

WORKERS INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Theoretical Organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party, Fourth International.

VOL. 5. No. 9.

JULY - AUGUST, 1945.

THREEPENCE

In this Issue:

**REFORM OR
REVOLUTION —**
*Answers to Harry
Pollitt By H. Atkinson.*

**RESOLUTION ON
THE NATIONAL
QUESTION IN
EUROPE**

**PROBLEMS OF THE
EUROPEAN
REVOLUTION**
By Comrades of I.K.D.

**FROM THE
ARCHIVES OF THE
REVOLUTION —**
Revolutionary Tactics
By Leon Trotsky.

**TASKS OF FOURTH
INTERNATIONAL
IN EUROPE —**
*Resolution European
E.O.*

Reform or Revolution?

By H. ATKINSON

The Communist Party ranks are disturbed, and no wonder. Those members who believed that the class collaboration policy of the Party was an expedient to be employed only to "defeat fascism" have received a rude shock. Harry Pollitt's booklet "Answers to Questions" is an attempt to allay the misgivings of the Party militants and to justify the policy of continued collaboration with the capitalists during the post-war period.

Pollitt's "answers" make one's hair stand on end. For sheer cynicism they are unsurpassed. The writer claims to be guided by his "understanding of Marxism and how it ought to be applied in the present situation." In fact every word is an attack on Marxism and its application to any situation. What we get is not Marxism, i.e. revolutionary class politics, but a warmed up hash of its opposite . . . traditional reformism. Communism is negated in every word and line of Pollitt's argumentation.

THE MARXIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Capitalism has a number of specific laws, defined by Marx and developed

by Lenin. It is an economic phase which is basically unchanged by the political developments which occur within the framework of that given social system. Capitalism, like the feudal and slave societies which preceded it, is a class society. Under capitalism there are two major classes: those who own the means of production—the capitalists, the exploiters—and the exploited, the working class, who possess nothing but their labour power and are, therefore, compelled to sell this commodity in order to exist and reproduce their like. Between these classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, there are intermediate layers who form the middle classes, doctors, lawyers, small shopkeepers, farmers and so on. But these have no independent basis as a social force. They are compelled to base themselves on the programme of one or other of the major contending classes who, having irreconcilable interests — those of exploiter and exploited — are compelled to engage in struggle. This struggle between classes, the class struggle, has been defined by Marx as the motive force of history.

So long as capitalism remains the prevailing mode of production and exchange, so long will the social re-

lationships, the struggle between classes, continue. It is the economic base which conditions the political forms of these social relationships and not vice versa. This is the essence of Marxism, of the materialist conception of history. Pollitt reduces the historical process to a metaphysical absurdity conditioned by the "good-will" of the employing class.

IMPERIALISM AND IMPERIALIST WAR

In support of the abandonment by the C.P. of the policies of class struggle and internationalism on which it was founded, Pollitt contends that there is a difference between the imperialist war of 1914-1918 and the present "anti-fascist war". Mr. Pollitt's credentials as a judge are not of the highest grade. When the war began, in September 1939, Pollitt characterised it as a "just war". A few weeks later he discovered that he had made a "mistake", it was an imperialist war. And so it remained until Hitler attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941. The reason for the change in character of the war, according to the C.P. theoreticians, was the extension of the war to the U.S.S.R. and resulting alliance between the workers state and the western

imperialist powers. How valid is this reasoning from the standpoint of Marxism-Leninism on which the Stalinist leaders claim to stand?

What yardstick did Lenin use to gauge the motives of those conducting a war? "Every war" he said "is inseparably connected with the political system which gave rise to it. The politics which a certain country, a certain class in that country, pursued for a long period before the war, are inevitably pursued by that very same class during the war; it merely changes its form of action." In his attitude to war, Lenin invariably employed as illustration that profound dictum of the military theoretician, Clausewitz: "War is a continuation of politics by other (i.e. military) means." What new factor has arisen to invalidate this? The "alliance against fascism" between the imperialist democracies and the Soviet Union reply the Stalinists. Let us examine this argument.

PROGRESSIVE AND REACTIONARY WARS

The Soviet Union is a workers' state. In defending itself against imperialist attack it conducts a progressive struggle. It is thereby waging a just and progressive war for what remains of the conquests of the October revolution: nationalised property in the means of production and the planned economy resting on that base. Likewise a colonial or semi-colonial country struggling to free itself from foreign domination, or to repel an imperialist invader, conducts a progressive war, e.g. India's struggle against British imperialism, or China's war against Japanese imperialism. But how can a mere alliance, a military and political expedient, change the character of a war? The war of all the imperialist powers, whether allied to the Soviet Union or not, "is inseparably connected with the political system which gave rise to it." They are imperialist wars. That is the Leninist way of judging.

And this method is well known to the C.P. leaders. A fortnight after Churchill had declared support for the Soviet Union, in an article in "World News and Views", July 5, 1941; Palme Dutt wrote:

"But they (the British imperialists) by no means wish to see a victory of the Soviet Union, with its liberating consequences for Europe. They count, instead, on the basis of the weakening of both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, on establishing their own domination

in Europe and eventually to return to their ultimate aim of crushing the Soviet Union. There is no room for illusion on these ulterior aims of the imperialists."

A question is pertinent: why, then, do you now spend your whole time sowing just such illusions, Messrs. Dutt and Pollitt? For the subsequent events have confirmed, and are still confirming, Dutt's appraisal of the role of the imperialists.

It is not the 'goodwill' of the capitalists that decides the course of history, it is the economic forces. That is the reality of the situation. And these very forces make impossible a prolonged peaceful co-existence of capitalism and the workers state. One or the other must ultimately succumb. In the coming period of economic turbulence and political storms and strife; in the coming period of ever fiercer class struggles on the world arena, either the toilers will emerge triumphant and create a world federation of socialist republics, or black reaction will plunge humanity into new dark ages. The Soviet Union, world fortress of the toiling masses, will, in that event, be plunged into a new dark age.

CLASS COLLABORATION AND THE DEFEAT OF FASCISM.

One of Pollitt's most amazing arguments in favour of continuing 'national unity', i.e. class collaboration, to call things by their right names, is the "defeat of fascism". During the war it was claimed that national unity was essential in order to "defeat fascism". Now we are told, class collaboration is necessary because of the defeat of fascism which, Pollitt claims, has been achieved. The "defeat of fascism"; the alliance of the so-called United Nations; and the authoritative position assumed by the Soviet Union are trotted out as new factors bringing about a "basic change" in the world situation which requires the abandonment of class struggle policies. The Churchill-Stalin pact is designed to last for 20 years after the end of the war. We will hear no more from the Stalinist leadership about revolution or class struggles for as long as it endures.

WHAT IS FASCISM?

The defeat of fascism, is not, it appears, complete. "It has taken almost six years to organise the military defeat of fascism, and the political and moral defeat is as yet only in the first stage of being tackled." (*Answers to Questions*, p. 6).

Such a statement could only be the product of a mind utterly incapable of understanding or utterly unwilling to understand, what fascism is. Fascism, according to Pollitt, "was the expression of the determination of the most reactionary section of the capitalist class not to allow the urgent problems of the day to be settled by the people in the interests of the people." Such a definition is a complete contradiction of Marxism.

In polemicising against the renegade Kautsky, a quarter of a century ago, for defining imperialism, not as a phase or an economic stage, but as a policy "preferred" by finance capital, Lenin wrote:

"The important thing is that Kautsky detaches the policy of imperialism from its economics, speaks of annexations being 'preferred' by finance capital, and opposes to it another bourgeois policy which he alleges to be possible on the same basis of finance capital. It would follow that monopolies in economics are compatible with methods which are neither monopolistic, nor violent, nor annexationist, in politics. ... It would follow that the territorial division of the world, which was completed precisely during the period of finance capital and which represents the main feature of the present peculiar forms of rivalry between the greatest capitalist states, is compatible with a non-imperialist policy. The result is a slurring over and a blunting of the most profound contradictions of the newest stage of capitalism, instead of an exposure of their depth. The result is bourgeois reformism instead of Marxism." (*Imperialism* p. 84, International Publishers edition).

We have quoted this at length for within these lines resides the basis of our theoretical discussion with Pollitt.

Basing ourselves on this reasoning of Lenin, it follows that fascism is not a policy "preferred" by the reactionary capitalists. It is the political expression of decaying imperialism; the political manifestation of an economic phase or phenomenon: capitalism in its death agony. Fascism is the last resort of the imperialist ruling classes in their efforts to stifle the class struggle. It means the destruction, by brute force, of the workers' organisations and of all democratic rights and institutions. It is not "preferred" but employed reluctantly by the capitalists when bourgeois democratic methods of achieving harmony between the workers and the capitalists have failed. There is no basic social-

conflict between capitalist democracy and fascism. One will follow the other as sure as night follows day unless the economic conditions which produce both are changed.

Social reformism belongs, generally speaking, to the historical period of the progressive development of capitalism. As a result mainly of colonial exploitation the ruling classes of the imperialist countries, e.g. Britain, France, Germany, U.S.A., Italy, were able to soften the class struggle at home by granting economic and political concessions to the workers at home. Around the struggle for reforms within the bounds of the capitalist system bourgeois democracy grew and developed with its parliaments and its workers' organisations.

In the period of imperialist decay in which we now live, capitalism is no longer developing. It is rapidly declining. Far from being able to find new fields of exploitation, the imperialist powers have been forced into two catastrophic wars in a quarter of a century for a redivision of the existing colonial spoils. In these conditions they are forced to exploit the workers in the imperialist countries ever more ruthlessly. All resistance on the part of the workers must be crushed if the capitalists are to continue to make profits. The democratic liberties of the masses, the industrial and political organisations of the working class, must be destroyed by brute force and the toilers held in a vice of reaction.

Fascism, although it also imposes certain unpalatable overhead charges on the capitalists, is, nevertheless, not the choice of one section of the ruling class. It operates in the interests of the ruling class as such. Fascism gains its mass base among the departing middle classes and the lumpen proletariat as a result of the failure of the working class, above all of its leadership, to take advantage of the conditions favouring the revolutionary struggle in order to bring about the overthrow of the rule of capital.

HOW FASCISM CAME TO POWER IN GERMANY

Pollitt blames the Labour leaders for the coming to power of fascism. He lies! The Stalinist leadership of the Comintern was no less to blame. Pollitt now says that it was due to "the divisions that existed in the international working class movement, and the refusal of the Labour leaders in the principal capitalist countries to unite with the Communists in common action against reaction and fascism." ("Questions and Answers" p. 3). But we must remind Pollitt

that it was due in no small measure to the so-called "third period", ultra-left politics of the Comintern that these divisions existed.

From 1929 to 1934 the Communist Parties attacked the Labour leaders, in Germany and elsewhere, as social-fascists! They united with Hitler in Prussia in 1931 in an attempt to overthrow the Prussian Social-Democratic Government by means of a referendum. They smashed up Labour Party meetings everywhere. And it was for opposing these criminal policies; it was for advocating a united front between the Communist and Labour parties against fascism and reaction that the Trotskyists were expelled from the Communist Parties. This is how the Stalinists characterised our policy at the time: "It is significant" jeered the "Daily Worker" of May 26, 1932, "that Trotsky has come out in defence of a united front between the Communist and Social democratic Parties against Fascism. No more disruptive and counter revolutionary class lead could possibly have been given at a time like the present." Now Pollitt wants to claim this policy as his own. You will not get away with this deception, Mr. Pollitt! We will not permit you to trade on short memories in your attempts to deceive the masses.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE PRESENT WAR

"We can see", Pollitt avers, "that political, economic and social consequences entirely different from those that followed the last war are bound to arise from the victory over fascism, consequences that give promise of securing lasting peace, important social progress and further new developments on the road to Socialism." ("Answers and Questions", p. 2).

This monstrous theme runs through the whole of Pollitt's booklet. His thesis is simple: capitalism can be made to function in the interests of the workers and capitalists alike. There could be no greater travesty of Marxism!

How is this miracle to be achieved? What "new" factor, what "basic change" has taken place which is so momentous as to alter the whole course of historical development, cut it away from its economic foundations and thereby completely invalidate Marx? We find this epoch-making discovery of Pollitt's in his booklet recently published. In support of a policy of pure reformism, not differing a jot from that of the Labour Party, Pollitt writes:

"There will be work and good wages for all, side by side with

decisive measures of social reform. It is a policy that takes into account all the new political features of the present and coming periods. It depends for its success on the unity and strength of the Labour movement and the willingness of the employers to co-operate." ("How to Win the Peace", p. 29).

There you have the key to the whole situation: "the willingness of the employers to co-operate"!

In his attempt to pose as a Marxist, Pollitt reasons that there are economic motives impelling the capitalists towards co-operation with the workers. The workers and the capitalists have now got common interest in making capitalism work. He contends that a planned economy under capitalism, that state capitalism, will benefit the working class and the capitalist class alike. Joint production committees, joint employers and employees participation in the running of capitalism, according to the Stalinist plan worked out by Pollitt and Co., will soften the contradictions that hitherto rent capitalism asunder; will bring more profits to the capitalists through increased sales; and, as a consequence, the workers will get higher wages and better living standards. The alliance of the United Nations, if extended to the domain of economics, through joint co-operation and planning, will enable the products of Britain and America to find a practically limitless market in Asia; will, in fact, enable Anglo-American imperialism to dominate the world market.

These wonderful possibilities open up as a result of the Anglo-Soviet alliance which opened a new phase of world history. The Crimea Conference—that conspiracy of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin to destroy the European revolution, for it was nothing less than that!—has opened the gateway, we are now asked to believe, to a new era of peace and prosperity. We now have the opportunity to create a new world order without destroying the old one. The old economic system is to remain intact, reinforced only by the "willingness of the employers to co-operate" and thereby disappears the need for the socialist revolution in the capitalist countries. The cause of war will "diminish", living standards will be raised and democracy will bloom like a garden. All given the willingness of the employers to co-operate, on a national scale with the workers and internationally with the Soviet Union.

KAUTSKY'S "THEORY" OF SUPER-IMPERIALISM

Such fantastic rubbish runs counter to every idea of Communism. It

denies the specific historical laws governing capitalist production, as enunciated by Marx. It is based on the idea of good and bad capitalists being responsible for the destiny of mankind. In contrast our criticism will base itself on the materialist conception of history, i.e. the Marxist method of analysing social phenomena.

This "theory" of the modification of capitalist contradictions through economic co-operation between the capitalists is by no means new. It is no more than a re-hash of the hoary old Kautskyan theory of super-imperialism.

In his book on Imperialism, which is a Marxist classic, Lenin wrote of Kautsky thus:

"From a purely economic point of view, says Kautsky, it is not impossible that capitalism will pass through yet another new phase, that of the extension of the policy of cartels to foreign policy, the phase of ultra-imperialism, i.e. of super-imperialism, a union of world imperialism and not struggles among them; a phase when wars shall cease under capitalism, a phase of the joint exploitation of the world by an internationally combined finance capital." ("Imperialism", p. 85.)

And Lenin proceeds to condemn such a postulate as "ultra-nonsense"!

A German economist, Werner Somhart, also put forth these ideas before Pollitt. He wrote a book "Capitalism" as a reply to Marx's "Capital" and in the section which he counterposed to Marx's prognosis of catastrophe he wrote:

"Capitalism will continue to transform itself internally in the same direction in which it has already begun to transform itself, at the time of its apogee: as it grows older it will become more and more calm, sedate reasonable."

This conservative economist, an adversary of Marxism, had his prognostication rudely shattered by the world slump of 1929-34 and later by the war. If the socialist revolution is not achieved in the period following the present war, Pollitt will see his moth-eaten scheme also shattered in the economic ruins and consequent war which is inevitable within the next decade or two.

Even the capitalists today recognise the crisis facing them in this country. And not only the capitalists but also the Labour leaders the traditional reformists. They realise that it is impossible within the existing order to solve the problem of the full

utilisation of the productive forces which exist. To provide full employment and a decent standard of living for the masses.

Britain depends very largely on imports in her economic life. But during the war over 60% of her markets have been lost, mostly to U.S.A. American productive forces have doubled during the war and the U.S. capitalists aim at trebling their export trade. Whereas Britain was faced, at the end of the last war, with an expenditure of 2% to 3% of the national income on armaments so deep has the permanent crisis become that some 10% at least will have to be budgeted for after this war. Estimates vary up to 300% but the most optimistic economists claim that to have the pre-war standards of living for the masses in this country (and, God knows, they were low enough!) the pre-war export trade of Britain will have to be increased 125%. England instead of continuing to draw tribute from the colonial peoples now finds herself a debtor nation. To India she now owes £1,500,000,000 sterling, to Egypt £300,000,000 and £350,000,000 even to Ireland! All her American and Canadian investments have gone to finance the war. And America has now a merchant navy which far outstrips Britain's thus another pre-war source of external income literally goes west. Well might Bevin say that there is "nothing left in the till." Well might Greenwood estimate that seven millions unemployed would be a regular feature of Britain's post-war economy. These are realistic appraisals of the future under capitalism. It is left to Pollitt the latter-day reformist advocate to cover over the capitalist hell with rose garden pictures.

GERMANY, CHINA, INDIA AND THE WORLD MARKET

There is even less chance now than when Kautsky wrote of capitalism solving the immediate problems confronting it. In his calculations Pollitt leaves out of account Germany as an industrially developed nation. Yet Germany is the heart of Europe. Without her industrial production the conditions of the population of Europe will fall catastrophically. Conversely, if Germany once again arises from the ruins as a powerful industrial country with a capitalist base, i.e. if the social revolution is not achieved in the coming period, then a new world war is bound to follow.

But even assuming the possibility of the Western imperialists finding

an outlet for their industrial production in the sale of capital goods to China and India, as is proposed by Pollitt. How long can it last? In a few years an industrialised Asia, equipped with the latest American machines and industrial technique, with vast supplies of raw materials and cheap labour at their command, would be able to flood the world with goods at incredibly cheap prices. The living standards of the British and American would be cut to the bone in order that the capitalists of these countries could compete with Asia. Either that or else every one would be unemployed.

THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM

But in any case the whole idea is a pipe dream of the Stalinists which violates the fundamental laws of capitalism, particularly in its advanced imperialist stage. Nearly a century ago Marx wrote:

"The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them. And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented." (Communist Manifesto).

Events have only served to confirm this analysis. When Pollitt contends that the developments of capitalist industry and production, on the basis of the Crimea decisions, will provide better opportunities for full employment he is again denying the laws of capitalist production. "The greater the social wealth", says Marx, "the greater is the industrial reserve army . . . the mass of a consolidated surplus-population . . . the greater is official pauperism. This is the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation." No "defeat of fascism", no alliance of democratic imperialist powers with the Soviet Union, No Crimea, Bretton Woods or San Francisco Conferences; above all, Mr. Pollitt, no word-spinning and phrase-mongering such as you are now indulging in, will change these "absolute general laws" of capitalist development. You accuse those who refuse to support your ridiculous and barren policies of being "defeatists". We reply: those who abandon the struggle for socialism are the de-

featists You describe those who hold aloft the banner of Marxism as "revolutionary" romanticists. You, who think, or pretend to think, that you can defy the laws of historical development are the reactionary dreamers: Your ideas of reforming capitalism when it is already in its last stages of decay are not "realistic", they are utopian. "Socialists, above all revolutionaries, are used to being called romanticists by reactionary opponents of the working class. But Hegel, the dialectician teaches us that a point is reached when reason becomes nonsense and nonsense becomes reasonable. That stage has been reached. There is only one practical way out of the impasse: Socialism. Those who think they can save capitalism are the dreamers.

On page 27 of "Answers to Questions" we read:

"We attack the causes of economic crises internally to the extent that we control capitalism financially and industrially. Are the conditions ripe for full employment in Britain? Yes, but it will take a threefold struggle to achieve them. First, to raise the standards of the working class; second, to secure the nationalisation of certain industries, and the retention and extension of State controls; third to carry out a taxation policy which takes from the rich and assists the working people"

This does not take us one step beyond the miserable rag-patching proposed by the Labour Party. But in the period of capitalist decay even these miserable reforms are impossible to achieve. As for providing full employment under capitalism, that is a myth except during a war, or, as in Nazi Germany from 1935 to 1939, in preparation for a war. And how does Pollitt propose to achieve his modest programme. By a Labour and Communist victory in the General Election. We will return to this point.

CAPITALISM AND THE STATE

"State planning on the lines we are suggesting will demand democratic changes in the character of the State machine itself. Changes away from bureaucracy and sectional interest. . . . In this process the State will become less and less suitable for a switch to fascism, and more and more stimulus and authority will be given to the democratic organisations of the people themselves." ("Answers to Questions", p. 31.)

This will, of course, only produce State capitalism, Pollitt agrees, and asks: "what is wrong with that?" Our reply is simple: "from the stand-

point of the working class, everything is wrong!"

Marx defined the State as the instrument of the ruling class; the organ of the domination and oppression of one class by another. In the Communist Manifesto Marx wrote: "The executive of the modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." Lenin defined it even more precisely "The State is the product of the manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms."

No one, including Mr. Pollitt, has ever been able to refute this. It has been confirmed particularly by the events in Europe since the last world war. And the Russian revolution proved beyond doubt the conclusions Marx and Engels drew from the Paris Commune of 1871: "The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes."

"It is sometimes argued", Pollitt says, "that it is of no importance to the workers whether they live under capitalism or State capitalism, that it makes no difference to the working class in its struggle towards Socialism. But no serious Socialist can refute the fact that such forms of State capitalism do represent an advance for the working class compared with conditions in 1939," and he goes on to ask: "If not, why will the question of nationalisation of coal and transport and retention of certain essential forms of State control be the central feature of the fight at the General Election?"

We will tell you why, Mr. Pollitt, or rather we will remind you, for you know as well as we do that parliamentary elections are never fought on basic issues but always on diversionary, side issues and red herrings. This one is no exception.

But to return to the main point. State capitalism, for which Pollitt and Co. now fight, which now constitutes the "immediate programme" of the C.P., is here counterposed to capitalism as though it was something different. No serious Socialist, says Pollitt, can refute the fact that State capitalism is an advance for the working class. What, then, was Lenin, we must ask. A playboy? For he refuted it, a quarter of a century ago, when he wrote:

"The proximity of SUCH capitalism (State capitalism) to Socialism should serve for the real representatives of the proletariat as an argument proving the nearness, the ease, feasibility and urgency of the Socialist revolution, and not at all as an argument for tolerating a re-

puddiation of such a revolution or for making capitalism more attractive, in which work all the reformists are engaged." ("State and Revolution", p. 53.)

There is nothing we need add to that. As for "democratic changes" in the State machine, the organ of oppression of the ruling class over the working class, which will render it "less and less suitable for a switch to fascism" we again need only to turn to Lenin to see how clearly he explained the problem. He writes:

"The more developed democracy is, the nearer at hand is the danger of a pogrom or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which threatens the existence of the bourgeoisie," and continues: "Or take bourgeois parliaments. Is it to be supposed that learned Mr. Kautsky has never heard of the fact that the more democracy is developed, the more do the bourgeois parliaments fall under the control of the Stock Exchange and the bankers? This, of course, does not mean that bourgeois parliamentarism ought not to be made use of . . . but it does mean that only a Liberal can forget the historical limitation and relativeness of bourgeois parliamentarism in the manner in which Kautsky does." ("The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky", p. 27.)

Here we must substitute Pollitt for Kautsky; for he is very familiar with these writings of Lenin. Pollitt has also seen for himself how this prognosis has been borne out by the events in Italy, Germany, Spain, France, since the time of Lenin's writing. Unless we can regard him in the same light as Lenin regarded Kautsky—as a bourgeois reformist, a Liberal, worse: a renegade—then there is no explanation for the policies of Pollitt and the C.P. leaders in failing to explain the capitalist state and the limitation of bourgeois parliamentarism.

UNITY OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

Pollitt deplures the fact that Britain is the only country in which unity between Labour and Communist Parties has not been achieved. On what programme have the so-called Communist Parties united with the reformist Labour Parties? Is reformism or revolutionary socialism the basis for your unity with the Social Democrats, with the Mensheviks. It is enough to pose the question in order to show that the C.P. has become a reformist Party, has deserted the banner of Marx and Lenin.

THE TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM

When Pollitt writes of the transition to Socialism he implies that it can come about peacefully by parliamentary means. Not once does he mention the Dictatorship of the Proletariat: the need for the workers to create their own organs of struggle (Soviets) independent of parliament and take the power through these democratic organisations. And when he fails to warn the workers that the capitalists will strive to use force against the workers should they take power and it is necessary therefore, to prepare for the defence of a Workers' Britain arms in hand, against the remnants of capitalism and any outside aid they can muster, he is committing no less than a crime against the working class.

In conducting this polemic we have quoted extensively from Marx and Lenin to give authority to our arguments, and in order to show how far

the C.P. leadership has departed from Marxism and Leninism. We do not ask the comrades of the C.P. to take our word for it. They have a duty to study the writings of Marx and Lenin side by side with the vapourings of Pollitt and Co. Such investigations cannot fail to convince any sincere Communist that we, the Trotskyists, are the true inheritors of the banner and traditions of Bolshevik-Leninism.

The task of Communist leadership is not to deceive the workers with catch-cries about parliamentarism and 'Labour and Progressive' governments; not to deceive the workers into believing that even their immediate problems can be solved by reformist panaceas, and electioneering promises which will never be kept. Pollitt's jeers at those who ask: "what has become of the class struggle?" are in bad taste; are a measure of his contempt for the class conscious C.P. membership. For only through class struggle politics taken to their logical end—the seizure of power by the

working class—can the emancipation of the working class be achieved and even the immediate problems of our epoch solved.

The "next step forward" is to put the Labour leaders in power and expose them before the masses, as the Kerenskyists were exposed by the Bolsheviks. To those millions of workers who have illusions in the reformist leadership we say: "The Labour leaders are the lackeys of the capitalist class. They will betray you. But you do not believe us. Very well, put them in power. We will help you. We will promise them our unqualified support in any struggle, any independent step forward they take against the policies of capitalism." In this way, through their own experiences, the masses will be won to the banner of Communism. **Labour to Power!** That is the battle-cry of the Trotskyists, the Revolutionary Communists. That is the real Marxist-Leninist "answer" to the immediate questions posed before the working class.

Resolution on the National Question in Europe

*Issued by the Central Committee of the R.C.P.
for Discussion in the Party.*

1. The Revolutionary Communist Party condemns and fights against the national oppression of one nation by another; it supports the **right** of complete self determination and political secession of every nationally oppressed people.

2. In the epoch of imperialism and its present phase of imperialist war, all the objective conditions demand that a genuine struggle for national freedom must be linked to the programme of the socialist revolution and the struggle for the United Socialist States of Europe.

3. Whilst condemning the Nazi oppression of the nations in Europe, the Trotskyists equally condemn the national oppression which is carried out by the French imperialists, the Belgian, the Dutch, and in particular the British and American imperialists. We conduct a ruthless exposure of the national oppression carried out in the

name of democracy, not only in the colonial empires, but also in Europe, and by the **satellites** of Anglo-American imperialism.

4. The role of the European ruling classes is clear to see. They collaborated as a class with the foreign Nazi oppressor and now seek to play the same role as agents of the military victors—Anglo-American imperialism and the Kremlin. Without the active support of Stalinism and Social Democracy the capitalists would long have lost all semblance of support among the workers and peasants. By subordinating the working class and its organisations to the leadership of the bourgeoisie and to the programme of Anglo-American imperialism and Stalinism, the Social Democrat and Stalinist parties play a counter-revolutionary role. It is the duty of revolutionaries, while striving at all stages of the struggle to win the rank and file to the banner of Trotskyism,

to oppose and expose the role of these parties and their auxiliary organisations.

5. Despite their undoubted support from many thousands of the best proletarian fighters, who see in the Resistance Movements not an instrument for the replacement of one master by another, but rather the instrument for the overthrow of capitalism and the emancipation of the working class, these National Resistance Movements in Europe today are agencies of one or other group of imperialist powers. As movements they are incapable of genuinely struggling for national freedom.

6. To these movements, and particularly to the leadership, the proletarian party and the proletariat must adopt an attitude of implacable hostility, opposing and exposing their class roots and anti-proletarian policy; explaining that such leaders seek nat-

ional freedom only as part of their programme of subjugation of the proletariat together with other peoples; and demonstrating that there is no possibility of genuine national freedom along that road.

7. In opposition to the military formations of the bourgeois-led and inspired Resistance Movements, the proletarian party must counterpose and organise independent military formations of the working class, as well as its own independent military formations.

8. The mass movements of resistance are, nevertheless, important fields for revolutionary activity. Within the Resistance Movements the class contradictions manifest themselves, and in some cases are carried to the point of civil war. So also do the class conflicts express themselves between the governments and the militias. As part of its tactics the revolutionary Party must send members into these Resistance Movements to create a **conscious proletarian opposition** to the bourgeois and petit bourgeois leaders, and thus help to destroy the influence of the bourgeoisie over militant sections of the working class and petit bourgeoisie. We oppose the attempts of the bourgeoisie to disarm the militias and incorporate them into the structure of the bourgeois state. We are for the complete independence of the militias and for proletarian state power. On this policy the best members of the resistance movements can be won for the socialist revolution.

9. In all European countries the bourgeoisie has outlived its progressive phase and now plays an **absolutely** reactionary historical role. The bourgeois democratic revolution has long been completed in the Western

countries. In the Balkans the bourgeoisie is incapable of completing the democratic revolution. Bound to the landlords by countless economic and social ties; faced with landless, hungry peasants demanding the land, and with a proletariat which has assimilated the experience of its Western class brothers — demanding inroads into bourgeois property rights—the capitalist class of the Balkans cannot solve the problems of the democratic revolution. Only the proletariat can take mankind a step forward through the socialist revolution.

10. The conception that the Nazi domination of Europe **levelled everything** and united the workers with the capitalist class in face of the common problem of national subjugation, is a capitulation to reactionary bourgeois and petit bourgeois politics. So also is the conception that the next phase of the revolution in Europe is **basically equivalent to the democratic revolution** which the proletariat must lead. It is necessary to brand these ideas as a petit bourgeois deviation from Marxism and from the Fourth International.

11. A bourgeois democratic phase in the next immediate stages of the evolution of European society is most likely in the Western states. This would have no stable character and would represent, in essence, not the democratic revolution, but the bourgeois **counter** revolution. From one state to another the regimes may alter, expressing themselves as military dictatorships or as unstable democratic forms of government.

12. The proletariat, however, must inscribe the transitional democratic slogans into the socialist programme as a powerful means of arousing and

uniting the masses in the struggle for power. The Constituent Assembly, freedom of press, speech, together with the slogan for Soviets, the fraternisation of the workers and soldiers of the warring powers—all these and other transitional slogans and demands will arise out of the concrete and objective course of the revolutionary upheavals. But they must be conceived as part of, determined by, and integrated with the slogans and ideas of the socialist programme and workers' power, and the unification of the peoples of Europe through the United Socialist States of Europe.

13. The Great Russian Stalinist bureaucracy stifles the national aspirations of the national minorities within the Soviet Union. While subordinating the struggle for independence to the defence of the Soviet Union, the Revolutionary Communist Party stands for the **right** of the Ukrainian, Baltic and other Soviet minorities to secede from the Stalinist Soviet Union and form independent socialist states. But such secession is a reactionary utopia unless it is conceived of as part of a struggle for Soviet democracy, the overthrow of Stalinism and for the unification of the democratised U.S.S.R. with the United Socialist States of Europe.

14. In general, the self determination of nations is an illusion and a utopia in the present epoch of imperialism and while capitalism continues to exist as the economic system of production. For the solution of the national and socialist problems, the proletariat must place itself at the head of society **as a class**. In this it must be united as a class under the leadership of the Trotskyist parties, under the banner of the Fourth International.

NOW ON SALE!

GERMANY—The Key to the International Situation

By **LEON TROTSKY.** December, 1931

INTRODUCTION by **TED GRANT** - - 6d.



Problems of the European Revolution

By Comrades of the I.K.D.

The following article is submitted by comrades of the I.K.D. as part of the discussion on the problems of the European revolution taking place in the ranks of the Fourth International. The "Three Theses" referred to were published in "Workers' International News" of April 1943.

We profoundly disagree with the central ideas of the "Three Theses" as can be seen from the Resolution issued by the Central Committee for internal discussion published elsewhere in this issue. The discussion will be continued in the pages of "W.I.N." and the Editors will answer the points raised in this article in the next issue of "W.I.N."

The crucial importance of the movements of national liberation for revolutionary socialism was first put forward in 1941 in the "Three Theses". In presenting the analysis of the situation in Europe we will, at the same time, investigate whether or not the ideas of the "Three Theses" have been confirmed by the actual events.

(1) The retrogressive development of capitalism led to the destruction of national independence and democratic liberties of the most important European nations. Under these circumstances, the class struggle had to exchange its old traditional forms for new ones. Instead of the more or less free play of the different social and political forces in the old democracies, with the existence of political parties and Trade Unions, we now find a national-democratic liberation movement of the whole people against the national and political oppressor.

Revolutionists had the choice either to give unconditional support to these movements, or to withdraw altogether from politics. For the struggle for democratic and national freedom does by no means run counter to the struggle for the proletarian revolution which, on the contrary, is not feasible without going through the stage of the democratic revolution.

In practice, the problem poses itself as a struggle for the leadership of this liberation movement. Only under the leadership of the proletariat could the movement achieve its full development: under bourgeois leadership, it was doomed to lose its revolutionary

potency and to degenerate into an agency of one or the other imperialisms.

(2) This evaluation and prognosis, put forward in the year 1941 in the "Three Theses", has found in the events of last year its full confirmation—unfortunately only in the negative sense (reflecting the degeneration of the working-class movement in general and the weakness of its left wing in particular).

In all German-occupied countries of Europe, the masses entered upon a struggle against the national oppressor, in the course of which they used all methods of the modern class struggle, from demonstrations, acts of sabotage, passive resistance to strikes and armed uprisings. Leaving aside the specific peculiarities of the individual movements and uprisings, we find the following traits which they have in common: These were movements in which all layers of the population took part; independent, at first, from either the one or the other imperialist grouping, they used even the strongest methods of political struggle for the most elementary democratic demands: national independence and democratic liberties. Nowhere did the movement go beyond the limits of bourgeois demands, and the proletariat which, obviously, supplied the bulk of the fighting masses, did not appear as an independent force, but remained, with exceptions of a merely local and temporary nature, an appendage to the policy of the bourgeoisie. If the proletariat, whose participation in this fight for democracy was entirely correct and in keeping with the historical situation, was unable to conquer the leadership of the bourgeois-democratic movement, still less did it attempt to go beyond the limits of bourgeois democracy and to open a fight for its own, socialist demands. The revisionist leadership of the old "workers' parties of both Stalinist and reformist coloration, which had regained a semblance of life, succeeded in completely harnessing the proletariat to the chariot of the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary wing lacked the strength or the correct orientation to influence the turn of events. The most fatal part

was played by the Stalinist parties, which received a tremendous fillip, not only because of their revolutionary past and the cover which the authority of the Soviet Union gave them, but first of all because they understood the importance of the national movement and made themselves its standard bearers in order the better to strangle it. (This, incidentally, is a negative proof for the correctness of our viewpoint.)

(3) Since the revolutionary proletariat failed to become the champion and leader of the democratic movement, since it left the initiative to the de Gaulle's, Tito's, Bonomi's & Co., the movement could in no case fulfil the tasks it had set itself; the first attempt of the suppressed masses of Europe to realize the democratic revolution and to re-conquer national independence, was doomed to failure. For in the epoch of capitalist decline, when even the most elementary democratic demand threatens the very foundations of the economic system, the democratic revolution can be realized only by the smashing of the framework of capitalism.

Thus the series of national uprisings left the fundamental traits of the political picture of Europe unchanged. To be sure: the graveyard silence of political life has been somewhat disturbed, the old political parties and Trade Unions have come back to the surface, figures like Croce whom history had long ago thrown on the dust-heap, once more haunt the political stage, the class struggle seems to have resumed its traditional course, etc., etc.; but these facts cannot be interpreted as a rebirth of the old democracy.

This is merely a reflection of the past, tolerated by allied imperialism during the honeymoon of "liberation", but with no economic basis and therefore with no long expectation of life. If the era of "liberation" differs from that of the "New Order", it differs not so much in the "liberators" permitting some bankrupt politicians a doubtful playing-about with empty forms of democracy, but rather in their throwing the masses into still more appalling starvation and misery

by disorganising the whole economy in a measure never before known.

(4) From this, however, it by no means follows that the terrific economic pressure will, of itself, push the masses on to the socialist road. Nor will their experience of the incapability, on the part of bourgeois politicians of Stalinist, reformist or liberal stamp, to fulfil their own demands, be sufficient to do so.

Certainly the masses have learned from their experiences, many illusions as to the help to be expected from foreign imperialism have disappeared, certainly the second wave of the democratic revolution will find many obstacles removed which impeded the first.

But this does not mean that the consciousness of the masses has been radically transformed, that the proletariat has reached a degree of consciousness which would enable the revolutionary party to pay only scant attention to the fight for democratic demands; it does not mean that the revolutionary party has nothing more to do than to produce a well drawn-up revolutionary programme and socialist slogans like "All Power to the Soviets" or "Socialist United States of Europe", in order to get the support of the decisive part of the masses and to lead them gloriously to the seizure of power.

Such over-optimism is absolutely out of place, for it means closing one's eyes to the real difficulties. A political orientation which jumps over **decisive** steps in the growing consciousness of the masses, which considers the fight for democratic demands as a troublesome side-issue instead of treating it as the central problem and the historic lever for the socialist revolution—such an orientation is in for a rude shock. It is senseless to intoxicate ourselves with the strikes and armed uprisings that have taken place; it is our duty to understand their true meaning.

The events in Italy could give the impression that the masses, contrary to the prognosis of the "Three Theses", would take up the thread of development where they had broken it off in 1921, and that they would immediately place the socialist revolution on the agenda. Reality, however, proved the impossibility of such a jump from fascism straight into socialism; it pushed into the foreground, as the immediate task, the re-conquest of the indispensable democratic liberties. With this Italy, too, follows the road taken by the movements in the other countries of Europe. The national element in the struggle, which initially had been hidden by special circumstances, now manifests itself in Italy as well. The initial stages of the movement in Italy showed some traits which were

quite unessential even for that country; what a mistake to take this for the classical example of the coming development in the whole of Europe!

It is France, not Italy, which presents the classical example. Here the movement appeared from the beginning clearly and unmistakably as a movement of the entire people directed against the national oppressor, and it created all possibilities to lead the development beyond the limitations of the bourgeois struggle. (All power to the Committees of National Liberation, Fight against the disarming of the militias, etc.)

Since the opportunity was missed, the task remained unsolved. De Gaulle's "democracy" disintegrates already, before it has begun in earnest. The national oppression has remained, only the uniforms of the oppressors have changed. For the French "national independence" by grace of the U.S.A. is a farce, and an ever growing part of the French people realize this. Germany, with a view to her war economy, was interested in the good functioning of French industry; American imperialism, however, which can wage war only too well without the help of French factories, has not the slightest interest in restoring to health an old imperialist competitor. In consequence, it does not lift a finger to put on its feet again the absolutely broken-down French industry and with it, **French national independence.**

The same applies, of course, to all European nations who enjoy the rehabilitation of "democracy" and "national independence" by Anglo-American and Russian benevolence. The situation today is therefore, in its fundamental traits, the same as that of 1941, and the "Three Theses" have not only been confirmed, but their practical proposals retain full validity.

(5) The lessons drawn from the experience of a democratic movement in Germany (the Church movement) played an important part in determining our attitude towards the national movements in the German-occupied countries of Europe. Today the same ideas, enriched by the experiences of these national movements, can be brought back to Germany. For the machinery of oppression, which was first successfully tried out on the masses of the German people and which then, for a time, spread destruction over the whole of Europe under the Swastika, now returns to Germany where, with redoubled fury (this time under different flags), it will raze to the ground all the relics of social, political and economic life the Nazis were not able to destroy.

The general tendency of monopoly-capitalist centralisation manifests itself with appalling logic before our

very eyes. The most highly developed European nation, which only recently has enslaved and depressed to the status of colonies other highly developed nations, now becomes itself an object of national oppression and is to be forced down to a level lower than that of India.

We will, therefore, encounter in post-war Germany all those conditions and problems which characterized the countries under German occupation during the war. The tremendous, unprecedented national oppression will arouse from their apathy the popular masses who were broken and reduced to an amorphous state by years of fascist tyranny, and will create an all-embracing national-democratic movement. Instead of indulging in futile hopes that a spontaneous upsurge of the German workers may appear like a bolt from the blue, instead of cherishing illusions about an imminent proletarian revolution, the revolutionists will have the duty, as they had in France, to give unconditional support to this movement, to go the necessary detour of the democratic revolution, to conquer the leadership in the course of the struggle so that the movement, breaking through the national-democratic limitations can, as a movement of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, realize the socialist revolution.

(6) In Germany, the movement will find conditions incomparably more favourable to a healthy development than those experienced by the corresponding movement in France. All the illusions which corrupted the French movement, will hardly flourish on the soil of post-war Germany. There can be no false hopes for help from a "friendly" imperialism. Nor will the Stalinist reactionaries find a place inside the movement from which to exert their pernicious influence, since Russia stands completely on the side of Germany's imperialist oppressors.

The part to be played by the intellectual tradition of Germany should not be underestimated; the continuity of this tradition cannot have been interrupted by the—historically viewed, short—period of Hitler's domination. The national liberation wars of 1813-15, the students' movement (Burschenschaft) and 1848, the classical German philosophy and its fulfilment, scientific socialism, are still alive in the minds of Germans, and will give the movement the theoretical armament it needs for victory.

Germany gave up her function of the "theoretical conscience of the world" (Marx) in order to demonstrate to the capitalist world the practical methods of keeping up its domination under the conditions of imperialist decay; but she is now on the way to regain her old position and is pre-

paring herself to play a leading part in the coming struggles in Europe.

(7) Obviously, all these tendencies have to be substantiated by detailed proofs which, however, could easily be compiled. But they foretell that Europe's first and unsuccessful attempt to shake off national oppression and to re-conquer democracy, was but a dress rehearsal for the great **national-democratic wars of liberation of all suppressed peoples of Europe** against imperialism that are to come.

The material conditions are extraordinarily favourable for the proletariat to succeed, this time, in seizing the leadership of this gigantic struggle

and fulfilling its historic task. For "The rebellion of the working class, which has been hurled back by the mechanism of imperialism into a state of unorganization, dismembered, atomized, split up, counterposed to each other in its various strata, politically demoralized, internationally isolated and controlled (and whose organizations have been eviscerated, corrupted, paralyzed, decimated with the aid of their imperialistically-degenerated leadership, and which are finally smashed and extirpated along with every kind of bourgeois organization and opposition), likewise assumes a new form under the new conditions. It be-

comes more comprehensive and general; it finds a mighty prop in the rebellion of the peoples and nations who are suppressed, thrust back, oppressed, enslaved and levelled through the monopoly of the few nations, but by the same token also united against this monopoly and schooled by its mechanism; and it restores the shredded internationalism of the movement upon a more universal plane. Still more: it prepares the ground for the "classic ideal" of the labour movement, for the accomplishment of the proletarian revolution as a simultaneous world-revolution." ("Capitalist Barbarism or Socialism.").

From the Archives of the Revolution

Revolutionary Tactics

By LEON TROTSKY

The following two articles by Comrade Trotsky are particularly important since in them he gives the theoretical basis for the so-called "French Turn", the name given to the tactic pursued by the French Trotskyists, when, in 1934, they liquidated their independent organisation—the Ligue Communiste—and entered the French Socialist Party—the SFIO—to work as a fraction within it. A little later this tactic of "entry" assumed international importance when it came to be applied in other countries where similar conditions, justifying its adoption, existed. What these conditions are can be clearly seen from the two articles themselves, which originally appeared in the organ of our French comrades, "La Verité". The present translation is from the original Russian as published in the Russian "Bulletin of the Opposition" No. 40, October 1934, and was translated by Comrade Paul Dixon.—Editor.

The crisis of the democratic state of the bourgeoisie signifies, of necessity, the crisis of the Social Democratic Party. It is necessary thoroughly to understand and to analyse this dependence. The passing over of the bourgeoisie from the parliamentary to the Bonapartist regime does not finally exclude Social Democracy from that

legal combination of forces upon which capitalist government bases itself. Schleicher, as is well known, sought in his time the aid of the trade unions. Through his friend Marquet, Doumergue has without doubt relations with Jéhaux and Co. Langeron with the white rod in his hands shows both the fascists and the socialists to their places. In as much as the Socialist Party understands the dependence of the Bonapartist equilibrium upon its own existence, so it, in the person of its leadership, still continues itself to rely upon this equilibrium, and comes out against revolutionary methods of struggle, stigmatises Marxism as "Blanquism" and preaches the almost Tolstoyan doctrine of "non-violent resistance to evil". But this policy is as unstable as the Bonapartist regime itself by means of which the bourgeoisie is attempting to avoid taking more radical decisions.

The essence of the democratic state consists, as is well known, in the fact that everyone has the right to say and write what he pleases but that the big capitalists retain the power of deciding all important questions. This result is obtained by means of a complicated system of partial concessions ("reforms"), of illusions, bribery, deceit and intimidation. When the economic possibility of partial con-

cessions ("reforms") becomes exhausted, Social Democracy ceases to be "the main political support of the bourgeoisie". This signifies; capital can no longer rely upon a tamed "public opinion"; it needs a state apparatus which is independent of the masses—i.e. Bonapartist.

Parallel with this shift in the state system very important shifts take place within Social Democracy. In the period of the decline of Reformism (especially in the decade after the War) the internal regime of Social Democracy becomes a reproduction of the regime of bourgeois democracy; every member of the party can speak and think as he wishes but the decisions are taken by the tops of the apparatus who are closely linked up with the State. To the same extent as the bourgeoisie loses the possibility of ruling by relying upon the public opinion of the exploited, the leaders of Social Democracy lose the possibility of guiding the public opinion of their own party. But the reformist leaders, unlike the leaders of the bourgeoisie, have not at their disposal a coercive apparatus. That is why while the parliamentary democracy of the bourgeois State disappears, the internal democracy of the Socialist Party, on the contrary, becomes an ever greater reality.

The crisis of the Democratic State and the crisis of the Social Democratic Party develop in a parallel manner but in opposite directions. Whereas the State, by way of the Bonapartist stage, is going towards Fascism, the Socialist Party, by way of a "loyal", quasi-parliamentary opposition to the Bonapartist State, is going towards a mortal conflict with Fascism. The understanding of the dialectic of this inter-connection between the bourgeois State and Social Democracy is one of the necessary conditions for a correct revolutionary policy; it was precisely here that the Stalinists went off the rails.

During the Bonapartist stage, through which France is at present passing, the leaders of the Social Democratic Party try at all costs to remain within the framework of (Bonapartist!) legality. They do not lose hope that an improvement in economic conditions and other favourable circumstances will lead to a restoration of the Parliamentary State. But, after the experience of Italy, Germany and Austria, they are forced to reckon with another, less attractive perspective, against which they would like to insure themselves. They are afraid of becoming separated from the masses who demand a struggle against Fascism and are waiting for a lead. Thus the Socialist apparatus becomes the prey of the sharpest contradictions. On the one hand, its struggling against the radicalisation of the masses, goes so far as actually to preach Tolstoyism; "violence only begets violence; it is necessary to oppose clubs and revolvers by . . . wisdom and caution." On the other hand, it speaks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the general strike etc. and moves towards the policy of the united front. Meanwhile within the apparatus itself differentiation takes place. The "lefts" acquire ever greater popularity. The official leaders are compelled with their right hands to hang on to Doumergue ("legality" at all costs!) and with their left—on to Marceau Pivert, Just etc. But the objective conditions are not such as to preserve such a contradiction. Let us repeat once more: **the present condition of the Socialist Party is still less stable than the preventative Bonapartist regime of the State.**

There can be no more fatal mistake in politics than to work with ready-made conceptions which relate to yesterday and to yesterday's relationship of forces. When, for example, the leadership of the Socialist Party confines its task to demanding a new parliamentary election, it transfers politics from the realm of realities to that of shadows. "Parliament", "Government", "Elections", have today a quite different content from that prevailing before the capitulation of the

parliamentary regime on February 6th. Elections of themselves can today no longer change the centre of gravity of power; for this purpose there would be necessary mass pressure from the left, capable of fully wiping out the results of the pressure from the right of February 6th.

But a mistake of precisely the same type is being made by those comrades who, in their estimation of the Socialist Party itself, let themselves be guided by ready-made formulae of yesterday; "Reformism", "The Second International", "the Political Support of the Bourgeoisie". Are these definitions correct? Both yes and no. Rather no than yes. The old definition of Social-Democracy corresponds still less to actuality than the definition of the present State as "a Parliamentary Democratic Republic". It would be a mistake to maintain that "nothing" remains of Parliamentaryism in France to-day. Under certain conditions there is even possible a temporary return to Parliamentaryism (in the same way as flashes of consciousness return to a dying man). But the course of development as a whole is already going away from Parliamentaryism. If we wish to give a definition of the present French State that at all corresponds with reality, we must characterise it as "a preventative Bonapartist regime, cloaking itself with the worn-out formulae of the Parliamentary State and manoeuvring between the insufficiently strong camp of the Fascist regime and the insufficiently class-conscious camp of the proletarian State." Only such a **dialectical** definition can create the basis for a correct policy.

But these same laws of dialectical thinking are obligatory also in relation to the Socialist Party, which, as has already been said, shares the fate of the Democratic State, only in the opposite direction. To this it is necessary to add that, to a considerable extent, thanks to the experience of Germany and Austria, the evolution of the Socialist Party is even outstripping the evolution of the State; thus, the split with the Neos preceded the coup d'etat of February 6th by some months. It would be, of course, the most clumsy mistake to maintain that after this split "nothing" remained of reformism and patriotism in the party. But it is no less of a mistake to speak of it as **Social Democracy** in the old sense of the word. The impossibility of applying henceforth a simple, customary, stable definition is of itself the unmistakable expression of the fact that we have to do with a **centrist** party, which, as a consequence of the rapid evolution of the country still retains at its two poles the sharpest contradictions. One would have to be a hopeless scholastic in order to be prevented by the label Second Inter-

national from seeing what is actually taking place. Only a dialectical definition of the Socialist Party, i.e. above all a concrete appraisal of its internal dynamics, can give the Bolshevik-Leninists the possibility of drawing up a correct perspective and of adopting an active, not a waiting, policy.

Without the revolutionary pressure of the masses, which is capable of sharply pushing the political centre of gravity towards the left—or to put it better; **before** such pressure—the State Power must ever more openly and crudely identify itself with the military-police apparatus, Fascism must become ever stronger and bolder. Parallel with this process the contradictions inside the Socialist Party must come ever more to the surface, i.e. the incompatibility of the Tolstoyan preaching of "non-resistance to evil" with the revolutionary tasks which are dictated by the class enemy. At the same time as the State become bonapartistised and as the Fascist danger approaches, the majority of the party must inevitably become radicalised, and the internal differentiation, which is as yet far from complete, must enter a new phase.

The Bolshevik-Leninists must state all this quite openly. They always rejected the theory of "Social-Fascism" and hooligan polemical methods, in which theoretical impotence is combined with lies and slander. They do not see any reason to-day to stand on their heads and to call black white. We fought for the united front when it was rejected by both Socialists and Stalinists. Precisely for this reason we retain to-day also a critical, realistic attitude towards the abstraction of "unity". In the history of the workers' movement a political delimitation has more than once been the prerequisite for unity. In order to be able to take the first step in the direction of the united front, the Socialist Party had first to break with the **Neos**. This must not be forgotten for a moment. The Socialist Party will be able to play a leading role in a really mass and really militant united front only if it clearly sees its tasks and if it cleanses its ranks of the open and concealed enemies of revolutionary struggle. It is not a question of some abstract "principle" but of an iron necessity, flowing from the logic of the struggle. The question is not to be settled by means of diplomatic phrases as is thought by Zyromski, who is trying to find a formula of reconciliation between social-patriotism and internationalism. The course of the class struggle at its present stage will mercilessly expose and destroy all half-heartedness, falsehoods and masquerading. The workers, in general, the socialists in particular, need the

truth, the naked truth and nothing but the truth.

The Bolshevik-Leninists have correctly formulated that which is and that which is going to be. But they have proved quite unable—this must be admitted openly—to carry out that task which they set themselves a year ago; **to approach nearer to the worker-socialists**, not in order to “teach” them from above in the capacity of learned specialists in the art of strategy who know everything, but in order to learn together with the advanced workers, shoulder to shoulder, on the basis of real mass experiences which will inevitably lead the French proletariat to the path of revolutionary struggle.

But for the better understanding of the tasks which stand before us in this connection it is necessary to deal with the evolution of the so-called “Communist” Party. We will do this in our next article.

(“Verité”, 17th August 1934.)

The Socialist Party of France, we wrote in a previous article—is developing in a direction opposite to that of the development of the State; whereas Parliamentarism has been replaced by Bonapartism, which represents an unstable stage on the road to Fascism, Social Democracy, on the other hand, goes forward to a mortal conflict with Fascism. Is it possible, however, to give to this proposition, which has today enormous significance for French politics an unconditional and therefore **international** character?

No, truth is always concrete. When we speak of the opposite directions of the development of Social Democracy and of that of the bourgeois State under the conditions of the present social crisis, we have in view only the general **tendency** of development, and not some uniform and automatic process. The political question is decided for us **by the extent** to which the tendency has been realised in practice. It is possible to put forward the converse theorem, which will not, let us hope, meet with any opposition amongst us; the fate of the proletariat in our epoch depends to a considerable extent upon how resolutely Social Democracy will be able, in the short time allowed to it by the course of events, to break with the bourgeois State, to rebuild itself and to prepare for the decisive struggle with Fascism. The very possibility of such a dependence of the fate of the proletariat upon the fate of Social Democracy has been born of the collapse of the Comintern as the leading party of the international proletariat and of the exceptional acuteness of the class struggle.

The tendency to the squeezing out of reformism by centrism, like the tendency to the radicalisation of centrism, cannot but have an international

character, in accord with the general crisis of capitalism and of the democratic State. But a decisive significance for practical, and especially for organisational conclusions, is possessed by the question as to **how** this tendency is reflected—at the given stage of development—in the Socialist Party of the **given** country. The general line of development which we have established must only direct our analysis, and can in no way anticipate its conclusions.

In pre-fascist Germany the approach of the rupture between the bourgeois State and reformism found its expression in the formation of a left wing within Social Democracy. But the strength of the bureaucratic apparatus was sufficient, given the complete disorientation of the masses, prematurely to cut off the as yet weak left wing (the S.A.P.) and to retain the party upon a conservative and waiting course of policy. At the same time the German Communist Party stupefied by the gases of the “Third Period” and of “Social-Fascism”, substituted “Amsterdam” parades for a revolutionary mobilisation of the masses which was impossible, with given relationship of forces, without the policy of the united front. As a result the mighty German Proletariat proved incapable of offering the least resistance to the Fascist coup d’etat. The Stalinists declared; the guilt is Social Democracy’s. But by these words they admitted that all their pretensions to the leadership of the German Proletariat were but empty boasting. This tremendous political lesson demonstrates above all that even in that country where the Communist Party was—both absolutely and relatively—the strongest, it proved, at the decisive moment, incapable of even snapping its fingers so long as Social Democracy retained the possibility of putting up against it the whole force of its conservative opposition. Let us mark this well!

In France this same basic historical tendency has found an essentially different reflection. Under the influence both of special national conditions and of international lessons, the internal crisis in French Social Democracy assumed a considerably deeper development than in the corresponding period in German Social Democracy. The Socialist Bureaucracy found itself compelled to strike a blow **to the right**. Instead of the expulsion of the weak **left** wing, as in Germany, we witnessed the break with the most consistent (as an agency of the bourgeoisie) **right** wing (the Neos). These two splits with their symmetry, show with the utmost clarity the serious difference in the evolution of German and French Social Democracy: despite the existence of general historical tendencies common to both; the crisis of capitalism and of democracy, the

collapse of reformism and the breach between the bourgeois State and Social Democracy.

An analysis should be made, from the above point of view, of the position in the Socialist Parties of all capitalist countries which are passing through different stages of the crisis. But this task goes beyond the limits of the present article. We will point only to Belgium, where the Social Democratic Party, tied up by its thoroughly reactionary and corrupted parliamentary, municipal, trade union, co-operative and banking bureaucracy, finds itself to-day struggling with its **left** wing and strives to imitate its German models (Wels-Severing and Co.). It is clear that it is not possible to draw the same practical conclusions for both France and Belgium.

It would be, however, incorrect to think, that the policies of German and Belgian Social Democracy on the one hand, and of French Social Democracy on the other, represent two eternally incompatible types. In actual fact they can and will change roles more than once. It is possible to state with certainty that if the German Communist Party had carried on in its time a correct united front policy, it would have given a mighty impetus to the radicalisation of the Social Democratic workers, and the whole political development of Germany would have assumed a revolutionary character. On the other hand, it cannot be excluded that Social Democratic bureaucracy in France, with the active support of the Stalinists, may isolate the left wing and give a retrograde direction to the development of the party; the consequences are not difficult to foresee in advance; the prostration of the proletariat and the victory of Fascism. So far as Belgium is concerned, where Social Democracy is almost the monopoly party of the proletariat, it is in general impossible to envisage a successful struggle against Fascism there without the decisive regrouping of the forces and tendencies within Social Democracy. But it is impossible to foresee in advance all the stages and forms of development. It is necessary to keep one’s hand on the pulse of the workers’ movement and to draw on each occasion the necessary conclusions.

Sufficient has been said, in any case, for it to be understood what an enormous significance for the fate of the proletariat, at least in Europe, in the immediate historical epoch, is to be attached to the internal development of the Social Democratic Parties. If we remember that in 1925 the Comintern in a special manifesto declared that the French Socialist Party in general no longer existed, we will understand without difficulty how great has been the retreat carried out by the proletariat and especially by its

vanguard during the years of the rule of the epigones!

It has already been said above that with regard to Germany, the Comintern admitted—after the event it is true, and in a negative form—its complete inability to struggle against Fascism without the participation of Social Democracy in this struggle. With regard to France the Comintern has been forced to make the same admission, but in good time and moreover in a positive form. So much the worse for the Comintern, but so much the better for the Revolution!

Having relinquished without any explanations the theory of Social Fascism, the Stalinists have at the same time thrown overboard the revolutionary programme. "Your conditions will be our conditions", they have declared to the leaders of the SFIO. They have given up the right to criticise their ally. The price they pay for the alliance is the relinquishment of their programme and their tactics. Meanwhile, in as much as it is a question of defence against a common mortal foe, in which defence each of the allies pursues its vital interests—neither is obliged to pay the other anything for the alliance, each has the right to remain himself. The whole behaviour of the Stalinists is as though they wish to say to the Socialist leaders: "Demand more, press us, don't be embarrassed, help us to free ourselves as speedily as possible from those sharp slogans which, in the given international position, are an embarrassment to our Moscow bosses."

The slogan of the workers' militia is thrown overboard. The struggle for the arming of the workers is declared to be a "provocation". Is it not better to share "spheres of influence" with the Fascists under the control of monsieurs the prefects? For the Fascists this is, in any case, the most advantageous of all possible combinations; while the workers, lulled to sleep by general phrases about the united front, occupy themselves with parades, the Fascists multiply their cadres and stores of arms, draw in new mass reserves, and, having chosen a suitable moment, start their offensive.

The united front has thus been, for the French Stalinists, a means of capitulating before Social Democracy. The slogans and methods of the united front become a capitulation before the Bonapartist State, which, in its turn, paves the way for Fascism. By means of the united front the two bureaucracies defend themselves, not without success, from any interference on the part of the "third power." Such is the political situation of the French proletariat, which can very soon find itself faced by decisive events. This situation could prove fatal were it not for the pressure of the masses and the

struggle of the tendencies within the Socialist Party.

He who says; the Second, as well as the Third International, is doomed, the future is for the Fourth International, gives utterance to a thought, the correctness of which is once again confirmed by the present position in France. But this correct thought in itself tells us nothing as to when and under what circumstances, the Fourth International will be created. It can emerge—theoretically this is not excluded—from the union of the Second and Third, by means of a regrouping of elements and a further cleansing and tempering of the ranks in the fire of struggle. It can arise by means of the radicalisation of the proletarian core of the Socialist Party and the falling apart of the Stalinist organisation. It can be formed in the process of the struggle against Fascism and of victory over it. But it can also arise much later, after a number of years, amidst the ruins and fragments heaped up by the victory of Fascism and war. For people of the Bordigist ilk all these variants, perspectives, and stages have no significance. Sectarians live outside of time and space. They ignore the living historical process which pays them back in the same coin. That is why their balance sheet is always the same; **nothing**. Marxists can have nothing in common with this caricature of politics.

Naturally, if in France there existed a strong organisation of Bolshevik-Leninists, it could and should, under the existing circumstances, become the independent axis around which the proletarian vanguard would crystallise. But the Ligue has not succeeded in becoming such an organisation. Without in any way mitigating the mistakes of the leadership, it must be recognised that the basic reason for the slowness of the development of the Ligue has been conditioned by the course of the world working-class movement which, for the past ten years, has known only defeats and retreats. The **ideas and methods** of the Bolshevik-Leninists have been confirmed by each new stage of development. But is it possible to count upon the Ligue, as an **organisation**, being capable, in the time which remains before the approaching crisis, of occupying an influential, if not a leading, position in the working-class movement? To answer this question to-day in the affirmative would signify either putting off the crisis for several years, which would be in contradiction to all the circumstances, or simply hoping for miracles. It is perfectly obvious that the victory of Fascism would signify the destruction of all working-class organisations. A new historical chapter would open in which the **ideas** of the Bolshevik-Leninists would have to seek for themselves a

new organisational form. **To-day's** task must be formulated concretely and in indissoluble union with the character of the period we are passing through; how with the greatest chances of success to avert the victory of Fascism, given the existing groupings of the proletariat and the existing relationships of strength between these groupings? In particular; what place is to be occupied by the Ligue—a small organisation, which cannot pretend to play an independent role in the struggle which is developing, but which is armed with a correct doctrine and valuable political experience—what place is it to occupy in order to be able to impart a revolutionary content to the united front? It is obvious that to pose this question means, in essence, to answer it. It is necessary for the Ligue to occupy a place **within the united front** in order actively to co-operate in the revolutionary regrouping and concentration of its forces. Under the given circumstances it cannot occupy such a place without entering the Socialist Party.

But the Communist Party is still the more revolutionary—retort certain comrades—if we have got to give up our organisational independence, can we join the less revolutionary party?

This main, or rather this sole argument of our opponents, rests on political recollections and psychological appreciations, and not upon the living dynamics of development. Both parties are **centrist** organisations, with the difference that the centrism of the Stalinists is the product of the decomposition of Bolshevism, whereas the centrism of the Socialist Party has arisen from the decomposition of reformism. There is also another difference between them and one that is not less essential. The centrism of the Stalinists, despite its convulsive zig-zags, represents a very **stable** political system, which is inextricably bound up with the position and interests of the powerful caste of the bureaucracy. The centrism of the Socialist Party reflects a **transitional** position of workers who are seeking a way out to the road of revolution.

In the Communist Party there are without doubt thousands of militant workers. But they are hopelessly confused. Yesterday they were ready to fight on the barricades **alongside real** Fascists against the Daladier Government. To-day they are silently capitulating before the slogans of Social Democracy. The proletarian organisation of Saint-Denis which has been **educated by the Stalinists**, capitulated without a murmur to Pupism. Ten years of attempts and efforts to regenerate the Comintern gave no results. The bureaucracy turned out to be sufficiently powerful to be able to carry its destructive work to the end.

By giving to the united front a purely decorative character, by sanctifying with the name of "Leninism" the rejection of elementary revolutionary slogans, the Stalinists hold up the revolutionary development of the Socialist Party. They continue to play the role of a brake even now after their acrobatic somersault. The internal regime of the party to-day even more decisively than yesterday excludes every possibility of regeneration.

One cannot compare the SFIO and the SFIC as though they were two pieces of cloth; which has the better, the thicker material? It is necessary to take each party in its development and to take into account their mutual relationships in the present epoch. Only thus can we find the point at which it is most profitable for us to apply our lever.

The adhesion of the Ligue to the Socialist Party can play a great political role. In France there are tens of thousands of revolutionary workers who do not belong to any party. Many of them have passed through the Communist Party, have abandoned it with indignation or been expelled

from it. They retain the old attitude towards the Socialist Party, i.e. they turn their backs upon it. They sympathise or half-sympathise with the ideas of the Ligue, but do not join it, since they do not believe in the possibility of the development of a third party under the existing conditions. These tens of thousands of revolutionary workers remain without a party, and inside the trade unions they remain without a fraction.

Here also must be added the hundreds and thousands of revolutionary teachers, not only in the Unitary Federation but also in the National Syndicate, who could serve as a connecting link between the proletariat and the peasantry. They remain with out a party, hostile both to Stalinism and to Reformism. Meanwhile, in the immediate future more than ever before the mass struggle will seek for itself a party channel. The creation of Soviets would not weaken but, on the contrary, would strengthen the role of the working-class parties, for millions of the masses, united in Soviets, need a leadership, and only the parties can give it.

There is not the least need to idealise the SFIO, i.e. to proclaim it with

all its present contradictions, as the revolutionary party of the proletariat. But it is possible and necessary to point out these internal contradictions of the party, as the pledge for its further development, and, consequently, as the point for the application for the Marxist lever. The Ligue can and must show an example to those thousands and tens of thousands of revolutionary workers, teachers etc. who, under existing conditions, risk remaining outside the main channel of struggle. By entering the Socialist Party they will greatly strengthen the left wing, will fecundate the whole evolution of the party, will create a powerful centre of attraction for the revolutionary elements of the "Communist Party" and by so doing will immeasurably ease the emergence of the proletariat upon the road of revolution.

Without rejecting one's past and one's ideas, but also without any sectarian mental reservations, having clearly said what is, it is necessary to enter the Socialist Party; not for star- turns, and not for experiments, but for serious revolutionary work under the banner of Marxism.

(*"Verité"*, September 1934.)

Ulster in Transition

By BOB ARMSTRONG

Concluded from previous issue.

The shooting of a policeman during a gun battle in Easter Week, 1942, led to the imposition of the death penalty on six youths, one of whom was subsequently hanged. In the days immediately preceding the execution, revolt and insurgence was in the air, even if not on the order of the day. On the eve of the execution the Republican Army caused a statement on its aims and principles to be circulated widely in Protestant neighbourhoods—a rare occurrence which fed the rumours of impending insurrection. Subsequently the authorities claimed to have frustrated a "coming-out" by the timely discovery of an arsenal at Hannahstown, near Belfast. The Republican insurrection—assuming that one was in fact planned—had been effectively aborted, and the I.R.A. was debilitated by the capture of so many of its members. The police struck with an iron hand and the nationalist community as a whole was thrown very much onto the defensive. Cage cars nightly patrolled the nationalist areas, seldom returning to the police barracks without a cargo of suspects. Bombs were flung at the police and, to facilitate the fight against this practice,

the authorities imposed a curfew which lasted approximately three months and penalised over fifty thousand workers.

It is instructive to study the fluctuating fortunes of the Labour Party during the crisis and its aftermath. A bye-election to the Stormont Parliament held in the curfewed area ended in a bitter defeat. The pseudo-Republican candidate, Donnelly, gained an easy victory, not on the strength of his own programme—he had none!—but by virtue of the help offered him by Midgley whose insulting tirades against the martyred Republican youth proved ruinous to the Labour candidate. Barely three months later, however, the West Belfast bye-election to the Imperial Parliament revealed that the Republican workers had in the interim swung spectacularly to the Labour Party; enabling it, despite an adverse Protestant vote, to gain a seat at Westminster for the first time in history. What had happened to effect this lightning conversion of the nationalist workers? In the first place, Midgley's secession and Beattie's

agitation on behalf of the internees had redeemed the tarnished prestige of the Party. The other side of the medal was opprobrium towards the charlatan "Republican" party—whose candidate, Corvin, forfeited his deposit in this latter election.

It was a negative, despairing mood which had driven the nationalist workers behind Donnelly. However, the Donnelly movement led neither sideways nor forwards. Its mission was neither to reform nor to overthrow. It held out a reasonable hope neither for to-day nor for tomorrow. Rejecting work inside the Stormont parliament on the grounds that gerrymandering and British control render the existing parliamentary set-up farcical and likewise hostile towards the I.R.A.'s physical force doctrine, the "Republican" Party sits back and curses at life's complications. Consisting of a loose agglomeration of Catholic sectarians, abstentionist nationalist M.P.s at loggerheads with the official nationalist party, and a few workers momentarily fooled by the Republican label, the Donnellyite movement had begun to die before it even had time to achieve the stability and con-

tinuity of a party. An adverse turn in the class struggle may resurrect it in the future, but its spells of popularity can never be more than highly transient.

In supporting Labour the average nationalist worker reasons thus: "Unlike the bourgeois nationalist parties the Labour Party may really come to power. If it stands by its promises it will bring us some freedom from police persecution, and perhaps also improve workshop conditions and build some decent houses." Beyond such modest reforms the Republican workers cannot expect a great deal from Labour's rule. The regime of Stormont has left them little faith in the possibility of achieving fundamental aims by parliamentary methods. However, even under a reformist Labour regime every concession accruing to the nationalist workers, whether as members of the minority or members of the working-class, will still have to be fought for bitterly in the teeth of capitalist opposition. The fulfilment of a programme of reforms will depend, therefore, not so much upon the Labour Government itself as upon the regroupment of the masses around a revolutionary party which will at once act as a medium for exerting pressure on the vacillating Labour bureaucrats and as a weapon for intimidating and demoralising the reaction.

The Labour Party stands pledged to a programme of civil liberties, but it has no programme for superseding the capitalist state which in Northern Ireland is an Orange, sectarian state. Employers, Unionist politicians and the whole Stormont officialdom have a vested interest in keeping the Catholic areas in a state of incipient revolt. If there were no I.R.A. it would be necessary to invent one and, in fact, the new I.R.A. is their creation—a product of the Special Powers. These embattled interests, which can only perpetuate their rule in a divided Ireland and a disunited Ulster, would resist the introduction of ordinary civil liberties to the last ditch. A Labour regime would not last for ever, or even for very long. Either the proletarian dictatorship or a retrenchment of the reaction along totalitarian lines would succeed it. Either the working class will utilise the greater degree of liberty afforded by a Labour Government to raze the existing state to the ground or the Orange capitalist state will put an end even to the modest liberty of belonging to the reformist Northern Ireland Labour Party.

Meanwhile at the last Labour Party Conference it was resolved that the Party should take the initiative in inaugurating a Northern Ireland Council of Civil Liberties. This is a welcome development from the days of Midgley. The Trotskyist movement has conduc-

ted a long campaign for the setting up of such a Council to combat the injustices meted out under the Special Powers Acts. Militants in the Labour Party, and the workers generally, must see to it that this decision is really implemented by the building of a genuine Civil Liberties Council supported by and representative of every section of the Labour movement. Militants in the Eire Labour movement must demand similar measures.

By bringing into the clear light of day the full, unimpeachable facts on every case of arbitrary search, arrest and intimidation; by demanding full facilities for enquiry into every case of alleged police intimidation and brutality; by spreading information regarding the insanitary over-crowded conditions under which political prisoners live; by exposing the farce of the police-influenced 'Internees' Appeals Tribunal and, in short, by making a public display of samples of the British "democracy" being daily meted out to hundreds of Ulster citizens, a Civil Liberties Council has a revolutionary role to perform. It can hasten the downfall of the regime. It can set on fire the conscience of the whole community, shaming and shocking even the Protestant petit-bourgeoisie into protest.

The fight for civil liberties is an integral and immensely important aspect of the class struggle. It is instructive, therefore, to perceive from this angle how low the Stalinist renegades have sunk in their clownish eagerness to act as sycophants to Tory Unionism. Stalinist policy, as is well known, is to give undivided attention to "democracy's" battle against Hitler. However, the tyranny endured by the Ulster minority is too near at hand and affects too large a number of workers to be passed over in silence. At their recent Congress, therefore, the Stalinists passed a resolution "demanding" an end to sectarian discrimination in the hiring of labour and "insisting" on various other laudable changes in the direction of greater justice for the Catholic workers. However, this was a resolution for the record only. Civil liberties cannot be wrested from the vested interests without the maximum effort of a united proletariat, but complete and unconditional independence from the Orange capitalist state is the prerequisite for proletarian unity. The Stalinists, however, are the most steadfast and unwavering supporters of the Orange Tory Cabinet.

Actually, the Stalinist Party is completely opposed to the extension of civil liberties. Its recipe for ending discrimination against the Catholic workers clearly amounts to this:—"Put the Protestant workers in the same boat: abolish civil liberties for

them also!" This can clearly be seen from the 13th March 1943 issue of their paper "Unity". In a front page editorial, while whole-heartedly professing agreement on the need for special powers, they permitted themselves to indulge in a light criticism of the sectarian character of the Civil Authority (Special Powers) Acts, and—without forthrightly demanding the abolition of these acts—suggested that the British Emergency Powers Act would be a "fairer" weapon in the hands of the Government. This is equivalent to a demand to abolish hanging in favour of electrocution. It is not the sinister name "Special Powers", or a few embroidered phrases which constitutes the essence of the Civil Authority (Special Powers) Acts but the actual powers of repression vested in the state. The British Emergency Powers, quite as totalitarian in scope, would function equally well as a sectarian weapon in the hands of Stormont for there is nothing of a categorically sectarian nature in the wording of these Acts. It is because hitherto Stormont has used them almost exclusively against the Catholic population that the stamp of sectarianism is attached to them.

THE IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY

The Russian People's Will Party was the classic exponent of individual terrorism. With bomb and revolver it sought to extirpate the worst Czarist bureaucrats and intimidate the remainder into resignation. In France to-day the De Gaulites and Stalinists carry out systematically planned assassinations on a considerable scale. With the I.R.A., however, individual terrorism is not a regular form of struggle. True, armed expropriations are carried out. Persons suspected of giving information are sometimes shot. Republicans tracked down by the police in the ceaseless combing for 'wanted' men, illegal drilling, and arms dumps will sometimes try to shoot their way free. Nevertheless, premeditated assassinations are rare. During the past four years one or two detectives in Eire have fallen victims to planned assassination, while in the North one prison warder has been shot "according to plan" and a number of police were injured by bombs thrown during the curfew crisis. Two Ulster policemen have lost their lives during this period, one at the hands of armed expropriators of doubtful connection.

The I.R.A. adheres to the principle that England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity, and seeks to preserve its forces until auspicious conditions mature for striking a blow of genuine military consequence. Even the tragic bombing campaign was directed more against property than against lives, although lives were lost, and it was undertaken not in the naive hope of

terrorising the British into a withdrawal from Ireland but mainly to publicise to the world, and the Irish nationalist masses in particular, the Republican declaration of war against Britain. It was the imminence of world war, holding out the possibility of a German victory over England, which led to the spectacular intensification of Republican activities in the spring of 1939. On the outbreak of war the I.R.A. welcomed the Axis as partners in the common struggle, and undoubtedly, if England had been struck sufficiently crippling blows, the Republicans would have risen.

The I.R.A. and the French Stalinist Party, as it is to-day, have striking points in common. Justifying themselves by the sophistry that the Soviet Union must be defended by all means (excepting revolutionary means!) the Stalinists solidaridise with Churchill and Roosevelt and preach contempt and even hatred towards the German masses. Similarly, in the supposed interests of the fight for national independence the I.R.A. solidaridises with the Axis and instils into its members a contempt for the British workers. Both movements subscribe to the doctrine of a fighting elite. Neither is able to draw the bulk of its following into an active participation in the fight against foreign occupation. For this a programme is necessary—a social programme which the workers will feel it is worth staking anything to achieve and which holds out a genuine hope of commanding the sympathy and, ultimately, the collaboration of the soldiers and workers of the enemy country.

Socialists have frequently fallen into the error of confusing the negative violence of the I.R.A. with revolutionary violence. However, more than the proclamation of abstract republican principles and a recourse to violent methods of struggle against imperialism is required to make the I.R.A. a revolutionary organisation. Revolutionary violence is positive violence, aimed at effecting a progressive transformation at the base of society. Even the frankly terrorist People's Will Party was more deserving of the name revolutionary than the I.R.A. because it aimed at least at achieving a change in Russian agrarian production relations.

Incapable of setting in motion its own nationalist masses around a programme for social liberty the I.R.A., its sincere idealism notwithstanding, could scarcely rise beyond the role of a saboteur squad engaged in helping one imperialism against another. An I.R.A. rising would strike a demoralising blow at the revolutionists in Germany and occupied Europe by placing the prestige of Ireland's age-long fight for national freedom at the disposal of Goebbels. For although they are cer-

tainly not "Hitler's agents" in the crude Stalinist sense of the term the Republicans are by no means sufficiently hostile to fascism, which they do not understand, to make any clear distinction between themselves and the fascists. Again: an Irish rising could have profound revolutionary repercussions among the British workers, but only providing it was a social revolution besides being a fight for national independence. It is only when the workers can clearly see the connection between a struggle taking place abroad and their own domestic class struggle that they can be roused to sympathetic action. A nationalist rising which failed to advance the cause of socialism in Ireland would have only a negligible influence on the British workers, without whose active aid the rebellion would be swiftly crushed under the weight of England's military superiority.

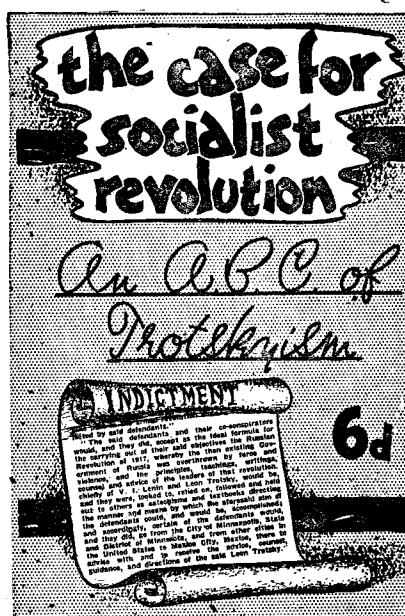
However, the possibility of the I.R.A. forming the state power over a limited period cannot be excluded. This could happen should, for instance, the triumph, or imminent triumph, of the British revolution release the imperialist pressure on Ireland and bring the Orange state to the brink of collapse at a time when the Irish workers were not yet sufficiently prepared for the seizure of power. In combination with Fianna Fail in the South the Republicans could effect the state unity of Ireland but the people, reduced to unimaginable pauperisation, would remain as disunited as ever. The regime

would be one of crisis, ushering in a new phase of the breakdown and decay of Ireland's economy.

Why do not the rebellious Republican youth seek emancipation through a working-class party? How explain why, twenty-six years after the Bolshevik Revolution, they cling with stubborn faith to such a hopelessly antiquated form of struggle? Because the provocations of the Government engender a rebellious spirit which seeks assuagement in belligerent action, runs the most facile explanation. However, while the instinct to rebel against imperialist oppression is aroused with almost the automatism of a reflex action the mode of resistance chosen by the oppressed, the methods and aims of their struggle, are by no means so rigidly determined. These depend upon a multiplicity of conditions, the chief of which is the stage of class-consciousness and political maturity reached by the proletariat, and that in turn is largely determined by the course of the international class struggle.

The reformists and Stalinists querulously chide the Republican workers for remaining captive to a narrow nationalist outlook, for refusing to face up to the larger issues—namely, the war effort to defend "democracy". These people solemnly assure us that the narrow nationalism of the Republican workers is due to a "narrow nationalist psychology". Beyond this meaningless tautology they dare not venture lest unwittingly they hint at the true political explanation—the corrupt opportunism of this self-same reformist-Stalinist fraternity. It is the big-power nationalism, the British Imperialist jingoism, of the Labour and so-called Communist leaders which repels the Republican workers from the working-class movement and binds them to the tradition of Sinn Fein (Ourselves Alone). They belong to a section of workers who for years have been subjected to systematic persecution by an infamous regime owing its existence to the British Imperialist State; and all this time the British workers, led by corrupt lackeys of imperialism, seemed to be sitting back comfortably, impervious to the plight of the nationalist workers in Northern Ireland. It is only when the "larger" issues begin to have a bearing on the fight to end imperialist tyranny at home that the Republican workers will take cognizance of them.

It may be that only a handful of the active Republicans will be won in the future into the Trotskyist movement. Workers who have devoted the most ardent years of their youth to the task of building an organisation at risk and sacrifice frequently cling to it with blind loyalty long after its legitimate successor has cast an obscuring shadow over it. However, the Republican



Army comprises only a fraction of the Republican working-class. Outside its ranks stands the class-conscious section of workers who have remained aloof from the Labour Party and the Stalinist Party on account of their connivance with Imperialism while at the same time rejecting the I.R.A. on class grounds. It is chiefly from these workers not only leaves the caste bigotry of the workers unchanged, but actually leads to a strengthening of the bonds of ideology uniting them to the bourgeois politicians belonging to their own particular side of the community. For instance, during the period of the Stalin-Hitler pact the Communist Party's flirtation with the nationalist organisations had the double consequence of sustaining the worst illusions of the Republican proletariat and, at the same time, hopelessly alienating the Protestant workers. The effect of the present line-up with Orange reaction on the Republican workers we have shown elsewhere. Among the Protestants the Stalinist Party has registered formidable gains over the past two years. Membership has probably increased seven- or eight-fold. These new recruits consist mainly of worker and petit-bourgeois elements completely new to politics; drawn towards the "left" out of admiration for the Red Army but, most of them, unemancipated from the old jingoist mentality. On the other hand the strike-breaking role of the Stalinist Party has alienated most of the experienced industrial militants among the Protestants.

In Eire, following upon Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union, the Eire section of the Communist Party, afraid to proclaim openly the new policy foisted upon it by the Kremlin—the ending of Eire neutrality—quietly dissolved itself into the Labour Party. Hitherto, despite its imposing record of treachery, Stalinism has always brazenly tried to justify itself in the eyes of the workers. In this single episode is contained the whole preceding twenty years of Stalinist degeneration: political bankruptcy and its moral spinelessness. The greatness of Bolshevism consisted not merely in its capacity to withstand the material blows of the reaction but, even more, to swim against the current of popular feeling. Stalinism gives a few short grunts and then sinks to the bottom.

LABOUR AND MIDGLEY

Midgley lorded over the Labour Party when he was its leader. However, this show of autocracy was tolerated only so long as it did not run counter to the fundamental interests of the bureaucracy. Directly a cleavage arose over a basic question the bureaucracy asserted its supremacy.

Midgley, already a Labour member of parliament, aspired after Cabinet honours; which obviously would not be offered to the leader of a party bent upon ousting the Tory Unionists from power. Midgley's problem, therefore, was to foist an election truce agreement on the Labour Party in exchange for a place for him in the Cabinet. Naturally, his colleagues in the bureaucracy refused to sacrifice their own parliamentary ambitions on the altar of Midgley's ego. To bring him to heel the Executive resorted to a calculated "provocation". Beattie, representing the "nationalist" wing of the party, was elected parliamentary leader over Midgley's head. The affronted autocrat straightway demanded the revocation of this decision and, failing to achieve this, deserted the party on the excuse that it was capitulating to Republicanism. The bureaucracy tried hard to effect a compromise and finally only expelled him after he had already formed his new organisation, the Commonwealth Labour Party. For, providing he could have been persuaded to accept defeat on the main issue, a chastened Midgley, harnessed alongside Beattie, might have remained an important asset to the Labour Party. His reassuring presence would have helped to counteract the adverse effects in the Orange constituencies of Beattie's overtures to the Republicans, and vice versa. In Northern Ireland the caste division of the workers makes a system of double bookkeeping—always a necessary device of opportunist parties—particularly expedient.

Midgley was the most outspoken reactionary in the Labour Party, but only because he had the opportunity of coming to immediate terms with the reaction. The remainder of the bureaucracy can only climb to power through a Labour Party General Election victory. While it is commendable to resist a temptation, no virtue is involved in bowing to necessity. Moreover, while piously denouncing Midgley's entry into the undemocratic Stormont Cabinet these bureaucrats condone the position of the Labour Ministers at Westminster. Yet the crimes of British Imperialism in India, which Bevin and Attlee freely participated in, are already of infinitely greater magnitude than any which could fall within the provincial scope of the Stormont regime.

It is theretofore hypocritical, besides being a barren and dilletante pursuit, to indulge in abstract moral comparisons, as is the practice of the self-righteous "loyal" leaders. For our part, while preserving complete independence from the reformist bureaucrats on all questions, we support every aspect of policy and every practical action forced upon them, whether

by rank and file pressure or by the pressure of their own ambitions, which adds to the independence of the workers separating them from the bourgeois parties and heightening their hostility towards them. Therefore, we support the Labour Party demand for a General Election as against the Stalinist-Midgleyite policy of a truce with the Tories. A Labour Party General Election victory will usher in a new and higher phase of the class struggle, subjecting the reformist leaders to the test of practice at a time when immediate socialist measures will have become a matter of life-and-death urgency to the working-class. Reformism's decline in prestige will be matched by a corresponding growth in the influence of the revolutionary party.

On the other hand, we are not in favour of submitting the sectarian Commonwealth Labour Party to any sort of parliamentary test. A party which bases itself upon sectarian disunity aids only the Orange dictatorship and cannot be considered a section of the Labour movement. At present Midgley's party is an auxiliary wing of the Tory Unionist Party. Tomorrow it may well become a fascist organisation. Certainly its predominantly proletarian composition does not exclude this possibility. Directly Midgley began to smell of fascism most of the present members—to-day drawn towards Midgley by their violent hatred of Catholicism and nationalism—would abandon him. Nonetheless, in a period of prolonged unemployment large numbers of the most backward, prejudice-ridden masses would gather round him. Midgley himself no longer has any real stake in the proletarian organisation. On the other hand, although he is a Cabinet Minister he has not as yet become assimilated into the Tory-Unionist Party bureaucracy. He remains an irresponsible, unstable element; a free-lance Labour Unionist. It is in this lack of a secure anchorage that the danger of him lies. When the capitalists begin to cast around for a Fuhrer to foist upon the workers, Midgley, whom nature and circumstances have endowed with manifold qualifications, will stand high on the list of candidates.

LABOUR AND THE ORANGE STATE

In contradistinction to a Tory regime a Labour Government cannot enter conspiracy with the aggressive forces of the bourgeois state against the mass organisations of the working-class, the Trade Unions and the Labour Party itself, upon which it depends for its own place in politics. No more can it

secretly foster fascist movements. However, this is not to say that the Labour leaders in themselves constitute a serious barrier to the counter-revolution, fascist or otherwise.

But fascism triumphs only after the proletariat has exhausted itself in un-availing efforts to seize power. However, the bourgeoisie cannot foresee whether in fact there will be an ebb-tide of revolutionary hopes or whether on the contrary the deluge will sweep them away. When the swing of the pendulum is violently leftwards and the reformists are losing all control, the bourgeoisie is compelled to attempt to avert disaster, even at the risk of hastening its doom, by unleashing naked military and police terror on the workers. Thus during the British General Strike in 1926, Churchill was on the point of issuing firing orders to the Army when the capitulation of the treacherous leaders absolved him from the need. During the ascending revolutionary curve the White Conservative reaction is a more immediate danger than fascism.

In Northern Ireland, where there is not as yet even the nucleus of an avowedly fascist movement, the colossal body of regular and auxiliary police—well drilled and equipped with arms, and anti-socialist to the marrow—is a constant menace overhanging the working class. The warning of 1932 cannot be forgotten when the police fired into a peaceful, unarmed, unemployed demonstration, causing wounds and death. Far more fundamental causes are to-day driving the workers towards bitter class struggle. Hence, it would be criminal on the part of those claiming to represent the workers to fail to prepare for the recurrence of similar incidents on a far vaster scale.

It is idle chatter to speak of introducing civil liberties into Northern Ireland without placing the demilitarisation of the police force at the head of the agenda. We demand, therefore, that the Labour Party places to the forefront of its programme for power the withdrawal of the right of R.U.C. members to bear lethal weapons of any description. Furthermore, we demand that it pledges itself, upon coming to power, to disband the state-financed auxiliary police force, the "B" Specials and demand that the funds at present allotted for the upkeep of this Orange partisan body be used instead for the purpose of arming and training workers' defence guards, under Trade Union control, to resist the threat of fascism or of any force of the reaction which might engineer a coup d'etat.

LABOUR AND THE IMPERIAL STATE

Within limits the class struggle in Northern Ireland has its own internal

rhythm of development, which may lag behind or race ahead of the British. However, in the last analysis, the balance of political power existing between the workers and capitalists of Britain exercises a decisive influence in determining the nature of the regime.

A fascist dictatorship in England would inevitably produce its Ulster equivalent. Owing to a previous lag the revolutionary curve might continue to ascend for some time after a British revolutionary situation had dissipated itself; but immediately a basic change set in, directly a fascist regime had installed itself on the other side of the Channel, the Ulster workers would be powerless to avert a bourgeois dictatorship in one form or other. Similarly, a triumphant socialist revolution in Britain would be followed in quick succession—if not automatically—by the assumption of state power by the Irish proletariat.

A reformist Labour Government at Stormont would be unable to maintain itself for long in the face of an entrenched Tory regime at Westminster; for if, despite its minority position in Parliament, the Tory Party in past years proved sufficiently powerful in the work of sabotage, and resourceful enough in the invention of calumnies, to bring about the untimely downfall of the two MacDonald Labour regimes;

and if at a later stage, operating through the machinery of the Federation of British Industries, they conspired to close the New Zealand Government's channels of trade—notwithstanding New Zealand's relative independence of Britain as compared to Ulster, it may be accepted without discussion that the British Tory Government would move into action against a Stormont Labour regime with ruthlessness, effrontery and ruinous effect.

The choice confronting the unfortunate Labour ministers would be reduced to one of running a risk of provoking a state overturn by the workers should they postpone the introduction of radical social changes or, alternatively, of being crushed in the vice of an economic boycott imposed by the Imperial State should they prove themselves lax in the defence of property rights and the maintenance of order. Caught in the midst of a withering cross-fire from three directions—from the workers, the Republicans and the Imperialists—the Labour regime would inevitably succumb to mortal wounds. However, during its brief tenure of office the commands of the Imperial dispenser of gold and food would be harkened to like the voice of God. God, though feared, is not in all things obeyed. The Labour reformists could not implement to the full the dictates of their Imperialist overlords without, in doing so, eternally disgracing themselves in the eyes of the nationalist population that the cadres won from the Republican side of the community will be drawn.

"A plague on both your houses" is the dictum of "progressive" philistines but not of revolutionaries. Imperialist and Republican violence cannot be equated as twin evils. British Imperialism is cause; the Republican bombs and revolver shots effect. We denounce the Republican Army tactics, the bombings and the armed expropriations—not to affronted humanity at large, however, but to the Republican workers themselves. It is senseless adventurism, indeed a gangster form of activity just as the philistines say, except that the perpetrators of these "outrages" are not gangster elements but politicals pursuing a false path to freedom. We are far from being neutrals. The Imperialist state is our enemy also. It is precisely because the I.R.A. is in reality a diversion, useful to that enemy though feared by him, that we strive to undermine it and win its following. We are in favour of defending the Republican victims of imperialism but only in our own way, by our own proletarian methods. We thereby weaken the influence of the I.R.A. by demonstrating to the Republican masses that we are equally resolute and much more effective fighters against imperialism.



**I stake
my life!**

BY LEON TROTSKY

DEWEY REPORT on the
Moscow Trials

6s

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRELAND

Protestant-Republican working-class unity can be forged only on the anvil of the class war. National independence will be won either as a by-product of the Irish and British revolutionary struggles or not at all. Finally, only the victory of socialism on a world scale will end national oppression forever. The Trotskyist movement alone fights under the banner of international socialism and, therefore, alone of all parties and tendencies represents the true national interests of the Irish people. It alone is implacable in its hostility alike to imperialism and to all forms of capitalist rule, and alone is the enemy of every manifestation of bourgeois ideology within the ranks of the working class. On the other hand, the Communist Party of Ireland—Irish, as it is Communist, in name only—confuses, disorients and increases the disunity of the working class. The Stalinist Party is never permitted to absolve itself from a sense of responsibility towards the capitalist system. This follows from its role as a satellite of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

The Kremlin bureaucracy is fully aware that the social stability of the capitalist countries is a prerequisite for its own plunderous rule over the Soviet working masses. World Revolution constitutes an even greater threat to its vested interests than world imperialism; for while it is possible to hope that the antagonisms dividing the great powers will always drive one of the camps of imperialist predators into seeking an understanding with the Kremlin, no hope whatever can be entertained of the revolutionaries making their peace with bureaucratic tyranny. A revolution in any one of the advanced countries would act as an inspiration and a signal to the Soviet masses to break asunder the chains of Stalinism. Thus, under the totalitarian Stalinist regime, the Soviet Union is as deeply involved as any of the capitalist countries in the jugglery of power politics.

It follows, therefore, that either the Stalin regime will be in the camp of British Imperialism or working in collaboration with its (Britain's) imperialist enemies; and that the Communist Party of Ireland will be committed either to supporting the British ruling class or to demagogically opposing them. However, opposition to British Imperialism does not mean for the Stalinist Party support for an independent proletarian struggle for national and social freedom. It simply means that an alliance with the Orange dictatorship, on the essentials of the Tory programme, is replaced by an attempted alliance with the bourgeois nationalist organisations on their programme. One form of "national united

front" takes the place of another. That is all. The social set-up in Northern Ireland undoubtedly offers the Stalinists admirable scope for the creation on paper of national fronts to suit all purposes. In reality of course either form of the so-called national front is of an equally fictitious nature. This is not to imply that the fiction is without its effects; but these are wholly on the side of sectarian disunity. What happens is this: each fresh about-turn of the Stalinists and the working class in general. They would equivocate and temporise, squirming round in a vicious circle of half measures. Confronted with the imperative necessity of taking sides on an issue, certainly the Labour lackeys would always choose the bourgeois state. But they would take sides weakly. Therefore, Imperialism would not be tempted gratefully to forbear from wrecking their regime; for it would feel the pressing need of restoring a strong, authoritarian Government in Ulster. British "good-will" is not a free commodity on the market. Its price to Ulster is the maintenance of sufficient internal calm to ensure a peaceful occupation.

In all probability, however, a British Labour Government would exist alongside a Stormont reformist regime. The British Labour Party bureaucrats are reactionary to the core. Confronted with a maturing revolutionary situation at home they would not scruple to embarrass their junior colleagues at Stormont by endeavouring to bludgeon the Irish workers with the weapons of boycott and blockade should the example of militant socialist action in Ulster prove inspiring to the British workers. In an outright revolutionary situation such intervention would, as a matter of fact, be not unwelcome to the affrighted Ulster bureaucrats, unable to sweep back the revolutionary tide with their own broken brooms.

Assuming that the first phases of a revolutionary situation develop in Ulster before the overthrow of the British Imperialist state has been accomplished by the English workers, the logic of the class struggle will compel the Ulster proletariat to establish control over the key industries and to punish refractory capitalists by outright confiscation—measures which the Imperial state will strive to nullify by a full utilisation of all the coercive means at its disposal. The Northern workers will be able to hold out against the hostile machinations of imperialism and the internal economic chaos following the rupture with the British capitalist state, only together with the Southern workers within a system of pooling and makeshift planning until the British proletarian dictatorship comes to their aid. Events will accomplish in a remarkably short space of time the work which centuries have

left undone. The tasks of the revolution will weld together the workers and peasants of North and South.

THE QUESTION OF LABOUR UNITY

Ulster is a bridgehead which must be held against all comers in the unending battles for world trade hegemony. It is one of a chain of fortresses stretching to the ends of the earth to protect the trade routes and the colonial empire of the British bourgeoisie, upon whose prosperity and stability—with only fluctuations enough to ensure the return of strong Labour forces to Parliament—the hopes of the Labour Party bureaucrats recline. If the English social patriots would prove reluctant to yield up Ulster the Six County bureaucrats—equally dependant on the spoils of Empire—would be no less unwilling to accept secession. Therefore a precondition to Irish Labour unity is a break between the workers and the bureaucrats.

It is reported that at the next Annual Conference of the Northern Ireland Labour Party a resolution is to be moved in support of a Socialist Ireland. Militants in the Labour Party must propose a complementary resolution demanding a joint Conference to discuss the unification of the Eire and Northern Ireland Labour Parties. A united Labour Party of Ireland, freed from the bureaucratic stranglehold, could not take the place of the revolutionary party. It would be slow, unwieldy and encumbered by reformist traditions, but the workers composing it would already have achieved an enormous liberation from the old religious caste mentality. A united Labour movement confronting a divided bourgeoisie would strengthen the workers' confidence in their organised might and hasten the struggle for political power.

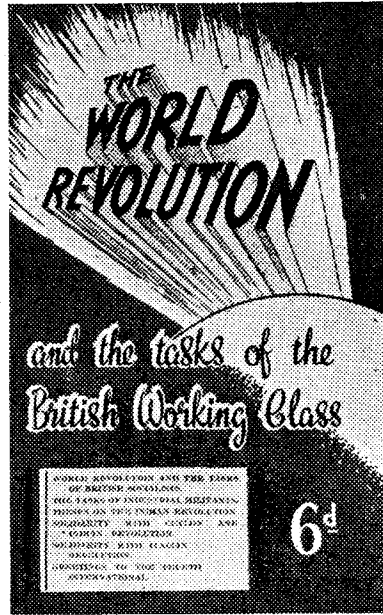
NATIONALISM AND SOCIALISM

The fundamental tasks of nationalisms awaiting the solution of the approaching revolution are:— (1) the healing of the sectarian breach; (2) the winning of national independence from British Imperialism; and (3) the ending of partition. These form an inseparable trinity. None are realisable as isolated aims in themselves, or possible of attainment except by means of the socialist revolution. Conversely the socialist movement can turn its back on the problems of nationalism only at the price of prostration before capitalism; for a proletariat divided within itself cannot seize state power. National tasks and social tasks are thus inextricably woven together.

The national question is a social question and, moreover, one of the largest magnitude. Hitherto, the prevailing tendency among socialists has been to regard the intrusion of Orange and nationalist banners into the arena

of the class struggle as a complication of an exclusively detrimental nature to the Labour movement; as a plague of ideologies, in fact. Most certainly this judgment holds true under all circumstances so far as Orangeism is concerned. On the other hand, the unsolved national question—which is not at all a sectarian issue from the standpoint of the nationalist workers—is not necessarily a brake upon the class struggle but, under favourable circumstances, can act as a dynamo upon it, causing violent accelerations of tempo.

For example, had the Imperialist Government dared to implement its threat of conscription in 1941, the unanimous and unswerving determination of the Catholic working-class community to resist would have acted as a potent moral stimulus on the Protestant workers, whose instinctive opposition to conscription lacked an ideological and organisational point of support. The struggle begun by the Catholic workers, rallied in the first stages



behind their traditional watchwords, could have led in the course of events to the creation of a united Catholic-Protestant proletarian movement, waging resistance against imperialism on the programme of an independent Soviet Ireland. The lifelong hatred and irreconcilability of the Republican masses towards imperialism, and its Carsonite marionettes, will harden and energise the ranks of the proletariat in the approaching period of revolution.

Finally, the best Irish nationalists will always be the Trotskyists; for Trotskyism's conceptions of international solidarity and socialist co-operation alone correspond to the national needs of the Irish people. An isolated proletarian dictatorship, even assuming it were not militarily overthrown, could not in the long run prevent a resurgence of sectarian disunity; for ideology cannot take the place of bread indefinitely. With the prolongation of hunger and poverty the wheels of the revolution would begin to revolve backwards. It is only within a system of world socialist economy that the unity of the Irish people will become indestructible for all time.

IN PREPARATION

Full Figure Photograph

OF

Leon Trotsky

IN RED ARMY UNIFORM

Size — Appx. 16 ins. x 12½ ins.

PRICE — 3/6

Orders are being booked for this Splendid Photograph in Limited Supply.

The Maturing Situation in Europe and the Tasks of the 4th International

Resolution adopted by the European Executive Committee of the Fourth International, January 1945

The following resolution published in part was adopted by the European Executive Committee of the Fourth International in its meeting of Jan. 1945 about a year after the European Conference of Feb. 1944.

CIVIL WAR

As the thesis of the European Conference of Feb. 1944 emphasised: "The imperialist war is inexorably being transformed into civil war." One after the other the European countries are entering the revolutionary whirlpool. While the imperialist war is further prolonged, in the countries which have been liberated, either by the Red Army or the Allied troops, the civil war is flaring up and spreading.

In a series of countries with agrarian structures and strong feudal survivals, such as Poland and Hungary, occupied by the Red Army, it is chiefly the acuteness of the agrarian question, aggravated by the consequences of the war and the length of Nazi occupation, which drives the masses to revolutionary action. In countries such as Rumania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Belgium, it is mainly the economic ruin, demonstrated in the inflation, large-scale unemployment, food shortage and lack of goods, which is at the bottom of the revolutionary ferment. Throughout Europe, five years of imperialist war have completely disorganised economic life, destroyed material resources, ruined the system of exchange, and have brought famine and poverty.

Indescribable chaos reigns in all the "liberated" countries, with no prospect of improvement in the near future.

While British imperialism itself considerably impoverished by the war, proves incapable of bringing any material aid whatever to the countries which it claims as its zone of influence (Belgium, Italy, Greece) and American imperialism refuses to risk its capital and goods in a Europe in the grip of inflation and shaken by the first waves

of the revolution: the revolutionary action of the masses is destroying the last possibilities for the bourgeoisie to restore its economy which has been ruined and dilapidated by the war.

The revolutionary character of the present situation is determined by the fact that the smallest demand of the masses directed against the high cost of living, famine and unemployment, attacks the very foundations of capitalism and inevitably leads to a struggle against the system as a whole.

The coming months will aggravate this already strained situation. The past year has witnessed inter-imperialist antagonisms, as well as the antagonisms between the imperialists and the USSR, brought to an extremely sharp pitch.

As the second-rate imperialisms collapsed, as the Russian, American and British armies penetrated deeper into Europe, and the defeat of Germany appeared inevitable and near, raising the question of the future of Europe and the world, "the victors" were obliged to reveal their real "war aims", to formulate their demands and, by diplomacy and by force to consolidate their interests.

American imperialism, with the aim of further weakening British power, and of assuring free access everywhere for its goods and capital, systematically opposes British policy, which aims at creating blocs exclusively attached to British imperial economy. (The civil aviation conference at Chicago, Stettinius' declarations on British policy in Italy and Greece).

On the other hand the differences with Russia on the German, Polish and Balkan questions are constantly increasing with the advance of the Red Army into Central and Southern Europe.

Britain, supported here by the United States, is attempting to limit the effects of the Russian victories by maintaining the Polish government in

London as an instrument of struggle against a complete Russian seizure of Poland: by the manoeuvres of King Peter against Tito in Jugoslavia: by the brutal submission of Greece to her yoke: and above all by increasingly open opposition to the Russian plans for Germany after her defeat.

Because of the sharpening of inter-imperialist antagonisms, and the resistance of Germany, which has been fortified on account of the prospect of dismemberment and rapine which the Allied imperialist bourgeoisie and the reactionary Stalinist bureaucracy offers the German people, the war is prolonged, accumulating material and financial ruins.

But even in the case of a rapid German defeat, Europe cannot look forward to any immediate social betterment. The defeat of Germany will liberate twelve million foreign workers who will be added to Europe's unemployed.

But its chief effect will be to automatically intensify the revolutionary struggle on the whole continent, drawing into the struggle the masses who, thanks to the treachery of the Socialist and Communist parties, still subordinate the struggle for their own demands to the prosecution of the war. All the measures of the bourgeoisie for arresting the rise in the cost of living, lowering prices and preventing inflation are doomed to certain failure. No administrative measure can restore a real value to money without an increase in production and the re-establishment of international exchanges. No administrative measure can banish the black market while industry is unable to give the peasants cheap and abundant goods. And finally, no administrative measure can restore to the workers their energy and will to work to increase production, without at the same time giving them more food, better wages and a more decent standard of living.

THE CHARACTER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The revolutionary upsurge in Europe occurs within the framework of the continuing imperialist war, and the occupation of the various countries by the German or Allied armies. It is this fact which still represses the revolutionary energy of the masses, distorts its true class character, splits it and conditions the relative defeats of the first waves of the revolution.

In Belgium, Italy and Greece the masses struggled and still are struggling under conditions which are still generally unfavourable, dominated by the imperialist war, the presence of the occupying armies, and the pressure hostile to every independent class movement which results from the policy of national unity pursued by the traitor workers' parties.

Side by side with the working class, and sometimes in advance of it, the revolutionary movement embraces large sections of the poor peasantry and the urban petty-bourgeoisie, ruined either by the inflation or by the anti-inflationary measures. The revolutionary ferment of the petty-bourgeoisie is one of the principal factors in the political instability which is at present spreading to all European countries, aggravating the crisis of the bourgeoisie, accelerating and amplifying the working-class movement itself.

If, however, the proletariat proves incapable of bringing the struggle against the bourgeoisie to a victorious and relatively speedy conclusion the mass of impatient petty-bourgeois elements will, as in the past, turn towards reactionary and fascist solutions.

The experience in the countries "liberated" by the Red Army as in those "liberated" by the Allied armies already shows that the bourgeoisie, ruined, incapable of making the smallest concessions to the masses and directly menaced by their growing agitation, turns from the beginning to "strong" solutions, to police and military dictatorships, resting on the occupying troops and the national fascist elements who were already used during the Nazi occupation to break the movement of the masses.

A relatively long intermediate "democratic" period, lasting until the decisive victory either of the socialist revolution or once again of fascism, will be impossible. "Democratic" manoeuvres are not however excluded in cases where the bourgeoisie, thanks to the active aid of foreign imperialism, after having attempted to repel brutally the first revolutionary attacks of the masses, succeeds in reconstructing its own repressive apparatus (army, police), disarming and dissolving the independent organisations of the masses of the type of militias, partisans etc.

which were created during the Nazi occupation, and in regaining confidence in itself. It is possible that in this case the bourgeoisie, once again faced with the menace of a new and violent revolutionary offensive of the masses, might allow a certain margin of "democratic" manoeuvres of which it would make use. But these possibilities will never exceed the limits of an artificial and extremely temporary solution.

Our perspective and consequently the definition of our tasks in the immediate future must be based, not on exceptional circumstances which may allow certain countries, under the menacing pressure of the masses and for a very limited time, to experience a "democratic" period, but on the general line of the bourgeoisie which is visible from the recent experience of all European countries, particularly those characterised by an objectively revolutionary situation. Basing ourselves particularly on the Belgian and above all the Greek experiences, we must emphasise the danger of certain countries following the example of Hungary (Horthy) and Poland (Pilsudski) after the last war, entering a dictatorial regime immediately after the first defeat of the revolution, from which they will only emerge with the direct aid of the European and world proletariat.

On the other hand, the aggressive and brutal intervention of the foreign imperialisms, in the first place those of Britain and America, in a number of European countries (Belgium, Holland, Italy, Greece), where they do not hesitate to employ the worst methods of violence and massacre which they use in colonial countries, shows how far imperialism is conscious of the danger which threatens the capitalist regime in Europe, and is determined to struggle with all its might to break the revolutionary wave before it engulfs the whole continent and from there spreads to the other parts of the world.

The European bourgeoisies, directly threatened by the masses, in spite of the dangers to their economic and military independence which the active intervention of foreign imperialism brings, do not hesitate to appeal to the forces of British and American imperialism, and rest principally upon them while building up their own military and police apparatus of repression.

In a number of countries, the apparent point of departure of the revolutionary crisis is the conflict between the popular armed forces amalgamated in the organisations of resistance to Nazi oppression, and the bourgeois state determined to restore its authority over them. In reality the conflict is between the mass of the people who do not want to submit again to the old capitalist order, who desire a revolutionary solution, and the gov-

ernmental set-ups of the reactionary bourgeoisie, supported by foreign imperialism.

In spite of the prejudices, illusions, confusion and ignorance, which still obscure and trouble the consciousness of the masses, in spite of the fact that the Communist parties, corrupted and rotted by the policy of class collaboration, deprived of all revolutionary audacity, programme and perspective, are still borne by the pressure of the masses to the leadership of their struggles; the recent events in Belgium and Greece constitute the first phase of the revolution which has actually begun in these countries. It is through these struggles and the inevitable struggles in the future that the masses will reject everything that is outdated, and will acquire the experience necessary to lead the struggle to its necessary end, the conquest of power.

OUR TASKS AT THE PRESENT STAGE

If the struggle in Europe has entered a revolutionary period, still the scope and rhythm of the revolutionary crises remain different from one country to the other. In a number of countries, chiefly France, Spain and Italy, history allows us a limited time for our sections to carry out their ideological and organisational preparation for the great struggles ahead. In another group of countries such as Belgium and Greece, our sections have already met the first wave of the revolution. But there it is not a question of development in a straight line to the decisive solution, reactionary or revolutionary. More or less long pauses are inevitable on account of the general situation in Europe. With one exception all the historical conditions necessary for the victory of the social revolution in Europe are not only objectively ripe but even going rotten. Only the existence of real revolutionary parties is lacking in the principal European countries. If we have, in every European country, solid nuclei of devoted revolutionaries, it is an undeniable fact that no section of the Fourth International has yet succeeded in becoming an organisation whose internal functioning and methods of work are worthy of a truly Bolshevik party. Although time is pressing and under no circumstances must we neglect the tasks which imminent events will pose, the most important task of each section is to uproot mercilessly every trace of petty-bourgeois organisational methods, remnants of the epoch of discussion groups, and replace them by truly Bolshevik functioning and methods of work.

Our sections must use the interval between two phases of the revolution to assimilate experiences, improve their positions, and prepare themselves better for the next phase. In general all our European sections must consider

the immediate period as one of political and organisational preparation pushed to the extreme, in view of the much wider and sharper struggles which are coming in the whole of Europe.

In every country the party of the Fourth International must now do its utmost to arm its militants politically, strengthen its material and technical resources, multiply its means of expression, mainly legal papers, and acquire solid positions in all political and union organisations.

At the same time, starting from the actual conditions in each country, it must draw up a precise plan of action, in which the fundamental slogans of the Transitional Programme find a living and concrete expression.

The following are the principal political questions which arise at the present stage in the different European countries, to which our programme of action must reply:

(a) The ruin of economy by the war and its consequences: unemployment, high cost of living, famine.

(b) The political crisis of the bourgeoisie shown by the instability of bourgeois governments.

(c) The fate of the military and political popular formations which arose out of resistance to the Nazi occupation, and the neo-Fascist dangers.

(d) The aggressive intervention of foreign imperialism.

(e) The continuation of the imperialist war and the imperialist "peace" plans.

The programme of action of each of our European sections must be centred round these problems, posing them concretely according to the special conditions in each country, and giving them concrete solutions, guided by the following general considerations:

The restarting of economy can only be the work of the working class which through its organisations (factory committees, unions) will elaborate a plan taking into account the needs of the civil population, which will be applied under the control of these organisations.

The idea of a plan implies the control of economy by the working class, as well as the adequate organisation of the latter and of the mass of the people.

In all the "liberated" countries the bourgeoisie proves incapable of restoring economic life and bettering the lot of the mass of the people.

In certain countries the political crisis of the bourgeoisie is shown by the instability of the government.

In face of this general situation which at root reflects the social crisis of the capitalist system, our European sections will put forward the slogan of a workers' government, or workers' and peasants', according to the character of the country. But this slogan, completely justified in the present period, will find no echo among the masses if it is not concretised in each country and adapted to the particular conditions.

A workers' government does not signify an immediate dictatorship of the proletariat, which can only be realised by the Bolshevik Party in each country, basing itself on the soviets of workers and peasants, but a government of the parties which claim to represent the working class, which have at the moment the confidence of the masses and declare themselves ready to realise a minimum programme of anti-capitalist measures. At the moment these are the Communist and Socialist parties. Consequently the slogan of workers' government put forward by our sections has today no other significance than this: We say to the workers' parties, break the reactionary coalition with the bourgeois parties, take the power and carry out your programme.

The leadership of our national sections must seize on every aggravation of the political crisis to put this slogan forward concretely.

Such a government must rest on the organisations of the working class and the toiling masses in general, on the militias, factory committees, housewives' committees, and unions. But there also our sections must be capable of seeing in the existing organisations (such as patriotic militias, F.F.I. in France, Greek partisans, etc.) in spite of their reactionary titles and orientation, their progressive social content, supporting them, giving them direction and broadening them.

The vicious attacks of the bourgeoisie and of foreign imperialism against the popular militias and armed formations of partisans which grew out of resistance to the Nazis occupation, show that the criterion of our class enemy was more correct than the political intuition of the ultra-leftists outside and within our ranks with respect to these organisations.

Instead of ignoring them or condemning them en bloc, the partisans of the Fourth International must try to develop their progressive social content and direct them towards an independent political existence, in the service of the toiling masses, against the bourgeoisie.

The active intervention of foreign imperialism, and in the first place of British imperialism in Belgium, Italy and Greece, sharply raises on the one hand the necessity of intense fraternisation propaganda among the soldiers of the occupying forces, and on the other the intensification of the struggle of our British section against British imperialism.

The Executive Committee recommends all the sections concerned to bring out as quickly as possible material in the English language meant for the soldiers, and to employ every means to strengthen the tendency to fraternise with the toiling masses of the occupied countries, with the German soldiers and masses.

It must be recognised that the imperialist war is dragging on, and that new sacrifices, heavier than ever, will be demanded of the masses.

The sections of the Fourth International must struggle with all their might against the tendency of national unity, and take every opportunity to show the masses that the imperialists are incapable of bringing the war to a speedy close, and of consolidating a democratic and lasting peace.

The war will only come to an end and the peace have a genuine character by the joint action of the workers of all countries in smashing capitalism and setting up in its place the United Socialist States of Europe and the World. The sections of the Fourth International must mercilessly denounce the monstrous plans of pillage and rapine drawn up by the diplomats of the "Allied" imperialist bourgeoisie and the Stalinist bureaucracy for the defeated countries, primarily Germany.

The European Executive Committee emphasises the urgent necessity for all our national sections of emerging from propaganda which is theoretically pure but abstract and indifferent to the masses, and of passing immediately to the elaboration of a concrete plan of action, taking into account the actual situation in each country, using every lever capable of moving the masses and hastening their revolutionary development.

A revolutionary situation without precedent is being created in the whole of Europe.

Our political and organisational capacities will determine whether we become, in the great events of this period, a real political force, which will definitely lead the masses to the conquest of power.

The European Executive Committee of the Fourth International.
January 1945.