THE COMMUNIST

ORGANIZE TO FIGHT HUNGER BY DEMANDING "SOCIAL INSURANCE" FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

JULY, 1930 25c

THE COMMUNIST

ORGANIZE TO FIGHT HUNGER BY DEMANDING "SOCIAL INSURANCE" FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

JULY, 1930 25c

THE COMMUNIST

A Magazine of the Theory and Practice of Marxism-Leninism

Published Monthly by the
Communist Party of the United States of America

MAX BEDACHT, *Editor*

Entered as second class matter November 2, 1927, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1890.

VOL. IX. JULY, 1930 No. 7

CONTENTS

NOTES OF THE MONTH 579

ORIGIN OF THE ECONOMIC SUPREMACY OF THE UNITED STATES 590
By V. MOTILEV

THE NEW "LEFT" SOCIAL-FASCISM..... 622
By SI GERSON

LESSONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.... 632
By DAVID GORDON

SOCIAL TRENDS IN AMERICAN LITERATURE.. 641
By JOSEPH FREEMAN

BOOK REVIEWS 652

Make all checks, money orders, and correspondence to: THE COMMUNIST, 43 East 125th St., New York. Subscription rates $2.00 a year; $1.25 for six months; foreign and Canada $2.50 a year. Single copies 25 cents

Notes of the Month

THE Seventh Convention of the Communist Party of the U.S. A. came to a close. The Convention marked a turning point in the history of our Party and the American working class. The convention and its results have demonstrated the great progress of our Party since the Sixth Convention. One of our great achievements that was clearly demonstrated at the convention is the complete unification of our Party. While the Sixth Convention was a dress-rehearsal for open struggle against the Communist International, the Seventh Convention showed the determination of our Party to follow the Comintern and mercilessly combat every attempt to deviate from its correct political line. The eradication of factionalism and unprincipled struggle for power made possible a healthy bolshevik discussion of the political line of the Party and especially its concrete application to mass work.

The crisis of world capitalism, the increased attack upon the workers and the growing revolutionary upsurge of the masses are now presenting to our Party great revolutionary tasks and responsibility. The attention and energy of the Convention were therefore directed to a recognition of these tasks with the full responsibility and seriousness as the vanguard of the working class. The discussion of our achievements was not conducted in the spirit of smug satisfaction, but in a spirit of self criticism and self correction. The convention made it very clear that our past achievements are conditional and dependent upon the extent to which the Party will succeed to bridge the gap that exists today between its political influence and organizational strength.

The Convention declared it insufficient to compare the strength and influence of our Party of today with what it was a year ago. It insisted that our achievements are not to be measured with the past, but with the objective possibilities of the present period, with the requirements of the present stages of struggle. Having such an approach to the work of our Party, the convention critically examined the shortcomings of our Party and outlined its future tasks.

It was clearly understood at the Convention that the unification of our ranks and the achievements of the Party came primarily as a result of the struggle against the opportunist line of the Right wing and the acceptance of the political line of the Comintern. Only on the basis of a correct political line can the Party grow and develop. The convention therefore, in considering the future

course of the Party first of all considered the political line of the Party and the correct perspective in the present economic and political situation in the United States and internationally.

The center of the political discussion of the Convention was occupied with the analysis of the nature and revolutionary perspective of the present economic crisis of American capitalism. In this respect the Convention struggled against two wrong tendencies: 1) against the Right opportunist conception of the normal liquidation of the crisis, 2) against the "leftist" opportunist theories of the bottomless crisis and catastrophe of capitalism. It was established at the convention that the present crisis of American capitalism, having all the typical characteristics of the cyclical crisis, is taking place in the period of the general crisis of capitalism. While it was recognized that the possibilities for renewed activity in capitalist industry and commerce are by no means excluded, yet no worse political error could be committed than to believe that a new period of the same old "prosperity" could again be restored or that capitalist economy after this crisis will look the same as prior to the crisis, and the third period will give way to a fourth period of post-war capitalism. The perspectives established at our Convention is that the present crisis is deepening, that capitalist world economy as a whole is in a crisis. The deepening of the crisis, the further accentuation of the contradictions of capitalism will only broaden the revolutionary upsurge of the working class.

The bourgeoisie naturally is trying to conceal this fact. It interprets the present economic crisis as the typical old cyclical crisis, and what is more important, it expects that the present crisis will be over and a new period of prosperity will begin. Because of its class interests the bourgeoisie cannot see that the present crisis will only further undermine capitalism and lead to its inevitable destruction. However, the capitalist solution of the crisis, or the turning of the present economic crisis of capitalism into a general political crisis must take into consideration also the subjective factor—the revolutionary role of the working class and its leader, the Communist Party.

> "Whether the present economic crisis will grow into a general political crisis depends on a number of factors and before all on the subjective factor, on the fighting capacity of the Communist Parties." (Manuilsky at the enlarged Presidium meeting of the E.C.C.I.)

The most important conclusion one must draw from this statement is that the *rapidity* of the decline of capitalism and the approach of the proletarian revolution will be determined by the revolutionary mass activities of the Communist Party, its ability to mobilize the working class to prevent the capitalist solution of the

crisis and turn the economic crisis of capitalism into a political crisis. It would be disastrous for our Party and the working class to think that capitalism because of its inherent contradictions will fall by itself. This idealistic conception and fatalistic approach to the revolutionary struggle must be eradicated if we are to combat all tendencies of passivity and mobilize the working class for revolutionary mass struggle.

The other important achievement of our Convention is the seriousness with which the Convention treated the Negro question. The Convention brought out the fact that great misunderstanding exists in the ranks of our Party concerning our work among Negroes. Particularly is there great confusion in respect to the slogan of "self determination." The convention made clear not only our political line and understanding of this problem but also our concrete organizational tasks. Special emphasis was laid on our work in the South. It was understood that Communist activity in the South means Communist work among Negro workers and farmers. In the past this work was carried on spasmodically, without any definite plans and consequently with little organizational achievements.

For the first time in its history the Party took the first steps to adopt a program of work among the poor farmers and agricultural laborers. For years our Party ignored the agricultural question and limited itself to general statements of its great importance. The chronic agricultural crisis, which in turn became more accentuated by the industrial crisis, is driving the American farmers to desperation. The objective possibilities of our Party work among farmers are tremendous. The adoption of a basis for an agricultural program as well as the concrete political discussion of this question will definitely mark the beginning of Communist activity and organization of the exploited agricultural masses.

* * * *

AT the same time, when our Seventh Convention was coming to a close, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was opening its XVI Congress. The Congress of our Russian brother Party is of tremendous international importance. In the period from the XV to the XVI Congress of the C.P.S.U., the working class of the entire world witnessed the realization of our ideal—the successful building up of socialism in one-sixth of the globe. Socialism changed from a Utopia into a scientific theory, from a scientific theory into revolutionary action, from revolutionary action into socialism as it is today being embodied in the gigantic construction now taking place in the Soviet Union.

While at the XV Congress, the Soviet Socialist economy marked the end of the "reconstruction" period and reached its pre-war level of production, the XVI Congress is today gathered in a period when large socialist industry took a tremendous leap forward and increased the capacities of its production from two and two and a half times its pre-war level.

Large industrial production for the last two years increased 59% instead of the 43% according to the Five Year Plan. Those branches of industry producing means of production increased in the last two years 88% instead of the 58.4% according to the Five Year Plan.

The most important achievement in the construction of socialism, that marks the period since the XV Congress, is the collectivization of agriculture. The extent of collectivization in the important grain producing areas is from 40 to 50 per cent of all the individual peasant enterprises (instead of the 3% in Spring, 1928). The success of socialist construction in the Soviet Union becomes particularly clear when we compare the rate of increase of production in the U.S.S.R. with the most advanced capitalist countries, as for instance, the United States. In the U.S. the average increase of the rate of production was 4.5%, while in the U.S.S.R. during the first two years of the Five Year Plan the yearly average rate of increase of production was 28%. Especially striking is the contrast between the growth of socialist economy and the decline of capitalist economy in the last 8-9 months, during which the Soviet Union increased its industrial production 30%, while in the U. S. industrial production declined 20%; industrial production in Germany declined 13%; Poland 19%; Canada 10-12%, etc.

These tremendous achievements and successes in socialist construction was possible only because of the correctness of the political line of the Russian Party and its Leninist leadership—the Central Committee. This explains the determination and decisiveness of the struggle of the Russian Party against all those who fought the Party line and policies. The correctness of the line of the Russian Party is being proven by life itself. The Trotskyites, whose last vestiges were wiped out at the XV Congress, now openly entered into the camp of the counter-revolution. While even the staunchest enemies of the working class are forced to recognize the success of the Five Year Plan, yet Trotsky states:

> ". . . the plan is itself an unrealizable, Utopian and economically reactionary aim. . . ." (Militant May 24, 1930)

Equally successful was the struggle of the Party against the Right wing led by Bucharin. Without defeating the Right wing,

the struggle for the extermination of the kulaks as a class would have been impossible. Their policies when accepted would have been disastrous to the workers' State. The interests of the Party and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat demanded an uncompromising struggle against them until the bankrupt leaders of the Right wing themselves had to admit:

> "We consider it as our duty to declare that in this disagreement the Party and its C. C. were found to be correct. Our views expressed in certain documents were found to be wrong."

While fighting against the Right danger as the main danger, the Party continued the struggle against the leftist excesses, which distorted the correct line of the Party and gave objective strength to the Right wing and threatened to undermine the collectivization campaign. The Party therefore determinedly struggled on two fronts, against Right and Left opportunism.

During this period the hopes of world capitalism and social democracy, that the Soviet Union will be defeated by the very forces working from within, also vanished. The enemies of the Soviet Union see clearly that the Leninist leadership of the C.P.S.U. is consolidating the victories of the October Revolution. The successful carrying out of the Five Year Plan is being openly considered by the bourgeoisie as an undermining factor of world capitalism. The "New York Times" in an editorial on June 1 sounded a warning to world capitalism of the consequences of the successful carrying through of the Five Year Plan:

> "If ever Moscow demonstrates that her new communal methods can provide more goods and satisfactions and opportunities than private enterprises, the effect upon the nations will obviously be profound. If Socialism 'works' in Russia, the capitalistic nations will have to look to themselves."

This precisely is the basis for the growing attack upon the Soviet Union, of the feverish imperialist war preparations, as they express themselves not only in the religious anti-Soviet campaign, in the poisonous propaganda of the social fascist press, but in the direct organized attacks of the imperialist powers.

* * * *

THE other factor which is accelerating the war preparations of imperialism—the crisis of capitalist economy—became still sharper since we discussed it last in the "Communist." A brief review of the basic economic factors will clearly prove this:

The "Annalist" index of business activity for May reached a new low figure of 89 points. This is the lowest since 1924. The

Index of wholesale commodity prices sagged during the month of May to 129.7, which is the lowest since 1916. The reports of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce shows that for the year up to June 20, residential building construction declined from $1,045,000,000 for the same period last year, to $554,000,000, while non-residential building construction during the same corresponding periods declined 9%. Further, the Chamber of Commerce reports that for the four weeks ending June 14 car loadings declined 12%. For the first 23 weeks of 1930 car loadings show a decline of 9%. Electric power and gas consumption by manufacturing industries during the month of May was 1% under April and 13% under May of last year. For recent weeks production of bituminous coal has been 12% below the same period of 1929. The daily average of pig iron production during the month of May was 17% below May of last year. For recent weeks, production of bituminous coal was 14.7% below the same period of 1929. Steel ingot output for May was 129,072 tons less than during April, a decline of over 3%. Steel ingot production for the first five months of this year showed a drop over the corresponding period last year of 3,767,609 tons or over 18.5%. Production of automobiles during the month of May was 7% under April and 32% under May last year. Automobile production during the first five months of this year shows a decline of 31% over the corresponding period of 1929. May production in cotton goods was 19% below production of May 1929. In discussing the present economic situation we must also consider the foreign trade, which is continuously declining and thereby still further accentuating the crisis. United States exports for May were in value $322,000,000. This is 3% below the value for April 1930 and 16% below the value for May 1929. For the first five months of 1930 exports were valued at $1,783,000,000, which is 20% below the value of the first five months of 1929.

United States imports in May were valued $285,000,000 being 7% below the value of April and 29% below the value of imports of May 1929. Imports in the first five months were valued at $1,486,000,000. This is 16% below the imports for the first five months of the year 1929. The total drop in U.S. foreign trade, both exports and imports, during the first five months of the current year is over $900,000,000. The significance of this decline becomes especially important when we take into consideration the proposed policies of the American bourgeoisie of "making the world our own market." We can remember how at the beginning of the present crisis the American bourgeoisie proposed to solve

this crisis by the conquest of new markets and increase the export of American commodities.

The facts above clearly show the deepening of the economic crisis and the futility of the meaningless statements coming from the apologists of American imperialism. The most serious leaders of the American bourgeoisie themselves realize the great dangers involved in the attempt to cover up economic facts with false statements or harness inevitable economic developments by artificial means. The "Annalist" of June 20 states:

> "The market's present difficulties add one more example to the past several years' long list of illustrations of the dangers arising from interference with the natural working of economic forces. It is now clear that the attempts early this year to force business back to a prosperity level have actually delayed the recovery."

The "New York Times" in an editorial that appeared a few days ago, warns the Hoover administration of the grave consequences of its repeated meaningless optimistic reports concerning the rapid recovery of American economy. The "Times" states:

> "But it seems now to be the case that most Americans, irrespective of Party politics, have grown rather tired and cynical in respect to this whole class of routine official optimism."
>
> "But the diet of false encouragement upon which they have been fed for three or four months past by government statements is getting pretty thin."

The effects of the crisis on employment is self-evident. The "Annalist" index of employment and payrolls shows that during May, employment declined to a new low level of 92.4 compared with 93.5 for April, which is the lowest since 1922. The payroll index stands at 92.4 compared with 93.9 for April, which is the lowest since November 1924. These facts show conclusively that unemployment is increasing and will continue to increase. The government is trying to conceal these facts by manipulating with the census reports. The recent calculations of Secretary of Commerce Lamont of only 2,298,558 unemployed in the country is a deliberate lie and misrepresentation of the existing situation. The Hoover administration will try to tabulate the census reports in such a manner as to suit its own political ends. Even the bourgeoisie refused to consider seriously the statements of Lamont. Such bourgeois institution as the National Unemployment League, Inc., had to admit that there are at present 6,600,000 unemployed. The Sage Foundation report of 1924 also admitted that unemployment ranges from 5% of all wage earners in periods of prosperity to 20% in periods of bad times, with a general average from 10 to 12 per cent of all wage earners over periods of years.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the deepening of the economic crisis, we also note an intensification of the revolutionary struggles of the colonial masses against imperialism and its agents. In India, in spite of the treacherous role of Gandhi and the imperialist oppression of the Labor Government, the revolutionary struggle is developing and assuming higher political forms. The published Simons report on India clearly indicates what course imperialism wants to follow in India. The Simons Report, as is well known, is a report of a special commission consisting of representatives of all three political parties of England, among whom there are included two leading members of the British Labor Party, who are today occupying leading positions in the Labor cabinet. The contents and the proposals of the report are therefore also the proposals of the imperialist British Labor Government and the British Labor Party. At no time in the history of British imperialist policy was there such an open stand taken to intensify and increase the exploitation of the Indian workers and peasants and perpetuate the domination of British imperialism in India. This is being recognized even by the bourgeoisie itself. The "New York Times" in its statement on the Simons report had the following to say:

> ". . . the report which will be published tomorrow makes it plain on almost every page that Britain does not intend to relapse her control. . . ."
>
> "Depsite all its emphasis on self-rule for the provinces, the scheme is to give Britain a stronger hold on India than ever. For the present at least, the British Governors in the Provinces will be virtually autocrats with sweeping power to over-ride their Indian ministers."

So speaks the capitalist press of the proposals included in the Simons report, which are approved by the British Socialist Government. It was clear from the reports of the British press that British imperialism is determined to crush the revolutionary struggle in India and therefore the Simons report which was pre-arranged, could not be anything else than a perpetuation of the imperialist rule in Great Britain and ruthless struggle against the Indian workers and peasants. The fascist Lord Rothermere's "Daily Mail" stated upon the publication of the report:

> "The faintest countenance to the policy of holding out hopes to the Indian extremists, fulfillment of which would mean the ruin of India and the British Empire."

What does the Simons Commission recommend in its report? It first of all reiterates the traditional policy of British imperialism

in giving its full support to the Indian feudal princes, without whom it could not maintain its control over India:

> ". . . in view of the historical nature of the relationship between the paramount power of the princes, the latter should not be transferred without their own agreement to a relationship with a new government in British India responsible to an Indian legislature."

The Simons commission report will strengthen the imperialist rule of the British Viceroy and consolidate British imperialist control of India. The report declares:

> "The army in India (meaning the British Army) must be strong enough for its task. We hold that for many years the presence of British troops and British officers serving in Indian regiments will be essential."
>
> "There must be in India a power which can step in and save the situation before it is too late."
>
> ". . . the Governor General or the Governor, as the case may be, must be armed with full and ample power."

From the Simons Commission report we can also understand the composition and nature of the so-called Indian Legislative Assembly.

At present only 2% of the Indian population has a right to vote. The Simons commission clearly states that there must be certain definite property qualifications for those participating in elections. It speaks of only 10 to 20% of the Indian population as those who will be qualified to vote in any elections. It is clear that under such conditions the Legislative Assembly or other elected officers under the supervision of His Majesty's Government will be in the hands of feudal landowners and the native bourgeoisie.

To assure the imperialist rule of Great Britain in India, the Simons Commission is proceeding to split the vast Indian territory. It, for example, proposes to separate Burma from India. This is in complete accord with the old Roman imperialist policy of "divide the rule" now carried out by the British Labor Government.

The resentment of the Indian masses and even the Indian bourgeoisie to the Simons report is even more fierce and broader than the boycott of the Simons Commission while carrying on its "investigation" in India. The struggle against British imperialism is continued. Every day more thousands of workers and peasants are being shot and imprisoned by British troops. The Labor Government and the Socialist International as a whole, however, does not see the blood that is being spilled by them as agents of world imperialism in India. Wedgewood Benn, the Secretary for the State of India, stated on May 26 in the British House of Commons:

> "In spite of what one reads in the newspapers about the events in India, the vast majority of the people in India are living under a benevolent, settled and ordered government."

Even the American capitalist press was forced to admit that the stand of the Labor Government Secretary of State for India is the same that would have been taken by the Conservatives or the Liberals. The "New York Evening Post" in an editorial on May 28 stated:

> "The stand taken by the Labor Secretary of State for India so closely paralleled the position which would have been assumed by a Conservative Secretary of State for India, that the Tories had no grounds for complaint or even serious criticism."

* * * *

THE Month of May also marked the first year since the British Labor Party took over power for the second time. The record of the British Labor Government speaks for itself. First, its attack upon the Soviet Union is continuously being carried on. The foreign minister, Mr. Henderson, united with all the reactionary forces at the time of the religious war campaign against the Soviet Union. More than that, the Labor Government is actively proceeding to increase the imperialist war campaign preparing for the future war. The Labor Government's armament expenditure is 110,089,000 pounds. The total tonnage of British cruisers will be increased from 326,500 to 339,000 tons. Submarine tonnage will be increased from 45,000 to 52,700 tons. Only the obsolete battleships will be scrapped. On June 24 the British admiralty through its Labor Party principal, Admiral Alexander, announced a program of building 3 new cruisers, 9 destroyers, 3 submarines, 4 sloops, and net layers. The total expenditure for this gigantic war program carried on in the name of peace will be $45,000,000.

One should also recall the statements of the British Labor Party prior to its acceptance of office concerning unemployment. The British Labor Party promised to solve the unemployment question. However, for the year of its being in power we find that the number of unemployed on the register list has increased by 659,375.

At the same time the British Labor Government effectively carries out a campaign of wage cuts and rationalization of British industry in order to intensify the exploitation of the British working class. On June 5 J. H. Thomas declared at the Oxford Union Society:

> "I have deliberately, and will continue deliberately to proceed on the basis of a process of rationalization which must for weeks

increase unemployment figures. I have got to do it in the interests of the country.

Lord MacMillan, who was appointed by the Labor Government to conduct an inquiry into the woolen industry, openly proposed a wage cut to which the Labor Government agreed, and which is today being fought militantly by the woolen strikers. The wage cut affecting the 500,000 cotton workers on the first of August of last year, was also carried through with the approval of the Labor Government.

At the same time we must also point out that the terror employed against the workers by the Labor Government is unheard of even under the most reactionary administration of the Conservatives or the Liberals. Taking the number of arrests for a period of one week—January 11, 1930, to January 19, 1930, we note that 232 workers were fined for working class activity. Of these 30 miners in Bridge End and 20 at Newport were fined five pounds each under the Trades Dispute Act. Such is the record of the first year's activities of a Labor Government which has the full approval and endorsement of the Second International.

Origin of the Economic Supremacy of the United States

By V. MOTILEV

THE extraordinary rapidity of the economic development of the United States is an outstanding fact in economic history. A comparison of the rate of development of the United States with that of western European countries discloses a marked supremacy of the American rate for almost the entire period of its existence. In none of the European countries has productive power developed at a rate so *systematically* high as in the United States. Due to this fact, the extent of national property and production increased so rapidly, that in the '80s of the last century the United States reached, and then surpassed, the mark set by the greatest industrial power of the 19th century—England. The capitalist system of economy in the United States developed the maximum rate in the growth of productive power possible within the limits of this system. [1]

This extraordinary rate of development in capitalist economy in the United States attracted Marx's attention even as early as the '70s of the last century, and he recorded this as an outstanding fact. In his letter to N. in 1879, Marx wrote of "the unheard of rapidity of industrial development, the agricultural progress, etc." in America, and declared that "at present, the United States has surpassed England by far in the *rapidity* of its economic progress." [2] In his letter to Sorge in 1881, in referring to Henry George's criticisms, Marx posed the question as to the source of this rapidity: "*How is it to be explained* that in the United States, where, relatively speaking, i.e., in comparison with civilized Europe, the acquisition of land was, and still is, within the reach of the people, that capitalist economy and the consequential enslavement of the working class developed *more rapidly and in a more inhuman form than in any other country?*" [3]

---

[1] For statistical figures showing the comparisons between the American and European rate of development, see our article "Rate and Laws of the Development of Capitalist Economy" in the "Economic Review," 1928, No. 25 (Moscow) (Russian).

[2] K. Marx and F. Engels: *Letters*, 1879. Emphasis ours. (Translated from the Russian).

[3] K. Marx and F. Engels, ibid. Emphasis ours.

The supremacy of the American rate over the European has been even more marked in the last quarter of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, when the leading capitalist countries of that period tended to decrease the rate of productivity. In the United States this tendency appeared later (in the '90s) and to a much lesser degree. The *relative* difference in the rate of development was even more significant. And, at the beginning of the '90s the United States reached such a high degree of *absolute* fundamental (constant) capital and productivity, that even the slight decrease during the next ten years did not disturb the turbulent growth in absolute figures. These ten years therefore characterized the extraordinary growth of American economic power. "The United States," wrote Lenin in 1913, "is without equal in the rate of its development (especially towards the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries), nor in the level of development already attained. It is without equal in the vastness of the territory on which the most modern scientific technique is applied, technique especially adapted to the natural-historical conditions of the soil. It is without equal in its political freedom and cultural level of the population. This country is in fact in many respects the model—the ideal—of bourgeois civilization." [4]

This extraordinary growth in the economic power of the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century caused the European bourgeois economists and statesmen great alarm and uneasiness. In 1902 the British journalist, MacKenzie, wrote a book, "The American Invaders, Their Plans, Tactics and Successes," in which he described in apprehensive and grossly exaggerated terms America's dominance over British markets. In Europe many books appeared on "The American Invaders," the "American Danger," "Americanization of the World." [5] However, these works dealt with the economic power of the United States and its consequent danger to Europe rather than with an analysis of the causes of the supremacy of the American rate of development. It was only the imperialist world war, exposing the crises of capitalism, and greatly increasing the significance of the United States as a separate factor in world economy, which sharply brought before

[4] Lenin: *Capitalism and Agriculture in America,*" COMMUNIST, Vol. 8 No. 6.

[5] On this point reference may be made to the following books, which were all published about the same time: 1. B. Thwart: The American Invasion, London, 1902. 2. Chas. Furness: The American Invasion, 1902. 3. Lenshaw: "Die Amerikanische Gefahr," Berlin, 1902. 4. Prager, Die Amerikanische Gefahr, Berlin, 1902. 5. W. Stead: Die Amerikanisierung der Welt (Americanization of the World), Berlin, 1902. 6. Ozeroff: America Threatens Europe, 1903.

the European economists and statesmen the question of the origin of this American supremacy. The western European capitalists are attempting to adopt the economic principles and methods of the United States in the hopes that they will thus find some way out of their difficulties. This is the reason for the numerous concentrated efforts to unclose the "secret" of American supremacy. [6] Great interest in this question of the origin of American supremacy has also manifested itself recently in the United States in connection with the growing contradictions and disproportions, retarding economic development. In a number of books written on the subject of economy in the United States, American historians and economists have endeavored in the past to analyze American supremacy on the basis of its characteristics and tendencies.

It is our opinion that this question is of particular interest to Marxists also. "The unheard of rapidity" of the economic development of the United States is one of the clearest manifestations of the unevenness of capitalist development. Clarification on the question of the sources of this rapidity should shed light on the sources of unevenness, playing so important a role in the development of the contradictions of capitalist economy. Secondly, clarification on the character of these sources should facilitate an analysis of further perspectives in the development of this mighty capitalist power. And finally, clarification as to these sources and their character is of the utmost importance in analyzing the problem of the rate of development of the U.S.S.R.

GEOGRAPHICAL CONDITIONS

We shall begin with the role played by geographical conditions. This is all the more fitting in view of the fact that a number of students of this problem consider geographical conditions as the decisive, or one of the decisive factors, in the superior rate of development in the United States.

Indeed, the geographical conditions in the United States represent a striking combination of beneficial, natural conditions. Notwithstanding the most intensive exploitation of its natural riches, during the entire history of the United States, it still continues to possess a huge part of the world's resources.

Occupying 6% of the world's territory, and having about 6% of the world's population, it possesses 45.2% of the accounted world's power (fuel) reserves, with its coal reserves constituting

[6] In this connection it is interesting to read the book written by B. Austin and F. Lloyd, two British engineers who went to the United States to discover this "secret." "The Secret of High Wages."

47.1% of that of the entire world, oil 7.3%, water power, 11.7%, lumber 6.7%. [7]

Along with this, its iron ore reserves constitute 19.5% of the entire world. This combination of enormous reserves of highest grade iron ores together with huge reserves of coal, and the richest reserves in the world of copper, the rich reserves of lead, zinc, aluminum, etc., created exceptionally favorable conditions for the development of industry. The vast stretches of fertile land with its varied climates and soils created favorable conditions for the development of many different kinds of agricultural crops. Almost all technical crops (with the exception of rubber), necessary for the development of industry were grown within the United States. Finally, its wealth of waterways and lakes guaranteed cheap transportation of commodities.

Franklin Lane, characterized these vast natural riches thus: "With the exception of one or two minor minerals, the United States produces every mineral that is needed in industry—and this can be said of no other country. . . We can build a battleship or an automobile (excepting tires), a railroad or a factory entirely from the products of American mines or forests. . . Our soil and climate are so varied that we can produce all grains, fruits, vegetables, fibres known to the temperate zone and many found in the semi-tropics. And to crown all this we have water-power which can be made to generate as much as 60,000,000 h.p." [8]

This extraordinary collection of natural conditions so completely overwhelms some economists and statesmen, that they are inclined to consider it the decisive factor in the supremacy of the United States. Thus, for example, Prof. J. Smith states: "The United States is a world in itself. It has great abundance and variety of natural resources and a very favorable climate. These things have made it the richest nation in the world and have enabled it to have varied industries." [9]

Sometimes, even writers who understand the significance of social-economic conditions consider the natural conditions as playing the decisive role. Thus, for instance, E. Cowdrick, bringing forth several social-economic sources, nevertheless states: "First, perhaps, in importance is the fact that the United States is a country abundantly supplied with raw material and power reserves." [10]

---

[7] W. Weitz: *Productive Power of World Economy.* Communist Academy, 1927, p. 79-84 and 207.

[8] T. Van Metre: *Economic History of the United States,* New York, 1924, page 6.

[9] Ibid, page 94.

[10] E. Cowdrick: *Industrial History of the United States.* New York, 1923, p. 37).

This point of view is shared also by some economists in the U.S.S.R. and especially by S. A. Falkner. In his book, "The United States in World Economy," he sums up his views as follows: "This rapid rate of economic development in America is conditioned basically by its vast natural resources, progressively and easily utilized. This has led to the energetic growth of productive power of the country and to the ever increasing percentage of accumulated capital." [11] As S. A. Faulkner gives hardly any explanation in his book to the social-economic conditions in the development of the United States, the role of the natural resources appears to be the decisive role.

This point of view has also found adherents among Marxists. For example, the late Joseph Ivanov in his interesting book on world economy contended that the abundance of coal reserves, iron ore reserves and other natural riches is the basic reason for transferring the center of world economy to the United States, "attracting" world economy "to the vast North American center." [12]

Is this however a truly Marxian point of view? Does it reflect the true origin of American supremacy?

First, let us recall the classical definition of the role of geographical conditions on the development of society given by Plekhanoff.

> "The characteristic of the social being is determined at every given period by the degree of development of the productive forces, because the whole social structure depends upon the degree to which these forces are developed. Thus this structure is determined in its last analysis by its peculiar geographical conditions which affords the people larger or smaller opportunities to develop their productive forces. But once certain social relationships are created, their further development is carried on *by their own internal laws*, whose acts either hasten or retard the development of the productive forces, who precondition the historical movements of mankind. *Direct* dependence of man on geographical conditions is transformed to *indirect* dependence. Geographical conditions influence man *by way of social conditions.*" [13]

If it is true that social relations may hasten or retard the development of productive powers, that geographical conditions may be influential only by way of social conditions, then it is evident that the prime reason in establishing a rate of development of productive power is not the geographical, but the social economic con-

[11] S. A. Faulkner: *United States in World Economy.* Published by "Planned Economy," Moscow, 1926, page 173.

[12] J. Ivanov: *World Economy, A Productive Unit.* V. C. A., Vol. 6

[13] Plekhanoff: *Monistic Conceptions of History*, p. 219.

ditions. Natural riches alone do not warrant the rapid economic development of a country if the social-economic conditions, to facilitate their utilization, are lacking. On the other hand, a scarcity of natural riches does not exclude the possibility of rapid development of a country if the social-economic conditions facilitate a multifarious and effective utilization of these riches. Russia and China developed very slowly, notwithstanding their vast natural riches; whereas Japan developed very rapidly since the second half of the 19th century, notwithstanding the scarcity of its natural resources. Obviously, the decisive role is played by the social-economic conditions.

The extraordinary natural riches of the United States could influence the rate of its economic development only to the extent that the social-economic conditions facilitated their exploitation. While recognizing the important role played by geographical conditions in the economic development of the United States, nevertheless, we contend that this factor cannot be the decisive factor, inasmuch as its influence depends upon the social-economic conditions.

It is therefore necessary now to examine that "social medium" in which the development of the United States took place.

2. INSIGNIFICANT AND SHORT-LIVED ELEMENTS OF FEUDALISM

Capitalism in western Europe grew out of the depths of feudalism. Its development was hindered by various obstacles growing out of this system. The struggle between capitalism and feudalism carried on during a whole historical epoch, finally culminated in bourgeois democratic revolutions. However, the bourgeoisie could not completely finish these bourgeois-democratic revolutions. In destroying the feudal system, the bourgeois revolutions did not completely eliminate all of its elements. In some form or another vital feudal elements still remained, undergoing a change under the influence of capitalism, but in its turn bringing its influence to bear upon capitalism.

One of these elements of feudalism in the epoch of capitalism is first of all, private ownership of land. "Under the capitalist form of production," says Marx, "a capitalist is not only the necessary, but the ruling agent of production. The landlord, on the other hand, under this form of production is entirely unnecessary. Under the capitalist form of production it is only necessary that the land should not be common property, that as far as the working class is concerned, it is only a means of production and does not belong to them, and this purpose may be achieved by the land becoming the property of the State, the State consequently receiving rent. The landlord, so important an agent of production in the

ancient and middle ages, has become a mere weed in the industrial world." [14]

Ownership of land resulted in high prices of land and in absolute rent. Besides, most of the capitalist countries for a long period of time preserved, and some still preserve, such direct remnants of feudalism as large royal estates, the system of working off one's rent, three-field sowing, etc. Marx and Lenin pointed out with sufficient clarity the negative influence of all these elements of feudalism on the development of capitalism. We shall not dwell on this question here.

The retention of the elements and remnants of feudalism in economy have necessitated their retention in State structure as well as in politics. For quite a long time most of the countries retained, and some still retain, such remnants of feudalism as hereditary monarchy, houses of lords, etc. Political parties of large landowners have become very active in many bourgeois countries in defending the elements of feudalism; by its influence on the State and by its politics it has hampered and hindered the development of capitalism.

The peculiarities of feudal ideology, its conservatism and its authority has therefore reflected itself in all the other superstructures of bourgeois society. While on the one hand, during the epoch of bourgeois revolution the bourgeoisie fought against feudal ideology, we see on the other hand that with the development of class contradictions the bourgeoisie is no longer interested in the continuation of this struggle. Here we see the bourgeois ideology merging with the feudal. Conservatism and authority permeates the superstructures of bourgeois society and this retards the development of the bourgeois enterprise.

Thus, the remnants of feudalism have brought various influences to bear upon the development of capitalism. In weakening the motive forces of this development, it has retarded and weakened its tempo.

The conditions of development of capitalism in the United States substantially differ in this respect from the European. In the United States feudalism as a developed system never existed. The British king's efforts in his colonization activities to artificially transplant feudalism by marking off large estates, resulted in the appearance of large estates of the feudal type in some provinces during the 17th century (Virginia, New York, etc.), but these were inconsequent and played no decisive role in the economy of the country. It was only in the South that these estates flourished, and only on the basis of the slave system.

---

[14] K. Marx: *Theory of Surplus Value*, Vol. II, Part 1.

The abundance of free land diverted the flow of immigration to such regions where it was possible to own and work the land for themselves. "Who will be such a fool as to become a base tenant when only crossing Hudson's river man can purchase a good freehold in the Jerseys for a song?", wrote one of the rulers of New York. [15]

To meet the difficulties of attracting tenants, owners of huge estates were compelled to let their land at very low rates and even to distribute sections of it free of charge in order to encourage a demand for other sections. The artificiality of creating rental relations in the face of an abundance of free land was so obvious that the lesees paid their rent very reluctantly and irregularly.

The struggle against these elements of feudalism, artificially transplanted, was one of the reasons for the revolution of 1775-81. The revolution resulted in driving the Tories out of the country, and in the confiscation and division of large feudal estates.

In the State of New York alone the value of the confiscated land equalled 3,600,000 dollars.

"Just as the French revolution of 1789 and the Russian revolution of 1917 destroyed large estates and led to a radical change in agricultural relationships in these two nations, so 1775-81 saw the change in the agrarian relationships of the 13 colonies, which was just as real, although not as spectacular. All institutions which were not in conformity with the local agrarian conditions were doomed to destruction in the process of the general development. During the course of 150 years, the Europeans had endeavored to transplant to America the feudal system of the Old World, and in most of the colonies huge estates were established. . . The driving out of the Tories did not only affect the most conservative class in the country, but made the division of large estates possible." [16]

In the years directly following the revolution all feudal laws of inheritance were outlawed by legislation. Thus, the revolution annihilated the weak elements of feudalism and drove out its adherents.

At the same time, the revolution strengthened the movement against slavery, and at the end of the 18th century a large number of the States prohibited trade in slaves. Huge estates, worked by

---

[15] K. Coman: *Industrial History of the United States.* New York, 1923, page 37.

[16] H. Faulkner: *American Economic History.* New York, 1924, p. 162-163. Chapter VIII of this book gives a characterization of the influence of the revolution on the agrarian relationships. (Retranslated from the Russian).

slaves were preserved only in the South. Here the influence of slavery in many cases was identical to the influence of feudalism. Slave economy hindered technical progress and facilitated pillage of the land. Besides, capital was invested primarily in these slave plantations, thus retarding the development of industry and ways of communication. All these factors had their influence on the low rate of development of the Southern States and caused their backwardness in comparison with the other States. The Civil War, 1861-1865, annihilated slavery, and wrecked the base for the existence of large plantations. It caused the growth of rental relations and the development of the share cropping system, as a form of peonage.

Thus, the annihilation of slavery, inasmuch as it was not accompanied by the nationalization of land and its division among the Negroes, caused the development of the same system of relationships which we find in Europe after the fall of feudalism. Therefore, Lenin in 1913, criticising the contention of Himmer that the United States had not known feudalism and was unfamiliar with its economic remnants, declared: "That the economic remnants of *slavery* in no way whatsoever differed from the economic remnants of feudalism, and that in the former, slave-owning South, these remnants are still very strong." [17]

However, the development of peonage limited itself to the former slave-owning South and has had no substantial influence on the United States as a whole. *With the exception of these local remnants, the elements of feudalism have actually not been retained.* As we shall see, private ownership of land existed only formally up until the last 30 years. Therefore, Engels could write in his letter to Sorge in 1890: "America is a purely bourgeois country without any feudal past and very proud of its purely bourgeois structure." [18]

The development of capitalism in the greater part of the United States was neither retarded nor hindered by the remnants of feudalism. Capitalism developed here in a state of pure petty-commodity economy without the interference of feudal bonds. That is why Engels, in his letter to N. challenged Struve's contention that the disastrous consequences of the late capitalism in Russia would be overcome as easily as in the United States. "Here he forgets entirely," objects Engels, "that the United States is a new bourgeois country from its very inception, that it was founded by the petty

[17] Lenin: Vol. IX, page 191 (Russian).

[18] K. Marx and F. Engels: *Letters*, ibid, page 273.

bourgeoisie and peasants escaping from European feudalism with the aim of establishing a purely bourgeois society." [19] Engels' critical note here indicates the great significance he placed upon this particular development in the United States.

3. FREE LAND AND RENT

The abundance of free fertile land and the process of acquiring ownership has influenced the economy of the United States in various ways. The acquisition of free territory continued almost during the entire history of the United States. This process was marked by the continuous movement to the West. "The continual westward movement," says G. Faulkner, "was the most important factor in the life and history of the nation." [20] Prof. Turner was even more decisive. "Up to our own day," he says "American history has been to a large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West. The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession and the advance of the American settlement westward explain American development." [21] And it has indeed placed its mark on the whole development of the United States.

The movement towards the west acquired an organized character after the revolution of 1775-81. In view of the claim of seven States to the territory lying west of the Mississippi, Congress decided, on the insistence of the other six States, to pass the right of distribution of this territory over to the central government. This marked the beginning of a policy of planned settling of the West and the institution there of private ownership of land. The extent of territory settled, can be seen from the following figures: in 1790, the United States covered a territory of 891,135 square miles, the major portion of which was unsettled; in 1803 this territory increased 827,987 square miles over this number; in 1819, 72,101 square miles; in 1845, 389,166 square miles; in 1846, 286,541; in 1848, 529,189 square miles; in 1853, 29,670 square miles. [22]

Soon after the revolution, a regulation was enforced providing for the public auction of land at the minimum price of one dollar an acre, and a small payment for the division. In 1796 the price for settlers was raised to two dollars per acre, to be paid within a period of four years. Although this figure was still within the reach of the workers, the act evoked so much dissatisfaction that

---

[19] Ibid, page 311.

[20] H. Faulkner: ibid, page 117.

[21] H. Faulkner: ibid, page 117.

[22] See Isaak Lippincott: *Economic Development of the United States.* New York, 1927, p. 165.

in 1821 the price was reduced to $1.25 per acre, but the instalment privileges were sharply curtailed.

Nevertheless, the movement for the distribution of free landholds continued to grow. Laws facilitating this, however, were not ratified, because of the opposition of the slave-owning South, which was interested in the preservation of free land for itself and expansion of slave plantations. The Homestead Act, granting free land was ratified by Lincoln only in 1862, during the Civil War, with the slave-owning South. This act granted the right to every citizen of the United States, or those declaring their intention to become such, to receive a section of land free of charge. But this land became their property only after five years of settlement upon or working of the freehold. Notwithstanding this limitation—a stipulation for the land becoming the direct possession of the farmers, the best sections of the land soon became objects of speculation. However, this act facilitated the rapid settlement of the West. The extent of this movement can be seen by the following figures:[23]

Region	1810	1830	1860
Central North East	272,324	1,470,018	6,926,884
Central North West ...	19,783	140,455	2,160,832
Central South West ...	77,618	246,127	1,747,933
Mountain	—	—	174,923
Pacific	—	—	444,053

This covers the free territory lying west of the 13 original states. Thus the above figures show that the westward movement caused a rapid growth of population in the settled regions. During the more recent period settlement was even more rapid. In 1890 there were 4,536,000 people in the territory west of the Mississippi, about one-seventh of the entire population of the United States, and in 1910 there were 27,248,000, which was one-third of the population.

In this manner, the process of taking possession of free land continued during the entire history of the United States. It is due to these conditions that the agrarian development and the whole economy of the United States differs fundamentally from the European.

In the European countries the first epoch of the development of industrial capitalism was characterized by the system of partial ownership and rental relationships. The scarcity of land and

[23] Ibid, page 160.

relative overpopulation placed the small rentee in a position of utter dependence upon the landowner so that the latter could raise the rents to the very limit. Often the peasant was left the mere physical minimum. Marx illustrates this by the example of Ireland. "Here the farmer is generally a poor peasant. What he pays in the form of rent to the landowner very often swallows not only part of his profits, i.e., of his own superfluous labor which rightly belongs to him as the owner of his tools, but also part of that normal wage which he would receive under other conditions for the same amount of labor." (Karl Marx: "Capital." Volume III, Part II). Under such circumstances the majority of commodities of peasant labor went to the parasites and were spent by them unproductively, while the possibility of developing agriculture was checked.

On the other hand, under partial ownership the prices of land rose independently of the rate of interest, stimulated by the mass demand of landless peasants; and the prices of agricultural products were very low because of the competition among the mass of small producers. All this worsened the position of the peasant and caused a halt in agricultural economy.

Further, the development of capitalism in agriculture caused the appearance and rapid growth of absolute rent. Along with this, differential rent grew as a consequence of the utilization of the poorer sections of the land. Both the absolute and the differential rent under rental relationships passed into the hands of the parasites. Thus, part of the social surplus value was spent unproductively, and the possibilities for accumulation of capital again restricted.

In the United States these factors were absent. Because of the reasons outlined above private ownership of land here was merely formal. First, in view of the abundance of free land the formalities of private ownership could not limit the flow of capital into agriculture. Second, in view of the almost complete absence of rent until the last quarter of the 19th century (excluding the former slave-owning South) landowner and cultivator were combined in one person. These conditions influenced, variously, the development of agriculture as well as the development of national economy of the United States as a whole.

First: These conditions primarily precluded the existence of absolute rent in the United States. In "Theories of Surplus Value," Marx, in regard to this says the following: "We explain the formation of absolute land rent by the opposition of the land owners, namely, that the latter in agriculture hinder the capitalist equalization of prices of commodities to prices of production. If we should

eliminate this act of the landowners, this obstacle, this specific obtacle, which the competition of capitals come up against in this region, then we would, of course, eliminate the hypothesis of land rent. . . Something similar to this is occurring in the colonies, even in face of legal landowning, inasmuch as the government distributes the land free of charge. Such was the case at the beginning with the English colonies, and even in that case, when the government actually sends landowners into the country, it sells the land, but at extremely low prices, as e.g., in the United States where about 1 dollar an acre is paid." (Karl Marx: "Theory of Surplus Value," Volume II, Part 2, Page 46. Marx makes the same contention on Page 75 and also in Part I, Page 133. Kautsky also makes note of the absence of absolute rent in his "Agrarian Problem." Translated from the Russian).

Absolute rent has as its source the difference between surplus value and the average rate of profit, brought about in agriculture because of the small organic capital. This difference in absolute rent passes into the hands of the parasite landowners and is spent unproductively. With the possibility of the free flow of capital into agriculture, this difference should be attracted into the process of the formation of the general rate of profit. The rate of profit should therefore be higher.

"Let us say," states Marx, "that in a country, for instnce like the United States, the number of competing farmers is still so insignificant, and the process of possession of the land still so formal that it is possible for everyone without the permission of the former owners or leassees of the land to place his own capital into the working of the land. Under such conditions, in the course of a sufficient length of time it is possible—with the exception of those sections which due to their situation near thickly populated cities are monopolized—it is possible that the surplus value produced by the farmers above the average value, is not realized in the price of his product, and he is compelled to divide it with his brother capitalists. . . In this case the general rate of profit would increase because wheat, etc., would, like other commodities, be sold below its value." [24]

Thus, the absence of absolute rent in the United States increased the average rate of profit, and the low prices of agricultural raw material and other agricultural products stimulated the development of industry. The low level of prices of agricultural products was still more strengthened by the fact that with the abundance

[24] Ibid, Volume II, Part I, Page 133. Emphasis ours. Marx says the same in Volume III, Page 325. (Translated from the Russian.)

of free land, the best sections of the land producing the least amount of waste were utilized first.

Besides this, as a result of the absence of rental relationships until the 19th century, differential rent was not a special form of profit for the landowners, but was the usual superprofits remaining with the producer. Thus, in contradistinction to Europe, these superprofits did not pass into the hands of the parasite class, but remained with the farmers.

All this accelerated the rate of accumulation. A higher rate of profit and the cheapness of agricultural products created the possibility for strengthening the rate of accumulation, and a number of other conditions, which we will deal with later, transformed this possibility into a necessity, into an inevitability.

This is what Karl Kautsky wrote on the subject: "How are we to explain this magic growth of capital? First of all because America has not that huge social force with which capital would have to divide its surplus value, and which would unproductively squander its share. Thanks to the vast stretches of free land in the United States until recently, it did not have high land rentals, it did not have a landowning class, which like the European feudal lords would take for themselves part of the surplus value and squander it on personal needs. (I am not taking into account the owners of Southern plantations who disappeared at the approach of the capitalist regime.) [25]

Second: In European countries high and continually rising prices of land caused large amounts of capital on the purchase of land to be expended, thus diverting this capital from application to the development of agriculture. Besides the mortgage system developed in the European countries, making payment in most cases by a tax upon the income from the land. This also caused a diversion of means away from agriculture. Until the last quarter of the 19th century none of this had taken place in the United States. The possibility of receiving sections of land either free of charge or for a very nominal charge made it possible to apply all the capital directly to agricultural production. Generally, in the United States, in contradistinction to Europe, a special parasitical layer of landowners was not created, as there the owners of the land and the cultivator were united in one person. The development of speculation in land during the second half of the 19th century caused a comparatively slight rise in the price of land for agricultural use but did not play so decisive a role in the United States as in Europe.

A steep and rapid rise in the price of land took place only in large

[25] See K. Kautsky: *American and Russian Workers, pages* 19-20.

cities and along the important railways. However, as a consequence of the peculiar development of the United States, large fortunes, accumulated by owners of city real estate, were utilized by them for the expansion of their productive undertakings, and was one of the sources of the formation of large capitals.

Third: The development of rental relationships made it difficult for the European countries to invest capital in land. The knowledge that the improvements made in the land were to pass over to the owner of the land at the end of the lease term, often hindered investment, the leasees being loath to invest if they could not make their complete turnover during the term of lease... "This," says Marx, "is one of the greatest shortcomings in the rationalization of land, because the farmer avoids any improvement and expenditure, if he cannot expect complete returns before the expiration of his lease." (Karl Marx: "Capital," Volume III, Page 2, Page 160. Translated from the Russian). On the other hand, the system of rent makes the rentee interested in the very maximum exploitation of the leased land, which hastens the exhaustion of the soil.

In the United States, the combination of the cultivator and landowner in the one person eliminated this obstacle and made it possible for the rationalization of the land. This advantage could not show any substantial influence until the second half of the 19th century, because the abundance of fertile free land encouraged the system of extensive economy. But in the second half of the 19th century, this advantage showed its favorable influence on the development of agriculture, encouraging its intensification.

Thus, the formal character of private ownership of land, in the major part of the United States, immensely influenced its development. It strengthened the rate of accumulation in the country and supplied a wide basis for cheap agricultural raw products for industry. It also supplied cheap products for the masses. It encouraged the application of capital in agricultural production and facilitated the development of rational farming.

"Here we see clearly illustrated," wrote Lenin in his book on capitalism and agriculture in the United States, "the peculiarity of the United States, already more than once noted by us, of the presence of unoccupied free land. This peculiarity...explains the extraordinary extent and rapid development of capitalism in America. The absence of private ownership of land in certain sections of this vast country I did not eliminate capitalism, but on the contrary, had broadened the base for it, hastening its development."[26]

[26] Lenin: Volume 14, page 247.

Fourth: Shortage of labor power, wages, technical progress.

The direct result of the above mentioned movement to the West, causing a constant flow away of labor, was a shortage of labor power. This was overcome only in the last quarter of the 19th century, and brought its influence to bear on the peculiarities of capitalist development of the United States. The easy acquirement of land and transformation into an independent farmer created an almost permanent scarcity of labor power on the labor market. "The wage worker of today," wrote Marx, "will tomorrow become a farmer, or artisan working on his own account. When this happens, he disappears from the labor market—but not in the workhouse. This constant transformation of the wage workers into independent producers who work for themselves instead of working for capital, and enrich themselves instead of enriching capital, has an injurious reaction on the state of the labor market." (Karl Marx: "Capital," Volume I, Page 853). Marx further cites Weakfield's statement about an Englishment who departed for New Holland, taking with him 3,000 workers and servants, but on his arrival there found himself without a single servant, because they had all deserted him. "They soon would have ceased to be laborers for hire," wrote Weakfield indignantly to Marx in 1833, "they would have become independent landowners, if not competitors with their former masters in the labor market." [27]

On the other hand, the need for labor power during the colonial period became sharpened by the necessity for clearing land and forests, laying roads, building homes, bridges, etc. With the development of agriculture and industry the need for labor power continued to sharpen. The employers tried to overcome this scarcity of labor power during the colonial period, first by hiring workers in Europe on contract and by importing slaves. The contract stipulated that the identured workers were obliged to work off the cost of their passage for several years for their employer, the latter paying for their transportation to America. Although these measures partly satisfied the needs for labor power, they did not completely relieve the situation, because at the termination of their contracts, the workers endeavored to become independent producers. Thus, these measures were far from being profitable, and the labor of slaves due to their low productivity proved to be far from profitable. Only in the South, where there was a predominance of tobacco and cotton plantations, was the labor of the slaves widely applied.

[27] Karl Marx: ibid, page 854.

Therefore the colonial authorities and the masters endeavored to overcome the shortage of labor power by other means—by means of instituting payment for land and by thus artificially placing it outside of the rich of the non-propertied classes. Weakfields's "colonization theory" exposed by Marx in the last chapter of the first volume of "Capital" was an expression and a basis of these endeavors of the masters. "According to this plan," solemnly exclaims Weakfield, "the supply of labor must be constant and regular because, first, as no laborer would be able to procure land before he had worked for money, all immigrant laborers working for a time for wages and in combination would produce capital for the employment of more laborers; secondly, because every laborer who left off working for wages and became a landowner, would, by purchasing land, provide a fund for bringing fresh labor to the colony." [28]

The fact that until 1862 the above mentioned order for the sale of free land at special fixed prices existed, partly reflected this endeavor to hinder the non-propertied strata from becoming independent labor, and thereby facilitating the supply of labor power on the market. However, the vast stretches of free land available excluded the possibility of setting high prices. The price of $1.25-$2 per acre could not be a serious obstacle in the transformation to independent labor, no doubt, however, compelling the non-propertied people to work a certain amount of time as wage workers in order to save up the necessary sum. The following curious excerpt from an official report of 1832 shows an interesting characteristic of the comparative simplicity of the process of transformation from worker to farmer even after the Act of 1831, which almost entirely eliminated the instalment plan.

"Land is now being sold in sections of 80 acres at $1.25. A good plot of 80 acres can be purchased for 100 dollars. In every State west of the Ohio River a worker may earn 75 cents a day, and if one is to consider that the cost of living will come to about 25 cents a day—this is an entirely sufficient amount in our land of abundance—then he can, by working 200 days, or about 8 months, earn enough to purchase a farm. As the number of working days in a year, considering bad weather, is not more than 200, one can confidently state, that a worker may buy himself a plot of 80 acres after having worked one year. . . . The earnings of artisans is much higher; those who work the trades such as carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers, are in great demand. People belonging to this group

[28] Karl Marx: ibid, page 857.

may earn the sum necessary for the purchase of an 80 acre plot within six months." [29]

All this, transformed the lack of labor power on the United States labor market into a chronic phenomenon (excluding, of course, the period of crisis), overcome only in the last quarter of the 19th century. The conditions of development in the United States in this respect sharply differ from the European.

In Europe capitalism developed under the conditions of the constant presence of a reserve labor army. This condition kept the wages down to a relatively low level and facilitated the production of absolute surplus value. The low level of wages and the possibility of intensified output of absolute surplus value hindered technical progress.

In the United States, on the contrary, the shortage of labor caused a rise in wages. Marx stated in the first volume of "Capital" that the extent of the usual demands deciding the value of labor power depends "also on which conditions, and consequently, what habits and standards of living were formed by the class of free workers." (Karl Marx: "Capital," Volume 1, Chapter 4, Part 3). In the United States the working class was formed under the conditions of a comparatively high level of wages and value of labor power. "In colonial countries the law of demand and supply is favorable for the workers. This explains the relatively high rate of wages in the United States." (Karl Marx: "Wages, Prices, and Profits.") Indeed, even at the close of the colonial period, in the third quarter of the 17th century wages of farm laborers averaged about 40 cents a day. Carpenters were paid about 52 cents, boat builders 90 cents, blacksmiths 70 cents. (E. Cowdrick, ibid, Page 43). Taking into consideration the low cost of living in the United States at this period, one must admit that this level of wages was relatively high.

In the 17th century efforts were made to overcome this rise of wages by establishing official rates as was done in England. These efforts however, were unsuccessful, and were soon discarded.

At the beginning of the 19th century the wages for skilled workers in the cities fluctuated from 1 to 2 dollars a day. Notwithstanding the long working day, and often the unsanitary conditions of labor, the conditions of the American workers were so much better than the European that many Europeans were enthused by the conditions of the United States workers. (See for example, excerpt from description of H. Martineau in W. Jennings book, page 303). During the 19th century the wages rose extremely high. (For de-

[29] W. Jennings: *A History of Progress in the United States.* New York, 1926, Page 234. Retranslated from the Russian.

tails on wages and prices in the first half of the 19th century see W. Jennings book, pages 302-304. For data on the movement of wages and prices in the second half of the 19th century see H. Faulkner's book, Page 605, or K. Comon, Page 306.)

The shortage of labor power and the high rate of wages were the important motive factors in the process of mechanization and automatization of production in the United States. The exceptional rapidity and the extent of this process is the most outstanding peculiarity of the economic development of the United States and the most important source of the superiority of its tempo, conditioned mainly by this factor.

It is the scarcity of labor power which causes the producer to be extremely interested in the application of new inventions and labor-saving devices. The high level of wages also stimulated this interest. Capitalists are interested only in the use of such labor-saving devices the value of which is less than the sum of wages paid to the workers replaced. Therefore, the introduction of these labor-saving machines in the United States raised no question for the capitalists as on the one hand they had to combat the relatively high wages, and on the other, the influence of these machines on lowering of the cost production was not to be disputed.

This is what the American economist, A. Low, writes on this question: "It is only where a high rate of wages prevails that machinery can be profitably employed." It has been pointed out that "in railroad building and canal work in India it is found that the low day rate of day laborers who can be hired for carrying the dirt away from the banks makes the employment of machinery unprofitable and unnecessary." In America, on the contrary, "railroad building, canal digging and other like work can be very profitably done by the use of steam shovels, excavators and similar machinery, than by an army of working men. The relationship which the use of machinery bears to the cost of labor is concisely expressed by distinguished French author: 'A manufacturer,' writes he, 'considering the purchase of a machine which will cost 2,000 pounds and displaces four laborers but which must pay for itself in ten years will not hesitate to make the purchase in a country where wages are 100 pounds per annum. The machine will effect a saving of 200 pounds per annum. A manufacturer in a country where wages are 40 pounds cannot use the machine, however, because it would cause an annual loss of 40 pounds.' This explains in a very few words why the American manufacturer so quickly disregards an obsolete machine and is always willing to substitute for it a machine that will do its work better and cheaper. A machine costing 1,000 pounds which in five years has saved 1,200

pounds in wages can be sacrificed at the end of that time without the manufacturer feeling that he is loosing money. He is not losing money. He has made money by the use of the machine, and if he can obtain something better, something that in the next five years will have pid for itself and saved 1,500 pounds in the cost of production, he will feel that he has made a good investment." [30]

Further, the rise of wages deprived the capitalists of a part of those favorable possibilities to realize surplus value resulting from the absence of absolute rent.

Also, the above mentioned conditions hindered them from taking the offensive in the production of absolute surplus value. All this drove them to a greater use of methods producing *relative* surplus value, i.e., to *hightened productivity* and *intensification of labor,* by mechanization of industry, speeding the movement of machines, rationalization of the labor process, etc. *The combination of these conditions precipitated and forced technical progress in American economy.*

The first stage of this progress was facilitated in the United States by the fact that the United States began from the stage already reached by England. Notwithstanding the efforts of England to keep the plans of its machines secret by passing laws during the period of 1765-1789, prohibiting the emigration of skilled workers, and the export of machinery or their parts, these inventions were quickly transferred to the United States by emigrants, and they were extensively used. For example, the first textile mill constructed on the Arkwright plan in the United States was built in 1789 under the direction of an English emigrant employed by Arkwright in England, who emigrated to the United States for the purpose of applying his knowledge there.

Generally, emigration from Western Europe to the United States greatly hastened its technical progress. Until the 80's of the 19th century immigrants came almost exclusively from England, Ireland, Germany and the Scandinavian countries, the majority of the immigrants were therefore quite skilled workers. Only in the '80's did emigration from Italy, Austro-Hungary and Russia increase, and in the '90's begin to surpass that of other countries. [31] Immigration from industrially developed countries *transplanted to the United States the technical accomplishments of their countries,* facilitated their wide use. Also, immigration provided the growing industry *with prepared skilled labor.* At the

[30] A. Law: *Protection in the United States.* London, 1904, pp. 68-70.

[31] See P. Leroy-Beaulieu: *The United States in the 20th Century,* pages 16-18 (translated from the Russian).

time when other countries had gone through the lengthy process of preparing a cadre of skilled labor, the United States received a great number of skilled workers from the industrial countries of Western Europe. As the average of the immigrants were largely adults, ready to work, and immediately brought into the process of social labor, American economy was saved the expenditure of bringing up and educating the greatest part of their labor power. *The percentage of independent population was relatively high, and this facilitated the hastening of the rate of accumulation.*

The fact that the United States commenced its technical progress from that stage reached by western European countries, *greatly heightened the effectiveness of capitalist expenditure and the starting point of the productivity of labor.*

However, the real origin for the rise of the United States does not lie in these *borrowed forces* but in the intensiveness and widening scope of its own technical progress.

The extreme interest of the American manufacturer in mechanical and rationalized production facilitated the broad development in the United States of individual initiative in inventions. The American manufacturer not only spent huge sums to aid the activities of special scientific inventions, and of engineers, but also in every way encouraged the development of inventions among the working people. As a consequence, a broad cadre of inventors was developed. The rapidity of the development of inventions and its extent is characterized by the following figures on the growth of the number of patents: [32]

Period	Amount
1790-1800	276
1844-1850	6,480
1850-1860	2,200
1860-1870	71,800
1890-1900	221,500

Due to such rapid technical progress, in the United States machinery was "normally" worn out much sooner than in Europe. As a result of this the American manufacturer, as in contradistinction to the European, preferred cheap machines, often quite unendurable but profitable because of their cheapness and quick amortization. At times this lowered the quality of production, but made possible quick transition to new types of machines, and a *corresponding reduction in the cost of production.*

As in contrast to the European countries, in the United States

[32] Figures taken from Faulkner, ibid, page 554.

the process of mechanization of production embraced not only industry, but also agriculture. The scarcity and high price of labor power stimulated inventions and the use of various machines to agriculture which would replace labor power, and increase the productivity of labor. Over 10,000 patents on agricultural tools and machines were granted up until 1800. The most important of these, under American conditions, were the milling, harvesting and binding machines. "With the aid of these improved agricultural machines," says E. Bogart, "the average amount of grain which could be harvested, milled and prepared for the market... by one person per day increased approximately from 4 bushels in 1830 to 50 bushels in 1880. As a result, the production of grain in the United States increased per capita population from 5.6 bushels in 1860 to 9.2 bushels in 1880. Simultaneously, the value of grain was greatly reduced for the consumer. [33]

The wide use of machinery in agriculture and the intensive development of inventions caused a qualitative superiority in many types of the American machines over those of the European. For instance, at the International Exposition in Paris, 1855, the American harvesting machine harvested an acre of oats in 21 minutes, being three times as quick as the European; the American grinder produced 740 litres an hour, while its competitor, the English grinder, produced only 410. [34]

The basic peculiarity of technical development in the United States, its extraordinary rate and scope, the stimulation of inventions, the varied mechanized processes of loading, carrying and conveying, the introduction of machinery into agriculture, the varied exploitation of its natural riches and power resources—all this is a result of the above mentioned conditions, and also the conditions of the market, an analysis of which we shall here embark upon. Electrification, i.e., the building of huge district electric stations, playing so important a role in the economic development of the United States, was a natural result of the general tendency of American economy to the mechanization of production, and to the utilization of the forces of nature. "American invention, American aptitude for labor-saving processes and machinery," wrote Henry George, "are the results of the relatively high wages that have prevailed in the United States. Had our producers been condemned to the low reward of the Egyptian fellah or the Chinese coolie, we would be drawing water by hand and transforming goods on the shoulders of men." [35]

---

[33] E. Bogard: *Economic History of the United States.* New York, 1916, pages 310-311.

[34] H. Faulkner: ibid, p. 236.

[35] Henry George: *Progress and Poverty.* Book 9, Chapter II, page 443.

The decisive influence of the scarcity and the high price of labor power on the mechanization process in the United States was noted by Marx in the last century. In 1846, in one of his letters, Marx stated that "In North America machinery was introduced to meet the competition of other countries as well as due to the scarcity of labor power, i.e., due to the inequality between the industrial demands of North America and its population." [36] In "Theories of Surplus Value," remarking that machines "were nowhere used to such a large extent as in America, where they are almost a domestic necessity," Marx states, "It is precisely America, where much more machinery is used than in England with its constant overpopulation, which proves how little the use of machinery depends upon the prices of food, but rather that it *may* depend on the relative scarcity of workers. In America, a relatively small population occupies a vast territory. In the "Nation" (9 Sept. 1862) in the article on the Exhibition we read: "Man is an animal producing machines... If we analyze the American as a representative of humanity, we derive this definition. One of the principal points in the American system is that man never does by hand what he can produce by machine. From the rocking of the cradle to the production of coffins, milking cows, felling forests, sewing on buttons, voting for president—for all these he has a machine—he has a machine for almost everything. He invented a machine to chew food! The extraordinary scarcity of labor power and its consequential high price (notwithstanding the low prices of food products—Marx) as well as his inherent interest, encouraged this inventive spirit. Generally, the price of production of machinery in America is lower than that in England... Machinery is used more as a labor-saving device rather than an invention for making the impossible possible (steamships)...One can find very little outside of machines in the American work yard." [37]

MARKET CAPACITY, PROTECTIONISM, MASS PRODUCTION

Such an extraordinary rate of technical progress was accompanied, of course, by the rapid growth of the productivity of labor and the extent of production. It is obvious that this was possible only under the conditions of a corresponding growth in the capacity of the market. The problem of the market, the problem of the realization of commodities is one of the central problems in the capitalist system of production. The contradictions between production and consumption, and the anarchy in production hinders the realization

[36] K. Marx and F. Engels: *Letters*, page 10.

[37] K. Marx: *Theories of Surplus Value*. Volume II, part 2, pp. 229-30 (translated from the Russian).

of commodities under capitalism, thus retarding the growth of capitalist economy.

In the United States, however, as a result of a number of peculiar conditions, partly outlined above, these contradictions and difficulties appeared in a weakened form. These conditions precipitated the rapid and considerable broadening distribution of the means of production, as well as the distribution of the means of consumption.

Consumption, the *basic* element of proportionality, grew more rapidly in the United States than in other capitalist countries because of the relatively high level of wages and the considerable purchasing power of the farmer.

"In America the development of industry was met by an ever growing market. This again, is explained in the main, by the presence of vast stretches of free land, as well as the nominal taxes levied on American landowners. It was only necessary to make these virgin lands accessible for work, for the population, due to its natural growth, and immigration, to rapidly increase, thus broadening the American market for industry." [38]

The considerable capacity of the *consumptive market* and its rapid growth created the base for a relative growth in the capacity of the market as a whole. It made possible the above mentioned development of technical progress, as *its consequent growth in the production of commodities of consumption in general, corresponded to the growing capacity of the market.* On the other hand, the process of mechanization and electrification of production created in its turn a growing market for the *means of production*, having its great influence on broadening the capacity of the market as a whole.

An important role in broadening the domestic market was played by the *building of railroads and canals.* The extent and rate of this construction may be judged by the following figures: in 1830 the length of railroads was 32 miles, in 1840, 2,818 miles, in 1860, 30,626 miles, in 1900, 198,964 miles. In 1914 the mileage of railroads in the United States was greater than that of all of Europe combined. The above mentioned factors caused this rapid pace of construction. This immense network broadened the market, not only because it united the economic districts, strengthened the commodity turnover between them, developed commodity economy, but also because this network created a growing market for heavy industry... "Railroads, with their great needs of various products were important consumers for industry." [39] Besides this, as

[38] K. Kautsky: *American and Russian Workers*, p. 21 (translated from Russian).

[39] K. Kautsky: ibid, page 23.

I. Lippincott correctly points out, "in widening the market they laid the way for the development of intensive competition, which in its turn became a powerful stimulant for the introduction of new methods and for the improvement of organized forms of economy. The railroads also facilitated the placing of production in the most favorable places." [40]

Especially significant in the development of the domestic market was the fact that this vast territory of the United States with her rapidly growing population had no *internal boundaries or obstacles* in the development of its commodity turnover. "Continental United States," says Cowdrick, "is the largest continuous area in the civilized world, in which trade is free and unrestricted. This domestic market, available for the manufacturer, is not only large geographically, but it is rich in its ability to purchase goods." [41] The German Prof. U. Girsh in his impressions of the United States, ardently exclams: "Here there are no customs for a distance of several hours ride, no passports, no political difficulties, which we have in "balkanized" Europe." [42] And indeed, if one were to compare the development of Western Europe during its history in this regard with the United States, the immense significcance of the economic and political unity of this vast country in its economc growth becomes obvious.

Having no internal borders, the United States was simultaneously surrounded by a high wall of custom tariffs, protecting its internal market from the competition of other countries. *The reign of protectionism in the foreign trade policy of the United States for a period of many years of its history, is one of the peculiarities of its economic development. The prolonged reign of protectionism could not halt the technical progress of United States because of the above mentioned conditions which quickened technical progress. Therefore, protectionism in the United States could play a positive role, widening its internal market for the products of American industry.* This role of protectionism is even overestimated by American economists. This, for instance, is how A. Law concludes his analysis of protectionism: "Every time the United States has departed from its traditional policy of Protection, disaster has followed in its train. Every time the United States abandons Free Trade and reverts to Protection, the forge is relit, the silent loom pulses with new activity, the languid lather becomes infused with a new life, the farmer no less than the artisan is prosperous;

[40] I. Iippincott: ibid, page 470.

[41] E. Cowdrick: ibid, page 240.

[42] V. Girsh: *Accomplishments in the Organization of American Economy*, p. 14, 1926 (translated from the Russian).

work is plentiful and wages are high. These are the substantial reasons to convince the protectionist that Protection is the proper policy for the American people." [43] Here Law clearly overestimates the role of protectionism, subscribing to it such inherent influence. *It is very obvious that its prolonged existence in the United States had a positive effect only because of the specific social economic conditions reigning there.*

While with protectionism hindering the penetration of foreign goods into its domestic market, the United States greatly *utilized foreign trade for the export of its agricultural products. Due to the absence of absolute rent and because of the high productivity of agricultural labor the prices of agricultural products in the United States were lower than those of Europe. As a result of this, agricultural products from the United States competed favorably with European commodities. Thus, agriculture had not only a wide domestic market, but a considerable external market.*

A favorable influence on the domestic market was also *the relatively low rate of taxes.* As on the one hand the United States *received quite a large income from the custom tariff and the sale of free land, and on the other hand, until the last quarter of the 19th century its military expenditure was quite insignificant, the American citizen did not have the burden of the heavy taxes of the European..* "The United States was in the favorable position of remaining outside of European politics, which guaranteed it from foreign attack and freed it from the necessity of huge military expenditures. Its fleet, as well as its army, were extremely small... Therefore it is not to be wondered at that in the United States, free from these terrible tax burdens (land rent and military expenditures), capital accumulates much more rapidly than in Europe." [44]

Finally, at certain times, the growing domestic market was also influenced by the development in the United States of a specific system encouraging demand, and *in particular the sale of goods on instalment.* Its wide development was possible due to the relatively *high wage level* and relatively high income of the farmers, and also the *relatively high purchasing power.*

All these factors warranted the broad capacity of the domestic market, which swallowed up the rapidly increasing production of the nation. *This capacity of the internal market caused the necessity and possibility of mass production.* Therefore, in the United States the idea of *standardization* of industry and *specialization* of production was evoked early and found wide application. The

[43] A. Law: ibid, page 163.

[44] K. Kautsky: *American and Russian Workers*, pages 20-21.

scarcity of labor power also had its influence on the development of standardization and the mechanization of industry. "The scarcity of labor power in America," says Faulkner, "also facilitated the early development in standardization of machinery and its parts. It was possible to quickly reproduce complex mechanisms in large quantities by the production of each part separately and then assembling them. This makes it possible to change parts and reduces the expense of the use of machinery." [45]

As the standardization of production and its specialization substantially reduce the costs of production and make the reduction of prices possible, it in its turn developes the domestic market. On the other hand, by increasing the profit of the producer, it hastens the accumulation of capital.

6. ROLE OF THE SUPERSTRUCTURES

In the foregoing sections of this article we endeavored to explain the social economic factors conditioning the supremacy of the American tempo over the European. On the basis of these conditions, a parallel series of superstructures grew up in the U. S. Developing on the foundation of the economic basis, the superstructures acquire, as is known, relative independence, independent movements, having a contrary effect on the economic foundation. "Political, legal, philosophical, religious, literary and artistic development," wrote Engels in 1894 in one of his letters, "is based on the economic, but they all influence each other and also the economic base. It is not at all a case of the economic condition being the only active factor, and all the others being only passive factors." [46]

In another letter in 1890 on the subject of the influence of government on the economic development, Engels explains the relationship between the basis and the superstructure more clearly. "The contrary action of the government powers on the economic development may be of a triple kind. It can act in the same direction, and then it hastens the action." [47] Thus, in those cases when the superstructures act in the same direction as the base, their effect should be to hasten the process of economic development.

The process of the formation of superstructures in the U. S. took place on the base of the above mentioned social economic conditions, creating in the U. S. a peculiar system of superstructures, playing an important role in the hastening of the rate of economic development, inasmuch as they acted in the same direction as the base.

[45] H. Faulkner: ibid, page 553.
[46] K. Marx and F. Engels: *Letters*, page 315.
[47] K. Marx and F. Engels: *Letters*, page 283.

Primarily, a tremendous role was played by the fact that elements immigrated to the U. S. who were the pioneers of the bourgeois form of production, and carriers of the bourgeois ideology. ". . . The U. S. is a new bourgeois country in its very beginning . . . it was founded by petty bourgeoisie and peasants escaping from European feudalism, with the aim of establishing a purely bourgeois society." [48] This condition caused the blooming of a relatively pure bourgeois ideology in the United States.

The political structure of the U. S. in its government institutions were therefore clearly bourgeois. In contrast to European government institutions, the policy and activities of which often reflected the interests and ideology of the feudal-royal strata of the population and thus hindered the development of productive forces, the government power in the U. S. carried through a clearly expressed bourgeois policy, thus accelerating the development of the capitalist system of economy.

On the other hand, the stormy process of colonization of the country and taking possession of its riches, was inducive to developing enterprise, initiative and flexibility of the people. It was necessary to mechanize, electrify and standardize production, thus encouraging inventiveness and the aptness for technical and organizational efficiency. These qualities of the American people, playing so important a role in the acceleration of the rate of economic progress in the United States is a result of those economic sources from which it developed. "The character of the American," says I. Lippincott, "creates a favorable atmosphere for the growth of industry, and one of its manifestations is the readiness with which he accepts new ideas, and the other the ease with which they are influenced by new requirements. The people of this country have shown the greatest readiness to reject old methods of production when better methods have been discovered; i. e. the traditions of the past played a very minor role." [49]

We must point out here, however, that this "readiness" to accept new ideas was actually very one-sided. They were ready to accept new technical-organizational forms of production, but as far as social-political achievements went, the overwhelming majority of Americans were completely unprepared for new ideas on this score, because of the maximum development of bourgeois forms and the reign of bourgeois ideology in the United States.

Bourgeois authors, praising the personal qualities of the Americans, do not always understand the dependence of these qualities on the objective social-economic conditions. For instance, G. Rob-

[48] K. Marx and F. Engels: *Letters*, page 311.
[49] I. Lippincott: ibid, page 471.

erts contended at a meeting of the American Economic Association: "The development in the United States is new proof that the main factor in the industrial development of a country is the intellectual and moral standard of the people. High productive ability lies in the hands of the most energetic, the most adaptable, the most alert-minded — those who instead of being tied down by routine and tradition are continuously going forward, imbued with new initiative." [50]

It is obvious that here the effect has been mistaken for a cause. This quality of the Americans undoubtedly played its role, but it did so precisely because it arose upon a corresponding economic basis, and *acted towards the same direction, thus accelerating its development.* Therefore, Mr. Faulkner is correct, for instance, when he says that the shortage in labor power is "perhaps a partial explanation of the American philosophy of the glorification of labor, and its puritanical intolerance of laziness, so evident in many of the colonial laws." [51]

It is precisely in the social-economic conditions wherein lie the sources of the peculiarities of the American character and American ideology.

These conditions in part, have reflected themselves in the American educational system and training, determining to a great extent the economic development of the U. S. The basic feature of this system is the early and broad development in the U. S. of a net of educational institutions: the broad development of special, and in particular, agricultural education, close contact of the educational system with the needs of production; courses for the development in children of adaptabilities, will power, agility — all this is dealt with in the article on the social economic environment. The multifarious mechanization and electrification of production demanded corps of cultural and technically educated workers. Also, the social-political structure, growing out of above-mentioned social economic base, demanded the education of the wide masses in bourgeois culture and their subservance to bourgeois ideology. This caused the capitalists and the government institutions to be generous in the expenditure for national education.

All these conditions explain why in the U. S. bourgeois ideology prevailed among the people and relatively speaking, established it-

[50] Quotation from pamphlet by I. Ozeroff: *America Threatens Europe.* 1903, p. 66. In this booklet, Ozeroff very enthusiastically sang the praises of the Americans, being unable, however, to understand and explain the social-economic roots of their qualities. He showed this same superficiality in his re-edited edition of this book, published in 1908, under the promising title of "What Does America Teach Us?"

[51] H. Faulkner: ibid, page 72.

self. The *influence of the bourgeois ideology upon certain sections of the working mass,* Engels in his letter to Sorg in 1890 characterized as following: ". . . They are still very conservative and only the experiences of life will free them from the old traditional superstitions: they are so conservative because America is a purely bourgeois country without any feudal past, and they are very proud of their purely bourgeois structure." [52] Bourgeois influence on the proletariat, strengthening the conservative elements therein, was in its turn one of the factors aiding American capitalism, because it reduced the fighting spirit of the proletariat and facilitated for the capitalists the production of relative surplus value.

And so, we have arrived at the conclusion that the origin of the supremacy of the U. S. lies in those peculiar social economic conditions, in those specific "social circumstances" in which the development of capitalism took place in the U. S. Only under these social economic conditions could the natural riches of the U. S. and its geographical position manifest themselves and influence the economic development of the U. S.

The prolonged reign of these conditions in the U. S. and on the basis of this, the tremendous development of the productive powers and the corresponding superstructures created the *vast reserve power of American capitalism.* Its reserve power is so great that during the course of the last thirty years it played a decisive role in weakening the growing contradictions, obstacles and disproportions.

The last thirty years has been a period of continuous extinction of the social economic conditions, causing the supremacy of the U. S. Characterization of the process of this extinction is beyond the limits of this article. The following is evident however. The gradual disappearance of the sources of supremacy of the U. S. must lead to the gradual *weakening of the rate of development of the U. S. Although the reserve powers of American capitalism delay the development of this process, nevertheless, the slowing down of the rate of development of the U. S. beginning with the 90's, shows that the monopolist stage of capitalism creates a tendency to stagnation in the U. S. also.*

If, therefore, even in the U. S. the sharpening of contradictions evokes a slackening in the rate of development, then in Europe this tendency must naturally manifest itself even more sharply. The efforts of the European capitalists to find a way out of their difficulties by imitating the American principles of economic construction under the conditions of western Europe can hardly lead to any solution. The American principles of economic construction

---

[52] K. Marx and F. Engels: *Letters,* page 273.

developed in the U. S. due to definite social economic conditions, and only under these conditions was their application economically effective. The application of these principles to the western European countries is therefore not always economically beneficial for the capitalists.

We will examine, for instance, the "basic principles of industrial organization," formulated by two prominent English engineers after having studied twenty-four foremost American institutions.

"(a) The success of an enterprise is in a large measure dependent upon a strict adherence to the policy of promotions by merit and ability only.

(b) It is more advantageous to increase total profits by reducing the price to the consumer, at the same time maintaining or improving the quality, with a consequent increase in the volume of sales, than by attempting to maintain or raise prices.

(c) Rapidity of turnover makes for comparatively small requirements of both the founded and working capital, i. e. the capital required for shop space (including equipment) and the financing of work in progress.

(d) The productive capacity per capita of labor can be increased without limit depending upon the progress made in time and trouble saving appliances.

(e) It is better that labor should be rewarded by wages bearing some relation to the output, rather than by a fixed wage; the amount of the wage being earned by any one man being in no way limited. Contrary to the general belief in Europe, high wages do not necessarily mean a high level of prices. It is to the advantage of the community that the policy of industrial management should be directed to raising wages and reducing prices.

(f) A free exchange of ideas between competing firms should be advocated.

(g) Elimination of waste is an essential factor in the achievement of national prosperity.

(h) It is important that every possible attention be paid to the welfare of the employees.

(i) Research and experimental work are of prime importance to progress." [53]

[53] B. Austin & F. Lloyd: ibid.

It is entirely obvious that high wages, reduced prices, rapid turnover of capital, consideration of the living conditions of the workers, etc. would be profitable and possible in the foremost institutions of the United States only due to the vast capacity of the domestic market, rationalized, standardized and mass production, intensification of labor, etc. Insofar as the conditions of western Europe differ substantially even from the contemporary conditions of the United States, the application of these principles there would not be feasible.

Only the system of economy in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, the transition from capitalism to socialism, enables the broadest utilization of American progressive principles of organization and industry. The economic system of the U. S. S. R. has many advantages over the capitalist system of economy. Therefore, by utilizing these advantages, the rate of development of the U. S. S. R. will exceed by far not only the European, but also the American. [54]

---

[54] See Problems of the Rate of Development in the U. S. S. R. in the "Bolshevik" 1927 No. 23-24. The present article is one of the chapters of the work we are preparing on the Problems of the Rate of Development of the U. S. S. R., a brief summary of which is given in Nos. 23-24 of the Bolshevik.

The New "Left" Social-Fascism

By SI GERSON

THE Communist International in its historic Address to the Communist Party of the United States pointed out that

> ". . . the United States with unprecedented speed is showing the inexorable laws of capitalist development."

The economic crisis, the mass unemployment, wage cuts and frenzy of rationalization bore out this statement to the hilt. The consequent radicalization and resistance of the workers to the pressure of these "inexorable laws" was further indicated by the Comintern. Finally, it was pointed out, certain developments would take place in American reformism—the A. F. of L. and the Socialist Party. These developments would be in the direction of fascism. This estimate has been proven by countless facts in the past year. The A. F. of L. leadership in practice and in theory has become quite thoroughly labor fascist. It has worked—and is working—with the object in view of tying the trade unions firmly to the chariot of imperialism, taking away any class functions that inherently belong to the trade union, and integrating the unions into the official apparatus of the government, operating only through official sanction and compulsion. The perspective of the A. F. of L. top leadership is quite openly that of fascist trade unionism—they are the rationalization agents of the bosses, strikes will be a matter of the past, "arbitration" will be compulsory, the class struggle unions will be outlawed and viciously persecuted and the A. F. of L. leadership will officially take part in government alongside of the bosses, herding the workers into the rationalization pens and the shambles of the next imperialist war.

At the same time, under presure of the crisis and the developing radicalization of the workers, there would arise—the C. I. pointed out—"left" social-reformism. Such did arise, led by the "socialist" Reverend Muste. This opposition, which we call social-fascist (radical or socialist in words; *fascist in fact*) aped to a fine degree the program of the Trade Union Unity League (then the TUEL), the center of revolutionary trade unionism in the United States.

This opposition was correctly compared to the fake "left" opposition of Cook in England — also a militant in words but a shameful betrayer in deeds. The fight against the Muste wing

was — and is correctly placed in the foreground, since it is the most deceptive and treacherous of the enemies of the workers, invariably using militant phrases and the best-veiled betrayals.

Further confirmation of the correctness of the estimate of the Comintern has come with express-train speed and an almost premeditated clarity. *This phenomenon is nothing less than the appearance of an organized "left wing" in the Socialist Party*, obviously one that is in an advanced stage in the process of crystalization, with a program and theoreticians of its own.

Its strength is shown by the fact that its statement is printed in the *New Leader*, official organ of the S. P., of April 19th. Significantly enough, this statement comes after the events of March 6th and before the Seventh National Convention of our Party which will be the first really politically unified convention of our Party, one that will undoubtedly register great advances and ruthlessly examine the shortcomings of our Party in order to progress further along the highway of leadership of the majority of the working class. This statement, further, comes at a time when the capitalist class, fully alarmed to the menace that the Communist Party is to its huge profits, is taking steps of a desperate kind against the Communist Party and the militant workers.

It is the political entrance bow of a crafty social-fascism, one that comes with struggle phrases to the workers. Although this is not a complete program and cannot be criticized as such, it nevertheless gives the line of a program. This statement must be carefully studied and analyzed, if we are to conduct a genuine struggle against this fake "left" which isued it and whose line it is. It is not sufficient to dismiss it merely with the phrase "left" social-fascism—a part of which it undoubtedly is. We must seek its roots, its similarities to international "left" social-fascism and its peculiarly American characteristics.

The fact that this statement is not official, and comes from a minority grouping in the S. P. is obvious from the statement in the introduction:

> ". . . a number of active members of the Socialist Party have met *informally* to discuss the party situation." (our emphasis—S. G.)

This little sentence proves what the statement of principles itself indicates, namely:

1. That the development of the class struggle in America has had its effect on social-reformism (social-fascism) in America, creating in its ranks a division of opinion as to the best methods of betrayal of the interests of the workers; and that

2. There are in the S. P. a few tendencies, the largest unofficial one being the so-called "left" and that

3. The coming convention of the S. P. will undoubtedly see some fake struggle between the Cahan "right" and the Stanley-Muste "left."

THE STATEMENT

The most startling thing and the fundamental characteristic of the statement is the attempt at a new orientation of the Socialist Party. In direct contradiction to the decision of the last convention of the S. P. which struck out the words "class struggle" from its application as a final symbol of its orientation on the petty-bourgeoisie, its total surrender to capitalism, this "left" wants the S. P. to go back (in words, of course, it must always be remembered) to the class struggle. After some vague and abstract criticism of the "liberal" line of the S. P.—made in typical social democratic fashion, glossing things over, mentioning no names, etc., the statement says:

> "the Socialist Party has come to minimize the importance of the class struggle and the abolition of capitalism as a central issue in the fight for Socialism."

The age of miracles indeed! Truly Moses has come to lead the chosen tribes out of the land of the cruel Pharaohs! Logically following from the premise that the S. P. must fight for "the abolition of capitalism" is that the S. P. must fight for the workers. For, the statement says:

> ". . . the workingclass to whom our fundamental appeal should be made has been woefully neglected."

This is not only a criticism of the S. P. leadership for its too frank orientation on the petty-bourgeoisie but by implication admits that the Communist Party is the leader of the struggling masses —a condition which must never, never be permitted if capitalism is to exist!

The S. P. then must orientate itself on the workers. Such unusual phrases for the S. P. as "Face Towards the Workers" (which, incidentally, like most of the wording of the document is thinly-veiled plagerism of Communist literature) are the slogans. The statement says categorically, as if warning the S. P., that the Communists will capture the leadership of the majority of the working class "ef ye don't watch out," that:

> ". . . the Socialist Party must keep its face turned towards the working class. As the Party of the workingclass the Socialist party

> should assert its moral leadership of the workers and be active in every phase of the workers' struggles, in an aggressive and militant manner."

This left wing of social fascism makes no bones about it. If the workers are to be kept from following the Communist Party, the S. P. must put up a working class front.

> ". . . Party members must be encouraged to help organize the unorganized."

And to further emphasize the point that vote-catching is not enough and not basic, the statement declares further:

> ". . . the attempt to confine Socialist activities to the political field alone must be combatted. The field of Socialism is much broader and includes the political, the economic, and cultural activities of the workers."

Our heroes of the "left" go on to elaborate their line with a dangerous demagogy. The policy in the trade unions must be examined and given a new coat of "left" social-fascist, 1930 varnish. The S. P. must by all means pretend to be in opposition to the openly fascist A. F. of L. leadership. Such open cooperation as the Socialist leaders of the United Hebrew Trades and the I. L. G. W. U. have given the A. F. of L. leadership and Tammany Hall is bad tactics. The workers will see the real face of social-fascism too easily. This is to be "deplored." The "Forwards," socialist organ of the strike-breaking yellow bureaucracy of the fascisized ILGWU and the IFWU and weapon of the Jewish manufacturers is mildly criticized.

> "We urge that the Forwards adopt a definite and progressive labor attitude which will include criticism of present reactionary A. F. of L. policies, not only as to political action but on such matters as Lewisism, the National Civic Federation tendency and no strike policy in the South, and that editorially it call for more aggressive policies on the part of organized labor."

(So! And we always naively thought the "Forward" was "progressive"—nay, even radical! Is it not controlled by the Socialist Party?)

Political campaigns—municipal campaigns—must be run, not in order to secure some reforms, say these knights of the "left." No!

> ". . . a municipal campaign must be conducted so as to emphasize the class character of municipal politics. Reform measures must be placed against the background of the class struggle."

Neither does the "left" fail to pay its respect to the youth.

> ". . . the Socialist party must give unstinted support to the Young People's Socialist League. Serious educational work must be carried on. Steps should be taken towards establishing a separate youth publication." (This last comes significantly enough at a time when our Young Communist League has established a Weekly Young Worker.)

And, of course, for the 13,000,000 doubly oppressed Negroes in the United States it has a word. Finally, it winds up with some suggestions on work in the cooperatives, building the Socialist Party press, etc., etc.

CRITICISM OF THE PROGRAM

Space does not permit a detailed analysis of the statement in all its points. We must content ourselves here with an analysis of the social-political roots of this "left" tendency in the S. P. Why did a "left wing" arise in the S. P. at *the present historical moment?* Why does it imitate so sedulously the methodology and line of the Communist movement, if even in a distorted fashion? Why does it make such heavy literary loans from Communist literature and phraseology?

Precisely because at this historical moment the moribund capitalist world finds itself in an economic crisis; because American capitalism, far from being exempt from the "inexorable laws" of capitalism, is also a victim of this crisis; because this crisis, the mass unemployment which is its inevitable consequence, the bitter rationalization by which capitalists tried to solve this crisis — and which further accelerates it — the deep agrarian crisis — all are drawing the masses further leftward, causing a deep radicalization and bringing about sharp class struggles—and bringing thousands upon thousands of workers under the leadership of the Communist Party and into active struggle against the capitalists and the capitalist State, despite the efforts of the fascist A. F. of L. leadership and the social-fascist S. P.

Precisely because of these facts, capitalism needs new methods of braking the activity of the workers. The Social Fascism of Oneal and Abe Cahan is too degenerate, too easily seen through. Social Fascism must be given a "left" mask, just as the A. F. of L. must have Muste as its left disguise. That is why this "left" has developed. It is by no means an accident that it arises at this moment. Even the statement admits this. During the period of relative prosperity in the U. S. this "left" showed itself nowheres but joined in singing the praises of the "New Capitalism." (It is

no wonder then that Lovestone, always a keen admirer of this self-same "New Capitalism," could address united front letters to the S. P.!) The statement says:

> "The philosophy of the "New Capitalism" emphasizing certain self-adjusting features of our present day industrial order, such as are involved in the theory of high wages as a cure for the evils of the wage system, *muddled our thinking*." (emphasis mine—S. G.)

Oh yes, gentlemen! Yesterday, when capitalism was apparently a buxom maiden, you wooed her! Today you have already discovered her wrinkles! Yesterday you could not see the class struggle. Today, under the pressure of the economic crisis and the radicalization of the masses you "see" the struggle. Your thinking is no longer "muddled." Today you have become clear thinking indeed—and better servants of the capitalist class, of course!

More convincing evidence than their own above-quoted statement that the birth of this "left wing" of social-fascism is no accident, but a result of the present economic and political situation in the United States cannot be cited. Clearer proof of the fact that the United States is subject to the economic—and hence, political —laws of capitalism could not be advanced and clearer confirmation of the correctness of the line of the Comintern is likewise hard to find.

THE CONTENT OF THE STATEMENT

It is necessary to touch briefly on some of its content.

What strikes one firstly is the total lack of even an effort to analyze the international economic and political situation. Absolutely no analysis is made of the present economic situation inside the country, monopoly capital and imperialism. This in itself should put the document into the theoretical rubbish pile .It shows how much below the theoretical level of European social-fascism, the American variety is. This absence of even a fraudulent note of internationalism is obviously studied. It opens the door wide for all sorts of chauvinism. These "left" social-fascists want to be "practical," want an American "left" socialism, much in the same manner as Lovestone, Gitlow, Thalheimer and Company do not want to be "dominated by the Russian Party."

No mention, of course, is made of American imperialism. The colonial peoples, this "left," with typical imperialist contempt, ignores Haiti, and Nicaragua—pooh! The S. P. must talk of "the abolition of capitalism!"

The war danger finds the "left" equally silent. Not a word on the accumulating contradictions, the danger of an attack on the

Soviet Union or war between England and the U. S. A discreet servant, this "left!"

On the Soviet Union—a significant silence. Not even the customary word on recognition.

The trade union program is obviously the same as Muste's—of whom this "left" is only the "political" side. Loyal opposition to the A. F. of L.—not the building of revolutionary unions, to fight capitalist rationalization and to mobilize the masses for struggle against capitalism. On class collaboration—diplomatic evasion. Ditto on the sell-outs in Elizabethton and Marion and other places where the Musteites have had leadership.

Their program on the youth shows the typical crass social democratic attitude. This "left" does not talk of the working youth as a doubly exploited section of the working class, suffering fearfully from capitalist rationalization. It talks of "educational work among the youth"—not of organization of the young workers for struggle, not of the special problems of the youth. This left wants its "young people" in quiet educational circles, where any militancy can be stifled. Of the youth and capitalist militarism and the historic struggles of the youth international before the war against capitalist militarism—only the silence of the tomb.

For the Negroes "a sympathetic (?!) committee to work out a thorough plan of action." Not a syllable on the Negroes as a doubly oppressed section of the toiling masses. Nothing here concerning the damnable Jim-Crow system, lynch law, segregation, etc.

Finally, last, but not least, not a word is said about the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Not a word about Marx's teaching on the nature of the State. We can only conclude that the "left" will overthrow capitalism via the ballot box.

Point after point can be enumerated. But further proof is unnecessary. It can easily be seen, upon any kind of close analysis, that this "left" is blood and bone of the social-fascists, that they are fundamentally the same as their brethren of the right—Cahan, Oneal, etc. The only difference is that this group prefers to wear a "left" mask—and is hence more dangerous—and the other does not. Basically these gentlemen are the same as the Maxtons in England and the "Leipsiger Volkszeitung" group in Germany. All are results of basically the same fundamental social processes. What is peculiarly American here is their relatively low theoretical level and their lateness in arriving into the political arena (approximately coinciding with the lateness of the arrival of the American economic crisis.)

OUR PARTY AND THE "LEFT" SOCIAL FASCISTS.

For our Party this "left" variety of social-fascism is by no means unexpected. It could easily be foreseen, not only on the basis of logical inferences from the operations of the general laws of capitalism in this period, but also from the concrete signs in the American labor movement. The activities of the Musteites in the trade unions, the open appearance of socialists like Germer (Illinois) in the so-called progressive movement, the clamorings for a real Labor Party—all these were straws showing which way the political winds were blowing.

Our Party faces a great enemy in this "left" variety of social-fascism, an enemy which, altho not very powerful today, is potentially a danger by virtue of the fact that it in many ways copies the Communist Party, uses militant phrases, and avowedly concentrates on the workers. Furthermore, its organic connection with the Musteites, of whom it is the political arm, makes it still more dangerous. Let us not fool ourselves. Take for example some mining towns in Southern Illinois where the Musteites have some foothold. This "left" could certainly grow politically for a period—unless we were on the job, to expose systematically their sham phrases on the political field as well as their betrayal policy in economic struggles—and lead the workers ourselves into battle.

A prerequisite for a real struggle against the "left" is a ruthless struggle against the Right opportunists, the conciliators, the left phrase mongers in our own ranks. Especially must the Party guard against and ruthlessly combat opportunist errors in practice—notably in the trade union field. It can easily be seen that where Communists make opportunist errors (Southern Illinois, Needle Trades), there a fertile field is left for the "left" social-fascists, for in those circumstances the masses will see little difference between our militant phrases and opportunist practices and the militant phrases and opportunist practices of the "left" gentlemen of the S. P. who know quite well how to distort and utilize demagogically our errors.

A second pre-requisite in the struggle against this newly-born "left" is a genuine understanding of its true character on the part of the Party membership.

The line of the struggle against this "left" cannot be merely that of agitation. While a systematic and accurate exposure of the true nature of this "left" brand of social-fascism must be a constant feature in all our various organs, leaflets, speeches, etc., nevertheless we will not defeat them in this way alone. It must be emphasized again and again—*only the persistent application of a revolutionary line in all phases of our work will defeat the "left."* It is precisely where our Parties have deviated mostly to the right (Gt.

Britain, etc.) that left social-fascism flourishes most luxuriously and always at the expense of our Party and the working-class.

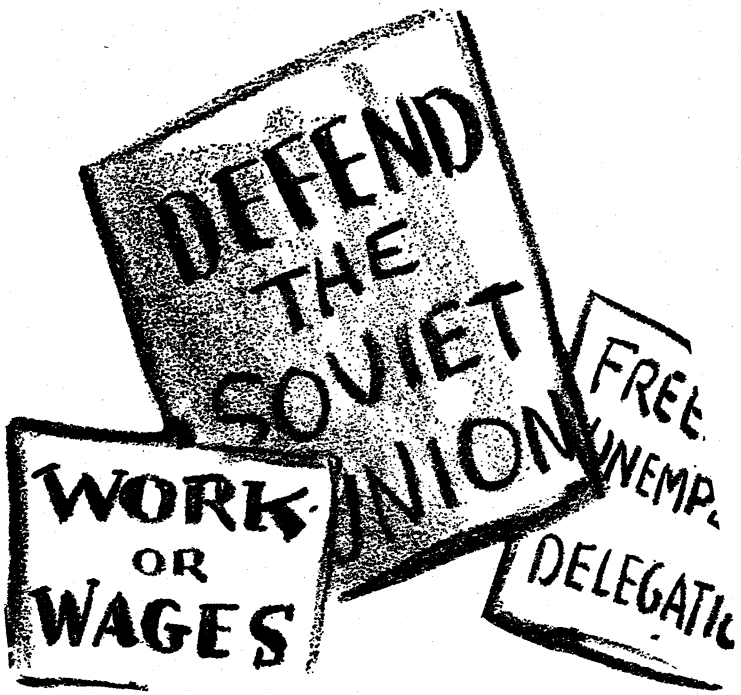
A word of warning must be uttered here. There may be some comrades who reckon that simply because the correlation of forces in the S. P. *at present* is possibly such that the "left" cannot hope to gain control, that therefore the danger from them does not exist.* This is a fatal attitude and will result in throwing our Party off its guard. Whether or not the Oneal-Forward clique has organizational control over the S. P. or the Stanley-Muste forces win out is not the point. The main point is that these "lefts" will come to the masses with their phrases, irrespective of whether or not they have control of the S. P. (tho that would facilitate their work greatly) and do their level best to divert the radicalization of the masses into reformist social-fascist channels. And especially so as the struggle sharpens.

One further point in connection with the new American "left" social-fascism. As is well known, every new political phenomenon of any importance is an acid by which political attitudes and tendencies may be determined. It will be interesting to note the attitude the Lovestonites and the American Trotskyites will take towards these gentlemen of the S. P. "left." By what political slight-of-hand will Lovestone and Cannon explain their refusal (if they do refuse!) to have anything to do on the political field with people with whom they cooperate on the economic field (cooperate to fight the militant workers). How will Ben Gitlow explain any reluctance to cooperate politically with these gentlemen of the "left"? How—except by desire to hold the few remaining followers? The powerful logic of politics will not be avoided for very long. It will drive him to these people, precisely as some of his brothers of the Right in Germany have already gone over to the German social democracy.

Finally, to draw a general conclusion in summary. The appearance of the "left" variety of social-fascism on the political scene is only further proof of the operation of the inexorable economic and political laws of capitalist development, to which the U. S., like all other capitalist countries, is subject. Only the most determined

* Since this was written the *N. Y. Times* carried the story that seven New York locals of the S.P. have endorsed this "left" program, which only proves our contention that this "left" movement is in quite an advanced stage of organization. Also it is worthy of note that the *N. Y. Times* gives this fact prominence. Capitalism is ever on the alert for promising young movements to enter its service. At their recent New York City convention of the S. P. this "left" crystalized around the basis of the program discussed above and was defeated by only a narrow majority.

struggle of the Communist Party on a correct line in all phases of work can defeat these most dangerous social-fascists and lead the *workers to victory over capitalism.*



Lessons of the American Revolution

By DAVID GORDON

THE American Revolution, no less than revolutions before and after it, required a determined, well-disciplined and class conscious vanguard organization in order to realize a victorious result. The development of those organizations which represented the interests of the colonial merchants as against those of the English capitalists, offers a lesson of extreme importance to the revolutionary movement of today. Many present day attacks against the proletarian revolutionary movement by bourgeois professors are answered by the actions of the middle-class ancestors of "our" bourgeois Americans.

The revolutionary movement of today, led by the Communist Party, finds itself in several situations which are analagous to those in which the colonial bourgeois revolutionary movement was in before the revolution of 1776. In its struggle for emancipation from England, middle-class America raised the very important slogans of freedom and the rights of man. However abstract these terms were—and are—their effect on the people as a whole was tremendous. Upon the defeat of England and the ascension of bourgeois rule, the freedom set forth in the Declaration of Independence, applicable to the revolutionary movement in its period of violent action, were modified for the requirements of the ruling class, wielding its power without the interfering hand of England, by the Constitution and federal and state laws.

In the effort to make the freedom of life, liberty, the press, speech and the pursuit of happiness appear as freedom for all, the capitalist class created a self-devastating contradiction. Since the new government was of a class nature, a capitalist minority exploiting a working majority, opposition to it was met with all along the line. Even a school-child could suggest some means that a proletarian party might use in order to spread its views.

Among such methods we would list the formation of a well-knit and disciplined mass organization, the creation of fraternal and sympathetic organizations, the issuance of agitational broadsides, the conduction of public indoor and outdoor meetings, the day to day agitation and propaganda by organizing members of workers wherever they assemble and the establishment of a press.

At first, the bourgeoisie would use openly ruthless methods against the militant workers primarily when it would most hurt the repute of their much-heralded freedom. As soon, however, as the proletariat becomes a significant menace to its exploitative rule, capitalism defines freedom in brutal, sharp class terms. It then tries to discredit the revolutionary movement in the eyes of the masses by saying that revolutionary activity leads to the destruction of freedom. The militant movement retaliates with greater and growing effectiveness that freedom and justice are enjoyed by a handful of exploiters who attempt by all violent means and with hypocritical talk to stem the tide of the growing demand of workers for decent living conditions.

The continued attacks on the revolutionary movement—armed bands sent to murder strikers and strike leaders, the arrest and deportation of militant workers, etc., etc.,—makes it necessary for it to create extra-legal organizations, defying the law, to carry on the work and prevent a useless wholesale arrest of revolutionists. In spite of illegality the revolutionary movement must be so organized that when the time to strike arrives it will be prepared to lead the proletariat to victory and have ready the basis for a firm proletarian dictatorship, along the lines of the Soviets in 1917.

The merchants, organized into the Committees of Correspondence, Inspection, Intelligence and Safety, were faced with the problem of illegality. These committees "formed the bridge by which the colonists passed over the morass of political destruction from the ruins of a repudiated, paternalistic tyranny to the firm ground of self-administered government beyond." [1]

There was little emotion connected with the acts of the colonial merchants whose material interests were being so adversely affected by the passage of numerous tax acts by England. "Prudence, indeed," we find stated in the famous document which epitomizes so-called Jeffersonian democracy, the Declaration of Independence "will dictate that governments long established, should not be changed for light and transient causes," but "whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends (life, liberty and the pursuit of happines), it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness." In an important sense the revolutionary colonial merchants created a weapon which could be used against themselves at a

[1] John C. Fitzpatrick, "The Spirit of the Revolution," N. Y., 1924, p. 100.

later date, a weapon improved upon by the class struggles of over one and a half centuries.

Such a pronouncement as the above was the result of certain revolutionary development. The Sugar and Navigation acts passed after the French and Indian War, effected a consolidation of the colonial mercantile interests. Committees of merchants were formed in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New York. The legal methods of literal petitioning and the sending of select delegations to complain in England, failed them. Not only could they not secure the repeal of the Sugar and Navigation Acts but they were also unable to prevent the passage of the Stamp Act.

The Committees felt that they must increase their strength in order to cope more equally with their formidable antagonist. Dangerous as the formation of an extra-legal apparatus was, the merchants were nevertheless pressed by the necessity of doing this. The organization became secretive and conspiratorial and upon the urging of the original members other colonies gave the adherence. The added strength of the Committees finally brought the repeal of the Stamp Act. Rendered giddy by the success of the Committees, members felt that their work had been accomplished and consequently left the Committees. They soon practically disappeared.

The necessity of maintaining not only a permanent organization but of creating unified action of all colonies, was made clear by the *Gaspee* event. The *Gaspee* was a British revenue ship burnt by certain Rhode Islanders as a protest against England's colonial policy. The crown ordered the arrest of the persons guilty and their commitment to England for trial. The colonial merchants seized this as a pretext to unite all the colonies against what they called an abrogation of the rights of citizens: a trial by jury of peers, in America. Although all of Providence knew who the leaders in the *Gaspee* affair were, they were not delivered into the hands of the British. In spite of the fact that no one was captured, the colonial merchants "felt the menace of this display of arbitrary power and turned to Samuel Adams, of Massachusetts, for advice." He suggested the circularizing of letters among all the colonies to ask their support. The assistance was quickly forthcoming.

The Virginia House of Burgesses established a standing Committee of Correspondence and Inquiry. This committee was to register the pulse of resentment against England and ascertain the offensive acts of the same. The Committee was to inquire into the constitutionality of transporting inhabitants from America to England for trial. Resolutions were drawn and a chain of

communications was set up between the colonies and the Virginia Committee. When word of this Committee reached the Governor of Virginia, he dissolved the House of Burgesses. However, the merchants reconvened, adopted a circular letter and sent it together with their resolutions to the colonies. The response to this act of defiance against England was enthusiastic and instantaneous. Within two months the "New England Colonies were solidly organized into committee groups, with rumors of like activity coming in steadily from the southward." "The Virginia resolves of March 12, 1773, were the signal for an inter-colonial unity of action never before obtained. Before a year had passed, every Colony, except Pennsylvania, responded with a committee organization. Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Connecticut and Massachusetts formed committees in May, 1773; South Carolina, in July; Georgia, in September; Maryland and Delaware, in October; North Carolina, in December; New York, in January 1774; and New Jersey in February." (Fitzpatrick, ibid., p. 105). The strength of the revolutionary organization halted the attempt of the Royal Commission to try the burners of the *Gaspee*. This victory of the merchants helped considerably the acceptance of the Virginia resolves by the various colonies. The Committee organization was the skeleton of the new government which was to arise after the defeat of Britain. It was this group which provided leadership to the revolutionists before and during the revolution and to the ruling class as a whole after the revolution until a formal and "permanent" government was established. "It was this group organization that controlled at the outbreak of the hostilities of the Revolutionary War, and it held steady the reins of governmental power and authority until the royalist machinery was shaken loose and democratic (bourgeois-democratic, that is—D. G.) governments set up and set in motion."

It would prove of great international value to critics of the "violent and unlawful" Communist movement of today to recall the principles of violence to which their noble and respectable yet violent, unlawful and bloody forefathers adhered. (Fitzpatrick, p. 106, lists the class of men who participated in the Committees. Among these are signers of the Declaration of Independence). In the case of the American Revolution of 1776 it was a matter of establishing a rule of an exploiting minority whereas today it is the question of abolishing all minority rule and the gradual establishment of a classless, Communist society.

The victory gained in the *Gaspee* affair resulted in another relaxation of the Committees' work. At the time, Governor Thomas

Hutchinson, of Massachusetts, wrote to England in 1773, as follows:

"I had the fullest evidence of a plan to engage the colonies in a confederation against the authority of Parliament. The towns of this province were to begin, the assembly to confirm their doings and to invite the other colonies to join."

In an effort to enforce its rule over the colonies, England passed the Tea and Declaratory Act. Immediately, the Boston Tea Party took place. This was open defiance to the laws of its rulers. The mother country responded with the Boston Port Bill, which closed Boston harbor to all commerce; the port was blockaded and regiments landed in the city. "Immediately the committee organization commenced to demonstrate its value. The Boston Committee held conference with those of the neighboring towns and addressed a circular letter to all the colonies. The armed pressure imposed upon Boston was a fatal mis-step (sic!—D. G.). The Committees worked feverishly and the First Continental Congress was the result."

Until this time the committees of Observation, Inspection and Intelligence were limited in their work. Their function was that of a correspondence society to keep the colonies informed of what was happening at the time, to discuss the situation and to enter protests to be sent to Parliament through their London representatives. In 1774 the times demanded a new form of committee, a committee capable of leading a physical struggle against England. This was supplied by the Committee of Safety. The new Committees were known as the Committee of Safety and Correspondence, the Committee of Safety and Inspection and the Committee of Safety and Observance. "There was something ominous in the appearance of this word (safety—D. G.). It seemed to assume that the danger of a resort to force of arms might not be far distant."

The basis of representation to the central Committee of Correspondence was limited to property-owners and free-men, as was that of the regular provincial, town and village elections. The highest provincial body, the assembly, selected the greatest majority of men to fill the offices in the central Committee.

The protest and antagonism of fellow-citizens of the Committee members did not stand in the way of the revolutionary impetus initiated by the First Continental Congress. In February 25, 1775, two months before the battle of Lexington, the Boston Committee of Correspondence criculated the following:

"The following proceedings and votes of the joint Committees of this and several other towns are conveyed to you by their un-

animous request. The importance of the subject at this critical time when our enemies are aided by some of our deluded fellow citizens must strike you forcibly. We do not doubt but you will adopt the following or some similar plan as your salvation depends upon it. What you must do must be done soon, or it will be ineffectual. The army (British in Boston) by the number of wagons which they have engaged must be in want of a number of horses and cattle, it is wholly with our friends in the country to prevent their supply, but we need not dictate to them the mode. The cannon and baggage of the army must remain here unless you supply them with horses and cattle, but on your firmness and resolution we depend. We have a good cause, the thought is animating, take courage, and rely upon a kind Providence for protection and success in your resistance, in case it becomes necessary by your being attacked."

The merchants' Committee did not stop at illegal organization. They were intent on crippling the power of the British army in Boston. They raised the slogan of refusal of any aid to the army. Refusal to supply horses and cattle would naturally interfere considerably with the effectiveness of armed repression. The Committees went farther than mere refusal to aid the British. Knowing that armed force would be used against those not complying with the army's demands, they advocated "resistance" in the event of attack. The Communist movement of today raises analagous unpatriotic and revolutionary slogans applying to present day circumstances. While the following words of Fitzpatrick are hypocritically uttered by him and as falsely applauded by the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the like, the Communist movement can with full knowledge of honesty agree that:

"It is impossible to withhold admiration from action such as this. It was sabotage; but sabotage boldly and publicly recommended in the face of the bayonet." We supply the word *refusal* to carry out the demands of the British instead of the word *sabotage* (and the action was not sabotage) and heartily congratulate such correctness of tactics and boldness of execution.

After the Second Continental Congress, held in Philadelphia a few weeks before the battle of Lexington, the work of the Committee of Safety was knit more closely. The Congress recommended a central Committee of Safety for each province to supervise and connect the work of the various committees spread over the towns and villages. The royalist representatives could not penetrate the organizations to bribe members and thus weaken the revolutionary strength because:

"...Here was an organization, in which were to be found the

most influential men of the Colonies, which could not be reached or controlled by any royal officer or crown power and through which the legislature, though securely fettered by the established royal practice, continued to function freely in its rebellious attitude." (My emphasis—D. G.).

After the American Revolution, the Committees of Safety could well disappear as they did because they were substituted with a more perfected and respectable form of middle-class rule. The Revolution once in progress, the middle-class desired no others. Another revolution would mean the civil war between the middle-class and the working classes. The new ruling class was unconscious of the possibility of such action on the part of the working masses. It therefore dissolved the Committees in an effort to place into obscurity its demands for freedom and its revolutionary activities as such. In tune with their own true wishes, fearful of the assumption of revolutionary organization and ideology by the workers the middle-class desired to emphasize its bourgeois respectability without cessation.

"The central Committees of Safety became, from their composition and character, the most important and powerful of all committees. *During the transition period before the royal Government fell to pieces and before the Revolutionary legislatures could begin to function, they held, for a time, almost dictatorial power.* But it was always wisely used and quietly wielded in cooperation with the local town and county committees. Together these committees held firm to the heavy, everyday work of massing the resources of the country behind the fighting forces. It was not spectacular work, but exacting and unceasing. A break in the lines, a check or delay of men or equipment, a need for wagons, for arms, for blankets for animals and fodder, and the Committee of Safety was appealed to for aid. It called out the militia, collected arms and accoutrements, handled desertions, received, managed, and guarded prisoners of war, arrested Tories, adjusted accounts, settled claims, and performed hundreds of other tasks of a minor nature, but none the less necessary, which, unattended to, would have increased immeasurably the burdens and difficulties of the war. Yet, important as were these committees and this committee system, after the advent upon the scene of the Committee of Safety the career of all became comparatively brief. Few of them continued in existence beyond the year 1777." Most of the Committees "ceased functioning as soon as the Revolutionary legislatures took firm control of affairs; this was usually as soon after the Declaration of Independence as the different States could adopt new constitutions and put them into operation. The

Committees of Correspondence had virtually merged with the Committees of Safety after the war commenced, and the entire committee organization, as a part of the Revolutionary War machine, had dissolved by January 1778." And in line with this return to so-called respectability and the non-revolutionary foundation of a bourgeois society, we find George Washington writing to the New York Committee, July 22, 1777, as follows:

> "Gentlemen,
> I am informed by General George Clinton that you have vested him with powers to call out the Militia of the Counties of Ulster, Orange, Dutchess and Westchester until the 1st August, at which time the New Legislature of the state is summoned to meet. As it will probably be some time before the wheels of the New Government can be put into motion, I am fearful, that unless this Power is extended to a further time, there will be a vacancy between Genl. Clinton's present Commission, and the enacting new Laws by the Legislature, a circumstance, which at this time may prove most fatal in consequences, because from the present appearances of matters, the enemy are upon the point of making some capital move. I would therefore wish, *if it can be done with propriety*, that before your Board is dissolved, you would extend this power of calling out the militia to Genl. Clinton, or some other person, till such time as you may reasonably expect the New Legislature will have met and proceeded regularly to business. . ." (My emphasis—D. G.)

The heritage of the American Revolution rightfully belongs to the vanguard of the revolutionary movement of today, the Communist Party. The claim to its heritage by such as those who belong to the Daughters of the American Revolution is made in order to keep the revolutionary tradition of 1776 from the working class today. The use by contemporary revolutionists of the strategy and tactics of the respectable gentlemen of the American Revolution are decried by patriots, American Federation of Labor misleaders and cowards. The glory of the American Revolution to such people lies in the fact that it ushered in an unhampered rule of the middle-class. Only insofar as bourgeois interests were and are concerned do these lying or stupid people sanction and legalize violence and blood-shed. When the proletariat, driven to desesperation by the various economic, political and social attacks against it by the bourgeoisie, resists, it is hounded down, outlawed, brow-beaten, murdered—declared non-respectable!

Yet only the proletariat can lay claim to the legacy of the American Revolution. Led by the Communist Party, the working class is preparing its own, proletarian revolution. It intends to create a workers' society as in the Soviet Union and a classless, Communist system.

We have seen that the American Revolution gives us a few

examples of what is occurring in the modern revolutionary movement. Our bourgeois historian, Fitzpatrick, went so far as to admit that the committees had to assume almost dictatorial power in the transition period between the break-down of the royalist regime and the firm establishment of bourgeois government. Emotionally undesirable as bloodshed may be, the American Revolution teaches that the ruling class will not peacefully submit to its own elimination by the people it holds in subordination, that the proletariat must be prepared for it in all its struggles. The bourgeoise will indeed use armed pressure in its attempt to crush rebellion, even more than it has in simple economic or in economico-political strikes. The working class today must be as prepared for such contingencies as were the revolutionary forefathers.

The greatest object lesson of the American Revolution is the necessity for effective organization. In 1776 it was the Committees of Safety and later in the legislatures—both represented by members of the middle-class and run on a bourgeois basis. Today the organizations must be truly democratic and wide-spread and must find its active nuclei in every mine, factory, mill and farm comprised of workers of all ages, colors and creeds. Just as the revolutionists of yesterday carried out every detail task, knowing its absolute, great importance as part of a strongly built, disciplined whole, so the revolutionary movement of today does not overlook any detail in order to carry out its duties effectively.

The conditions of the American Revolutionary periods made for the creation of bourgeois industrial society. Today we find the bourgeoisie not only developed to the final, imperialist stage of capitalism, but we find them in a vortex of crises in which the position of the working class is being continually lowered. Only the working class is able to help the situation by seizing power and creating a proletarian dictatorship. This necessitates not only the taking over of some of the methods employed by the Revolutionary fathers, but also the application of the Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics of proletarian revolution in the epoch of imperialism.

The patriotic critics may try all they please to keep the revolutionary traditions of 1776 from the proletariat. In spite of all their howling and whining the Communist Party takes the best from the American Revolution and makes it a weapon of the working class against capitalist rule and for the establishment of a workers' society in America.

Social Trends in American Literature

By JOSEPH FREEMAN

AMERICAN literature is going through a violent war. Critics, poets and novelists are firing articles with the rapidity of machine guns; epithets explode with the thunder of high-powered projectiles; phrases, new and old, zoom in the air like Fokkers. Positions, hitherto considered impregnable, are won and lost and won again over night. There is the usual war hysteria and propaganda, the accusations and counter-accusations, the casting up of accounts. The embattled armies issue manifestoes and counter-manifestoes, and (just as in the world war) what is at stake are not merely the interests of the contending Parties, but the whole of civilization.

Who started the war? Who is fighting? What are the objectives of the "powers" involved?

The Archduke Ferdinand, so to speak, was shot at Serajevo only last summer; but just as Marxists, understanding the laws of capitalism, were able to predict the world war long before Germany "raped Belgium," so Marxist literary critics foresaw the present conflicts in American letters.

In the summer of 1928, for example, all was quiet on the Western Front. At any rate, so it seemed upon reading the bourgeois literary journals. The liberal novelists, like Sherwood Anderson, Theodore Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis—rebels and outcasts a decade ago—were securely seated on the thrones of glory; they were already classics; they were read all over the world, including the Soviet Union. Liberal critics, like H. L. Mencken, Van Wyck Brooks and Lewis Mumford, also among the despised and rejected ten years ago, were likewise among the revered institutions of these United States. The liberal poets like Carl Sandburg were seldom heard from, but their names glittered in that great liberal tradition which made the administrations of Wilson and Harding landmarks in American literature. New names like Ernest Hemingway, Glenway Wescott, and E. E. Cummings were bandied about at the cocktail parties of the intelligentsia, but they appeared to continue the "Wilsonian Era" in literature. Truly, the American "Republic of Letters" seemed to be at peace—very much as Europe, to liberal journalists, appeared to be in peace in the spring of 1914.

In September 1928, however, there appeared some "Notes on American Literature" in *The Communist*, which made three chief points: First, that the literature which developed on the basis of Wilsonian middle-class liberalism had reached the end of its rope and could go no further; second, that a new bourgeois literature was budding with definitely fascist tendencies; third, that a left-wing literature, gaining sustenance from the Communist viewpoint, was beginning to develop.

Such conclusions were inevitable from even the most superficial observation of the American scene at that time, and of the internal evidence already offered by American literature. During the Wilson administration, up to the Treaty of Versailles, democratic illusions were widely current in American life and letters. The intelligentsia was especially weak in that direction. Afterward came a period of disillusion in intellectual quarters, expressed in the satirical novels of Sinclair Lewis and James Branch Cabell; in certain war novels; and in the critical writings of H. L. Mencken. Many young writers fled from the American scene to Paris, where they founded magazines criticising America from the viewpoint of the old European culture. The outstanding American writers of the 1920's were liberal in politics, rebellious and emotional in temper, preoccupied with the theme of the unadjusted middle-class individual, at war with the tradition of Puritanism, and often steeped in the then new theories of psychoanalysis. Sinclair Lewis, in satirizing the American scene, created *Main Street* as a symbol for American provincial life; *Babbit* as a symbol for the American philistine; and *Elmer Gantry* as a symbol for the hypocritical minister of the gospel. Cabell's *Jurgen*, with its sexual symbolism and elaborate satire against Puritanism, so shocked the respectable classes that for a time it was suppressed. Sherwood Anderson's stories and novels cursed the machine, mourned the passing of handicrafts, portrayed the degeneration of petty-bourgeois types under the pressure of big-scale industry, and, again, sought to break the shackles of Puritanism in sex. Mencken, hurling verbal bombs against philistinism, democratic illusions (from an aristocratic standpoint), puritanism in sex and drink, became a byword in the United States, and by the end of the '20s won for himself hundreds of imitators and thousands of disciples.

But the Fall of 1928 revealed a new scene. Hoover and Smith, both frankly representing big capital, drew the support of many former liberals and Socialists. There was no liberalism in politics. The Socialist Party was, for all practical purposes, defunct as an inspirer of new ideas. A new bourgeois youth had come to the fore. Hardened by the war, completely cynical as a result of the

prosperity which did not break until a year later, this youth no longer pretended to believe in the traditional American values. It was skeptical of democracy, of romance, of Socialism, of humanitarianism in general, and of puritanism in particular. For a long time American writers were preoccupied with the theme of the "younger generation." Needless to say, this "younger generation" did not include the working-class youth, Negro and white. It was the youth of the upper and middle classes, especially the student youth in the universities, which constituted the "problem." This youth alarmed the older bourgeois generation because of its alleged excesses in drinking and love, but above all because it was cynical and without faith. They had no "religion."

While the bourgeois youth was thus breaking away from the humanitarianism, democratic ideals represented by the liberal novelists, the proletarian intelligentsia was breaking away from these same novelists for other reasons. Michael Gold, John Dos Passos and others were seeking new values in Moscow while the bourgeois intellectuals of the new generation were seeking them in Paris.

The sharpening of class lines in life was bound to find some expression in literature, and the writer of *Notes on American Literature*, referred to above, noted with care the appearance of a slim volume of criticism by Gorham B. Munson called *Destinations*.

Munson's book did not attract much attention outside of certain intellectual circles, but it made an important point. Confining itself to bourgeois literature, and ignoring social and class factors, Munson divided contemporary American writers and critics into three camps on the basis of age. The Elder Generation was represented by two university professors, conservative critics of long standing and great prestige in academic circles—Professor Paul Elmer More and Professor Irving Babbit. The Middle Generation was represented in æsthetics by J. E. Spingarn; in fiction by Theodore Dreiser and Sherwood Anderson; in the drama by Eugene O'Neill; in poetry by Carl Sandburg and Edgar Lee Masters; and in criticism by Van Wyck Brooks and H. L. Mencken. The Younger Generation, as Munson saw it, was represented in fiction by Ernest Hemingway and Glenway Wescott; in poetry by E. E. Cummings; in criticism by Kenneth Burke.

Munson pointed out that the Elder Generation was characterized by extensive scholarship, hatred of romanticism, classical religion and classical humanism, and conservatism in general outlook; the Middle Generation was rebellious and emotional, favoring liberal and humanitarian, often even socialistic, movements, and interested in psychoanalysis; its novels were naturalistic and its criticism impressionistic. The Young Generation, on the other

hand, suspected the enthusiasm of the Middle Generation, and was seeking new ideas. These ideas they found in Professors More and Babbit, whom Munson characterizes as "the two most mature intellects in American letters."

Here then was that reactionary philosophy which the younger bourgeois intellectuals were seeking. For More is a metaphysician in the worts sense of the word, a "religious dualist," a mystic and a snob; while Babbit loathes Rousseau for his democratic views, Bacon for his faith in science, and Robespierre for his revolutionary temper, and frankly admires Mussolini. In his critical studies Babbit has not only attacked Marx, but stated that "circumstances may arise when we may esteem ourselves fortunate if we get the American equivalent of Mussolini; he may be needed to save us from the American equivalent of Lenin."

At this time, however (in the Fall of 1928) both Munson's book and the Marxist review pointing out that it conained the seeds of a reactionary movement in American letters, were read by a handful of people. It was not until a year later, in the summer of 1929, that Professors Babbit and more became centers of a violent literary controversy involving every literary publication in the country and attracting general attention. It was then that they organized and launched the so-called Humanist movement, based on mystical tenets in philosophy, fascism in politics, puritanism in morals, and fixed classical standards in literature. And because the bourgeois youth of America is extremely conservative, they have gained a following. Today there are Humanist magazines, publishers, critics and professors. The Humanist movement has even been supported by the New York *Times*, which feels with justice that Humanism is safe and reactionary.

The manifesto of the Humanists, which brought their views out of the cloistered halls of the university into open discussion, appeared in the form of "Humanism in America," a book consisting of essays by fifteen critics. These essays, discussing science, art, modernism, fiction, education, religion and life in general were united by certain reactionary tenets which the authors called "Humanism."

The Humanists proceed on the assumption that life can be divided into three planes: the natural, the human, and the religious. They urge that "man" should cultvate the "human" plane, supported by the religious plane, as against the "natural" plane, represented by the scientific descendants of Francis Bacon and the romantic-democratic descendants of Jean-Jaques Rousseau. A passionate preoccupation with the past and an obtuse disregard of contemporary life marks the thinking and writing of the Humanists.

Hence it is not surprising that in first bringing the Humanist viewpoint to public attention in the popular magazines, Professor Babbit should devote most of his energies in attacking Bacon and Rousseau, without taking into accout that both science and democracy must be approached in a different way.

What the Humanist writers do make clear, however, is the complete bankruptcy of bourgeois culture; and since they are unable to see beyond it, they seek refuge behind it, in dead, precapitalistic cultures. Describing the confusion following the collapse of bourgeois ideals, one of the contributors to the Humanist manifesto, a university student (Richard Lindley Brown) says: "The noise and whirl increase, the disillusion and depression deepen, the nightmare of Futility stalks before us." To the Humanists the literature and art most characteristic of the day is "chaotic, joyless, devoid of beauty, comfortless, fretfully original or feebly conventional, impotent, futile." Hence the Humanists oppose "conceit of the present"; they urge the youth to break away from "modernism." They further declare that the present confusion in art and literature is connected with a similar confusion in "our ideas of life." They therefore emphasize life above art, saying that "as we live, so shall we paint and write" and "as we paint and write, so shall we come to live." This idea they derive from Plato, to whom the Humanists continually refer as the most profound source of wisdom for solving the problems of contemporary life. On the question of the relation between art and life, one of the Humanists, Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., says:

> "Appreciation really requires a right and balanced attitude toward life. It was really more important for Florence that her great citizens, while bowing to the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome, wanted a full and honorable life in Florence—it was really more important, I say, that they cared discriminatingly for the dignity of their ordinary activities and for the authority of their faith, than that they cared specifically for painting, sculpture, and architecture. In short, some aristocratic vision of the good life has always been the foundation on which great national art has been reared in the past."

In this search for the "aristocratic vision of the good life," the Humanists reject the confusion and futility of "democratic" life, and the writers who portray it with malicious care. To them the virtue of Proust, Andre Gide and James Joyce is a negative one, consisting merely in their "unflinching record of the intellectual defeat and spiritual dismay they find about them in actual life and within themselves." But as a recognition of the futility of bourgeois values is all that the Humanists have in common with contemporary fiction. The novelists, Professor More complains, "per-

ceive the evil state of society and portray it with gloating contempt. But having no faith in the possible dignity of individual human life, they offer a very dubious alliance to Humanism. Rather, on the contrary, they fill their public with a self-congratulating superiority of knowingness, as if to know the sickness about him were sufficient to relieve a man in the hospital of the need of a physician for himself. Bourgeois society, then, is sick, and whereas the Prousts, Gides and Joyces have merely diagnosed the disease, Humanism now steps forth with the cure. But first it offers its own diagnosis. The cause of the pessimism of modern literature, Professor More finds, is a false philosophy which sees "man only as the slave of his temperament, or as a mechanism propelled by complexes and reactions, or as a vortex of sensations, with no will to govern himself, no center of stability within the flux, no direction of purpose to rise above the influences that carry him hither and thither." The Humanism rejects the concept that man is governed by natural law; it rejects materialism; it maintains that there is a faculty which marks off man as *human*, endowing him with free will to choose between good and evil, to exercise an inner check.

> "Against romanticism," the Humanist Robert Shafer declares, "humanitarian sympathy, mechanistic or vitalistic determinism, the doctrine of progress and the like, has been opposed a skeptical criticism of life and letters which rests ultimately on the proposition that man differs not alone in complexity of organization, but in kind, from the animal, and that his happiness depends upon his recognition and the cultivation of that element in his being which is distinctive of him. This is held to be possible; man is held to be, within limits, capable of responsible choice. . . . To choose to discriminate, and, for this, habituation to self restraint is essential; it is, indeed, the foundation on which the whole structure of distinctively human life rests."

In this there is nothing new. Furthermore, it merely represents a negative attitude. The Humanists are enemies of democracy, of humanitarianism, of socialism, of the concept of progress, of both romanticism and naturalism in literature, of the implications of science and the materialist conception of history—in short of all the contradictory developments of contemporary civilization.

What do they offer instead? Despite their opposition to Rousseau, the Humanists are primarily interested in the happiness of the individual. To be sure, not of all individuals. The mass of workers and farmers, even the mass of bourgeois philistines are ruled out. It is an "aristocratic vision of good" which they seek. But for the elite individual there is to be a happiness based on a wise morality, an ethic based on self-restraint, on applying the law of

measure, on imitation of great models chosen from antiquity. The result of such an ethic is to be poise, proportionateness, decorum.

This in itself is an empty and negative philosophy. Self-restraint, the *frein vital*, the Inner Check, self-denial is to be practiced that the individual may achieve happiness. Here the theory stops; and some of the Humanists, conscious of its remote and negative character, have taken the logical next step and have agitated for a return to religion. One of them, the poet T. S. Elliot, though born and raised a Protestant in "democratic" America with naturalist traditions in literature, has become a convert to Rome, and has declared himself "a Catholic in religion, a royalist in politics, a classicist in literature."

In practice, the Humanists have judgments often unconnected with their vague theory, but always reactionary. Babbit's praise of Mussolini and hatred of Lenin has been noted. In the realm of personal conduct they uphold the Puritan ideal of chastity. They attack Goethe because of his love affairs; they extol Wordsworth's poetry because "the erotic element is absent." To them Edgar Allen Poe, who, as the liberal critic Malcolm Cowley has pointed out, lied, flattered, slandered, drank to excess, and took opium, and whose characters indulged in strange perversions, is an honorable poet because neither he nor his characters committed fornication; but his disciple Baudelaire is a monster because he wrote of sexual unchastity. The Humanists are obsessed by this Victorian attitude toward sex; they reject modern authors from Joyce to Dos Passos because they deal frankly with the subject, and, out of all modern fiction, find words of praise only for the detective story which, though it deals with theft and murder, at least touches on love with sanitary hands.

Economically, socially and politically the Humanists are equally reactionary. They have no clear conception of the society in which we live; they ignore the existence of social classes and the class struggle; they repudiate the implications of the machine and the increasing socialization of production. Yet they do have snobbish and reactionary class prejudices expressed in an infantile babble about the relations of capital and labor.

In his book "Democracy and Leadership," Professor Babbit, of the Humanist high-priests, whose name by some irony of fate is the same as that of Sinclair Lewis' petit-bourgeois hero, asserts that the economic problem runs into the political problem, which runs into the philosophic problem. For the solution of any problem he turns to the psychology of the individual. The remedy for the evils of competition—including low wages, long hours, unemployment, police clubs—is found, according to Babbit, "in the modera-

tion and magnanimity of the strong and the successful, and not in any sickly sentimentalizing over the lot of the underdog." On the other hand, he knows that Marx was wrong in "identifying work with value," when as "everybody" knows, value is determined "by the law of supply and demand and by competition." He insists, furthermore, that the attempt to "eliminate competition has resulted in Russia in a ruthless despotism, on the one hand, and a degrading servitude on the other." The inference would seem to be that the "strong and the successful" in America should not be too moderate or too magnanimous; here, too, they should exercise the supreme Humanist virtue of self-restraint, lest they destroy competition altogether and thus reduce the Unted States to the same deplorable state in which Babbit finds the Soviet Union. . . .

This religious-fascist school in American literature has attracted the support of certain of the more conservative writers and critics among the bourgeois youth. That in itself, however, would not have made Humanism the center of litetary discussion. Neither is its domination of literary discussion to be explained by the fact that a good deal of balyhoo attended the launching of Humanism in the popular magazines. What Humanism did succeed in doing was to compel writers and critics of all schools to clarify their position on fundamental questions.

Babbit and Moore have been writing for decades. Their views were buried on library shelves. If they have suddenly emerged as the center of a literary war, it is chiefly because the liberal group, which dominated the literary scene, had lost its faith and its vigor. This was equally true in politics. Journals like the *New Republic* and the *Nation* (which publish the critical writings of the liberal intelligentsia) have abandoned the liberal crusading spirit of the Wilsonian period; they could no longer believe in the democratic shibboleths of the war period. This has been pointed out at great length in a series of articles by John Dewey in the *New Republic* on the "lost individual," where that leader of liberal thought points out the impossibility of maintaining the old liberal, individualistic views in a mechanized, corporate society. For the past few years, liberal critics have contented themselves with casual book reviews, where general social questions were avoided. When, in the midst of the general reaction in the country, the humanists came out into the open with force and dogma, it was inevitable that they should precipitate a literary war, in which each group would be compelled to clarify its position.

And just as a fascist coup d'etat in politics sometimes drives the vascillating liberals into a negative form of resistance, so the liberal writers and critics of America, in the articles with which they

flooded the journals, contented themselves with critical attacks on humanism, without formulating a positive program of their own. These critical articles attacked the humanists for their religious and mystical tendencies, for their anti-democratic views, for their blind worship of classical and ignorance of contemporary literature, for their Puritanism, for their old-maidish timidity in the face of life, expressed in their search for "decorum" above all other values, for their snobbishness, for their repudiation of science. In this counter-attack all the leading liberal writers and critics participated, from H. L. Mencken of the *American Mercury* to Henry Hazlitt of the *Nation.*

The best of the liberal attacks was written by Malcolm Cowley of the *New Republic,* in an article called *Angry Professors,* in which the writer, confronted by the possibilities of fascism in literature, rushed to the Marxian arsenal for weapons.

> "Out of what society does Humanism spring," he asks, "and toward what society does it lead? Has it any validity for the mill-hands of New Bedford and Gastonia, for the beet-toppers of Colorado, for the men who tighten a single screw in the automobiles that march along Mr. Ford's assembly belt? Should it be confined to the families who draw dividends from these cotton mills, beet fields, factories, and to the professors who teach in universities endowed by them? Can one be a Humanist between chukkers of a polo match, or can the steel workers be Humanists, too—once every three weeks, on their Sunday off?"

The Humanists call for an aristocracy of elite spirits to transform the United States, for "a few thousand genuine Humanists in America" to make "our society Humanistic"; for a "hundred Humanist painters, sculptors, architects, musicians, and men of letters" to make "our art solidly humanistic." This snobbish dream so offends the liberals that Cowley replies: "I submit that these rash professors, in their aversion for utopian visions, have produced the lamest utopia ever imagined. The vast economic machine that is America would continue to function aimlessly; great fortunes would continue to grow on smaller fortunes; several millions factory workers would continue to perform operations so subdivided and standardized as to be purely automatic; two million former workers, the 'normal' army of the unemployed, would seek vainly for the privilege of performing the same dehumanizing tasks; the Chicago beer barons would continue to seek their fortunes and slaughter their rivals, revealing once more a deplorable ignorance of the Inner Check; the students of the new Humanist university, after the two o'clock lecture on Plato, would spend an hour at the talkies with the It Girl—and meanwhile, because of a few thousand Human-

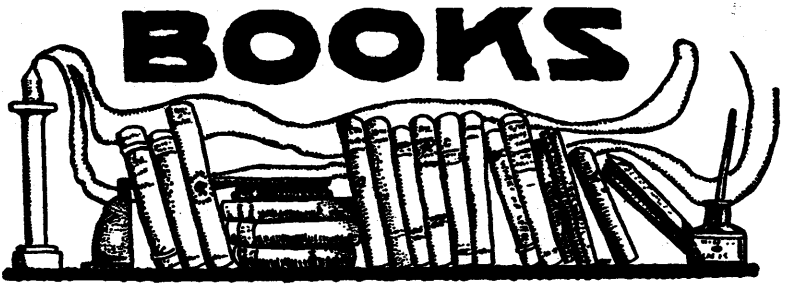
ists, our society, our government, our arts could be genuinely and ideally Humanistic."

Falling back on the methods of sociological and psychological criticism—both anathema to the Humanists—Cowley proceeds to analyze the roots of the movement. He points out that the American university of the 1890's was the cradle of Humanism, for it was there that Babbit and More developed and formed their ideas. The young university teacher of that time was sure of being fed and clothed; he was comfortably lodged, his salary was fixed. The economic problem was not urgent, but the moral problem, "the problem of self-restraint," was of supreme importance. Enthusiasm was suspect. The young instructor had to exercise the Inner Check in regard to frankness of judgment, freedom of thought, sympathy with the workers, "and love most of all—love for one's neighbor or his wife." The penalty for failure in self-restraint was dismissal. With such a background it is natural for Professor Babbit to say: "The wiser the man, the less likely he will be to indulge in a violent and theatrical rupture with his age." Babbit and More followed the conventions of their "age," i. e. their class, the academic circles of the upper bourgeoisie. Hence their intellectual and social snobbishness; hence their repudiation of a whole school of American fiction, represented by Dreiser, Dell, Anderson, Sandburg, and Masters, because its leading men have no social standing, because they are, as More puts it, "almost without exception from small towns sprinkled along the Mid-Western states from Ohio to Kansas . . . self-made men with no inherited background of culture." Another Humanist, Seward Collins, editor of the *Bookman*, extends this snobbishness to certain other prominent American writers because they are Jews, "the sons of recent arrivals in this country."

Cowley in his attack keenly connects this university background of the 1890's with its Puritan and snobbish traditions and the attitudes of the Humanists who derive from it. He points out that More approved the punishment of a student at Princeton University because of his "aspiration toward free morals in literature"; that Seward Collins vehemently defends the Watch and Ward Society, a private guardian of morals which obtained the suppression of Upton Sinclair's "Boston"; that Bryan in the notorious "monkey" trial of Tennessee argued against Darwin with quotations from a book on evolution by Louis Trenchard More, brother of Paul Elmer More and author of the leading essay in the Humanist symposium. "And so," Cowley points out, "these angry professors, in following the usage of the city, have come to de-

fend the social and intellectual prejudices of the universities where they teach and the churches where some of them worship."

The left wing writers, prepared for the advent of reaction in literary criticism, attacked the Humanists in the *New Masses*, where Michael Gold in an editorial and V. F. Calverton in an article emphasized the fascist nature of the movement. The left wing group has long been seeking to work out a program in literature based on the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat; but the controversy over Humanism has compelled the younger liberal writers to seek for positive values of their own. Here they have encountered the difficulties inevitable in their class ideology. Cowley, for example, has learned (what Marx pointed out as far back as 1859) that "the myths of Homer still people the shores of the Ionian Sea, but they are alien to the prairies, the sky-presuming city." . . . But though he sees the effect of machinery on art, Cowley fails to see the effects of the class war and of the revolutionary struggle for a new society. He understands that "our mechanical civilization has outmarched its artists," but fails to see that this mechanical civilization has produced a new class, the industrial proletariat, whose ways of thinking have their roots in machine civilization and therefore carry the seeds of a new and appropriate art. It is important to record, however, that the liberal group now centers its hope on a group of young writers including John Dos Passos, William Carlos Williams, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Glenway Westcott, E. E. Cummings, Hart Crane and Ivor Winters. Some of these (Westcott and Cummings) were claimed by Gorham Munson for the Humanists before Babbit and More clearly formulated their battle-program and these young writers reverted to the liberal camp. Others, like Dos Passos, also have one foot in the left wing camp. Here the lines are not clearly drawn, because the revolutionary movement has not yet produced a strong and unified literary group. Outside of Michael Gold, and, of late, Paul Peters, there is no solid achievement to boast of. What can be said is that in literary criticism, at any rate, the left wing has begun to develop a school of its own.



ABOUT A CERTAIN "EXPERIMENT IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY"

By M. POKROVSKY

> *"There can be no greater ideological fall for a professional revolutionary than practising deceipt upon the masses!"*
>
> (L. Trotzky, "My Life").

Should anyone take a notion to study the history of our revolution "a la Trotzky," dire disappointment would be in store for him, for he will not find a bit of history in his book "My Life," not even any with quite a bit of subjective coloring. But as a "human document" it is most illuminating.

"This book is not a dispassionate portrayal of my life, but a constituent part of it. Upon these pages I am continuing the fight to which my whole life has been dedicated. While expounding, I characterize and evaluate; in narrating I defend myself and still more frequently I attack.

"It strikes me that this is the only means to render biography objective in a somewhat higher sense, that is, to make it the most adequate expression of the person, the conditions and the epoch." (My Life).

This of course is not the best way to give an "adequate expression . . . of the conditions and the epoch" and in that sense Trotzky's "My Life" gives us nothing, as the reader will see from a number of instances. "Adequate expression of the person" however may be found to even a greater extent than that "person" stands in need of. It is hardly likely that Trotzky, engaged in this "experiment" with his own autobiography, thought of presenting a final resume of his claims to being an historical figure. It is hardly likely that through this book he prepared for definite enrollment "in history." Meanwhile after "My Life" there is as little possibility to speak of Trotzky as a leader of anything or of anyone whatsoever as there is of Kerensky. The impulse to draw a comparison between these two figures is irresistible when you read "My Life."

"Kerensky was called a low-down braggart by Lenin. To this we can add a bit even now. Kerensky was and remained a figure of chance, the idol of an historical minute. Each new powerful wave of the revolution, that involved virgin, as yet non-discriminative masses, inevitably brought to the surface such heroes of the hour, who immediately became blinded by their own glare." ("My Life.")

This is a self-characterization in the guise of the characterization of another. While getting together the material for this article I at first allowed

one line for the title "Boasting." It would have been impossible to head off with any other title, it hit the nail too squarely on the head. That proved too little. I added one more. That also was too little. So I had to add a third line. Even that was not enough and I was compelled to write references under the lines, between the lines, crosswise, on top, at the bottom. It is absolutely impossible to adduce here even the greater part of my notations; it would have grown to a full-sized reader with several scores of printed pages. I will confine myself to the most striking examples which incidentally will permit us to understand the *tenor* of the whole book.

I am skipping the instances of bragging that refer to his childhood days, bragging about his 5's at school (5 is the highest school mark); about how his school bag was always tidy, his student's booklet always in its place (each student had to carry this booklet or card with him constantly for identification purposes) and such like. This is shallow, but it needs to be said that it is shallow not only for the reviewer but also for the author. Yet it is a fact that this author laid claim to being nothing less than the heir of Lenin, laid claim to a position of world importance, to the role of a world historical personage. How this fits alongside of the delight he took in his successes at high school.

And now we have before us Trotzky, already a weighty political figure. Came 1905. "On November 13th we formed a bloc with the mensheviks and got up a big political publication, the "Nachalo" (Beginning). The circulation of the paper grew not only daily but hourly. The bolshevik "Novaya Zhisn" (New Life) was colorless without Lenin. The "Nachalo" on the contrary enjoyed a huge success. I think it resembled its classical prototype, Marx's "Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung" of 1848, more closely than any other publication for half a century" (!!) ("My Life").

After this we can readily understand why the "correspondence between Marx and Engels was to me (Trotzky, M. P.) *not* a theoretical but a psychological revelation. I convinced myself at every page that a close psychological kinship bound me to these two. Their attitude toward people was akin to mine; I used to conjecture about what they had left unsaid; shared their sympathies; became exasperated and hated together with them. Marx and Engels were revolutionaries through and through..." ("My Life").

Comes the second revolution, the first defeat—the July days. "Lenin and Zinoviev went into hiding." "Lenin was not there." "Lenin, who had been declared a German spy, was hiding in a hut." ("My Life"). This is repeated and dished up on every occasion, unveiling the real feelings of the writer toward him before whom he, with his (pardon the expression) most dastardly hypocrisy, is running through the full length of his book.

"The bolshevik fraction of the Central Executive Committee felt orphaned in the building of the Tavrichesky palace. They sent a delegation after me with the request to submit a report on the situation that had arisen, despite the fact that all the while I was not yet a party member; the formal act of joining was postponed until the impending session of the party. As may be readily understood, I willingly consented. (!!) My talk with the bolshevik fraction established such moral contacts as are formed only under heavy blows from the enemy. I said that after this crisis we were headed for a quick upsurge; that the masses would be attached to us twice as much, when it will have checked up on our loyalty by our deeds; that in these days we must keep a vigilant eye on every revolutionary, for in such moments people are weighed on unerring scales. I recall with pleasure now how warmly the fraction thanked me while accompanying me." ("My Life").

In the "Village Stepanchikoff," Dostoyevsky draws a certain retired literary personage who had turned into a leisurely country squire, Foma Opiskin, who imagined that he was the central figure in the whole literary world, above Pushkin, above Lermontoff. He believes that whatever of importance there was in his day, not only in literature, he was its original fountain-head. Kazan burned down, so he sacrificed his fees to have it built up (fees that were imaginary, as no one would print his stuff). "So it was you, little father, who rebuilt Kazan," these peasant serfs, stunned by the greatness of their master, would ask him—the only public before which our supernumerary literateur could swagger. "Yes, and I too had a finger in that pie there!", Opiskin would condescend to agree.

When you read Trotzky, you feel like asking all the time: "So it was you, little father, who made the revolution?" But Opiskin was more modest than the author of "My Life." The latter admitted all along that he did not rebuild Kazan quite by himself but only assisted. But in Trotzky we read:

"During the preparations for the October revolution Lenin was hiding himself in Finland; Kamenev, Zinoviev, Rykov, Kalinin, were opponents of the uprising, and as for Stalin, nobody knew anything about him! In consequence of this the Party used to connect the October revolution predominantly with my name." ("My Life").

He, he it was who alone built all Kazan. And who do you suppose might become the chief magistrate in the city that he had rebuilt? He, of course, once more. The chapter "In Power" begins with these singular lines:

"Those days were unusual days, both in the life of the country and in personal life. The highest straining point of social passions as well as of personal forces was reached; the masses were creating an epoch, the leaders felt that their steps were being merged in the steps of history." ("My Life").

Thanks to a slight "ambiguity" in the last phrase, one might think that "their" steps refers to the steps of the masses. That, however, would present an altogether nonsensical picture: The "steps of the masses" are history. So we arrive at the steps of the steps of history—buttery butter. "Their" steps means the seps of the *leaders*. Every step of Trotzky's was a step of history. True, there still was Lenin, but we have already seen that at the critical moment he "fled" and not for Trotzky the poor bolshevik fraction of the C.E.C. would have been at a loss to learn the perspectives of the revolution. And this same Trotzky was "making" even the revolution, Lenin turned into the likeness of a certain satrap in a well known fable: "He signed everything that he (not the secretary, as in the fable, but Trotzky) handed him."

"The contemporary literature on the differences of opinion between Trotzky and Lenin is overburdened with apocrypha. Of course there were differences of opinion. But immeasurably more frequent were the instances where we came to one and the same conclusion, after exchanging two words over the telephone, or independently of each other. When it became clear that we were looking at a question alike, neither he nor I doubted any longer that we would carry through the required decision. On such occasions, where Lenin feared some sort of serious opposition to his projects, he would remind me by telephone: 'Be sure to come to the meeting, I will give you the floor first'. I would speak for a few minutes, Lenin would say 'That's right' once or twice during my speech and this would settle the question beforehand. We were capable of breaking into lengthy debates and did so at times during my divergence from Lenin. But when we were in agreement the discussion always used to be very short. In the overwhelming

majority of cases decisions which we arrived at apart from Lenin coincided in every essential particular. Half a word might suffice to attain a mutual understanding. When it occurred to me that a decision of the Polburo or of the Sovnarkom might be formulated incorrectly, I would send a little note to Lenin on a scrap of paper. He would reply: 'Absolutely true; make a motion.' Sometimes he would send an inquiry to me. If I agreed with his motion and demanded that I come out in support of it." ("My Life.")

I have not exhausted a tenth part of such places; there are swarms of them like mosquitoes over a swamp. But what has been adduced, suffices, I think, to prove that in 1917 we had not one, but two braggars... The second one, who revealed himself in this capacity but now was of course cleverer than the first. He knew how to make contact with that force whose steps were indeed the "steps of history"—clinging to that force he dragged behind the revolution much longer than his predecessor. Getting down to fundamentals we find the same fact underlying both cases, that of the "virginity" of the "not yet discriminative masses." When these masses saw through things and began to analyze, the role of Trotzky as a leader had to come to an end. But he already had managed to "become blinded by his own glare" and failed to see this. This was also not seen by a few others who had become blinded by the purloined glare of their hero. Herein lay the tragedy of Trotzkyism. Without attributing to the selection of "leaders" the importance which Trotzky himself attaches to it in his "Lessons of October," we must admit nevertheless, that it is of some, and at that, not secondary, importance.

"Every real orator has known those minutes when his lips were uttering something stronger than he would voice in his prosaical hours. This force is 'inspiration'. It springs from a higher creative straining of all forces. The unconscious rises from out of its deep lair and subordinates to itself the conscious working of the mind, fuses with it in some higher oneness." ("My Life").

This self-characterization unexpectedly yields the explanation of how and whence arise these Kerenskies and Trotzkies. In a genuine political leader his oratorical talent fashions his influence: Kerenskies and Trotzkies are fashioned by their oratorial talent. It raises them high above the mass, which they become accustomed to see only from the tribune. The meetings at the circus "Modern" fill one of the most flowing pages of "My Life".

"There were moments when it seemed as if your lips could perceive the exacting inquisitiveness of this crowd that had become merged into a compact one. You become oblivious of arguments and words mapped out in advance—they retreat before the imperative pressure of sympathy and from under some hidden weight came out other words in full armor, other arguments not expected by the orator but needful for the mass. Then you fancy that you yourself are listening to an orator just alongside of yourself, your mind cannot keep up with his and you are only afraid that he, like a sonambulist, tumbles off a cornice at the voice of your reasoning faculty. Such was the circus "Modern." ("My Life").

To understand that only the fascination of his talent will get an orator up on a high cornice, that outside of this talent this orator is perhaps lower than many of his hearers—to understand this accurately one must be a very clever fellow; but such, you see, would not be a sonambulist; he would certainly be a lawful candidate for leadership and the fate of a Kerensky would not overtake him. Nor would he write a book such as "My Life," as he would understand that such a book compromises him more than a

whole library written by his opponents. The "unconscious" played a bad joke on Trotsky.

But our presentation of "My Life" would be very weak indeed, if the readers were to think that it is only a naive display of the "unconscious" in its author and no more. Such a presentation would be beneath the "philosophy of history" of Trotzky himself. It is worth while quoting this "philosophy of history" if for no other reason than because its author has been parading as a Marxist for decades. Here is some of his "Marxism".

"Broadly speaking, every historical process is the refraction of the law-conforming through the casual. If we may make use of the language of biology, it may be said that historical law-conformance finds its realization in a natural selection of casualnesses. Upon this basis conscious human activity is being developed, activity which subjects casualness to artificial selection." ("My Life").

In Trotzky's book there is not only the unconscious. We find there also "conscious human activity which subjected "casualness," that is to say, historical facts, to "artificial selection." To an exceedingly artificial one, the reader will see forthwith, though not to a very skillful one.

And here, in contrast to the "unconscious," one must likewise speak about childhood. For although the tale concerns a child, he who wrote was not a child, he who wrote was more than a grown-up person, with a huge political load on his shoulders. He who wrote was a candidate for Lenin's place in our revolution.

Where did he spring from and how does he evaluate the environment with which he was linked by birth?

"My father was a *tiller of the soil*, at first on a smaller, then on a larger scale."

After running through another page, you begin to think that in the word underscored (by me.—M.P.) there is a misprint, that a syllable had been left out. (M. P. alludes to a term meaning "land owner" instead of "land tiller"—Transl.) But no, we have further on a characterization of Trotzky's mother:

"Transplanted from the principal town of a gubernia to a village in the steppes, the young woman did not submit to the harsh condiions of farm life all at once, but afterwards she fully submitted and from that time on she did no take off her working harness for almost 45 years... Land, cattle, poultry and mill demanded her full attention without any let-up. The seasons of the year came and went and the waves of labor for the *land tiller* rolled on amidst family ties..."

No, "land tiller" was not a misprint in the first quotation. Let us see then what kind of "laborious land tilling life" this was. "Father bought more than 100 dessyatin from Janofsky and about 200 dessyatin he held under a lease." Do you suppose that he cultivaed all this land by his own labor? Of course not.

"There were a few steady workmen who did not leave the farm the whole year round. The bulk of them, going into the *hundreds* in years of extensive sowing, consisted of seasonal workers—people from Kiev, Chernigov, Poltava, who were hired until the Feast of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin, i.e., until first of October."

The old man Bronstein received thousands of rubles for one shipment of grain sold. From one instance we will find out that he sent to the market at one time as much as 20,000 pud wheat (raising the price 5c a pud yielding him 1,000 rubles). ("My Life").

I first read "My Life" in German and was convinced that such things may be written in all frankness and without comments only for a reader abroad, and at that a *bourgeois* reader. He naturally swallows all that without choking on it. To the German bourgeois the "kulak" is a most honest-to-goodness "toiler." What more do you want? The bourgeois who at times sits in his office for 12 hours at a stretch also considers himself a "toiler." But for whom is the *Russian* text intended where all this is reproduced letter for letter? Could it be for those Russian workers whose indignation against the Central Committee Trotzky endeavored to inflame by assurances that the Party was "heading toward the kulak" and whom he invited "to turn the fire toward the Right against the kulak, the nepman and the bureaucrat"!

Trotzky's father was a typical big kulak even during the childhood of the author of "My Life." He was not a "toiling tiller" of the soil at all but a village exploiter, of whose methods even his son can find nothing better to say than that he was no worse an exploiter than the others of the same kind. Trotzky describes the living condiions of his father's workers thus:

"The open field served as their habitation; in rainy weather, the hay stack. For dinner a lean borshch and gruel; for supper millet porridge. Meat was not served at all; only vegetable fats were dispensed and in meagre rations. On this ground things sometimes began to ferment. The workers would drop their reaping, gather in the courtyard, would lie on their stomachs in the shade of the barns, turn up their bare, chapped feet covered with hay pricks and wait. They would give them sour milk or water melon, or half a bag full of dried fish and they once more would be off to work, often with a song. This went on on all the estates... One summer there was an epidemic of chicken blindness among the workers that had come. They used to move about slowly in the twilight with outstretched hands. A nephew of mother's, who had been staying in the village as a guest (M., about whom we will find out later that he was a moderate liberal with a slight leaning toward populist socialism, not a revolutionary by any means, M. P.) wrote a newspaper article about this, which was noticed in the Zemstvo and they sent an inspector. Mother and father who loved the "correspondent" very much felt offended at him. He himself was not glad either (!) There were however no unpleasant consequences (!!): the inspection established that the disease was due to insufficient fats, that it was spread throughout the whole province, as they were being fed everywhere the same way and some places even worse." ("My Life").

Once more and again—for what and for whom is all this being written? If a fellow wanted to whitewash the fact that his father was an exploiter, he would simply have had to suppress all these facts. (Further on we shall see that Trotzky knows how to suppress even more important things). Did he want to tell frankly where he sprang from, he would deserve credit for his frankness, but in such event he would have to assign to these facts an evaluation that *each and every* bolshevik would assign to them, though ultra-right, let alone a "leftist." But to give *all the facts* in perfect innocence and then to whitewash them with the *words* "land tiller's toil" and the like, to the point where after a Zemstvo inspection the exploiter suffered "no unpleasant consequences" (why, this is heavenly!)—be that as it may, the fact remains that this man depends upon his pen and not the pen upon the man. This is again the "unconscious," again "inspiration." The fellow could not refrain from painting a bright picture but forgot that once upon a time he would proclaim from the platform: "Against the kulak! The

fire is on the Right!" That, you see, comes from another compartment of the "unconscious."

To connect these facts, consciousness was indeed required, elementary consciousness, it is true, but even that was not on hand. But if frankness came out of the unconscious, then the sweet, whitewashing prattle about the "life of a toiler" is no longer inspiration. That amounts already to attempting—unsuccessfully, it is true—"to subject casualness to artificial selection." The further we go, the more there are of these attempts. Toward the end the "selection" becomes "artificial" so much so, that by then nothing remains of the "casualness," of historical reality. But before turning to this kind of specimens of the application of the historical method, we must make a halt before one more episode in the childhood of the author, seeing that the author himself ascribes to this episode an historical importance of its own.

The scene is now no longer in the country, in Janovka, but in a city, in Odessa. Trotzky is already a high school student. A goody-goody, always 5's (5 was the highest mark at school)—and in Russian composition even 5 plus.

"At school I was punctual, my school bag was tidy and my student's ticket (required for purposes of identification), rested securely in the left pocket of my jacket. I was indisputably the best pupil, far outdistancing the next one."

Of course his rating with the authorities was the highest. Then suddenly such a calamity. They had an extremely unpopular teacher in French with a chronic catarrh of the stomach and a rather unpleasant character to match. The high school students hated him and played all kinds of "little jokes" on him. Once when he had outraged the class by giving someone a zero without justification "they gave him a concert"—the school boys started to whisper, winking and nudging each other with their elbows. "I," says Trotzky, "was among them and not the kindest either; perhaps even the foremost." In plain words, he was the organizer of the whole thing.

The "concert" was given, 10-15 students were kept late and went "without dinner," but Trotzky already on the next day managed to "forget halfway yesterday's doings." The authorities were of course thousands of miles from casting any suspicion whatever on their best pupil. Suddenly it dawned upon his fellow students organized by Trotzky: "Here we are sitting without dinner, and he? And to think that he was the one who had contrived the whole affair!" One after another they started to give the authorities some "candid testimony." The authorities at first refused to believe them; but when "ten to fifteen" boys corroborated the tesimony of the first, the deceived principal's confidence in him was changed to fury. "Well, well, so he lead us around by the nose all this time!" They expelled Trotzky from the school, which was not quite in proportion to how much he had chipped in, but exactly proportioned to the fury of the authorities of whom he had made such fools. (But excluded only for a year; thereafter he completed his course without further adventures).

"Such was my first test that in a way may be called political. The following groups were formed around that episode: tattle-tales and grudge bearers at one extreme and frank, hardy lads at the other, with the neutral, shilly-shallying, vascillating masses in between. These three groups were still far from being completely weaned even for years after. Further on in life I used to meet them more than once under the most diverse circumstances." ("My Life").

As a matter of fact, when it will become necessary to familiarize ourselves

with the 1923 discussion "a la Trotzky," we will see the same picture. The leading organizer is a perfect wall flower, he had nothing to do with it, the affair did not concern him in the least! Those "frank and hardy lads," who are fighting a battle on behalf of this leader of theirs who was sitting idly in the bushes, are drawing up resolutions, are collecting signatures, speak at meetings. Finally the "vascillating mass," at first "shilly-shallying while as yet non-discriminating," now hesitating, then turning in a body to the "slanderers and grudge bearers," on whose side unexpectedly the whole Party appears with the exception of the "hardy lads," who lose some of their hardiness when this state of affairs is reached and after some delay move along behind the mass. A quite similar picture—and not to no purpose does Trotzky recall it more than once, only not always for a pertinent reason. As for the 1920 discussion he does not recall it at all for some reason or other.

(To be continued)

* * *

IMPERIALISM AND WORLD ECONOMY, By NIKOLAI BUKHARIN, International Publishers, N. Y. 170 pages.

Reviewed by EARL BROWDER

This book, written in 1915 and first published in 1917, immediately after the Bolshevik revolution, is one of the historical contributions to the Communist analysis of imperialism, the final stage of capitalism. Examining world economy, its growth, its organizational forms, in Part I, Comrade Bukharin proceeds in Part II to analyze the inner structure of "national economics," under the growth of monopoly; the development of markets and changed sale conditions, the problem of raw materials, the world movement of capital, and the relation of the national State to world economy. Part III deals with imperialism "as the repreduction of capitalist competition on a larger scale," modern imperialism as an historic category, the process of concentration and centralization of capital on a world scale, and the means of competitive struggle. The future of imperialism is the subject of Part IV, which deals with the question of "ultra-imperialism," war and economic evolution, and the role of the proletariat as the historically designated gravedigger of imperialism. This is the general outline of the book.

In the main, Comrade Bukharin's book is a systematic compilation of evidence in support of Lenin's theses on imperialism as the last stage of capitalism, with detailed examination of a large number of special phases of the subject. The fact that it was written 15 years ago does not in the least detract from its value, inasmuch as the book deals with details only as exemplifying the lines of development of imperialism as a system. (A reservation on the influence of the time-element will be dealt with later).

TARIFF POLICY OF IMPERIALISM

Without going into a detailed examination of the book as a whole, we may bring out some of its strong points by a few examples, beginning with the question of the tariff policy of imperialism.

The American renegades from Communism (Lovestone) who for long paraded under the banner of Comrade Bukharin, had curiously enough developed a theory on the tariff which Bukharin had completely smashed in 1915.

According to Lovestone the tariff policy of American imperialism is one of "the lowest possible tariff," while the protectionist policy is merely a hangover from the pre-imperialist epoch which is rapidly being liquidated with the maturing of imperialism. For Lovestone, high tariff was only an instrument of a young capitalism, but with the emergence of giant monopolies, this policy must be transformed into one of "free trade" as the best means of conquering the markets of the world and collecting its bills.

The Lovestone conception has, of course, not the slightest relation to the Leninist analysis of imperialism. Already in the time of Engels, in the first years of budding imperialism, its classical tariff policy was seen and outlined by him, in a note to the third volume of "Capital" (quoted by Bukharin) in which he said:

> "The fact that the rapidly and enormously growing productive forces grow beyond the control of the laws of the capitalist mode of exchanging commodities, inside of which they are supposed to move, impresses itself nowadays more and more even on the minds of the capitalists. This is shown especially by two symptoms. First, by the new and general mania for a protective tariff, which differs from the old protectionism especially by the fact that now the articles which are *capable of being exported* are the best protected. In the second place, it is shown by the *trusts* of manufacturers of whole spheres of production."

This general policy of finance capital, noted even by Engels, is formulated by Bukharin very clearly in the following paragraph:

> "Present-day 'high protectionism' is nothing but the economic policy of the cartels as formulated by the state; present day custom duties are cartel duties, i. e., they are a means in the hands of the cartels for obtaining additional profit, for it is quite obvious that if competition is eliminated or reduced to a minimum in the home market, the 'producers' can raise the prices inside the home market, adding an increment equal to the tariff. This additional profit makes it possible to sell commodities on the world market below the cost of production, to practice *dumping*, which is the peculiar export policy of the cartels. This explains the apparently strange phenomenon that present day tariffs 'protect' also export industries." (page 75.)

Pointing out that the United States, "that classical country of trusts and of the modern tariff policy," gives the clearest example, Bukharin shows the inevitable close connection between *imperialism* and *high tariff*:

> "Consolidated industry, led by heavy industries, appears as the most ardent advocate of a high tariff system, for the higher the tariff the greater is the additional profit, the easier it is to conquer new markets, and the greater is the general volume of profits obtained . The limit is reached only when the demand shrinks to such an extent that the loss is no longer compensated by the high prices. Inside these limitations, however, the tendency to higher tariffs is an undisputed fact."

Establishing this as the *general tendency* of imperialism, Bukharin concludes that "the very structure of modern capitalism gives birth to this form

of economic policy; together with that structure it comes into being, and together with it it will fall."

THE QUESTION OF "ORGANIZED CAPITALISM"

The reference to the tariff as a means to "eliminate competition" in the home market raises the question, to what extent did Bukharin hold those views in 1915, which fourteen years later ripened into his theory of "organized capitalism," the source of his sharp departure from the Leninist line of the Comintern. It is in the answer to this question that we must make a grave reservation to our previous estimation of the book as unaffected in its value by the intervening 14 years since it was written; for the reason that, while in 1915 the roots of Bukharin's theory of "organized capitalism," which are clearly discernible in this book, could be overlooked because of the impossibility of a political deviation arising therefrom in the practical tasks then facing the movement, this condition had profoundly changed in 1929.

To what extent had Bukharin already crystallized this theory in 1915? The question can be answered in a few quotations which already sharply expressed its leading thoughts.

> "It is a profound error to think, as the bourgeois economists do, that the elimination of free competition and its replacement by capitalist monopolies would do away with industrial crises. Such economists forget one 'trifle,' namely, that the economic activities of a 'national' economy are now conducted with a view towards world economy." (Page 53.)

Here is a more or less clear declaration of "the primacy of outer contradictions"; of the theory that, except for the "one" fact of international contradictions, crises would actually be eliminated by the growth of monopoly; that the "inner contradictions" are being replaced by the "outer contradictions."

> "The entire process, taken on a social scale, tends to turn the entire 'national' economy into a single combined enterprise with an organization connection between all the branches of production" (page 70). Thus various spheres of the concentration and organization process stimulate each other, creating a very strong tendency towards transforming the entire national economy *into one gigantic combined enterprise under the tutelage of the financial kings and the capitalist State, an enterprise which monopolizes the national market and forms the pre-requisite for organized production on a higher non-capitalist level.*" (pages 73-74). (Bukharin's emphasis).

In this conception of the "entire national economy" transformed into "one gigantic combined enterprise" as "the prerequisite" for the passing of production on to a "higher non-capitalist level," there are all the essentials of the theory of "organized capitalism."

And finally, in Chapter XV, "Conclusions," Bukharin condenses this thought into two summarizing sentences:

> "Capitalism has attempted to overcome its own anarchy by pressing it into the iron ring of State organization. But having eliminated competition within the state, it let loose all the devils of a world scuffle."

In view of Bukharin's later elaboration of these ideas into a system in opposition to the line of the C.P.S.U. and the Comintern, it is of more than ordinary interest to note that in the preface to Bukharin's book in 1915, Lenin concentrated attention in a polemic agaist Kautsky's theory of "ultra imperialism" which is a sort of father to the theory of "organized capitalism." It is in this introduction that Lenin wrote that much-quoted paragraph which says:

> "Can one, however, deny that in the abstract a new phase of capitalism to follow imperialism, namely, a phase of ultra-imperialism, is 'thinkable'? No. In the abstract one can think of such a phase. In practice, however, he who denies the sharp tasks of today in the name of dreams about soft tasks of the future becomes an opportunist. Theoretically it means to fail to base oneself on the developments now going on in real life, to detach oneself from them in the name of dreams. There is no doubt that the development is going *in the direction* of a single world trust that will swallow up all enterprises and all states without exception. But the development in this direction is proceeding under such stress, with such a tempo, with such contradictions, conflicts and convulsions—not only economical, but also political, national, etc.,—that before a single world trust will be reached, before the respective national finance capitals will have formed a world union of 'ultra-imperialism', imperialism will inevitably explode, capitalism will turn into its opposite."

IMPERIALISM AS AN HISTORIC CATEGORY

A chapter of Bukharin's book which has a special current interest for the American movement, is Chapter IX, dealing with imperialism as an historic category. Here Bukharin effectively destroys the vulgar theories of imperialism as representing a "struggle of races," or as "the policy of conquest in general." The special current interest of this chapter lies in its clear application to the case of Scott Nearing, whose relations with the Communist Party were severed as a result of his inability to understand that modern imperialism, the last stage of capitalism, cannot be explained by co-relating it to the previous imperialisms of history, under one general category of "conquest in general."

> "From this point of view," says Bukharin, "one can speak with equal right of Alexander the Macedonian's and the Spanish conquerors' imperialism, of the imperialism of Carthage and Ivan III, of ancient Rome and modern America, of Napoleon and Hindenburg. Simple as this theory may be, it is absolutely untrue. It is untrue because it 'explains' everything, i.e., it explains absolutely nothing." (p. 112).

Nothing whatever can be gained by an analysis of forms of imperialism. Not the form, but the moving class forces, and the system of economic relationships giving rise to these classes, are the features of modern imperialism which Marx and Lenin taught us to seize upon, and by so doing to understand imperialism, to know its strength and weakness, and by knowing to be able to destroy it. Bukharin makes this point abundantly clear, in a chapter which is perhaps one of the best in the entire book.

It would perhaps be hyper-critical to complain about a book, which makes no pretensions to "popularization" but is purely a scientific treatise, that it strikes one as a bit too formal, a trifle academic, a litle "highbrow." Yet one cannot help remembering that the greatest scientist of modern times, Lenin, never wrote a page that sounded formal, academic, or "highbrow." Our writers can still study Lenin to advantage for "style" as well as political line. And in one way or another, perhaps, even "style" has its relation to politics.

* * *

THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO OF KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS. With an Introduction and Explanatory Notes by D. Riazanov. International Publishers, New York, 1930. 365 p.

Reviewed by A. L.

This edition of the Communist Manifesto is different from all other English editions. The greater bulk of the volume is accounted for by the introduction, the explanatory notes and the various documents relating to the Manifesto. In this edition, the Manifesto itself occupies only one-eighth of the total volume. It is the material of the other seven eighths which makes this volume an invaluable contribution to the literature of Marxism in English.

For the first time, the English reader can really study the Manifesto in the making. Important documents that hitherto have been available to the special student only, have here been brought together in one convenient volume. These documents consist of the Communist Journal which was published originally in London in September, 1847; an article by Engels on the Revolutionary Movements of 1847; the rules and constitution of the Communist League; the demands of the Communist Party in Germany; and Engels' Principles of Communism, which, however, was previously available in English translation. The present edition also contains five prefaces which Marx and Engels wrote at various times between 1872 and 1893. In addition to this, there is a twenty-four page introduction by Riazanov which traces the history of the Communist League, summarizing the latest information concerning the authorship of the Manifesto and the conditions under which it was written.

One of the most valuable features of this edition, however, is the fact that Riazanov's explanatory notes make it an excellent introduction to Marxism. The sixty-three notes which take up over half of the entire volume, supply a wealth of supplementary information, illuminate the source and origin of many of the ideas in the Manifesto and generally contribute towards a better understanding of the text.

By having drawn freely on the other writings of Marx and Engels, Riazanov has not only facilitated the understanding of the Manifesto, but he has at the same time laid the basis for an understanding of these other works. Without being an exhaustive commentary, the explanatory notes, nevertheless, give the reader the benefit of Riazanov's extensive knowledge and supply him with information which could otherwise be gotten only by the widest reading in a voluminous literature.

The Communist Manifesto has generally served as the initiation text of Marxists. With the notes and other material supplied by Riazanov, the value of the Manifesto for this purpose has been greatly enhanced. The most urgent need of the Party and the working class today is the speedy development of new corps of revolutionary Marxists. This cannot be done unless

we really learn to read and study, unless we absorb and spread the literature of Marxism, unless we actually combine our every-day activity in the class struggle with the theoretical achievements of Marx and Lenin—in short, unless we learn to be revolutionary Marxists. We may insist that the practical struggle keeps us too busy to learn Marxism. But it is precisely the practical struggle that proves sooner or later in the most practical way that we cannot do without Marxism, that we may deceive *ourselves* but that it is impossible to deceive *objective reality*.

The objection may be raised that we have travelled far since the Manifesto was written and that it would therefore, be more practical to study the Program of the Communist International. Naturally, the Manifesto does not take into account the events of the latest period. That is why the Program of the Communist International was made necessary. It is true also that Marx and Engels likewise realized that the Manifesto was out of date in many respects. How much more true, then, is this today when capitalism has already advanced far in its final stage of imperialism, of imperialist wars, of proletarian revolutions, of vast, revolutionary upsurges, not to mention the existence of the Soviet Union! In this fundamental sense, the Manifesto was brought up to date by the Program of the Communist International.

But the Program of the Comintern has not automatically "shelved" the Communist Manifesto. It represents a continuation of the basic principles of the Manifesto. But it does not represent its negation. The Program of the Comintern does not replace the Manifesto in the sense that it makes it unnecessary to study the latter. Marx's *Capital* was written before the era of imperialism. Nevertheless, Lenin's *Imperialism* does not "replace" *Capital*. For a Marxist, it is necessary to study both *Capital* and *Imperialism*. One cannot seriously claim to be a revolutionary Marxist today without having gone through the school of Lenin. Nevertheless, no Communist will even try to argue that Leninism "replaces" Marxism.

The Communist Manifesto is an historical document which must be studied in itself for an understanding of the basic principles of Marxism. Even the ideologists of the bourgeoisie recognize the historical importance of the Manifesto. Harold J. Laski, for example, speaks of the Manifesto in the following terms: "No description can do justice to the brilliant vigor of the whole. Every phase of it is a challenge. . . . It is the book of men who have viewed the whole progress of history from an eminence and discovered therein an inescapable lesson." And he quite correctly understands that the Manifesto represents "a critical insight into the facts, progress and general results of the actual social movement" which constituted a real advance over the systems of the Utopian socialists, as much as they described the economic conditions of their time.

Riazanov himself remarks that "the Manifesto has an international significance, marking as it does, not only a distinct stage in the development of socialist thought but likewise a stage in the development of thought in general, in the history of culture." (p. 258).

It is worth noting how Lenin looked upon the Manifesto. In his opinion the Manifesto represented the embodiment of a new Weltanschaung or philosophy; a distinct advance over Feuerbach in that it constituted an application of materialism, not only to nature, but also to society; an application of dialectics as the most scientific view of evolution; a development of theory of class struggle; and a positive statement of the historic role of the proletariat. Thus Lenin wrote: "This work presented the new world view with the clarity and precision of genius; it presented consistent materialism which

embraces also the sphere of social life; dialectics as the most many-sided and deepest theory of development; the theory of class struggle and of the world, historical revolutionary role of the proletariat, the creator of a new, Communist society." (Lenin: The Imperialist War).

If we look at the specific contents of the Manifesto, we can see very clearly where it needs to be brought up to date, but at the same time how much it can still offer us. This already Lenin's description has shown. If we draw attention only to the single fact that the Manifesto can teach us much in regard to dialectics, it will have justified itself sufficiently in the eyes of any Marxist. It is characteristic of Lenin as a Marxist that he pays special attention to precisely this aspect of the Manifesto. The dialectic method is the basic instrument of every Marxist, and it is this, first of all, that we must learn from the works of Marx and Engels. It is precisely because Marxian dialectics has not become second nature to us, because we have not learned to use it "instinctively" that we made so many mistakes in our every-day practice. Naturally this is not the only reason in every case. But it is a vital reason.

First, the Manifesto traces the evolution of bourgeois society. Of course bourgeois society has developed far since the Manifesto was written. Secondly, it sketches the evolution of the proletariat as a class. Thirdly, it presents and criticizes all objections to Communism as advanced by the bourgeois ideologists. Fourth, it explains the tactics of the Communists in relation to the other working class Parties. In this respect, the situation has changed fundamentally, and it is absolutely necessary to consult Riazanov's historical notes to understand the full significance of this section. Fifth, it analyzes the numerous tendencies which were striving for ascendancy among the Socialists and Communists at the time the Manifesto was written, rejecting all except St. Simon, Fourier and Owen, but supplanting their utopian socialism with Marx's proletarian Communism, while accepting their criticism of bourgeois society. Naturally, our task today is not to repeat what Marx and Engels have already achieved, but to analyze and expose the tendencies within the working class today. Sixth, the Manifesto analyzes the Communist tactics in the time of revolution, but especially in relation to the bourgeois parties . Here again the later experience of Marx and Engels must be taken into consideration. And this once more illustrates the importance of Riazanov's historical notes and commentary.

The publisher's "Foreword" is quite correct when it states: "There is no document of the working-class movement that has so clearly marked the beginning of a new phase in its development, or has had so much influence on that movement as the Communist Manifesto. No other document has had so wide a circulation in so many languages." It is an interesting commentary that in the eleven years between August, 1914 and September, 1925 about fifty-one new editions of the Manifesto were publishd altogether in eighteen different languages.

It is necessary to draw attention to Riazanov's contention concerning the authorship of the Manifesto. In his opinion the Communist Manifesto was written not by Marx and Engels, but by Marx alone. It is of course a well known fact that Marx and Engels often erred in a matter of authorship. The two men worked so closely; Engels often wrote articles for Marx; they exchanged ideas and information by word of mouth and by correspondence so much so that it is often impossible to identify the original author. For example, the series of articles which Marx published in the *New York Tribune* and which were later republished as *Revolution and Counter-Revolution* under Marx's name, turned out to have been written by Engels for Marx

with the use of certain material supplied by Marx. Nevertheless, Engels was thoroughly convinced that these articles belonged to Marx. Riazanov's contention that Marx alone was the author of the Manifesto does not mean that Engels had nothing to do with the ideas contained in the Manifesto. As a matter of fact, the basic ideas contained in the Manifesto had been worked out by the two men as early as 1845-1846. This entire question, however, is purely of historical, biographical interest.

There are a few typographical errors in the volume, as for example on page one where 1810 instead of 1820 is given as the year of Engels' birth. The volume also contains a chronology of events which the student will find very useful. Generally, the reader will find a treasure of information in this volume.

* * *

THE NATIONAL INCOME AND ITS PURCHASING POWER. By WILFORD ISBELL KING. *National Bureau of Economic Research*, New York, 1930.

Reviewed by S. SAKURAI

Figures are like maps. Read to understand them and you will learn a great deal from them. For figures, once compiled, can tell stories very fluently.

"The National Income and Its Purchasing Power" published by the National Bureau of Economic Research, as we might expect from its title, is a book full of figures. It is a book which, with figures compiled by years of collective efforts, tries to show and prove the so-called "economic prosperity" of present day America. (Since the stock market crash of last October very few deny the economic crisis which now set in full swing in U. S.).

The National Bureau of Economic Research immediately after its foundation in 1920, set for itself the task of "ascertaining the approximate size and distribution of the total income of the people of the United States." To insure the "reliability" of the outcome, "two" investigations were conducted "independent" of each other. When the series of totals were compiled, "it was found that they were in close accord," and this general agreement was "*believed* to indicate that *neither was widely in error*."

The book, as we stated at the outset, tries to prove with car loads of figures the American "prosperity." Did it succeed? According to the figures given in the present volume in 1909 every inhabitant of the United States received an average income of $327. By 1928 this figure rose to $749 in current dollars, an increase of more than one hundred per cent in nominal wages. "For the typical family of five," the book says, "this would mean an income of $3,745." Truly an enviable figure. In actuality, however, the income of the U. S. is not "equally divided among the inhabitants." A blessed fact for the bourgeoisie. A greater part of the national income is being concentrated in fewer hands and there are millions of workers who are receiving practically starvation wages. To refute this by figures in Table XII we see the following:

ESTIMATED PER CAPITA RECEIPTS FOR VARIOUS CLASSES OF INDIVIDUALS

	Current Dollars			*Dollars of* 1913		
Year	*Per Capita*	*Per Salaried Employee*	*Per Wage Worker*	*Per Capita*	*Per Salaried Employee*	*Per Wage Worker*
1909	$327	$976	$527	$346	$1,934	$556
1913	368	1,066	594	$368	1,066	594
1921	585	1,696	983	$339	950	550
1927	748	2,084	1,205	$448	1,220	705
1928	749	——	——	$452	——	—

Supposing for the "typical family of five" one, i. e., the husband, alone is working. In this case, if he is a salaried employee he would have received in 1927 an average of $2.084 in current dollars, i. e., $417 per head, or $332 below average per capita. If he is a wage worker his average in the same year would have been $1,205 or $251 per person, one-third of the "prosperous" per capita average. Even the author has to say the following: "*As a matter of fact, of course* (emphasis mine—S. S.) the total realized income is far from being equally divided, some families receiving *extremely large* amounts and others being in poverty." In 1926, 87 per cent of the population received less than $5,000 yearly, while 1.65 per cent received $150,000 or more. What then, is the use of showing such average "per capita" figures except to give an illusion to workers that they are prosperous? Coming back to the aforementioned $3,745 figures again: It is astounding to find that these advocates of American "prosperity" solemnly declare that "even this $3,745 figure for the family of five, i. e., $749 per head," is not "affluent according to *American standard*." Moreover, these same gentlemen are careful enough to warn us that we should *not* assume "this process of equal division (of national income) *does not reduce the productivity* of the nation" for such "an assumption is *probably contrary to fact*."

We have been talking about "per capita" in *current* dollars. Let us now examine the purchasing power of the current dollars. (In determining the purchasing power of the dollar index figures for various necessities of life were used as a basis. This part in itself, by the way, deserves our close attention.) Translated into the 1913 dollar what does this $749 amount to? Seven hundred and forty-nine dollars is no more $749, but it must be made to read $452. Still more significant is the fact that even the bourgeois scholars have to admit that twice, in 1914-15, and in 1919-21, the realized income of the American people fell below the 1913 level. (This is in terms of 1913 dollars.) In 1921, for example, inhabitants of the U. S. received an average of $339 in 1913 dollars, i. e., 29 dollars less than in 1913. The adovcates of American "prosperity," however, do not forget to mention the fact that $452 per capita income in 1913 dollars means that the "*average* American was one-third better off in 1928 than he was in 1913." Mathematically correct. But who are the "average Americans"? Certainly not the wage workers.

Let us now take the estimated percentage of the entire realized income of the people of continental United States, going to different groups. The figures show that the enterpreneurs and other property owners shared in 1919 49.03 per cent of the realized income of the continental United States as against 50.97 per cent for the employees (including salaries, wages, pensions, insurance, etc.). By 1928 the proportion had changed. According to one of the charts listed in the present volume, by 1928 the share of the

enterpreneurs and other property owners fell down to 42.83 per cent, whereas that of employees rose to 57.17 per cent. The author of the present volume here, at last, obtained desired figures. They look triumphantly at us and shout, "Look, American employees are 'prosperous.'" But is the American working class of today sharing more liberally in the nation's income than it did twenty years ago? Hardly. First of all "employees" and "working class" are not to be confused. When the book speaks of "employees," that includes both salaried and wage workers. Thus it becomes necessary that we distinguish these two and find out percentages of the increase of the share of the two groups in order to paint more truthful pictures. The wage workers of America in 1909 received 35.56 per cent of the realized income of the nation and, in 1928, in spite of the 36 per cent increase in their number, the increase in the share was less than half of one per cent, i. e., 36.05 per cent. It becomes clear, therefore, the greater part of the above-mentioned 6½ per cent increase in the share of American "employees" is accounted for by the "salaried employees" and not by wage workers (who, by the way, according to the present volume, are more or less in an insecure position.) In fact, the share of "salaried" employees within these same twenty years rose from 14.58 per cent to 19.93 per cent. But even this figure has to be carefully scanned. For as the author himself admits, the "salaried employees are far from constituting a homogeneous group" and highly paid officials, small in number, "account for the greater part" of this increased percentage. The president of the United States, the governor of the state of New York, come under "salaried" group, together with the presidents of big corporations, etc. As far as the ordinary salaried employees are concerned, they remain even today as "white collar slaves."

So far we have been exposing how cleverly these bourgeois scholars compiled figures to suit their own purpose. Now we seriously ask whether the American working class is really sharing more in the nation's income or not. According to our view the only feasible way to judge this is to see how much of the value added by application of labor goes to the working class itself in the form of wages. Very conveniently the present volume does not give this figure. We take therefore the figures from the statistical extract of 1929. On page 788 we find the following figures (in thousands of dollars).

Census Year	*Wages*	*Value Added by Manufacture*
1914	$4,067,096	$9,855,868
1921	8,200,359	18,326,832
1923	11,007,851	25,845,659
1925	10,727,358	26,771,375
1927	10,848,803	27,585,210

The percentages, therefore, in order, are:

Year	*Percentage*
1914	41.27
1921	44.47
1923	42.05
1925	40.00
1927	39.32

What do these figures show? The share of the American working class in the value created is *gradually* but *steadily declining year after year* since

the end of the world war. Already in the past six years, from 1921-1927, the drop was 4.77 per cent. Here we may quote Owen D. Young, apologist of American imperialism: "Let no man think that the wages and living standards of the American workers can for long be maintained at a level higher than in other civilized countries."

The present volume, in spite of its pretended fairness, in its effort to prove "prosperity," exposed its real class character. As far as the American working class is concerned there never was "prosperity," nor will there be any in the future as long as we have the present system of production. In reviewing the present volume we regret very much that we are unable to produce any considerable amount of positive figures ourselves. Most of the time we have to depend upon figures prepared by bourgeois scholars and governmental statistics. The very nature of our movement prevents most of our rank and file from devoting their whole time in compilation of facts and figures. For this reason, and no other, we regard the present volume as valuable. Readers might be interested in knowing that the names of Harry W. Laidler and Matthew Woll are included among the directors at large of the bureau from which the present volume is published.

* * *

INVESTMENTS OF UNITED STATES CAPITAL IN LATIN AMERICA

By MAX WINKLER, World Peace Foundation, Boston, Mass. 297 pp.

Reviewed by R. DOONPING.

A book stuffed with figures, names of banks and business corporations and stories of loans and financial negotiations and written in the driest possible manner, must appear at first sight, to be repugnant to the general reader. But the figures, names of banks and business firms, loans and financial negotiations together tell a tale of such historical significance that no class-conscious worker can afford to ignore. Contrary to the intention of he author, who, as a banker, has his own reasons for writing this book, it nevertheless paints a picture of an ever extending network of blood-sucking pipes of Yankee imperialism in Latin America.

Even though U. S. imperialism was penetrating into Latin America long before 1914, it was only in the period after the war that we witness the phenomenal growth of U. S. investment and trade in Latin America. "For every American dollar planted in the territory south of Panama in 1912, there are ten growing there today." "Since 1914, Latin Americans have regularly sought capital in New York. The Department of Commerce computes a total of $966,701,099 of American corporate issues offered publicly in the United States between 1914 and 1928 in 162 issues." Since the above figures only include "isues offered publicly," "the investment of United States capital has been more extensive than the figures for corporate issues indicate." Taking all the known investments into account, the author estimates that "the total of United States investments in Latin America at the begining of 1929 was $5,587,494,100, of which about 30 percent was loaned to governments." This is approximately one-third of the total of all foreign investments of the United States!

Despite the author's repeated attempts to cover up the political dominance of Yankee imperialism in America, the facts are such tha he has to admit that "within ten years (after the war) no less than ten Latin American countries have had American financial advisors." In Colombia, Cuba,

Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, and Peru, U. S. "experts" "reconstructed their finances" with the "cooperation" of the U. S. government. In Bolivia, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico and Paraguay, U. S. "experts" worked but the hand of the U. S. government was not so clearly shown. An American financial advisor was "permanently" stationed in Haiti. In seven cases out of ten, Prof. Kemmerer, the notorious emissary of Wall St., "reorganized" the finances of these Latin American countries in order to make them safe for exploitation by Wall Street capital.

The system of "advising" and "reorganizing" the finances of debtor countries is more or less a product of American imperialism, started and tried out in Latin America, and is now being extended to Europe and Asia. It is a "necessary" accompaniment of the export of the period of capital which, as Lenin indicated, is the dominating feature of the period of imperialism. It is a new method of financial and political control by which the wealth, including the labor power of the workers, of the debtor nation is mortgaged to the financial capitalists of the creditor nation.

The facts as given in this book contribute much in smashing the erroneous theory of decolonization which raised so much controversy during the Sixth Congress of the Communist International. Despite the tremendous amount of foreign capital invested in Latin America, little manufacturing industry is developed there. "Foreign capital has to a large extent been invested in railroads and highways." Agriculture and mining are still the leading industries. The imperialists are primarily interested in extracting natural wealth—raw materials—from Latin America and keep these countries open markets for manufactured commodities. All the power of the imperialists is directed to this end. Under such circumstances, no colony can develop a really home manufacturing industry, especially the heavy industries, and without a manufacturing industry of its own a colony or semi-colony certainly cannot be considered as "decolonized"! Of course, it goes without saying that such trifling industries as the manufacture of traveling bags, vanity cases, card cases, etc., which the author mentioned as developing rapidly in Latin America, have not much bearing on the question of industrialization and "decolonization."

The book also gives facts and figures that vividly bring to the foreground the acuteness of Anglo-American antagonism in Latin America although the author by no means expressly points this out. But facts are obstinate things and they point to inevitable conclusions whether the author welcomes such conclusions or not. The few tables in the appendix giving 1913 as well as 1927 or 1929 figures of Latin American trade with Great Britain and America and also the amount of the investments of the two powers in the different Latin American countries in detail, reveal facts which constitute one of the most important basis in the world-wide antagonism between these two big imperialist powers that no amount of diplomatic phraseology and lying pacifist propaganda can cover up. For instance according to the tables, in 1927 United States commerce with Latin America gained 118.32 percent as compared with 1913, while Great Britain only registered a gain of slightly more than 26 percent. At the same time, Great Britain's investments in Latin America in the same period showed only an increase of 18 percent as against a gain of 349 percent by Wall Street! As the author calmly put it: "the center of investment gravity shifted from London and the role of New York as Latin America's banker steadily increased."

Great Britain, of course, is doing its best to stop this American advance, and to reinforce its own position. This explains why such great importance was

attached to the D'Abernon Commission last year by the British capitalists and its tool, the MacDonald government. But the D'Abernon Commission, as the British ambassador to Argentina had to admit a short time ago, did not make much headway. The British ruling class is trying other means; the American capitalists not only will not give in, but are advancing with full speed in Latin America. No diplomatic soft-pedalling can solve this basic contradiction. This situation can only lead to war.

But the reader here must not misunderstand that the author of the book, Dr. Winkler, drew all these conclusions which the reviewer attempts to explain in the above paragraphs. The author, himself a prominant banker, is the foremost authority in Wall Street on the question of American foreign investments. He certainly has access to materials that are denied to the "lay" scholar. This explains partly the unusual wealth of material contained in this book, which makes it an excellent companion volume to Robert Dunn's famous book on the question of American foreign investments. However, this book is not much of an economic analysis of U. S. investments in Latin America. It is rather a handbook, first giving a general picture of the situation, then describing in detail the state of affairs in each individual country. But when a class conscious worker reads a book of this nature his chief interest is to look for what objective facts the author gives rather than his "analysis." It is precisely in this sense that this book is of great value to the revolutionist and class-conscious worker.

MASS CIRCULATION

To Keep Our Paper
and Party

GROWING

MASS SUPPORT

To Keep the
Central Organ
of Our Party

GOING

HAVE YOU, as a Party member, fulfilled your task of securing your minimum of $5 worth of subscriptions and donations?

IS YOUR Party Unit, Section, District completely mobilized and actively engaged in our campaign?

Into Action at Once!

LET'S BUILD A MIGHTY MASS MOVEMENT BY WINNING TENS OF THOUSANDS OF NEW READERS FOR YOUR PAPER.

Daily Worker

26-28 Union Square New York, N. Y.

Two months..$1.00
Six months...$3.00
One year.....$6.00