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INTERNATIONAL

September . 1942

NOTES OF THE MONTH

**LEON TROTSKY ON
WINSTON CHURCHILL**

Notes On a Union Convention

By David Coolidge

RUSSIA'S NEW RULING CLASS

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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

VOLUME VIII

SEPTEMBER, 1942

NUMBER 8

NOTES OF THE MONTH

The Fourth Year of the War

Three years of World War II have already been fought. No decisive victory has yet been won by either of the two camps in the struggle. While it is true that the German armies have swept deeper into the wide areas of the Soviet Union and now fight in the environs of Stalin-grad, their battle victories, important as they are, have not brought the fascist hordes to the end of the war. The Russian armies, with their seemingly inexhaustible manpower, fight on through constant retreat as the war approaches its second winter in that sector.

In the Pacific and the Far East, the Japanese have also won military victories. Malaya, Singapore, the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines, New Guinea, Burma—they have served to stretch the battle and supply lines over enormous territories and tremendous seas, but they have drawn Japan deeper into the war without any prospect of a conclusive triumph over the United Nations in these areas.

The great powers in Europe now face the fourth year of the war and the bloody carnage seems endless to the peoples of the Old World. But for the United States, the war is only beginning. Everything is still in the state of preparation. It is true, there have been some important engagements involving American forces, naval, land and air, but no one will claim that the United States is fully engaged, nor ready to be so engaged. The rapidly expanding navy, air and army forces point to an impending mass use of American forces to turn the tide of a war which is universally acknowledged to be still going in favor of the Axis. American economy has not yet been completely converted into a war economy. The movement in that direction gains momentum every day, but it does so in fits and starts, with great inner stress, yet slowly but surely the American ruling class, profiting mightily from war production, is gaining mastery over the working class with the aid of the New Dealers and the labor skates, in order to complete a war economy which is dependent upon a veritable enslavement of the proletariat.

For Americans, the war is less than a year old and everyone understands that this is only the beginning. No one knows how long this war will last—two, four, seven or ten years. How large an army the United States will need in this war is also a subject of conjecture. Those presumably in the know have made estimates of anywhere from seven to fifteen million men. Nobody really knows. But one thing is certain, even in the opinion of the leading bourgeois authorities, the war will be a long one, its destructive effects incalculable, its casualties enormous. One admiral estimated at least five million American casualties! If this is a reasonable assumption,

and we believe it is, the world magnitude of this bloody carnage becomes somewhat clearer. In the First World War there were ten million dead and twenty million wounded over a period of four years, confined to the area of Europe. The global character of a mechanized Second World War, the infinitely larger forces engaged in battle, holds out greater fears—there should be at least three times the number of casualties! If anyone doubts this possibility, he need only turn to Europe, where an excellent beginning has been made in military and civilian casualties.

If the prospect for Americans is a seven year war (or ten), what of those nations which have been at war for three years already? For them a ten or thirteen or fifteen year war is in the offing!

That the present war is merely the continuation of the imperialist slaughter of 1914 is verified by the manner in which it is fought, i.e., its purely military character. The objectives for which the war is fought are crystal clear: colonial hegemony, world market control, cheap labor supply, profits and enslavement of the world masses to capital. The dispute is over who shall prevail. Shall it be Germany, as the dominant power of the Axis, or the United States, as the dominant power of the Allies? This is the essential explanation for the inability of the United Nations to wage an ideological war against the Axis.

Allied war aims, given expression through the Roosevelt-Churchill Four Freedoms, have had no effect upon the peoples of the world. Every concrete act of the United Nations has served to convince them that the Four Freedoms is merely verbiage. Nothing has really changed. Colonial enslavement remains a paramount aim of the United Nations (reestablishment of the lost empires); economic, political and social supremacy of the white race. Any tendency that would lead to a weakening or destruction of the principles of private property, profit and the right to exploitation is resisted by the combined might of the capitalist classes in all bourgeois nations. The growth in profits of the bourgeoisie, the lowering living standards of the masses, the treatment of racial and national minorities (India, Negroes, etc.) are only the concrete manifestations of this imperialist war. The apologists for imperialism are running out of explanations for the patent failure of the United Nations to make out a better case for themselves. The only difference between the two camps in the war are the political régimes in some of the contesting powers. In a number of instances the régimes are identically or similarly totalitarian (Greece, Soviet Union, Brazil, China, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Hungary, Germany, etc.) But even in the genuinely bourgeois democratic nations, the prevailing historical tendency is toward totalitarianism, toward an economic and political consolidation of the rule of finance capital.

It is with this understanding that the Workers Party declared in March of this year that: "Neither side is capable of winning the war by destroying the enemy politically, that is, by conducting such a political campaign as would result in undermining the social foundations of the enemy's régime

or in depriving it of social support to such an extent as to make further military struggle futile. There remains to both of them only physical struggle as the means by which the war can be won, that is, by continued economic pressure (blockade) and by direct military combat."

The prospects for world humanity, under such conditions, are bleak indeed. It has become more clear than ever that there is only one hope for all of mankind, in the advanced countries as well as in the colonial, in the United Nations as in the Axis dominated countries, and that is socialism, sweeping away the bankrupt, destructive and reactionary social order of capitalism.

The Roosevelt Message

In April of this year, President Roosevelt set forth his economic program to prevent inflation and bring about an "equality of sacrifice" by all the classes in the conversion of economy to a war basis. The program he then presented was over-all; it covered taxation, price ceilings, the stabilization of wages and farm prices, increase of bond sales to drain off additional millions from the people, nation-wide rationing of essential consumer commodities, the cessation of installment buying and the paying off of debts and mortgages.

From April until September 8, when the President made his fireside chat instructing Congress to act on his program lest he be compelled to use his extraordinary war powers to enforce individually such economic measures as he considers essential for the prosecution of the war, the legislative bodies did nothing or next to nothing. To say that Congress did nothing during these six months is not precisely correct. It did everything within its power to fortify the enrichment of the American bourgeoisie as a result of the war economy and concerned itself solely with placing the entire burden of the war on the backs of the American workers and poor farmers.

While there is general agreement between the Administration and Congress on the need to increase taxes on almost everything, Congress has been pondering on legislation designed to make the payments of the financiers and industrialists as light as possible, and those of the poor as heavy as the burden will carry. Everyone must pay taxes, say the reactionary congressmen, otherwise an unfair burden will be placed on those fortunate enough to own enormous fortunes. Thus, the person earning \$12 a week must be judged as economically responsible as the "captain of industry" earning \$9,600 a week! The difference between the reactionary Congress and the New Dealist Administration is one of degree—how much to tax the low income population!

Six Months of the War

Price ceilings under congressional supervision and administrative control have been a farce. Here again, the working and lower middle classes have been the worst sufferers. There have, in truth, been no genuine price ceilings. Too many commodities were not given ceilings to begin with. Those under ban were unenforceable because no real instruments of control were devised (trade union and consumer committees).

Under the whip of the congressional farm bloc (the rich farmers) no action has been taken on farm prices to effect a genuine ceiling accruing to the interest of the poor farmer and the worker of the urban centers. Thus, the most important consumer commodities (foodstuffs) have continually in-

creased in price, once again reducing the real wages of the workers.

Widespread rationing of essential commodities has not yet begun, but in this sphere too, no genuine controls are proposed with a view of creating a genuine equality in those goods most certain to be rationed in the coming months.

Pressure for the buying of war bonds increases and measures are now planned for enforced savings and buying bonds.

Curbs for installment buying have likewise been passed and are already in effect. These curbs will be made more stringent as consumer goods continue to decline.

In each instance, however, the Presidential program, if carried into effect, will result in a constant decline in the living standards of the masses. The President's objection to congressional action, or lack of action, is political! He desires an "equality of sacrifice" under conditions where inequality reigns. He desires to "equalize the burdens" of war, where no equality is possible. Does he understand this? Indeed, he does. Therefore, he wants his program to look as palatable as possible. Therefore, his program for wage stabilization is predicated upon the stabilization of farm prices (food). Unless such stabilization or ceiling is achieved, Roosevelt knows there is trouble ahead. The workers are restless. Already they have assumed the real burden of the war program. They work long hours; they sacrifice everything for the war! A wage ceiling is in effect in practice. Consumer goods become scarcer. Vacations, with or without pay, are eliminated from industry. Double time for overtime work on Sundays and holidays has been cancelled out. They have given up the right to strike, their conditions of labor, their union gains.

The workers know that the capitalist class and the rich farmers suffer not at all; they have given up nothing of importance. Union papers are afraid to publish figures on profits and earnings of the officers and directors of the large corporations for fear that the rank and file would become uncontrollable.

Contrasts Between Capital and Labor

Leon Henderson estimates that for the year 1942, corporations will earn \$20,000,000,000 (four times greater than 1939) and that after the payment of taxes they will have a net profit of \$8,000,000,000 (two times greater than 1939)! Recently published reports of individual earnings by officials of the giant corporations leave one aghast at the tremendous individual fortunes being made out of the war. And this despite the promise of the President that "no one shall profit from the war." Moreover, in the promulgation of heavy taxes against industry and finance, provisions are being made to rebate a portion of these payments after the war! To date, no proposal has been made to return to the workers a portion of their taxes after the war! And no action has been taken on the Presidential proposal for a limitation of income to \$25,000 a year. Nor is such action likely.

The rising cost of living strikes hardest at the workers. Figures show that wage increases have not kept pace with the rise in prices. These are constantly out of proportion, a disproportion favoring the increased costs of all commodities. But this is only the beginning. The Cleveland Trust Co. *Business Bulletin* for September 15 points out that:

Conversion to war work is not confined to manufacturing industry. It is progressively continuing throughout almost all forms of business activity, although it is not always recognized for what it really is. Transportation, banking, construction, agriculture, engineering, medicine and higher education are rapidly becoming subsidiary agencies of our na-

tional war effort. War has already become our chief business, and the degree of its preponderance will continue to increase as long as the struggle lasts.

The war budget by the month of August reached the staggering amount of 223 billion dollars. Less than one-fifth of this amount has been spent and only a little more than half of this amount has been "committed by contracts or letters of intent." But already the national economy has been drastically altered. A full realization of the program means a drastic destruction of the "American way of life"—for the masses only!

The President's effort to make more palatable the destruction of the living standards of the masses will be unavailing. His director of OPA has already indicated what is coming when he declared that "*it is probable that in the next twelve to fifteen months we will get a civilian standard of living equivalent to 1932, which was the low of all lows during the depression.*"

Given the continued existence of capitalism, the Workers Party has offered a partial program seeking the maintenance of the living standards of the masses during the war. It calls for a capital levy to cover the costs of the war and the confiscation of all profits! It calls for the conscription of all war industries under workers' control! It calls for the expropriation of the "Sixty Families"! This sharply contrasts with the Roosevelt program. But the Roosevelt program, in its essence, is the "reformist" war program of the financial and industrial ruling class. The program of the Workers Party is the program of the masses.

Inquilab Zindabad!

The United Nations are in a muddle. The muddle is India. From the moment that India rejected Churchill's messenger, Sir Stafford Cripps, and his "post-dated check" for Indian freedom, the British government proceeded with its characteristic policy to beat that country into submission. The dull-witted British ministers sit on a social powderkeg and blissfully announce that everything is fine and dandy in India, and the situation is completely under control. But *Time* magazine, hurling the lie at the British, wrote in its issue of August 24th:

Having clapped all Congress leaders into jail, the British were prepared to deal with rioting. The Raj even hoped that prompt action would break the back of the Congress Party once and for all. Optimistically, government officials announced that resistance was virtually under control. Immediately new riots broke out in Madras, where four men were killed trying to attack a railway station. Ahmadabad mill closed. A Karaikkudi mob tried to free an Indian being jailed. Calcutta brooded restlessly, heard threats of work stoppages at vital war plants. Poona, Nagpur, Cawnpore, Wardha reported fresh riots. An airplane dropped tear gas on a crowd of Bombay mill workers. The New Delhi town hall was burned."

In general, the American press plays the British game. The tenor of its articles and editorials is to defend, somewhat critically, it is true, the position of the Churchill government because Great Britain is an ally of the United States. They, too, paint a quiet India, an India resigned to continued British rule. But the truth lies elsewhere.

Louis Fischer, writing in *The Nation* of September 5, reports a strike of 50,000 Tata munition workers who demanded Gandhi's release. "The strike wave in India is spreading," writes Fischer, illustrating the mass participation of the Indian proletariat in the struggle for freedom. Behar, Madras, the United Provinces, the Central Province and the Bombay

Presidency are scenes of the struggle for independence; the movement is spreading.

In reply to the Indian masses, the British authorities have reintroduced the whipping post—democratic masters with cat-o-nine-tails! The machine gun, the carbine and the sword are in readiness and in use to convince the Indians that the British really mean business, this business of fighting for democracy.

Winston Churchill Speaks Out

Somewhat overdue, on September 10, came the statement of His Majesty's Prime Minister, the Honorable Winston Churchill. I use the word overdue, because the Prime Minister has never failed to express himself bluntly on colonial affairs in general and on India in particular. The imperialist Churchill remained true to himself and his class. His statement on the Indian situation was compounded of distortions and plain falsehoods. It even lacked his customary rhetoric, which seems to paralyze and hypnotize the world liberals and misleaders of labor. This is what the Prime Minister said: "The course of events in India has been improving and is, on the whole, reassuring." He then proceeded to prove that the Congress Party represents a small minority of the Hindu people and by implication "proved" that more than 235,000,000 of the population support the British, or at least reject the current struggle induced by the Congress rejection of Cripps. Without a blush of shame, Churchill, the magnificent representative of British finance capital, describes the Congress Party as a "machine sustained by certain manufacturing and financial interests" (native bourgeoisie). To prove what? That Britain is justified in its imperialist rule over the country!

In support of his declaration that the situation in India is "improving and is, on the whole, reassuring," the Prime Minister declared: "*Less than 500 persons have been killed over this mighty area of territory and population, and it has only been necessary to move a few brigades of British troops here and there in support of civil power.*" (Emphasis mine—A. G.)

With the customary obtuseness of the imperialist, Churchill concluded: "I therefore feel entitled to report to the House that the situation in India at this moment gives no occasion for undue despondency or alarm."

The Old Churchill Is the New

This is the real Churchill speaking and it is in keeping with his past. As early as the Simon Commission and afterward, it was he who protested most vigorously any negotiations with the Congress leaders as "beneath the dignity of an imperial Britain." In 1930, he declared: "Sooner or later you will have to crush Gandhi and the Indian Congress and all they stand for." In December, 1931, he stated: "I did not contemplate India having the same constitutional rights and system as Canada in any period which we could foresee."

In retrospect of World War I, during which India participated in the British war effort against the Kaiser, Churchill said (January, 1931): "No one has supposed that, *except in a purely ceremonial sense in the way in which representatives of India attended conferences during the war, that that principle and policy for India would be carried into effect at any time which it is reasonable or useful for us to foresee.*" (Emphasis mine—A.G.) Great Britain is in a new war fighting for its life. This time, it is Churchill, as head of the government,

who has offered India participation in the war effort on the same basis as in World War I—and with the same promises, never meant to be honored! Only the situation in India is different. Nobody there believes Churchill or the British government. The Indian masses want freedom now! It is the pressure of these masses which forced the Congress leaders, who had hoped for a “decent” compromise, to reject the imperial proposals. Why should they believe Churchill now? There is no reason whatever.

The Indians remember only too vividly the attitude of the British to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and what it meant for them. At that time, the Honorable Leopold Amery, Secretary for India, opined:

I confess that I see no reason whatever why, either in act or in word or in sympathy, we should go individually, or internationally, against Japan in this matter.

Who is there among us to cast the first stone and to say that Japan ought not to have acted with the object of creating peace and order in Manchuria and defending herself against the continual aggression of vigorous Chinese nationalization.

Our whole policy in India, our whole policy in Egypt, stands condemned if we condemn Japan. (Emphasis mine—A.G.)

There in a nutshell is the British position, under new conditions. It is fundamentally imperialist. And that is why, in the words of Churchill, the Four Freedoms of the Atlantic Charter have “no application to India.”

But, despite Churchill, a great deal of “despondency” and “alarm” are reflected in his speech. The hope that he might “appease” the Indians was shattered by imperialist determination to retain the colony as the basis of the British Empire. The disappointed liberals in England and America, seconded by the constantly protesting Chinese, in loud chorus now turn to Roosevelt. Only Roosevelt can save the situation! They are convinced that there is nothing to be hoped for from Churchill. They know, too, notwithstanding the lies about conflicts between the Hindus and Moslems and others, India has never been so united as now in the struggle for freedom. And this despite the fear of the Indian bourgeois nationalist

leaders that the struggle for freedom may take the revolutionary road of a workers’ and peasants’ government.

This demand for intervention by Roosevelt is widespread in the ranks of the United Nations. The Chinese government asks for it. The liberals in America ask for it. Lord Strabolgi, Labor peer, has also asked for it, stating “we should swallow our pride and invite the President of the United States to arbitrate on India.” What a commentary on the United Nations, fighting a “democratic war” for the right of the national independence of all oppressed peoples! What a commentary on the bankrupt position of the British Empire in this bloc!

A Complex Situation

The apologists for British imperialism are having a hard time of it reconciling the word and the deed. Thus, the notorious Bertrand Russell, justifying the British position to all Americans, offers this imposing opinion in his letter of August 27 to *The Nation*: “The question of India is much more complex than it appears to many American liberals.” This is the stock answer of British imperialism: the Indian situation is complex; the problems are many; independence for India cannot be achieved quickly. The only thing that is complex about the Indian situation is that independence for that enormous country would destroy the investments and profits of the parasitic British ruling class, which enjoys its good life on the toil, sweat and tears of the many millions of Indian workers and peasants. That is why the British have remained in India for more than 200 years, suppressing every struggle for independence.

The will to freedom of these oppressed peoples is strong. It will take more than the whipping-post, Churchillian rhetoric, the imperial troops and the Indian misleaders of the native bourgeoisie to halt this inevitable march to liberty for almost 400,000,000 workers and peasants of an oppressed colony of the second great power in the “democratic” camp. Support to that struggle is the duty of every worker, for its victory will hasten the freedom of all oppressed people from economic, political and social servitude.

A. G.

Trotsky on Churchill

In 1929, Winston Churchill published his book on the war, *The Aftermath*, in part of which he painted a violently distorted pen-portrait of Lenin. His remarks aroused considerable controversy at the time. Among the commentators was Lenin’s closest collaborator in the Russian Revolution, Leon Trotsky. Trotsky had just been exiled to Turkey by the Stalin régime, but he immediately wrote a sharp attack on Churchill. It was printed in the April 20, 1929, issue of *John O’London’s Weekly*, a British periodical. It is reprinted here for the first time in the United States.—Editor.

In 1918-19 Mr. Churchill attempted to overthrow Lenin by force of arms. In 1929 he attempts a psychological and political portraiture of him in his book, *The Aftermath*. Perhaps he was hoping thereby to secure some sort of literary revenge for his unsuccessful appeal to the sword. But his methods are no less inadequate in the second mode of attack than they were in the first.

“His [Lenin’s] sympathies cold and wide as the Arctic Ocean. His hatreds tight as the hangman’s noose,” writes

Mr. Churchill. Verily, he juggles with antitheses as an athlete with dumb-bells. But the observant eye soon notices that the dumb-bells are painted cardboard and the bulging biceps are eked out with padding.

The true Lenin was instinct with moral force—a force whose main characteristic was its absolute simplicity. To try to assess him in terms of stage athletics was bound to spell failure.

Mr. Churchill’s facts are miserably inaccurate. Consider his dates, for instance. He repeats a sentence, which he has read somewhere or other, referring to the morbid influence exercised on Lenin’s evolution by the execution of his elder brother. He refers the fact to the year 1894. But actually the attempt against Alexander III’s life was organized by Alexander Ulianov (Lenin’s brother) on March 1, 1887. Mr. Churchill avers that in 1894 Lenin was sixteen years of age. In point of fact, he was then twenty-four, and in charge of the secret organization at Petersburg. At the time of the October Revolution he was not thirty-nine, as Mr. Churchill would have it, but forty-seven years old. Mr. Churchill’s er-

rors in chronology show how confusedly he visualizes the period and people of which he writes.

But when from the point of view of chronology and fisticuffs we turn to that of the philosophy of history, what we see is even more lamentable.

Mr. Churchill tells us that discipline in the Russian army was destroyed, after the February Revolution, by the order abolishing the salute to officers. This was the point of view of discontented old generals and ambitious young subalterns; otherwise, it is merely absurd. The old army stood for the supremacy of the old classes and was destroyed by the revolution. When peasants had taken away the landowner's property the peasant's sons could hardly continue to serve under officers who were sons of landowners. The army is no mere technical organization, associated only with marching and promotion, but a moral organization, founded on a definite scheme of mutual relations between individuals and classes. When a scheme of this kind is upset by a revolution, the army unavoidably collapses. It was always thus. . . .

Churchill and Birkenhead—Two Muddlers

Mr. Churchill grants that Lenin had a powerful mind and will. According to Lord Birkenhead, Lenin was purely and simply non-existent: what really exists is a Lenin myth (see his letter in *The Times*, February 26, 1929). The real Lenin was a nonentity upon which the colleagues of Arnold Bennett's Lord Raingo could look down contemptuously. But despite this one difference in their appraisal of Lenin, both Tories are exactly alike in their utter incapacity to understand Lenin's writings on economy, on politics, and on philosophy—writings that fill over twenty volumes.

I suspect that Mr. Churchill did not even deign to take the trouble carefully to read the article on Lenin which I wrote for the *Encyclopedia Britannica* in 1926. If he had, he would not have committed those crude, glaring errors of dates which throw everything out of perspective.

One thing Lenin could not tolerate was muddled thought. He had lived in all European countries, mastered many languages, had read and studied and listened and observed and compared and generalized. When he became the head of a revolutionary country, he did not fail to avail himself of this opportunity to learn, conscientiously and carefully. He did not cease to follow the life of all other countries. He could read and speak fluently English, German and French. He could read Italian and a number of Slavonic languages. During the last years of his life, though overburdened with work, he devoted every spare minute to studying the grammar of the Czech language in order to have access, without intermediaries, to the inner life of Czechoslovakia.

What can Mr. Churchill and Lord Birkenhead know of the workings of this forceful, piercing, tireless mind of his, with its capacity to translate everything that was superficial, accidental, external, into terms of the general and fundamental? Lord Birkenhead, in blissful ignorance, imagines that Lenin never had thought of the password: "Power to the Soviets," before the revolution of February, 1917. But the problem of the Soviets and of their possible functions was the very central theme of the work of Lenin and of his companions from 1905 onwards, and even earlier.

By way of completing and correcting Mr. Churchill, Lord

Birkenhead avers that if Kerensky had been gifted with a single ounce of intelligence and courage, the Soviets would never have come into power. Here is, indeed, a philosophy of history that is conducive to comfort! The army falls to pieces in consequence of the soldiers having decided not to salute the officers whom they meet. The contents of the cranium of a radical barrister happens to have been one ounce short, and this deficiency is enough to lead to the destruction of a pious and civilized community! But what indeed can a civilization be worth which at the time of dire need is unable to supply the needful ounce of brain?

Besides, Kerensky did not stand alone. Around him was a whole circle of Entente officials. Why were they unable to instruct and inspire him, or, if need was, replace him? To this query Mr. Churchill can find but this reply: "The statesmen of the Allied nations affected to believe that all was for the best, and that the revolution constituted a notable advantage for the common cause"—which means that the officials in question were utterly incapable of understanding the Russian Revolution—or, in other words, did not substantially differ from Kerensky himself.

Lord Birkenhead Expounds

Today, Lord Birkenhead is incapable of seeing that Lenin, in signing the Brest-Litovsk peace, had shown any particular foresight. (I do not insist upon the fact that Lord Birkenhead represents me as in favor of war with Germany in 1918. The honorable Conservative, on this point, follows far too docilely the utterances of historians of the Stalin school.) He considers, today, that the peace was then inevitable. In his own words, "only hysterical fools" could have imagined that the Bolsheviks were capable of fighting Germany: a very remarkable, though tardy, acknowledgment!

The British government of 1918 and, indeed, all the Entente governments of that time, categorically insisted on our fighting Germany, and when we refused to do so replied by blockade of, and intervention in, our country. We may well ask, in the energetic language of the Conservative politician himself: Where were, at that moment, the hysterical fools? Was it not they who decided the fate of Europe? Lord Birkenhead's view would have been very far-seeing in 1917: but I must confess that I, for one, have little use for far-sight which asserts itself twelve years after the time when it could have been of use.

Lenin's "Recklessness"

Mr. Churchill brings up against Lenin—and it is the very keystone of his article—statistics of the casualties of the civil war. These statistics are quite fantastic. This however, is not the main point. The victims were many on either side. Mr. Churchill expressly specifies that he includes neither the deaths from starvation nor the deaths from epidemics. In his would-be athletic language he describes that neither Tamerlane nor Ghengis Khan were as reckless as Lenin in expenditure of human lives. Judging by the order he adopts, one would think Churchill holds Tamerlane more reckless than Ghengis Khan. In this he is wrong; statistical and chronological figures are certainly not the strong point of this Finance Minister. But this is by the way.

In order to find examples of mass expenditure of human life, Mr. Churchill must needs go to the history of Asia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The great European war

of 1914-18, in which ten million men were killed and twenty million crippled, appears to have entirely escaped his memory. The campaigns of Ghengis Ghan and Tamerlane were child's play in comparison with the doings of civilized nations from 1914 to 1918. But it is in a tone of lofty moral indignation that Mr. Churchill speaks of the victims of civil war in Russia—forgetting Ireland, and India, and other countries.

In short, the question is not so much the victims as it is the duties and the objects for which war was waged. Mr. Churchill wishes to make clear that all sacrifices, in all parts of the world, are permissible and right so long as the object is the power and sovereignty of the British Empire—that is, of its governing classes. But the incomparably lesser sacrifices are wrong which result from the struggle of peoples attempting to alter the conditions under which they exist—as occurred in England in the seventeenth century, in France at the end of the eighteenth, in the United States twice (eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), in Russia in the twentieth century, and as will occur more than once in the future.

Churchill, Leader of Reaction

It is vainly that Mr. Churchill seeks assistance in the evocation of the two Asiatic warrior chiefs, who both fought in the interests of nomadic aristocracies, but yet aristocracies coveting new territories and more slaves—in which respect their dealings were in accordance with Mr. Churchill's principles, but certainly not with Lenin's. Indeed, we may recall that Anatole France, the last of the great humanists, often expressed the idea that of all kinds of the bloodthirsty insanity called war, the least insane was civil war, because at least the people who waged it did so of their own accord and not by order.

Mr. Churchill has committed yet another mistake, a very important one and, indeed, from his own point of view, a fatal one. He forgot that in civil wars, as in all wars, there are two sides; and that in this particular case if he had not come in on the side of a very small minority, the number of the victims would have been considerably less. In October, we conquered power almost without a fight. Kerensky's at-

tempt to reconquer it evaporated as a dewdrop falling on a red-hot stone. So mighty was the driving power of the masses that the older classes hardly dared attempt to resist.

When did the civil war, with its companion, the Red Terror, really start? Mr. Churchill being weak in the matter of chronology, let us help him. The turning point was the middle of 1918. Led by the Entente diplomatists and officers, the Czechoslovakians got hold of the railway line leading to the East. The French ambassador, Noulens, organized the resistance at Yaroslavl. Another foreign representative organized deeds of terror and an attempt to cut off the water supply of Petersburg. Mr. Churchill encourages and finances Savinkov; he is behind Yudenich. He determines the exact dates on which Petersburg and Moscow are to fall. He supports Denikin and Wrangel. The monitors of the British fleet bombard our coast. Mr. Churchill proclaims the coming of "fourteen nations." He is the inspirer, the organizer, the financial backer, the prophet of civil war: a generous backer, a mediocre organizer, and a very bad prophet.

He had been better advised not to recall the memories of those times. The number of the victims would have been, not ten times, but a hundred or a thousand times smaller but for British guineas, British monitors, British tanks, British officers, and British food supplies.

Mr. Churchill understands neither Lenin nor the duties that lay before him. His lack of comprehension is at its worst when he attempts to deal with the inception of the New Economic Policy. For him, Lenin thereby gave himself the lie. Lord Birkenhead adds that in ten years the very principles of the October Revolution were bankrupt. Yes: he who in ten years failed to do away with the miners' unemployment, or to palliate it, expects that in ten years we Russians can build up a new community without committing one mistake, without one flaw, without one setback; a wonderful expectation which gives us the measure of the primitive and purely theoretical quality of the honorable Conservative's outlook. We cannot foretell how many errors, how many set-backs, will mark the course of history; but to see, amid the obstacles and deviations and set-backs of all kinds, the straight line of historical evolution was the achievement of Lenin's genius. And had the Restoration been successful at the time, the need for radical changes in the organization of the community would have remained as great.

LEON TROTSKY.

LENIN ON CHURCHILL

For the last few years already, the British Minister of War, Churchill, has been resorting to every means, lawful and, still more, unlawful, from the point of view of the English laws, to support all the White Guards against Russia, to supply them with military equipment. *This man hates Soviet Russia with all his heart.* (October, 1920.)

*

Churchill, who is pursuing a policy similar to that pursued by Czar Nicholas Romanov, wants to fight and is fighting, and is completely ignoring Parliament; he boasted that he would mobilize fourteen states against Russia—this was in 1919—he would take Petrograd in September and Moscow in December. He was a little too loud in his boastings.

*

... The dictatorship of the proletariat is better than the dictatorship of Churchill (which is concealed behind the sign-board of bourgeois "democracy").

(All quotations from *Lenin on Britain.*)

CHURCHILL ON LENIN

The following are characteristic excerpts on the subject of Lenin from *The Aftermath*, by Winston Churchill:

Implacable vengeance, rising from a frozen pity in a tranquil, sensible, matter-of-fact, good-humored integument! His weapon, logic; his mood, opportunist; his sympathies, cold and wide as the Arctic Ocean; his hatreds, tight as the hangman's noose. His purpose, to save the world; his method, to blow it up. Absolute principles, but readiness to change them. Apt at once to kill or learn; dooms and afterthoughts; ruffianism and philanthropy. But a good husband, a gentle guest; happy, his biographers assure us, to wash up the dishes or dandle the baby; as mildly amused to stalk a capercaillie as to butcher an emperor.

The quality of Lenin's revenge was impersonal. Confronted with the need of killing any particular person he showed reluctance—even distress. But to blot out a million, to proscribe entire classes, to light the flames of intestine war in every land with the inevitable destruction of the well-being of whole nations—these were sublime abstractions.

Afterthoughts on a Union Convention

Comments on the UAW

The most significant occurrences of the recent United Auto Workers' convention demonstrate anew the woefully inadequate political preparation of the American workers for playing a class rôle in the Second Imperialist World War. Despite the fact that the new industrial union movement and organization is now seven years old, that it arose in the course of the severest economic crisis in the whole span of American and world capitalism, accompanied by the imminence of world fascism, the movement remains today politically illiterate, naïve and other-worldly. This is expressed in its continued inaction under Roosevelt and its failure to achieve even the most elementary understanding of what Roosevelt is, what he really stands for and whom he represents.

We say that the American proletariat is not yet prepared to play a class political rôle in the present world drama. It is important to emphasize this lack of proletarian class consciousness today because it is in the period of imperialist war that the class consciousness of the bourgeoisie reaches its highest point and can be clearly seen, no matter how thick the covering layers of patriotic, chauvinist propaganda. In this period of the death agony of capitalism, the bourgeoisie is in continual crisis. From its class point of view it is urgently necessary to close ranks and act in a consistently class conscious manner. The leaders of the bourgeoisie know that the wars waged today by the capitalist states are in fact a struggle between the ruling classes of these states, fought for what is conceived to be the predominant national interest of each group. On a world scale, therefore, the present war is an intra-class struggle, i.e., a struggle taking place between the world bourgeoisies.

The leaders among the bourgeoisie know this to be a fact; they know what their aims are and what their goal is. They conceal these aims and their goal from the proletariat because this is indispensable if they are to have what is necessary to fight the war, namely, manpower in the armies and an unceasing flow of war material in the largest quantities possible. They also know that the mere physical presence of the proletariat at the guns and at the factory machines is not enough. There is a qualitative aspect to the question of war efficiency; the workers must not only be there in millions but they must have high "morale," they must believe in what they are doing and be induced finally to replace their interests with the interests of the ruling class. The attempt is made of course to effect this replacement peacefully but if this cannot be done, the bourgeoisie does not hesitate for an instant to produce it by force. To be sure, this only means that the effort is made, by "education," to bring the proletariat to acceptance of the "defense of the fatherland" concept and if this is not successful, to suppress the militancy of the unions by legislation or by military force.

This is the standardized procedure of the bourgeoisie in every capitalist country. They operate consciously and deliberately. They fight coöperatively on a class basis and always for what they think are their class interests. Do they want to win the war? Do they want to defeat Germany? Of course they do. But what the proletariat does not understand is that this is not the simple matter that the ruling class pretends it is when it seeks to win the working class to its side.

In this instance the bourgeoisie talks in simple terms and puts forth very simple formulas: This is a workers' war. Hitler is a barbarian. The Japanese unleash a brutal anti-white terror in the conquered areas. Our democratic way of life is endangered. This is a war of democracy against fascist barbarism. Should Hitler win, the trade unions will be destroyed.

One or two of these sayings are totally true, others are partially true, while others of the bourgeois slogans are totally false. The trade unions will surely be destroyed if Hitler wins, but the war is not a workers' war. It is an imperialist war waged by the imperialists of the several nations for the consolidation of imperialist gains and interests. (It must be remembered also that there is a concerted drive by the ruling class to destroy the unions now, before the arrival of fascism.)

The financiers and big industrialists want to win the war, it is true, but winning the war to them means not only the defeat of Hitler but also the maintenance of their class dominance in the United States. They are against Hitler and the German bourgeoisie because they threaten the class power and domination of the bourgeoisie in the United States. Hitler threatens to force the American bourgeoisie into the position of subordination to the German bourgeoisie. The war is truly a war between German and American capitalism for world mastery.

Nature of Bourgeois Aims

Class dominance and world power to the bourgeoisie have solid economic roots. They are based on the need for markets, raw materials, labor power (domestic and colonial) and above all, on profits with which to pay salaries, dividends and interest. The conflict between the necessity for defeating the German imperialists and their internal class needs and demands create certain contradictions for the native bourgeoisie. They want to defeat the German bourgeoisie but not at the expense of their rule at home. And thus they face a dilemma. If Hitler wins they will at least be partially stripped of their power and profits. But to make concessions to the unions and the working class in general is, in their opinion, also to be partially stripped of power and profits. Consequently, they attempt not only to maintain but to increase their profits, to "pacify" the working class and thereby increase its exploitation while attempting to gain a military victory against the enemy. In the long run, a victory for Hitler would be preferable to them than a victory for the proletariat in the United States.

Workers or their leaders may object that this is therefore not a consideration at the present; that the ruling class can well afford to bargain collectively with the unions and pay higher wages. It is their contention that, in the circumstances, this is the only decent, patriotic and American course for the bourgeoisie to follow. This will promote "national unity" and enhance the country's "war effort." But the bourgeoisie, being extremely class conscious, especially in wartime, knows more about these matters than the proletariat. It is suspicious of the working class and its organizations, particularly the industrial unions. It is even suspicious of its labor lieutenants. It says openly that Murray's industrial councils will be an entering wedge for the unions to encroach on ownership.

The labor-management committees are a kind of "socialistic" experiment. The bourgeois leaders know well that the strength of the proletariat is in its numbers and that these numbers organized in the industrial unions such as the UAW and led by revolutionists can become an irresistible force.

Furthermore, the bourgeoisie has its own ideas of decency, patriotism and Americanism. In its own thinking and acting, it proceeds from a class basis. It knows that it is its class which prosecutes the war against the German and Japanese ruling classes for its own class ends. It knows that the German and Japanese ruling classes on their part wage the struggle for their own class needs. It knows that there is a Japanese patriotism and a German patriotism as well as an American patriotism. It knows that it is all cut from the same piece of cloth: world capitalism, world imperialism. Therefore the bourgeoisie in the United States practices its own decency, class decency; its own patriotism, class patriotism; its own Americanism, class Americanism. It seeks to win the proletariat over to its ideas of decency, patriotism and Americanism and to hurl the working class ideologically and physically not against the German, Italian and Japanese ruling classes, but against the German, Italian and Japanese nations and their people.

"Good" and "Bad" Capitalists

The "exposure" of the Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey and the General Electric Co., the charges that the big steel companies are selling steel to a "black market," the hijacking operations of the meat packers, the refusal of the airplane companies to produce for less than an eight per cent profit—all these things are traditional and typical of bourgeois decency, patriotism and Americanism. This has been true from the days of Valley Forge, when Washington's army was left to starve by the food brokers of Philadelphia because they could get "good" money from the British in place of the continental script of dubious value. The decent and patriotic bankers mulcted the federal government during the 1860 rebellion; the meat men sold rotten supplies to the government during the Spanish-American War; Morgan patriotically led the country in the First Imperialist World War in order to protect his investments in Europe. The contemporary bourgeoisie acts no differently.

The workers and their leaders can see what the "bad" capitalists do. But they do not see what the capitalists as a whole do. That is their main weakness. They do not understand that capitalism is an indissoluble unity, that it is not a matter of their private opinions but of men functioning as a class and in the interests of their class. The workers and their leaders complain about Henderson, Nelson, Smith of Virginia, Cox of Georgia, Ford and the dollar-a-year men in the government. These are terrible men and should be replaced, they say. But the proletariat does not realize that it is just at the time that capitalism is in crisis that dollar-a-year men come forward to take the reins of government. In times of calm and peace there is no need for the big bourgeoisie to place their strong key men in the government. The little men can then handle the team: the college professors, the theoreticians, the dreamers and experimenters.

The Social Order or "Bad" Capitalists?

During the past eight years they have gone back to the Middle Ages and beyond for their philosophy: to the paternalistic conceptions of the medieval manor, the Catholic

Church and the benign paternalism of Augustus Caesar. Roosevelt is their Augustus, their kind lord of the manor. What they do not grasp though is that the Rooseveltian rôle is not to promote the basic interests, that is, the class interests, of the workers but to erect a bridge over which the proletariat can pass, be led or driven into the camp of the bourgeoisie. First Roosevelt must establish unity, even though temporarily, inside the ruling class. They must be unified behind the war effort. The national interest, that is, the class interests of the bourgeoisie as a whole, dictates this. The fact that some sections of the bourgeoisie do not always see this is beside the point; it is the business of Roosevelt to create harmony and make them work as a team. Roosevelt came to save American capitalism and not to fight for collective bargaining for American workers except to the degree that this was necessary to save and perpetuate capitalism. If the workers could get this in their heads then they would be able to understand Roosevelt and his rôle. They would understand why Roosevelt sent the army to the North American Aviation Co. strike, why he demanded the giving up of the strike and of double-time pay.

Confusion of the Workers

It is through their allegiance to Roosevelt that the workers succumb to the "spiritual" paraphernalia of capitalist society today. They are led to believe that this imperialist war is a "workers'" war, they come to accept "our way of life." They come under complete domination of the bourgeoisie. They think and believe that they carry on the fight against fascism, not realizing that to the bourgeoisie the "fight against fascism" is basically a struggle to save and perpetuate the American brand of capitalism. They and their leaders act as though they believed that Roosevelt and the ruling class were at war with Hitler because he destroyed the trade unions.

The proletariat is impressed with the tremendous power of the capitalist state. This power is not something to be ignored because it is real and terrible, oppressive and cruel. What workers seem to forget is that they are part of this power, in a sense the main part. The capitalist state would be nothing more than little Switzerland without its main prop—the proletariat, the chief of the productive forces of capitalism and the bulk of its military forces. Also, the proletariat does not yet understand that a workers' state would be still more powerful and infinitely more productive. The energies of the people that could be unleashed by the workers' government: their productive capacities and spontaneity, their proletarian patriotism and the ensuing military might, would sweep Adolph Hitler and every other Hitler from the seats of power.

The proletariat has some vague and wandering feeling that all is not well. They see the drive against the unions and against their living standards. They behold the National War Labor Board tie them to their shacks and poverty as of January 1, 1941. They listen to the shout of dissent that went up from the bourgeoisie when the steel workers got a small increase in pay. And while their wages are "stabilized," they read about rising prices, soaring profits and the doubling of the big salaries. They do not catch on because they do not know and understand what we have been discussing above.

Occasionally some union convention will pass some fleeting resolution calling for the formation of a Labor Party. This is only an old-fashioned longing for a change of some sort. But this is not enough. The offensive of the bourgeoisie is political in nature and the unions reply with the simplest of

age-old economic demands and the intention of winning them with routine collective bargaining, all within the framework of rampant, predatory, exploitive and imperialist capitalism.

Hence Roosevelt represents neither the economic nor the political interests of the proletariat. Just as in the case of the bourgeoisie, with its Democratic-Republican Party, the proletariat must have its own political party to formulate its program, fight its political battles and lead it to victory. The Republican-Democratic Party does this for the ruling class and for this class alone. The day that the proletariat grasps and understands this elementary political idea it will break with the bourgeois parties and form its own class political instrument. The break with the bourgeois parties is the beginning of a definitive break with the ruling class; a casting out of the bourgeoisie with all its anti-proletarian baggage and ideas. This is the first and fundamental political and organizational task confronting the working class. The gulf between the economic militancy of the American proletariat and their political class consciousness is still very wide.

* * *

These observations are prompted by the procedure of the recent UAW convention and the antics of the leadership at that convention. Every question raised and discussed here is pertinent for an understanding of the deliberations of that convention and all the other labor conventions that take place today. Each of the labor conventions is used by the bourgeoisie as a forum for the propagation of ruling class ideas. Today these conventions are only formally a gathering of labor. Specific economic problems of the labor movement are always on the agenda but they are distorted, crowded out or passed through the hopper like pension bills going through the House of Representatives.

The main part of the program is devoted to deliberation on proposals on the war coming from Roosevelt or from some other representative of the ruling class. These bourgeois ideas and resolutions are brought into the convention by the union leadership. This leadership today functions exclusively as the labor lieutenants of the bourgeoisie. As discussed above they seek to cover this up by placing Roosevelt outside the bourgeoisie, by giving him a sort of no-class status. Objectively this is the chief rôle played today by Murray, Thomas, Addes, the Reuthers and all the rest of the trade union leaders. They virtually have no other function. Their pro-imperialist war, class-collaborationist politics makes them the ideal persons to represent Roosevelt and his class in the ranks of the proletariat. They are the leaders of the workers and have or had their confidence. By the time that this confidence had begun to wane the workers had already been chained to the war drive.

The CIO and Roosevelt

Murray made the deal with Roosevelt which resulted in halting the advance of the CIO at least for the duration of the war. The membership was not consulted for the reason that the leadership of the CIO did not trust the membership to go along. This leadership is experienced and wise enough to know that the agreements they have made are in conflict with the interests of the workers. It also acquiesces in the plans of Roosevelt and the bourgeoisie for the unions because it does not have the courage to resist these powerful leaders of American capitalism. Murray, Thomas, Reuther and the others know that in order to stand out against Roosevelt they must have the mass support of the proletariat. The proletariat is willing and anxious to give this mass support even to

the point of mass strikes, but Murray & Co. are afraid of the spontaneity of the masses. They draw back from the picture of the masses in motion. They know that the proletariat marching is a dangerous working class. The movement will get out from under their control and they will not be able to carry out the commitments they have made to Roosevelt and the bourgeoisie.

This is one reason why the organizing drives of the CIO have been halted, especially the drive to organize the airplane industry. This is the chief and the biggest war industry today. The workers there are young and militant. They are not what the *New York Times* calls "responsible" old-time trade unionists.

The CIO has a resolution for beginning the organization of the South. It is safe to predict that this organizing campaign will not begin until after the war is over. The organization of the white and Negro paupers of the South into fighting industrial unions would be like placing a stick of dynamite under the seat of every bourgeois in the nation. Murray, Thomas & Co. will not do this.

Not only do Murray, Thomas and the rest not have the courage, but also they do not feel that a militant mass movement of the proletariat is in their interest today. As class-collaborationist trade union leaders, they are of the working class but their thinking is not directed by the class interests of the proletariat but objectively by the class interests of the bourgeoisie. Hence they become the deputies of the bourgeoisie in the organizations of the workers. For the reason that the core of their political philosophy is class collaboration it is especially in war time, the period of greatest crisis for the bourgeoisie, that they succumb completely to bourgeois ideology and therefore fail to resist the plans of the ruling class for the proletariat.

Explanations by the Leadership

In what way did these factors manifest themselves at the UAW convention? The UAW is an excellent example because not only is it the largest of the CIO internationals, but, aside from the miners, the most militant, the one in the key war industry and the one with the youngest workers. Their recent convention in Chicago was a first-rate illustration of what we have been saying.

The leadership knew that they faced a rank and file revolt and had made plans to control the situation and to direct the convention to the "proper" goal. The bureaucracy had two types of proposals for the delegates: political and organizational. The political proposals concerned the relationship of the international to the government and therefore to the bourgeoisie. The main resolution and the one around which a real revolt threatened was that presented by the War Policy Committee on overtime pay. This resolution illustrated the complete dependence of the union leadership on the Roosevelt Administration; its complete trust in Roosevelt, its repudiation of class struggle methods and its refusal to invoke the mass power of the 600,000 UAW members. The resolution complained that whereas both the AFL and CIO had made a pledge to Roosevelt to give up the overtime pay, the AFL had not abided by the promise. The claim is made that the loss of the Curtiss-Wright election by the CIO could be attributed to the repudiation of the agreement by the AFL. The resolution called this a repudiation of the President. It went even further and said that: "Many employers approached by the UAW-CIO local unions for the purpose of revising their contracts to conform to the policy enunciated by the President

of the United States have flatly refused to do so and have insisted upon payment of premium time." The resolution demanded that the giving up of "premium" pay be made "universal" within thirty days or the UAW will demand return to the former status.

Pawns of the Administration

Here was a demand by a labor union for the government to enforce a wage cut for workers in plants where the bourgeoisie had refused to make the cut. They admit in the resolution that this is a policy put forward by Roosevelt. It was not a demand of the union. There is no claim that the demand is in the union interest. The bureaucracy does not even pretend to claim that the giving up of the "premium" pay will increase production. It only says that the workers must make sacrifices and that this is a sacrifice that Roosevelt desires. That the workers it is supposed to lead do not desire it is of no consequence; they must make sacrifices! How giving up premium pay will support the war is not explained, only that the President says so. Perhaps Thomas, Addes, Reuther and Frankenstein thought that the explanation would be too technical for the UAW membership to understand. Also, it did not occur to them to look into Roosevelt's motives. Was Roosevelt by this move attempting to pacify the bourgeoisie, which was against the "premium" pay? Was there any connection between Roosevelt and this bourgeoisie? The leadership was silent on all these questions; all it knew was that the workers must sacrifice.

The "Open Letter"

The leadership acted as though it was operating, not under capitalism, but in a workers' state which was at war with an imperialist state. In such a situation the delegates would have understood and there would not have been the tremendous outcry against the resolution and all the talk of the leaders about "sacrifice." But this was not the case; the delegates knew that there was something out of joint. What it was about they had only the vaguest proletarian notions.

The bourgeoisie, however, is not so stupid as Murray and Thomas, nor so dishonest as Addes, Frankenstein and Reuther. It knows it can afford to give the overtime pay, that it has nothing to do with the winning of the war. Those who do so keep up the overtime pay because they believe that it is in their class interests to continue the "premium" pay. They of course are not philanthropists, they are hard-headed capitalists. It could be true and probably is, that some of the capitalists who continue the overtime pay do so in the hope of disrupting the UAW. The union must do something about this but the proper approach is not that of the UAW officers. They want the government to punish the recalcitrant employers, to use its might to make the President's policy "universal." They do not appeal to their own class but to the enemy class, that is, to Roosevelt, for action in behalf of the proletariat.

One other illustration of the blundering class collaborationism of the Murray-Thomas leadership was the "Open Letter" to the German workers. Here again was revealed not only the crass and criminal stupidity of this leadership but also the political backwardness of the rank and file.

This obnoxious and windy "Open Letter" to the German workers said in part: "You have two clear alternatives. The one is to continue what you are doing now sacrificing yourselves and your children, dragging Germany and the whole

of Europe with you into an ever-deepening brutality, until Germany and all the German hopes will lie buried upon the battlefields of the world; and... A workers' alternative to make your inevitable suffering and sacrifices meaningful to the ultimate realization of a free and decent world... for the workers anywhere there is but one side in this war... in this fateful hour we call upon you workers of Germany to join us—the workers of the world—in our struggle for a workers' victory and a workers' peace."

This "Open Letter" ignores every political consideration that is important in the situation both here and in Germany. In the first place, in their haste to advise the German workers to join with Roosevelt, Churchill and the Anglo-American bourgeoisie, the UAW bureaucrats ignore the history of the development of fascism in Germany. They speak as though the German workers were responsible for Hitler and fascism. They forget that the German labor movement had its Murray and its Thomas, class collaborationists and capitulators, who advised "sacrifice" and trust in "the President." And doesn't the "socialist" Reuther know that there was a Social-Democracy in Germany and that it had its Reuthers in the labor movement? Have these bureaucrats forgotten that it was the Murrays, Thomases and Reuthers that tied the German working class to the bourgeois war chariot in 1914? They and all the other trade union and socialist leaders in the United States today are playing the identical rôle as that of the German trade union and socialist leaders in 1914. In Germany the political capitulation of the trade union and political leaders to the bourgeoisie led straight down the road to Hitler and fascism. How will the CIO leaders explain this to the working class?

The "Open Letter" says that for the workers there is only one side in the war. To these bureaucrats, there are only two sides: "The Axis" and "the United Nations." Which side shall the German workers choose? Thomas wants them to join the side of the United States and England. But is there no other alternative?

Political Clarity Is Indispensable

The German workers have been forced to serve the side of Hitler. But Thomas & Co. have no right to condemn them for this. Murray, Thomas and Reuther are voluntarily supporting their own ruling class, their own imperialists.

We say too that "for the workers anywhere there is but one side in this war." But it is not the side that Murray and Thomas have taken, for the side they have taken is the position of the bourgeoisie: the side of death, misery and destruction; the side which in Germany and under similar conditions led to fascism and the complete destruction of the labor movement.

There is a "workers' alternative," the way of the class struggle. This means to break from the bourgeoisie and from support of its wars; independent political action by and for the working class; a party of workers to educate the proletariat politically, to lead its battles and to organize its victory.

Fully 95 per cent of the delegates to the UAW convention disagreed with the antics and the proposals of the leadership. Yet this leadership came away with the victory. The militants among the delegates talked and talked and pounded. But their fury and militancy accomplished comparatively little. The reason is easy to see. These militants had no political or organizational program. They do not understand capitalism and bourgeois-democratic society. They confuse politics with parliamentarianism. They do not think in terms of

working class politics and of the urgent need for militant and independent working class political action.

The "Open Letter" calls for a "workers' victory and a workers' peace." Who can organize this victory and this peace? Only the most militant, class conscious political party of the proletariat can organize and lead the working class to

such a victory and such a peace. It can never be accomplished in a million years by the Murrays, Thomases, Reuthers and their kind. They fight for the victory of the bourgeoisie; they lead to the defeat of the proletariat. The trade union militants don't yet understand this. But these lessons must be learned, and learned quickly—else the fascist deluge.

DAVID COOLIDGE.

Russia's New Ruling Class

An Examination of New Materials

Who rules Russia today?

According to the official Stalinist mythology, there is no ruling class in Russia, because there is nobody left to rule over. There is the new Soviet worker, there is the collectivized Soviet peasant, there is the not very clearly delineated "new Soviet intelligentsia"—and they all stand on the same social plane, cooperating harmoniously, without social or class conflict, to bridge the last few small gaps remaining between the socialist society already in existence in Russia and the communist society of tomorrow. If the state, usually understood to be the coercive organ of class rule, nevertheless continues to exist and, with the aid of the GPU, to grow ever stronger, more centralized and more oppressive, it is only in order to guard against the insignificant "remnants" of the outlived classes and occasional nests of unreconstructed "Trotskyists, Zinovievist, Bukharinist wreckers." The ownership of property, at all events, is no longer the basis of minority class rule, since property is now fully socialized; it is state property and thereby, in the words of the Stalinist Constitution, "the possessions of the whole people."

According to Trotsky, whose running analysis of Soviet society remains of fundamental importance, the working class that once ruled Russia has lost all traces of *political* power. That power has been usurped by a counter-revolutionary bureaucracy. However, the bureaucracy is not a class, but more in the nature of a caste whose rôle it is to serve classes. In the present case, it serves the working class. In what sense? In that it preserves the workers' *social* rule, which is represented fundamentally by the existence of nationalized property, more exactly, of state property. Russia is therefore a degenerated workers' state, the bureaucracy being a symptom of the great danger to the revolution which it has not succeeded in destroying so long as it protects state property, even if with reactionary methods.

Therefore, although the workers have no political power whatsoever, although they are exploited by methods which would not be countenanced in a bourgeois democracy, although their share of the national wealth continues to decline in favor of the share allotted to itself by the bureaucracy, although their economic position grows worse every year, although they have nothing to say about domestic or foreign policy, about economics or politics in general, although they are subjected to the same totalitarian barbarism that Hitler

inflicts upon the German workers—they remain the ruling class of Russia so long as property remains in the hands of the state.* So long as property (i.e., the means of production and exchange) remains in the hands of *what* state? In the hands of the workers' state! But what is it that makes it a *workers' state*? The fact that property is in its hands. And so on in a complete circle.

My view, which was substantially adopted at the following convention of the Workers Party, was, briefly, that which Trotsky called the political rule of the working class was actually its class rule; that this had been brought to an end by the counter-revolution of the Stalinist bureaucracy—roughly in the period between 1933 and 1936—which established new property relations while retaining more or less intact the old property forms (i.e., state property), and thereby set up a new, reactionary, hitherto unprecedented state with a new ruling class. This new social order, while a thousand times closer to capitalism than it is to socialism or even to the workers' state of the early days of Lenin and Trotsky, is neither capitalist nor proletarian. To distinguish it from either one of these two and at the same time to underline its outstanding characteristic as tersely as possible, this new state was designated as *bureaucratic collectivism*.

Some Concrete Data on Russia

The official defenders of Trotsky's theory had previously shouted themselves livid with the demand that we discuss the fundamental question of the class character of the Soviet Union, which they declared themselves ready to argue with the greatest of freedom and amplitude. They met the criticism and presentation which we had made with a dignified silence which they have maintained down to the present day, and directed at the critic a stream of abuse which they have maintained just as steadily. As is evident, they borrowed this method of theoretical dispute from the same source whence Collins borrowed the theory that the Russian people own everything in Russia—except the state which really does own everything.

But although we have for long been deprived of the annihilating criticism which Collins & Associates would undoubtedly inflict upon our views if they could be persuaded to speak, we have just been provided with some extremely interesting corroboratory material from another source. It appears in an article by Solomon M. Schwarz, called "Heads of Russian Factories," which appears in the September, 1942, issue of *Social Research*, a quarterly published in New York by the New School of Social Research. The article is part of a graduate faculty research project on "Social and Economic Controls in Germany and Russia." Unless we are mistaken, the author is the same writer who, apparently a member or supporter of the Russian Menshevik Party, used to contribute

*Like Lenin, Trotsky is not without his epigones. He wrote time and again to show that ownership of all property by the state in Russia did not make it in Russia was the possession of the whole people." Yet we are now told by one George Collins that in Russia "the factories, mines, mills, railroads, work-shops belong to those who work them. The soil belongs to those who till it." Did this 100 per cent Stalinist propaganda-lie appear in *The Daily Worker*, where common decency dictates that it properly belongs? No, it appears on page 1 of the Cannonite *Militant* for September 12. But no need to worry; as is customary with this paper, without repudiating Collins, it will say the opposite in a following issue, and generously let the reader make his own choice as to its real position.

before the war to the German theoretical magazine of Rudolph Hilferding.

The article deals with the origin and rise of a new social stratum, the heads of the Russian factories, and "their relations with government officials and organizations." Its principal value lies in the patent objectivity and scholarly scrupulousness with which the author has selected and compiled his data from official Soviet sources. Frankly, we do not have such access to the source material as would make possible a speedy and conclusive check on Schwarz's material. If we accept the data it is because they are entirely in line, first, with commonly known and commonly accepted facts; second, with material adduced repeatedly by Trotsky on which we have had good reason to rely in the past, and third, with material about which we are more directly informed.

What the present political views or affiliations of the author are, we do not know. The article reveals neither the blatant anti-Sovietism of the Abramovich wing of the Menshevik émigrés nor the bleating "pro-Sovietism" (read: more or less pro-Stalinist position) of the Dan-Werner-Yugov wing. In fact, Schwarz seems to lean over backward in political self-restraint, both from the standpoint of giving his own political opinions and of indicating the political causes and concomitants of the phenomenon he examines. All things considered, we are ready to say: "So much the better."

Schwarz starts, satisfactorily enough, with the end of the civil war in 1921. Industry had to be reestablished; the militants in the military forces were being demobilized. A system of dual management was set up in the factory, with the Bolshevik Party representation (*khozyastvennik*, "economist") as director, and a "technical director," usually from the overthrown classes, as his assistant. It may be added, though Schwarz does not deal with this aspect of the question, that the rôle of the party organization, of the trade unions, of the factory councils or committees, and of the Soviets in general, was such as to give fair assurances of the preservation and predominance of proletarian interests in this set-up. At all events, Lenin's whole policy was based upon establishing and multiplying precisely such assurances.

"The party director, who exercised most of the managerial functions, was often a former worker who had played an active rôle in the local labor movement since the beginning of the Revolution or even before, perhaps in the very factory where he now acted as manager." (This and all following quotations are from Schwarz unless otherwise indicated.) "The technical director, often an engineer with considerable experience, served as a subordinate assistant, limited in his rights in the factory and frequently, for political reasons, tacitly considered not wholly reliable."

For reasons which Schwarz does not develop properly, in our opinion, either because of the political limitations he places upon himself in his article or because of his own political limitations, this "system of dual control" began to disappear along about 1928-1929. The first "wrecker" trials—of bourgeois engineers—were framed by the régime, and despite Stalin's speech of June 23, 1931, on the "six conditions necessary for our industrial development," in which he held out a rather wilted olive branch to the engineers of the old order, the latter never got back to the tolerated positions they had enjoyed before.

That is understandable. In the first place, new levies of engineers trained from among the young Soviet generation were being turned out of the technical schools. But more important than this was the fact that the "wrecker trials"

were held, not because the engineers had wrecked but because it was necessary to wreck the engineers. It was part of the violent campaign which the bureaucracy suddenly launched at that time to crush all bourgeois elements in the country's economic and social life, following right on the heels of the climax of the first phase of the crushing of the revolutionary elements in the Bolshevik Party (the Trotskyists and the Zinovievists).

Trotsky Erred in His Analysis

Hindsight enables us to see now how erroneous was the then analysis of the Left Opposition, and in particular of its leader, Trotsky. The Stalinist wing of the party was judged to be a fundamentally inconsequential grouping which was doomed to capitulate to the Right Wing. The latter, representing the capitalist restorationist tendency in the party, was the real and serious and durable danger. The Stalinist wing might make a little zig-zag to the left, but only in order to make a bigger and more prolonged jump to the right at the next stage. The Stalinists might gain a bureaucratic point here or there over the Right Wing, but it would quickly end by going over to the Right Wing. The Stalinists, due to their hold on the party machine, might defeat the Right Wing inside the party, but on the broad arena of the class struggle in the country, the "Right Wing tail will crash down upon the dead" of the party bureaucracy. The real protagonists were the capitalist forces, on the one side, represented inside the party by the Right Wing, and the revolutionary proletariat, on the other, represented by the Opposition. The Stalinist Center would be speedily dissolved in the heat of the class struggle between these two forces—and while speedily did not mean fifteen weeks or months, it certainly was not meant to extend to fifteen years.

This misconception, this terribly wrong underrating of the true significance of the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy, failed to prepare us properly for the future. Stalin's "zigzag to the left" was no movement to the left at all, if by that term is understood a movement in the direction of the class interests of the proletariat. It was not a brief precursor of a long zigzag to the right, if by that term is understood a capitulation to the capitalist elements. The opening up of the independent Stalinist drive (independent of Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, that is, of the Right Wing), marked the beginnings of the declaration of independence of the bureaucratic counter-revolution, of its rise to power *in its own name*, not in the interests of the working class and not in the interests of capitalist restoration. This drive had and still has its ups and downs; it had its zigzags and side-leaps and slow-downs and retreats. But at the same time it had a main line, a fundamental line: the formation of a new, reactionary ruling class in Russia, and the casting of Russian economic, political and social life in the image of this new ruling class.

That's why the line of Stalinism *inside Russia* meant not only the most brutal extirpation of all representatives and institutions of the working class, but an only slightly less brutal extermination of all representatives and institutions—especially economic—of the capitalist class. At bottom, that is also why the Stalinists would not tolerate even the most abject coexistence of the capitulators. The latter thought they were capitulating to representatives—bad ones, to be sure, but representatives nevertheless—of their own class and their own class régime. Had their assumption been essentially correct, they would have been absorbed into the apparatus of the "bad representatives" of their class, as has happened before in his-

tory. But the assumption was false; that's why they were not absorbed by the new Stalinist bureaucracy and could not be. The fate of the capitulators, acting in the most debased manner for what they thought was the most noble cause, was thus a *double tragedy*.

We have just mentioned "the *new* Stalinist bureaucracy." To see and weigh just what it is, let us return to Schwarz.

With the restoration or near-restoration of pre-war economic levels, and with the need of more and more managerial forces, the Central Committee, especially from 1928 onward, laid increasing stress on the training of *khozyastvenniki*. Where Rykov had put some emphasis on this point, it is interesting to note that men like Molotov laid much greater emphasis on it. In the middle of 1928, it was decided that the proletarian elements in the engineering colleges and technical schools be raised to a minimum of 65 per cent among the new applicants; and "the party nucleus in the engineering colleges was also to be strengthened, by commissioning annually, for engineering studies, at least 1,000 communists with good experience in the field of party, Soviet or trade union activity." Eighteen months later, the Central Committee renewed its emphasis on this problem, increased the number of communists assigned for engineering studies from 1,000 to 2,000, and for the year 1930-31, to 3,000, while the Communist Youth organization "was instructed to prepare 5,000 annually for training in engineering colleges and technical schools." "Red specialists," to be trained for the purpose of replacing the old bourgeois technicians, and of supplementing the former party *khozyastvenniki*, began streaming from the colleges and schools by the thousands. How great, comparatively, was their number, may be seen from the fact that while there were only 20,200 engineers in all Soviet industry in 1927-28 (before the inauguration of the five-year plans), 165,600 students were graduated from the colleges and schools in the period of the first five-year plan alone (1929-32).

Statistical Expressions of the Change

The extremely rapid growth of industry, unexpected by the bureaucracy, went hand in glove with a shortage of labor and a decline in quality. The bureaucracy at first proceeded with a freezing of transfers of workers from manual work to general administration for two years (October 20, 1930, decree). Two years later (September 19, 1932, decree) it acknowledged that "the system accelerated education of engineers and technicians had failed. . . . In that section of the decree devoted to 'recruiting for the engineering colleges and technical schools' there was this time no mention of a 'workers' nucleus.' The previous regulations in this regard were not formally revoked, but they were tacitly pushed into the background, and little by little forgotten."

Schwarz adduces instructive figures on the changes in the social composition of the schools. They really speak for themselves:

The percentage of worker students began a rapid increase in 1928, but after 1933 it showed an even more rapid decline. In fact, the figures for 1938 may be regarded as on practically the same level as those for 1928, because during those years there was a great increase in the percentage of manual workers among the whole population.

	1928	1931	1933	1935	1938
	pct.	pct.	pct.	pct.	pct.
Higher educational institutions					
Total	25.4	46.6	50.3	45.0	33.9
Industry (and building)					43.5
Transportation and postal service	38.3	61.9	64.6	59.8	48.8

Technical schools

Total	25.8	42.6	41.5	31.7	27.1
Industry (and building)					41.0
Transportation and postal service	38.5	60.1	62.2	51.7	42.8

Conversely the percentage of students consisting of white collar employees and their children grew considerably after 1933, but here the figures apply principally to the "specialists" and the employees in the higher positions, for the white collar employees in medium and inferior positions were of about the same material and social standing as manual workers, sometimes lower. At the beginning of 1938, as shown above, manual workers and their children constituted 33.9 per cent of the students of the higher educational institutions; at the same time the figure for peasants and peasants' children was 21.6 per cent, but that for white collar employees and "specialists" and their children was 42.2 per cent (the remaining 2.3 per cent consisting of "others"). The figures for the higher educational institutions devoted to training for industry are even more significant: manual workers, 43.5 per cent; peasants 9.6 per cent; white collar employees and specialists 45.4 per cent.

This gradual process of reducing the proletariat's influence in the posts of direction, which were becoming increasingly the posts of command, underwent an abrupt change in 1936, according to Schwarz. He quite rightly connects this change with the big purge that began with the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial in 1936 and reached a high point with the Pyatakov-Radek trial in January, 1937. Thousands were cleaned out of posts, from small enterprises right up to the highest posts in the land.

From the last months of 1936 until well into 1938 a radical change took place in the leading industrial personnel, wider and more important than that of 1928-29. *This shift cannot be explained as arising out of the development of industry.* The replacement of almost all the important industrial chiefs by new men—new not only in the direct sense of the word but also in the sense that they were representatives of a social stratum now in process of formation—*was a conscious act of policy, put into effect systematically and with a decisive firmness by the supreme authority.* . . .

The replacement of the chiefs of industrial plants by new men was only one aspect of this *new social upheaval*. Its broader aspects—its historical roots and inner motives and sociological importance—cannot be analyzed within the frame of this study. [Schwarz here exercises the political self-restraint already noted. Note also that the italics are mine—M.S.]

Of what type were the new industrial directors, the new chiefs of the factories, the new overlords, in a word? Schwarz' picture is photographically accurate:

. . . In their political psychology they represented a new type. Most of them leaned toward authoritarian thinking: the highest leadership above (Stalin and those closest to him) has to decide on right and wrong; what that leadership decides is incontrovertible, absolute. Thus the complete devotion to Stalin. It would be an undue simplification to explain this devotion merely by the fact that the system represented by Stalin made possible the rise of these people. The attitude had deeper roots. Stalin was for them the embodiment of the economic rise and the international strengthening of the country. They accepted as natural the fact that this rise was dearly paid for, that the bulk of the toiling masses remained in dire want. They were educated to the idea that the value of a social system depends on the nationalization of the economy and the speed of its development: a society with a developed industry and without a capitalist class is *ipso facto* a classless society, and the idea of social equality belongs only to "petty bourgeois equalitarianism." Their interest was not in social problems, but in the strong state that built up the national economy.

How the "Workers' State" Really Looks

The year Schwarz gives for the rise of this new ruling class, with its own specific class ideology—not a "deviation" from the ideology of another class, but a specifically different ideology, is of significant importance. It coincides with our own estimate of the period of the rise to class power of the bureaucratic counter-revolution. At the same time, it coincides with

the time of Trotsky's radical change in policy, conformative to his view that the objective situation had changed. For it was in 1936 that Trotsky declared that the Russian proletariat had not only lost all political power, but that the Stalinist bureaucracy could not be removed by reform methods, and that the proletariat could return to power only by means of an armed insurrection, that is, the violent overthrow of the existing régime. Once Trotsky made this change in his policy, then, given the singular character of the class rule of the proletariat which distinguishes it fundamentally from all preceding ruling classes, he was saying that the workers' state in Russia had been destroyed by a counter-revolution. For Trotsky had himself written, in a fundamental thesis on Russia adopted by our movement in 1931, that

The recognition of the present Soviet state as a workers' state not only signifies that the bourgeoisie can conquer power in no other way than by an armed uprising but also that the proletariat of the USSR has not forfeited the possibility of submitting the bureaucracy to it, of reviving the party again and of mending the régime of the dictatorship—without a new revolution, with the methods and on the road of reform. (Trotsky, *Problems of the Development of the USSR*, page 36.)

When Trotsky declared in 1936 that the proletariat of the USSR had lost the "possibility of submitting the bureaucracy to it," of reviving the party and the régime "without a new revolution, with the methods and on the road of reform," he involuntarily recognized, on the basis of his own criterion in 1931, that Russia was no longer a workers' state.

But while there may be, and are, disputes about the class character of the Russian state, there can scarcely be any debate about the change in the character of the so-called Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Schwarz' contribution on this score solidly confirms Trotsky's view in 1933, 34 that the Stalinist party, at any rate, could not be reformed, and most definitely confirms our more specific point of view on the question of the present CPSU.

He dates the radical and fundamental change in the party from the period of the big purges, 1936-38, and compares party statistic of the Seventeenth Congress, before the purges (1934) and of the Eighteenth Congress, after the purges (1939).

At the Seventeenth Congress 22.6 per cent of the delegates had been party members since before 1917, and 17.7 per cent dated their membership from 1917; thus 40 per cent had belonged to the party since before the time it took power. A total of 80 per cent of the delegates had been party members since 1919 or earlier. But five years later, at the Eighteenth Congress, only 5 per cent of the delegates had belonged to the party since 1917 or before (2.6 per cent from 1917, 2.4 per cent from earlier years), and instead of 80 per cent, only 14 per cent dated their membership from 1919 or earlier.

Perhaps even more impressive are the figures for the party as a whole. At the time of the Eighteenth Congress there were 1,588,852 party members (compared with 1,872,488 at the time of the Seventeenth Congress, a loss of almost 300,000 members). Of the 1,588,852, only 1.3 per cent, hardly more than 20,000, had belonged to the party from 1917 or before. At the beginning of 1918 the party had numbered 260,000 to 270,000 members, mostly young people. Even taking account of the high mortality during the Civil War, it can be assumed that fewer than 200,000 of these people were alive at the beginning of 1939. But only 10 per cent of them had remained in the party.

The high regard for party membership that dated from the heroic period was over. At the Eighteenth Congress it was particularly emphasized that 70 per cent of the members had belonged only since 1929 or later, and that even of the delegates, 43 per cent belonged to this group (the comparable figure for the Seventeenth Congress was 2.6).

The report of the Mandate Commission of the Seventeenth Congress emphasized with satisfaction that 9.3 per cent of the delegates were "workers from production," that is, were actual, not only former, manual workers. This question had always been mentioned at the previous congresses. At the Eighteenth Congress, however, the party lost all interest

in the matter. Even the most glorified Stakhanov workers—Stakhanov, Busygin, Krivonos, Vinogradova, Likhoradov, Smetanin, Mazai, Gudov—were somewhat out of place at this Congress. All of them were now party members, and some were delegates, but when the Congress passed to the election of the new Central Committee of the party, the important leading body of 139 persons (71 members and 68 substitutes), not one of the famous Stakhanov workers was elected. It was but a logical development that the Congress changed the statutes and eliminated all statutory guarantees of the proletarian character of the party. The Communist Party is no longer a workers' party; to an increasing extent it has become the party of the officers of the various branches of economy and administrations.

What Is the New Ruling Class?

The CPSU is about as much a "bureaucratic workers' party" as the National Socialist German Workers Party is a "fascist workers' party." To say, as Trotsky rightly but inconclusively said, that it is the party of the bureaucracy, is not enough; the CPSU is the party of the new ruling class, the collectivist bureaucracy.

How do the new factory directors jibe with the "specifically" party bureaucracy? A most interesting development has taken place in the relations between these two social groups. Marx underlines in *Capital* the familiar phenomenon of the division of the original owner-superintendent into the owner and the superintendent. Where originally the property-owner performed the socially-useful work of superintendence and management and was therefore a "laboring capitalist," the further division of labor under capitalism and the extension of the economic power of the capitalists made it possible for them to "shift this burden [of management] to the shoulders of a superintendent for moderate pay." Noting this development under capitalism, I pointed out in my article on the Russian state, almost two years ago, that a directly opposite development had marked the rise and consolidation of the power of the new ruling class in Russia—the "owner" (of the state) had fused with the manager. I wrote that "the bureaucracy is no longer the controlled and revocable 'managers and superintendents' employed by the workers' state in the party, the state apparatus, the industries, the army, the unions, the fields, but the owners and controllers of the state, which is in turn the repository of collectivized property and thereby the employer of all hired hands, the masses of the workers, above all, included" (*The New International*, December, 1940, page 200).

Schwarz traces the same process which marked the consolidation of the new ruling class. What he calls the "conscious act of policy, put into effect systematically and with a decisive firmness by the supreme authority," was the necessary movement of the Bonapartist bureaucracy to establish and widen a new class base for itself in the economic foundations of the country. A new class base—no longer the old base of a corrupted labor bureaucracy. Hence the decline in the "influx of workers and workers' children into the institutions of higher education." Hence also the decree of the Supreme Council of the USSR on October 2, 1940, in which

... free education was abolished in the high schools (the eighth, ninth and tenth classes of the public school) and in the higher educational institutions, and a fee was introduced amounting to 150 to 200 rubles a year in the high schools, 300 to 500 rubles a year in the colleges. Hence a higher education became the exclusive privilege of those who could pay for it. The social tendency of this decree is further illuminated by another issued by the same body on the same day, introducing the compulsory vocational education of boys from fourteen to seventeen. After a training of six months (for boys of sixteen and seventeen, to teach them the duties of a "half-qualified" worker) or of two years (for boys of fourteen and fifteen, to teach them the duties of a "qualified" worker) the young men are for four years tied to their manual vocation, and

must work in the enterprises indicated to them by the special authority; except in these respects they work under the same conditions as the other workers. But this compulsory vocational training (and the consequent compulsory labor) is not general: 800,000 to 1,000,000 boys must be "mobilized" each year for the vocational schools, but the students of the high schools (the last three classes of the public school) and of the higher educational institutions are tacitly exempt from this obligation. Thus the character of the higher education as a social privilege of the new higher social stratum is directly emphasized. The future industrial chiefs grow up from their very school days with a feeling of their social superiority.

In blunter language, the "new higher" class has its special class privileges and grows up with a feeling of its class superiority. Meanwhile, as happened under capitalism in its time, the class status of the workers as a whole is frozen, but in this new class state with methods that are essentially singular to it.

... The promotion of workers into administrative positions was almost stopped in the second half of the 30's. The outstanding workers were now protected by higher wages, bonuses and the like and in their social and material position they were elevated above the majority of the workers, almost to the level of the higher ranks of plant employees and engineers. But they were no longer "promoted"; they remained manual workers. Moreover, by this time it was only for a few of these favored workers that the way was open to a higher education, with a prospect of rising later to industrial leadership. The idea of putting the direction of industry into the hands of people rising from the working class and bound up with labor, as it had been formulated at the end of the 20's, was now lost, and the order to assure a workers' nucleus in the colleges and technical schools had been tacitly forgotten. At the end of 1940 obstacles were even put in the way of workers' children and higher education.

The process of developing out and congealing a new ruling class could not avoid the problem of the relations between the new heads of industry and the specifically party officialdom. Schwarz shows, as we indicated two years ago, how this problem has been solved by means of a more or less harmonious fusion, similar though not quite identical with historic fusions into one class of different social strata.

Although directors and party officials represented the same interests, "the economic interests of the state," they nevertheless represented "different social types," they "often approached the problems of plant life in different ways." "Only around the middle of the 30's did these tensions (between the two groups) begin visibly to abate, and only at the beginning of the 40's were they almost completely removed."

It might be supposed that in a state consciously built up as a party dictatorship this uncertainty would work in favor of the party officials, but actually the dominant trend in the first half of the 30's was a strengthening of the authority of the economic officers, guaranteeing them a greater freedom of decision. Thus the position of the director as compared with that of the party cell grew stronger. The outcome of the development was a more intensive subordination of the economic officers to the party officers, but an increasing influence of industrial officers inside the party. The new changes that began in the middle of the 30's, much more complicated than may appear at first sight, ended with an almost complete removal of friction between industrial and party officials.

The fusion of the new industrial leadership with the new party bureaucracy was at the same time a fusion with the official (and new) state apparatus—quite inevitably—and the "perfection" of the most totalitarian régime in all history.

It is characteristic of recent developments that the young engineers are being increasingly promoted, not only in industrial plants but everywhere, especially in the Communist Party offices and in the general administration. Toward the end of the 1930's the newspapers published frequent reports about the election of engineers and technicians as secretaries of party organizations in the plants, and some of the rising new men even reached the central government. When the Soviet Constitution of December 5, 1936, was voted, there were only eighteen People's Commissariats, including five industrial commissariats, but during the next

two years the number was increased, and today the People's Commissariats total thirty-seven, those for industry twenty-one. Many of the industrial commissariats are led today by younger engineers, some of them having risen into these positions directly from the office of plant director. Engineers in the Soviet Union constitute today almost a third of the government, a phenomenon not to be observed anywhere else.

Then, after pointing out (as quoted further above) how the social composition and character of the ruling party has been altered fundamentally, Schwarz continues:

Thus it is no accident that the young engineers, who since 1936 have occupied such important positions in the industrial administration, have come more and more into party offices, even into the higher positions in the party structure. And in the plants the party apparatus and the general administration have become more and more homogeneous, both socially and psychologically. The roots of the friction between the plant directors and the cell secretaries have died out...

The party organization of the plant is thus enclosed in the general industrial administration as an auxiliary organ of the official control; in this activity it is strongly subordinated to the higher party organs, which are at the same time superior to the administrations of the plants. This arrangement serves as a substitute for the public control of public economy. The problem of the relations between the plant administration and the party bodies loses through this development its sociological complexity and becomes only a problem of administrative technique.

"A substitute for the public control of public economy"—indeed it is! It is a euphemistic way of saying that the worker-controlled collectivist economy has been replaced, euphemistic but accurate. The "substitute" is in no sense of the word a workers' state. The closest to this characterization is the description of it that a Cannonite editor once permitted himself to give of the Stalinist state: *a workers' prison*.

* * *

It is not hard to understand why Marxists hesitate to acknowledge the rise to power of a new ruling class, new in type as well as in character. They have been educated in the fundamental concept that in our time society can be organized only under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat. As a broad historical generalization, we believe that this concept is basically correct. But it cannot serve as a substitute for the concrete study and evaluation of the—in our opinion brief—historic bypath that has led Russia to a new class state and a new ruling class, the Stalinist bureaucracy.

It would perhaps be easier to break down the theoreticopsychological barriers in the way of accepting this evaluation if it were more generally known that the idea of a bureaucracy as a new type of ruling class, neither capitalist nor proletarian, is not unknown in the literature of Marxism.

In his book, *Historical Materialism*, written long before the word Stalinism was even thought of and which is, with all its defects, a Marxian classic, the late N. I. Bukharin takes up the argument made among others by Robert Michels that "socialists will conquer, but socialism never." In other words, the socialist movement may take power, but it will only establish a new form of class exploitation and oppression, not capitalist but labor-bureaucratic; the classless socialist society is a Utopia. We must say that Bukharin did not seek to evade this question but courageously came to grips with it. In replying, it should be emphasized, he was not considering the possibility of the workers' Soviet régime degenerating into or being forcibly converted into a capitalist régime. No, that possibility he, like every other sane person, acknowledged out of hand. What was involved was the question: will the present Soviet régime lead directly to socialism or will it—can it—degenerate into a new, bureaucratic form of class exploita-

tion? Will the ruling officialdom in the Soviet land develop its own class power, entirely independent of the proletariat (and of course of the capitalist class)? Here is Bukharin's reply:

We may state that in the society of the future there will be a colossal overproduction of organizers, which will nullify the *stability* of the ruling groups.

But the question of the *transition period* from capitalism to socialism, i.e., the period of the proletarian dictatorship, is far more difficult. The working class achieves victory, although it is not and cannot be a unified mass. It attains victory while the productive forces are going down and the great masses are materially insecure. There will inevitably result in a *tendency* to "degeneration," i.e., the excretion of a lead stratum in the form of a class-germ. This tendency will be retarded by two opposing tendencies first, by the *growth of the productive forces*; second, by the abolition of the *educational monopoly*. The increasing reproduction of technologists and of organizers in general, out of the working class itself, will undermine this possible new class alignment. The outcome of the struggle will depend on which tendencies turn out to be the stronger. (Bukharin, *Historical Materialism*, pp. 310f.)

Considering that the book was written almost a quarter of a century ago, the words are positively prophetic! What an incongruity that the same Bukharin should have become, later on, one of the theoreticians of "socialism in a single country"! We *know* now "which tendencies turned out to be the stronger." It is true that the productive forces grew in Russia, but their growth was accompanied precisely by the "excretion of a leading stratum in the form of a class-germ," by its expansion on a monstrous scale, and by the legalization, not the abolition, of the "educational monopoly" of this leading stratum. There has not been any "increasing reproduction of technologists and of organizers in general, out of the working class itself," but rather a decrease, rather a deliberate exclusion of the working class from the training-fields of technology and industrialization organization and management. Bukharin's frankly avowed fears have been realized. How tragic that he unwittingly contributed to the consummation!

Rakovsky, next to Trotsky the leading figure and theoretician of the Opposition, wrote about the same question, not

in anticipation, like Bukharin, but as a participating witness of the evolution of the Russian state. As early as 1930, still in Stalinist exile in Astrakhan, he set down in one of his studies which is, unfortunately, not available to us in full, the following penetrating observation:

Under our very eyes, there has been formed, and is still being formed, a large class of rulers which has its own interior groupings, multiplied by means of premeditated coöptation, direct or indirect (bureaucratic promotion, fictitious system of elections). The basic support of this original class is a sort, an original sort, of private property, namely, the possession of state power. The bureaucracy "possesses the state as private property," wrote Marx (*Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*). (*The Militant*, December 1, 1930.)

That's precisely the point, and it is all the more forceful twelve years after Rakovsky noted it. The Stalinist bureaucracy is an "original," that is, a singular, an unprecedented type of ruling class, but nonetheless a ruling class. What is singular about it is the fact that in Marx's words, it owns the state as its private property. It may be objected, that Marx wrote this about the Prussian bureaucracy of a century ago. But the objection is not valid because the two bureaucracies are fundamentally different and not comparable, because the "states" are different. The Stalinist bureaucracy possesses as its exclusive own a state which owns the property! Nothing else could have been meant by Trotsky when he wrote (*The Revolution Betrayed*, p. 249) that the seizure by the bureaucracy "of political power in a country where the principal means of production are in the hands of the state, creates a new and hitherto unknown relation between the bureaucracy and the riches of the nation." *New and hitherto unknown*—that is perfectly correct! That is why Trotsky's own analogies between the Stalinist and other bureaucracies, however illuminating, were fundamentally inadmissible and therefore misleading.

The theory of the "degenerated workers' state" has not stood the test of theoretical reconsideration or the test of events. It has only served to disorient the movement. High time to discard it.

M. S.

Opportunism on India

In the August issue of the *Fourth International*, the editor, Felix Morrow, had the bald statement that there is a deep gulf between his organization and the Workers Party on the question of India. At the time, we ignored this statement as a typical Morrow "polemical exaggeration" and stupidity, typical of the sort of thing that has earned that gentleman his notoriety. We beg to acknowledge our error; Morrow was correct! There is a gulf between our position on India and his. For, as we shall prove in this article, his position and that of the Cannon group represents a whitewashing and support of the Indian colonial bourgeoisie, in a manner clearly reminiscent of the Stalinist collaboration with the Chinese Kuomintang (1925-27).

The Cannonite theoreticians, even on questions of elementary fact, do not know what they are talking about (except when they plagiarize unashamedly from the work of others). To give a few illustrations: (1) The *Fourth International* completely underestimates the numerical strength and importance of the Indian proletariat, particularly its growth since the war. It bases itself upon old, now-antiquated statistics; (2) on the Hindu-Moslem question a virtual silence

is maintained, except for some hackneyed quotations from ancient sources; apparently, either they know nothing about the matter, or they think it plays no rôle in the Indian events. Either cause is based upon ignorance; (3) the Congress Socialist Party is spoken of as a leading force among revolutionary circles in India today, an important factor in the militancy of the revolutionary proletariat. But any acquaintance with the decline and disintegration of this petty-bourgeois party (especially since the war, when the Stalinists and the Gandhists tore it to bits) makes such a statement ludicrous. This party, if it still exists, is an empty shell of its former bloated self, incapable of any rôle! Its best elements have long since joined with the Bolshevik-Leninists of India; (4) the peasant organization mentioned in the various articles—the All-India Kisan Sabha (Peasants' Union)—is not what, by implication, the unacquainted reader is led to believe it is. The Sabha, limited to the provinces of Bihar and Orissa, is an organization of small tenant and landowning peasants. It is *not* a union of agricultural laborers or poor peasants who are forced to work for others at least part of the year. If the editor had taken the trouble to read the thesis of the Indian Bolshevik-

Leninists with care, he would have noted how these comrades, while recognizing the importance and militancy of the Sabha, emphasize the fundamental task—the need for the *independent* organization of the farm laborers and poor peasantry; (5) the entire issue ignores the history of the Congress during the past three years (that is, since the war began), fails to link up today's events with this history and thus gives a breathless, excited character to its newly-discovered "revolutionary crisis in India." Or, perhaps, this ignoring of the Congress' rôle during the past three years is more closely related to our main point—the whitewashing and opportunist glorification of the Indian colonial bourgeoisie.

Position of Indian Bolshevik-Leninists

With what solicitude the *Fourth International* writes of the Congress! That notorious red-baiter and right-winger, Abdul Kalam Azad, is delicately referred to as "Maulana Azad, the Moslem scholar and president of the Congress"! How the Congress is painted up, in a stupid and shameless manner! "A hundred times it has been established that the Congress has infinitely more following among the Untouchables than the British agents who parade as their leaders. . . ." Certainly Dr. Ambedkar is a British agent with no following among the Untouchables, but anyone acquainted with the Congress *today* knows that it, too, has no base among this most depressed section of India's people because of its long betrayal of their interests. "But great masses . . . arose under the formal leadership of the Congress." "But at the given moment the people of India are fighting under the banner of the Congress."

Contrast this approach to the Congress, the party of the Indian colonial bourgeoisie—with the scientific analysis rendered by the Indian Bolshevik-Leninists.

Since 1934 Gandhi and the leaders of the National Congress have had as their chief aim that of preventing the renewal of a mass struggle against imperialism. . . . (THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, April, 1942.)

Or,

The main instrument whereby the Indian bourgeoisie seeks to maintain control over the national movement is the Indian National Congress, the classic party of the Indian capitalist class, seeking as it does the support of the petty bourgeois and if possible of the workers, for their own aims (*Ibid.*)

Or,

. . . the direction of its policy remains exclusively in the hands of the bourgeoisie, as also the control of the party organization, as was dramatically proved at Tripuri and after. The Indian National Congress in its social composition, its organization and above all in its political leadership, can be compared to the Kuomintang, which led the Chinese revolution of 1925-27 to its betrayal and defeat.

The characterization of the Indian National Congress as a multi-class party, as the "National United Front" or as "a platform rather than a party" is a flagrant deception calculated to hand over to the bourgeois in advance the leadership of the coming struggle, and so make its betrayal and defeat a foregone conclusion. (*Ibid.*)

Then I am correct, Felix Morrow will say. You do not support the Indian nationalist movement because it is led by the Congress. Ignoring for the moment the question of who is leading the present movement, our answer is that this is a false and lying accusation. The question is *not* one of support or non-support to the movement. The Workers Party stands unequivocally behind the nationalist masses in their struggle with imperialism. *The basic difference between us and Morrow is over our attitude toward the Congress bourgeois leadership and its rôle in the Indian revolution. Our*

attitude can be no better expressed than in the words of the Indian revolutionists we have quoted. But, it goes without saying, in so far as the Congress conducts a struggle (more accurately, is forced on the road of struggle by the people) we give our critical support to such actions.

Morrow, forgetting Trotsky's major point in the introduction to his book, *The Permanent Revolution*, that the essence of revolutionary strategy and tactics lies in grasping the *specific features and peculiarities* that are brought about by the law of uneven development, tries to place India and China in precisely the same category. Herein lies the major mistake in his analysis. The question of why we support India's struggle and why we refuse to support China's is answered in the article of Comrade Shachtman appearing in this issue. What we are concerned with here is pointing out the differences between the Indian and Chinese bourgeoisies. How can one compare the two? *One holds state power ("Free China"); the other is lodged in jail!* One is a class with some strength, maturity, political and social experience; the other is historically feeble and inept, incapable even of taking power. One organized and led nationalist armies in bloody wars against imperialism, gaining its *semi-colonial* status on the battlefield; the other proposes a philosophy of non-violence and remains more than ever in a *colonial* status. Of course, in a *general* sense, they are similar: both are victimized by world imperialism.

Why do we insist upon these specific distinctions between the Congress (party of the Indian bourgeoisie), and the Kuomintang (party of the Chinese bourgeoisie)? Because it proves that the Congress cannot even play the rôle in India that the Kuomintang did in China! Fifteen years of capitalist crisis have passed since 1927, the Indian bourgeoisie has not become any stronger or more powerful in that time. On the contrary. We ask Morrow, since he assigns such an important rôle to the Congress Party (not the proletarian revolution, to be sure, but a good sized chunk of the bourgeois revolution, at any rate): what exactly do you expect of the Congress in the present crisis? We have given *our* answer to that question—we expect nothing but counter-revolutionary sabotage and betrayal, at the earliest opportunity, of that struggle. What do you expect?

Attitude Toward Indian Bourgeoisie

But the Congress is leading the struggle today, isn't it? "What about *this present struggle led by the Congress*—does Shachtman support it?" Morrow asks (emphasis in original). We are ready to grant that in a "formal" sense the Congress resolution was the event that precipitated the present fight. But we are concerned with the content of the struggle, not its form. The answer to Morrow's question is not a simple yes or no. Rather, it is yes *and* no! Yes, the Congress bourgeoisie is "leading the struggle" so as to divert it from revolutionary channels and behead it at the earliest opportunity; no, the Congress is *not* "leading the struggle"—the *real* struggle of the workers and peasants dying under British fire, the struggle of the masses seeking to find the road to power. How beautifully our point is symbolized by the presence of Gandhi (the spokesman of the bourgeoisie) in "jail" in the summer palace of Aga Khan! The masses struggle in the streets, in the villages. Its "leaders" are in jail, waiting for the imperialist master to make the first overtures for truce and compromise. It is the duty of a Marxist to lay bare the anti-revolutionary, compromising rôle of the Congress leadership, not to get sloppy over its presence in "jail." The Indian bourgeoisie

has plenty of defenders—that is, compromisers—among the liberals.

Morrow quotes from a statement of the Workers Party issued at the start of the struggle. "We do not know whether Gandhi, Nehru and Azad intend to go through with their call to mass struggle." Yes, Morrow, we do not have *your* confidence in the Indian bourgeoisie! This statement was written on the eve of the struggle, *before* it began, when the Congress leaders were desperately appealing to everyone under the sun in an effort to arrange a last minute compromise. The struggle was forced upon the Congress (that is, its *formal* endorsement of the struggle) by the people of India, fed up with three years of treachery and Gandhian inaction. Do not cover yourself up by saying: "We . . . were and remain certain that the Congress leadership will *not* go through with the struggle to the end." We are not talking about *the* end—we are talking about India today. Sir Stafford Cripps has pointed out in Parliament that "the Congress working committee had passed a resolution accepting the proposal, but Mr. Gandhi intervened and that resolution was subsequently reversed." The working committee had accepted the sell-out, but Gandhi (who knows the temper of the people much better than Azad, Nehru and the other working committee members) demanded a higher price! There is Morrow's "Congress leadership" of the "concrete struggle!"

And what rôle is the Congress leadership playing today, in the midst of battle? All reporters have remarked on the disappearance of the professional congressmen from the scene; the emergence of new, young and militant working-class and student elements! In this *elemental* and chaotic rebellion of great masses the *formal* Congress leadership has been swept aside (that is, by everyone but Morrow) and replaced by the first semblances of a new, revolutionary leadership in the earliest pangs and difficulties of its formation. There is, in a sense, a *dual power* within the nationalist movement itself—the old, decrepit and conservative leadership (wringing its hands and shedding tears at what is transpiring) and this new, yet-to-be leadership emerging from the people. We do not urge that the leadership should be granted *formalistically* to the old leadership. On the contrary, the fate of the Indian revolution depends upon the seizure of hegemony by the Indian workers and peasants, by *new* leadership. We are sure that the Congress leaders will be pleased with Morrow's protests at our failure to recognize and grant their formal leadership!

We now come to our final point. We are charged with nothing less than "an irresponsibility which one can characterize only as criminal." This charge is launched against us for having raised the question of the Indian bourgeoisie going over to the Japanese. Let us quote the entire section of the article referred to (The NEW INTERNATIONAL, August, 1942):

Yet, what was it that forced the hand of the Congress (the Indian bourgeoisie) and made it take steps that—*despite its desire*—precipitated the violent clashes? In our opinion, the causes are two: (1) The threat of Japanese invasion accompanied by a growing pro-Japanese sentiment among the population (2) the insistence and unquenchable demand of the people that a national struggle should be launched immediately. It became necessary for Gandhi, political leader of the Indian bourgeoisie, to *act* or else be swept aside by other elements. In this respect the Mahatma is infinitely more shrewd and farsighted than the pitiful and cowardly Nehru!

The successes of Japanese imperialism have had an impressive effect upon the Indian capitalist class. Coupled with the defeats and astounding weaknesses of the British, the native bourgeoisie (or an influential section of it, even if we exclude those merchants and industrialists who are benefitting by large British war orders) has lost confidence in the ruling imperialist power. It sees the British Empire staggering and tot-

tering under endless blows. Yet—being an abortive product of capitalism in its permanent decline—this native bourgeoisie is unable and unprepared to take over power. It is too small; too weak, too divided, too undernourished—a lightweight contender in the heavyweight struggle for power in India.

But it does not wish to tie its fate to that of a doomed, bankrupt imperialist power—the British Empire. Therefore, beyond a doubt, the Indian bourgeoisie is casting about for a new master to which it may subordinate itself a new power before which it may lay its claim for junior partnership in the exploitation of the country. Obviously, that new power is the greatly expanded Japanese Empire! It is impossible to say whether a "deal" or tacit understanding has been reached with Japanese imperialism, but it is clear that doubly-parasitic Indian capitalism is seriously pondering the question.

At the same time, the Congress bourgeois leadership has done everything in its power to sabotage and disorganize the struggle against imperialism.

For the Revolutionary Masses

The interpretation that Morrow places upon this section is that we accuse the Congress leadership of being Japanese-Axis agents! This section is supposed to give a "theoretical" basis to our "criminal slander"! As a matter of fact, says Morrow, this goes even further than the social-democratic *New Leader* and could well be utilized by an enterprising British agent.

The disputed section is an historical and social analysis of a given class, the Indian capitalist class. It seeks to explain what motivates the current actions, its rôle in India and the war, its possibilities and its limitations. If Morrow disagrees with our statement that "this native bourgeoisie is unable and unprepared to take over power," let him say so. If this pretentious windbag disagrees with our contention that the Indian bourgeoisie is unable to rule in its own name, but must seek a senior partner upon whom to lean for support, let him say so. Let him not answer a concrete historic analysis with a cheap effort at an amalgam between us and British imperialism. If he believes there is no tendency among the Indian bourgeoisie of a pro-Japanese character (he says: ". . . there is not the slightest sign that the Congress leadership is seeking a 'deal' or tacit understanding with Japan"), then he grants the Indian bourgeoisie, by implication, the power and ability to seize and hold power in its own name. Is this really true? Suppose that Japan should successfully, or with partial success, invade India? Can it for a moment be doubted that the Indian capitalist and landlord class, in the manner of the Burmese bourgeoisie, would make its peace with the new foreign masters? Whence comes this intransigence and strength with which Morrow so strangely endows the colonial bourgeoisie?

For our part, while we stand unequivocally behind the revolutionary masses of India in their struggle, we refuse for an instant to whitewash the bourgeois leadership, to spread illusions about its historic rôle or its combativity. The Socialist Workers Party, on this question as well as others, moves further along the opportunist road. Morrow's painting up of the Indian bourgeoisie is but one aspect of the ideological capitulation of his party to one of the warring imperialist camps, to Stalinism. First we have support to Russia in the war, then support to China in the Allied imperialist camp, and now a glorification of the Indian colonial bourgeoisie! We, on the other hand, stand fundamentally with Trotsky, who propounded the revolutionary road for backward, colonial countries as "an alliance of the proletariat and peasantry in struggle *against* the liberal bourgeoisie." The situation in India has always been the opposite. We have had an alliance

of the worker and peasant *with* the liberal bourgeoisie, *under the hegemony of the latter*. Now that the Indian workers and peasants are, for the first time in their history, challenging the liberal bourgeoisie and seeking to break the hold of the Congress, it is criminal to urge them to bow down in respect before the formal authority of their bourgeoisie. Let that task be performed by those suited to it.

HENRY JUDD.



THE ROAD FOR INDIA

By LEON TROTSKY

Achievement of Workers' and Peasants' Democracy

When and under what conditions a colonial country becomes ripe for the real revolutionary solution of its agrarian and its national problems cannot be foretold. But in any case, we can assert today with full certainty that not only China, but also India, will attain genuine popular democracy, that is, workers' and peasants democracy, only through the dictatorship of the proletariat. On that road many stages, steps and phases can still arise. Under the pressure of the masses of the people the bourgeoisie will still take various steps to the Left, in order then to turn all the more mercilessly against the people. Periods of dual power are possible and probable. But what there will not be, what there cannot be, is a genuine democratic dictatorship that is not the dictatorship of the proletariat. (*The Permanent Revolution*.)

Congress Bourgeoisie Is Counter-Revolutionary

Our liberal bourgeoisie comes forward as counter-revolutionary even before the revolutionary climax. In every critical moment, our intellectual democracy only demonstrates its impotence. The peasantry in its entirety represents an elementary rebellion. It can be put at the service of the revolution only by the force that takes over state power. The vanguard position of the working class in the revolution, the direct connection between it and the revolutionary village, the spell by which it conquers the army—all this pushes it inevitably to power. The complete victory of the revolution means the victory of the proletariat. (*Our Revolution*.)

The Working Class Leads the Nation

With regard to the countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks, *democratic and national emancipation*, is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses. (*The Permanent Revolution*.)

Alliance of the Proletariat and the Peasantry

Not only the agrarian, but also the national question, assigns to the peasantry, the overwhelming majority of the population of the backward countries, an important place in the democratic revolution. Without an alliance of the prole-

tariat with the peasantry, the tasks of the democratic revolution cannot be solved, nor even seriously posed. But the alliance of these two classes can be realized in no other way than through an intransigent struggle against the influence of the national liberal bourgeoisie. (*The Permanent Revolution*.)

Revolutionary Party Is Fundamental Key

No matter how the first episodic stages of the revolution may be in the individual countries, the realization of the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry is conceivable only under the political direction of the proletarian vanguard, organized in the revolutionary party. (*The Permanent Revolution*.)



LENIN ON INDIA

The liberal English bourgeoisie, irritated by the growth of the labor movement at home and frightened by the rise of the revolutionary struggle in India, is more frequently, more frankly and more sharply revealing what brutes the most civilized European "statesmen" who have passed through the highest school of constitutionalism, become when the masses are roused for the struggle against capital and against the capitalist colonial system, i.e., the system of slavery, plunder and violence.

In India, the native slaves of the "civilized" British capitalists have been recently causing their "masters" a lot of unpleasantness and disquietude. There is no end to the violence and plunder which is called the British administration of India. Nowhere in the world . . . is there such poverty among the masses and such chronic starvation among the population. The most liberal and radical statesmen in free Britain . . . are, as rulers of India, becoming transformed into real Genghis Khans, who are capable of sanctioning all measures of "pacifying" the population in their charge, even to *flogging* political dissenters.

There is not the slightest doubt that the age-long plunder of India by the English, that the present struggle of these "advanced" Europeans against Persian and Indian democracy *will harden* millions and tens of millions of proletarians of Asia, will harden them for the same kind of victorious struggle against the oppressors. The class conscious workers of Europe now have Asiatic comrades whose numbers will grow from day to day and hour to hour. (August, 1908. *Collected Work*, Vol. XII.)

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Silone on Marxism and Christianity

A Literary Review

When a novel is as completely concerned with political problems, as all of Silone's are, the critic faces the alternatives: Is this book to be evaluated as a work of art or as a draft program for a political party? Is it to be judged by the pleasure and stimulation afforded the reader or is it to be analyzed as a political document?

It is easy to say that a work of art deserves consideration on the basis of its intrinsic merits, to acknowledge Trotsky's formula that "art functions according to laws of its own." But the application of this formula is a rather more difficult task. For instance, the question immediately arises: To what extent do the faulty politics of the writer result in a deterioration of his work's literary merit?

Nor are these difficulties lessened when one remembers that in recent years many novels have read like political programs, and many political programs like novels.

The above truistic remarks are prefixed to this review because of a fear that *The Seed Beneath the Snow** is likely to be cavalierly dismissed by radicals as merely another instance of intellectual backsliding reflecting Silone's retrogression from Marxism to a strange variety of primitive, revolutionary Christianity. Yet such an attitude, despite its political good intentions, would result in a failure to appreciate a literary masterpiece of our times.

The reader will recall that there has been a certain developmental line observable in Silone's two previous novels. *Fontamara* is an epic of mass awakening and struggle against the scourge of Italian fascism. It is objective and impersonal to the point of adopting the characteristics of a folk tale; it breathes with fire, hope and confidence. This is the Silone, who, while no longer an adherent of the Third International, is still a revolutionary Marxist. The political pivot of *Fontamara* is the revolutionary section of the urban proletariat even though its main characters are peasants: it is the peasant who goes to the city, there to be tinged for the first time by revolutionary ideas, and who returns to the countryside to plant those ideas among his fellows.

Silone in His Earlier Works

In *Bread and Wine* we meet a vastly different Silone. He has lost his easy optimism; defeat is complete; the period of struggle is at an end; there is only despair, resignation and obeisance to authority. The novel's protagonist, Pietro Spina, who largely reflects the opinions of his creator, is a revolutionary leader returned from exile to the peasant areas of the Abruzzi in order to re-establish ties with his people and test his theories in the experiences of actual life. *Bread and Wine* is largely a book of dialogue, of sparkling, brilliant dialectical interplay—more mature and provocative than *Fontamara*, though less dramatic—tracing the ideological transformation of Spina, the Marxist, into Spina, the revolutionary Christian saint.

At the end of *Bread and Wine* (in the by-now classic dialogue with his old teacher, Don Benedetto) Spina concludes that his old life has been barren, chained to an exiled apparatus which failed to understand those workers and peasants

whose liberation it claimed as its end. Spina adopts as his guiding principle the ethical ideal of primitive Christianity, "a Christianity denuded of all religion and all church control." He now refuses to recognize any duality between means and ends; the only way to achieve the good life is to live it and thereby inspire others to live it. The task is not to propagandize, not to organize parties, not to preach, but to live as saints, revolutionary saints. "No word and no gesture can be more persuasive than the life and, if necessary, the death of a man who strives to be free, loyal, just, sincere, disinterested. A man who shows what a man can be."

It is on this note that *Bread and Wine* closes. And it is to show the actual living-out of the doctrine which *Bread and Wine* only stated, that *The Seed Beneath the Snow* is written. It is even slower in pace than *Bread and Wine*; it contains none of the fascinating dialectics of political and intellectual debate which made *Bread and Wine* such a brilliant novel.

In a way, it returns to the objective method of *Fontamara*. Just as *Fontamara* depicted the living-out of one approach to life, so does *The Seed Beneath the Snow* depict another approach—with *Bread and Wine* as the intermediary explanation of why Silone abandoned the first approach for the second. The trilogy is now complete—a masterwork of literature.

As everyone knows, Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* can be read merely as a detective story. It can also be read on at least one other plane as well—as a profound exposition of Dostoevsky's views on morality and human conduct. So, too, can *The Seed Beneath the Snow* be read merely as a realistic novel of peasant life in fascist Italy or as that and as an exposition of Silone's views on how to meet the problems of contemporary society. It is with extraordinary skill that Silone weaves and interweaves these two motifs—not conflicting but co-extant and even complementary.

The Plane of the New Book

On one plane, *The Seed Beneath the Snow* is a realistic novel of the life of a people. It is therefore more illogical, more contradictory, more twisted than *Bread and Wine*; not because of any perversity or light-mindedness of the author, but rather because of its faithful adherence to life.

Nothing—not even Silone's previous books—can compare with *The Seed Beneath the Snow* for a picture of the concrete effects of fascist society on daily life. It concerns itself not with the more sensational and crude horrors of fascism, but rather with showing how fascist society corrodes and destroys the most elementary relationships and the most basic values of life. Fascism is hateful not merely because of its rubber hose, its concentration camps, its castor oil; but also because it makes each man suspicious of his neighbor, because it exalts ignorance and stupidity into a system, because it makes of its subjects everfearful beasts instead of men. Some of the most remarkable sections of the book portray the life of the town petty bourgeoisie and office holders: their spiritual corruption ("What has that to do with it," queries the local judge when asked by a friend if he sincerely meant his lyrical panegyric of fascist "national mysticism"!); the constant toadying to superior authority; the solemn development of the most arrant nonsense into a system of logical absurdities (Does the

**The Seed Beneath the Snow*, by Ignazio Silone. Harper & Brothers, New York: \$2.75; 380 pp.

state exist for man? No, man exists for the state. Does the pharmacy exist for the sick? No, the sick exist for the pharmacy. Does the handkerchief exist for the nose? Of course not, the nose exists for the handkerchief.)

Silone blends violent realism with the broadest and most scathing satire. All the rotten parts of fascist society—and by inference, all of contemporary society as well—are shown in all their ugliness, filth, corrosion. The only person who retains a degree of freedom is the much-envied village idiot, who is certified by the state as being a simpleton and therefore has the right to tell the truth about it!

But to read this book *merely* in this light would constitute an act of irresponsibility for the serious reader. It is at least as necessary to consider the *idea* as the *picture*, even though we find far more to quarrel with in the former.

A New Spina Returns

The plot of *The Seed Beneath the Snow* is deceptively simple. Spina returns to the town of his birth, spiritually reinforced by his new life-creed; he effects a reconciliation with his old grandmother, finding that her strong, unbending and literal Christianity coincides with his humanistic creed with regard to problems of practical morality; he convinces her of the moral loss involved in gaining a pardon from the state at the price of a humiliating "admission of guilt"; he spends his time now, not by wondering about the validity of Marxism, which he has already abandoned, but rather in developing his friendships with a rural rebel, Simone the Polecat, and a pathetic deaf mute, Infante. He gradually gains the confidence of many of the peasants, never by talking politics, but rather by stimulating them into decent, honest and fearless friendships, the very existence of which comes to represent a threat to the local authorities; and finally, he sacrifices himself for the deaf mute Infante as a last gesture of humility. And that is all.

Silone is convinced that the use of propaganda and agitation in fascist Italy are completely useless as a means of overthrowing the dictatorship. People have been misled too long and too often by words and slogans; they automatically distrust and disbelieve all phrases. It is useless, again, to point out the stupidities and lies of the official propaganda because nobody believes that either, least of all the government propagandists themselves. Humanity has become so utterly corrupted, so cynical and hopeless, that it is useless to speak of programs, of platforms, of parties. One cannot organize a revolutionary party in a town where no one is certain that his neighbor will not betray him for so much as making a joke about the head of the state.

It is necessary to show the people once more how to live. One must show them that it is still possible to live honestly, decently; that friendships can be cultivated for their own sake and not as the means toward getting a favor from the local fascist secretary; it is necessary to teach them the meaning, not by words but by deeds, of those most elementary human decencies which have, until now, been taken more or less for granted. Then, and only then, can the régime of Etcetera Etcetera be wiped out. When people have regained their respect for themselves and others as worthy human beings, when they understand the meaning of trust and friendship—fascism is doomed.

Spina Speaks for Silone

And that is the significance of the plot. Spina's friendship and sacrifice for Infante is the symbol of the book: the symbol of the revolutionary saint bringing back to life the most lowly of the oppressed (Infante was even exploited by the poorest peasant, ate potato peels and lived in a cave with a donkey); teaching him the simplest words, the basis for human communication; giving him dignity and joy; and finally making the supreme sacrifice in his behalf. Infante is the symbol of the Italian people degraded to muteness and deafness; his resurrection is the triumph of the intellectual, Spina.

"To our newly discovered friends," says Spina, "we should not bring theories but only our friendship. What better gift can we offer them? Nor must we indulge in any more distrust than is strictly necessary; to take it for granted that a man is a coward means to make him into one, to cover him with shame. If our friends are demoralized by their long isolation, we must seek to reawaken their pride and self-esteem and they'll see to the rest. The main thing is to watch out that we don't fall into rhetoric and bluff."

And again: "An old, faithful and disinterested friendship is in itself a total negation of the relationships in vogue today, just as life is a negation of death."

The perceptive reader immediately asks: Is this theory intended merely for the unique situation in Italy today, or is it Silone's "program" for contemporary society as a whole? Is it based merely on a conjectural situation or does it have more basic roots and premises?

Though there is no explicit answer to this question in *The Seed Beneath the Snow*, we are forced to conclude that the latter is the case. Silone has relapsed into a variety of what he seems to think is primitive Christianity, an abstraction of the absolutist moral creed of the love-concept of *parts* of the New Testament, with which is mingled elements of the philosophical idealist theory, held by Christians and Confucians alike, that the pre-condition for social liberation is individual ethical regeneration. Together with this, there is Silone's profound disillusionment with Marxian politics, resulting from his identification of Stalinism with Marxism. (In this respect alone he is akin to the contemporary intellectuals.) Silone's disillusionment does not, however, take the form of a surrender to the powers that be; there is no evidence that he has become a hawk for bourgeois democracy, that he has sold his soul for another Versailles Treaty. For, whatever one's opinion of his new creed, it is necessary to emphasize that if he has ceased to be a social revolutionary, he has remained an implacable rebel against contemporary society—more of a rebel, it needs be noted, than many professing to be Marxists. He has not made his peace with Mammon; he accepts no lesser evil. Silone's disillusionment takes, on the contrary, the form of absolutist suspicion of *the party*. He is obsessed with the dangers of organization, the inevitable bureaucracy of the intellectuals which he believes parties produce.

Fears of Bureaucracy, a Universal Phenomenon

But there remains a residue of a certain revolutionary practicality in Silone's outlook. When Spina begins to "organize" the peasants on the basis of friendship, he displays much of the shrewd method which Silone's newly revolutionized leader did in *Fontamara*. On a more general plane, it may be admitted that much of what Silone says about *approaching* the Italian peasantry at present is undoubtedly

true. Especially in a situation where we find a lone, isolated revolutionist in a peasant area who is not in contact with any revolutionary party (perhaps because none exists), would he not, if he had some sense, act similarly to Spina in many practical aspects? He might not indulge in so much rhetoric, which the actual peasants of Italy, unlike Silone's peasants, would appreciate very little, but he would undoubtedly try to gain their respect as a human being, and their confidence. He would try to prove himself, to demonstrate in actual practice his worth as a friend, a confidant, a *leader*.

"Ah," Silone might now say, "here is where we part roads. For you, gaining the friendship and confidence of the people is merely a means toward an end, a means toward enrolling them under your political banner. While I seek their friendship as an end in itself; I have no ulterior motives."

We are now at the crux of the argument. We have the right to ask: Once you, Silone, and your fellow saints, whom you presumably wish to spring up in other parts of Italy, have gained the friendship of the peasants, what will you *do* then? Is it really merely enough to exist as martyrs, is it really true that your very existence would then obliterate fascism? Would you not yourself tend to organize a party, a peculiar kind of party, but a party nonetheless? Would you not contact the saint, with his flock of peasants, in the adjacent towns? In a word, wouldn't you yourself organize? And once organized, what guarantee—of the kind you ask of the Marxists—would there then be that your morality would not become party (or church or whatever else you would call your organization) morality? What about your organization would guarantee the non-existence of bureaucracy and dishonesty and deceit, unlike a Marxian party? Would it be the fact that your organization or sect would be based on love, on friendship and not on dialectical absorption with the seizure of power? But is it not possible for a sect based on love and friendship—especially when one considers its temptation for Messianism—to develop a bureaucracy at least as vile as certain "Marxist" parties have developed? As witness, the greatest of all bureaucracies in human history: the Christian Church, which, according to your belief, started with a creed similar to your present one!

The Inadequacy of "New" Piety

We are forced to come to the conclusion: the only way to guarantee the non-existence of a bureaucracy is to refrain from organization; the refusal to organize together with one's fellow men can mean only either constant subservience to the powers that be, or isolated, futile acts of individual heroism. And is that not what Spina comes to at the end of this book? True, Silone says, but his act will be remembered and revered by the peasants; it will inspire them to . . . to what?

This, then, is Silone's dilemma: the dilemma of defeat. Let it be remembered that Silone argued not against certain kinds of parties, certain features of parties—but as against parties *per se*. And that, we believe, cannot reach any other conclusion than the one we have outlined above.

How, then, was it possible for Christianity to retain such a hold on millions of people with the creed of love and friendship when *it* never organized to give them concrete and real meaning. The answer to this question will help us explain Silone's other great error: his misunderstanding of the nature of Christianity. When, in its inception, Christianity, as the creed of a revolutionary sect, had a certain specific, historical rôle, which helped produce its moral creed, which in turn served as its ideological banner—then Christianity *organized* into a tight, intolerant, bureaucratic and homogeneous force.

It did not believe that merely to live righteously was enough to cast evil out of the world; it knew that evil was personified in corporeal forms and social forces and went out to do battle against them. When, afterward, Christianity degenerated into a solace for existent misery and a handmaiden of reactionary social orders, it maintained its hold, first, by its support from the social system it helped sustain, and second, by its opiate creed of salvation in an after-life. It doped men to live "righteous" lives not, primarily, as a means of bringing heaven to earth, but as a means of getting into heaven. And those rare thinkers who took the premises of Christianity seriously found it necessary, as does Silone, to break from the church and rebel in one way or another.

In Search of the Non-Existent

Thus we see that Silone's admiration for primitive Christianity is based on a complete misunderstanding of its real character and subsequent development. Christianity never proposed passivity—until it became the organ of the *status quo*. Silone has attempted to reconcile the rebelliousness of primitive Christianity with the passivity of later Christianity—and they do not blend.

Baldly stated and abstracted from its context in the novel, Silone's ideological creed does not appear very attractive to the radical reader. What does remain is a man of great sincerity and honesty, a man who in a period of intellectual surrender remains an uncompromising rebel and a man (most important of all) who is one of few genuinely great writers of our time. *The Seed Beneath the Snow*, we do not hesitate to say, is his most mature and finest novel to date. Let it be remembered that two of the world's literary masterpieces, Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, are expositions of reactionary ideologies. That does not prevent any sensible person from reading them again and again.

For our part, we hope that Silone will yet be stimulated to new revolutionary consciousness by the events which undoubtedly lie ahead. We see the future, not in Spina's resignation and sacrifice, but in the unity and joint struggle of Romeo, the revolutionary worker of *Bread and Wine*, and Simone, the rebel peasant of *The Seed Beneath the Snow*. That Silone has brought them to the pages of literature is in itself cause for gratitude and rejoicing.

R. FAHAN.

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China in the War

A Reply to Shamefaced Critics

There is a growing social-patriotic tendency in the war position of the Socialist Workers Party. It has not yet undermined the programmatic foundations of the party. But it is a tendency that cannot be ignored, or dismissed as so many disconnected, episodic errors. What is most disturbing is the apparently unanimous acquiescence of the party leadership in the unfolding of this tendency. There is seemingly nobody able or willing to check it; if there is, he does not display sufficient courage to disrupt the deadening calm imposed upon this monolithized party in recent years.

The present article aims to offer proof of our assertion.

We are frank to say that the very outset that while it is not exactly impossible to carry on a political dispute with the Cannonites, it is not very easy either. A few examples of what we mean will lead us straight to the heart of the subject.

In the period leading up to the split in the Socialist Workers Party and the founding of the Workers Party, we insistently demanded of the Cannonite leadership a clear statement of position on Russia's rôle in the war. We were met with dogged evasion. There was only one question that was worth while discussing, they said, and that was the "class character of the Soviet state." Rightly or wrongly, we proposed to discuss that separately, that is, as much divorced from the active factional struggle as possible, in the columns of the theoretical organ of the party, and declared that we would make our contribution to that discussion in good time. After the split, whether in time or belatedly, we accommodated the demand of the Cannonites. The present writer and other members of the Workers Party developed a criticism of the position put forward by Trotsky and supported by the SWP. Presently, our party adopted as its own this critical revision of our old view. The Cannonites suddenly forgot their demand that we discuss the "fundamental question of the class character of the Soviet state." To this day they have not replied to our position. Some scribbler whose name escapes us did indeed smear up a few pages of SWP paper in order to say that Shachtman was preparing to support American imperialism in the war. But apart from this truly clairvoyant prediction, our thesis on the bureaucratic-collectivist state in Russia was not dealt with by a word, not then, not before, not since.

Our next experience dates back to September, 1940. At an SWP conference in Chicago, Cannon revealed a new "proletarian military policy." The revelation was as sorry a mess as its author ever got into when he ventured beyond the sphere of trade union tactics and practical organizational questions on which he so often makes judicious and experienced observations. After elbowing our way through the veritable maze of misunderstanding and downright theoretical ignorance, we came upon what was in Cannon's own words the centrally new point in policy: Whereas *up to now*, in imperialist countries like the *United States*, we have said that we will *first* take power and *only then* be for defense of the fatherland, *from now on the new policy* is that the "two tasks must be telescoped and carried out simultaneously." In a polemical article we attacked the "concession to social-patriotism," as we restrainedly called this position of defensism under imperialist rule. What answer did we get? Cannon started a "series" of articles in which he promised to answer us "point by point." He toyed with a few items for a week or two in his paper, and then the "series" came to an abrupt and unex-

plained stop. Cannon never answered our criticism. Above all, he never again said a *single word*—not to this day—about what was, in his own words, the "new" element in the policy, namely, the "telescoping" theory of national defense.

The "New Military Policy"

Two years later, out of a clear sky, *The Militant* prints an article by Morrison, which is a *veiled* reply to our original criticism of Cannon's "new military policy." We attack Cannon; Cannon is silent for almost two years, and then gets himself an attorney to defend him. But does even Morrison come back to the "telescoping" theory? Read his article on "Trotsky's Military Policy and Its Critics" (critics, by the way, who are: a, unnamed; b, unquoted; c, misrepresented) in *The Militant* of August 15, 1942, and you get the answer: Not by a syllable or a hint! It is as though Cannon never mentioned it, much less made it the central point in his "new" military policy; it is as though the "critics" had not made it the central object of their criticism.

How can people act this way unless they are imbued with a cynical contempt for Marxian theory, loyalty in political dispute, and the scrupulous training of their membership? Nobody asks that they agree with every criticism made, good or bad. But at least answer criticism, if not for the benefit of the critic then for the benefit of those he may "affect." Above all, drop this disgusting pretense that the criticism was never made or that an entirely different one was made!

Our most recent dispute with the Cannonites is over working-class policy in China and other colonial and semi-colonial countries in the war. In the April, 1942, issue of the *Fourth International*, John G. Wright, with the crystalline lucidity that is peculiarly his own, attacked the resolution on China made public by the Workers Party in *Labor Action* of March 16, 1942. We declared in our resolution that because of the integration and subordination of China's just war for national independence to the general imperialist World War, it was no longer possible for revolutionists to support China. Wright argued contrariwise. To justify the defensist position of the SWP on China, he put forward the fundamentally Stalinist thesis that Lenin had distinguished the national struggles in Europe from the colonial and semi-colonial countries of Asia "not only in degree but in kind"; that the latter, unlike the former, "can play and are playing an *independent* rôle not only in isolated struggles, but also in the very midst of an imperialist war." Still invoking a defenseless Lenin, he argued that while Serbia, in the last war, could not be supported by revolutionists when she was allied to one of the two imperialist camps, the fact that China is allied to one of the imperialist camps in the present war does not make any difference to revolutionists so far as their support of China's war is concerned.

In a special supplement to the June, 1942, issue of *The New International*, we took up Wright's criticism and his point of view and subjected them to a detailed refutation, particularly his central argument, namely, the alleged difference in principle between a small European nation and a colonial country in the East. We proved to the hilt—we repeat, to the hilt—that this was in fundamental opposition to the constantly reiterated view of Lenin and Trotsky. As the read-

er of Wright's polemic knows, this difference in principle constituted his basic argument against us, and was set forth as *the* theoretical premise for the conclusion that China's war must still be supported. We permit ourselves to say that we completely shattered this theoretical premise, above all the claim that it was also the premise of Lenin and Trotsky.

Cannonites Liquidate John G. Wright

In the August, 1942, issue of the *Fourth International*, our answer to Wright is answered in turn. Who answers? The not unfamiliar Morrow. Now, there's no law that says Morrow can't answer an article which criticized Wright. But why Morrow? He was mentioned in our article only in passing, where we pointed out that in the same issue of the *Fourth International* he had based his defensist position in China today on a flagrant mistranslation of a Lenin article that appeared in a Stalinist paper. Why not Wright? Is he ill? Has he lost his limpid pen? Has he stopped contributing to the Cannonite press? Has he quit the SWP? No, none of these. He is hale and hearty, thank heaven, and he continues to pour an endless stream into the press. In fact, he proves his continued corporeal existence by publishing an article in the very same issue that contains Morrow's reply to us. But Wright's article deals with something altogether different.

The mystery become more baffling when we read Morrow's answer, for there are several strange things about it. One, Morrow does not mention Wright's article or Wright's name; he doesn't even hint that there is such a thinker as Wright or that he ever had anything to say on the Chinese question in the magazine Morrow edits. Two, he does not refer either directly or indirectly to the central thesis, the basic theoretical premise, put forward in Wright's article, namely, Lenin's alleged distinction in principle between the "two types" of countries. Three, he does not refer by one single word to the fact that our article was directed at Wright and at Wright's basic theory. Four, for all his usual fondness of piling one quotation from Lenin on top of another, he does not so much as mention Lenin's name or refer once to the series of damning quotations we cited from Lenin's works.

Let us undo the mystery of the strange disappearance of Wright from the field of polemics on China. It was only after our article was written that we learned, from the tree-tops of the bureaucratic jungle, that Wright's central argument, including his reference to Lenin, was not accepted by the SWP leadership. When Morrow learned this, we do not know, but surely he was not aware of anything wrong with Wright's article when it was written, for as editor of the magazine he passed it and printed it without comment of any kind.

How do the Cannonites handle a "problem" like this? From the standpoint of the interests of theoretical clarity? Nonsense! From the standpoint of the interests of picayune bureaucratic prestige! When "one of our boys" is under criticism—it doesn't matter if he's wrong—we must stick by him and protect him if only by our silence. We mustn't repudiate his erroneous views publicly, for that will reflect on the infallibility of our spokesmen. Therefore, we will gag Wright, prohibit him from answering *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL* and from trying to defend views which have proved utterly indefensible, and turn the job over to Morrow, whose political motto is taken from the coat-of-arms of the Prince of Wales. What about the average reader, the "innocent reader," and the average party member with whose theoretical education we have been entrusted? Will he think that Wright's theory of the colonial question is correct, or Morrow's? Or, if he is

not yet sufficiently educated to see the difference, will he think that the two positions are identical, or at least compatible?

To judge from the way they have handled the situation, the Cannonite clique obviously doesn't give a hang about what the readers and members think. At any rate, what they think or don't think, whether they are to be confused or clarified—all this must be subordinated to bureaucratic considerations.

A polemic with such people therefore starts with a handicap. We will try to surmount it by continuing to contrast our theoretical position with theirs.

Trotsky on the Colonies in the World War

The background of Morrow's reply to us has already been painted. Read it, we repeat, from beginning to end and you find no reference whatsoever to the original article by Wright, to the famous distinction in principle Lenin is supposed to have drawn between national struggles in Europe and colonial struggles in the East, or for that matter to the fundamental question of the Marxian position on the subject, all of which were dealt with at sufficient length in our criticism of Wright. Morrow disposes of the voluminous compilation of evidence that the SWP position is in direct conflict with the traditional Marxian standpoint by the most effective, in fact, the only, means at his disposal: *silence*. He literally ignores every single theoretical argument put forth by us on the basis of the easily available teachings of Lenin and Trotsky.

But out of all the vast literature on the subject from which germane quotations could be adduced, Morrow finds one, just exactly one, which he quotes in the hope that it will justify his position. It is from the resolution of the Founding Conference of the Fourth International in September, 1938, and since it is the only "authority" Morrow cites, we go right to the heart of it.

The workers of imperialist countries, however, cannot help an anti-imperialist country through their own government, no matter what might be the diplomatic and military relations between the two countries at a given moment. If the governments find themselves in temporary, and by the very essence of the matter, unreliable alliance, then the proletariat of the imperialist country continues to remain in class opposition to its own government and supports the non-imperialist "ally" through *its own* methods. . . .

Let us bear in mind, in reading this one and only reference, what is in dispute. We never did and do not now raise the question of the right of a colonial or semi-colonial country, or an oppressed nation, to count upon the independent support of the working class when such a country is carrying on a fight for national independence against an imperialist power. We never did and do not now question the right of such a country, engaged in such a war, to utilize antagonisms and conflicts between imperialist powers, or even to take material aid from one of them against another. What we do question is the policy of supporting a colonial or semi-colonial country *when it is an integral part of one big imperialist camp at war with another imperialist camp*, as is the case with China now but was not a year ago.

Morrow's quotation from the document which, as is known, was written by Trotsky, is calculated to show that it is correct to continue supporting China even though she is now in full alliance with the Anglo-American imperialist camp at war with the Japanese-Axis camp. But it should be perfectly clear from a conscientious reading of the quotation, that it must not be construed literally, and above all it must

not be construed in the sense in which Morrow puts it forward. Let us see.

If this quotation is to be taken literally—and above all if it is to be torn, as Morrow tears it, out of the known context of all that Lenin and Trotsky taught on this subject—it would say that we support a non-imperialist country regardless of the (temporary and unreliable) alliance it makes with an imperialist country. From the same resolution, Morrow quotes a preceding passage which says that “some of the colonial or semi-colonial countries will undoubtedly attempt to utilize the war in order to cast off the yoke of slavery. Their war will not be imperialist but liberating.” Correct, above all as a general proposition contained in a forecast, such as the 1938 resolution was. Wrong, as a concrete proposition today, in 1942, in China.

Thus, for an Asiatic colony or semi-colony to “utilize” the World War, and the preoccupation of England in the West, to free itself from English domination, would be perfectly proper and worthy of international revolutionary support. If, in order to conduct its war for national emancipation, it accepted arms or money from a second imperialist power, or even one which was at war with England and offered the aid for its own imperialist reasons, that act in itself would not invalidate the worthiness of the colonial war.

What Is New in China

When China utilized the antagonism between America and Japan in order to get the paltry material aid it obtained from the former in its struggle against the latter, that was perfectly proper and legitimate. But when the antagonisms between America and Japan reach the point of armed conflict between them; when this war reaches right into the Western Pacific, into China's coastal regions, on to China's own soil; when China becomes a military ally of American imperialism and fights under its command; when China becomes the actual battleground between the two major imperialist forces—that creates a situation in which continued support of “China” means in actuality support of one of the imperialist camps. To compare such a situation with the one that existed prior to the war between Japan and America, to compare this alliance with the Sino-American “alliance” of yesterday, in which Washington sent good wishes to China and oil and scrap iron to Japan, is either an attempt to outstare realities, or else to seek a plausible cover for a fundamentally social-patriotic position.

The attempt to use the isolated quotation from Trotsky will not work. It is not hard to establish his position on this question because, in the first place, his solidarity with Lenin in this field is as well known as is Lenin's position, and in the second place, his own independent writings on the question are available and pretty clear-cut.

In a discussion with a Chinese comrade back in August, 1937, Trotsky said:

It is necessary to say that all imperialists are brigands; they differ merely in their proceedings. We don't deny the right to oppose one imperialist to the others and to utilize the antagonisms between them. *But only a revolutionary people's government is capable to do so without becoming an instrument of one imperialism against the other.* The present government [of Chiang Kai-shek] can't oppose Japanese imperialism without becoming a servile tool of British imperialism. They will answer: the Bolsheviks also used one imperialism against the other and why do you criticize us for our bloc with Great Britain? A bloc depends on the relationship of forces; if I am the stronger, I can use it for my purposes; if I am the weaker, I become a tool. *Only a revolutionary government could be the stronger.* (*Internal Bulletin*, December, 1937, p. 34.—My emphasis—M.S.)

To support China *now*, when Britain and America are at war with Japan on Chinese soil, and when this war completely and in every respect dominates the former more or less isolated and in every respect China and Japan, is simply to give objective support to Anglo-British imperialism in the form of its “servile tool.”

Views of Trotsky and Li Fu-jen

Like Lenin in the First World War, Trotsky understood that the Second World War would absorb and dominate all other bourgeois struggles, including even such progressive bourgeois-democratic struggles as are carried on by colonial countries. That, among other reasons, is why he incessantly stressed the significance of revolutionary proletarian leadership as the indispensable prerequisite for any progressive movement, in any country and in any struggle.

“The world war which is approaching with irresistible force,” he wrote in 1938 in his introduction to Isaac's book on China, “will review the Chinese problem together with all other problems of colonial domination.” But not with Morrow's consent, for he will stand for no review of the Chinese problem! The answers were set down years ago and that's all that's necessary for him and for all future generations unto the seventh of them.

“The war in Eastern Asia,” Trotsky wrote two years later, in the manifesto of the Fourth International on the world war that had just broken out, “will become more and more interlocked with the Imperialist World War. The Chinese people will be able to reach independence only under the leadership of the youthful and self-sacrificing proletariat.” (*Manifesto, Etc.*, p. 25.)

Further evidence is offered us by the same Chinese comrade with whom Trotsky in 1937 had the discussion quoted from above. Writing in Morrow's magazine of February, 1941, Li Fu-jen declared:

Trotsky pointed out that Chiang Kai-shek fights against Japan, not with the intention of freeing China from imperialist domination, but with a view to passing into the service of another, more magnanimous power. And there can be no doubt that when American intervention against Japan gets under way, and increases in range, Chiang Kai-shek under Washington's pressure will tend to subordinate the present Sino-Japanese war to the completely reactionary war aims of American imperialism in the Far East. If this is to be prevented, the Chinese masses will have to intervene, for they have no interest in substituting the American taskmaster for the Japanese slave-driver. The intervention of the masses can take place only on a revolutionary basis. Their struggle will have to be directed not only against the imperialists, but also against the native exploiters and their government. (*Fourth International*, February, 1941, p. 49.)

Compare these views with Morrow's sneering comments, saturated with the Stalinist evaluation of the colonial bourgeoisie: “During the war Shachtman will support only that colonial country in which the leadership of the proletariat has been established—of course a proletariat already under revolutionary and not reformist leadership. This revelation has nothing in common with Lenin and Trotsky's reiterated position that revolutionists should support a colonial struggle against imperialism even if the colonial bourgeoisie leads it.”

Just what is the “reiterated position” of Lenin, which Trotsky could not but share? We cited it a dozen times over from well known texts in our reply to Wright. Morrow does not dream of commenting on them. Didn't he notice them? Let us call his attention to them once more. It is worth while, because Lenin's criteria are exceptionally clear, which is why Morrow has such an advanced case of *rigor mortis* when it comes to speaking of these criteria.

Lenin, like Marx and Engels, was a firm supporter of every nation's right to self-determination, as he was of every genuine democratic right. Even though both are bourgeois nations, he taught, an imperialist nation stands on a different footing than does an oppressed nation or national minority. The big powers are not on the same footing with the colonial and semi-colonial countries they oppress and exploit. Any struggle conducted by a national minority, by a small, oppressed nation, or by a colonial country, to emancipate itself from the foreign oppressor's yoke, is a progressive struggle and, provided it does not conflict with internationalist and socialist interests, it demands the support of the working class. Such struggles, and the wars engendered by them, are *progressive* struggles. They are *just* struggles. The proletariat, without giving up its independent class position, should support them, should be for national defense in the countries which are conducting these struggles or wars against imperialist domination.

That is simple and clear enough. But in addition to just wars for national emancipation, there are also imperialist wars. What is the relation between them? Lenin's answer to this question is also clear-cut.

Wars of Small Colonial Countries

The war of a small nation or a colonial country against imperialism must be supported even though it *may* be converted into a general imperialist war, that is, a war dominated by the struggle for domination between imperialist powers and their allies. Lenin polemized against Rosa Luxemburg because she

... says that in the imperialist epoch every national war against one of the imperialist Great Powers leads to the intervention of another imperialist Great Power, which competes with the former, and thus every national war is converted into an imperialist war. But this argument is also wrong. This *may* happen, but it does not always happen. Many colonial wars in the period between 1900 and 1914 did not follow this road. And it would be simply ridiculous if we declared, for instance, that after the present war, if it ends in the complete exhaustion of the belligerents, "there can be no" national progressive, revolutionary wars "whatever," waged, say, by China in alliance with India, Persia, Siam, etc., against the Great Powers. (*Works*, Vol. XIX, p. 363.)

Isn't this quotation really enough to give any objective person the clear content of Lenin's views on the matter.

Isn't it clear what Lenin means? A national war is possible by countries like China against imperialist powers; it should be supported by us. Will not such a war lead to an imperialist war? It may and, under certain circumstances, it may not. Of course, if it is overtaken, so to speak, by an imperialistic war, then the "national element" in the war becomes subordinated to the dominant imperialist element, and all talk of national defense in any country is nothing but service to imperialism.

If the war, said Lenin from 1914 onward, were confined to a struggle between Germany and Belgium, we would be for the defense of Belgium, even though Belgium is a bourgeois and an imperialist country, because we are for Belgian national independence from Germany's attack. But in the general imperialist war that is actually going on, Belgian national independence is completely subordinated to the conflict between the major imperialisms, and Belgium is merely an ally of one imperialist camp.

Or again: The struggle of Servia against Austro-Hungary is a just national struggle against an oppressor. If the war was confined to a duel between these two countries, Lenin repeated a dozen times, we would be for the victory of Servia,

even of the Servian bourgeoisie. But in the real situation, we are not for the defense of Servia because "the Austro-Servian war is of no great importance compared with the *all-determining imperialist rivalry*" (*op. cit.*, p. 204. My emphasis—M. S.)

To make doubly sure that he would not be misinterpreted, Lenin declared categorically:

In short, a war *between* imperialist Great Powers (i.e., Powers which oppress a number of foreign nations, entangling them in the web of dependence on finance capital, etc.), or war in *alliance* with them, is an imperialist war. Such a war is the war of 1914-1916; the plea of "defense of the fatherland" in *this* war is deception; it is used to justify the war. (*Op. cit.*, p. 220. Emphasis by Lenin.)

The categorical nature of the statement is all the more significant because it occurs in the course of a polemic against a comrade, Pyatakov, who denied altogether the possibility of progressive national wars in the imperialist epoch. *A war in alliance with the imperialist powers is also an imperialist war.* Does Morrow understand this unmistakable sentence? Or doesn't he want to understand it?

Why was it possible for Lenin to be so "dogmatic"? Because this keenest of all analysts of capitalist imperialism was too well aware of the relations between the powerful imperialist metropolis and the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation, or the bourgeoisie and feudal elements of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, to come to any other conclusion. He understood what Morrow refuses to get into his head, that the colonial bourgeoisie, when allied with the imperialist ruling classes in a war, cannot pretend to an independent rôle, cannot be anything but providers of cannon-fodder for imperialism; that the one is not and cannot hope to be the equal of the other in the alliance; that one dominates and the other is dominated.

On the Stalinist Road

The Stalinists failed to understand this, and from their failure followed the betrayal of the Chinese Revolution. Against Trotsky they argued that the Chinese national bourgeoisie is struggling against imperialism. In vain Trotsky patiently replied that it was fighting one imperialist power and serving another; that the colonial bourgeoisie is incapable of conducting a struggle against *imperialism* but on the contrary always maintains connections with it because it requires its support in the struggle against the class it fears more than anything else, the proletariat. The Stalinists turned a deaf ear; they glorified the bourgeoisie, apologized for it, exaggerated and embroidered its every action "against imperialism" and helped bring about one disaster after another.

And Morrow? And his colleague Wright? They are not Stalinists, to be sure, but they are moving along the same theoretical road.

Wright went so far as to commit to paper the statement that colonial countries differ from all others because "the oppression strikes at all classes in the colonies and semi-colonies with the exception of a tiny minority of native agents and partners of the imperialist rulers," forgetting to give credit for this idea to its Stalinist author, the late Martynov, who had it as the basis of his policy of "the bloc of four classes" in China. The same Wright declared, right in the face of what Trotsky wrote repeatedly, to say nothing of the facts of life, that under Chiang Kai-shek, "China is freer today to play an independent rôle *vis-à-vis* Anglo-American imperialism than at any other time since 1937." What does it matter if Wright, like Morrow, satisfies his emotional needs by calling Chiang a "counter-revolutionary scoundrel," if he can write the above

political statement, which differs in no essential from some of the worst to be found in Stalinist literature?

The same Wright, lest it be forgotten, condoned the reactionary alliance of Chiang with American and British imperialism by telling the Chinese masses to "shoot with anybody who shoots in the same direction," at a time when a revolutionist should be pounding out of the heads of the Chinese people the sinister illusions they are being filled with about the imperialist alliance.

Is Morrow any different? Does he separate himself from Wright's mockery of Marxism? Of course not. "We must stick together." He improves on Wright. The Chinese bourgeoisie was denounced by Trotsky years ago as the servile tool of British imperialism. In paragraph after paragraph, Morrow paints it up. When he quotes our statement that the colonial bourgeoisie is "serving one imperialist camp against the other," he accompanies it with a skeptical sneer worthy of a "political writer" in the *New Republic*. He repeatedly attacks us for stating that the Chinese bourgeoisie has capitulated completely to Anglo-American imperialism (he demands "proof" of this—demands it in a Trotskyist paper!), denies this violently and declares that the contrary is true—the imperialists "fear" the Chinese bourgeoisie! No doubt of it, no doubt of it. He gives us a long and erudite picture of China in the last war, shows how conditions have changed in that country in the past quarter of a century, and leaves the impression that somehow—just how is not stated—there is some qualitative, or principled, difference that must be introduced into the Marxist attitude toward colonial struggles and imperialist wars (similarly Wright sought to establish a principled difference between national and colonial struggles, and with just as much warrant). And his attitude toward the colonial bourgeoisie, specifically in India, is a monstrous disgrace even to a journal that calls itself Marxist, as we shall show later on.

All of this comes from what? From the point of view, obviously shared by Wright and Morrow, that the colonial bourgeoisie can play an independent rôle in the struggle against imperialism, and therefore can play an independent rôle in the midst of an imperialist war in which it is a subordinate ally. Lenin and Trotsky differed from this viewpoint in only one way: they believed exactly the opposite. "The dialectics of history is such," wrote Lenin during the war, "that small nations, powerless as an *independent* factor in the struggle against imperialism, play a part as one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, which help the *real* power against imperialism to come on the scene, namely the socialist proletariat." (*Works*, Vol. XIX, p. 303.)

Do We Always Support Every Just War?

China's war for national independence is undoubtedly a just war, unlike wars between imperialist bandit-powers. That is why we, for our part, supported it in the past. But if it is just, why not support it now, too? This is essentially the question put by the Cannonite masters-of-the-dialectic-beyond-time-space-and-circumstance. Because we do not *always* support *every* just war. That is one of the lessons in Marxism that we learned long ago from Lenin.

Lenin, we have pointed out, considered Serbia's war against Austro-Hungary a just war, meriting the support of the proletariat. Had the conflict between the two countries remained isolated, he said, we would support Serbia. But the conflict did not remain isolated; it spread until it became a general imperialist world war. Even the Servian socialists understood that their country's struggle was subordinate to—not

independent of—the imperialist war as a whole and, to their honor, they refused to vote war credits in the Skuptschina or to support the war.

But there is a more illuminating example: Poland. The veriest tyro in Marxism knows the support given the struggle for Polish independence by every revolutionary socialist as far back as Marx and Engels. Without having any illusions at all about the revolutionary qualities of the Polish bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie and social-democrats, Lenin was all his life for the freedom of Poland from czarist domination. He felt so strongly on the question that some of his sharpest polemics were directed at Rosa Luxemburg—to whom he was otherwise politically very close—who rejected the struggle for Polish national independence.

In the period of the Russo-Japanese war, the weakening of the iron hoops of czarist rule encouraged the Polish nationalists, the semi-socialist variety included, to believe that the time to strike the emancipating blow was nigh. One of them—if I am not mistaken, it was the late Pilsudski himself—event went to Japan in order to get financial and other material aid for the promotion of the Polish national struggle. This fact was fairly common knowledge, certainly in the socialist circles of Poland and Russia. Did it cause Lenin to abandon the slogan of Polish independence? No, there is no record of any such thing having happened. For Pilsudski to have asked and obtained material aid from one imperialist power to struggle against another was a case of "utilizing imperialist antagonisms" which did not invalidate the worthiness of the Polish struggle.

The Experience of Poland

In the period of the World War, however, things were different, at least from Lenin's point of view. Again, Pilsudski "utilized imperialist antagonisms." With Austrian and then German permission and assistance, he established the Polish Legion. Right after the outbreak of the war he promulgated in Cracow the "Polish People's Government of Warsaw." His troops were separately organized, formally speaking, but the "Polish high command" was of course connected with and subordinated to the Austrian high command and, at times, to the German. The troops and commands fought side by side against the armed forces of the czar. Was Pilsudski "merely" a tool? the then Morrows probably asked. Of course not; not any more than Chiang is "merely" a tool of imperialism. Like the Chinese bourgeoisie, the Pilsudskyites had more than one conflict with the arrogantly stupid Prussian command and the simply stupid Austrian command. The latter looked down upon their inferior Polish "sow-ally" with the same arrogance and disdain that the British command so often reveals in its dealings with its inferior Chinese ally. And sometimes this would have the same ravaging results that the British commander's failure to use all the Chinese troops available in the Burma campaign had last April. But this did not change the fact: Pilsudski and "Poland's struggle" were an integral and subordinate part of the Imperialist World War, just as China is right now under the Chinese bourgeoisie.

Lenin therefore rejected the Polish national struggle "at the present time," as he put it. He even went so far as to state that the Polish revolutionary socialists should not even advance "in the present epoch, or present period, the slogan of independence of Poland." Imagine the apoplectic convulsions into which this must have thrown the Wrights and Morrows of that time!

To advance the slogan of Polish independence *at the present time*

[wrote Lenin in 1916], bearing in mind the relationships at present existing between the neighboring imperialist nations, really means chasing after a utopia, sinking into narrow-minded nationalism, forgetting the prerequisites for a general European, or at least a Russian and German revolution...

The Polish Social Democrats cannot, at present, advance the slogan of Polish independence, because, as proletarian internationalists, the Poles can do nothing to achieve it without, like the "Fraki" [social-chauvinists], sinking into mean servility to one of the imperialist monarchies. (*Works*, Vol. XIX, p. 296f.)

Did this mean that Poland's aspirations for independence were no longer just? No, for as Lenin continued:

To the Russian and German workers, however, it is not a matter of indifference whether they participate in the annexation of Poland (which would mean educating the German and Russian workers and peasants in the spirit of most despicable servility, of reconciliation with the rôle of hangman of other peoples), or whether Poland is independent....

The Russian and the German Social-Democrats must demand unconditional "freedom of secession" for Poland... (*Ibid.*, p. 297.)

As we showed in our reply to Wright, the Leninist viewpoint was applied with equal force over national struggles in Europe and the national struggles of the colonies in the East. We noted the significant comments made during the last war by Lenin's closest collaborator, Zinoviev, on the Persian uprising against Anglo-Russian domination in 1916. Was the struggle of the Persians, of the revolutionary committees formed in various parts of the country and finally suppressed by czarist troops, a just struggle? Of course, replies Zinoviev. "What attitude should be taken toward such a state of things in Persia?" he asks. Zinoviev knows the leanings of the insurrectionary Persians toward an alliance with Germany for the purpose of ridding themselves of Anglo-Persian domination, and he therefore points out:

It is obvious that the socialists sympathize with all their heart with the revolutionary movement in Persia which is directed at Russo-English imperialists. But in case Persia had participated in the war of 1914-16 and placed itself on the side of the German coalition, the Persian war would only have been an unimportant episode in the imperialist robber war. Objectively, the rôle of Persia would have been very little distinguished from the rôle of Turkey in the war years 1914-16. (Lenin and Zinoviev, *Gegen den Strom*, "The Second International and the War Problem," by G. Zinoviev, pp. 499f. My emphasis.—M.S.)

The Marxian position toward a bourgeois-democratic national struggle which becomes a subordinate part of an imperialist camp in war, is stated with exceptional clarity and absence of the slightest ambiguity. How does Morrow refute the passages from Lenin and Zinoviev to which we so pointedly called attention, and which we repeat here? By a time-worn but not time-honored device: Brazenly ignore what your critic writes, coolly pretend he hasn't written it, and pray to God that your reader will never learn the facts.

The just war for national liberation must be supported by the revolutionary proletariat even if the bourgeoisie stands at the head of the war. The just war cannot be supported by us if it is sucked into the black stream of a general imperialist war, if the warring country in question becomes an ally (and therefore, given the inherent relationships between the imperialist great power and the small nation or colony, a subordinate ally) of one of the big imperialist camps. To support it under such conditions means "sinking into mean servility to one of the imperialist monarchies," said Lenin; or, as we must say it now, "imperialist camps." The struggle for national freedom is then tied up inseparably with the struggle against the imperialist war and for the proletarian revolution. Which is another way of stating what we wrote in *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL*, the words that aroused so much philistine mockery

from Morrow, namely, "Only the leadership of the proletariat can re-launch the just wars of the colonies against imperialism, or the just wars of conquered nations and peoples against their conquerors."

Not so fast! Wait! Is China today the same as China in the last war? The analogy, splutters Morrow, is "preposterous, false." "Shachtman perverts Trotsky's conception to mean that the Second World War is a continuation of the first on the part of all the countries participating in it... There is no analogy between China's rôle in the two wars, as we shall easily establish by facts."

Pretentious Erudition in Place of Marxism

Thereupon Morrow proceeds for a full page, one-fourth of his article, to demonstrate that there is no analogy, no sir, none whatsoever. And it is a typical piece of Morrow-journalism if ever you saw one. Everything is there, including the kitchen sink, everything, that is, except what is essential. How erudite it is! How impressive! How filled with facts and figures, and Chinese names, to boot! Yuan Shih-kai is paraded before us, so is Sun Yat-sen, and the Manchu dynasty and the Chinese delegation at the Versailles Conference, and what Powers had spheres of influence in what provinces, and lots more of the same. And right down to, and over, and past the hilt he proves that not less than twenty-five years have elapsed since 1917, and even more than that since 1911. What else he proves remains an Eleusinian mystery which was not given to us plain people to fathom. We do know, however, that he set out to prove that any attempt to draw an analogy between China in the last war and China in this war is "preposterous" and even "false."

Good, good! We are convinced. Now the only one you have to convince is Trotsky. For the idea of the analogy, even of China in the last war, originates with him. It is true that Trotsky did not mention Yuan Shih-kai, but he made up for it with a fundamental Marxian analysis. Here is what he wrote against the Stalinists who were trying to glorify the Chinese bourgeoisie by spurious "fundamental" and "historical" distinctions, which were no less spurious, however, than the fundamental distinction that Morrow draws between China in 1914 and China in 1942 for the purpose of justifying his opportunist position.

The "February" revolution in China took place in 1911. That revolution was a great and progressive event, although it was accomplished with the direct participation of the imperialists. Sun Yat-sen, in his memoirs, relates how his organization relied in all its work on the "support" of the imperialist states—either Japan, France or America. If Kerensky in 1917 continued to take part in the imperialist war, then the Chinese bourgeoisie, the one that is so "national," so "revolutionary," etc., supported Wilson's intervention in the war with the hope that the Entente would help to emancipate China. In 1918 Sun Yat-sen addressed to the governments of the Entente his plans for the economic development and political emancipation of China. There is no foundation whatever for the assertion that the Chinese bourgeoisie, in its struggle against the Manchu dynasty, displayed any higher revolutionary qualities than the Russian bourgeoisie in the struggle against czarism; or that there is a principled difference between Chiang Kai-shek's and Kerensky's attitude toward imperialism.

But, says the ECCI, Chiang Kai-shek nevertheless did wage war against imperialism. To present the situation in this manner is to put too crude a face upon reality. Chiang Kai-shek waged war against certain Chinese militarists, the agents of one of the imperialist powers. This is not at all the same as to wage a war against imperialism. (Trotsky, *The Third International After Lenin*, p. 173.)

As we see, Trotsky is "preposterous" enough to make an analogy not only between China today and China in the First World War, but between the Chinese colonial bourgeoisie and

the Russian *democratic-imperialist* bourgeoisie (i.e., between Chiang and Kerensky). We drew an analogy, nothing more than an humble, unpretentious little analogy, between *China* in the last war and *China* in the present war. Trotsky draws an analogy between *China* in the last war and democratic *Russia* in the same war. He states emphatically that there is no difference in principle between Chiang and Kerensky in their attitude toward imperialism, and therefore toward imperialist war. Then why, in heaven's name, should there be a difference in principle in the Marxist's attitude toward the Chinese bourgeoisie when it joins completely in the war of Kerenskyite (and worse than Kerenskyite) imperialism, and in alliance with it? Does everything that Lenin and Trotsky insistently taught on this subject have to be thrown out of the window just because Wright is a self-starting muddlehead and Morrow an obedient but deplorably ignorant journalist?

* * *

The second half of this article, which will deal with aspects of the uprising in India which are not developed in the excellent article Henry Judd has in the current issue, as well as with the national question in Europe, must be left for next month for want of further space here.

MAX SHACHTMAN.

CORRESPONDENCE

Again, Riazanov and Sneevliet

Dear Max Shachtman:

The July number of *The New Internationalist* having come to my attention by accident, I read there with emotion your article on Riazanov and Sneevliet. I knew Riazanov, followed closely the drama of his end, and Sneevliet was my friend. I can contribute some additional information about them which may also be of interest to your readers.

Riazanov was arrested in 1931, following a very lively altercation with the secretary-general. . . . He was accused of having hidden in the strongbox of the Marx-Engels Institute some documents relating to alleged negotiations of the Mensheviks with the Socialist International concerning . . . a Franco-Polish intervention in the USSR! In reality, he had protested in various ways against the preparation of a monstrous frame-up trial and more particularly against the use that was to be made at the trial of the "confessions" of one of his collaborators, Sher, who was neurasthenic to the point of being obviously half-irresponsible.

On May 11, or 12, 1940, being in Paris, I received a letter from Sneevliet, who had just taken refuge in Antwerp. By the time the letter arrived in my hands, Antwerp was already threatened. Sneevliet asked me to get him a French visa. I found no support from anybody. I received nothing, my only friends in a position to intercede with the authorities, socialists, no longer having any real influence. So Sneevliet did not succeed in finding asylum in France. I received a similar request from a courageous Italian anti-fascist, a friend of Bordiga, Perrone, who, fleeing from Brussels, was blocked with his family at the frontier. Up to the very moment when the Nazis crossed the Franco-Belgian frontier, the French gendarmerie refused to let "the foreigners" pass (it let the Belgians pass), thus turning over to the enemy a certain number of Italians, Spaniards, Russians and others. At the last mo-

ment, the Belgian authorities began to intern all the foreigners, starting with the anti-fascist refugees. Perrone, like Sneevliet, disappeared in the tumult of the invasion. For a while I hoped that Sneevliet had succeeded in getting to England; everything leads me to believe that he tried it without success. For him to remain in occupied territory was to commit a sort of suicide and he was well aware of it. He tried to escape, he failed, he fulfilled his duty as a militant on the spot and to the very end.

VICTOR SERGE.

Mexico, D.F.

MISCELLANY

The Fire Bell Tolls but Once

Evaluating a contemporary work of art is beset by many pitfalls, not the least of which is the personality of the artist involved and the social forces that surround him. The hypocritical ballyhoo surrounding Shostakovich—the Soviet composer—dating from the time that America became allied with the Soviet Union, can arouse in the honest persons disgust to a point where he cannot even bring himself to listen to the music! One must be careful. And yet what we know about a contemporary artist's relation to society and to his followers cannot but be a factor in our estimate of his art. To ignore this relationship one would have to maintain an abnormally detached viewpoint.

Certainly the most objective among us must prick up his ears when someone like Serge Koussevitzky—darling of the Back Bay Bostonians—goes all-out for the darling of the Soviets, Shostakovich, who extinguishes fires in Leningrad while nursing the fires of inspiration. It is still more astonishing to find this gentleman, born and bred in the aristocratic circles of Czarist Russia, nurtured among White Russian refugees, leader of a non-union orchestra that plays only to the supremely refined—it is indeed astonishing to find Conductor Koussevitzky shouting hurrahs for the "mass appeal" of Shostakovich's music!

The Company a Composer Keeps

A composer cannot be blamed for the people who like his music. But today, when every individual is influenced by and is dependent to the point of existence itself, on the political forces that surround him and where every field of art is exploited for its propaganda value, may it not be said that a composer should be judged, if not by the company he keeps, then by the company that keeps him?

This does not mean that the Shostakovich Seventh Symphony (recently introduced to America with such fanfare) has no musical value for these reasons. The enthusiastic reception of this work by the bourgeois music critics need not lead us to condemn it, but must arouse our suspicions. The political and social setting in which it was presented can help us to understand the form in which it was cast. Shostakovich knew well its propagandistic purposes and the audience that would listen to it (the middle class of America and England, worked up by advance publicity, eagerly awaiting the message, itching to go all-out in emotional praise).

With this in mind, Shostakovich rose to the occasion. He gave them what they wanted, but the occasion was such that only a miracle could produce a great and sincere work of art.

Such a miracle did not occur. For we have here an instance of music playing second fiddle to the obviousness of the dramatic situation which invoked it. If the mass appeal of the Seventh Symphony was assured before its inception, its artistic worthlessness was equally predetermined!

It must be realized that music is of such an intense emotional and abstract nature that it can be used just as readily to befuddle people as to enlighten them. Unlike literature or the graphic arts, it says nothing concrete. Thus, when a piece of music, heralded for obvious political reasons as a genius' masterpiece, is written only to stir the emotions of people with a confused political orientation, then this music can resolve itself into nothing more than drum beating, as indeed the Shostakovich Seventh Symphony is—both figuratively and literally!

However that may be, there is some pretty competent drum beating found here. Whatever his faults, Shostakovich manages to be effective. After a brief introduction, the snare drums introduce a military rhythm which continues crescendo throughout the movement. Above this a theme of several short phrases appears, symmetrical and imitative in character. The most casual listener is struck by two things—first, the close resemblance to Ravel's *Bolero* and, second, the banality of the theme.

Bang, Bang and BANG!

Shostakovich is no fool and knew what he was doing. Did he take the attitude that a particular form is never a composer's private property? Or did he want to show the possibilities of the form when handled by a greater composer for a more important subject? "The *Bolero* is merely a *tour de force*, but I, the great Soviet composer, use it for a great purpose." This form, consisting of a theme repeated over and over again with cumulative orchestral effect. It is of such an obvious nature that it must be treated in a subtle and non-too-serious manner. The great crescendo in the *Bolero* is intense as well as quantitative—that is, it undergoes remarkable and dextrous changes in color. Not so with the *Seventh*, which simply adds and adds and adds. Shostakovich tries to overwhelm you with the theme's insistence and with sheer power of sound. He is only childish and monotonous. He might just as well have let the drums go bang, BANG, BANG—(that's Hitler coming at you!).

And the theme. Is it meant to be the onward march of fascism, and therefore deliberately banal? Or did the composer consider it a good theme? Did he think the theme itself didn't matter and was secondary to the treatment given it? Unfortunately, no amount of lofty idealism or vital message can hide badly written music.

The first movement is clearly meant to be a mighty, marching force—but whether it is Hitler or the Revolution, we don't know! Shostakovich is too clever to tell us. But the movement ends on a note of forboding, denoting either that (1) Hitler is perched on our doorstep; or (2) the Revolution has triumphed and awaits the inevitable counter-assault by reaction.

The following *scherzo* movement turns out to be leisurely, cheerful and melodious—perhaps leaving today's grim problems to momentarily sing the joys of Stalinist socialism. This movement is not programmatic in character, but is sandwiched in between the other two movements. It illustrates the fact that, to Shostakovich, music is a string of contrasting themes, harmonized, developed and orchestrated. Any organic idea binding this material into a purposeful whole is notori-

ously lacking. All of his ideas are alive and some have a youthful freshness, but each climax falls short of being a fulfillment! The expected return of the first theme in the second movement has no reason behind it. The dramatic and emotional possibilities contained in the relationship of parts to one another and to the whole are a closed book to his nimble but superficial mind.

The final movement returns to today's stern realities. It attempts to overcome them by blowing them away! Climax upon climax, the brass blares louder and louder; the strings soar and rhapsodize (sometimes with sonorous effect). The stale memory of Tchaikovsky—the sugary petty bourgeois romantic beloved of Lewisohn Stadium concerts—and Strauss pervades this movement. Shostakovich is a man of tremendous resources, with a facile mind. He is quick to learn from the assets and errors of others; he borrows unashamedly where he can; he gathers in all the musical weapons of the last fifty years. When he throws all this at you, with the purpose of leaving you limp, he is likely to succeed to the point where you almost forget what you have listened to!

For Shostakovich, at any rate, has freed himself from the fads and cacophonies of the 1920's without sinking into the mire of post-romanticism. Having at his finger tips the enormous technique developed by the twentieth century, he avoids mere orchestral effect, but uses it to project his ideas. Unlike Ravel (whose orchestrations were scintillating and iridescent), Shostakovich brings the orchestra back to a normal level, but covers a greater range. Of course, most of the *Seventh Symphony* is not "modern," except for some moments of value.

A Victim of Stalinism?

What conclusions may we draw? Is Shostakovich a victim of Soviet corruption and censorship? Perhaps there are great musicians lost to us because of the Stalinist dictatorship, but he is not one of them! Shostakovich reveals his own superficial character and lack of sincerity by the idiom in which he chooses to write. His is the kind of talent that flourishes most readily in a corrupt political régime. He knows much, but believes in nothing. His glib mind can produce any style it pleases—"revolutionary" music, conservative music, satirical, serious, Strauss, Ravel, Stravinsky and even Stalinist music! It doesn't matter much to him. He cheerfully conforms to his master when ordered to change his style. His early works were all satirical. Then came his *First Symphony*—slight, competent, light-hearted, without an important theme. But the Comintern was ultra-leftist in those days (third period), so Shostakovich wrote the *May Day* and *October* symphonies, both broad epic works. After the Popular Front Seventh World Congress, both were withdrawn. The *Fourth Symphony*, for unknown reasons, was never played. Was it by coincidence that the *Fifth* (born during the days of the Nazi-Soviet pact) contained large chunks of Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler, both "Germanic" composers?

Stalinist musicians and apologists have a ready answer to the overrated music of Shostakovich: "The important thing is to win the war; we must forgive this enthusiasm." Let us remind them that this so-called work of art is presented with pomp and fanfare as a work truly representative of art within the Soviet Union; as a work of genius; presented as indicative of the spirit within that country. As such, it reflects profoundly upon the character of the régime that has produced it. Let these musical apologists ponder well the meaning of this.

FRANK DAVIS.