

W. Z. FOSTER ON THE CUBAN PARTY CONGRESS

*The*  
**COMMUNIST**  
MARCH



AMERICA AND THE  
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL  
EARL BROWDER

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL:  
A FORCE FOR WORLD DEMOCRACY

ALEX BITTELMAN (*Review of the Month*)

LENIN AND  
INTERNATIONAL LABOR UNITY

D. Z. MANUILSKY



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# The COMMUNIST

A MAGAZINE OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MARXISM-LENINISM  
PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE U.S.A.  
EDITORS: EARL BROWDER, ALEX BITTELMAN, V. J. JEROME



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*Entered as second class matter November 2, 1927, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Send checks, money orders and correspondence to THE COMMUNIST, P. O. Box 148, Sta. D (50 E. 13th St.), New York. Subscription rates: \$2.00 a year; \$1.00 for six months; foreign and Canada \$2.50 a year. Single copies 20 cents.*

The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workingmen of all countries, unite!

—Marx and Engels, 'The Communist Manifesto'



The  
Communist International  
1919-1939

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## REVIEW OF THE MONTH

*Twentieth Anniversary of the Communist International. A Marxist-Leninist International. Proletarian Dictatorship in Theory and Practice. Lenin's and Stalin's Teachings. Democracy and Dictatorship. What Is a Fascist Dictatorship? Communism and Fascism. The Anti-Fascist People's Front and the Higher Type of Socialist Democracy. What Is the Economic Outlook? Reactionary Economy Drive Is a Disturbing Factor. What About the Growing National Debt? Borrowing and Taxing. Contradictions Between Public Debt and Private Economy. Immediate and Long-Range Solutions. Marx and Hamilton on Public Debts. Historical References and Comparisons. The Spanish War Is Extending. Compel Withdrawal of Hitler's and Mussolini's Invaders. President Roosevelt's Anti-Fascist Orientation and the Reactionary Maneuvers. Labor's Task and Duty.*

**T**WENTY years ago this month—March, 1919—representatives of Communist Parties of the most important countries in the world assembled in Moscow, where they held their first world congress and established the (Third) Communist International. Thus had been formed an international revolutionary working class organization of a new type, a Marxist-Leninist International.

Lenin led in the work of the Congress. In his report on bourgeois democracy and the proletarian dictatorship, Lenin demonstrated the significance of Soviet power, the new type of government, as the genuine democracy for the toiling people. The congress adopted an appeal to the world proletariat, calling for decisive struggle for the proletarian dictatorship, for the victory of the Soviets in all countries.

While the young Soviet country was at that time preparing to resist foreign intervention, a widespread

revolutionary upsurge began in Western Europe. The new republican regime in Germany, and the existence there of Soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies were having a revolutionizing influence over the rest of Europe. It is true that the German revolution was a bourgeois and not a socialist one and that the German Soviets, because they were dominated by Social-Democrats, soon became subordinated to the bourgeois parliament. And in this lay the weakness of that revolution. Yet it was a revolution, which overthrew the regime of William the Second, liberated the energies of the masses, thus helping to stimulate a revolutionary rise in the other European countries.

A widespread revolutionary movement was developing in Austria. In Hungary a Soviet republic was established. And in many countries, Communist Parties were coming into the political arena on the basis of this revolutionary wave.

It was this sort of world situation in which the conditions matured for the unification of the various Communist Parties in the Communist International. Leninism became the guiding theory and practice of this new type of world labor organization. Learning from the model Communist Party, the Party of the Soviet Union, all the other parties affiliated in the Communist International made the Lenin-Stalin theory of the proletarian dictatorship the basis and essence of their struggles.

The Left wing of the Socialist Party of America, organized in 1918 under the leadership of Charles E. Ruthenberg, which later founded the Communist Party of the United States, made its main fight in the old Socialist Party and among the class-conscious workers generally on this fundamental issue: the acceptance of the Lenin-Stalin theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

On this occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Communist International, and in the face of the increasing world offensive of fascism and reaction, it is absolutely imperative deeply to reflect upon and to consider the following truth. In the years 1918-20, the countries of Europe were passing through a revolutionary crisis. The socialist revolution was growing. Life itself had then placed on the order of the day the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Today, this should be evident to all. If in the situation then prevailing the workers of the most important capitalist countries had followed the path of the Soviet proletariat, instead of letting themselves be

deceived by the Kautskys, Bauers and MacDonaldis, is there any doubt that socialism would today be the prevailing system in most countries? No doubt at all. Had this happened, there would be no fascist dictatorships in Germany and Italy, no second imperialist war, no economic crises, none of the miseries and pain resulting to the masses from dying capitalism.

One does not have to rely upon theory alone to show that this is true. Just take the Soviet Union, in which the masses started out to build socialism, inheriting a relatively backward economy, largely agricultural, ruined by years of imperialist war and foreign intervention. And see what this country is proving as it prepares for the Eighteenth Congress of its Communist Party which opens on March 10 in Moscow. It proves that *Soviet power works*. It abolished capitalism and has built in the main a socialist system. It eliminated all the causes that give rise to a country's imperialist aggression and to fascism. Fascist agents cannot for long survive. It knows how to deal with aggressors, to maintain the freedom and independence of the country and to fight for peace. The right to a job, to leisure, to education and to security is guaranteed by the Stalin Constitution to every citizen and is realized in actual fact.

From 1932 to 1937, average annual wages for workers and office employees have been more than doubled. The wage fund, out of which the social security needs of the workers are met, has increased in the same years two and a half times. The gross income of collective farmers has increased in the four years from 1933

to 1937—2.7 times while the money incomes paid out to the collective farmers in accordance with their work increased four and a half times in these years.

The development of the Third Five-Year Plan—1937-1942—calls for an increase of industrial output of 88 per cent. Production of articles of consumption is to be increased 70 per cent. And agricultural production is to be increased 53 per cent. The same plan calls for a more than 50 per cent increase in consumption by the people of the Soviet Union, with the average wage rising 35 per cent.

Just compare this progress in the land of socialism, in the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat, with the stagnation, decay and retrogression in the capitalist world. Here, in the capitalist world, the fascist countries play the first fiddle. The fascists keep their own peoples in a living hell, already waging a second imperialist war against China, Spain and Ethiopia, and threatening the lives and existence of many more peoples and countries.

The proletarian dictatorship, the basis and essence of the Marxist-Leninist International, enriched by the world-historic theoretical and practical contributions of Stalin, *the proletarian dictatorship works and succeeds* despite all difficulties. It points the road to the workers in all capitalist countries.

In the Soviet Union, the proletarian dictatorship has already effected a most significant transformation in the class structure of the country. There are no longer any exploiting classes there. The differences and con-

traditions between worker, peasant and intellectual, differences inherited from capitalism, are disappearing. A moral and political unity of the whole of Soviet society is becoming a reality. So much so that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in preparation for its Eighteenth Congress, is proposing to establish one and the same requirement for Party membership to hold good for all applicants, modifying in this sense its present constitution which lays down different requirements for persons of different social positions.

The proletarian dictatorship builds socialism and moves to communism. It is proving itself in the Soviet Union and before millions of toilers throughout the world. It is proof conclusive of the correctness and universal validity of the Lenin-Stalin theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the theory which guides all the activities of the Communist Parties affiliated in the Communist International.

\* \* \*

WHEN we say we believe in the proletarian dictatorship, our enemies come back at us with the charge that we are opposed to democracy, that we are the same as the fascists, that we are insincere in advocating and supporting the policy of the democratic front. Even though this sort of "charge" is perfectly ridiculous and, in nine times out of ten, is made by people who know better but are seeking purposely to confuse the masses, we have to answer, explain and educate. True, we have been doing so in a measure, but we must do more. And our answer is

relatively plain. We answer by pointing to both our theory and our practice.

To take our practice first. This includes the actual workings of the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union. It is the theory in practice. And it shows plainly that a genuine democracy for the people is being realized in the land of socialism. A higher type of democracy than that prevailing in the bourgeois-democratic countries. A higher type—because it excludes exploitation of man by man; because it raises to active participation in government all honest citizens, developing in them the capacity to government and self-government; because social security is its very essence; because it provides opportunities for the unlimited development of every citizen's creative capacities; because finally it creates the conditions for a complete moral and political unity of the entire society. In short, because it is *socialist democracy*.

When the reactionaries say, as they do every day, that communism is the same as fascism because both are dictatorships, we point to the *realities* of the land of socialism and contrast them with the economic and political realities of the countries of fascism. But that is not all. We also point to the realities, to the *deeds* of the Communists in the capitalist countries, to the fact that no other section of the people fights as energetically and consistently as the Communists for the preservation and extension of democracy.

Granting this to be true, some people ask none the less: but isn't it also true that both are "dictatorships"?

To which we could reply by asking a question ourselves. Supposing that "both" are dictatorships, then the really relevant questions would be these: Who is doing the dictating under communism, on the one hand, and under fascism, on the other? What does this dictating in both instances mean to the rights and well-being of the people? And where is it leading to in each of these cases? What kind of social order is emerging from it? And one more question, which really should be answered first. How and why did these dictatorships come into being?

An *honest* attempt to answer these relevant questions is the only way of getting at the truth. And there are many people today, non-Communists, even opponents of communism, who are sincerely and honestly seeking an answer to these questions.

Taking the thing historically, as we must, we find that the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union arose at a time when old Russia was in the grip of a most far-reaching economic, social and political crisis. A revolutionary crisis. The ruling capitalist class was enmeshed in the imperialist war of 1914 which was ruining and destroying the country. The capitalist class was no longer able to rule as of old, and the masses of the people—the overwhelming majority—would no longer stand the old order. It was a catastrophe as far as the old social and political order was concerned. The masses wanted peace, bread, land, and freedom from intolerable oppression and a chance to live.

None of the existing political parties or groups, with the exception of the Bolshevik, Communist Party, had



any program that would lead the people out of the catastrophe. On the contrary, all of the parties which stood for bourgeois democracy as against the proletarian dictatorship during that revolutionary period were in fact *trying to perpetuate the old order* which became an impossibility, and were in fact *paving the way* for a return to power of the White Guard reactionaries and monarchists.

In this situation of social collapse and disintegration, the Bolsheviks (Communists), the Party of the working class, presented to the people a plan and program of action that pointed the way out to peace, freedom, democracy and security. It was a plan to form an alliance between the working class, the toiling peasantry and the middle classes of the cities for the purpose of taking power into their own hands and, under the leadership of the proletariat, to establish peace, order, and the minimum requirements of economic security.

Politically, this meant that the Soviets, which had already established themselves as the recognized governmental spokesmen of the people, should become the actual government of the country. Economically and socially, it meant garnering all resources to feed the people, giving land to the peasants, breaking the sabotage of the big capitalists and monopolies which was strangling the country, and establishing governmental and workers' control over the most important branches of the national economy. In the revolutionary crisis, which then prevailed in the country, this necessarily meant going beyond the confines of capitalism. And the Communist Party, led by Lenin, was propos-

ing its plan to the country in this sense, pointing out that *this would be a socialist revolution leading to the building up of a socialist society.*

"Yes," we can hear somebody interjecting, "but did not the Bolsheviks destroy democracy in the process of carrying through this plan?"

To say "no" to this interjection would be correct but not enough. The first thing that was accomplished by the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship was *to save* the existing liberties established by the bourgeois democracy from the destructive hands of White Guard reaction and terror and from the capitulating hands of the bourgeois and social-reformist parties. And—this is decisive—to save these bourgeois-democratic liberties under the conditions of the revolutionary crisis prevailing in the country, it was imperative *to go beyond* the confines of bourgeois democracy, *to move toward* socialist democracy, which was accomplished by the victory of the proletarian dictatorship. This supplanted bourgeois democracy by a higher type of democracy. In other words, under the conditions of revolutionary crisis as then developing, it was *impossible* to save and further develop the democratic liberties brought about by the bourgeois revolution in February, 1917, *without* removing from power the bourgeois-democratic capitulators to White Guard reaction, *without* the proletariat and its allies assuming power, *without* overstepping the bounds of bourgeois democracy.

Thus it is seen that the struggle for socialism and the proletarian dictatorship in old Russia, the struggle which established the Union of Soviet Social-

ist Republics (U.S.S.R.) was a struggle for democracy, for its development to the very end, for the discovery of new and more adequate forms of democracy, for its growing over into a higher form of democracy.

This brief glance over the historic process already indicates the answers to the other relevant questions. It shows who is doing the dictating under the proletarian dictatorship: the people themselves under the leadership of the working class. It shows that the *inner laws* of this dictatorship of necessity work toward the abolition of all classes and class divisions in society, of all exploitation of man by man, leading for the first time in history to the moral and political unity of the whole of society. It shows that it is the only true government of the people, by the people and for the people which only socialism makes possible.

In the same way, one should now review the origin and development and perspectives of fascism; its meaning to the masses of the people, *to the nation*, in the past, present and immediate outlook, because the future of fascism is on the scrap-heap of history. Such an examination would immediately show that, though fascism also arose in conditions of deep crisis, it was a different sort of crisis from the one in Russia in 1917. In both countries the bourgeoisie was no longer able to rule as of old. But whereas in Russia (in November, 1917), the masses of the people, headed by a united working class and led by the Party of Lenin and Stalin, were *able* to take the power themselves and begin to rule *in a new and more advanced way*, the masses of the people

in Germany (in March, 1933), lacking a united working class, kept split by reactionary Social-Democracy, with a splendid Communist Party but which did not yet lead the majority of its class, the German masses were *unable* to take power and to rule in a more advanced way. The result was the coming of German fascism to power. This is the first fundamental difference to consider in contrasting the proletarian dictatorship to a fascist dictatorship.

Second, the fascist dictatorship came into existence to save the rule of the most reactionary and imperialist monopolies by the only way open to them —by the destruction of bourgeois democracy, by terror for the masses and by enslaving the people. The proletarian dictatorship came into being in the fight *to save the people*, their liberties, security, their lives, and it did so by preserving and extending the liberties acquired through the bourgeois revolution, by developing democracy further, by building up a new and higher democracy.

Third, the fascist dictatorship creates no new social order. It aggravates and intensifies to the utmost all the ills, miseries and sufferings resulting from the capitalist system. Instead of uniting the people, it further divides them, breaks them up, and sharpens all the contradictions between them. This fascism does because it is the terroristic rule of a handful of monopolists, the most reactionary and imperialist circles of finance capital, sacrificing the vital interests of all other groups and classes (even bourgeois groups) to the interests of these reactionary circles.

And the proletarian dictatorship?

Does anyone still have to bring elaborate proof that it builds—and has already built up in the main—a new social order, socialism? It has built up a system of society which knows no monopolies, no exploitation, no reaction, no fascism—a system which is the complete negation of everything fascism stands for. *A system superior to capitalism whether under bourgeois democracy or fascism.*

Fourth, the proletarian dictatorship rests upon the principle of the brotherhood and equality of nations, a principle realized in the Soviet Union. The proletarian dictatorship in that country came into power in the struggle against imperialist war, for peace, for the true self-determination of nations.

And fascism? Everybody should know by now that fascism is the negation of all these things. Fascism is the most reckless and brutal imperialism. Its very nature is war, war against the people at home, war against other peoples abroad. Its very national chauvinism, a threat to all other nations, is also destroying its own nation.

Fifth, the net result and effect of fascist dictatorship is to prolong and intensify the agonies of dying capitalism, destroying all the progressive and cultural achievements of humanity acquired in the course of centuries, reviving and “perfecting” the worst features of barbarism and medievalism.

And what about the proletarian dictatorship? What is its historic role? As proven by the experiences of the Soviet Union, it is to hasten the inevitable transition from capitalism to socialism with the least pain and suf-

fering. It is to direct and organize the transformation of one social order, outlived and decaying, into a more progressive and superior order for which all material prerequisites have already matured. It is to incorporate into the new social order, integrally and organically, all the progressive and cultural achievements of humanity. It is to hasten the emergence for the first time in history of a true humanity with unlimited opportunities for growth and creative activity.

At this point somebody might say: Good, you may have made your point about the proletarian dictatorship as against the fascist dictatorship and capitalism generally. But how do you square this with your present policies of the democratic and people's front? Isn't there a contradiction between your ultimate political aim, whose realization spells the negation of bourgeois democracy, and your present policies, which seem to be directed toward the defense and preservation of bourgeois democracy?

When the people become ready for it, the proletarian dictatorship “negates” bourgeois democracy by producing a *higher type* of democracy. Historically, as we have shown in the case of the revolution in Russia, this higher type of democracy is the culminating point of a process of struggle for democracy, for more democracy, for better and more progressive forms of democracy. It is a process which, at a certain stage of development, *begins to grow over* from bourgeois to socialist democracy. Our own country offers one of the best illustrations of this historic process of struggle for democracy, only here it has not yet reached the stage of growing over.

Thus it is clearly seen that the fight for socialism and the proletarian dictatorship is a fight for democracy, for its extension and development, for its eventual growing over into socialist democracy. And this is how the "contradiction" resolves itself both in life and in theory.

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International, in its resolutions and in the report of Comrade Dimitroff, has shown that the people's front policies of struggle against fascism flow inevitably from the great strategic plan of Lenin and Stalin *regarding the proletariat and its allies*. It is the plan which calls for the unity of the working class and its alliance with the toiling farmers, all working people of the cities, the oppressed nations and enslaved colonial peoples. And this plan, in its turn, is one of the foundation stones of the theory of the proletarian dictatorship.

When we fight today for the creation of a solid anti-fascist people's democratic front, we are guided by this theory. But those Social-Democrats, who in 1918-20 were combatting the growing socialist revolution "in the name of" bourgeois democracy, were in reality helping bourgeois reaction to destroy bourgeois democracy and to pave the way for the coming of fascism. We are pushing the historical process forward; they were trying to stop it.

The twentieth anniversary of the formation of the Communist International falls at a time in the world's affairs when the reactionary bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries (served by the Trotsky-Lovestone agents of fascism) is not only intensifying its offensive against the masses

but is also betraying the interests of the nation. So much more reason why the working class must become that force which unites the people, functioning as "the backbone of the nation, of its liberty, dignity and independence."

\* \* \*

THE economic outlook for the coming months is in many respects very uncertain. What is certain is this: that the temporary business improvement which started last summer did not yet take us out of the economic crisis which broke in 1937. It is also certain that this business improvement began to flatten out in December and seems to have continued that way through January and February. These months also continue to display a major characteristic of the economic situation already noted before, the lagging of the durable industries in the country. These, according to the Federal Reserve Board's new indices, showed a decline to 92 in December from 95 in November while the non-durable industries showed a rise to 113 from 110.

As to the essential economic factors in the situation, the present state of commodity prices and of inventories does not seem to be very encouraging to business and financial circles. Markets for basic commodities are characterized as "sluggish" and inventories, while decreasing, are not doing so fast enough. Production had caught up with consumption already in October-November.

Mass purchasing power at home has so far undergone little change; but the economy drive in Congress is having a highly disturbing effect on the

economic outlook even though P.W.A. and W.P.A. investments continue. Trade prospects in Latin America cannot be expected to show much improvement, if any, in the coming months, while the economic situation in such countries as England and France is deteriorating.

Highly detrimental to the economic outlook, long range and short, is the further unfolding of the second imperialist war waged by the fascist powers. It should be added that increased armaments in the United States, carried out as part of a progressive program of social and national security, would at this time have a favorable influence on economic conditions.

And then—the sabotage of big business, especially in the heavy industries. They still continue to operate from hand to mouth without any visible intention of initiating large-scale capital investments. And it is hard to believe that the mere settlement of the dispute between the utilities and the Administration over the Tennessee Valley Authority, that this *alone* will release a large flow of investments by finance capital in the coming months.

From the foregoing, one would be justified in concluding that the continuing economic crisis is on the way of passing over into the depression phase of the cycle. Should this turn out to be so (by spring, very likely), we shall again have a special kind of depression, with little chance for boom and real recovery. Unless, that is, the people are able to force upon the government the realization of a thorough and rounded-out program of social and national security. We refer here to a program which would en-

able the government to stimulate private enterprise by *greatly augmenting (instead of curtailing) the flow of purchasing power to the masses and by assuming greater and more substantial responsibilities for large-scale capital investments*. Public ownership of the railroads, an enlarged housing program and the nationalization of the banks—these are becoming indispensable measures for the promotion of recovery.

Significantly enough, big business reaction and its coalition in Congress have seized upon the growing national debt (not for the first time) as a stick to beat the Administration for its “spending” policies. This national debt, which is nearing the 40-billion-dollar mark, is represented as a terrific threat to the nation, its economy, its well-being. Is this debt, by itself, really such a threat? A brief answer to this question would be that the present size of the national debt constitutes at the present time *no economic threat* but that the *political* use of this growing debt by the reactionary opponents of the Administration does create *serious economic difficulties*. One has no right to overlook either the one side or the other.

The arguments on the dangers of the increasing debt have been summarized by the Bulletin of the National City Bank (February) under three heads: Credit expansion, the burden of interest cost, and fiscal unpreparedness for a war emergency. It is worth examining these points even though briefly.

Since about 44 per cent of the federal debt is held by commercial banks, raising their total deposits to a level higher than in 1929, the point is made

on the dangers of a credit inflation. But it is hard to take these "fears" seriously, for the simple reason that the main trouble is, and will continue for some time, not that the banks are advancing too much credit for business but too little or none at all. It is rather a credit deflation or stagnation that American capitalist economy is suffering from. Therefore, the dangers of a growing public debt at this time are of an entirely different sort. Government borrowing has the effect, in this connection, of providing earnings to idle capital which refuses or is reluctant to go into production.

Conceivably, if there were no steady flow of government securities to invest capital in, and tax exempt, finance capital might be forced to make *real* capital investments—in production. This is the trouble and not the imaginary dangers of credit inflation, although such danger might arise but under entirely different circumstances. It is for this reason, among many others, that the Communist Party, together with other progressive forces, favors a wider resort to taxation of the rich instead of a wider resort to borrowing. However, even with the present fiscal policies, a nationalized banking system would enable the government to force the bank deposits (arising from federal borrowing) either into private or public productive enterprises.

As to the burden of interest costs, this is a real thing. And the important consideration about this burden is that, while the poor pay a good deal to provide the interest cost, most of this money goes to the banks and the well-to-do. This decreases mass purchasing power and increases the vol-

ume of "idle" capital, thus intensifying deflationary trends. Should the fiscal policy continue unchanged, the solution is increased taxation of the monopolies and rich.

Lastly is the "fear" that, if war comes, the government will find difficulties in financing it because of the present huge public debt. To which the answer is (again if we take these fears seriously) that the borrowed funds should be used to finance a broad program of social and national security. We repeat: national *and* social security. This means projects to provide jobs at decent wages for the unemployed. If this is done, on a much larger scale than now, this country will be well prepared for emergencies *in a social and economic way* as well as militarily. With this taken care of even in a measure, the purely financial problems will present no insurmountable difficulties.

All of the foregoing is merely to indicate that the increasing public debt constitutes at present no economic threat. But it is not to say that it presents no difficulties which may not become serious. It is the political opposition and sabotage of the monopolies. How does this enter the situation? It enters into it because there is a fundamental contradiction underlying the public debt, all public debts under capitalism. The contradiction is this: *whereas the debt is public (national), the economic resources (the wealth of the country which is backing the debt) are private*. This means that finance capital, which controls the resources of wealth that are supposed to support the government's credit, is in a position to undermine and destroy it whenever it sees fit. The

two hundred families have been doing it in France. Our own sixty families are maneuvering along similar lines, though not yet so openly and brazenly. This may become very acute, and the better part of wisdom is to be prepared, to curb such maneuvers before they become too dangerous. And the way is the nationalization of the banking system under democratic control.

It is really a major contradiction, and it underlies the central struggle of today for democracy—for curbing the economic and political power of the monopolies.

Perhaps a brief historical reference would be relevant at this point, a reference that has some humor in it.

Our bankers, who are today so fearful of the public debt, have probably forgotten that the institution of the "public debt" stood at the very cradle of modern capitalism, and that the banking system itself is in part the offspring of the public debt.

Marx shows that in the beginning of capitalism "the public debt becomes one of the most powerful levers of primitive accumulation," and that "the national debt has given rise to joint stock companies, to dealings in negotiable effects of all kinds, and to agiotage, in a word to stock exchange gambling and the modern bankocracy." (*Capital*, Vol. I, p. 827.)

Through the dialectics of history, the public debt may also become a means of ending the existence of this bankocracy, a means of transforming private banking into public banking and thus solving the contradiction between the public nature of the debt and the private character of its true collateral. These words are addressed

especially to those who think that, if the socialist Soviet Union can go ahead and "create" money and acquire a public debt, why can't we without being fearful of consequences. The answer to this is already given: in the Soviet Union debt and economy are *both* public, with no contradiction between the two.

So, leaving the future aside for the moment, it is important to remember that the father of the first public debt (national) in the United States, as well as of the banking system, was no other than Alexander Hamilton, the darling of the young capitalist class of those days. And during, as well as after, the Civil War, it was again the spokesmen of the industrialists, merchants and bankers that were promoting the growth of the national debt and the banking system.

Therefore, if it was moral, permissible and all right in every other way to pile up national debts to build capitalism, why should it (from the same standpoint) be immoral and reckless to use the same institution to the extent that it is possible to protect the people from the miseries produced by this very capitalism? What is the answer?

\* \* \*

WHILE it is nearly impossible, at this writing, to secure an exact picture of what is happening in Spain, several things stand out more or less clearly. The war in Spain is not over. On the contrary, it is entering a more acute stage, bringing it closer to the frontiers of France and making it in reality a war of the fascist powers also against France. And this means an *ex-*

*ension* of the second imperialist war now waged by fascism instead of a "localization" which the criminal and treacherous "non-intervention" was supposed to achieve. And this we have foretold, warned and fought against.

The task of the anti-fascists now is bigger, but the army of willing fighters is also growing bigger. Here as well as in Europe.

The appeal of the Communist Parties of Europe and America, issued from Paris, France, on January 26, indicates the main lines of united anti-fascist resistance which are of great actuality today. We shall quote the main proposals:

"Compel immediate and complete withdrawal of Hitler's and Mussolini's armies, material, technicians. Demand the immediate opening of the republican frontiers. Demand the end of the blockade. Demand the application of international law by complete freedom of trade for the Spanish Republic."

We draw attention especially to the first demand *to compel the immediate withdrawal of Hitler's and Mussolini's armies, material, technicians.* This is a major line of struggle because it hits directly at the fascist interventionists and brings up the central issue, which is the national independence and territorial integrity of Spain. Mussolini's spokesman, Virginio Gayda, has already indicated that fascism, Hitler and Mussolini, propose to stay in Spain, to transform it into a colony and to use it as base for the extension of their war also against France, England, threatening all the time the United States.

The appeal of the Communist Parties goes on:

"Boycott all goods to or from Germany, Italy and Japan. Refuse to load goods on ships going to or coming from Germany, Italy and Japan.

"Not a ton of coal, not a barrel of petroleum, not a bar of steel, nothing for the troops of invasion and the traitor Franco.

"Demonstrate everywhere, in workshops, factories, offices, in the cities and in the countryside. Take every form of action, even work stoppage, to force the governments to respect the people's will and allow republican Spain to procure the means of struggle and victory."

To see clearly under what terrific handicaps the republican armies have been fighting in Catalonia, and to show the technical equipment concentrated by the fascist interventionists there, we quote from a dispatch by Messrs. Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen, dated February 8. On the strength of information available in Washington, they write:

"Here is a tabulation of Franco's armament compared with the loyalists: Franco—field guns 1,500, planes 800, tanks 320. Loyalists—field guns 500, planes 86, tanks 60.

"Furthermore, whenever Franco lost equipment it was replaced almost immediately, being delivered by German warships which entered Spanish ports without any international restriction.

"Meanwhile, the loyalists were receiving absolutely nothing from France. Since June the border has been shut tight... Only medical supplies arrived from France."

Speaking of the qualities of the respective armies, the dispatch continues:

"Compared man for man, American observers report the loyalists as having the better army... During the advance on Barcelona, one loyalist brigade performed the miracle of holding off Franco for 35 days without fresh ammunition, food or supplies



of any kind. Living on 'iron rations' they retreated inch by inch, using as little ammunition as possible, until they were fighting with their bare hands."

This is the spirit of the Spanish people fighting for the territorial integrity of their country against the fascist invaders and oppressors. It is the spirit and struggle which defend also France and England and the United States.

At this writing, the republican forces still hold ten provinces (about one-fourth of Spain), with ten million inhabitants, 500 miles of coast, a good army and a good fleet. In the territories held by the fascist invaders, the bulk of the population is known to be hostile to the foreign invaders and desirous of a free and independent Spain. These constitute tremendous forces for driving Hitler and Mussolini out of Spain, for preserving its national independence and territorial integrity. France needs that, England does and so does the United States.

The peoples have it in their power to compel the governments of these countries to come to the assistance of Spain against Hitler and Mussolini.

We have not much time to make up our minds about it.

It is well known that the majority of the American people want this country to do all in its power to help check the advance of the fascist war-makers. The national and social security of the United States demands that this be done. And President Roosevelt has expressed this wish of the people on numerous occasions.

Hoover and Co. speak for the pro-fascist monopolies. The traitorous fascist priest, Coughlin, speaks for Hitler and Mussolini, assisted by the

Trotskyites and Lovestoneites. The so-called isolationists in Congress are clearly and definitely helping the fascist aggressors. But all of these elements speak for a small minority of the American people. The administration of President Roosevelt is therefore fully justified, from every standpoint of democratic principle and procedure, to proceed consistently with the realization of the principles of foreign policy enunciated by the President in his opening message to Congress.

Reaction and pro-fascism in this country are maneuvering. Maneuvering to gain time. To allow them to do so is to play into their hands.

So far, pro-fascist reaction and its spokesmen in Congress have not yet challenged *directly and fully* the President's anti-fascist foreign orientation. Why? Because they know that the majority of the people are supporting the President on this central issue. Therefore reaction has chosen to provoke the fight on such demagogic issues as "secret diplomacy," and "foreign entanglements," hoping in this way to delay and obstruct action in support of Spain and China.

The job is not to let the main issue of resistance to the fascist war-makers be sidetracked by the "anti-secrecy" maneuvers of reaction. Let the administration put the issue squarely before the people and with their support proceed to render all possible aid to the struggle for Spain's national freedom and independence, aid to the Chinese people against the Japanese invaders, aid to the anti-fascist forces in Europe, collaboration with the Soviet Union.

American labor has a great duty

and task to come forward and help rally the American people for these aims. American labor has also the task of throwing the full weight of its great influence in favor of an international

conference of workers' organizations to establish a united front of labor against the fascist aggressors and war-makers.

A. B.

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*"At the time when fascism has already set about the repartition of Europe, when it is crippling other peoples and tearing them to pieces, the task of the working class now is to head the liberation struggle of the enslaved nations and the defense of the peoples threatened by foreign domination.*

*"The nation is not the gang of fascists, reactionary financiers and industrial magnates who rob and betray the people. The nation is the many millions of workers, peasants and working people generally—the people that is devoted to its country, cherishes its liberty and defends its independence. Just as in Spain and China where the people are fighting with arms in hand, and in Austria and Czechoslovakia, so also in all countries menaced with fascist invasion from without, only the working class can rally, rouse and lead the people to a victorious struggle for national liberation. The working class is the backbone of the nation, the bulwark of its liberty, dignity and independence."—Manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, Nov. 7, 1938.*

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# AMERICA AND THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

BY EARL BROWDER

IT WAS inevitable that the rise of the Communist International in 1919 should find one of its points of support in the United States. This was predetermined by the character of our country, as the most advanced capitalist land with the largest industrial working class; by the composition of its population, a large proportion acutely conscious of its origin in other lands, and therefore international-minded; and by its whole history, which from 1776 onward was intertwined in the main stream of international development, outstandingly exemplified by the correspondence between Karl Marx, for the First International, and the administration of Abraham Lincoln.

## A HISTORIC SURVEY

The large majority of the membership of the Socialist Party was internationalist in its sympathies and responded to the victory of Leninism in the October Revolution, and to the call of the First Congress of the Communist International on March 2-6, 1919. The American Socialist and labor movements had always had close connections with the First and Second Internationals. But the stubborn resistance to the post-war rebirth of the

International by the old opportunist leadership of the Socialist Party brought about the birth of the Communist Party of the United States as a split-off from the Socialist Party, while the political and organizational immaturity of the movement caused its division at birth into two parties (Communist Party and Communist-Labor Party), which were finally united only two years later.

The infamous repressions of the Palmer raids and deportations of 1920 broke up the normal development of the Party until the end of 1921, when its scattered forces were drawn together and emerged in the Workers' Party of America with Charles E. Ruthenberg at the head, uniting the best members, leaders and traditions of the old Socialist Party. Four years later the name was changed to Workers' (Communist) Party, and in the Sixth Convention, March, 1929, to Communist Party of the U.S.A. These formal dates roughly coincide with the main periods of economical and political developments in the world, and in the United States, and serve to mark the main periods of development of the Communist Party.

The period of the post-war crisis of the capitalist world, which to some extent involved the U.S., was the time

of the gathering of our forces into a Party able to begin the systematic study and application of Lenin's teachings in the national and world situation. That was the period of the consolidation of the workers' power in the Soviet Union, the defeat of its armed enemies within and without, and the beginning of its economic reconstruction.

The period of partial and temporary stabilization of the capitalist world, after the post-war crisis, in which capitalism regained the pre-war level of production, reflected in the U.S. by the Coolidge "prosperity," was a time of relative stagnation in the American labor movement, during which the Communist Party gradually hammered out its first elementary Leninist leading personnel and mastered the basic principles of Leninism, a period distorted and prolonged by a protracted and fierce factional fight, the roots of which sprang from the hostile and alien groups of Trotskyites and Lovestoneites then within the Party, and expelled finally in 1928 and 1929. That was the period of the Soviet Union's reconstruction of economy above the pre-war level, the beginning of socialist industrialization, leading into the First Five-Year Plan and collectivization of agriculture.

The period of the renewed world crisis of capitalism, beginning with the stock market crash in the U.S. in the last half of 1929, and leading to the rise of world-fascism and the beginning of the second imperialist world war, marked the beginning of the steady political and organizational growth of the C.P.U.S.A., year after year, up to the present; it is a period

of firm consolidation of Party unity based upon proving in practice the profound lessons of Lenin's and Stalin's teachings; it is a period of unprecedented rise of the labor movement and of the united and people's front. This is the period of the gigantic strides forward of the Soviet Union, the completion of the foundations of socialist economy, the tenfold multiplication of production, and the historic realization of the socialist democracy of the new Stalinist Constitution.

These are the great landmarks of the history of the twenty years since the founding of the Communist International, which rise before us as we review this interval of time so rich in experience, so crowded with world-changing events, as to challenge comparison with centuries of pre-war history. It is with this background always in mind that we should study the relations between America and the world Communist movement crystallized in the Communist International.

#### REFUTING THE "ORDER FROM MOSCOW" SLANDER

The professional "Red-baiters" and anti-Communists have never ceased to spread the idea, in a thousand variations, that the American Communists are some sort of automatons or puppets operated by strings from Moscow and speaking as phonograph records for some mystical "foreign body"; this fantastic conception they have symbolized in the formula "Orders from Moscow." This slanderous attack is particularly spread today by the Dies Committee and its agents, and by all supporters of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo "Anti-

Comintern Alliance" of war-makers.

Because this slogan is the chief ideological instrument of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis, in its war against all democracies, the task of refuting it and unmasking its true significance becomes not merely the narrow Party concern of the Communists, but an urgent necessity for the whole camp of democracy.

The Red-baiters become sarcastic about the "sudden change of attitude" when on June 29, 1938, I presented a formal statement for the Communist Party, before the McNaboe Committee of New York State, declaring:

"The Communist Party makes its own decisions, it has never received orders from Moscow or anywhere else, and if it did receive any such orders it would throw them in the wastebasket."

But this is not something new, and was not a changed attitude in any way. It has always been the position of the Communist Party of the U.S.A., and this position has always characterized the relationship between the Communist International and the C.P.U.S.A.

As an important confirmation of this fact, which needs to be brought to the attention of all democrats and progressives who have been frightened by the Dies Committee, let me cite the words of Joseph Stalin, spoken in 1927 in reply to a question put by a delegation of American trade unionists (non-Communists) who were visiting the Soviet Union. Stalin said:

"The assertion that the American Communists work under 'orders from Moscow' is absolutely untrue. There are no Communists in the world who would agree to work 'under orders' from outside against their own convictions and will and contrary to the requirements of the situation. Even if there

were such Communists they would not be worth a cent. Communists are bold and courageous, they are fighting against a host of enemies. The value of a Communist, among other things, lies in that he is able to defend his convictions. Therefore it is strange to speak of American Communists as not having their own convictions and being capable only of working according to 'orders' from outside.

"The only part of the assertion that has any truth in it at all is that the American Communists are affiliated to an international Communist organization and from time to time consult with the central body of this organization on one question or another. But what is there bad about this? Are the American labor leaders opposed to an international workers' center? It is true they are not affiliated to Amsterdam [the International Federation of Trade Unions; since then the A. F. of L. has affiliated to the I.F.T.U.—E.B.]; not because they are opposed to an international workers' center as such, however, but because they regard Amsterdam as being too radical. (*Laughter.*)

"Why may the capitalists organize internationally and the working class, or part of it, not have its international organization? Is it not clear that Green and his friends in the American Federation of Labor slander the American Communists when they slavishly repeat the capitalist legends about 'orders from Moscow'? Some people believe that the members of the Communist International in Moscow do nothing else but sit and write instructions to all countries. As there are more than 60 countries affiliated to the Comintern, one can imagine the position of the members of the Comintern who never sleep or eat, in fact, do nothing but sit day and night and write instructions to all countries. (*Laughter.*)"\*

This quotation confirms that my statement to the McNaboe Committee contained the long-established position of the Communists of all

\* Published in the pamphlet, *An Interview with Stalin by the American Trade Union Delegation*, 1927, and in *Leninism*, Vol. I, by Joseph Stalin, pp. 383-84, International Publishers, New York, 1933.

countries, that there was nothing new in principle in my declaration, nor was there anything opposed to general Communist views on this question.

OUR INDEBTEDNESS TO LENIN, STALIN  
AND DIMITROFF

Having cleared this question out of the way, the much more important point remains of the nature and direction of the influence which the Communist International has exercised in the development of the C.P.U.S.A. Communists are the last to deny that influence; we have learned the most profound lessons from our affiliation to the Communist International, and above all are American Communists indebted to the individual contributions of three men, Lenin, Stalin and Dimitroff. It is this above all that I would discuss.

Lenin's writings during the World War reached American Socialists only in a fragmentary and sometimes distorted form. Despite this, they were the decisive factor in bringing together the Left wing which later founded the Communist Party. With the victory of the Russian Revolution, Lenin's thoughts began flowing to us more completely and directly, and furnished the main theoretical guide of the formative days of our Party. With the establishment of the Communist International in March, 1919, Lenin personally devoted many long hours of most painstaking educational work with the American delegates who visited Moscow. In the midst of the most pressing problems of state, of an enormous country struggling with heart-breaking problems, Lenin found time for long and intimate con-

versations with Americans. And what was always the main theme of these conversations? I have gathered information from a dozen sources which all agree in the main.

Lenin gave most of his attention, talking with Americans, to asking innumerable questions and making comments on the answers. Thus he was never *talking at* but instead *drawing out* his visitors. By his questions he directed attention to what he considered the most important problems. By a thousand questions on conditions of labor and life, and on the labor movement, he taught that fundamental lesson that no one could be a serious Communist who was not *immersed* in the daily life of his own people, in this case the *American* people. His constantly reiterated question, "Why do you not have a daily newspaper?" and his incredulous and quizzical attitude to all answers that tended to exaggerate the difficulties in the way of such a project were really the genesis of the *Daily Worker*, which was born in the very week in which Lenin died.

His intimate knowledge of the fundamentals of American development always astonished American visitors; it was only after his death that we learned of his book on American agriculture, the first really scientific study of the American agrarian question, as distinct from its separate parts, ever written. He was fully acquainted with the deep connections of Marx and Engels, and the First International, with America, and had a profound understanding of the world-historical importance of the Revolutionary War of 1776 and the Civil War of 1861-65; unfortunately for us,

he was not able, during the years of his own life, to impress this sufficiently upon the visiting American comrades for this understanding to take root and grow in the American Party, and it is only in the last few years that we have awakened to the rich revolutionary content of American history which Lenin was trying to point out to us. From these brief characteristics, it is clear that Lenin was always bringing us *closer to America*, closer to the working class and people of our own land, closer to our own nation and the treasures of its history. And that is not the least of the reasons why rapidly growing masses of Americans learned to love Lenin and to follow him; and why with every passing year Lenin's spirit grows stronger in our country.

Stalin's intimate political and spiritual collaboration in the solution of the problems of growth and consolidation of the American Communist movement came fully to our consciousness in 1929. That was a year of climax of factional strife, threatening the disintegration and destruction of our Party, in which the anti-Party and essentially anti-Communist groupings of Trotskyites and Lovestoneites had played the principal role. It was the calm wisdom, incisive analysis, and unanswerable, devastating criticism of errors and unprincipledness wherever they showed themselves, contained in two short speeches by Stalin in the discussions of 1929, that closed the formative period in the history of our Party, setting it firmly and unitedly upon the road to become a mass Party, a Bolshevik Party.

Stalin's fraternal opinion in the form of two speeches of 1929 about

American problems takes a permanent place in the history of our Party, which first placed squarely the historic international role of our Party, without the full understanding of which no one can claim to really understand this history. Moreover, Stalin taught our Party the meaning of the Leninist style of work, the necessity of combining Bolshevik zeal and devotion to the working class with "American efficiency" which is "an antidote to 'revolutionary' phrasemongering and fantastic invention." And this, too, is not the least of those many reasons for the universal confidence and love felt by all American Communists for Stalin.

Dimitroff became for the American Communists a decisive influence, quite inevitably, through his glorious achievement in turning the "Reichstag Fire Trial" into a world-condemnation of the Nazi incendiaries themselves, and defeating them in their own courts by his brilliant and sterling Leninist-Stalinist abilities. With the historic Seventh World Congress, and Dimitroff's world-historic contribution of the united front of the international proletariat and of the people against fascism, he became not only in general a decisive influence, but in a most intimate sense an intellectual collaborator and a spiritual inspiration in the American Communist movement. Dimitroff has become "ours," one of the fundamental facts in our life, his thought as essential to our political life as the air we breathe is to our physical life. The helmsman of the Communist International is the living embodiment of everything we trust, admire, and love in Lenin and Stalin.

BETTER INTERNATIONALISM MEANS  
BETTER AMERICANISM

It is most emphatically clear, therefore, that when we contemptuously repudiate the conception of "Orders from Moscow," slander of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis and its agents everywhere, we affirm with equal emphasis our closest comradeship with the greatest spirits of the international Communist movement, and with our millions of comrades in other lands, who are united in the Communist International. Because we are becoming every day *better Americans*, we are also becoming *better internationalists*; because we were internationalists we were able to become Americans in the truest and most profound sense. We have revived on a higher plane the great traditions of internationalism, which was always the most living core of the American revolutionary tradition, as exemplified in the great figures of Jefferson, Paine and Franklin.

Never before have the international spirit and outlook been more vitally necessary for the very continued existence of our nation as an expression of human liberty and progress.

The Rome-Berlin-Tokyo war alliance is threatening to engulf the whole world outside the impregnable stronghold of the Soviet Union.

Great Britain and France, under the domination of monopoly capital, continue the suicidal policy of "appeasement" and surrender before the fascist axis, which not only endangers their own national existence, but already presents a direct threat to the Americas.

The heroic resistance of the Span-

ish people to the fascist invasion, and epic struggle of the people of China against the invasion of Japanese fascism, are the only active defenses now being put up that keep the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis from turning full attention to Latin America.

Among the great powers, only the Soviet Union has pursued a firm, consistent policy of intransigent resistance to the fascist world offensive, and of active help to the attacked and threatened people.

Among the capitalist democracies, only the United States has assumed an attitude which gives promise, if consistently developed, of creating another great world center of organized resistance to fascist world conquest. But this promise can be realized only if the United States policy is built upon a consistent world-view, taking into consideration *all* the active and latent forces of a world democratic front.

It is one of the historical functions of the American Communists, which we can perform best because of our organic connection with the world movement, through the Communist International, to contribute to bring the U.S. fully into the world democratic front by making our people world-conscious, by creating a clearer understanding that the national security of our country is most intimately bound up with the fate of world democracy and peace. From the time of Marx and Engels this has been a conscious goal of Communists. It is worth while to recall the words of Marx, contained in the Inaugural Address of the Workingmen's International Association (the First International) on September 28, 1864:



"If the emancipation of the working class requires their fraternal concurrence, how are they to fulfil that great mission with a foreign policy in pursuit of criminal designs, playing upon national prejudices, and squandering in piratical wars the people's blood and treasure? It was not the wisdom of the ruling classes, but the heroic resistance to their criminal folly by the working classes of England that saved the West of Europe from plunging headlong into an infamous crusade for the perpetuation and propagation of slavery on the other side of the Atlantic.

"The shameless approval, mock sympathy, or idiotic indifference, with which the upper classes of Europe have witnessed the mountain fortress of the Caucasus falling a prey to, and heroic Poland being assassinated by, Russia, the immense and unresisted encroachments of that barbarous power, whose head is at St. Petersburg, and whose hands are in every cabinet of Europe, have taught the working classes the duty to master for themselves the mysteries of international politics; to watch the diplomatic acts of their respective governments; to counteract them, if necessary, by all means in their power; when unable to prevent, to combine in simultaneous denunciations, and to vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations.

"The fight for such a foreign policy forms part of the general struggle for the emancipation of the working classes." \*

This thought has always been a basic guiding line of followers of Karl Marx since it was uttered, to the extent that they understood their Marxism. Lenin developed it to its climax in the great October Revolution, which took its origin largely in "the fight for such a foreign policy," in the fight for "peace without annexations and without indemnities." Stalin has further developed it in the firm and

consistent peace policy of the Soviet Union, which is supporting in every way the democratic peace forces of the entire world against the robber ways of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis. Every nation, every class, every party and every individual leader in the world is choosing today between surrender to the war-making alliance on the one hand, or the stern defense of the policy enunciated by Marx in 1864 on the other hand.

There can no longer be any doubt that the great majority of the American people have chosen to "vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice" . . . "as the rules paramount in the intercourse of nations." In the fight to realize the will of the people on this issue, upon which the fate of the world depends, the Communists will be in the front ranks of the most effective fighters, because they are worthy members of the Communist International, worthy followers of Marx and Engels, and of their best continuators, Lenin and Stalin, and because they are thereby also the best representatives and continuators of the great traditions of Franklin, Paine and Jefferson.

On the twentieth anniversary of the Communist International, we repeat the words of Stalin on the occasion of Lenin's death:

"In departing from us, Comrade Lenin bequeathed to us the duty of remaining loyal to the principles of the Communist International. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will not spare our lives to strengthen and expand the union of the toilers of the whole world—the Communist International."\*

\* *The Founding of the First International*, pp. 38-39, International Publishers, New York.

\* Joseph Stalin, *The Lenin Heritage*, p. 15, International Publishers, New York.

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# LENIN AND THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR MOVEMENT

BY D. Z. MANUILSKY

**T**HE main thing in Leninism is "the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the conditions for winning it, of the requisites for its entrenchment." (*Stalin.*) The teaching on the dictatorship of the proletariat is the soul of Leninism. This teaching has been tested by the experience of millions. This teaching is now not only a revolutionary theory, it is a living reality. It is expressed in the mighty socialist state, it is materially embodied in the tremendous victories of the socialist revolution. Lenin's doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat has now been developed and enriched by Comrade Stalin on the basis of the great experience, summarized by theoretical thought, of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. The theory of Marxism-Leninism is inseparable from all that has been contributed to it by Comrade Stalin, who in all his theoretical creative work teaches the international working class that Marxist-Leninist theory is not a dogma, but a guide to action.

## THE PATH OF THE PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

Lenin's genius marked out for mankind the path of the proletarian revolution which millions of workers in the capitalist countries will tread with

greater confidence and courage. Along with Lenin in marking out this path was Comrade Stalin. It is along this path that, since Lenin's death, Stalin's genius has led the working people of our country and brought them to the world-historical victory of socialism.

Lenin's tremendous service to the world labor movement lies in the fact that he restored and upheld Marx's doctrine, which had been distorted and discarded by the opportunists of the Second International; in the fact that he developed it further, transforming it into an ordered theory of the proletarian revolution in the new conditions of the class struggle.

For the workers of the capitalist countries who are still on the road to the overthrow of capitalism, the Leninist-Stalinist doctrine of the proletarian dictatorship is of decisive significance. Lenin was right a thousand times over in mercilessly trouncing and exposing all varieties of opportunists who, on the pretext that no clause regarding the dictatorship of the proletariat was included in the program of the majority of the West-European Social-Democratic Parties, wanted to throw overboard the very idea of the proletarian dictatorship. Lenin was right a thousand times over in incessantly castigating the oppor-

tunists and centrists who, at the moment when the socialist revolution was maturing in Europe, fought—under the guise of defending bourgeois democracy—against the proletarian revolution and saved capitalism from destruction.

Had the workers of the most important capitalist countries in 1918-1920 followed the path of the Soviet proletariat, had they not allowed themselves to be duped by the Kautskys, Otto Bauers and MacDonaldis who persuaded the workers of their countries not to overthrow capitalism but to follow the path of bourgeois democracy towards reforms, the world would have looked different now. There would not today be a sanguinary fascist dictatorship either in Germany or in Italy, nor would we now have the second imperialist war; we would not now be witnessing the brigandage of the fascist interventionists in Spain, the outrages of the Japanese fascist militarists in China, the enslavement of Austria and the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. Socialism would have been the prevalent system over the greater part of the globe.

The Kautskys, Bauers and MacDonaldis sought to scare the workers with the fact that the proletarian revolution is accompanied by difficulties and privations. But can one compare these difficulties and privations with the horrible calamities which dying capitalism inflicts on mankind? What endless suffering and sacrifice were inflicted on the proletariat by the world economic crisis of 1929 alone, not to speak of the new crisis that has begun! And what agonies of White terror is fascism today inflicting on the

masses of the people in the Sudetenland, Austria, in the Spanish territory occupied by the interventionists, in Germany, Italy, Japan!

The Kautskys, Bauers, MacDonaldis alleged they were defending bourgeois democracy, but by their entire ruinous policy of retreat before fascism they have prepared its downfall. In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, which followed the path of Lenin-Stalin, the path of proletarian revolution, socialist democracy flourishes, embracing the entire people, a democracy such as has never yet existed in history.

#### THE PARTY OF A NEW TYPE

The victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat would have been impossible without *the formation of a new type of working class party*. A party free of opportunism, irreconcilable towards conciliators and capitulators, revolutionary in relation to the bourgeoisie. A party capable of uniting the basic masses of the working class, and rallying to the side of the proletariat its allies. A party capable of utilizing the opportunities of every situation for the organization and mobilization of the masses, and of leading the toiling people to the storming of capitalism. The formation of such a new type of party as the Bolshevik Party was not a "Russian," a "national" affair. It was the supreme achievement of the entire international labor movement. Fashioned, reared and steeled by Lenin and Stalin—the two giants of revolutionary thought and revolutionary deed—the Bolshevik Party is a model for the entire international Communist movement. All the sections of

the Communist International learn from it. It has elevated to tremendous heights the significance of the Party of the working class as the decisive instrument in the struggle for the liberation of the toilers, for the socialist revolution, in the struggle against fascism and predatory wars.

Under the direct influence of the *Leninist-Stalinist* teaching there have grown up parties such as the heroic Communist Party of Spain which plays a part of prime importance in the defense of its country and its people against the invasion of the foreign interventionists. The Communist Party of France, the initiator of the People's Front in France, with growing influence over wide masses not only of workers but also of the peasantry and of the urban toilers has grown into a first-rate political force. The Communist Party of the U.S.A., which has won new strength in the struggle against fascism, in the struggle for the development of the democratic front, is becoming transformed into an important political factor, and is drawing into its ranks, on an ever wider scale, the best elements of the American labor movement. The heroic Communist Party of China is in the front ranks of the armed struggle, giving tens of thousands of its best sons to the cause of liberating the great Chinese people from the yoke of the Japanese invaders.

Severe is the ordeal through which the Communists in the fascist countries are now passing. But let the fascist executioners not delude themselves into believing that by killing hundreds and thousands of Communists in the fascist countries, they are putting an end to Marxism-Leninism,

to the Communist movement, that they are curbing the working class for long.

"The schooling of civil war," wrote Lenin, "is not wasted on the peoples." The Russian Bolsheviks underwent this severe schooling and in the fire of it they hammered out the new type of party. Hundreds of people are coming forward in the fascist countries to take the place of every tortured, murdered Communist, and in the hour of historic reckoning—there will be hundreds of thousands and millions. And the hundreds who are rising up today constitute the iron shock troop of the new type of Party.

But this by no means implies that the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries are already Bolshevik Parties in the full sense of the term. They have yet much to learn, and, above all, to learn revolutionary theory from the great classics of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin. They need to make a deeper study, in the light of the history of the C.P.S.U., of the experience of the revolutionary struggle of their respective countries and of the world revolutionary movement, to fashion out of this study a keen weapon for their day-to-day activities.

#### THE STRUGGLE WAGED BY LENIN AND STALIN AGAINST OPPORTUNISM

Lenin and Stalin always taught the Communists to establish better contacts with the masses, not to grow conceited at moments of success, not to give way to panic at moments of defeat. They taught them Bolshevik vigilance, the lack of which has inflicted no small damage on the Com-

munist Parties. They taught them to be ever on their guard, to be on the alert for every maneuver of the enemy. In the present grim days of acute class struggle, the experience of Spain and China goes to show that the Communists must master all forms of struggle.

In putting forward the task of establishing a new type of party as the chief weapon of the working class struggle for the proletarian dictatorship, for socialism, Lenin conducted a merciless, irreconcilable *struggle against all opportunists*. He did not wait for opportunism to become transformed into open counter-revolution. He did not wait for the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, bourgeois-nationalists, centrists, openly to desert to the camp of intervention. He did not let them develop, acquire influence over the working class, but from the very first appearance of these trends attacked them with the utmost revolutionary passion.

Stalin defended with supreme devotion the doctrine of Marx-Engels-Lenin against the Trotskys and Bukharins long before these latter degenerated into a gang of spies, diversionists and assassins. Both Lenin and Stalin were irreconcilable in clearing out of the way of the working class, all that was rotten, foul and hindering its progress. And had the active elements of the international labor movement mastered the essence of the profoundly principled struggle waged by Lenin and Stalin against opportunism, the monstrous betrayal of the parties of the Second International during the imperialist war of 1914-1918 would not have taken place, nor could pro-fascists of the Citrine

type act today as spokesmen of the working class.

The *Leninist-Stalinist teaching* of the proletarian dictatorship presupposes the *unification of the basic masses of the working class under the revolutionary leadership of a new type of party*. The path to the solution of this task in the contemporary labor movement of the capitalist countries lies through the establishment of the united working class front. The united working class front helps to draw into the general stream of the class struggle millions of workers disorganized by the policy of retreat before fascism pursued by the Social-Democratic capitulators. It facilitates in every way the most speedy formation of the People's Front for the struggle against the capitalist offensive, fascism and predatory wars. It enhances the activity of the masses of workers, trains them in the spirit of irreconcilability to the class enemy, steels their revolutionary will, leads them on to the practical realization of the final aims of their movement.

The Communists fight for the united working class front because it enables the workers, at the moment of the oncoming new economic crisis, to wage a successful struggle against the capitalist attempts to reduce still further their standard of living. The Communists fight for the united working class front because its establishment will contribute to the victory of the Spanish and Chinese people over the fascist vandals, because it will help to frustrate the insidious plans of the Munich plotters who are preparing chains of still worse slavery for the peoples, because it hastens the

overthrow of the bloody fascist dictatorship by the downtrodden peoples.

THE LENIN-STALIN STRATEGY FOR RALLYING THE ALLIES OF THE PROLETARIAT

The teaching of the proletarian dictatorship further presupposes the *rallying to the side of the working class of their allies*—the peasantry, the urban toilers, the oppressed nations and the enslaved colonial peoples. The opportunists of the Second International never seriously posed the question of the allies of the proletariat, because they never seriously posed the question either of the overthrow of capitalism or of the defense of so-called bourgeois democracy against the encroachments of fascism, or even of the defense of the working class against the capitalist offensive.

It is precisely today, when there is an intensification of monstrous imperialist brigandage, when the turbid waters of fascism threaten to inundate new countries, when the conditions of the working class and laboring people generally in the capitalist countries are becoming ever more terrible—it is precisely in the present specific historical situation that *Lenin's great strategic plan regarding the allies of the proletariat* assumes exceptionally great significance. The significance of this plan is increased by yet other factors. It must not be overlooked that the reactionary bourgeoisie systematically betrays the interests of the nation. They are ready to place their own peoples under the heel of alien fascist domination, for the sake of preserving their own narrow class interests. Under these conditions the working class is the force

that cements all the laboring sections of the people, becomes the backbone of its nation, of its liberty, dignity and independence.

The People's Front tactic outlined by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International both in its resolution and in the report of Comrade Dimitroff, is part of this great Leninist-Stalinist plan. And precisely because this tactic constitutes a danger to world reaction, it has encountered considerable difficulties in a number of capitalist countries. A furious struggle has been waged against the People's Front by fascism.

Operating hand in glove with the latter have been the reactionary bourgeoisie of all capitalist countries, particularly of Great Britain. Strenuous aid is rendered to reaction by the capitulators in the Labor Party and the Second International. All the fascist-Trotskyite spies, provocateurs and stool-pigeons endeavor to injure the People's Front movement.

It needs to be stressed in addition that in those countries where the People's Front already exists, the Communists, in the course of realizing it, have to take account of the fact that the allies of the working class—the peasantry, and the toilers in the cities—are frequently still under the influence of other parties and organizations, that these parties and organizations pursue a vacillating policy, that the struggle against the vacillations of such parties is no easy matter, all the more since the Socialist Party leaders contribute to these vacillations. The partners of the Communists in the People's Front frequently endeavor to switch over the policy of the People's

Front to the path of coalition with the reactionary bourgeoisie. It is absolutely clear that the so-called policy of non-intervention pursued by certain leaders of the Radical and Socialist Parties in France was not the policy of the People's Front at all, but the policy of agreement of big business in England and France with German and Italian fascism against the interests not only of the Spanish but also of the French people.

The policy of the People's Front runs directly counter to this policy of reaction. It does not mean agreement with fascism, but a resolute, consistent struggle against it both on the internal and the international arena. The People's Front policy does not mean the suppression of workers' strikes, but the defense of the elementary demands and needs of the workers. It does not mean attempts to split the labor movement and the democratic forces, but self-sacrificing work to bring about their unification. It does not mean the reactionary, fascist-like baiting of Communists, but joint struggle by all the anti-fascist forces against reaction.

The Communists must not forget that the united working class front and the anti-fascist People's Front are not a peaceful idyll of "genial neighbors" but a militant association with-in which it is necessary to conduct comprehensive, tenacious, patient, explanatory political work, persistently and resolutely to criticize all waverings, ruthlessly to expose every act of treachery. On no account must this be forgotten, for otherwise it will be impossible to secure and entrench the united and people's front.

But to secure and entrench the

united and people's front means in addition to extend it to such countries where it does not as yet exist. This, in its turn, demands of the Communists a great deal of persistent work to convince workers who are honestly mistaken, who have been led into an impasse by the capitulatory elements of Social-Democracy, or have been confused by the blows which the Munich policy inflicted on the People's Front in France. At the same time, however, it demands of the Communists a most ruthless struggle against those pro-fascist leaders in the labor movement who, by their malicious policy of systematically rejecting the united working class front, brought the international labor movement to such a pass that it proved unable to prevent the Munich plot against the peoples. Only by fighting in this way for the united workers' and people's front will the Communists be acting in the spirit of the *Leninist-Stalinist teaching*.

#### THE PROLETARIAT IN ALLIANCE WITH THE OPPRESSED NATIONS

The *Leninist-Stalinist teaching* of the proletarian dictatorship includes not only the problem of the alliance of the proletariat with the urban and rural toilers of one nation, but also the problem of the reserves in the shape of *the oppressed nations and the enslaved colonial peoples*.

The fascist obscurantists, in developing their aggressive policy, basely endeavor to exploit the national sentiments of the peoples belonging to other multi-national states. They endeavor to exploit the slogan of the self-determination of nations, for the dismemberment of those states against

which their plans of aggression are directed. This method is no new one. It was used by Metternich. It was resorted to by the ringleaders of the imperialist war of 1914-18.

Now times have changed. At the present time there exists the U.S.S.R. which has shown all peoples *how to solve the national question*. The U.S.S.R. is realizing, before the eyes of the whole world, the Stalinist policy of great friendship, of real national equality and fraternal alliance between the peoples. This solution of the national question is exerting a profound influence over all the oppressed nations and peoples. In the capitalist countries of today the *social factor will play a decisive role in the self-determination of peoples*.

Lenin taught us that all questions of home and foreign policy must be examined and decided from the viewpoint of the fundamental interests of the proletariat and of its struggle for the liberation of all laboring people. That was how Lenin approached also *the question of wars*. Not to war in general, but specifically to each given war. Lenin taught that:

“. . . Marxism, which does not stoop to Philistinism, demands an historical analysis of each individual war, in order to determine whether *that war* can be considered as progressive, as serving the interests of democracy or the proletariat, and *in this sense* legitimate, just and so on.”\*

What distinguishes the present situation from the situation obtaining at the time of the world imperialist war of 1914-18?

First, capitalism is no longer a sys-

tem wielding undivided power over the whole world; besides the capitalist countries, there is the U.S.S.R., the powerful land of socialism, the foremost stronghold of the international proletariat, the fatherland of all laboring people, the defense of which against foreign attack is *the sacred duty of the toiling people of the whole world*.

Second, there exist, not only imperialist states in general, but also such imperialist states as have established a sanguinary fascist dictatorship in their countries, created a bloc of aggressors, are rallying around themselves the dark forces of reaction of the capitalist countries, and have jointly begun a new forcible redivision of the world. It is the *prime duty* of the toiling people of all countries *to contribute the utmost to bringing about the defeat* of these fascist governments.

Third, the object of the imperialist redivision now is not only the colonial and semi-colonial countries, but Europe itself as well (Austria, Czechoslovakia, etc.), in which there thus arises the possibility of *national anti-fascist wars, wars for national independence, just wars*.

Only the Trotskyite blackguards, who are direct agents of the Gestapo and the Italian Ovrá, can assert that it is a matter of no concern to the international proletariat which country emerges victorious *in such a war*. It is well known that the proletariat has no desire for imperialist wars. It is well known that the Communists wage a resolute struggle against imperialist wars, for peace. But if the fascists force war on the peoples, then it is absolutely clear that the Com-

\* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIX, pp. 198-199, Russian Ed.



munists will be acting in complete harmony with Lenin's teachings, if they call on the masses to utilize this war to overthrow the bloodstained fascist regime, to extend and deepen the gap in the world imperialist system begun by the great socialist revolution in October, 1917.

THE INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF  
PROLETARIAN THEORY AND PRACTICE

*Proletarian internationalism* runs through the entire teaching of Marxism-Leninism, the entire theoretical and practical work of Lenin and Stalin. Away back at the dawn of the 1905 Revolution, Lenin spoke of the international significance of overthrowing the tsarist autocracy, that "most powerful buttress not only of European, but . . . also of Asiatic reaction." He pointed out at that time that the overthrow of tsardom was the most revolutionary of all the immediate tasks facing the international proletariat. Of no less significance for the international proletariat is the task today of overthrowing the fascist dictatorships. By building socialism in the U.S.S.R. and by strengthening the socialist state to the utmost, the working class of the U.S.S.R., led by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), headed by Comrade Stalin, has solved the gigantic task of advancing the cause of the international proletarian revolution. Thereby Comrade Stalin has raised the cause of proletarian solidarity to heights such as had never been reached in the history of mankind.

Leninist-Stalinist proletarian internationalism is the internationalism which is put into life by the land of

victorious socialism. It is manifested in the *powerful political support* being given by the Land of the Soviets to the Spanish people in their heroic struggle for independence. It is manifested in the *effective* solidarity of all the peoples of the U.S.S.R. with the great Chinese people, who are conducting a life and death struggle against the Japanese imperialist invaders.

A striking manifestation of this proletarian internationalism is provided by the heroic page of the *struggle of the international brigades in Spain*, of whose feats the entire world Communist movement and the entire international proletariat are proud. All these constitute new, higher forms of proletarian internationalism. These are no paper resolutions, in the production of which the reactionary leaders of the Second International, who disrupt united action of the international proletariat, are past masters. These are living revolutionary deeds, from which the entire international working class, all the best people in the world, are learning.

An expression of this effective proletarian internationalism is to be found in the splendid advice of Comrade Stalin to the workers of all countries, when he said:

"The international proletarian ties between the working class of the U.S.S.R. and the working class of bourgeois countries must be increased and strengthened; the political assistance of the working class in the bourgeois countries for the working class of our country must be organized in the event of a military attack on our country; and also every assistance of the working class of our country for the working class in bourgeois countries must be organized; our Red Army, Red Navy, Red Air Fleet, and the Chemical

and Air Defense Society must be increased and strengthened to the utmost."\*

The entire history of the great socialist revolution, the entire history of the struggle and victories of the Soviet people, the entire history of the C.P.S.U., constitute a record of great proletarian solidarity. It is a great school for the Communists and advanced workers of the capitalist countries, in which they learn how to wage the struggle against the class enemy, how one can and should defeat the enemy.

The *History of the C.P.S.U.* that is now appearing in many languages will make the great doctrine of Lenin and Stalin accessible to millions of proletarians and toiling people in the capitalist countries. This book will make the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism the property of hundreds of thousands and millions of people; it will

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\* Joseph Stalin, *A Letter to Ivanov*, p. 13, International Publishers, New York.

tell them the great truth of the tremendous battles and victories of the Party of the proletariat which was the first to plunge into battle against capitalism, the first to establish a proletarian dictatorship, the first to lead the working class, the peasantry, the huge Soviet country to socialist society. The *History of the C.P.S.U.* is one of the sharpest weapons of the class struggle. It is Marxism-Leninism in action. It is the summarized experience of the Bolshevik Party, of the first new type of party in the world, which was built, taught and reared by the great Lenin, and which is now being led in the teeth of all machinations of the enemy to further victories by our leader and teacher, Comrade Stalin. The *History of the C.P.S.U.* should become a guide book, not only for active Communists, but for all advanced workers, for all honest fighters for the liberation of the proletariat, for all those who wish to act, fight, and conquer in Leninist fashion.

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"... The strengthening of the Communist Parties is not a narrow Party concern but the concern of the entire working class.

"The unity, revolutionary solidarity and fighting preparedness of the Communist Parties constitute most valuable capital which belongs not only to us but to the whole working class."—Georgi Dimitroff, *The United Front*, p. 83.

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# THE CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA

BY WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

**T**HE Third National Assembly of the Communist Party of Cuba was held from January 10 to 15, in Santa Clara. This city, two hundred miles from Havana, is in almost the exact center of the island and was chosen largely because nearby took place the famous battle of Mal Tiempo in December, 1895, during the war of liberation. Representing the 23,300 Party members were 347 regular delegates (of whom 259 were workers and 25 peasants, and 221 were white and 83 Negro) to which should be added 72 fraternal delegates from various mass organizations. Representatives were also present from the Communist Parties of Mexico (Carillo), Canada (Morris), Venezuela (Silva) and the United States (Trachtenberg, Foster). Many prominent trade union and political leaders, artists, writers, etc., were in attendance.

The congress was extremely colorful. The local population greeted the delegates with open arms. At the entrance to the city a welcome arch spanned the roadway, banners were strung across many streets, and every telephone pole in the city bore a Communist poster. Official greetings were extended by the Mayor and also by the local military commandant. Chickens, fish, bread, cheese and even

three cows were donated by workers, peasants and small business men to help feed the delegates. During the week of the convention its thirteen-hour workday was broken up by a round of sports, shows, fireworks, etc. It all wound up with a rousing meeting of 10,000 people at the baseball stadium. Santa Clara, a city of only about 25,000 people, will not soon forget this Communist gathering.

## THE FRUITS OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

For forty years American capitalism has dominated Cuba and as a result this glorious island, which could be an arthly paradise, is an abode of poverty and misery for the masses. I was amazed, riding to Santa Clara and back, to note the destitution of the people and the undeveloped state of the country. Many workers and peasants were obviously underfed; beggars swarmed about our automobile at every stop, and—a monument to American imperialism—I was informed that about 40 per cent of the people are still illiterate.

Cuba is now in the midst of a severe economic crisis. Sugar, the basic crop, is at only about 50 per cent of normal production, and tobacco and coffee, the other two main crops, are also in deep depression. Consequently, the econo-

my of the whole island is crippled. Unemployment is rife—400,000 jobless out of a population of 4,500,000. The unemployed receive no insurance or government relief whatever. The workers who have jobs receive miserable wages—about 40 cents a day for agricultural laborers and a dollar to a dollar and a half for city workers. The cost of living is very high and is steadily mounting. With his present wages a worker can buy only about 75 per cent of what he could buy in 1935. Among the small farmers actual destitution prevails. They suffer from the usual evils of low prices for what they sell; high prices for what they buy; high rents, high taxes and high interest on mortgages—all in very exaggerated and brutal forms.

#### THE PEOPLE ON THE MARCH

Bad economic conditions, following long years of imperialist super-exploitation and savage political oppression, plus the stimulating effect of the democratic upsurge in Mexico and the United States, have set the Cuban people politically in motion. All the popular mass organizations, including those of the youth, Negroes and farmers, are growing and increasing their activity. The masses are moving on towards a great Constituent Assembly, in order to introduce deep economic, political and social betterments.

There is an especially strong renaissance among the trade unions. During the last week of January there took place in Havana the huge convention of the Confederation of Cuban Workers to unify and reorganize the trade union movement. Among the outstanding leaders is the young Negro cigarmaker, Lazaro Pena. The dele-

gates represented almost 800,000 workers—exceeding by far the number of trade unionists before the general strike of March, 1935. The numerical strength of the Havana gathering was equivalent, considering the difference in the populations, to a convention of some 19,000,000 organized workers in the United States.

Among the many political organizations there is also a great ferment, with the several parties of the Center and Left growing rapidly. Most spectacular is the expansion of the Communist Party. Illegal for the thirteen years of its existence until September 25, 1938, our Party, under the brilliant leadership of the shoe worker, Blas Roca (Francisco Caldiero), is now advancing with remarkable rapidity. During the past four months, since its legalization, it has increased its membership from 4,000 to 23,300. It has set itself the goal of 50,000 members by next June, which it will by all indications realize. As evidence of the vitality and activity of the Party it is only necessary to point out that it publishes a twelve-page daily, *Hoy*, proposes to circulate 50,000 copies of Blas Roca's congress report, and is campaigning for a fund of \$100,000. These are very big achievements and objectives in a small and poor country like Cuba and for a party which only a few months ago was illegal.

The Communist Party's mass influence is also large and is growing rapidly. No party in Cuba is increasing its prestige so fast among the people. The Party is a real power in the trade union movement and in all other economic, political and cultural organizations of the masses. In the coming elections the Party counts on

securing a minimum of about one-eighth of the total vote. It is a vital if not decisive factor in the struggle for the Constituent Assembly, which the reactionaries are resisting desperately. The Party congress attracted wide attention nationally; Roca's speeches were broadcast over several stations, and many of the most prominent people in the nation listened in to hear this rising young leader and to learn the message of his Party. A member of the Santa Clara City Council, a conservative, paid the Communist Party the tribute of saying it is the best organized and best led of any party in Cuba.

The young Communist Party of Cuba has many shortcomings, of course—lack of a solid dues-collecting basis, need of a Party school system to develop cadres, organizational weakness among the farmers, women and youth, etc. But it is conscious of these shortcomings and is working diligently to eliminate them. One thing that surprised me was the way the Party, so newly emerged from illegality, is taking hold of its tasks of broad mass agitation and organization. This, the Cuban comrades pointed out, is because even under conditions of harsh repression the Party gained experience in leading real mass struggles.

#### THE OFFENSIVE OF REACTION

While the Cuban workers, peasants and other democratic forces unite and become more active politically, the reactionary elements do not fail to take the offensive. There are several groups of reactionaries, but more and more they tend to unite and to become fascist.

First, there are the Cuban openly fascist groups, such as the A.B.C. Party, supported by the big banks and Spanish merchants. Along with these are active German and Italian fascist organizations, which have their own press services, newspapers, espionage, etc. These fascist elements carry on a ferocious campaign against Roosevelt and Cardenas as "Communists" and, by implication, against Batista also. They hold up the Communist Party as the main enemy and they denounce democracy as "half Communism"; they are fomenting a Jew-baiting and anti-Negro campaign, and doubtless they would also discriminate against the Indians if these had not long been exterminated by the Spanish exploiters.

Second, there are the rich bourgeois elements, including big American interests, that tend to group themselves around Menocal's Republican-Democratic Party. They are constantly more open in opposition to Batista and their line is to sabotage his government by a sit-down strike of capital, by resisting and persecuting the trade unions and by a fierce campaign of wholesale evictions of farmers.

Third, there are some pseudo-liberal, or former liberal groups, such as Grau San Martin's Cuban Revolutionary Party, whose policy is to put Roosevelt and Batista in the same pot with Hitler and Mussolini. Here the Trotskyites play their counter-revolutionary role; their demagogy dovetailing with that of the open reactionaries.

The foregoing groups of reactionaries are strong in the Congress of Cuba, forming a definite majority in the Senate and also having a large

degree of control in the House. They sabotage Batista's progressive legislation, such as the legalization of the Communist Party, the formation of trade union federations, the coordination of transportation and the revaluation of farm mortgages. They control most of the daily press and they also have some grip on the army—Batista's stronghold.

The bogey of all these reactionary cliques is the proposed Constituent Assembly. They are sure that if this gathering takes place it will result in a big victory for democracy; they use all tricks of demagoguery and maneuvering to prevent its convocation. Just recently some of the main reactionary groups (A.B.C., Republican Democrats, Republican Action, and Cuban Revolutionary), formed a pact to fight against the Constituent Assembly. They are prepared to use desperate means.

In Havana, during our stay, there was open talk of some sort of putsch on their part. The recently increased forces of reaction in the United States Congress stimulate all these Cuban fascist and near-fascist elements; for political events in this country always produce strong repercussions in Cuba.

Batista, increasingly supported by the popular masses, on the one hand, and facing an aggressive capitalist reaction, on the other, continues to develop his progressive line. He encourages the formation of trade unions, as well as organizations of farmers, students and Negroes; he favors the Constituent Assembly and although he proposes no definite program for it, he declares it will cure Cuba's ills. He hopes for a progressive democracy and says that unity of the

workers, farmers and soldiers will liberate Cuba. Batista has recently denounced the fascist totalitarian states, has taken a more friendly attitude towards Loyalist Spain, and has opposed racial discrimination. Batista's policy has been much influenced by Roosevelt and Cardenas. He has, however, been criticized for failing on numerous occasions to champion aggressively his own program in the face of the attacks of reaction.

#### THE POLICY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The main slogan of the Santa Clara Congress was, "For Democracy, the People's Welfare and Defense of the National Economy." To realize this, the Communist Party called for a united national front of all democratic and progressive elements and for the holding of the long-talked of Constituent Assembly. Comrade Blas Roca summarized its general policy briefly as follows:

"We fight for the unity of the people of Cuba, for the unity of the revolutionaries, and for a great united national front to realize immediately an urgent practical program: to achieve a free and sovereign Constituent Assembly, to establish democracy with equal rights for Negroes and women; to aid the unemployed, to protect the peasants against evictions; to apply the social laws, to extend culture, to save the thousands of Cuban debtors by means of a law for the revaluation of mortgages, to work for the defense of the national economy, for the defense of our country from Nazi-fascist invasion, for help to Spain and China, for collaboration with the democratic countries."

On the basis of this general program the Party is leading a militant struggle for the immediate demands of the masses, especially for relief for the unemployed and against the evic-

tion of debtor peasants. It is also vigorously fighting for the convening of the Constituent Assembly. The Revolutionary Union, a Left party of some 100,000 members headed by Marinello, has outlined a project for the Constituent Assembly which, if adopted even in the main, would make Cuba one of the leading bourgeois-democratic countries in the world. The Communist Party supports this outline of demands.

Towards Batista the Communist Party maintains a general attitude of support, while criticizing him for his failures to fight for his own projects. Roca declared that, Trotskyites and phrasemongering pseudo-liberals to the contrary notwithstanding, the continued trend of Batista towards democratic reform has fully justified the Party's "positive attitude" towards him.

The Communist Party places fascism as public enemy number one, and fights militantly for Cuban national liberation. It proposes close collaboration between the Caribbean countries against the fascist menace and it likewise demands world concerted action of the democracies to check the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo aggressions and to aid their victims. The Party supports Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy, urging at the same time intensification of the struggle against the great American imperialist interests which dominate the island. Roca estimated Roosevelt and the New Deal as follows:

"The Roosevelt Administration does not represent, as previous governments have done, the interests of Wall Street, the interests of the most reactionary sections of finance capital in the United States. The Roose-

velt administration . . . represents the growing democratic, progressive movement in the United States, the mobilization, the forward march of the millions of workers who in the United States, as we in Cuba, have suffered the oppression of the imperialists, the great financiers, and the powerful monopolist companies."

#### THE GENERAL POLITICAL LINE-UP

The present political struggle in Cuba turns around the question of the Constituent Assembly. The masses see in the Assembly an effective means to democratize the government and to realize their urgent economic and social demands. They feel assured that despite reactionary opposition the Assembly will eventually be held and that the prospects are excellent for registering a real advance for Cuban democracy.

The present line-up of the many political parties is confused and shifting. The main mass trend is towards democracy. In the Constituent Assembly and the preceding elections there will be three definite blocs of parties. From appearances now the Right bloc will probably consist of the A.B.C.'s, the Cuban Revolutionary Party (San Martin), the Republican-Democrats, and the Republican Action; the Center bloc will be made up of the Liberal and National Union Parties; the Left will include the Revolutionary Cuban Party (C.A.R.B.O.), the Revolutionary Union and the Communist Party. Between the Left and Center blocs there will doubtless be more or less of a working agreement. This probable line-up of forces, with reasonably good strategy, should be able to win a substantial victory for democracy. That is why the reactionaries are so strongly opposed to hold-

ing the Constituent Assembly and are willing to use violent measures to prevent it.

#### TWO PERSPECTIVES

The penetration of fascist Germany, Italy and Japan in this hemisphere confronts all the peoples of Latin America. The people of Cuba, with a turning point in their history, face a double perspective. If they join with the democratic peoples of the United States and Canada in resisting the fascist invaders they will enter into a new and higher period of democracy, prosperity and national independence. But if they do not build this common anti-fascist resistance, if they surrender to, or weaken before the fascist powers, they will confront the worst period of retrogression and oppression in all their history.

Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese militarists do not intend to set up civilized relations with the Latin American peoples, treating them as equal, independent nations. Far from it. If they can secure the opportunity, these barbarians will try by armed force and trickery to rob the Latin American countries of their national independence. They will seize their rich natural resources, destroy their democracy and culture, subject their toilers to the most barbarous exploitation, treat their people as inferior beings, incite one republic to make war against another and use their citizenry as cannon fodder all over the world. Fascism would introduce a new and terrible type of colonialism into Latin America, more ferocious than this hemisphere has yet seen.

The only way a disastrous victory

of fascism in Latin America can be averted is for all the democracies in this hemisphere, from Canada to Argentina, to stand united against the Italo-German-Japanese fascist invaders and their local supporters, at the same time waging the struggle against reactionary American and British imperialism. The declarations of the Lima Conference and Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy offer a basis for such democratic cooperation. The peoples of the Americas would then be a real factor for world peace. Meanwhile, it is the task especially of the people of the United States to keep their government out of the hands of the reactionaries and to make of the Good Neighbor policy a real instrument of democracy throughout the three Americas.

The fight against fascism in this hemisphere, however, is not merely a defensive one. It opens up the counter perspective to a general forward march of the many American peoples towards freedom, democracy and full national independence. For the very struggle against fascism on a national, hemispheric and world scale implies that the Latin American peoples must fight to improve profoundly the conditions of their toiling masses, to develop their democratic institutions, to assert their national independence, and to secure more and more control over their lands, industries and natural resources which are now so largely in the hands of American, British and other imperialists.

That the great masses of the Latin American peoples want to realize this second, democratic-national liberation perspective is certain. It is proved especially by the people's front advances



in Chile and Mexico and the democratic movements in many other Central and South American countries. The historic Santa Clara Congress of the Communist Party, as well as the general political situation in Cuba,

shows that the Cuban people are active participants in the great renaissance, the advance on every social front, resulting from the struggle of the Latin American peoples against fascism and all imperialist reaction.

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE,  
COMMUNIST PARTY, U.S.A.

Single copies 15c. Subscription \$1.25

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# THE DAY OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S SOLIDARITY

BY N. K. KRUPSKAYA

*[International Women's Day, like May Day, had its origin in the United States. On March 8, 1908, the Socialist women of New York organized, in contradistinction to the bourgeois suffrage movement, a mass demonstration of working class women in favor of woman suffrage. The effectiveness of this demonstration led to the establishment of March 8 as Women's Day on a national scale. In 1910 the International Socialist Congress, held at Copenhagen, proclaimed March 8 International Women's Day.]*

*We present here in translation Comrade Krupskaya's article, first published in February, 1938.—The Editors.]*

THE Stalin Constitution is the constitution of the land of socialism. For forty years, since its foundation in 1898, our Party has fought for socialism, for a system that will know no exploitation, poverty, ignorance, desolation and neglect; it has fought for a plentiful, healthy, bright and enlightened life for all.

Our Party is the offspring of the international working class movement, and we regard our victory as the victory of the working people of the world. From Marx and Engels,

from the experience of revolutions in every country, we learned the right way to fight, the right road to follow. Life has proved how correct is the teaching of Marx. The Russia of the past, ignorant, backward, poverty-stricken, devastated by the imperialist war, a country where the landlords and capitalists ruled unchecked, where the crudest forms of exploitation and national oppression prevailed—has become the mighty Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It has become so owing to the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, owing to the heroic, unselfish struggle of the workers, who succeeded in securing the following of the peasantry, the following of all working people. We will never let the banner of socialism out of our hands. We know that it will soar over the world.

Equal rights for women is not a new question. Our Party has fought for it all the time. From the very outset, women have taken part in the revolutionary struggle. From the very outset working women have fought shoulder to shoulder with their husbands and brothers. From the very outset our Party has devoted a great deal of attention to the emancipation of women, exposing the economic and political roots of women's inequality.

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION ABOLISHED  
INEQUALITY OF WOMEN

When the working class seized power in October, 1917, one of its first measures was to abolish the legal inequality of women. Speaking at the Fourth Moscow City Conference of Non-Party Women Workers on September 23, 1919, Lenin said:

"The Soviet government has applied democracy to a greater extent than any other country, even the most advanced, by the fact that in its laws not the slightest hint of any inferiority of women is left. I repeat, not a single state and no democratic legislation has done even half of what the Soviet government did for women in the very first months of its existence."

But Lenin always said that this is only the beginning in the emancipation of women; that in reality women will be finally emancipated only when the whole of society is reorganized on the principles of socialism; that to make the victory of socialism durable, prolonged organizational work will be necessary, into which millions and millions of working women must be drawn.

Ever since the beginning of Soviet rule, equal rights for women have been an object of interest not only for women, but for men as well— young men, Red Army men. I remember how surprised Mirbach, the German Ambassador, was when, while paying an official call on Lenin in 1918, he saw one of the Red Army men who acted as Lenin's guard sitting at a table reading a book. He wanted to know what the book was and asked to have the title translated. It turned out that the guard was reading a translation of *Woman and Socialism* by Bebel.

Women took an active part in the civil war. Those were hard years. The Whites spared neither women nor children; women who were Red Partisans, or mothers of Red Partisans, peasant women, teachers were whipped and shot down; so were children. Can this ever be forgotten? The civil war opened the eyes of the working people; it showed them who was friend and who was foe. Reading now of the atrocities committed by the fascists, the women who took part in our civil war cannot but recall what they went through; they cannot read without emotion about events in Spain and China today.

When the civil war was over in our Land of Soviets, working women began to take an ever more active part in public affairs, to develop in this sphere and learn the art of administration.

At first this work proceeded slowly, for women were handicapped by the ignorance that had been their lot under tsarism; they were handicapped by household drudgery, by the isolation of petty individual farming, by survivals of the old views regarding women.

Soviet women enjoyed every right; but they did not always know how to use their rights. As late as 1926 only 28 per cent of the women entitled to do so voted in the elections to the village Soviets, and only 43 per cent in the elections to the city Soviets. There was a core of active women, it is true, but many millions of working women had not yet been fully drawn into political life, into socialist construction.

After restoring the economic system and reinforcing heavy industry, the

Soviets launched a widespread campaign of agitation for collective farms. The collective farm movement, the reorganization of farming on a collective basis, did much to enhance the political consciousness and activity of Soviet women. In 1934-35, 90.4 per cent of the women electors in the cities voted in the elections to the city Soviets, and 80.3 per cent in the elections to the village Soviets.

The Stalin Constitution records what has been achieved in twenty years of Soviet rule. The discussion of this constitution, which registers the full rights of women, plainly demonstrated that the rights of citizens are inseparably bound up with the reorganization of the whole system of society. This discussion of the Stalin Constitution by the entire population served still more to enhance the political understanding and activity of women.

The elections to the Supreme Soviet\* fully proved it. Nearly every woman elector voted in the elections; the activity displayed by housewives, by collective farm women and women belonging to the national minorities was particularly marked. The elections demonstrated the friendship among the nations of the Soviet Union, the confidence they place in the Party of Lenin and Stalin, which is the object of such vicious hatred on the part of the fascists. In the course of the election campaign the Party became still more closely welded with the masses of non-Party people.

The elections showed what a powerful organization, what an enor-

mous force our Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has become; they showed that the U.S.S.R. is the true home of women, beloved by them.

During the election campaign we women recalled to mind the women comrades who have worked actively to build socialism in our Land of Soviets. During the campaign we also frequently spoke of the civil war in Spain, of Dolores Ibarruri and the other heroines of Spain, and thought of the unknown heroines of China. What they are going through now is so close to the hearts of our women, who fought heroically against the White Guards and lost their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons in the civil war. During the election campaign we recalled Clara Zetkin, whose name is known to every enlightened woman in the world.

CLARA ZETKIN, CHAMPION OF WOMAN'S  
EMANCIPATION

Clara Zetkin in 1910 initiated the celebration of March 8 as International Women's Day. On March 8, 1933, shortly before her death, she was awarded the Order of Lenin. She spent her last years in the U.S.S.R. and was greatly loved by our working and collective farm women. She was frequently visited by women's delegations. She was filled with joy at the development of Soviet women. It was a painful blow to her that Germany had fallen into the hands of the fascists. Though she never for a moment doubted that fascism is the last agony of dying capitalism, that fascism is doomed, it is natural that events in Germany should so deeply have agitated her. At the age of 75, though seriously ill, she went to Germany to

\* Held December 12, 1937.—*The Editors.*

exercise her right of opening the Reichstag as its oldest member. In doing so she risked her life, she risked falling into the hands of the fascists and being tortured to death. On August 30, 1932, she opened the Reichstag\* with a long speech against fascist dictatorship, and concluded with a fiery appeal for a united revolutionary front.

Clara Zetkin was chairman of the Executive Committee of the International Labor Defense and issued an appeal against fascism.

"Look at Germany, where dying capitalism is seeking salvation in fascism," she wrote. "Fascism has established a regime of physical and spiritual destruction, a regime of barbarism whose atrocities exceed even the horrors of the Middle Ages. The entire world is filled with indignation over the brutality of the fascist reign of terror...."

"Working women, remember that fascism deprives you of the rights you have won in bitter struggle and denies you the right to independent work. Remember that the 'Third Empire' wants to turn you into your husbands' servants and child-bearing machines. Do not forget the brave women fighters who have been tortured to death by fascism or are languishing in its dungeons...."

"Scientists, artists, teachers, writers, professional people! Do not forget that the fascists make *auto-da-fes*\*\* of the works of culture which you created and carefully protected, and whose destruction is depriving mankind of one of the sources of human development...."

"How vile is the baiting by fascists of representatives of other races; and, in particular, how vile are their Jewish pogroms! ..."

"Enemies of fascism in all countries! Not a single one of us should rest at ease until fascism, which brings in its train bloody

oppression, terror, starvation and war, has been destroyed."

So Clara Zetkin wrote. She died on June 20, 1933. During the years that have passed since her death, fascism has become ever more arrogant; it has come more and more to rely on the jingoist elements, to provoke national animosity and to exploit the unenlightened section of the petty bourgeoisie. The example of Germany has been followed in a number of other countries. Now fascism has become an international phenomenon; it is raging ever more arrogantly and brutally in a number of countries, is making open and secret connections in all countries, is not only hatching imperialist war but already waging it in Spain and China.

The memory of the imperialist war still lives in every mind; the working people have not forgotten it. They all know how the capitalists made profits out of this war, how they plundered the weaker countries. The fascists are taking account of the lessons of the imperialist war; they are using them for their own ends, exploiting the achievements of science. But the fascists also know that war rouses the class-consciousness of the masses, that it organizes the masses; they know that the October Revolution was born in the fires of imperialist war. And they are making haste.

The trial is now proceeding of the "bloc of Rights and Trotskyites," those traitors to the cause of the working class, the cause of socialism. A feeling of disgust mounts in one as one reads the statements of these traitors, who for years passed themselves off as leaders of the working class, builders of socialism, while in

\* At the last convocation of the German parliament before the Nazis usurped complete state power.—*The Editors*.

\*\* This term designated the burning of "heretics" by the Inquisition.—*The Editors*.

fact they were mortal enemies of the workers, and deceived and betrayed the Land of Soviets, and sold themselves to the fascists. . . . History has never known such baseness, such monstrous betrayal.

Now we must rally for concerted action.

The Party of Lenin and Stalin is filled with profound confidence in the strength, might and organization of the working people not only of our own Soviet land, but of the world. It never doubts that the working women of all countries will offer concerted resistance to fascism, which relies for support in every country on White Guards, on double-dealers like those of the "bloc of Rights and Trotskyites," whose purpose is to make capital, make careers at the expense of the working people's blood.

The experience of the October Revolution already attracts the attention of the broad masses in the capitalist countries; and this experience cannot be burned in an *auto-da-fé*. It is not fortuitous that in 1934 an international women's congress was held in Paris against war and against fascism, this scourge which is doing everything to kindle a world war. It is not fortuitous that in a number of countries women's committees exist for combating war and fascism. Nor are these committees made up of Communists alone; they are gaining ever more support among women who know how much grief and suffering war will bring.

The events in Spain and China show that the war which the fascists are so eagerly kindling will hit the masses of working people much harder than the last imperialist war.

This is clear, not only to the women of Spain, China, Italy, Germany and Japan; it is clear to the women of all countries.

Ten million people were killed in the World War and over twenty million wounded. Poverty and devastation are what this war brought the working people; human lives were accounted as nothing; millions of children were orphaned; long years of suffering fell to the lot of those who lost their eyesight, were crippled or went mad; and with them suffered their kith and kin, their mothers, wives and sisters.

The events in Spain and China show that the war started by the fascists is even more brutal, many times more so; it is spreading to new countries and bringing unparalleled destruction.

The working people of all countries must rally ever more closely in a united front of action in order by their concerted effort to frustrate the fascists' designs.

On March 8, the day of the international solidarity of women, the women of all countries should march in the front ranks of the united front, in the ranks of those who are fighting for peace and against war.

For peace! For friendship among the peoples!

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# CANADA—THE KEY TO ANTI-FASCIST UNITY OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLES

BY TIM BUCK

*General Secretary, Communist Party of Canada*

THE sharpening international situation and the reckless efforts of Neville Chamberlain to make Britain the underwriter of the expansionist schemes of Hitler and Mussolini have forced the issue of foreign policy sharply to the front in Canada.

There is a growing realization that Canada's national future is at stake. The great majority of her people are profoundly democratic and resent Chamberlain's policies, but the complicated problems involved in readjustment of her international relationships are little understood. Only the working class movement and its democratic allies are able to grapple with the problem in a democratic way and carry through a policy in the real interest of the people, because the issue is that of whether the narrow selfish interests of monopoly capital or the interests of the nation are to be supreme. In Canada the interests and aspirations of the working class movement and its democratic allies are the true interests of the nation, but in the struggle for direction of her foreign policy the representatives of reactionary big capital still hold sway.

## TWO BASIC TRENDS

In Canada, as in all capitalist countries, the two basic political trends are rallied around either the slogan of democratic progress or the interests of pro-fascist reaction. There is the body of opinion which favors concessions to the fascist aggressors. It is against Republican Spain, open and aggressive in its support of Franco, against the small nations, against the Soviet Union. It fights against democratic unification of Canada itself. It fights against even elementary social legislation in spite of the fact that Canada has the least advanced social legislation of any English-speaking part of the British Empire and less than any except the four most backward republics of the two Americas. This trend makes a principle of the fight against the C.I.O., and against any extension of democracy and civil liberties, as part of its drive to keep wages and farm incomes in Canada at starvation level. It is pro-Chamberlain and against Roosevelt.

This trend is represented most clearly by the Duplessis "Union Nationale" government of reactionary

concentration in Quebec, where the lowest standard of life and the highest rate of infant mortality and illiteracy of any part of North America are maintained by the infamous Padlock Law. Duplessis is not alone, of course. Drew, the leader of the Conservative Party in Ontario, and, only a little less clearly, Hepburn, the "Liberal" Prime Minister of Ontario, each gives public support to the policies of which Duplessis is the outstanding exponent. They are the policies of the forces which elected the present leader of the Conservative Party of Canada, Manion, to leadership.

The powerful influence of this reactionary camp does not flow from any mass support from the people but from the strategic position it occupies in the nation's highly monopolized economy. Its public spokesmen are adopting all the demagoguery of Hitler in an effort to gain mass support but their real attitude was expressed perfectly by ex-Prime Minister R. B. Bennett, in his farewell speech on the eve of his departure to join forces with Chamberlain in Britain. Relieved of public responsibility, Bennett spoke his mind. Throwing off the disguise of an ardent reformer, worn since his notorious "New Deal" speeches of 1935, he warned the audience of multi-millionaires and their hangers-on to beware of democracy, capping a series of such warnings with his pet formula: "Democracy, in essence, is government by those least fitted to govern." The absolute cynicism of the spokesmen of this camp was even more clearly demonstrated by the later declaration of a newspaper publisher who, in warm praise of Bennett's speech, declared:

"... now that Mr. Bennett is leaving Canada he can speak the truth."

Such frankness is exceptional, however. The favorite technique of the reactionaries is demagoguery combined with systematic efforts to narrow the front of the struggle by focusing their fire upon the Communist Party in Canada and upon the U.S.S.R. and republican Spain abroad. Their central political slogan is "A Coalition Government." Organizationally they are striving for a national concentration of reactionary forces. They give consistent support, extending in Quebec to governmental assistance, to open fascist organizations.

Systematic efforts to build a widespread semi-military fascist movement in Canada have been going on for years. The widespread and well-financed campaign of organization includes purchases of buildings in numerous industrial towns, smuggling of arms from the United States, and open drilling in several places. The fascist organizations have been united. They have dropped the names of "Fascist" and "Nazi" and call themselves the "National Unity Party of Canada." While they still wear the swastika on arm-bands, they have adopted a new national emblem calculated not to remind Canadians of Hitler and pogroms.

During the spring of 1938 a German paper manufacturing concern opened negotiations with the provincial government of Quebec to purchase the entire Island of Anticosti in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Five men who made a survey of the island were discovered to be, not industrial technicians, but high officers of the Reichswehr acting under the leadership of



one Gerhardt, "Landesgruppelleiter" of the Nazi Party for Canada, working through the office of the Nazi Consul-General in Montreal.

The systematic drive to establish a foothold in Canada has been emphasized recently by publication in Germany of a book entitled *Between the United States and the North Pole*. This is a careful survey of Canada. Its geography, topography, natural resources, mineral wealth, vast area and the strategic importance of its territorial relationship to the United States are all emphasized. Concerning the fact that Canada is part of the British Empire, the writer remarks: "The fact that Canada is part of the British Empire means only that the future of Canada is just as uncertain as is the future of the British Empire itself."

The opposite political trend was well illustrated during September by popular demonstrations all over the country against the Chamberlain policy and by the hundreds of Canadians who volunteered for service in Czechoslovakia if she should be attacked. Even the League of Nations Society felt the pressure of public opinion. It took a stand against the Chamberlain policy and called for security by concerted action. This trend supports the striving for democratic unification of Canada and enactment of democratic measures to meet the pressing needs of the people. It demands abolition of the barriers which make each province an economic entity, enabling a small financial oligarchy to dominate the political and economic life of the country while evading social responsibility. Supporters of this democratic trend welcome the utter-

ances of President Roosevelt and look more and more to the United States for leadership in the struggle to make the Western world safe from the threat of fascist aggression.

The weakness of this democratic camp lies in its disunity. Its supporters are separated by sectional interests. Its greatest need, which is at the same time the urgent need of Canadians as a nation, is for leadership that will give expression to the democratic aspirations of the majority of our people and their deep-seated desire for democratic progress and a positive policy against the fascist threat.

#### CANADA AND MUNICH

The contradiction between the anti-fascist sentiment of the majority of the people and the strategic advantage enjoyed by the reactionary minority was reflected in Canada's policy during the crisis which culminated in Munich. The official record shows the Canadian government backing Chamberlain during the crisis without reservation, although the facts of life in Canada showed that the mass of the people were against Chamberlain. The National Convention of the Trades and Labor Congress, the national leadership of the United Church, dozens of important central labor councils, the League of Nations Society, League for Peace and Democracy, some municipal councils, and dozens of big mass meetings all over the country all registered powerful public sentiment against Chamberlain's policy during the last two weeks of September.

The King government steered a course calculated to evade the issue. No independent statement was re-

leased and the Canadian government took no action which could have been interpreted as being opposed to, or varying from, the policies followed by Chamberlain. On September 27, when it appeared to the people of Canada that war was unavoidable, the government issued a public statement pledging complete support to the British government. Thus King committed Canada to Chamberlain's policy at a moment when public opinion in Canada was, so to speak, off guard. Canada's pledge being made without conditions became a weapon in the hands of Chamberlain. In defending himself before the British House of Commons he emphasized the fact that he had been in constant touch with the Dominions and implied that Canada had been in continuous agreement with him.

#### CANADA AND IMPERIAL POLICIES

That the Canadian government gave official support to a policy which popular opinion condemned is one of the several contradictions which grow out of the peculiar position of Canada in the British Empire and of Ottawa to the imperial government.

The traditional policy of the Dominion government in foreign affairs makes it appear that Canada is a helpless victim of British imperialist policy, but actually that is not quite true. Canada shares responsibility. As matters stand, it is no more possible for Canada to evade her share of the responsibility for Empire policies than for the Canadian people to escape their results. At the same time it must be borne in mind that Canadian foreign policy in matters involving peace or war is directed and operated by

the British government, and the only method by which the Dominions can register opinions on current questions is that of consultation between the imperial government and the governments of the various Dominions. In practice, this usually boils down to informing the Dominion Prime Ministers of the decisions made in London and recording their agreement. Issues and decisions rarely become known to members of Dominion Parliaments until it is too late to do much about them.

This rule was broken in 1922. Following the "Chanak" incident, Lloyd George cabled the Dominions seeking assurances that they would aid Britain in the event of war with Turkey. Mackenzie King, who had recently become Prime Minister of Canada, replied coolly that only Parliament (which was not in session) could commit Canada to such a course. The gesture aroused interest throughout the world. It was hailed widely as a sign that the Canadian people intended to decide for themselves in future upon questions of foreign affairs involving peace or war. Whitehall has never repeated the mistake.

The efficiency, if not the exact method, with which London dominates the Dominions' foreign policies, was well illustrated in the recent Canadian recognition of Mussolini's conquest of Ethiopia. Despite Mackenzie King's oft-reiterated devotion to the principle that only Parliament is competent to make such decisions, this one was made by the Cabinet, without a public announcement, only three weeks before Parliament convened. The reason for this hurried reversal of Mackenzie King of one of his

favorite "principles" was that Chamberlain was about to visit Mussolini. Canada was withdrawn from honorable association with the United States, New Zealand and the Soviet Union in non-recognition of Mussolini's Empire "so as to avoid embarrassing Mr. Chamberlain." The means by which London persuaded Mackenzie King to do that are the means by which the course of Canada's foreign policy is determined.

#### DOMINION STATUS IN PEACE AND WAR

This situation flows out of the complicated relationship between the Dominions and the rest of the Empire which in turn determines the status of Canada and its role in world affairs. Canada is a member of the British Commonwealth. The King of England is also the King of Canada, but he is King of Canada in an entirely different way than he is Emperor of India. Canada is an independent self-governing country. Her Prime Minister signed the Versailles Treaty; she is a member of the League of Nations with the same status as any other country and has legations in Washington, Paris, London and Tokyo. The Parliament of Canada has the sole legal right to declare Canada at war. The Statute of Westminster enacted in 1926 declared the Dominions and the United Kingdom (now Great Britain) to be equal in status, in no way subordinate one to the other, united only by the common allegiance to the Crown. Thus, in theory at least, the Dominions are each sovereign states and the King is King of each of them separately.

It should be emphasized that these vestigial remnants of colonial subor-

dination are quite acceptable to reactionary big capital in Canada. They create complications, sometimes difficulties, but in general they favor the interests of big capital. Through the course of time and development they have become fences behind which the monopolists frequently find shelter from the resurgent working and farming people. The peculiar relationship mirrored in these legal hangovers has enabled the Canadian bourgeoisie to enjoy almost all the economic and commercial advantages of partnership in the Empire while bearing very little of the Empire's cost.

#### CANADA AN AMERICAN NATION

The relationship of Canada to the rest of the world is further complicated by the fact that, while Canada is a British Dominion, she is also an American nation. History, economic interests, export markets and mutual interest in British policies hold Canada to the Empire; but geography, and again economic interests, cultural ties, the trade union movement and the sense of being Americans, unite the interests of Canadian people intimately with those of the people of the United States.

When President Roosevelt declared at Queen's University last summer: "... the people of the United States will not sit idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened" he sent a thrill of satisfaction and assurance through the hearts of 90 per cent of the Canadian people. Nobody was surprised; on the contrary, it echoed their own unspoken hopes. It received unstinted applause as an acknowledgment of the long recognized unity of

interests in matters of national defense between the two countries.

The relationship between Canada and the United States is not a matter of geography and national defense alone. Among the nations of the Americas Canada is second only to the United States in developed national wealth, industrialization, value of production, foreign trade and capital invested abroad. The basic economic inter-relationship of the two countries and the intimate relationships between the people have long been dominant factors in Canadian life. It is quite correct, therefore, to say that Canada can only play her proper role as a member of the British Commonwealth by taking full cognizance of her interests and responsibilities as one of the Great American democracies.

#### CANADA'S DILEMMA

In the minds of most Canadians Munich changed the position of England in the developing alignment of forces. Before Munich, Britain was considered the leader of the democratic capitalist states and the ultimate rallying center in their struggle against fascist aggression. The martyrdom of Republican Spain and the pitiless torture of her people by Chamberlain's policy did not change this general opinion; but Munich did. The change which has taken place since then has been stimulated greatly by the statements of President Roosevelt and the positive alternative therein proposed. It was not only that firm adherence to the principles of democracy and concerted action made him the real leader of genuine liber-

als and bourgeois democrats in all capitalist countries, but his call for unity of the American democracies in joint defense against aggression offers the one positive guarantee of national security for Canada.

The fall of Barcelona was a sharp warning to Canadians in this respect. The fact that Catalonia was finally overwhelmed precisely because her powerful neighbor, France, refused to grant facilities for her to secure even the bare necessities of life is generally recognized, and its lesson for Canada is being acknowledged by an increasing number of responsible men. Chamberlain, above all men, was responsible for the policy which brought victory to Mussolini and Franco, and Canadians are beginning to recognize the cynical logic of his so-called "appeasement." They see now that to Chamberlain, and the interests he represents, the collapse of the Hitler or Mussolini regimes would appear dangerous. They recognize also his cynical point that weakening democracy at home—and throughout the world—is the most ready means of which to strengthen the fascist aggressors abroad.

Thus, the issues of foreign policy before Canadians are conditioned by the fact that the spokesmen of the governments of the two great English-speaking nations with which we are intimately associated are supporters of opposite policies, with Roosevelt now the spokesman for the democratic camp—in which every Canadian feels he should belong.

The dilemma thus created has sharpened the whole issue of foreign policy in Canada, stimulating at once the imperialistic jingoism of the pro-

Chamberlain warmongers and the remnants of isolationist sentiment which nurses the illusion that peace and national security can be assured by the simple expedient of withdrawing from her economic and constitutional relationships; in other words, retiring from world affairs, if Britain becomes involved in war.

This sentiment was for some time widespread. Sections of the labor movement, the nationalists of Quebec, many of the radical agrarians on the prairie provinces and important sections of progressive people throughout the country, seized upon it as an alternative to Canadian subordination to the British Foreign office in matters of peace and war. Reactionary pro-fascist elements and their Trotskyite agents utilized it to confuse sections of the labor and progressive movement so that, behind the screen of isolationist propaganda, preparations for involving Canada could be pressed forward without any embarrassing discussion as to the principles for which Canadians would be called upon to fight.

In its complete demolition of this illusion, Canada's involvement with the British government in the Munich betrayal merely emphasized the relationship which caused Sir Wilfred Laurier to declare in 1910: "When Britain is at war, Canada is at war also."

Our Parliament can decide whether or not to send troops abroad, but it cannot decide what attitude an enemy, locked in decisive conflict with Britain, will adopt toward her Dominions. Canada's ships, including her ships of war, are British ships. Canadians abroad are British sub-

jects and foreign property of Canadians is British property. The highest Court of Appeal for Canadians is still the Privy Council sitting in London which disallowed unemployment insurance and other social legislation enacted by the Canadian Parliament as recently as 1936.

The words of Sir Wilfred Laurier are as true today as they were when Canada was a colony of the British Crown. Obviously Canada cannot solve her problems by the simple expedient of ignoring them and the idea of quietly withdrawing from the world when trouble starts is seen to be an illusion and a snare.

#### THE VOICE OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

The foregoing does not mean that Canadians must remain passive victims of Chamberlain's imperialist schemes. On the contrary, it means that Canadians must consciously assert themselves in their own interests and the interests of the British people as a whole. The last word has not yet been spoken by the British people. In the formulation of the reply of British democracy to Chamberlain's pro-fascist line, Canada can and must play an important role. It is the one role that can save her from involvement in war and from entanglement in the dark web of intrigue behind which the schemes of Chamberlain and the fascist aggressors are developed. That role is to face courageously the responsibility imposed by her dual relationship to Britain and the United States. Canada could thus become a positive force in unifying the democratic millions of the British Commonwealth in support of the pol-

icies enunciated by President Roosevelt, drawing the British democracies into closer relationship with the democracies of the Americas for cooperation against the common danger of fascist aggression.

It would be entirely wrong to assume that British policy cannot be influenced in this direction. One has but to recall the "Councils of Action" which stayed the hand of Lloyd George to realize the strength of the democratic traditions of the British people. Transfer of the support of the English-speaking Dominions from Chamberlain to the broad movement which opposes his pro-fascist policy would be a tremendous influence within Britain itself.

To recognize the vital importance of this question to Canada one need only visualize the tragic consequences she would suffer if Britain and the United States should ever become involved in open conflict in any part of the world. To argue, as both isolationists and the pro-Chamberlain camp in Canada do, that such an eventuality is improbable is only the most despicable method of evading the issue. For Canada, unity of Britain and the United States is vital; and national interests, no less than the sentiments of the great mass of the people, demand that such unity

be on the basis of resistance to fascist aggression.

The people of Canada desire such a policy, but to make it the official policy of the Dominion government is a job that only the labor movement, supported by its democratic allies, could perform.

The tasks involved are tremendous; but they can be accomplished. Their accomplishment coincides with the national interests of Canada and the aspirations of her people as well as with the desires of the majority of the people of the democratic dominions. The effort to relegate Canada to the role of passive bystander in British-American affairs must be defeated. She is between Britain and the United States but not simply as the meat in the sandwich. She is an active participant with each and must share in the making of policies just as she shares their consequences. Hitherto her role has been mainly that of the representative of British policies in North America. This has got to be changed. Instead of being the voice of the pro-fascist Chamberlain in America, Canada must become the voice of the American democracies in the councils of the British Empire: rallying the democratic English-speaking peoples of the world for joint struggle to make democracy supreme.

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# DETERIORATION OF LABOR CONDITIONS DURING THE LAST DECADE

BY GEORGE WALLACE

## INTRODUCTORY

THE decade 1929-1938 has been marked by profound changes in American social and economic life. The crisis of 1929, by its intensity, its protracted character and world-wide scope, shook the capitalist world to its foundations.

The ravages of this crisis bared all the evils inherent in the capitalist system. Developing under the conditions of the general crisis of capitalism, the great crisis of 1929 was not succeeded by an upturn similar to those following previous crises.

The revival of 1933 and of the following years was uneven in its character. Even before it reached the level of 1929, another cyclical crisis had come in the summer of 1937. During the period between the spring of 1937 and June, 1938, industrial production in the United States (not adjusted for seasonal variations) dropped 36 per cent. This was followed by a climb of 27 per cent to December, 1938, when the index was still 20 per cent below the peak for 1937.

Characteristic of the declining stage of capitalism are the defense tactics developed by the capitalists. Naturally, we find them fighting, with every weapon they command, not only for

the profit system to perpetuate their control of natural resources and of the means of production, but for the high rate of profit and every key position, economic and political. These tactics reveal themselves in the vicious attacks on labor, on civil liberties and on American democracy. They show themselves in the fascist methods used to fight any progressive and liberal program. They also take the form of sabotage of recovery measures introduced by the New Deal administration.

They do not stop there. Among the more insidious methods used by the capitalists and their agents is the intensive and continuous propaganda to the effect that the living standards of the American workers are so high that any struggle by the workers for higher wages and higher living standards is unjustified.

These propaganda tactics of the employing class of this country cannot be ignored. Although any worker knows in a general way that these yarns of the capitalists and their docile press are not sufficient to hide the deterioration of labor conditions, concrete factual data must be used to refute them. Precisely because these tactics can be fought best with the real knowledge of labor conditions, we present below a review of labor

conditions over the last ten years.

#### WHAT IS LABOR'S INCOME?

What do we mean by labor conditions? Various economic factors enter into them—job security, wages, hours of work, industrial accidents, amount of leisure time, total income, changes in the cost of living, etc. The scope of this article does not permit exploring the changes in all of these factors. We limit ourselves, therefore, to such major aspects of the problem as national income and labor's share in it. We look into what happened to labor income and labor's living standards over the last decade. We examine labor's per capita income, comparing it with workers' budgets and noting the effects of changes in the cost of living. This helps us to round out a picture of recent developments in terms of their effect on labor.

Available statistics are not adequate to get all the details; we have, therefore, to content ourselves with an average picture. Such an average, of course, has serious limitations. We may recall how Lenin showed in his "Development of Capitalism in Russia"\* that averages fail to reveal how bad real conditions are; the average tends to show a better condition on the whole than actually prevails. Thus, in combining the income figures for employed and unemployed workers, we are forced to hide to some extent the terrible plight of millions of the unemployed.

We take the year 1929 as a benchmark for two reasons. One is the fact that many of our figures cannot be compiled with reasonable accuracy

for earlier years. The other, more important reason, is that 1929 is the last so-called prosperity year and is frequently looked back upon as a year when our economy flourished and conditions, including labor conditions, were at their best. We know, and the figures will show, that even 1929 was far from being a millenium for American labor. We know that even then many were unemployed and that living standards for many workers were below the bare essentials of a minimum budget.

Let us look first at the amount of income received by labor and non-labor groups during the significant years—the prosperity year 1929 and the year which marked the bottom of the great crisis, 1933, as well as 1938:

	Total income	Labor income	Non- labor income
	<i>(In billions of dollars)</i>		
1929 .....	79	48	31
1933 .....	46	28	18
1938 .....	64	41	23

Total national income figures referred to throughout this article represent the actual payments of income to individuals estimated by the U.S. Department of Commerce. Income payments to the working population, calculated by the Labor Research Association on the basis of these estimates, including wages, salaries, relief payments, social insurance benefits, etc., represent fairly accurately the amount of money workers actually received. This cannot be said about the non-labor income because it does not include money reinvested in business, for example, corporation profits not paid out in dividends but instead added to surplus.

\* *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 219. International Publishers, New York.



Looking at these figures, could we say that labor is pretty well off, since its share of the total income payments of the country during these three years as well as during the entire decade of 1929-1938 has been over 60 per cent? Naturally not. For one thing, as we noted, the non-labor income would look much better if all profits of the employers kept by them in their business were included.

But far more significant is the fact that the working population, receiving this slightly over 60 per cent of the total income payments of the nation, is relatively much larger than the non-labor population.

Assuming that the average family size is the same among labor and non-labor groups, then over 75 per cent of the people depend on slightly over 60 per cent of total income payments. Taking 1929 as 100, we find that both labor and non-labor income followed a similar course during the last ten years:

TABLE I. NATIONAL INCOME, U.S.A.  
1929-1938

	Total income	Labor income	Non- labor income
	(Index, 1929=100)		
1929 .....	100	100	100
1930 .....	93	92	95
1931 .....	80	80	82
1932 .....	63	62	65
1933 .....	58	58	58
1934 .....	66	68	64
1935 .....	71	73	68
1936 .....	82	84	78
1937 .....	88	90	84
1938* .....	85	85	77

\* Preliminary.

Source: Total income based on U. S. Department of Commerce, national income series. Labor income based on Labor Research Association series.

During the depression years following the 1929 crisis, labor income went down somewhat more drastically than non-labor income. However, from 1933 on, during the recovery years, the increases in the total labor income were more pronounced. This was due in large measure to the great wave of unionization through which American labor was able to wage a successful fight for higher wages. This accounts also for the fact that the index of labor income went down only five points from 1937 to 1938, while the index of non-labor income went down seven points. Government appropriations, both for direct and indirect relief, have, of course, also been an important contributing factor in holding up labor income in the period since 1933.

Comparing changes in labor and non-labor total incomes since 1929, we should always bear in mind the relative effect of these changes on the two groups respectively. Any downward change in labor income means incomparably greater hardships for millions of workers than a similar or even greater decline in non-labor income. It is obvious that a 10 per cent drop in a worker's annual income of \$1,000, reducing it \$100, would force the worker to cut down on essential things needed to feed and clothe his family. Now the same percentage drop for a person with \$10,000 income, although causing a loss of \$1,000, would perhaps result in cutting down on a few luxuries, but it would certainly mean no reduction in such essential items as food, clothing, medical services and the like.

When we take the total labor income and divide it by the working

population we get an average income per member of the working population:

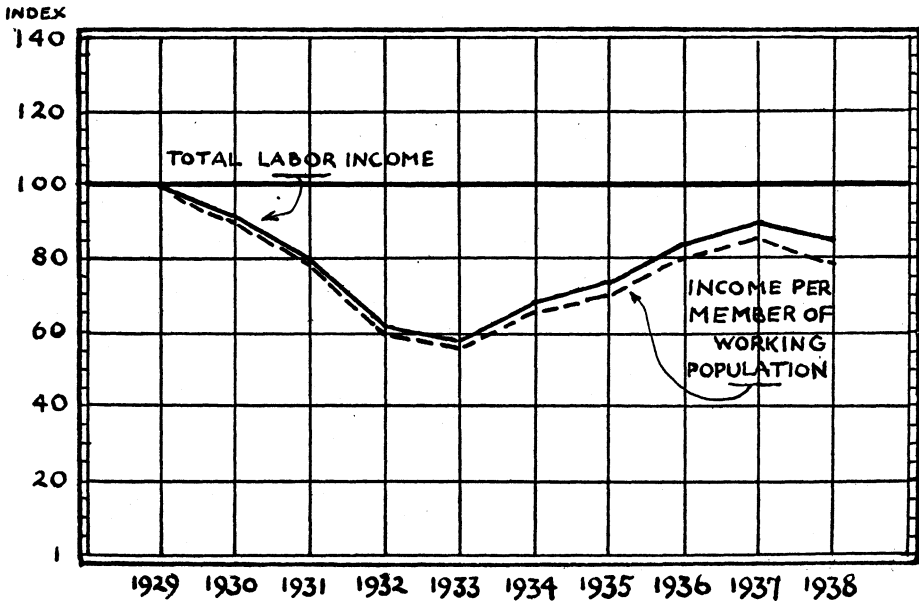
Since the working population consists of all salaried and wage workers, both employed and unemployed,

TABLE 2. LABOR INCOME PER MEMBER OF WORKING POPULATION, U.S.A. 1929-1938

Year	Money Dollars	Income Index (1929=100)	Cost of Living Index (1929=100)	Real Income Index (1929=100)
1929	\$1,310	100	100	100
1930	1,194	91	97	94
1931	1,022	78	87	90
1932	792	60	78	78
1933	742	56	75	76
1934	851	65	79	82
1935	914	70	82	85
1936	1,048	80	85	94
1937	1,110	85	88	96
1938*	1,038	79	86	92

\* Preliminary.

Source: Income based on Labor Research Association series. Cost of living index is that of National Industrial Conference Board recomputed on 1929 basis.



average income per member of the working population shows us roughly how much money the "average worker" both on the job and jobless has had at his disposal to spend each year since 1929.

From Table 2 we find that in 1929 this average amounted to \$1,310. It dropped to \$742 in 1933, a decline of 44 per cent. During the recovery years it climbed to \$1,110 (in 1937), to drop again in 1938 to \$1,038. Thus, at a glance, we see how small the average incomes were and how inadequate labor's income was even in the "boom" year 1929.

Most striking is the fact that these depressed conditions continued over the entire period. Inadequate earnings in one year were not compensated by good income the next, nor were depression year incomes balanced by large incomes during recovery years. Instead, year in and year out, average labor income remained miserably low.

#### LIVING STANDARDS DETERIORATE

These average income figures, of course, hide the real conditions, which—for millions of workers—are much worse. Thus, the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, making a study of family incomes in 1935-36, found that in New York City over 24 per cent of the population consisted of families with incomes of less than \$1,000. At the same time, about 50 per cent of New York's Negro families had incomes below \$837.

To check the validity of our conclusions, let us turn to the cost of living, which covers the cost of food, clothing, light, fuel, household goods and various sundries.

If, let us say, wages dropped by half, but at the same time the retail prices of what the worker buys also went down by half, then the worker could maintain the same living standards. But such things do not work out this way under our capitalist system. A glance at the third column of Table 2 explains this.

With the 1929 crisis, retail prices for goods a worker buys, the amount of rent he pays, declined. They went down, in fact, 25 per cent, from 100 in 1929 to 75 in 1933. However, as column 2 shows, during the same period the per capita labor income went down 44 per cent.

When the worker's income began to go up, retail prices also began to rise. Thus, the cost of living rose from its index of 75 in 1933 to 88 in 1937. The crisis of 1937 again sent labor incomes down. Cost of living declined, too, but not so much as incomes.

If we correct the average money income by the corresponding change in the cost of living, we get what is known as "real" income. It is particularly important to know about the changes in the amount of goods the worker can buy with his money, that is, to know how real income changes. The last column in Table 2 gives us these figures. Taking 1929 as 100, we see that the per capita real income continues to remain considerably below the 1929 level. The index went down to 76 in 1933, in other words, the worker could then buy, on the average, only three-fourths the amount of goods he could purchase in 1929. The upturn after 1933 improved his conditions, but this improvement was gradual, never reach-

ing the 1929 level. Even in 1937 the real income was 4 per cent below, while in 1938 it was 8 per cent below that of 1929. In a word, this row of figures tells us that labor has failed to regain the losses it sustained in income during the depression years.

In his testimony before the monopoly committee, Dr. Lubin, Commissioner of Labor Statistics, stated that according to his estimates the loss in wages and salaries since 1929 arising from unemployment alone exceeded \$119,000,000,000. This is two and one half times as much as the total labor income of \$48,000,000,000 in 1929.

To get a picture of how inadequate the average money income per member of the working population is, let us consider it in relation to what we call a "minimum health and decency budget." This budget was first worked out for various cities by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1919. It is supposed to cover the "minimum amount" of food, clothing, housing and other essentials for a year in a family of five, consisting of father, mother and three children. It is generally admitted to be inadequate, and a new one is now being worked out by the Bureau.

Taking this budget for various cities as a basis, the Labor Research Association has estimated the annual cost of the budget for the United States as a whole. In Table 3 (next page) we compare this minimum health and decency budget with average income.

The cost of this low minimum budget, it is clear, is greater than the income received by the average American working family. This holds true for

every single year covered in the table. These figures are the average for the country as a whole. Statistics from the same source for individual cities show how these budgets varied. For example, with an average minimum budget for all cities of \$1,955 for 1938, the budget requirements for New York City were \$1,835, while in Schenectady, N. Y., they were \$1,747, in Chicago \$2,005, and in San Francisco as high as \$2,245.

The budget column tells us that a worker had to earn \$2,348 during 1929 to maintain even the low minimum health and decency standard. We know that these minimum requirements do not allow for any luxuries.

We hardly need any figures to confirm what we all know only too well, that very few workers earned the cost of this family budget. A look at column 3 reveals that the annual income per member of the working population in 1929 was only about 55 per cent of the minimum budget. In other words, the average worker, even in that "prosperity" year, earned only slightly more than half of what was required to maintain minimum health and decency standards.

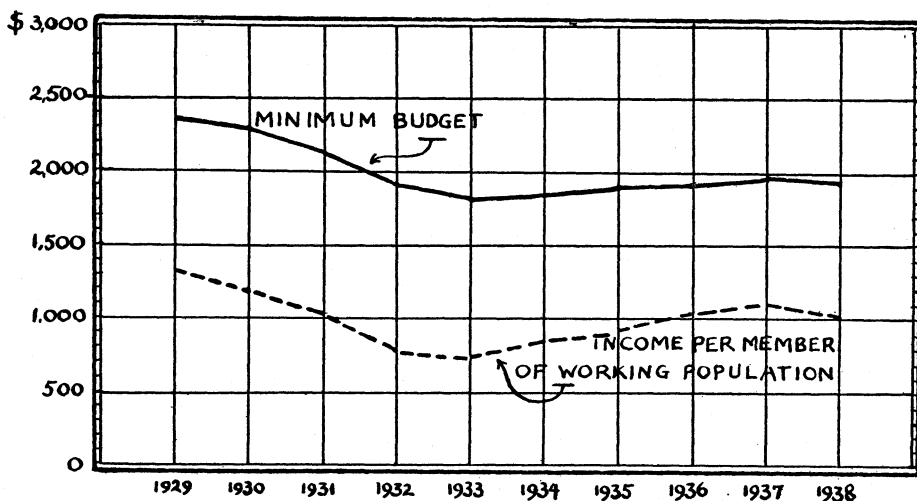
The study of *Consumer Incomes in the United States* made by the National Resources Committee revealed that in 1935-36, of 29,000,000 families: 14 per cent had incomes under \$500, 42 per cent had incomes of less than \$1,000, 65 per cent had incomes of less than \$1,500.

The same study showed that during that period, almost one-third of all families and single individuals in the country had incomes of less than \$750.

TABLE 3. MINIMUM HEALTH AND DECENCY BUDGET, U.S.A.  
1929-1938

Year	Average Cost of budget	Income per member of working population	Ratio of income to budget	Deficiency index (1929=100)
1929	\$2,348	\$1,310	55.8	100
1930	2,294	1,194	52.0	93
1931	2,110	1,022	48.4	87
1932	1,916	792	41.3	74
1933	1,804	742	41.1	74
1934	1,856	851	45.8	82
1935	1,900	914	48.1	86
1936	1,922	1,048	54.5	98
1937	1,978	1,110	56.1	101
1938*	1,955	1,038	53.1	95

\* Preliminary.



Source: Labor Research Association.

Sometimes one may wonder whether it is fair to compare a family budget with the average income of a member of the working population. Not only is it fair, but it is the only correct comparison. Our figures show an average picture. Some workers certainly earned more than \$1,310 in 1929, but some were without jobs and starving. Some families probably had more than one breadwinner in the family, but many had none. The par-

tial data available on this question indicate that the overwhelming majority of working class families depend on the earnings of one breadwinner. Thus, a survey of native white families in New York City, conducted by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, revealed that more than four-fifths of the income in these families was contributed by one chief breadwinner. Only one out of six native white families had a supple-

mentary breadwinner, while the proportion among Negro families, which, by the way, had much lower income, was somewhat higher—four to one.

From the figures on per capita income and minimum budget we compute the figures of column 3, showing the proportion of the income to the corresponding budget. Year by year this column tells the story of how inadequate the workers' income was. The figures show that in 1932 and 1933 the workers' average income dropped but slightly over two-fifths of the minimum budget, rising somewhat in the subsequent years. And only during the last three years the income slightly exceeded half of the budget.

In the last column the figures show the deficiency index based on the ratio of income to budget, with the 1929 ratio taken as 100.

Looking at this column, the reader should bear in mind that in 1929 the deficiency in the per capita income, as compared to the minimum budget, was close to 50 per cent. The deficiency index went down from 100 in 1929 until in the depression years 1932 and 1933 it stood at 74, that is, 26 per cent below the 1929 level. The revival which began after 1933 brought it up, but only in 1937 did it reach the level of 1929, when another crisis sent it down again to 95.

The figures tell the story of starvation wages, continuous unemployment and inadequate relief. They show that in eight out of the last nine years, the deficiency in earnings was much greater than it was in 1929. They reflect what we could expect to find

if we look at figures showing what happened to workers' health and living standards during all these years.

Thus, the survey of the people's health, made during 1935-1936 by the U. S. Public Health Service, showed that both sickness and death rates are higher among the working population. As income goes down, sickness goes up. The working masses are sick more often and for more days at a time than are people with comfortable incomes. And as income goes down, there is less medical care. (See *Labor Fact Book IV*, p. 84.)

INADEQUATE INCOMES—DECREASED  
CONSUMPTION—DECLINING  
PRODUCTION

It is instructive also to observe the effect of insufficient incomes on the volume of consumption. The Federal Reserve Board collects and publishes figures on department store sales in the United States. These figures do not show all the purchases, but they reflect buying trends of the consuming public. The more money a worker receives, the more he and his family are in a position to spend on clothing, household articles, furniture—various articles which he can buy at a department store.

Table 4 shows how these purchases at department stores declined since 1929, and how they stayed down. The table also takes into account the fact that the population has been steadily increasing. By 1938, it was 7 per cent more than in 1929. So, to determine the changes in the department store sales per capita of the population, we corrected the index of sales for the in-

crease in population, thus getting the index of per capita sales.

TABLE 4. DEPARTMENT STORE SALES, U.S.A.—1929-1938

Year	Department store sales (Index, 1929=100)	Population	Per capita department store sales
1929	100	100	100
1930	92	101	91
1931	83	102	81
1932	62	102	60
1933	60	103	58
1934	68	104	65
1935	71	105	68
1936	79	106	75
1937	83	106	78
1938*	77	107	72

\* Preliminary.

Source: Computed from Federal Reserve Board index of department store sales and U. S. Census estimates of population.

With 1929 sales taken as 100, per capita sales in department stores went down 42 per cent by 1933. By 1937 the index reached 78, that is, 22 per cent below 1929. In 1938 it went down again to 72, or 28 per cent below the 1929 level.

Since this index represents the dollar value of department store sales, the drop in prices after 1929 would mean that actual volume of goods sold did not drop as severely as the dollar sales. However, the decline in prices was relatively smaller than the decline in sales, indicating that even physical volume of goods sold did decline appreciably since 1929.

When we look at industrial production in the United States, we find a similar situation. Both total and per capita production have been under

the 1929 level during the entire period. Total production did not recover sufficiently since 1932 to reach the 1929 level. By 1937, it reached an index of 92, which is still 8 per cent below 1929; but the new crisis of 1937-38 sent it down to 72 in 1938, that is, 28 per cent under 1929. As the population meanwhile grew considerably, *per capita* production was still farther under the 1929 level—in fact, about 33 per cent:

TABLE 5. PRODUCTION, U.S.A.—1929-38

Year	Production (Index, 1929 = 100)	Population	Per capita production
1929	100	100	100
1930	81	101	80
1931	68	102	67
1932	54	103	52
1933	64	103	62
1934	66	104	64
1935	76	105	72
1936	88	106	83
1937	92	106	87
1938*	72	107	67

\* Preliminary.

Source: Computed from Federal Reserve Board index of industrial production and U. S. Census estimates of population.

MASS UNEMPLOYMENT CONTINUES

The volume of production, as we observed, since 1929 has been considerably below the level of that year. As shown in Table 6, unemployment was greatest in 1932. Almost 17,000,000 people were then without jobs. Although production has risen markedly since then, estimates of unemployment indicate that the number of jobless continues high. As the table shows, the unemployed num-

bered 12,300,000 in 1938, even if those working on various federal emergency projects are counted as employed.

The continuing large-scale unemployment is frequently referred to as chronic mass unemployment. Our capitalist system, in spite of its productive capacity, cannot absorb the unemployed workers. Production, as we have seen, did increase, but not fast enough to compensate for technological change and industrial rationalization. These changes reduce the number of workers required to produce the same amount of goods.

TABLE 6  
EXTENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Year *	Total unemployed (millions)	On federal emergency work	Unemployed, exclud- ing those on federal emergency work
1932 .....	16.8	..	16.8
1933 .....	16.1	.6	15.5
1934 .....	16.8	3.0	13.8
1935 .....	16.6	2.5	14.1
1936 .....	14.7	3.6	11.1
1937 .....	14.9	2.2	12.7
1938 .....	16.1	3.8	12.3

\* As of November of each year.

Source: Labor Research Association estimates of unemployment.

If we consider also the important fact that our working population is steadily growing, we learn why unemployment continues to be such a grave problem. It is estimated that each year about 700,000 new work-

seekers are added to our working population, both employed and unemployed. These 700,000 do not include those who replace workers withdrawn from industry each year. Finally, we know that during the last two crises, thousands upon thousands of impoverished farmers and members of the middle class joined the mass of job-seekers.

This mass unemployment is a burden on labor, contributing heavily to the deterioration of labor conditions. The employed workers, supporting unemployed relatives and friends, do this at the expense of their families' living standards.

The unemployment figures used here are those of the Labor Research Association. There are many various estimates of unemployment. All of them are rough approximations of a true picture. In a recent study of these estimates, Dr. Jerome B. Cohen, in the *Journal of the American Statistical Association* (December, 1938), correctly pointed out that the differences are due to coverage, classification and definition. As he put it:

"The Labor Research Association's estimate included unemployment among farm labor. Other estimates did not consider farm labor. Allowances for persons leaving school, seeking work but never having had a position before, varied. The higher estimates of unemployed [the L.R.A.'s estimate is among the highest] included a one-million correction of the United States Census of April, 1930. Despite the mass of reputable statistical opinion in favor of this correction, those responsible for the lower estimates made no such allowances. Unemployment among professionals was not considered in the lower estimates."

We use the Labor Research Association estimate because we believe it



gives us a more inclusive picture of unemployment.

Impoverization of the toiling masses of the population over this entire period increases still further the wide gap between the huge growing productive possibilities of capitalism and the narrowing boundaries of consumption.

The 1937 crisis pushed a new burden on the shoulders of the working class which had not completely recovered from the consequences of the preceding one. The economic conditions of American labor, as we have seen, are marked by chronic unemployment and deteriorating living standards.

Unemployment continues to run at high levels. The recent studies of bourgeois economists reveal that even if production runs at the 1929 level, millions of workers would continue to be without jobs.

The unprecedented growth of trade unionism and the strike wave of 1936-37 helped both to raise wages and to reduce somewhat the working hours of labor. Our findings show, however, that these gains were not sufficient to stop the general deterioration in labor conditions of the employed and unemployed taken together.

These findings show that to prevent any further deterioration and bring an improvement in the labor conditions, it is essential to fight for it along the entire economic front.

The figures we have presented are themselves weapons to use in this fight. How wide is the economic field where the struggle for more progressive legislation, larger government appropriations, and similar steps

affect the living standards, we may observe from a few examples given below.

The wage-and-hour law, while a gain for labor, is not adequate. A campaign should be carried on to extend it to service workers, agricultural workers, transportation workers, workers not engaged in interstate commerce, who are not now covered by the provisions of the law. American labor should also be on its guard against the attacks of employers on the law when its full provision for 40 cents an hour and 40 hours a week goes into effect.

Much is yet to be done in safeguarding and expanding various social security laws. Payment of old age benefits should begin at once and benefits to older workers should be raised. The coverage of the unemployment insurance law should be expanded to include workers now excluded. Benefits should be increased and should last longer to give adequate protection to unemployed workers.

The fight for adequate W.P.A. appropriations should be intensified and never relinquished, because we know that both direct and indirect relief payments have been important in preventing a further depreciation of living standards. This means a need for stronger organization of employed workers in trade unions, and of the jobless in the Workers Alliance—and joint action of the employed and unemployed. With further unionization of labor goes organization of consumers to fight for lower prices on milk, bread, meat and other necessities. It means also the building of stronger organizations of farmers and farm

workers to develop their interests in unity with those of industrial workers.

Only persistent and organized efforts of all labor and progressive forces can break the stranglehold of monopoly capital. This means one united democratic front against reac-

tion and fascism, to defeat the tory bloc in Congress and throughout the country.\*

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\* We refer the reader to the section of the "Review of the Month," elsewhere in this issue, in which Comrade Bittelman discusses the present economic situation and the need for a thorough program of social security.—*The Editors.*

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A Speech of International Significance—

## Social and National Security

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# THE MEXICAN QUESTION IN THE SOUTHWEST

BY EMMA TENAYUCA and HOMER BROOKS

*State Chairman and State Secretary, Communist Party, Texas*

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

THE war of the United States with Mexico, in 1846, following the annexation of Texas, resulted in the conquest of the territory which now makes up the states of California, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado and part of Utah and Nevada. From the historical point of view the forcible incorporation of these areas in the United States was progressive, in that it opened up for development these territories which until then had stagnated under the inefficient, tyrannical, and semi-feudal control of Mexico. The predominant influence of the Spanish in the Southwest, particularly in California, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado and Texas, can be seen in the names of such cities as Los Angeles, Santa Fe, San Antonio, San Diego and San Francisco.

The acquisition of these lands brought into the Union a population originally Spanish and later Mexican, whose customs, language, traditions and culture were essentially different from those of the rest of the country. In the border area of the Southwest the Mexicans have always constituted a majority, both before and after the war with Mexico.

The expansion and industrializa-

tion that followed the Civil War, lasting until a relatively late period in the Southwest, saw the importation of thousands of Mexican workers into Texas, California, Colorado and Arizona. (To a lesser degree this was true of New Mexico, for geographical reasons. Deserts and mountains bordering Mexico prevented free interrelation with old Mexico; at the same time this border region has not made for the development of large-scale capitalist farming.) Railroad companies alone were responsible for a great number of those imported. It is safe to say that most of the railroads of these five states were built by Mexican labor.

With the development of capitalist farming in these states, and particularly in California and Texas, Mexico was again a source of cheap labor. Early figures on the number of Mexicans immigrating into the United States are not available, since until a relatively late period entrance into the United States was comparatively simple. Complete figures as to the number of Mexicans in the United States are today not available, since until 1930 Mexicans living here were not classified separately.

However, between 1925 and 1929

the heaviest immigration from Mexico took place. In the course of these five years, 283,738 Mexicans entered the United States, as follows:

1925 .....	50,602
1926 .....	58,017
1927 .....	77,162
1928 .....	58,456
1929 .....	39,501

Source: *The World Almanac*, 1937.

The 1930 census showed 1,500,000 Mexicans residing in the United States. Of these, all but 150,000 were found to be living in the states of California, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado and Arizona. However, these figures include only the foreign-born and first generation Mexicans. They exclude the large Spanish-speaking population of New Mexico, which, according to H. T. Manuel of the University of Texas, numbers over 250,000, or approximately half the state population. These figures also exclude Mexicans of the third, fourth and fifth generations and those descendants of the early Spanish colonists of any of the other four states. Therefore, we can readily state that the Mexican population of the Southwest numbers approximately 2,000,000.

Thus, we can see that the present Mexican population in the Southwest is made up of two groups: descendants of those living in the territory at the time of annexation, and immigrant Mexicans and first or second generation native-born drawn from the impoverished peasantry of Northern Mexico to work as super-exploited wage workers in railroad and building construction and in highly developed (capitalist) agriculture in the border area.

However, there is no sharp distinction between these two groups, either in their social conditions or in their treatment at the hands of the Anglo-American bourgeoisie. Assimilation among those groups which were here before the conquest of these territories by the United States has been slow, and the Spanish language remains today the language of both groups.

The distinction has been sharpened somewhat in New Mexico, since a lack of direct contact with Mexico led the majority of Mexicans to regard themselves as Spanish-Americans or Latin Americans, and consequently to regard Spain rather than Mexico as the mother country. However, this distinction is being done away with more and more by the social conditions under which the Mexicans or Spanish-Americans are suffering, which are breaking down barriers and leading to unification. The pro-Mexico sentiment among the people in New Mexico was seen when the Spanish-speaking population rallied to support Mexico during the recent oil expropriations and even raised funds to be sent to Mexico.

Those Spanish-speaking people of Texas whose ancestors were in the state prior to its annexation from Mexico today regard themselves as Mexicans. We can thus state that the Spanish-speaking population of the Southwest, both the American-born and the foreign-born, are one people. The Mexican population of the Southwest is closely bound together by historical, political and cultural ties.

The treatment meted out to the Mexicans as a whole has from the earliest days of the sovereignty of the United States been that of a con-

quered people. From the very beginning they were robbed of their land, a process that has continued even up to the present time. In 1916, immediately following the abortive De la Rosa movement in the Texas lower Rio Grande Valley for an autonomous Mexican regime, Texas Rangers, in cooperation with land speculators, came into small Mexican villages in the border country, massacred hundreds of unarmed, peaceful Mexican villagers and seized their lands. Sometimes the seizures were accompanied by the formality of signing bills of sale—at the point of a gun. So that, where, until 1916, virtually all of the land was the property of Mexicans, today almost none of it is Mexican-owned. In many cases farmers who were well-to-do land owners today barely eke out a living employed as irregular wage workers at 60c to 75c a day on the very lands they once owned. This land-grabbing has continued under one guise or another throughout the Southwest. In New Mexico fewer than one-half of the Mexican or Spanish-American farmers retain any of their ancestral lands.

#### THE PRESENT SOCIAL STATUS OF THE MEXICAN PEOPLE

With the penetration of Anglo-Americans into these states, the Mexicans have been practically segregated into colonies. This is particularly true of Colorado. Disease, low wages, discrimination and lack of educational facilities are typical of these communities.

Mexican labor imported into the United States has uniformly received lower wages than those paid Anglo-

American workers. The vast majority of the Southwest are today found doing only the most menial work, the bulk of them having been excluded from skilled crafts. In the cities, although Mexicans are found in the garment industry and laundries and as laborers in building construction, the overwhelming majority are also seasonal agricultural workers. This is true of the Mexicans in all states except the Spanish-Americans of New Mexico, where instead of being agricultural workers, the majority are small farmers, tenants or share-croppers.

In Texas, in the area of Corpus Christi, few if any Mexicans are found working in the extensive oil field discovered there several years ago. Corpus Christi, we may add, is one of the cities that lies within the belt where the Mexicans form the majority of the population. An example of the kind of industry that Mexicans are not excluded from is the pecan industry in San Antonio, which until recently employed 12,000 Mexican workers, with wages averaging two to three dollars a week.

Near-starvation faces thousands of Mexican agricultural workers who must live part of the year in the cities and try to get work on W.P.A. A special clause in the relief appropriation act of 1937, which excludes foreign-born workers who have not taken out citizenship papers, resulted in dismissals of thousands from W.P.A. In El Paso, for example, 600 out of 1,800 on W.P.A. were so dismissed.

The reaction of most of the Mexican W.P.A. workers to these dismissals could not lead to acquiring citizenship papers due to language, cost, and

other burdensome obstacles. Their resentment was expressed by demanding the opportunity to work on all jobs, regardless of citizenship, a demand which by virtue of their historical rights in this territory is unchallengeable.

Discrimination against the Mexican people can also be seen in regard to relief appropriations. The Relief Commission of Los Angeles presents a special budget for Mexicans, claiming that diet and living expenses are lower among the Mexicans than among other sections of the population. Since the Mexicans live in houses without electricity or natural gas, they are subject to smaller relief portions in every state in the Southwest.

The conditions of the Mexican agricultural workers can be compared only to those of the Negro sharecroppers in the South. According to the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America, the average wage of the Mexican beet worker in Colorado is from \$100 to \$200 per year. The average wage of the Texas cotton picker is considerably less; in 1938 it ranged from 35c to 75c per 100 lbs. In those places where the U.C.A.P.A.W.A. carried on struggles, the prices were raised.

In New Mexico, where the Mexicans or Spanish-Americans have been engaged in small farming, fully one-half of the farmers have lost their land. Individuals such as John T. Raskob and large corporations have taken over ownership, and sharecropping is rapidly taking the place of small independent farming. Another factor which threatens the existence of the farmers of New Mexico and the

agricultural workers of the Southwest has been the large migration of Anglo-American farmers from the dust bowl.

The crisis has intensified the competition for jobs; a fact that is resulting more and more in displacing Mexican workers in the cities. For example, the Sun-Tex canneries in Texas, located in a city with an overwhelming majority of Mexicans, hires only Anglo-American workers.

The Mexicans are not only subject to wage differentials and discrimination, but a view of their political status in the five states referred to, reveals conditions in many ways comparable to the political status of the Negro people in the South. Denial of voting rights to the foreign born means disfranchisement of nearly half the adult Mexican population. Secondly, the semi-migratory character of the work of most of the Mexican workers disfranchises in addition many of those who are citizens. Finally, in Texas the poll tax disfranchises many of those who would otherwise be able to vote. Thus, due to one or another of the three causes, in San Antonio, a city of 250,000, nearly half of whom are Mexicans, only 8,000 Mexicans were eligible to vote in 1938.

This disfranchisement has resulted in nearly complete Anglo-American domination politically in most of the communities where the Mexican people are a majority. In only two or three counties in Texas do the Mexicans hold the decisive elective positions. (In New Mexico the situation is otherwise, since there the majority are Spanish-American, non-migratory, and no poll tax is in force.) The 800,000 Mexicans in Texas have only two

representatives in the State Legislature.

Lack of representation in local or state politics and low economic standards have resulted in poor health conditions and lack of educational facilities. An example of this is Texas, where the death rate among Mexicans is decidedly higher than among Anglo-Americans, and even higher than the rate among Negroes. The following statistics well illustrate this fact:

	<i>Per cent of Illiteracy</i>	<i>Deaths per 10,000</i>
Counties with a heavy Mexican population	15.5	98
Counties with a heavy Negro population . .	6.7	86
Counties with Anglo-American population	1.7	58.5

Actually, the relative difference in the death and illiteracy rates is higher, since the statistics refer to county averages which include considerable Anglo-American and some Negro populations in all of the counties having a heavy Mexican population. Health conditions among the Mexicans are evidently worse than among any other section of the population in the Southwest, or even in the United States. San Antonio has the highest infant mortality rate of any large city in the United States. It likewise has a higher rate of deaths from tuberculosis than any other city in the country.

The unequal treatment that the Mexican people suffer is manifested in all phases of life. The practice of excluding Mexicans from hotels and restaurants is prevalent in all these five states. A few years ago an international incident took place in Victoria, Texas, when an official delegation of

students from Mexico was excluded from a restaurant. Signs bar Mexicans from dance halls in Los Angeles. In Colorado small town restaurants display signs: "White Trade Only."

Segregation of Mexican children in small town public schools in Texas is a common practice. Several years ago a group of Mexican tax-payers in San Antonio, by threatening to withhold the payment of school taxes, successfully fought this issue. A few months ago Dr. Juan Del Rio, a resident of San Marcos, had to bring suit against the school board of that city to win the right of his children to attend the school established for Anglo-American children.

The suppression of the Spanish language, of the native culture of the Mexicans, is one of the reasons for the high rate of illiteracy. The most important reason is, of course, the semi-migratory life of the agricultural worker, which forces the children out of school at an early age, and makes school attendance irregular for many.

The social conditions of the Mexicans can well be summed up by the following statistics based on the census of 1930:

#### PERCENTAGE OF ILLITERACY

	<i>New Mexico</i>	<i>Arizona</i>	<i>Colorado</i>
Native white. . . . .	7.7	.5	.8
Mexicans . . . . .	36.4	28.5	22.0
Negroes . . . . .	..	..	3.9

Source: *The World Almanac*, 1937.

To summarize, the Mexican people of the Southwest have a common historical background and are bound by a common culture, language and communal life. It should be noted, however, that the Mexican communities

exist side by side with Anglo-American communities within a territory where the populated districts are separated by large but thinly populated mountainous and arid regions.

Should the conclusion, therefore, be drawn that the Mexican people in the Southwest constitute a nation—or that they form a segment of the Mexican nation (South of the Rio Grande)? Our view is no. Historically the Mexican people in the Southwest have evolved in a series of bordering, though separated, communities, their economic life inextricably connecting them, not only with one another, but with the Anglo-American population in each of these separated Mexican communities. Therefore, their economic (and hence, their political) interests are welded to those of the Anglo-American people of the Southwest.

We must accordingly regard the Mexican people in the Southwest as part of the American nation, who, however, have not been so accepted heretofore by the American bourgeoisie; the latter has continued to hinder the process of national unification of the American people by treating the Mexican and Spanish-Americans as a conquered people.

Comrade Stalin's classic definition of a nation states: "*A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture.*"\* We see, therefore, that the Mexicans in the United States lack two of the important characteristics of a nation, name-

ly, territorial and economic community.

#### THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN MEXICAN AND NEGRO CONDITIONS

The status of the Mexican people as an oppressed national group may be compared in a number of aspects with that of the Negro people in the South today. The policy of a wage differential, based upon the super-exploitation of the Negroes, has been carried over from the South and applied to the Mexican population of the Southwest. The treatment accorded the Mexicans is also a carry-over to the United States of Wall Street's imperialistic exploitation of Latin America.

The degree of oppression can also be compared to that suffered by the Negro people. Every effort of the Mexican people to organize has been met by repression, as in the case of the lettuce strikers in California; or by attempting repression, as in the case of the San Antonio pecan workers. The threat of deportation has been an important weapon used by the reactionary forces to break strikes and keep the workers from organizing.

Likewise, we might compare the social forms of discrimination of the Mexicans, previously cited, with those of the Negro people.

#### SOCIAL AND POLITICAL DEMANDS IN RECENT STRUGGLES

During the first series of demonstrations among the unemployed in San Antonio, the Border Patrolmen were used against the Mexicans. Scores were herded before the United States Immigration office and threatened

\* Joseph Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, p. 8, International Publishers, New York.



with deportation merely for membership in the Workers Alliance. On one occasion a number were beaten, including several American-born Mexicans.

The demand for the right to organize into unions without interference from the immigration authorities was immediately raised. As a result of the struggle by the Mexicans around this issue, the Border Patrolmen of San Antonio have not been used again as a strike-breaking agency.

Upon the formation of locals of the U.C.A.P.A.W.A. in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas, the Mexican workers raised the demand for schools conducted in Spanish. At the Brownsville (Texas) district convention of the U.C.A.P.A.W.A., a resolution calling for the establishment of schools to be conducted both in English and Spanish in all towns where Mexicans were a majority was unanimously adopted.

A year ago the announcement by the Workers Alliance of San Antonio of a campaign to combat illiteracy brought 250 Mexicans who registered for classes. However, the Mexicans would only attend classes providing they were taught in Spanish, a demand to which the W.P.A. acceded.

The tendency of the Mexican people toward solidarity was clearly manifested during the pecan strike in San Antonio a year ago. Scores of small Mexican merchants signed petitions demanding of Mayor Quin the right of the strikers peacefully to picket the factories without interference from the police.

The recent struggles of the Mexicans in New Mexico are significant. Liga Obrera, an organization of small farmers, has not only fought evictions

successfully, but has also taken up the struggle against all kinds of discrimination and for W.P.A. jobs. Thus, Liga Obrera and the U.C.A.-P.A.W.A. unions in Texas and Colorado have not only taken up the economic demands of the workers, but have entered the struggle for social, cultural and political demands.

#### WHAT PATH TO FOLLOW

Until now the various struggles of the Mexican people in the Southwest have been limited in the main to isolated instances enjoying only partial or purely local support. Strike struggles by the Mexican workers in all Southwestern states; struggles to hold the land in New Mexico; large demonstrations against discrimination in relief in most centers of Mexican population, particularly in San Antonio; and, finally, occasional struggles by various middle-class organizations, especially the League of United Latin American Citizens (L.U.L.A.C.) against discrimination, and segregation, is the record of recent years.

The struggles of the last few years signalize the awakening of the Mexicans and Spanish-Americans in the Southwest. *The task now is to build the democratic front among the Mexican masses through unifying them on the basis of specific needs and in support of the social and economic measures of the New Deal.*

A significant beginning in this direction is the forthcoming First Congress of the Mexican and Spanish-American people, to be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on March 24-26. The preparations for the Congress are a direct outgrowth of the mass struggles in San Antonio and

New Mexico. It is sponsored by labor, fraternal and religious organizations among the Mexican people, as well as by Anglo-American political, and community leaders in Southwestern states.

The desire of the Mexican people for unification is indicated, not only by the present preparations for this Congress, but also by two conferences held recently in Texas, initiated independently of the Congress movement but which now have joined in its sponsorship. We refer here to the Dallas national conference of the Camara de Trabajadores Mexicanos of the United States, a national group of loosely federated workers' clubs, and the Port Arthur State Conference of Mexican Societies, initiated by a number of Mexican fraternal societies with consular support.

In California, a thoroughly representative State Congress of the Mexican people has been held in preparation for the national gathering. Similar steps are under way in New Mexico, Colorado and Arizona.

Upon what is this movement for Mexican unification based? What are its main objectives?

It is a people's movement, uniting the interests of large and important sections of the population, over two million strong, who, in alliance with the country's democratic forces, in the Southwest and nationally, can free themselves from the special oppression and discrimination in all its phases that have existed for almost a century.

The struggle is directed:

1. Against economic discrimination—extra low wages; expropriation of small land holders; discrimination in the right to work in all trades and

crafts, particularly skilled trades; discrimination against professional and white collar workers; discrimination in relief and right to employment in W.P.A.

2. For educational and cultural equality—equal educational facilities for the Mexican population; no discrimination against children of Mexican parentage; a special system of schooling to meet the needs of the migratory families; the study of the Spanish language and *the use of Spanish as well as English in the public schools and universities* in communities where Mexicans are a majority; the granting of equal status to the Spanish language, as has been done in New Mexico and in those counties and states where the Mexican people form a large part of the total population.

3. Against social oppression—for laws making illegal the various forms of Jim-Crowism, segregation in living quarters, schools, parks, hotels, restaurants, etc. This struggle must be linked with that of the Negro people.

4. Against political repression. The struggle for the right to vote is divided into two phases:

(a) The majority of the Mexicans are American-born. The problem is, therefore, one of enforcing their citizenship right. This means demanding that all legal and extra-legal restrictions to the free exercise of the ballot be removed. These include residence qualifications, difficult for semi-migratory workers to meet; and in Texas, the elimination of the poll tax.

(b) Those who are foreign born must join with all of the immigrant groups in the United States to secure the democratization of the federal regulations pertaining to *length of*

*time, cost, and language conditions* required for citizenship; the aim being to simplify the process whereby all who intend to remain permanent residents of the United States—and this includes nearly all of the Mexicans—and who express a desire for naturalization, can become citizens.

In some states, as in Texas, it may become feasible to restore, at least until federal requirements for becoming citizens become less onerous, the provisions in the Texas state constitution which, until 1921, granted voting rights to all Mexicans and other foreign born, citizens and non-citizens, providing they met residence requirements and declared their desire for American citizenship.\*

In this general movement the leading role will undoubtedly be played by the proletarian base of the Mexican population, its overwhelming majority. This is already evident from the impetus given the movement for Mexican rights by the large strike struggles in Texas, California and Colorado. The surest guarantee for the full and successful development of the people's movement will be in further trade union organization among the Mexican workers; in the first place, in the U.C.A.P.A.W.A., affiliated with the C.I.O.

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\* The special status due to historic conditions that the Mexican people occupied prior to the migration of Anglo-Americans into the Southwestern states can be seen from the following two factors: First, only six months' residence but not citizenship was the requirement for voting among Mexicans in Texas until after 1921, when the state constitution was amended. Secondly, the Spanish language has, from the earliest days, been an official language alongside of English in New Mexico. However, this does not mean that the Mexicans during this time were not subject to discrimination, Jim-Crowism and unequal wages.

It would, of course, be the greatest mistake to give a purely *labor* aspect to this broad people's movement. But to be most effective, this movement must bring about the closest relationship with the labor and democratic forces in the Anglo-American population of the Southwest.

That the Anglo-Americans will respond to any initiative taken by Mexican people in seeking a closer relationship and mutual benefits is evident from such examples as that in Colorado, where the Mexican beet workers (U.C.A.P.A.W.A.) have an agreement with the Anglo-American farmers for joint action against the beet-sugar interests that exploit them both.

In San Antonio, last year's strike of 12,000 pecan workers could not have been successful without the important support it received from national and state councils of the C.I.O. and from progressive Anglo-American political leaders, such as Maury Maverick, in defense of civil rights. In the Texas Rio Grande Valley, unity between the small Anglo-American farmers and the Mexican agricultural workers will be the key to improving the conditions of both.

#### STERILE PATHS

One of the oldest organizations among the Mexican people is the League of United Latin American Citizens (L.U.L.A.C.) with branches in most of the Southwestern states. In the past, its viewpoint was colored by the outlook of petty-bourgeois native-born, who seek escape from the general oppression that has been the lot of the Mexican people as a whole. It meant an attempt to achieve Americanization, while barring the still un-

naturalized foreign-born from membership.

It resulted in the glorification of the English language and Anglo-American culture to the extent of prohibiting Spanish within the local societies. And, finally, it ignored the need for labor organization among the masses of super-exploited workers. This program of the L.U.L.A.C. resulted almost from the beginning in its isolation from the Mexican masses, who felt that it would lead them nowhere except to a possible split between the native and foreign-born. The extreme to which this policy led the L.U.L.A.C. was shown in Colorado a few years ago, when, at the height of the depression, a Republican governor proposed to deport 50,000 Mexican workers who were on relief, and the L.U.L.A.C. in Denver endorsed this proposal.

Recently, this splitting policy of the L.U.L.A.C. has undergone significant changes. An amendment to its constitution recognizes Mexico as the cultural motherland. In several cities in Texas and in New Mexico, the L.U.L.A.C. has entered into cooperative relationship with other Mexican groups, including labor organizations. In Texas they have led successful struggles against segregation in public schools, parks, etc., not only in behalf of American citizens, but of all Mexicans. With this change in the orientation of the L.U.L.A.C., which is welcomed by all friends of the people's unification, it can be confidently expected that this important organization of the Mexican middle class will play an increasing role in the general movement for Mexican rights.

Among the proposed solutions to

the Mexican question is the idea of repatriation. By this proposal, the 2,000,000 Mexican and Spanish-American people in the Southwest can be transported to Mexico. It is easy to see that this plan is fantastic, if only because, as we have shown, the 2,000,000 people under consideration are bound to the American soil by historical roots, cultural peculiarities, due to intermingling through several generations with the Anglo-American people in the Southwest, and by present economic and social ties. No, the solution to the problem of the Mexicans and Spanish Americans lies in the Southwest and not in Mexico.

There are those, even among liberal Anglo-Americans, who hold that either repatriation or some other means of exodus—at least from the larger cities—is an economic necessity, on the assumption that (as, for example, in San Antonio) “there is such a large proportion of unskilled common labor that the problem of their reemployment can never be solved.” To these people we must say that the solution lies:

1. In removing the barriers to employment of Mexicans in all categories of skilled, white collar and professional work.

2. In facilitating the cultural development of the Mexican people, which will help eliminate the conditions responsible for their status as unskilled workers.

The attitude of the American bourgeoisie to the Mexican question in the Southwest is not uniform. That section which derives super-profits from the exploitation of Mexican wage-labor is content with the status quo. Another section is anxious now that

capitalist expansion and construction in the Southwest have passed their peak to get rid of the relief burden of the unemployed masses, by deportation to Mexico, à la Hitler. A third section still clings to the former program of the L.U.L.A.C.—Americanization by assimilation.

It is only recently, with the growth of the labor movement among the Mexican people, that a correct program has developed, calling for abolition of all restrictions—economic, political and cultural—and for due recognition of the historic rights of the Mexican people in this territory.

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MEXICAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT

"No people oppressing other people can be free," wrote Engels\* in 1874. The correctness of Engels' statement is validated in the low wages, and generally low social status of the majority of the Anglo-American workers who live in the areas where the Mexican people form a large portion of the population. The status of the Mexican people in those areas has, further, tended to make them easy prey to corrupt and reactionary political machines—a consequence that affects the vital interests of the Anglo-American population in the Southwest.

The rise of the Mexican people's movement is therefore of crucial importance to the general democratic and progressive movement of the Anglo-American people in the Southwest, which is already developing under the leadership of such men as Maury Maverick in Texas and Olson in California.

It is likewise significant in relation to the movement for Negro rights in the South. For, the special exploitation of the Mexican people in the Southwest is, in many respects, simply a continuation of the special exploitation and oppression to which the Negro people in the South have been subjected. A blow against the oppression of one will be a blow for the freedom of both.

Internationally, the Mexican and Spanish-American people's movement in the United States has an important bearing on the relationship between the United States and Latin-America, especially Mexico. Unless the "Good Neighbor" policy begins at home, with respect to the treatment of the Mexican people, it will be difficult to convince Latin American of the sincerity of this policy.

It is interesting to note that a fascist publication in Mexico City, *Novedades*, a vehicle for Nazi influence, and therefore an opponent of the efforts made at Lima to organize the Western Hemisphere against fascist penetration, seized upon the fate of the 2,000,000 Mexicans in the Southwest—whose condition it described as being worse than that of the Jews in Germany—as an argument: (1) against the Mexican people concerning themselves with Jewish persecutions in Germany; (2) for a struggle against the "Jewish-dominated capitalists" of the United States, who "hold the Mexican population of the Southwest in bondage." The winning of the people in the Southwest for an anti-fascist peace policy and for continental solidarity of the Western Hemisphere, therefore, means winning them to a realization of the need for granting

\* *Volksstaat*, 1874, No. 69.

recognition to the historical rights of the Mexican people in the Southwest.

Due to their proximity to Mexico, it is important to the democratic people's front movement in that country that the Mexican people of the United States be organized, united and brought into progressive alignment with the democratic forces of the United States, as a barrier to the efforts of the Nazi-financed Mexican fascists to win a base among the Mexi-

cans in the border states in order to further their aims in Mexico itself.

The Mexican people's movement in the Southwest will constitute one more important and powerful link in the growing movement for the democratic front in the United States. The achievement of its objectives will be a decisive step forward toward the national unification of the American people.

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*"Only through the medium of an alliance of peoples conducting a self-sacrificing struggle for the cause of peace is it possible to frustrate the criminal plans of the instigators of war. A defense cordon of armed peoples who have joined their forces with the great Soviet people will doom fascism to impotence and hasten on its defeat and its inevitable ruin."—Manifesto of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, Nov. 7, 1938.*

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# CLASS FORCES IN CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE

BY HARRISON GEORGE

WE CONCLUDED the previous article\* with the officially stated purpose of the "Pro-Rate Law" which was put into effect during the Merriam regime in California. This law restricts agricultural production indirectly by restricting marketing, and making free marketing by farmers punishable under state law as "a misdemeanor."

## CLAIMS FOR THE PRO-RATE LAW

To get small farmers to accept the Pro-Rate Law, the time-worn theory was propagated that limiting the supply would increase the price, without regard to the total purchasing power in the market. This theory also left out of the reckoning that, since the full crop must be raised, though not marketed, the cost of raising the "surplus" held off the market must be included in the total production cost, thus narrowing the profit margin on the marketed crop to the point of disappearance.

This prospective loss is a reality to the family-sized farm, whose unit cost is higher than that of the big "factory farm." Such "factory farms" are owned or operated by the same capitalists who operate canneries,

wineries and other processing enterprises, as well as wholesale distribution agencies, and the banks which finance the whole set-up. Thus, the factory farm might well engage in a game of freeze-out with the small family farms and "lose money" on its farm operations, while making excellent profits on processing, distributing and financing.

Another argument for the Pro-Rate Law is the simple one of "regulation" of the "flow of products to market." This is an appealing argument. But this is *not* the purpose of the Pro-Rate Law—which is restriction. And while the federal A.A.A. gives definite and known compensation payments for restrictions, the Pro-Rate gives nothing, except the mentioned promise that restricted supply may return higher prices.

The "discussion" of a program on any product is dominated by processors, big growers and—*bankers*.

Thus, although there is nothing in the law about price-fixing or prices, the small farmer is told that he must vote *for the price offered* as an integral part of voting for the program. And, though the price be ruinous to him, the whole battery of propagandists from big growers, processors and bankers are put to work on hastily

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\* This is the second and concluding section of Comrade George's article, the first part of which appeared in the February issue.—*The Editors*.

called and unrepresentative "meetings," and the program is declared "carried."

Even if these interested parties did not—as they do—manufacture "majorities" at will, the literal provisions of the Pro-Rate Law are most involved, and defeat real democratic expression, for the final voting is by acres! And the whole apparatus of Pro-Rate administration consists of appointees who under Merriam were all big growers and Associated Farmers. Theoretically, the farmers "elect" a list of "nominees"—but the State Commission appoints its choice.

#### WORKINGS OF THE PRO-RATE LAW

The Pro-Rate works differently upon occasion. The Pro-Rated (restricted) percentage of the estimated crop may, as with apples, be left to rot in the orchards. Prune growers, last season, were instructed to "drop" a percentage (shake them from the trees and let them rot on the ground). With raisins, if the Pro-Rated part is 30 per cent, the farmer must deliver 30 per cent of his raisins to the "pool" warehouse of the Pro-Rate Commission, before he can get a "free tonnage certificate" that authorizes him to sell the other 70 per cent—if he can find a buyer.

Theoretically, he has an "equity" in that pool. The Commission may sell raisins from it—though, if it does, they will compete with those the farmer is trying to sell. And he will get a share of the pool proceeds after storage and handling costs are deducted. But since there is no reason for a Pro-Rate if there is a market for all the raisins, such outcome is illusory. In proportion as enlarged purchasing power

through general recovery may increase the market demand, the Pro-Rated raisins may be sold from the pool. But too often the pooled raisins lie in warehouses until the next crop forces their disposal as a "by-product"—hog feed at \$15 a ton—and the farmer's equity vanishes.

Observe that a farmer must get the cost of producing 100 per cent of his crop out of 70 per cent (in wine grapes in 1938 it was 55 per cent). He must farm forty acres, for example, paying principal and interest on a 100 per cent mortgage with 70 per cent income, from 28 acres. And, as mentioned, he frequently finds that the "higher price" promised him by restricting the market has been transformed into a lower price and enforced by the restriction program.

At the same time, any prospect of a good market in a one-season crop is invariably taken advantage of by purely capitalistic "speculative" farming. The speculators, for example, will rent land, throw modern machinery on it, reap the profit, and then withdraw, while the small farmer, whose family and home depend on returns from a Pro-Rate restricted crop, is ruined.

Inequality, aside from that widely practised by Merriam's corrupt agents who remain largely in control, is inherent in the very pretension of "equality." The same restriction laid upon the small family farm as upon the big capitalist grower makes farming impossible for the former, while being at the most only slightly less profitable for the latter.

#### GROWING OPPOSITION TO RESTRICTION

The Communist Party, pointing out



the anti-social nature of all restrictions on production or marketing while millions go hungry, opposes all such *compulsory* restrictions. It advocates that all "surpluses" be purchased by the Surplus Commodities Corporation of the federal government for relief to the needy; likewise that the farmers' demand for prices based on the cost of production be given legislative recognition.

With the election victory in California, and a growing indignation at the Pro-Rate, the revolt against this restrictive law is taking organized form. At its last convention the State Grange pledged itself to Pro-Rate repeal. With Grange support the *Farmers League for Pro-Rate Repeal* was organized at Santa Rosa in February, representative of organized small growers in olives, prunes, figs, dry wine grapes, apples, walnuts and apricots. It has to buck the well-oiled machine of the Associated Farmers, the processors and bankers, and their numerous stooges in the Legislature, where the Senate, at least, remains in control of reaction.

Bills have been introduced for repeal by Assembly progressives. But the farmers will not control the marketing of their products until this fight for repeal is carried over into a movement for democratically managed cooperatives. These should get aid from state and federal agencies like the Farm Security Administration—and from the trade unions, which can do much to assist, especially through consumers' cooperatives, and by carrying out the neglected decision of the C.I.O. for a "Joint Farmer-Labor Committee on Cooperative Enterprise."

#### DEVELOPING FARMER-LABOR UNITY

The California organization of the Communist Party has taken some laudable forward steps. It studied this question and adopted a general and specific program last year. But its ability to apply the program was limited by an almost total absence of farmer members in the Party. Its membership even in the rural centers was negligible. Since then it has built fairly good branches in the main cities of the rural regions; now from this base it must actually organize farmers into its ranks and build the democratic front among them.

The political basis is surely there. Every California county voted for Roosevelt in 1936, and the Olson ticket swept the rural regions in 1938. On the clearly labor issue of the Associated Farmer-proposed Proposition No. 1 to destroy the unions, the rural counties (towns included, of course) went against it by 122,000 votes. The farmers, indeed, are running ahead of many of the more sectarian elements of organized labor as concerns farmer-labor collaboration.

The state Grange officially declared for such collaboration last election. Frequent delegations from farmer groups visit the large cities seeking to interest the unions in consumer cooperatives for their products. They offer union contracts to labor on their farms if union labor will help them find markets through cooperatives.

It is the writer's impression that such connections have too often been neglected. The assault on unionism by the Associated Farmers, and the simultaneous discovery that a large section of the farmers voted progres-

sive aroused organized labor for the first time to reach out for an ally on the farms. These factors also illustrated to labor that there are class differences among farmers and that the small farmers are ripe for an alliance, at least on specific issues of visible mutual interest.

The reactionary theory of the Associated Farmers that—even if farmers might “get along” with city union labor—they have basic interests opposed to unionization of farm wage labor, is seen to be fundamentally false upon the slightest analysis.

Out of the 150,000 farms of California, we find that (in 1935) no less than 93,499 are worked with farm family labor exclusively; and that 31,211 farms use “both family and hired help.” Of the 14,247 that use “hired labor only,” the genuine big business farmers who use “ten or more” hired laborers are only 2,014—a mere handful out of the state’s 150,000 farms.

Whether the strictly “family labor” farmers have thought it out or not, they—and to a large degree those who use both family and hired labor—can be shown in five minutes that their own labor will be cheapened if and when their rich farmer neighbors succeed in beating down the wages of their farm wage workers (more than likely producing the same crop). For what the small farmers produce must compete in the market with the product of their slave-driver neighbors.

Still further, with deepening impoverishment, more small farmers seek to add to their inadequate farm income by wage labor. In 1934, there were no less than 46,326 California

farmers (out of 150,000—30.8 per cent) who worked an average of 172 days each off their farms as wage laborers—often on the big growers’ farms. They put in a total of 7,950,253 work days as wage workers. Why should these semi-proletarians be hostile to unions?

If these figures are not enough to refute the myth that “all” farmers are “inherently” hostile to organized labor, we must recall that thousands of farm boys and girls must each year seek work in canneries and other jobs. These youth, still too much neglected by the labor and progressive movement, certainly belong to labor, and constitute a nexus between the proletariat and the mass of small farmers.

There remains only the need for activity by the labor and progressive movement to establish the fraternal bonds of farmer-labor cooperation. The class differences serve as a guide to such activity. On one side, we see a small percentage of great capitalistic landholders, a Junker type of feudal baron. The traditional feudal paternalism toward serfs has, however, been entirely replaced by the ruthless greed of the great industrial capitalist and banker, with whom the California Junker is indistinguishably allied and identified.

On the other side, we see about 200,000 migratory laborers (“fruit traps”) from “Dust Bowl” and “tractored out” sources, who are abused worse than animals. We see the vast majority of 600,000 actual resident farm people, and the bulk of 1,000,000 people in the rural towns and villages—all of whose interests are opposed to the reactionary bloc of agrarian and industrial monopolists.

The task is to uproot the centers that reaction has built up among these people by deceit and violence through the Associated Farmers, and to build the democratic front among the farming and rural town masses.

Reaction, particularly with the aid of Trotskyism, seeks to poison the workers against the farmers, as the Associated Farmers try to poison the farmers against the workers. They complement each other in a division of labor. Thus, in California, too, we hear some ideas expressed in the labor movement such as "the farmers are all reactionary and capitalist-minded."

Marx and Engels fought against Ferdinand Lassalle on exactly this point.

In his article, "The Peasant Question in France and Germany," written in 1894, Engels stated:

"... And, indeed we stand decidedly on the side of the small peasant; we will do everything in any way admissible to make his lot more bearable, to facilitate his transition to the cooperative, if he decides to take this step, and even if he cannot as yet bring himself to this decision, to make a longer period of consideration possible for him on his holding. We do this, not only because we regard the small peasant who does his own work as virtually belonging to us, but also in

the direct interest of the Party. The greater the number of peasants whom we can save from actual downfall into the proletariat and win for ourselves while they are still peasants, the more rapidly and easily will the social revolution take place."\*

The menace of fascism consolidating its influence among the rural population admits of no conciliation with such tendencies that underestimate or oppose the democratic potentialities of the farming masses. Such "theoretical differences" are the conscious or unconscious importations into the labor movement of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism, which Lenin fought from the beginning and over which Stalin and his co-workers finally triumphed.

As Comrade William Z. Foster has shown, American history since colonial days is rich with incidents of unity of the toilers of farm and factory against their common exploiters. It is a natural affinity founded in common interest, and upon it Lenin and Stalin, with the guidance of Marx and Engels, built and guided the Party of Bolshevism that gave the world the first socialist nation.

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\* Cited in *The Correspondence of Marx and Engels*, p. 526, International Publishers, New York.

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# CLASS CONFLICTS IN THE SOUTH—1850-1860

PART II \*

BY HERBERT BIEL

## NON-SLAVEHOLDER VS. SLAVEHOLDER

IN 1860 there were over eight million white people in the slaveholding states. Of these but 384,000 were slaveholders among whom were 77,000 owning but one Negro. Less than 200,000 whites throughout the South owned as many as ten slaves—a minimum necessity for a plantation. And it is to be noted that, while, in 1850 one out of every three whites was connected, directly or indirectly, with slaveholding, in 1860 only one out of every four had any direct or indirect connection with slaveholding. Moreover, in certain areas, particularly Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri and Virginia, the proportion of slaves to the total population noticeably fell.<sup>1</sup> \*\*

These facts are at the root of the maturing class conflict—slaveholder versus non-slaveholder—which was the outstanding internal political factor in the South in the decade prior to Secession. It is, of course, true generally that, “. . . the real central theme of Southern history seems to have

been the maintenance of the planter class in control.”<sup>2</sup> But never did that class face greater danger than in the decade preceding the Civil War.

Let us briefly examine the challenges to Bourbon rule in a few Southern states.

In Virginia,<sup>3</sup> at the insistence of the generally free-labor, non-plantation West united with artisans and mechanics of Eastern cities, a constitutional convention was held in 1850-51. On two great questions the Bourbons lost; representation was considerably equalized by the overwhelming vote of 75,748 to 11,063, and the suffrage was extended to include all free white males above twenty-one years of age. The history of Virginia for the next eight years revolves around an ever-sharpening struggle between the slaveholders and non-slaveholders. The power of the latter was illustrated in the election of Letcher over Goggin in 1859 as Governor. In that campaign slavocratic rule was the issue and the Eastern, slaveholders' papers appreciated the meaning of Letcher's victory. Thus, for example, the *Richmond Whig* of June 7, 1859, declared:

“Letcher owes his election to the tremendous majority he received in the Northwest Free Soil counties, and in these counties to his anti-slavery record.”

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\* This is the concluding section of Comrade Biel's article begun in the February issue.—*The Editors*.

\*\* All references to sources, indicated by superior figures, will be found at the end of this article.—*The Editors*.

In North Carolina, too, there was an "evident tendency of the non-slaveholding West to unite with the non-slaveholding classes of the East,"<sup>4</sup> and this unifying tendency brought important victories. In 1850, for the first time in fifteen years, a Democratic candidate, David S. Reid, captured the governorship, and he won because he urged universal manhood suffrage in elections to the state's senate (ownership of fifty acres of land was then required in order to vote for a senator) as well as to the lower house. Slaveholders' opposition prevented the enactment of such a law for several years but the people never wearied in their efforts and, finally, free suffrage was ratified,<sup>5</sup> August, 1857, by a vote of 50,007 to 19,379.

A valiant struggle was also carried on for a more equitable tax system—ad valorem taxation—in North Carolina.<sup>6</sup> A few figures will illustrate the situation. Slaves, from the ages of 12 to 50 only, were taxed  $5\frac{3}{4}$  cents per hundred dollars of their value. But land was taxed 20 cents per hundred dollars, and workers' tools and implements were taxed one dollar per hundred dollars value. Thus, in 1850, slave property worth \$203,000,000 paid but \$118,330 tax, while land worth \$98,000,000 paid over \$190,000 in taxes. A Raleigh worker asked in 1860: "Is it no grievance to tax the wages of the laboring man, and not tax the income of their (sic) employer?"

The leader in the fight for equalized taxation was Moses A. Bledsoe, a state senator from Wake County. In 1858 he united with the recently formed Raleigh Workingmen's Association to fight this issue through. He

was promptly read out of the Democratic Party, but, in 1860, ran as an independent and was elected. The issue split the Democratic Party in North Carolina and seriously threatened the political strength of the slavocracy. Professor W. K. Boyd has remarked,<sup>7</sup> "one cannot but see in the ad valorem campaign the beginning of a revolt against slavery as a political and economic influence. . . ."

Similar struggles occurred in South Carolina.<sup>8</sup> The bitter congressional campaign of October, 1851, in which secessionists were beaten, again by a united front of farmers and urban workers, by a vote of 25,045 to 17,710, was "marked by denunciations hurled by freemen of the back country against the barons of the low country." The next year a National Democratic Party was launched, led by men like J. L. Orr (later Speaker of the National House), B. F. Perry, and J. J. Evans.<sup>9</sup> Their program cut at the heart of the slavocracy. Let South Carolina abandon its isolationism, let it permit the popular election of the President and Governor (both selected by the state legislature), let it end property qualifications for members of its legislature, let it equalize the vicious system of apportionment (which made the slaveholding East dominant), let it establish colleges in the Western part of the state (as it had in the Eastern), and let it provide ample free schools. And, finally, let it enter upon a program of diversified industry. None of these reforms was carried, except partial advance along educational lines, but the threat was considerable and unmistakable.<sup>10</sup>

## SOUTHERN ANTI-SLAVERY SENTIMENT

Overt anti-slavery sentiment was not lacking in the South. One evidence of this has been presented in the material showing that whites were often implicated with slaves in their conspiracies.

The New Orleans *Courier* of October 25, 1850, devoted an editorial to castigating native anti-slavery men, who, it declared, were numerous. Some even thought that two-thirds of the people of New Orleans would be willing to vote for emancipation. An anonymous letter writer said that this was so because there were so many workers in the city who owned no slaves. Earlier that same year a leading Democratic paper of Mississippi, the *Free Trader*, had declared that "the evil, the wrong of slavery, is admitted by every enlightened man in the Union."<sup>11</sup> Professor A. C. Cole has also noted "certain indications which point to a hostility on the part of some of the non-slaveholding Democrats outside of the black belt to the institution of slavery itself."<sup>12</sup>

Competent contemporary witnesses testify to such a feeling, and it certainly was very widespread in Western Kentucky, Eastern Tennessee, Western North Carolina, Western Virginia, and Maryland, Delaware and Missouri.<sup>13</sup>

## THE IDEOLOGY OF THE SLAVOCRACY

In order to evaluate properly the effect of the misbehavior of the exploited, Negro and white, upon the mind of the slavocracy, it is instructive to investigate its ideology. Formally, the Democratic Party was derived from Jefferson, but by the 1820's the

crux of that democrat's philosophy, *i.e.*, man's right and competence to govern himself, was being scrapped in the South, for one of an authoritarian nature; there has always been slavery, there will always be slavery, and there should always be slavery. And, said the slavocrats, our form of slavery is especially delightful for two reasons: first, our slaves are Negroes, and while slavery is good in itself, the fact that we enslave an "inferior" people makes our slavery particularly good; and, secondly, since ours is not a wage slavery, but chattel slavery, we have no class problem.

Thus Bishop Elliot would declare at Savannah, February 23, 1862, that following the American Revolution,

"... we declared war against all authority. . . . The reason of man was exalted to an impious degree and in the face not only of experience, but of the revealed word of God, all men were declared equal, and man was pronounced capable of self-government. . . . Two greater falsehoods could not have been announced, because the one struck at the whole constitution of civil society as it had ever existed, and because the other denied the fall and corruption of man."<sup>14</sup>

And thus, too, a Georgia paper, the *Muskogee Herald*, of 1856, might exclaim:

"Free society! we sicken at the name. What is it but a conglomeration of greasy mechanics, filthy operatives, small-fisted farmers, and moon-struck theorists?"<sup>15</sup>

But here were the mechanics and artisans and farmers, Negro and white, of the South, doggedly agitating and conspiring and dying for the same "moon-struck" ideas—liberty and progress! What to do?

There were two ideas as concerns the Negro: reform slavery<sup>16</sup> (legalize

marriage, forbid separation of families, allow education); and further repression. The latter, repression, won with hardly a struggle.

The Bourbons were, too, keenly aware of the dangerous trend among the non-slaveholding whites. Propaganda flooded the South to the effect that the interests of slaveholders and non-slaveholders were really the same. Said the press, ". . . arraying the non-slaveholder against the slaveholder . . . is all wrong. . . . The fact that one man owns slaves does not in the least injure the man who owns none." 17

Slavocracy's leading publicist, J. D. B. DeBow, issued a pamphlet on *The Interest in Slavery of the Southern Non-Slaveholder* (Charleston, 1860), and the politicians played the Bourbons' trump card, the non-slaveholders "may have no pecuniary interest in slavery, but they have a social interest at stake that is worth more to them than all the wealth of the Indies." 18

But, asked the Bourbons and their apologists, why then does it so often happen that whites aid slaves in their plots? Why, they asked, do some agitate against slavery and distribute "vicious works" like that by North Carolina's "renegade son," Helper's *Impending Crisis*? Why do they struggle for political and economic reforms similar to those of Northern "moon-struck" theorists?

Merchants and capitalists, even Northern merchants and capitalists, are sympathetic, they reasoned, "but the mechanics, most of them, are pests to society, dangerous among the slave population, and ever ready to form combinations against the interest of

the slaveholder, against the laws of the country, and against the peace of the Commonwealth." 19 And "slaves are constantly associating with low white people, who are not slave owners. Such people are dangerous to a community, and should be made to leave our city." 20

A visitor to Georgia, in December, 1859, felt that "the slaveholder seems to watch more carefully to keep the poor white man in subjection than he does to guard the slaves." 21 The North Carolinian Calvin Wiley warned in 1860:

"... that there was as much danger from the prejudice existing between the rich and poor as between master and slave [and felt that] all attempts . . . to widen the breach between classes of citizens are just as dangerous as efforts to excite slaves to insurrection." 22

In 1850 a South Carolinian, J. H. Taylor, had written that:

"... the great mass of our poor white population begin to understand that they have rights, and that they, too, are entitled to some of the sympathy which falls upon the suffering. . . . *It is this great upheaving of our masses we have to fear, so far as our institutions are concerned.*" 23

And in February, 1861, another South Carolinian, observing the growth of a white laboring class and its opposition to the slavocratic philosophy declared:

"It is to be feared that even in this State, the purest in its slave condition, democracy may gain a foothold, and that here also the contest for existence may be waged between them." 24

One month later, March 27, 1861, the Raleigh, N. C., *Register* observing the increasing class bitterness in its own state actually "expressed a fear of civil war within the state." 25

What, then, is the situation? The national supremacy of the slavocracy is gone. And its local power is threatened by both its victims—the slaves and the non-slaveholding whites—separately and, with alarming frequency, jointly. The South Carolina Senator James Hammond had warned, in 1847, that slavery's "only hope" was to keep "the actual slaveholders not only predominant, but paramount within its circles."<sup>26</sup>

#### THE SLAVEHOLDERS' REBELLION

This "only hope" appeared to be slipping away, if it were not already gone, by 1860. Desperation replaced hope, and desperation—the conviction that there was everything to gain and nothing to lose—led to the slaveholders' rebellion.

And it was *their* rebellion. As one of them, a South Carolinian, A. P. Aldrich, wrote November 25, 1860:

"I do not believe the common people understand it; but whoever waited for the common people when a great movement was to be made? We must make the move and force them to follow. That is the way of all great revolutions and all great achievements."<sup>27</sup>

One month later a wealthy North Carolinian, Kenneth Rayner, confided to Judge Thomas Ruffin that he "was mortified to find . . . that the people who did not own slaves were swearing that they would not lift a finger to protect rich men's negroes. You may depend on it . . . that this feeling prevails to an extent, you do not imagine."<sup>28</sup>

Just a few days before the start of actual warfare Virginia's arch-secessionist, Edmund Ruffin, admitted to his diary, April 2, 1861, that it was:

" . . . communicated privately by members of each delegation (to the Confederate Constitutional Convention) that it was supposed people of every State except S. Ca. was indisposed to the disruption of the Union—and that if the question of reconstruction of the former Union was referred to the popular vote, that there was probability of its being approved."<sup>29</sup>

The Raleigh, N. C., *Standard*, whose editor, W. W. Holden, had been read out of the Democratic Party because of his non-slaveholding proclivities, saw very clearly the result of a rebellion whose base was merely several thousand distraught slaveholders. Its editorial of February 5, 1861, warned that:

"The Negroes will know, too, that the war is waged on their account. They will become restless and turbulent. . . . Strong governments will be established and bear heavily on the masses. The masses will at length rise up and destroy everything in their way. . . ."

#### CONCLUSION

This article has attempted to present a new emphasis upon a factor hitherto insufficiently appreciated in appraising the causes that drove the slaveholding class to desperation and counter-revolution in 1861. This desperation was not merely due to the growing might of a free-labor industrial bourgeoisie, combined, via investments and transportation ties, with the free West, and to that group's capture of national power in 1860. Another important factor, becoming more and more potent as the slavocracy was being weakened by capitalism in the North, was the sharpening class struggle within the South itself from 1850 to 1860. This struggle manifested itself in serious slave dis-



affection, in frequent cooperation between poor whites and Negro slaves, and in the rapid maturing of the political consciousness of the non-slaveholding whites.

And, taking another step, he who seeks to understand the reasons for the ultimate collapse of the Confederacy will find them not only in the military might of the North, but, in an essential respect, in the highly unpopular character of that government. The Southern masses opposed the Bourbon regime and it was this opposition, of the poor whites and of the Negro slaves, that contributed largely to its downfall.

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- 10 For accounts of similar contests elsewhere see, T. Abernethy, *From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee*, Chapel Hill, 1932, p. 216; C. Ramsdell in *Studies in Southern History and Politics*, New York, 1914, p. 66; W. E. Smith, *The F. P. Blair Family in Politics*, New York, 1933, I, pp. 292, 300, 303, 337, 374, 400, 416, 440.
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- 12 Cole, *The Whig Party in the South*, Washington, 1913, p. 72; it is true that an anti-Negro feeling was often mixed with the anti-slavocratic feeling of the poor whites. Nevertheless, the latter feeling was present. For example, Hinton R. Helper was anathema to the slavocracy notwithstanding the fact that he was possessed of a vicious anti-Negro prejudice.
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## FROM THE WORLD COMMUNIST PRESS

### THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY TO THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE

*L'Humanité*, Paris, January 25, 1939

*[On the eve of the fall of Barcelona to Mussolini's hordes, the following manifesto was issued to the French people by the National Conference of the Communist Party of France, which met at Gennevilliers from January 21 to January 23. The manifesto was printed in l'Humanité of January 25.—The Editors.]*

**M**ILLIONS of French men and women, with a pang in their hearts and with fists clenched in anger, follow the unfolding of the Italian offensive in Catalonia.

They understand that the martyrdom of the Catalonian people is the herald of the unleashing of the barbarian forces of fascism against the free countries and, in the first place, against France.

They see now, in the face of the tragic reality of the facts, that there must be an end to the policy of so-called "non-intervention," this policy which deprives the Spanish republic of the means to defend itself, *to defend us*, while it cloaks the Italian and German intervention in Spain.

Frenchmen worthy of the name know that, through Catalonia, France is being aimed at.

They know that the heroic Spanish soldiers who, though deprived of

arms, deprived of everything, are resisting foot by foot the invaders from Rome and Berlin, are not only defending their liberty and their fatherland, but the security of France as well.

#### TO HELP REPUBLICAN SPAIN IS TO HELP OURSELVES

The capitulators and the traitors must not be allowed to sign, upon the quivering flesh of a sacrificed Spain, a new Munich, which would enslave our country.

We must prevent that; Spain must be left to the Spaniards so that France may be left to the French. That can be done, that must be done.

It is not true that it is too late to prevent the worst.

We can, we must save Spain and thereby save France, by compelling the opening of the Catalonian frontier, by insisting that the Republican government of Spain be allowed to obtain the indispensable means of defense.

The cannon and machine guns of the invaders must be answered by the cannon and machine guns of the defenders of freedom.

The children of Spain likewise must not die of hunger. Bread, milk, food and clothing are what humanitarian and generous France, in a surge of solidarity, must give to the great and noble Spanish people.

In order that the heroism of the

Spanish people shall not have been in vain, in order that the blood of Frenchmen shall not flow tomorrow, *we must impose a French policy.*

No longer are the Communists alone in this idea; it is the profound desire of the entire country, and this desire will become irresistible if all those who know that the fate of France is being decided in Spain unite from one end of our country to the other.

The groupings and the men of the People's Front are henceforth all agreed upon the necessity of saving Spain. Catholics and moderates recognize that a victory for Franco would be a catastrophe for France.

*That is why the Communists, conscious of the necessity to assure the independence of France, are ready to support a government policy which, by effectively aiding Spain, would assure the security of our frontiers.*

France is threatened and, whoever we are, whether Communists, Socialists, republicans, trade unionists, Catholics, Jews, Protestants or free thinkers, we are all threatened.

The enemies would not choose between us; if our country went under, we would all go under together in the abyss of persecutions, crimes and horrors.

UPON OUR UNITY DEPENDS OUR  
COMMON SALVATION

But our country will not go under, despite all the efforts of international fascism and its agents in France.

We Communists, who are proud to have struggled with all our strength to unite the democrats within the People's Front for bread, freedom and

peace, intend to do everything to assure its maintenance and development.

We sound a call for the rallying of the French nation, the nation of twenty races which, during the course of centuries, have burned with the same love of independence, have contributed our beautiful French language to the treasures of human civilization and, in the great hours of history, have shown other peoples the road to freedom.

The fascist barbarians oppose their racial theories to the living reality which is this nation, but against them they find and they will find, with the exception of a few traitors, the mass of Frenchmen proud of the past of their nation and conscious of the greatness of its mission in the world.

THE FRENCH NATION DEFENDS AND  
WILL DEFEND CIVILIZATION

It will defend civilization against international fascism, which denies the truth of science, which would like to establish the rule of obscurantism over the world and drag mankind back to some degrading state of bestial existence. . . .

No doubt Frenchmen may not think alike on one or another problem, but many are the reasons why they should unite their efforts to bring about the triumph of a policy of peace, freedom and national renaissance, which only the sinister forces of international capital are interested in opposing.

All honest Frenchmen can unite around a program of national recovery whose principles are contained in the People's Front program approved in the general election in 1936.

## YES, FRENCHMEN CAN UNITE

*They can unite* to put France back to work by forcing capital investment in production, in technical equipment of our country, thereby creating the elements of an economic recovery which would give jobs to the workers, customers to storekeepers, markets to the peasants, orders to manufacturers and additional revenue in taxes to the state.

*They can unite* to assure the maintenance of the social achievements and to compel that the sacrifices to which the workers are ready to consent should not be a source of profits for the big capitalists but a contribution to national recovery.

*They can unite* to compel a financial policy based on justice, which would put an end to the evils of the Paul Reynaud decree laws and impose the indispensable sacrifices upon the economic and industrial feudalists whose wrongdoings have long been denounced by French democrats.

*They can unite* to have France come forward as the country of freedom for the colonial peoples, whose living conditions must be improved, thus providing new outlets for French production.

*They can unite* to force the regular functioning of the institutions of the republic, which are the guarantee of our liberties, and to compel that the traitors and agents of international fascism shall be put where they can do no harm.

*They can unite* to safeguard peace, with honor and dignity for France, by an unwavering opposition to any new capitulation before the fascist countries, by effective aid to Spain and

a strengthening of the Franco-Soviet pact.

But even if some hesitation should remain among certain persons about such a clear-cut French policy, *nothing can prevent unity*—

For the defense of the freedom and independence of France against the fascist demagogues;

For the respect of the human personality against barbaric racism;

For respect of treaties and the defense of international morality which has been trampled underfoot by the dictators of Rome and Berlin.

The propagandists of Hitlerism would like to have it believed that France is weak, that she is lost. *No! No!*

The Munichmen, it is true, have done much harm to our country; it is to the honor of the Communists that they proclaimed loudly, while others thought it better to think it quietly. But, despite that, *everything can be saved*.

Yes, Spain can be saved; yes, France can be saved.

The essential thing is to oppose the forces of oppression and war: by the unity of all Frenchmen who wish to live free and independent; by the union of all the great democratic countries, whose power of attraction is such that the small, threatened states are ready to come to their side.

The union of France, England, the United States and the Soviet Union is alone capable of forcing a retreat of the war-makers of the Rome-Berlin-Tokio axis.

This union is wanted by the French people, whatever the Flandins and the Bonnets say and do.

This union is hoped for by the

English people, against whose desires Mr. Chamberlain is acting.

This union is awaited by the American people, who have echoed the words of President Roosevelt in condemnation of fascism, the war instigator and the oppressor of the conscience of man.

This union is desired by the Soviet Union, the rampart of peace and democracy in the world, bound to France by a pact in which millions of Frenchmen see the guarantee of our security against Nazism, which seeks first of all to isolate France in order to annihilate her afterwards.

*Frenchmen, courage and confidence!*

Workers, peasants, storekeepers, government employees, intellectuals, men and women, young and old, Communists, Socialists, Radicals, trade unionists, men of all religious beliefs:

To the counsel of cowardice, capitulation and despair spread by the

agents from abroad, by those who dream of a new Munich, oppose your firm resolve to live as free men working in an independent and respected France.

All united to save Spain.

All united to save ourselves.

No, fascism will not have the last word.

We will conquer under the banner of freedom and peace.

We will conquer under the banner of human civilization to realize the slogan: *Long Live France!*

Will all our hearts, with all our faith, against the bloody hordes of fascism,

*Let us come to the aid of Republican Spain!*

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF FRANCE.

A Great Contribution on the Negro Question—

## The Negro and the Democratic Front

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## BOOK REVIEWS

### A BOOK OF APOLOGETICS FOR THE PUERTO RICAN SUGAR ECONOMY

*THE SUGAR ECONOMY OF PUERTO RICO*, by Arthur D. Gayer, Paul T. Homan and Earle K. James. Columbia University Press. \$3.75.

As might be expected from a book which was produced at the request of "two landowning partnerships in Puerto Rico engaged in the cultivation of sugar cane and financed principally by capital coming from the continental United States," *The Sugar Economy of Puerto Rico* is, in its conclusions at least, an argument against any attempt to reach a basic solution of the problems of the Puerto Rican people. However, the carefully detailed study made by Messrs. Gayer, Homan and James, who have academic records of long standing, provides a valuable picture of the colonial plantation system and the effects of monoculture; inevitably, it becomes also a presentation of the mass misery resulting from this system.

The book is divided into three parts: The Puerto Rican Economy; The Sugar Industry; Conclusions. The first part reveals the extent to which Puerto Rico has been reduced to a completely dependent, colonial status. In 1929, 72 per cent of the land was planted to export crops, principally sugar, coffee, tobacco, and some fruit. Meanwhile, this agricultural country was forced to import food to the extent of 40 per cent of its total imports! How this situation was aggravated by the depression and monoculture can be seen in the fact that tobacco exports declined from \$21,000,000 in 1927 to \$4,000,000 in 1933, and coffee exports still more catastrophically from \$7,071,000 in 1926 to \$125,000 in 1933, while the acreage and exports of sugar were increased.

The large section on the sugar industry

is a revealing picture of the colonial plantation system. Four huge American corporations produce over half the total crop, and that total crop is nearly 70 per cent of total exports. The extent of centralization of land in foreign hands and the pauperization of the peasantry is shown in the fact that of the 7,693 cane farms, 156 farms of over 500 acres comprise 498,592 acres of the total 765,375 acres planted to sugar.

Of course, the huge sugar corporations not only control most of the land, but through their control of the credit facilities, means of transportation, sugar mills, etc., dominate completely the small would-be-independent sugar farmers. These, in turn, under the pressure of the monopolists, intensify their exploitation of the sugar workers, who average about \$150 a year in wages. Hunger, misery and sickness are corollaries of American monopolist domination.

Proceeding as it does from the premise that Puerto Rican economy must continue to rest on an "exportable cash crop," this work necessarily concludes that no fundamental solution of the island's economic problems is possible. But this premise is precisely what must be rejected. Not only liberation from national oppression, but the people's very immediate need for relief from untold misery, require its rejection. Puerto Rican economic reconstruction depends fundamentally on the building of an internal market, which, in turn, depends on the creation of a stratum of independent farmers producing for Puerto Rican consumption in the first place.

The land must be given back to the people, whether through the application of the existing five hundred-acre law, which the authors insist—ever so "objectively"—is inapplicable, or through other measures. The farmers must be helped with credits for cattle, seed, fertilizer, farm machinery, etc. This is not a program of economic retrogression, as Messrs. Gayer, Homan and

James would have us believe, but a progressive program of establishing a native Puerto Rican economy.

The New Deal has apparently begun to grasp this fundamental principle, although slowly and hesitantly. However, even such measures as it has attempted to advance—the Lafayette Cooperative Sugar Mill, construction of public works, and a minimum of native industry—have been sabotaged by the anti-New Deal, anti-democratic Governor, Major-General Blanton Winship, who accompanied his sniping at the New Deal with terroristic acts against freedom of speech and assembly.

Progress demands that the United States grant large-scale credits to make possible the buying up of the sugar corporation lands; at the same time the urban population to receive the benefits of the social legislation

of the New Deal, decent wages, minimum hours, elimination of sweat shops, etc.

This is, too, what a consistent Good Neighbor policy requires. Puerto Rico cannot occupy the strategic position it must hold in the defense of democracy in the American hemisphere so long as its population is oppressed and horribly exploited. Economic reconstruction and popular democracy will make Puerto Rico a strong and important neighbor allied to a great American democracy in the resistance to fascist aggression.

Despite the valuable factual material contained in the book, its conclusions, constituting an apology for the oppressive monocultural sugar economy, are anything but a brief for bringing to an end the mass misery of the Puerto Rican people.

HARRY ROBINSON

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- POLITICAL ECONOMY AND CAPITALISM, *by Maurice Dobb*. International Publishers, New York. \$3.00.
- SECRET ARMIES: The New Technique of Nazi Warfare, *by John L. Spivak*. Modern Age, New York. 50c.
- WHY SPAIN CAN WIN, *by Joseph North*. Workers Library Publishers, New York. 1c.
- INDUSTRIAL LABOR IN INDIA, International Labor Office, Studies and Reports, Series A (Industrial Relations), No. 41, Geneva, 1938. \$2.00.
- AFTER THE MUNICH CONSPIRACY, *by George Dimitroff*, Modern Books, Ltd., London. 2d.
- TRADE UNIONS FORWARD, Communist Party of Great Britain, London. 1d.
- LA RENOVATION NATIONALE, Programme de Redressement de l'Economie Francaise, *by Jacques Duclos*, La Brochure Populaire, Paris, Janvier, 1939. Fr. 0.50.
- LES DROITS DU PAYSAN, *by Waldeck-Rochet, Jean Flavien, Jean Laurenti, Gilbert Vital*. La Brochure Populaire, Paris, Janvier, 1939. Fr. 0.50.
- IS AMERICA MENACED BY FOREIGN PROPAGANDA? Town Meeting of the Air. Columbia University Press, New York, January 23, 1939. 10c.
- SIAMO ARIANI? *by Gino Bardi*, International Workers Order, Italian Section, New York. 5c.
- THE FRATERNAL OUTLOOK, Official Organ, International Workers Order, New York, Vol I, No. 1, January, 1939. 10c.
- THE INTERNATIONAL BOOK REVIEW, Workers Library Publishers, New York, 5c.
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