propaganda for the Cannon faction and in particular for James P. Cannon personally. The book should have been called an autobiography.

Were it not for his deadly humorlessness, I would think that the author of the introduction was indulging in subtle irony when he insists that Cannon is "completely objective" and that he gives fair portraits of leaders with whom he later broke. Cannon is, as a matter of fact, insufferably subjective—all through the book—and every one of his minute biographies is scored with rancor. Whenever people disagreed with him, they did so either because they were "no good" from the beginning, or because inevitably their "tendencies" came out—petty bourgeois tendencies, bourgeois tendencies, Stalinist tendencies, preacher's-son tendencies. Ideas never exist in and for themselves; people hold them only because of their tendencies. The only valid ideas, of course, are those Cannon holds at the particular moment of writing.

Perhaps this attitude springs from a

basic lack of interest in ideas—in spite of Cannon's reputation as a "theses shark." In this book, at least, he is not particularly concerned with them. His account of the endless factional struggles of his party deals largely with the faction leaders and very cavalierly with the principles involved. Issues—even the issues that led to the split with the Comintern—are blurred.

One of the few issues that he discusses in detail is the entrance of the Trotskyists into the Socialist Party. And it is in this discussion that he reveals most brutally his authoritarian attitude toward his own party and his conception of political life as the slippery game it is. He prepared for the convention of his party which was to decide the question of entering the Socialist Party by engaging in a series of negotiations with the Socialist leaders. Although he knew there was strong opposition within the party to this step, he committed the party to joining the Socialists *before the party convention*. And for the Socialists with whom he had dealings he has nothing but insults.

In fairness it must be said that this kind of thing is wholly consistent with Cannon's conception of political leadership. The "mass work activist," he says, wants a little discussion, a few directives, and then he wants to plunge right into work among the masses. The business of the professional leader is to give the "activist" the correct line, to guide him, with a firm, fatherly hand, through the maze of politics and keep him from worrying too much about theses and principles. Again and again in his book Cannon stresses that some crisis was due to

lack of trained leaders, or to the betrayals of some leaders—or to the fact that his own advice was not followed. His conviction of his own personal importance and rightness is beautifully unclouded by doubts. "Whenever anybody goes crazy in our movement he begins to denounce me at the top of his voice," Cannon writes. To disagree with him places one automatically in the category of the "lunatic fringe."

The book is a revealing record of the shabby inner life of political parties—the dog-eat-dog behavior of the leaders; the implicit contempt for the rank and file, for honest unionists (who are depicted as babes-in-the-wood in contrast to the wily Trotskyist leaders), and for the ordinary worker; the cut-throat attitude toward all other political parties. Cannon's aim is obviously the totalitarian party system of fascism or Stalinism. He is quite proud that the Trotskyists succeeded in nearly wrecking the Socialist Party. Everything that stands in the way of his aims must be wrecked, swept aside. It would be amusing, if it were not also sickening to see how these politicians without power extol power politics.

—G.

(The above letter was written from prison by a conscientious objector who had received a copy of the Cannon "history" from a member of SWP. We, of course, disagree with his conclusion that Cannon's book proves the "shabby inner life of political parties." The record of the Workers Party for the six years of its existence is proof to the contrary. However, let those who regard the SWP as the example of Bolshevism, ponder over his words.—EDITORS.)

THE TRUTH ABOUT INDIA:

'INDIA IN REVOLT'

By **HENRY JUDD**



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