
December 1944

Fourth International

THE ELEVENTH CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN TROTSKYISTS

By The Editors

Resolution Of The Socialist Workers Party On “The European Revolution And The Tasks Of The Revolutionary Party”

Discussion Articles By E. R. Frank and Felix Morrow

LESSONS OF THE 1944 ELECTIONS

Twenty Cents

Manager's Column

A sure indication of the growing influence of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL is the increasing number of unsolicited subscriptions. Subscriptions from Iowa, Minn., Connecticut, and Ohio were sent in on the printed coupon clipped from the magazine. Others — from Michigan, Massachusetts, California, New York, North Dakota — came in letter form. These letters are interesting and we quote excerpts from a few.

Dickinson, N. D.: "Please send FOURTH INTERNATIONAL and THE MILITANT for a year. I enclose a money order for \$4. Please send the July and August issues with the bound volume of the 1943 F. I. As I do not know the price of the latter could you send it C.O.D."

New York: "I'm enclosing \$5.75 for which please send me one bound volume of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL for 1943, one copy of the F. I. for January 1944, and a subscription for six months."

The material contained in FOURTH INTERNATIONAL is of lasting use and value and a month seldom goes by without our receiving requests for back issues. For instance, a subscriber in Seattle ordered a full file of NEW INTERNATIONAL (former name of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL prior to May 1940) for 1934, 1935 and 1936. He informed us that he is going to get these issues bound to preserve them.

We still have some almost complete files of NEW INTERNATIONAL for these years and individual copies of various issues. If you lack miscellaneous issues to complete your file or would like to have a file for binding, write us at once. Single copies cost 40c. each; a complete file \$5.

From Milwaukee we received a request for a more recent back issue: "I would like to get two copies of the recent issue of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL that contained an article about Gandhi, non-violence, pacifism, etc. Will you send them to me and bill me for them? I will remit immediately upon receipt of the bill." (The articles referred to appeared in the October 1944 issue under the titles:

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Editor: FELIX MORROW

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Trotskyism in India, The Present Political Situation in India (Theses), Gandhi on the Road to Betrayal, The August 1942 Struggle, The Famine in India.)

A letter from our Los Angeles agent reports a planned program of expansion for the near future: "Many of our plans out here will really assume proportions after the Convention. More stands for both THE MIL-

ITANT and FOURTH INTERNATIONAL are certain as well as placing many of Pioneer publications in stores. The list of F. I. subscribers should enable us to plug enough holes so as to sell another ten copies a month or to get at least that many more subs."

Our agent in Akron informs us that the public library there will display FOURTH INTER-

NATIONAL: "The Akron Public Library has a new Business & Labor Service Department. I brought in several issues of THE MILITANT and FOURTH INTERNATIONAL today. The Librarian in charge seemed familiar with our literature and promised that they would be added to the service if we would send gift subscriptions. While only the current issues of most publications are kept on the open shelves in the Business & Labor Service, both current and several past issues are instantly available — on open shelves — to the interested reader.

The cost of a subscription to FOURTH INTERNATIONAL meant considerable sacrifice to a friend in Havana, Cuba: "I want you to excuse me for my delay in sending you the subscription price of your newspaper and magazine. I didn't pay you before because for sometime now I have not been enjoying good health and have scarcely worked. Although I cannot read much, I wish to continue to subscribe to your publications."

A subscriber in Canada wants to make sure he will have a bound volume of FOURTH INTERNATIONAL. He asks: "If I am allowed to send the money order could you hold a bound copy of the F. I. until it is allowed entry into Canada?"

A reader of our literature in England sent the following letter of appreciation: "I think the best way to thank you is by lending the books and pamphlets out to other workers so that they may become acquainted with our policy and movement in order to fit them for the great tasks that lie ahead of the Fourth International.

"I do not wish to take too much advantage of your generosity, but I would be most grateful if I could have FOURTH INTERNATIONAL and THE MILITANT regularly. I have quite a job to procure one of the few which reach our section. I will endeavor to obtain a permit to pay for the subscription if you can let me have a regular copy of each.

"Will close by thanking you once again and also be sending greetings to the 18 and wishing you success in their release in the near future."

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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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REVIEW OF THE MONTH

By THE EDITORS

Lessons of the 1944 Presidential Campaign Under the Two-Party System

BREAKDOWN OF THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM

Roosevelt's re-election for a fourth term marked a further stage in the breakdown of the traditional two-party system of capitalist politics in America. The Republican party attempted its comeback through strict adherence to the hoary rules of the two-party farce of tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee. The Republican Old Guard staked everything on the accustomed swing of the pendulum. They groomed their candidate and their program exactly as the "outs" are supposed to when it is their turn to replace the "ins." Dewey, the candidate they put up, was manufactured as closely to specifications for a bourgeois political puppet as if he had been turned out on a wood lathe.

According to the Hoyle of two-party politics, when the masses are tired of a regime, they vote *against* it. Hence it is incumbent on the party out of office to avoid any act or declaration which might attract the ire of the public. This was Roosevelt's tactic in the months before the 1932 election. Dewey, in keeping with this tradition, kept his mouth shut, sedulously avoided any spectacular maneuvers such as the world tours that drew attention to Willkie, committed himself on public issues as little as possible, and made himself out to be a plain man concerned about the American home and efficient honest government.

The program of the Republicans, as synthetic as their candidate, was based on no other calculation than avoiding the ire of people presumably tired of the present regime. On the fundamental questions of the day, the Republican program was indistinguishable from the Democratic.

If the two-party system had not suffered a serious breakdown, this type of campaign should have put Dewey into office.

INITIAL GROPING FOR POLITICS OF PROGRAM

The depression of 1929-1933, however, started the American people on the road to the politics of program, particularly the workers. To the minds of the majority of workers, politics now means more than simply voting against the incumbents. They are concerned that a vote against the incumbents does not become converted into a return of the "depression party" and of pre-depression politics. In their voting has entered the element of being *for* something as well as *against* something. This element, when it has fully expanded and reached complete flowering, will mean no longer voting simply against an individual but voting *for a program*. Today it means the first beginnings of class consciousness on the political field.

Instructive in this connection is the fact that the American Labor Party and its split-off the Liberal Party registered more than 800,000 votes in New York state, double the 1940 vote. These parties supported Roosevelt, their program was the same

as Roosevelt's. The workers voted for these parties because there was no other avenue on the ballot to register their dissatisfaction with the capitalist two-party system.

The American working class does not want to go back to the politics of the era of Hoover. It wants to go forward. The experience of John L. Lewis is clear evidence. Despite his great popularity as a trade union leader, he not only failed to swing the working class back of Willkie in 1940, but in 1944, after four years more of Roosevelt, he could not even persuade the miners to back Dewey.

The politicalization of the working class has been deepened and accelerated by the war. The working class is deeply concerned over the war and the peace it hopes will follow. The workers are worried over the possibility of a third world war, agitated over "reconversion," the likelihood of widespread unemployment, and mounting living costs. The Negroes are becoming increasingly embittered over the spread of Jim Crow. No one can expect to gain a serious hearing from the workers unless he is prepared to take a stand on these fundamental issues. Dewey could not hope to win the working class unless he was prepared to go to the *left* of Roosevelt.

Instead, the Republican Old Guard chose to insult the intelligence of the working class by dangling a red herring before the ballot box. Roosevelt, they claimed, was under the influence of Communists because he was supported by the Political Action Committee, which in turn was influenced by Stalinists, who in turn—claimed the Republican propagandists—are revolutionists of the type of Lenin! The absurdity of these allegations could only make the Republican propaganda ludicrous in the eyes of every worker consciously turning to politics.

The vote in the industrial areas of the nation, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, etc., showed that the working class, holding the balance of power, gave Roosevelt his fourth term. This is admitted by virtually all commentators.

A SIGNIFICANT SAMPLE POLL

An interesting sample poll sent in to *The Militant* prior to the election by a worker in an auto plant reveals graphically the political trend of the working class. Of 58 workers polled, one voted for Browder, eight for Norman Thomas, seven for Dewey, 42 for Roosevelt. When asked whether they would have changed their vote from Dewey or Roosevelt to a Labor Party had it been in the field, 42 replied yes! This significant sample poll reveals the perfidious role of such labor leaders as Sidney Hillman.

Hillman and his stripe, who organized the Political Action Committee ostensibly to enable labor to play an active role in politics, exerted every effort to corral the labor vote for Roosevelt, alleging that Roosevelt has shown himself a "friend of labor."

True enough, labor made tremendous gains during Roosevelt's incumbency. But these gains were made against bitter opposition on the part of Roosevelt, as can be easily proved by a most cursory glance at his labor record, beginning with his strike-breaking activities during the great union organization drives of 1934-37 to his present-day maintenance of the Little Steel wage-freezing formula.

Roosevelt's program is continuation of the government role in labor disputes which has made the past four years some of the most difficult in the history of the labor movement. Roosevelt's program is continuation of wage-freezing in the face of sky-rocketing living costs, continuation of the no-strike restrictions, continuation of government interference on behalf of the bosses in every matter vitally affecting the unions. Roosevelt intends to continue placating the Southern Bourbons who constitute the backbone of the Democratic party. Roosevelt intends to entrench Jim Crow still more solidly in the armed forces and in those areas of the country which previous to his regime were relatively liberal in this respect.

Hillman, Murray and the rest promised that support for Roosevelt would ensure consideration for labor's interests during the next four years. Lewis made the same promises in 1936 when he organized Labor's Non-Partisan League to help re-elect Roosevelt. In 1937, during the Little Steel strike, Roosevelt gave labor its reward by pronouncing a "curse on both your houses," by which he meant the house of labor. The Little Steel strike was lost and labor took a serious setback.

It can safely be predicted that we will not have long to wait until Roosevelt hands labor a similar reward for its support in 1944. Already the War Labor Board has turned down the demands of the steel workers, again upholding the Little Steel wage-freezing formula. In the first major crisis affecting labor we can expect Roosevelt to come down with a mailed fist. And when that happens the misleaders of labor will undoubtedly complain, why no worse could have been expected from Dewey! The character of the Hillman-Murray labor "victory" in the election will then become manifest. In Congress there will

not be one single representative of the labor movement to take the floor and defend labor's interests. That labor does not yet have such a representative despite its great activity in the election, despite its power at the polls, is the best measure of the perfidy of the trade union heads.

FOREIGN POLICY FOR AND BY WALL STREET

On the field of international politics where American labor has vital interests, Roosevelt will continue the same reactionary program that has marked his regime from its inception. General Franco could never have come to power in Spain had he not been aided by the policies of the State Department under Roosevelt. Roosevelt's tenderness toward fascism has continued ever since, achieving notoriety in his dealings with ex-fascist officials in Italy and the most reactionary elements of French politics. Already Roosevelt has appointed a stooge of the House of Morgan, E. R. Stettinius, Jr., as Secretary of State. Just as the liberals, exemplified by the *Nation*, complained of Roosevelt's policy in Spain and then in North Africa and Italy, yet trembled lest Roosevelt not be re-elected for a fourth term, so we can expect them to complain more than once in the days to come that in foreign policy nothing more reactionary could have been expected from Dewey!

Roosevelt's continued program of reaction in both domestic and foreign affairs, however, will inevitably impel the working class farther along the road of political action. If the working class intervened in the 1944 election to halt the political pendulum from swinging back to the two-party system, they will now begin intervening to establish *independent* political action. Since this road is the road to complete class consciousness, we can expect some stormy developments in the period now opening up.

Just as Lewis proved impotent in herding the workers behind the elephant, so Hillman and the rest will presently prove impotent at keeping the workers behind the jackass.

The building of an independent labor party is now on the order of the day.*

The Eleventh Convention of the American Trotskyist Movement

By THE EDITORS

With clenched fists upraised and defiant voices confidently singing the *International*, 400 delegates and visitors closed the four day convention of the Socialist Workers Party held November 16-19 in New York City. This was the Eleventh Convention in the sixteen-year history of the American Trotskyist movement. A number of unique features make this national gathering outstanding.

This was the second convention since Leon Trotsky, founder and inspirer of the world Trotskyist movement, was murdered by one of Stalin's hired assassins. It was the second convention since we were deprived of the genius of Trotsky's Marxist appraisal and analysis of world events, his wise counsel, his inspiring leadership. In addition, we were deprived at this convention of the guidance and participation of the outstanding leaders of the American Trotskyist movement. As a consequence of a conspiracy hatched by

Roosevelt and Tobin in the summer of 1941, they were put behind prison bars on the eve of U. S. entry into the war.

The convention was, therefore, expressive of a double test the party has undergone: the testing of the party's temper under conditions of capitalist persecution; the testing of the party cadres, their ability to carry forward the work of the party in the absence of the imprisoned leadership and to supply the necessary ideological and organizational guidance to the vanguard movement for the Socialist liberation of mankind.

How the party met this test was summarized in the Organization Report to the convention by Comrade Stein, Acting National Secretary, as follows:

"The imprisonment of our 18 comrades confronted the party with its most serious test. Included among the prisoners were the outstanding leaders of the party — its National

Secretary, Labor Secretary, Chairman of the National Committee, editors of the press, New York organizer, Minneapolis organizer, and others — all comrades with many years of experience in the revolutionary movement behind them. Comrades who occupied key posts in the party organization and in its leadership. By striking this blow at us the conspirators in Washington hoped to paralyze our will and our ability to struggle. They calculated that this imprisonment would not merely decapitate the party, but also terrorise it.

"But they failed to accomplish their purpose. By our tenacity and hard work we frustrated the aims of Roosevelt, Tobin and Co. We turned the blow of the imprisonment into a party victory. The Minneapolis case — the imprisonment of the 18 — symbolized our party banner. We raised it high as the banner of uncompromising Trotskyist struggle against capitalism, against imperialist war, and for a Socialist society. This was no banner for fainthearts and cowards to flock to. But many revolutionary militants did rally to this banner and joined our party. Our recruitment has been greater since the imprisonment than in any comparative previous period.

"How and why was this possible?

"Because we've always been entirely free of illusions about capitalism and what it has in store for us. The imprisonment did not come as an unexpected blow. What has capitalism to offer a revolutionist except frameup and persecution? We knew this when we first came into the revolutionary movement. We knew this when we joined it to be participants in a life-and-death struggle. But we also knew that this fight is the only fight worth the sacrifice of one's freedom and even one's life.

"Our party was not caught unawares. Through years of preparatory work we steeled a cadre capable of assuming the responsible tasks of the imprisoned comrades and carrying on the work of the party with devotion and confidence. The substitute leadership did not come out of nowhere. They are no apparatus appointees. They are all comrades who have distinguished themselves by their work in the revolutionary movement for many years. They were not imposed upon the party but came into their positions naturally, as a matter of course. And this is how the party accepted them, placing full confidence in the substitute leadership and displaying a magnificent spirit of cooperation. Not for a moment was there the least sign of jitteriness or panic in the party ranks following the imprisonment. The party as a whole remained steadfast throughout and confident of its own strength and ability to carry on.

"The substitute leadership was assembled from various parts of the country. A number of the comrades in the substitute leadership hardly knew each other except that they had met at national party gatherings every now and then. Very few of us had had the opportunity of working together for any period of time. But we were united by a common program, which is the firmest of all bonds. We were united in the determination to demonstrate to the whole world the vitality of our party. We were united by the common training we had received in the same school of Bolshevism. That is why we could work so harmoniously, not only when there was unanimity on questions, but also whenever differences arose over policy or tactics.

"We were always mindful of our responsibility to the party and to the world Trotskyist movement, a responsibility which demanded that differences be resolved in a democratic

way by majority vote rather than by the method of factional struggle, personal recriminations, etc. In a word, we functioned in the true spirit of a collective leadership where the collectivity gives greater strength and greater wisdom to each individual. This is, after all, the true meaning of the Bolshevik party. It is only through the party that a worker finds strength and capacity to struggle, that he finds the wisdom with which to carry on his struggle most ably and most successfully."

Temper of Convention

The temper of the convention, evident from the first session, was likewise reflected in the attendance figures. While the regular delegates representing the branches throughout the country numbered only 56, with 24 alternate delegates, in addition to the New York visitors some 250 comrades came, on their own slender resources and despite transportation difficulties, from states as distant as California, Washington, Minnesota, etc., thus demonstrating their devotion to the party.

Conventions are the truest expression, in a concentrated form, of the party's actual condition. This is certainly true of the Eleventh Convention of the American Trotskyist movement which was, in this sense, a demonstration of a young, vigorous, serious party whose enthusiastic membership is rooted in the country's basic mass production industries.

The party activists gathered to draw a balance sheet of the work done during the two years that had elapsed since the previous convention; hard work which produced some not inconsiderable achievements. They had worked with might and main to rouse the labor movement against the threat of the Smith "Gag" Act and in behalf of the 18 who were the first to be railroaded to the penitentiary under this infamous law. As a result some 400 trade unions, Negro organizations and other labor and fraternal bodies representing approximately 4,000,000 workers came to the support of the Civil Rights Defence Committee in its struggle to free the 18 and to revoke the Smith "Gag" Law.

Through the unflagging efforts of the party membership, *The Militant* was enlarged from four to six pages, and circulated among ever broader layers of worker-readers and subscribers. Equally widespread was the literature relating to the Minneapolis trial of the Trotskyists: *Socialism on Trial*, by James P. Cannon, a pamphlet containing his testimony at the trial; *In Defense of Socialism*, a pamphlet with Goldman's speech for the defense; and *Why We Are in Prison*, with the farewell speeches of the defendants. These three excellent pamphlets, together with the CRDC pamphlet on the biographies of the 18, presented not only the record of this historic trial but the most timely type of literature for revolutionary Socialism that could be offered to militant workers. Through them tens of thousands of American proletarians have become familiarized with the case and the basic issues involved: Marxist opposition to imperialist war, the advocacy of revolutionary Socialism and the struggle for the establishment of the Workers and Farmers Government in the United States. These and other important achievements were recorded by the delegates to the Eleventh Convention of the American Trotskyist movement.

The convention met under the inspiration of achievement; armed with confidence and imbued with the awareness of great opportunities ahead. These opportunities are

both explicit and implicit in the altered objective situation, this long-awaited change which is coming after the long, hard years of isolation amid triumphant reaction. It was during these years that the Trotskyists had prepared, persevered and girded themselves for action. The hour is now approaching when the viability and power of Trotskyism will be demonstrated under conditions working not against but in favor of the revolution. It was in this spirit that the convention proceeded to its first and main job, that of hammering out the political line for the period ahead.

International Standpoint

For Marxists this line is never nationalist but invariably *internationalist* in character. Marxists arrive at their political line on the basis of the closest, all-sided examination of the interplay of class forces on the world arena and in the light of the inner logic of the development of these forces. In the last analysis this is what determines the political tasks they set themselves, the slogans they raise, the immediate tactic they undertake, and so on. This, we repeat, was the point of departure for the convention. It started with an examination of the world situation.

Our confidence in the correctness of our program had never for a moment faltered. Our program had been vindicated time and again, but, unfortunately, hitherto only in the negative. That is to say, the workers led by the traditional parties of the Second and Third Internationals were made to suffer defeat upon catastrophic defeat in one country after another. Each time the workers paid a terrible price for the successive defeats because their treacherous leaders departed from the program of revolutionary Marxism, trampling underfoot their false pledges to lead the fight for Socialism. Thanks to Social Democratic and Stalinist misleadership and sellouts, capitalism was given another breathing spell and was enabled to temporarily reestablish its equilibrium in society.

But so decrepit, so thoroughly rotten is this system that it could do nothing with this new lease on life, this borrowed time, but to plunge the peoples of the world into another holocaust. No sooner had the internal convulsions of capitalism been overcome through fascist barbarism (as in Germany and Italy) or by means of "People's Front" treachery (as in France) or through a combination of both (as in Spain); no sooner was this accomplished than the inter-imperialist conflicts of the most violent nature commenced. And today, while these inter-imperialist conflicts have far from subsided, a new wave of internal convulsions is sweeping over the European continent; and on the morrow it will extend to the Orient, to England and the United States and throughout the whole world.

Shallow observers and would-be Marxists had predicted a new organic era of capitalist stabilization and development, and a new flowering of bourgeois democracy. In fact, this was precisely the avowed goal of the "People's Fronts" in the prewar period. The war, and the events flowing from it, have shattered these opportunist illusions. Whence do these illusions arise? At the root of opportunism and all opportunist deviations is to be found, on the one hand, an over-estimation of the strength and viability of the bourgeoisie in general, and of bourgeois democracy in particular; and on the other, the under-estimation of the power, the creative ability, the initiative and fighting capacity of the working class.

All the countries which in the past year have been occupied by Allied troops in the wake of the defeated and retreating Nazi armies are now in the throes of a colossal revolutionary crisis.

Far from resolving the crisis of capitalism, the war has aggravated this crisis many times over. To the prewar reign of exploitation, misery, unemployment and slow death has been added sudden death by the millions and the terrible devastation of war. What can the peoples of the world look forward to under a continued rule of capitalism? Only to horror without end, as Lenin put it.

That is why it is universally acknowledged even by the capitalist press that the European masses desire a decisive change and are groping for such a change; they are seeking the revolutionary way out of the bloody blind-alley of capitalism. Only that party which is able to offer them a bold and realizable program for the revolutionary transformation of society, and lead them to the broad highway toward Socialism will in the end gain the confidence of the masses and conquer the leadership of the movement. This is the motivation of the international resolution submitted to and adopted by the 1944 Convention of the Socialist Workers Party by a vote of 51 to 5. The text of this resolution: *European Revolution And the Tasks of the Revolutionary Party* appears in this issue of *Fourth International*.

Convention Minority

The convention minority which took issue with this resolution had its origin at the party plenum of October 1943, where a dispute arose over the plenum resolution (for the full text of the latter, see December 1943 *Fourth International*). Comrade Morrow's article, likewise published in this issue, was written in criticism of the plenum resolution. Contained in it are three main flaws:

1) The contention that American imperialism is less predatory in character than German imperialism; that "this difference between the two great imperialisms aspiring to subjugate Europe is based on the difference in the economic resources of the two"; and that therefore "it is quite false" to refer to them as "equally predatory."

2) From this appreciation of the "less predatory" character of American imperialism Morrow proceeds to construct his theory that the European masses will in the period ahead fall prey to illusions centering around the character and role of US imperialism. He contends that these illusions will persist because:

Unlike Nazi occupation, American occupation will be followed by improvement in food supplies and in the economic situation generally. Where the Nazis removed factory machinery and transportation equipment, the Americans will bring them in. These economic contrasts... cannot fail for a time to have political consequences.

On this double foundation of a "short-time" improvement in European living standards and the consequent reinforcement of bourgeois-democratic illusions, Morrow greatly exaggerates the role of bourgeois democracy in Europe.

3) The contention that "the main danger *within* the Fourth International" lies "in the direction of ultra-leftism."

The convention rejected as false from the standpoint of both theory and fact the contention relating to the "less predatory" role of American imperialism. This is false from an analysis of the relative roles of American and German capitalism, their motive force, their respective programs,

aims, etc., as well as from the factual standpoint: Anglo-American occupation of Europe has brought a *worsening* and not an improvement in the conditions of the European masses. As the adopted resolution points out:

Today, the Allies under the hegemony of the Wall Street plutocracy, enter Europe as the new imperialist overlords. For their part, they aim not to unify Europe, but to keep it Balkanized. The Allied imperialists do not desire the revival of European economy to a competitive level. On the contrary, the program of the Allies calls for the dismemberment of the continent to render impossible the revival of an economically strong Europe. Their program of dismemberment, despoliation and political oppression can only deepen Europe's ruination. Allied occupation, as already demonstrated in Italy, spells not the mitigation of Europe's catastrophic crisis, but its aggravation.

False Contentions

The convention rejected Morrow's contention concerning the prospects of bourgeois democracy in Europe. Developments since the downfall of Mussolini have reinforced the party's prognosis that the program of Anglo-American imperialism is so reactionary that the initial illusions of the masses concerning the intentions and plans of the Allied occupying authorities are swiftly dispelled by their own experiences. In other words, the crisis in Europe is so catastrophic in nature that bourgeois democratic illusions can find no fertile soil. This is further attested to by the recent events in France, Italy, Belgium and Greece. Viewing the process dialectically, the resolution states:

Bourgeois democracy, which flowered with the rise and expansion of capitalism and with the moderation of class conflicts that furnished a basis for collaboration between the classes in the advanced capitalist countries, is outlived in Europe today. European capitalism, in death agony, is torn by irreconcilable and sanguinary class struggles.

Implicit in Morrow's criticism and in the position of the convention minority is an exaggerated appraisal of the role of bourgeois democracy, its potentialities, etc., in the next period. The party resolution gives the following correct estimate:

Bourgeois democratic governments can appear in Europe only as interim regimes, intended to stave off the conquest of power by the proletariat. When the sweep of the revolution threatens to wipe out capitalist rule, the imperialists and their native accomplices may attempt, as a last resort to push forward their Social Democratic and Stalinist agents and set up a democratic regime for the purpose of disarming and strangling the workers' revolution. Such regimes, however, can only be very unstable, shortlived and transitional in character. They will constitute a brief episode in the unfoldment of the revolutionary struggle. Inevitably, they will be displaced either by the dictatorship of the proletariat emerging out of the triumphant workers' revolution or the savage dictatorship of the capitalists consequent upon the victory of the counter-revolution.

The convention rejected the contention that ultra-leftism is the main danger within the international Trotskyist movement. Such a prognosis is borne out neither by the history of the proletarian revolutionary movement, nor by an analysis of the causes underlying either ultra-leftist or opportunist deviations in the revolutionary movement, nor by a concrete examination of the various sections of the Fourth International.

Comrade Logan's criticisms of the draft resolution, which were likewise rejected by the convention, are in essence

an elaboration of Morrow's views. (Comrade Logan's article will appear in our next issue.) Logan fails to take cognizance of Morrow's estimate of the role of American imperialism; he does not say whether he accepts or rejects it, but goes on instead to repeat and even multiply all the other errors of the Morrow position. Whereas Morrow at least made an effort to supply an economic foundation (false though it is) for his exaggerated estimation of the role of bourgeois democracy in Europe, Logan simply ignored this decisive aspect of the problem, as if it had no bearing at all on a Marxist prognosis and the tasks ahead.

Nothing could be more false than to attempt, as do Morrow and Logan, to characterize the convention resolution as "ritualistic" or "over-optimistic." The resolution clearly states:

We cannot anticipate how long the revolutionary process will take. That will be decided only in the struggle. The European revolution is not to be viewed as one gigantic apocalyptic event, which will with one smashing blow finish with capitalism. The European revolution will probably be a more or less drawn out process with initial setbacks, retreats and possibly even defeats. The might of the Anglo-American imperialists and the Kremlin oligarchy, and their joint plans of counter-revolution represent only one side of the European situation. Far more decisive is the other side: the continued disintegration of capitalism, the inexhaustible resources of the European proletariat and the power of the European revolution. There is absolutely no foundation for pessimistic conclusions.

That is, the resolution declares:

There are no blueprints on how to make a revolution. We do have, however, the program, the strategy and tactics which brought victory to the Russian Revolution. These need to be mastered and correctly applied. What is necessary now is to organize the party and plunge into battle!

This isn't "ritualism" nor "over-optimism"; this is revolutionary realism.

The Morrow-Logan criticisms as a whole along with the proposed Logan amendments were overwhelmingly rejected by the convention.

The Soviet Union

The convention reviewed the Trotskyist position on the USSR as a degenerated workers' state, and its defense against all imperialist attacks. The convention adopted a shift in emphasis in the slogans to be advanced in the next period. The altered relationship of forces in which the Soviet Union now finds itself, thanks to the victories of the Red Army, and the shift in objective conditions have brought sharply to the fore the problems and tasks of the European revolution which today take precedence over all others and make it mandatory for the party to place full emphasis on the slogan: *Defend the European Revolution Against All Its Enemies!* In the words of the resolution:

Throughout the period when the Nazi military machine threatened the destruction of the Soviet Union, we pushed to the fore the slogan: Unconditional Defense of the Soviet Union Against Imperialist Attack! Today the fight for the defense of the Soviet Union against the military forces of Nazi Germany has essentially been won. Hitler's "New Order in Europe" has already collapsed. The present reality is the beginning of the European revolution, the military occupation of the continent by the Anglo-American and Red Army troops, and the conspiracy of the imperialists and the Kremlin bureaucracy to strangle the revolution. We therefore push to the fore and emphasize today that section of our program

embodied in the slogan: **Defense of the European Revolution Against All Its Enemies!** The defense of the European revolution coincides with the genuine revolutionary defense of the USSR.

The Soviet Union is today more than ever confronted with the sharp alternative: Forward to Socialism or Backward to Capitalism. The present transition period cannot long endure. We, mindful of the counter-revolutionary role of the Kremlin bureaucracy both inside and outside of the Soviet Union, remain ever vigilant to all developments in the Soviet Union. Our policy of unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack retains all its validity, however, while the nationalized property relations remain. The struggle for the preservation of the first workers' state remains an essential task of the world proletariat. We fulfill this task by working to develop and heighten the European revolution and to secure its victory.

In adopting the line of the resolution, and, conversely by rejecting the line implicit in the Morrow-Logan criticisms, the convention assured the party that compass without which it is impossible to chart a revolutionary course in the period ahead. Today, more than ever before, mankind is confronted pointblank with the choice of two historic paths: Either regression into barbarism, or advancement through Socialism. There is only one way forward. That leads through the establishment of the Socialist United States of Europe as a stage toward the formation of the World Socialist Federation.

The convention, after thoroughly discussing the resolution as well as the minority criticisms, placed its seal of approval upon the resolution by an overwhelming vote. The discussion, which culminated in the convention, was extremely broad in scope. For more than two months, in keeping with the traditions of fullest democracy within the party, especially during pre-convention periods, the party membership carried on a concentrated discussion of all the issues involved; the various points of view were presented in articles published in eleven internal bulletins, as well as orally at local, branch, and general membership meetings. The party thus arrived at its definitive judgment after a full and thorough debate, closing the issues in dispute.

By unanimous vote the convention passed the following motion:

"1) *The Political (International) Resolution of the National Committee having been adopted by the Convention by a vote of 51 to 5, after a free, democratic discussion in the party ranks, the press and all public activities of the Party must strictly conform to the convention decisions.*

"2) *The discussion may at the discretion of the National Committee be continued in the internal bulletin.*"

In these pages we begin publication of the main documents of the convention on the European questions in order to familiarize our readers at home and abroad with the disputed questions and the convention discussions. The next issue of *Fourth International* will carry additional material.

After settling the line of the party on the international field, the convention next took up the problems of the American scene. The resolution on *United States and The Second World War*, supplemented by a report on the Negro question and the discussion revolving around them, occupied the entire sessions during the second day of the convention. This resolution and the report on the Negro question were unanimously adopted. Exigencies of space prevent the pub-

lication of the American resolution in this issue. Its text will appear in the January 1945 issue of *Fourth International*.

The Party Expansion Program

The revolutionary struggles in Europe and their inevitable reverberations, the increasing discontent and restlessness of the American workers, provoked by the capitalist masters and their war, expressed most recently by the struggle to rescind the no-strike pledge and by the rising sentiments in favor of an independent labor party — eloquent harbingers of the coming radicalization and politicalization of the American masses — motivated the convention's adoption of a rounded program for an expansion of SWP activities.

The convention proposed that *The Militant* be enlarged to eight pages as soon as practicable; and increase its circulation to 50,000, through a series of subscription campaigns. Furthermore, the subscription price of *The Militant* is to be reduced to \$1 a year. Concurrently, the convention decided to expand the organizing activities of the party. Likewise to be increased is the party's publishing activity, the issuance of books by Trotsky along with a series of popular pamphlets on timely topics, and similar material.

The convention took cognizance of the need of a systematized educational program in view of the party's growth, the influx of recruits without previous political affiliation and the new and greater tasks ahead. To this end, it was decided to establish a new system of education of the party membership — the Trotsky School System — which as Comrade Stein reported: "would take care of the Marxist educational requirements of the new recruits, promising candidates for leadership and all the categories in between." The National Educational Department has been established. With its aid the educational work of the branches will be guided and coordinated. As part of the educational program a National Training School will be organized next summer.

In its miseducation and deception capitalism has at its command the best brains money can buy. It is helped in addition by the petty-bourgeois confusionists of all schools including the self-styled "Marxists" of reformist and centrist varieties. The revolutionary party must carry on an increasing and unceasing ideological struggle for its program, for its policies, for its philosophy. The membership as well as the leadership must be trained as revolutionary Marxists who know how to fight in the class struggle, to fight not only with physical courage and power, but also with the sharpest ideological weapons.

To finance the program of expansion the convention authorized the raising of an \$18,000 Party Expansion Fund. This sum was set because it is realizable and, moreover, because it symbolizes the imprisonment of our 18 comrades and the party's reply to this attempt by Roosevelt and Co., to behead our movement. This expansion program and the \$18,000 Party Expansion Fund will be the best possible welcome home for our comrades when they are released.

* * *

The Eleventh National Convention of the American Trotskyists is a great milestone in the growth and development of our movement. It marks the long distance travelled by the movement since its emergence from the American Communist Party in 1928 as a small, isolated and persecuted hand-

ful of pioneers. These pioneer Trotskyists began their work under conditions of capitalist reaction and at a time when the Second and Third Internationals held sway, with the Comintern, in particular, appearing in the eyes of workers as a revolutionary force. Thus both the objective and subjective conditions seemed to raise an impenetrable barrier between the revolutionary vanguard of the vanguard and the toiling masses.

This barrier is now breached. Both of these Internationals have since collapsed under the impact of war. The

"Socialists" and Stalinists act as the avowed agencies of capitalism and the counter-revolution. The parties of the Fourth International are emerging from the war, unswervingly true to their revolutionary program. They stand out today as the only revolutionary parties in the world, the only parties fighting irreconcilably and audaciously for the Communist future of mankind. Under this banner of Trotskyism the SWP convention met, deliberated and adopted its great decisions. Under this banner the Socialist Workers Party continues its march forward.

European Revolution and the Tasks of the Revolutionary Party

Resolution Adopted by the Sixth Convention of the Socialist Workers Party — Eleventh Convention of the American Trotskyist Movement — November 16, 1944

The events of the past nine months have served to underline the validity of our previous analysis of the world situation and of the perspectives in Europe as embodied in the resolution adopted on November 2, 1943 by the Fifteenth Anniversary Plenum of the National Committee. The Plenum resolution has guided our analysis of the unfolding events and helped to formulate the slogans for our agitation. This resolution is a reaffirmation and an extension of the Plenum resolution.

The Italian experiences have provided the proving ground for the development of revolutionary events in Europe, of the revolutionary temper and power of the European masses, of the status and role of the European capitalist class, as well as a preview of Anglo-American aims, methods and plans. Italy provides a key to the understanding of events in France, in Germany, in all Europe.

One year ago in August, the Italian capitalist class, faced with the prospect of a revolutionary overthrow of its rule, proceeded, through the Badoglio regime, to call in the aid of the foreign imperialists. The ruling circles decided their best chance for survival lay in throwing in their lot with the Allies, and on September 3, 1943, an armistice was signed between the Badoglio Government and the Allies. At the same time, Badoglio's generals in the North turned over the revolutionary proletariat to the Nazi wolves. With guns and bayonets, the workers were pushed back into the factories. By the timely assistance of Allied and Nazi imperialism, the Italian revolution was, for the time being arrested.

In September 1943 Allied airmen dropped leaflets in Southern Italy which stated: "*We are coming to liberate you and not to conquer you.*" But the Allies soon revealed themselves to be not liberators but tyrants, exploiters and conquerors. First, they imposed on Italy "Armistice" terms reputed to be more Draconian than those Hitler imposed on France in 1940. To this day, neither the Allies nor the successive Italian governments have dared make public the full Armistice terms. After the Armistice, Italy was converted into a battleground of the second World War. The Allied military campaign was organized on the basis of a twofold objective: (1) to destroy the Nazi armies, and (2) to convert Italy into a semi-colony of Allied imperialism, imposing on the Italian people a military dictatorship based on the monarchy, the Vatican and the capitalist and landlord cliques.

In pursuit of their program the Allies systematically employed all their power, prestige and armed might to impose on the Italian people the dictatorship of Badoglio and the House of Savoy. To this end they conducted virtual warfare against the civilian population. While systematically disarming the fighters of the independent anti-fascist militia, they supported Badoglio in his attempt to reconstitute an army under the leadership of monarchist and ex-fascist generals. The Allies shielded the Black Shirt cutthroats from the wrath of the people and returned to public office many of the self-same rascals, crooks and tyrants who had lorded it over the Italian masses under the Mussolini regime. A new brazen attempt was launched to refurbish the power of the Church. Thus far the AMG has permitted only religious schools to reopen and education to be conducted under the direction of the ecclesiastical authorities. At the same time a reign of terror was carried on against the Italian masses: the suppression of strikes, the disarming of anti-fascist militants, the arrest of political opponents. Such is the sum and substance of Allied political "liberation" of Italy.

Allied Economic Policy

In the economic field, the Allies quickly dispelled the illusion that under their rule living conditions would improve. With Italy a battleground, her cities destroyed and fields devastated, with the Italian people paying the full costs of Allied occupation, if not additional huge war-indemnities, the economic situation in Allied-occupied Italy has not improved but drastically *worsened*. One year of Allied rule of Italy has made it unmistakably clear that the Anglo-American imperialists, in this sphere, will continue the robbery, looting and oppression practised by Nazi imperialism in its rule of occupied Europe. The Allies moreover will take advantage of the hunger of the masses and utilize their control of the food supplies at their disposal as an additional lever for counter-revolution.

The first important economic measure introduced by the Allies—in emulation of Hitler's occupation of France—was the setting of the exchange rate at 100 lire to the dollar. This measure immediately accelerated the inflation. All metal currency vanished. The Italian farmers, losing all faith in the currency diverted their produce to the black market.

Prices immediately soared, goods were unobtainable ex-

cept on the black market, the daily bread ration was reduced to 100 grams per person—three slices of bread—about a third of what the average Italian received under Mussolini. The daily food ration in Allied-occupied Naples is reputed to be one of the lowest in Europe—lower even than the food ration in Warsaw under the Nazis.

The Allied authorities declared all wages frozen as of September 1, 1943. These wages had been set under contracts during Mussolini's regime. With prices soaring, with goods obtainable only in the black market, and black-market prices averaging ten times the legal maximum prices, the working class is reduced to abject starvation. The white-collar, salaried and professional workers, ruined by the inflation, suffer a similar fate. Conditions are further aggravated by mass unemployment. Over 100,000 workers are unemployed in Naples alone. Disease is ravaging the population. The death rate has increased about fourfold. The masses of Naples are facing famine.

In Rome the cost of living, which has gone up 749 percent between November 1940 and June 1944, registered a further sharp increase, as soon as the Allies entered, owing to the same causes that operated in Naples. Pietro Nenni, pro-Allied Social-Democratic leader in Rome, declared: "If eight or ten more Italian cities get into the state of Naples, where three-quarters of the citizens live by beggary, prostitution, peddling and black marketing, Italy will cease to exist."

Hunger grips the land. The thieving fascist officials and businessmen who made price control and rationing a mockery under the Mussolini regime, continue, with Allied blessings to fleece the Italian people and pile up profits through black market operations. *Such is Allied "liberation" of Italy in the economic sphere.*

And Italy, it must be remembered, has become a "cobelligerent" of the Allies and thus comes under the provisions of the Atlantic Charter. What the Allies plan for Germany can well be imagined from the fact that the German people have already been declared outside the pale of humanity and the Atlantic Charter declared not applicable to Germany. The projected dismemberment of Germany spells economic ruin and starvation not for the German masses alone, but for the masses of all Europe. The highly developed German industry constitutes the indispensable backbone of Europe's economy.

The Political Crisis

The Allied program of counter-revolution and the conversion of Italy into a semi-colony of Anglo-American imperialism has produced a political crisis of the greatest tension and explosive power. The early sympathy of the Italian people for the Allies, based on the hope that conditions would improve, soon turned into consternation, bewilderment, distrust and hostility. Today the masses of Allied-occupied Italy understand that Roosevelt and Churchill are not liberators, but imperial plunderers and enslavers. Even the capitalist correspondents report that the political temper of the Italian masses is white-hot, that the masses are turning to Communism.

Politically, this is translated into the fact that of the six "opposition" parties that make up *The Committee of National Liberation*, only the two "working class" parties, the Social Democratic Party and the Stalinists, have any measure of mass support and following in the cities. The fact that the liberal politicians of the Sforza type continue to walk the political stage is to be explained solely by Allied support of those

politicians and the perfidy of the so-called working class parties.

The Italian masses are today ready for another gigantic step forward on the road toward their political and social emancipation. What, then, accounts for the present slow tempo of development of the Italian revolution? This is explained primarily by the treachery of the so-called working class parties that at present dominate the political stage in Italy, and by the absence of a mass revolutionary party.

No sooner did the workers begin to participate actively on the political arena after the fall of Mussolini, than they brushed aside the liberal capitalist parties and politicians (who paved the way for fascism after the first World War) and in the main gave their support and allegiance to the traditional parties of the Italian working class—the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party. (Under the fascist regime the Italian masses were for twenty years forcibly deprived of the opportunity of testing the various programs, leaders and parties through their own experience.) In this was revealed the leading role of the proletariat that has characterized every revolution of modern times; it also testifies to the fact that the Italian working masses ardently desire a *decisive revolutionary change*. They give their backing and support to the parties that in their minds stand for Socialism and Communism, in the mistaken expectation that these parties will lead them in revolutionary struggle.

How terribly have these so-called working class parties betrayed the Italian proletariat! The workers supported the "Socialists" and "Communists" because they wanted a leadership in their fight for peace, bread and freedom. The Social Democratic and Stalinist traitors assumed the leadership of this struggle only to behead it.

Organized in the underground, the Social Democrats and the Stalinists emerged in the open immediately after Mussolini's downfall as part of a five-party (later six-party) coalition: *The Committee of National Liberation*. This miserable replica of the People's Front—the bloc of the working class with the liberal bourgeoisie—lacks even the alibi given in 1935 for the formation of the People's Front of France. The primary power and mass following in Italy reposes in the so-called working class parties. The liberal bourgeoisie enjoy no mass support. Actually the "People's Front" bloc has only one purpose—to rehabilitate the liberal capitalist politicians of the Sforza-Croce stamp and to use their presence in the coalition as justification for the policies of upholding capitalism and supporting the war.

In the course of a single year, *The Committee of National Liberation* has piled up a long record of sellouts. The Stalinists, who comprise the most important party in the coalition and exercise the most extensive influence over the working class, have already emerged as the spearhead of the counter-revolution inside the working class movement.

When in June the Badoglio government simply melted away under the hostility of the masses, it was the six-party coalition with the Stalinists in the van, who stepped in to break the deadlock for reaction. For a brief period they served to prop up the Badoglio dictatorship by providing the facade of a six-party "coalition" cabinet. When the Allies entered Rome, the city was already under the control of a working-class anti-fascist Junta which refused to tolerate a government of Badoglio and the monarchy. After the Allies disbanded the anti-fascist Junta, they called in their lackeys of the six-party

coalition. A new government, headed by the liberal Bonomi, made up of the representatives of the six-party coalition, again stepped in to fill the political vacuum. In other words, the Stalinists, Social Democrats and their liberal allies directly took over the task of keeping the Italian masses subservient to the Allied invaders, of carrying through the infamous Armistice terms and acting as lackeys, helping prop up the disintegrating rule of Italian capitalism.

Already in this initial stage, the Anglo-American imperialists have been compelled in Western Europe and the Kremlin bureaucracy in Eastern Europe, to call in the Stalinist and Social Democratic lackeys in order to provide a "democratic" veneer for their hand-picked cabinets. This creation of class-collaboration coalition cabinets to screen their military dictatorships testifies not to the "popular" or "democratic" character of these regimes, but to the cynicism and corruption of the Stalinist and Social Democratic misleaders, to the shakiness and decay of capitalism in Europe and to the revolutionary temper of the masses.

The Bonomi government, like its predecessor, is a shadow government. It is a miserable caricature of a coalition government. First, it has no power. It is merely the servant of the Allied military authority, pledged to carry out the conqueror's demands and terms. Second, it is a hand-picked government, with no mandate from the people or even its own party constituencies. It "rules" by decree. The real power continues to reside first, in the Allied military authority and in the second instance the officer corps, the monarchist camarilla, the church hierarchy. The new coalition merely serves as a screen for the military dictatorship of the Allies and their Italian accomplices.

The Bonomi government is no more able than its predecessors to solve one single problem which confronts it. It cannot give the people bread because it is committed to supporting Allied looting of Italy under the terms of the Armistice. It cannot abolish the black market and fight the high cost of living because the Italian capitalists, with Allied protection, are making fortunes in the black market. It cannot purge the fascists and give democratic rights to the Italian people because the Allies are returning the fascists to the seats of power and are determined to prevent the masses from exercising their democratic rights and electing a government of their own choosing. The Bonomi government cannot abolish the monarchy smeared with the crimes of fascism because it is pledged not to raise the question of the monarchy until after the war. The Bonomi government cannot struggle for peace. It openly and brazenly demands that the Allies equip a new army so that the Italian people may again be hurled, as full participants, into the imperialist slaughter. The Bonomi government is a government of betrayal and impotence.

Masses learn very rapidly in a revolutionary period. In Italy they have seen several changes of ministries; they have even seen the representatives of the supposed working class parties enter the capitalist government. And yet everything remains as before. The people are still starving, they have no freedom, Italy remains a battleground. The wrath of the masses is sure to rise against the new government of repression and hunger, the pitiful lackey of the Allied imperialists and

the Italian capitalists. The Bonomi government will prove no more stable or durable than did its predecessors.

The Paramount Task

The proletariat of the Northern cities has for many months fought with the greatest heroism against the Nazi butchers and their Black Shirt accomplices. In March this struggle culminated in the calling of a general strike. 6,000,000 workers downed tools and presented their demands to the Nazi command. Despite the Nazi terror, they won significant concessions.

As soon as the separation between Northern and Southern Italy ends, the Northern proletariat, imbued with the ideas of Socialism and comprising the most militant and decisive section of the population, will take its rightful place at the head of the struggle. Italy stands on the verge of a new forward development of the revolution.

This makes the creation of a new revolutionary party the most immediate and unpostponable task for the Italian proletariat. The pernicious influence of the Social Democrats and the Stalinists must be fought and destroyed. For victory in the struggle, the Italian proletariat must have a firm, honest, devoted, revolutionary leadership. Such a leadership can be provided only by the Marxist revolutionary party.

The sources for the formation of the new revolutionary party exist and are numerous: among revolutionary elements inside the Communist and Socialist Left who have become disillusioned by the treachery of their leaders; among the leading militants of the trade union movement; in the ranks of the anti-fascist militia.

The advanced workers of Italy do not have to invent a new program and a new banner for the revolutionary party of Italy. Such a revolutionary program and banner exist. The revolutionary working class party will be organized on the tested program and methods of Lenin and Trotsky, the program and methods of the Great Russian Revolution of 1917. The revolutionary workers party of Italy will be a Trotskyist party, because Trotskyism is the only movement of genuine Marxist Internationalism today.

The Trotskyists have prepared themselves during the years of reaction for the revolutionary upsurge. The Trotskyist movement has a tested program, a firm cadre and an international organization. Upon its shoulders rests an historic responsibility. It must render every assistance to our Italian and European co-thinkers to assemble the forces for the revolutionary Marxist parties and strengthen those that already exist. Toward this end, the Trotskyists will pay the closest attention to all the new manifestations of the European labor movement, and work with the greatest energy to attract all leftward-moving groups to the Trotskyist program and banner. This work the Trotskyists will carry through with the greatest tactical flexibility and in a comradely spirit. At the same time the Trotskyists intend to wage unremitting struggle against centrist charlatans, professional confusionists and sterile sectarians. Through all the abrupt turns and tactical readjustments necessary to aid the rapid crystallization of the revolutionary forces, the Trotskyists will remain programmatically irreconcilable.

Today the Fourth International is confronted with tremendous tasks, opportunities and responsibilities. The decks must be cleared for action. There is no room for careerists, adventurers, cowards, philistines, petty-bourgeois windbags

and quacks or sectarian incorrigibles. Long ago the Fourth International turned its face toward the fresh revolutionary forces of the European proletariat. All its time will be devoted to rallying the fresh layers of workers in the struggle for Socialist emancipation. That is how the Trotskyist parties will grow strong!

The Italian revolutionary party, unfurling the glorious banner of Trotskyism, will call on the masses to struggle for the program of Socialist revolution and working class Internationalism. The party will explain that Italy can avoid disaster and famine only by a program that leads to the abolition of the capitalist system and the establishment of a Socialist Italy based on the workers' and peasants' councils; that only by a firm alliance with the revolutionary masses of the rest of Europe can the imperialist invaders be driven out and peace, economic security and freedom be achieved in Europe. Herein lies the motive power of the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe.

The Central Unifying Slogan

The *Socialist United States of Europe* is the central unifying slogan of the European revolution; the cooperation of the European proletariat and their combined forces are needed to drive out the imperialist invaders and oppressors; the proletariat of any single European country will be forced to safeguard and secure their victorious Socialist revolution from the military assaults of the imperialists by calling for immediate revolutionary assistance and support of the European proletariat, by boldly disregarding the outlived and reactionary national boundaries and working to extend their revolution on a continental scale. The *Socialist United States of Europe* is the revolutionary answer, the only alternative to the imperialist schemes of Balkanizing Europe and enslaving its peoples. It corresponds to the needs and experiences of the European masses who are learning that only by the destruction of the outlived and reactionary national state and through the economic unification and Socialist collaboration of the free peoples of Europe can the menace of recurrent, devastating wars be abolished and freedom and economic well-being assured. The slogan, *Socialist United States of Europe* will become the great rallying cry to unite the European masses against the despotic schemes and counter-revolutionary designs of Anglo-American imperialism; and to inspire and guide the working class, through every stage of the struggle for Socialist emancipation.

To rally the masses for the revolutionary struggle, the revolutionary Marxist party will elaborate a bold program of transitional and democratic demands corresponding to the consciousness of the masses and the tempo of developments, e.g. free election of all officials, freedom of the press, armed workers' militia, nationalization of industry under workers' control, etc. It will audaciously put forward those partial, sharp fighting slogans dictated by the circumstances of the day and the mood of the masses in order to advance the struggle and prepare the proletariat for power. It will become the leader of the masses in all their partial struggles, strikes, demonstrations, protests. It is in the tumultuous revolutionary battles that the proletariat will gather experience, cohesion and strength, that the revolutionary party will win the masses to its program and establish its right to revolutionary leadership.

The revolutionary Marxist party will be the leader in agitating for and building Soviets (Workers' Councils).

Soviets may begin on a very modest and elementary scale. They may begin with Consumers and Price Committees to fight the black market and the high cost of living. They may be set up as factory committees to establish workers' control and to fight unemployment. They may be set up as committees to fight for the free election of all officials. They may be set up as unions of farm workers to confiscate the landlords' estates and to operate them cooperatively or to combat and resist the disarming of the masses and to organize an armed workers' militia.

Thus in the very process of propaganda, agitation and struggle, the revolutionary fighters will become not only the propagandists but the foremost organizers of the Soviets (Workers' Councils). The Soviets, in the course of the struggle, will clash with the government apparatus and the Allied military authorities. They will be forced to reach out ever further in their fight for the people's rights. Thus, and only thus, will real meaning and revolutionary significance be lent to the slogan, "*All Power to the Workers' Councils!*" Only through the struggle and in the struggle will the Italian revolutionary party grow, learn how to lead the masses and how to conquer. There are no blueprints on how to make a revolution. We do have, however, the program, strategy and tactics which brought victory to the Russian Revolution. These need to be mastered and correctly applied. What is necessary *now* is to organize the party and plunge into battle!

The Task Ahead

Let skeptics shrug their shoulders! The Trotskyist fighters will conduct their revolutionary struggle with the conviction that they have every opportunity to build, in the crucible of events, a revolutionary party, fully capable of leading the revolution to victory. The Trotskyists need only display the necessary programmatic intransigence and loyal adherence to Marxist principles, the necessary audacity and energy in action, the necessary flexibility in their agitation and organization.

Trotsky taught us that:

"The October Revolution also once began with its swaddling clothes. . . The mighty Russian parties of Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks who made up the 'People's Front' with the Cadets [the Russian Sforzas] crumbled into dust in the course of a few months under the blows of a 'handful of fanatics' of Bolshevism."

The Trotskyists in the United States, as well as our British co-thinkers, bear an especially heavy responsibility. They must expose and struggle relentlessly against the counter-revolutionary aims of American and British Big Business. Around the slogans: *Hands Off the Italian Revolution! Hands Off the European Revolution!* the Trotskyists will conduct an energetic campaign to rouse the working class to fight against all counter-revolutionary intervention.

Despite the degeneration of the Soviet Union under the rule of the counter-revolutionary Stalinist bureaucracy, the Red Army and the Soviet masses have found sufficient resources within the economy nationalized by the October revolution to deal devastating blows to the Nazi military machine and to smash Hitler's attempt to destroy the Soviet Union and subject this one-sixth of the earth to capitalist exploitation and oppression. The heroic feats of the Red Army soldiers and the Soviet masses in the field of battle have revealed to all who have eyes to see that the Russian Revolution, though stifled and desecrated, still lives. The Soviet masses

who have rallied to the defense of the remaining conquests of the October Revolution, have proved that their instinctive understanding of the class nature of the Soviet Union is far superior to that of all the renegades, skeptics and turncoats who deserted the Soviet Union in its hour of mortal peril and gave up the Russian Revolution for lost.

The Trotskyists stand for the unconditional defense of

the Soviet Union against imperialist attack. Despite Stalin's crimes and betrayals, the Trotskyists everywhere urge the masses to work and fight for the victory of the Red Army against the military forces of imperialism, for the preservation of the nationalized property relations of the Soviet Union against all imperialist assaults from without or counter-revolution from within.

Stalin's Counter-Revolutionary Program

The victories of the Red Army have inspired the masses of Europe and provided a powerful impulse to their revolutionary struggle. The Stalinist bureaucracy, nationalistic and counter-revolutionary through and through, has utilized its enhanced prestige, derived from these victories, to seize control of the liberating movements in Europe in order to betray them and sell them out to the capitalists as chattels of Stalinist diplomacy.

In Yugoslavia, the Stalinists, headed by Tito, took the leadership of the revolutionary mass movement under the guise of aiding and organizing it and then proceeded to bend it to their own reactionary purposes. They were able to do this because they are still able to cloak their reactionary designs with the moral authority of the October Revolution. The Yugoslav Partisan movement originated as an indubitable movement of the masses, whose worker-peasant sections aspired not only to drive the Nazi conquerors out of their country, but to abolish the rule of the rapacious and reactionary landlord and capitalist cliques represented by King Peter and his Government-in-Exile. The determination of the masses to drive out the imperialist invaders and to win national freedom was fused with the social struggle against the native exploiters. The Stalinists have betrayed the aspirations of the masses; they have already united with the hated regime of King Peter, set up a class-collaborationist government, and have proclaimed their intention of preserving the capitalist setup, dominated by the same old crew of monarchists, landlords and capitalists. Utilizing the slogan of national liberation, the Stalinists are working to deliver the Yugoslav masses into the hands of their oppressors.

The Stalinist program of betrayal is not, however, proceeding unchallenged. Already in Greece active opposition and resistance has appeared in the ranks of the Greek Partisan movement to the Stalinist leaders who have conspired to perpetrate a betrayal similar to Tito's and to unite with the Greek Government-in-Exile, representative of the Greek capitalists and landlords. Undoubtedly, similar developments, to one degree or another, are taking place in all the movements of struggle which the Stalinist head in order to behead.

In Rumania, the Stalinists are carrying through the program proclaimed by Molotov in April 1944 when the Red Army first entered Rumanian territory. Molotov assured the capitalists that the Stalin bureaucracy will not alter "the existing social structure of Rumania." Stalin is keeping this promise. The Stalinist military authority is preserving the totalitarian filth of the semi-fascist regime of the Rumanian landlords and capitalists. The Stalinists are pursuing similar reactionary aims in Poland and are pledged to the same policy in Czechoslovakia and elsewhere. Stalin thus assures the Allies that under his rule the Red Army will be used in Europe as a gendarme of capitalist property.

The catastrophic defeats which the Red Army has dealt the Nazi military machine, the impending defeat of Nazi Germany and the emergence of the Soviet Union as a first-class military power has dazzled many and provided the Soviet Union with the appearance of unlimited strength. The appearance does not correspond with reality.

Stalin's foreign policy was based on an attempt to avoid war, to secure for the Soviet Union neutrality in the coming world conflict. For this, Stalin perpetrated his worst betrayals of the international proletariat. In the utopian quest for "peace" in a world dominated by imperialism, the Kremlin's agents were assigned the task of organizing pacifist show congresses, pretentious disarmament conferences, "Peoples Front" Leagues against war—all for the sake of currying favor with the "democratic" imperialists. This "peace" program was crowned by the Soviet Union's joining the "thieves kitchen of imperialists," the League of Nations. Stalin's policy thus consisted in selling out the proletarian masses, the only reliable allies of the Soviet Union, for the sake of illusory "Peace Pacts" with the "democratic" imperialists. This course of betrayal was carried through under the high sounding slogan "Collective Security Against Aggressors." The Kremlin's "Peace" policy collapsed ignominiously at the 1938 Munich Conference. Stalin then frantically turned to Hitler. He granted impermissible concessions to Nazi Germany in the shameful Stalin-Hitler Pact, which provided the signal for the opening of the Second World War. All of Stalin's treacherous maneuvers and betrayals proved impotent, however, in securing peace for the Soviet Union. It was precisely the Soviet Union that was converted for more than three years into the main battlefield of the second World War. As in all other spheres, Stalin's foreign policy proved thoroughly bankrupt.

The Soviet Union is emerging from the war a devastated country. Millions of the flower of its manhood are dead, wounded or missing. A great section of its industry is destroyed, and innumerable cities as well as great sections of the countryside lie in ruins. Far from having increased its independent strength, under Stalin the Soviet Union has been debilitated and is today weaker than ever in relation to the capitalist world.

The Kremlin bureaucracy is fully aware of the fact that with the defeat of the Axis, their ability to maneuver between the imperialist groups becomes very sharply restricted and the Soviet Union will face the concentrated pressure of the victorious Anglo-American imperialist camp. Stalin attempts to secure himself against this new threatening danger by guaranteeing the preservation of the capitalist system in Europe while employing the Soviet military power to establish "friendly" governments under its influence on the

periphery of the Soviet Union (Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, etc.).

At the same time, fearing the independent action of the masses and the approaching Socialist revolution, Stalin has given guarantees to Roosevelt and Churchill—and that is the major significance of the Teheran Conference—that he will join with them in their program of trying to strangle the European revolution, dismembering Europe, subjugating its peoples and propping up subservient regimes.

Soviet Reaction

Paralleling his program of counter-revolution and capitalist rehabilitation in Europe, Stalin has taken further steps inside the Soviet Union toward the destruction of the remaining conquests of the October Revolution and toward arrogating to the Kremlin bureaucracy added powers and new privileges. In the past year the Stalinist bureaucracy has issued new reactionary decrees governing education and other fields; the Bolshevik divorce laws and much of the progressive legislation for women have been abolished. Alongside of this increased regimentation of Soviet life, Stalin is making renewed frantic efforts to build up stable bases of support for the parasitic bureaucracy. The past year has witnessed a monstrous extension of the highly privileged officer caste, standing above the population. The bureaucracy is further attempting to strengthen its hold on the most backward sections of the population by encouraging the Holy Synod and Greek Orthodox Hierarchy to extend its influence and by facilitating the campaign of glorification of the church institutions and "holy places."

Stalin seeks to preserve his rule by reintroducing, encouraging and propping up all that is most reactionary and backward. In place of the liberating internationalist ideas of Bolshevism, Stalin disseminates among the Soviet masses the doctrines of Pan-Slavic chauvinism and *war revanche*, deifies the old Czarist butchers and oppressors, glorifies a privileged military caste, reintroduces the obscurantism of the Greek Orthodox Church.

Stalin's program both internal and external is reactionary through and through. It represents a terrible danger for the European revolution, and to the further existence of the Soviet Union itself. This program only plays into the hands of world capitalism and, if successful, would help convert Europe into the vassal of Anglo-American imperialism. If the dastardly conspiracy which Stalin hatched with Roosevelt and Churchill at Teheran to crush the European revolution were to succeed, it would simply open the road to capitalist restoration inside the Soviet Union itself, by internal counter-revolution or military intervention or both. The Anglo-American imperialists cannot—any more than could the Nazis—reconcile themselves to the existence of nationalized property for any extended period in the territory comprising one-sixth of the earth's surface. As for the "friendly" coalition capitalist governments, which the Kremlin bureaucracy is propping up with the Red Army bayonets, they will prove no more trustworthy than the alliance with Anglo-American imperialism. In the event of future conflict, these spurious "friends" of the Soviet Union, representing the capitalists and landlords of Eastern Europe, will act in accordance with their class interests and needs: they will join with the Anglo-American imperialists in the assault against the Soviet Union. Stalin's elaborate structure will collapse like a house of cards. The alliance of the Soviet proletariat with the insurgent

masses of Europe is thus indispensable for the preservation of the Soviet Union.

The Bolshevik fighters inside the Soviet Union face the paramount task of organizing the revolutionary forces to oust Stalin and his arch-reactionary gang and to restore the Soviet Union on the principles of its founders, Lenin and Trotsky. In the words of the 1940 Manifesto of the Fourth International on *The Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution*: "The preparation of the revolutionary overthrow of the Moscow ruling caste is one of the main tasks of the Fourth International." We call on the Soviet workers to organize the forces for the revolutionary overthrow of the oligarchy in the Kremlin and set up a genuine Soviet democracy as the essential condition for the preservation of the Soviet Union and of Socialist construction.

Character of the Bureaucracy

The Stalinist bureaucracy is not a new class with a historic mission to perform, but simply a parasitic caste, transitory in nature, which has no future. This caste came to power only as a result of an entirely exceptional conjuncture of historic circumstances. The theory of the emergence of a new "bureaucratic class" — the managers — who will interpose themselves between defeated capitalism and the Socialist society has received annihilating refutation with the collapse of Italian Fascism after a rule of twenty years and the imminent collapse of German Nazism after a rule of eleven years. This theory of Bruno R., Burnham etc., not to speak of their Shachtmanite imitators, with their "theory" of the new managerial class "only in one country," has already been consigned by events themselves to the garbage heap of history.

The Social Democrats and renegades from Marxism who propagate the idea that the Kremlin bureaucracy intended to "Sovietize" Europe under Stalin's Bonapartist dictatorship misrepresent both the nature of Stalinism and the meaning of Stalinist foreign policy and they slander the European proletariat. The European revolution cannot be harnessed by any bureaucracy. If Stalin with the aid of his henchmen succeeds in betraying and beheading the proletarian revolution, he can do so only for the benefit of the bloodthirsty capitalists and the Allied imperialists. Out of a defeated revolution will arise not a Stalinist dictatorship but the most savage capitalist military dictatorship. This theory of the Social Democrats, which can only disorient the proletariat and divert it from its necessary tasks, represents in essence a theoretical "justification" for their own abject surrender to Allied imperialism.

Stalin is betraying the European revolution through his agents from within and has given clear warning that he will if necessary attempt to drown it in blood from without. The decisions of the Teheran Conference as well as the actions of Stalin's agents in Yugoslavia, Greece, Rumania, Poland, Italy, etc., constitute unmistakable danger signals that Stalin is prepared to repeat his hangman's work in Spain on a continental scale.

To be forewarned is to be forearmed. The advanced workers of Europe must sound the alarm! They have the clear duty of warning the working class against the counter-revolutionary schemes of Stalin and his native henchmen. The working class must be prepared to combat Stalinist treachery and sellouts. *The Fourth Internationalists will work unceasingly to destroy the Stalinist influence in the labor movement.* This is an indispensable prerequisite for healthy growth and all future successes.

In the countries under Red Army occupation, the advanced workers will have to organize workers and peasants councils, factory committees, trade union bodies, etc. in a spirit of deepest distrust of the Stalinist agents. They will warn that Stalinist promises of fundamental reforms are lies. They will urge the masses to organize their *independent actions* to confiscate the landlords' estates, to place factories under workers' control, to arm the masses. In this *independent activity of the masses* lies the only guarantee for the success of the European revolution and its protection from the Stalinist hangmen.

Through these measures and in no other way, will the European masses be able to approach the Red Army soldiers and organize fraternization with them in order to protect the European revolution. Only in this way, and in no other, will the European proletariat be able to forge bonds of solidarity with the Red Army soldiers and the Soviet masses and help the latter settle accounts with the murderous Stalinist bureaucracy.

And what if Stalin nevertheless succeeds in using Red Army troops to suppress workers revolts? How will we reconcile our position on the defense of the Soviet Union with support of the European revolution? There is no contradiction between the two. The Trotskyist movement has long since given a precise answer to this question.

Trotsky wrote in 1939:

"What does 'unconditional' defense of the USSR mean? It means that we do not lay any conditions upon the bureaucracy. It means that independently of the motive and causes of the war we defend the social basis of the USSR, if it is menaced by danger on the part of imperialism . . . And if the Red Army tomorrow invades India and begins to put down a revolutionary movement then shall we in this case support it? . . . Is it not simpler to ask: If the Red Army menaces workers' strikes or peasant protests against the bureaucracy in the USSR shall we support it or not? Foreign policy is the continuation of the internal. We have never promised to support all the actions of the Red Army which is an instrument in the hands of the Bonapartist bureaucracy. We have promised to defend only the USSR as a workers' state and solely those things within it which belong to a workers' state. . . In every case the Fourth International will know how to distinguish where and when the Red Army is acting solely as an instrument of the Bonapartist reaction and where it defends the social basis of the USSR." (In *Defense of Marxism*, pp. 29-30.)

The independent revolutionary action of the European masses, in deadly combat against the Stalinist scoundrels,

will assure the victory of the European revolution and the survival and further development of the October Revolution inside the Soviet Union.

Of all the "programs" and "theories" on the Soviet Union and the Kremlin bureaucracy, only the Trotskyist analysis and program have been confirmed by events and have provided the revolutionary vanguard with a correct guide to action. The fair weather "friends" of the Soviet Union, the petty-bourgeois confusionists and cowards turned their backs on the Soviet Union in its hour of mortal peril, thereby going over to the other side of the barricades in the class struggle. Only the Fourth International remained true to the program of revolutionary defense of the Soviet Union.

Our active political slogans of the day are always consistent with our program and are derived from it, but express *that phase of the program* which has the greatest urgency. Therein is the art of politics; to apply the general program to the specific questions of the day.

Throughout the period when the Nazi military machine threatened the destruction of the Soviet Union, we pushed to the fore the slogan: *Unconditional Defense of the Soviet Union Against Imperialist Attack*. Today the fight for the defense of the Soviet Union against the military forces of Nazi Germany has essentially been won. Hitler's "New Order in Europe" has already collapsed. The present reality is the beginning of the European revolution, the military occupation of the continent by the Anglo-American and Red Army troops, and the conspiracy of the imperialists and the Kremlin bureaucracy to strangle the revolution. We therefore push to the fore and emphasize today *that section* of our program embodied in the slogan: *Defense of the European Revolution Against All Its Enemies*. The defense of the European revolution coincides with the genuine revolutionary defense of the USSR.

The Soviet Union is today more than ever confronted with the sharp alternative: *Forward to Socialism or Backward to Capitalism*. The present transition period cannot long endure. We, mindful of the counter-revolutionary role of the Kremlin bureaucracy both inside and outside of the Soviet Union, remain ever vigilant to all developments in the Soviet Union. Our policy of unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack retains all its validity, however, while the nationalized property relations remain. The struggle for the preservation of the first workers' state remains an essential task of the world proletariat. *We fulfill this task by working to develop and heighten the European revolution and to secure its victory.*

Revolutionary Perspectives

European capitalism has been in a state of sharp decline since the first World War. Today, after five years of slaughter, Europe is in the throes of disaster.

Hitler, as the representative of resources-starved and colonies-hungry German imperialism, attempted to unite all of European industry and agriculture around the highly industrialized economy of Germany. Despite German economic and military hegemony in Europe and the tremendous initial victories, which established Nazi Germany as the temporary master of the continent, Hitler could only bring havoc to

the occupied countries. Nazi imperialism could not unite Europe and stimulate economic development. It only enslaved the European masses, further wasted the resources of European economy and converted the unhappy continent into a prison-house of tortured peoples.

Today, the Allies, under the hegemony of the Wall Street plutocracy, enter Europe as the new imperialist overlords. For their part, they aim not to unify Europe, but to keep it Balkanized. The Allied imperialists do not desire the revival of European economy to a competitive level. On

the contrary, the program of the Allies calls for the dismemberment of the continent to render impossible the revival of an economically strong Europe. Their program of dismemberment, despoliation and political oppression can only deepen Europe's ruination. Allied occupation, as already demonstrated in Italy, spells not the mitigation of Europe's catastrophic crisis, but its aggravation.

This cold-blooded program of the Anglo-American imperialists is supplemented by Stalin's program of chauvinism, oppression and brutality. Stalin proposes to plunder Germany and her war-partners by the imposition of war reparations and slave labor. Stalin has joined with the imperialists in their efforts to plunge Europe into permanent ruin.

The program of the economic and political unification of Europe, under the aegis of the Socialist United States of Europe is today the only alternative to a descent into barbarism. Working class internationalism is thus no academic issue in Europe today, but an imperative necessity. By their combined efforts the European masses will drive out the foreign conquerors and succeed in tearing power from the hands of the capitalist exploiters. Economic and political necessity push the masses of Europe toward the acceptance of the *Socialist United States of Europe* as the only program that can save Europe.

The Italian proletariat was the first to take the revolutionary road. One year after the downfall of Mussolini and the destruction of the fascist apparatus, Nazi Germany finds itself in the throes of a similar mortal crisis. A group of Junker generals, fearing the collapse of German capitalism, organized a *coup d'etat* to remove the Nazi leaders and make peace with the Allies. The fact that this initial conspiracy failed does not detract from its deep symptomatic significance.

That section of the German ruling class which seeks to overthrow Hitler, aims solely to preserve German capitalism by setting up a Badoglio-type dictatorship in order to forestall the maturing uprising of the German masses. The fact that the Junker and capitalist circles have initiated and carried through this desperate conspiracy, in the midst of Germany's colossal military defeats, is an unmistakable indication that the pressure of the masses is reaching the bursting point and that the revolutionary explosion is near.

The German revolution is the key to the European revolution. Because German industry is the backbone of European economy and above all because of the dominant position of the German proletariat, by virtue of its numbers, its revolutionary traditions and organizing capacities.

Role of the German Masses

Both the imperialists and the Kremlin bureaucracy are fully aware of the preponderant position of Germany in Europe and the decisive role which the German proletariat is destined to play in the coming revolution. That is why they attempt to saddle the German masses with responsibility for the crimes of Hitler and German imperialism. The formula of "unconditional surrender" is directed first and foremost against the anticipated workers' revolution.

The German masses, who have been tortured by Nazism for eleven years, are not moving to overthrow Hitler in order to accept the rule of foreign dictators. In 1918, over twenty-five years ago, the German toilers first proceeded to take their destinies into their own hands and set up Workers' Councils. The Social Democratic traitors aborted the revolution and

cheated the workers out of their victory. This time the workers will secure their victory and carry through the revolution to the very end.

The Anglo-American imperialists as well as the Kremlin bureaucracy, fearing the sweep of the proletarian revolution, are preparing in advance to isolate the German workers. They seek to utilize the hatred of the European masses toward Nazism and all its fiendish works as a weapon against the German masses, who were the first victims of Hitlerism. The German workers will break through this dike of hatred by raising the banner of the Socialist United States of Europe. The German working class will find allies in their revolutionary struggle throughout Europe, including the ranks of the occupying troops. The proletariat, not of this or that country, but of the entire continent is in a revolutionary mood. The German masses, as the masses throughout Europe, will frustrate the plans of the counter-revolution, by organizing systematic fraternization with the rank and file of the occupying forces.

The petty bourgeoisie, especially the peasantry, are likewise seeking a way out of the madhouse of capitalism, starvation and war. In the course of the last years they have lost faith and hope in the capitalist system. Fascism, the last bulwark of capitalism, has pauperized and disillusioned one layer of the population after the other. Bereft in its last days of all mass support, fascism could rule only as a naked military-police dictatorship. The leading capitalist circles have discredited themselves in the eyes of the masses by collaborating with Hitler and will disgrace themselves further by collaborating with the Allied invaders.

In the Twenties it was possible for American imperialism, whose economy was still rising and expanding, to stabilize capitalism in Europe on a lower foundation through loans and credits. This stabilization was achieved on the basis of the defeated revolutions and by means of a bourgeois democratic regime in Germany. American capitalism, however, began its absolute decline in 1929 and for ten years thereafter found itself in the throes of a major crisis. Unable to extricate itself, it plunged into the war to secure world domination. Torn by its own contradictions and driven by its necessities, American imperialism today has no program for Europe other than its further dismemberment and degradation, and the propping up of the capitalist system with American bayonets. Here is a measure of the further terrible decay of world capitalism in the last 20 years.

The disintegration of British imperialism and the insuperable contradictions of American imperialism have already led to the sharpening of the class struggle in both England and the United States, especially the former country. This sharpening class conflict will be increasingly reflected inside the armed forces. The American and British Trotskyist movements will conduct a bold propaganda exposing the reactionary aims of Anglo-American imperialism and will work in a spirit of international solidarity to defend the European revolution.

Bourgeois democracy, which flowered with the rise and expansion of capitalism and with the moderation of class conflicts that furnished a basis for collaboration between the classes in the advanced capitalist countries, is outlived in Europe today. European capitalism, in death agony, is torn by irreconcilable and sanguinary class struggles.

The Anglo-American imperialists understand that demo-

cracy is today incompatible with the continued existence of capitalist exploitation. Economic and political conditions forbid the restoration of bourgeois democracy for any extended period, even to the extent that it existed after the last war. Bourgeois democratic governments can appear in Europe only as interim regimes, intended to stave off the conquest of power by the proletariat. When the sweep of the revolution threatens to wipe out capitalist rule, the imperialists and their native accomplices may attempt, as a last resort, to push forward their Social Democratic and Stalinist agents and set up a democratic capitalist regime for the purpose of disarming and strangling the workers' revolution.

Such regimes, however, can only be very unstable, short-lived and transitional in character. They will constitute a brief episode in the unfoldment of the revolutionary struggle. Inevitably, they will be displaced either by the dictatorship of the proletariat emerging out of triumphant workers' revolution or the savage dictatorship of the capitalists consequent upon the victory of the counter-revolution.

There will be no lack of opportunities in Europe to lead the masses in victorious struggle. The only question is: Will the advanced workers succeed in building strong revolutionary parties, and will the revolutionary parties display the necessary courage, energy, programmatic firmness and tactical flexibility to unite the masses behind their leadership and successfully lead the fight for the Socialist revolution?

We cannot anticipate how long the revolutionary process will take. That will be decided only in the struggle. The European revolution is not to be viewed as one gigantic apocalyptic event, which with one smashing blow will finish with capitalism. The European revolution will probably be

a more or less drawn out process with initial setbacks, retreats and possibly even defeats.

The might of the Anglo-American imperialists and the Kremlin oligarchy, and their joint plans of counter-revolution represent only one side of the European situation. Far more decisive is the other side; the continued disintegration of capitalism, the inexhaustible resources of the European proletariat and the power of the European revolution. There is absolutely no foundation for pessimistic conclusions.

The Trotskyist fighters build on the heritage of the Russian Revolution and the Bolshevik Party, as well as Leon Trotsky's struggle for re-creation and rebuilding of the international revolutionary movement. The Trotskyist fighters of all countries are part and parcel of the programmatically grounded and organizationally stable international Trotskyist movement. They have the opportunity of telescoping their revolutionary tasks and building the revolutionary party by bold methods, in the very heat of the coming revolutionary battles.

The Fourth International stands today on the eve of its greatest struggles and triumphs. Europe is on the verge of stupendous revolutionary developments. The reserves of capitalism are melting before our eyes. Out of the agony of the battlefields, out of the devastation, horrors and ruins of the second World War, is being shaped the anger and determination of the peoples which will burst in a revolutionary storm. When that avenging storm breaks, it will sweep away all the tyrants and exploiters. The Trotskyist party of the Socialist revolution, like the Bolsheviks of 1917, will take its place at the head of the people and ride the revolutionary storm to victory. Under the banner of Trotskyism, the people of Europe will wipe out the rule of the capitalists and rebuild the continent on new Socialist foundations.

The First Phase of the Coming European Revolution

A Criticism of the International Resolution of the Fifteenth Anniversary Plenum

By FELIX MORROW

The document, whose text follows, was rejected by the Eleventh Convention of the American Trotskyist movement by a vote of 51 to 5. See editorial on the Convention in this issue.—*Ed.*

* * *

Comrade E. R. Frank, as reporter on the plenum to the New York membership meeting, stated (comrades inform me) that the plenum arrived at unanimous agreement on the international question. He referred once to the "even heated manner" of the plenum discussion, but left unspecified what the political questions were in dispute, and indicated that whatever differences there had been, they were finally resolved in unanimous agreement.

This was not Morrison's or my understanding of the plenum decision. It becomes necessary to establish precisely what happened in the plenum.

In the course of the discussion it became clear (1) that the plenum did not accept the contention of Comrades Warde,

Frank and others that the difference between the subcommittee resolution and the Morrow resolution was no less than programmatic; (2) that some of the points in the Morrow resolution were acceptable to Comrade Cannon; (3) that other Comrades (Thomas, Russell) wished to see various paragraphs of the Morrow resolution incorporated in the final plenum resolution.

To facilitate this, and to arrive at a maximum possible agreement, I withdrew my resolution, joined with Morrison (who had supported my resolution) in rewriting some of its paragraphs to meet various objections, and my re-written document was offered as a series of amendments to the resolution.

However, after a protracted discussion, the lack of time and other considerations made it impossible to consider the Morrow-Morrison amendments individually.

In my summation speech, I stated that the essential differences between the Morrow-Morrison amendments and the draft

resolution could be summed up in two propositions. If these two propositions were accepted by the resolution subcommittee, there could be substantial agreement between us on the international resolution as finally edited. These two propositions were as follows:

(1) That the draft resolution erred in excluding the possibility of the use of bourgeois-democratic methods by the European bourgeoisie and its American imperialist masters; they would in all probability attempt to stem the European revolution not only by the use of military and fascist dictatorships but also where necessary by the use of bourgeois democracy.

(2) That the draft resolution erred in minimizing the Stalinist danger; we must recognize that the victories of the Red Army have temporarily strengthened the prestige of Stalinism; and we must, therefore, include in the resolution a warning of the very real danger of Stalinism to the European revolution.

Speaking after me in his summary speech, Comrade Cannon indicated that these two propositions would be acceptable to the authors of the draft resolution. This was my impression and that of Morrison and of the other members of the plenum. It is true that Comrade Cannon also added that the amendments which formulated these propositions would be accepted only insofar as they fitted into the framework of the draft resolution. This statement of Comrade Cannon did not, however, appear to modify vitally his statement that the two propositions were acceptable to the authors of the draft resolution.

On the basis of Comrade Cannon's indication of the extent of our agreement, Comrade Morrison and I accepted the final decision of the plenum as follows: to adopt the subcommittee's resolution in principle and to submit to the subcommittee the Morrow-Morrison amendments, the subcommittee to incorporate into the resolution those of the amendments which it considered compatible with the resolution, and Morrison and Morrow to be consulted in the writing of the final resolution. If important amendments were not incorporated by the subcommittee, Morrison and I stated, they would be discussed in the party by us in various articles in internal bulletins.

Thus, when the plenum closed, one could not really speak of unanimous or almost unanimous agreement. It was still to be seen which of the Morrow-Morrison amendments would be incorporated by the subcommittee in the final resolution, and which of them would be the subject of an educational discussion.

In preparing the final text of the resolution, the subcommittee was undoubtedly ready to consult me to the fullest extent. Unfortunately, however, I was stricken ill and the final resolution had to be drafted without such consultation. The subcommittee sought my views at the last possible moment before the resolution was sent to press, when I was still in the hospital, but my condition made it impossible for me to read it and offer further suggestions.

Had we been able to collaborate in the final editing, perhaps the area of agreement would be larger than it now is. As I shall indicate below, the subcommittee incorporated into the final resolution several sentences from the Morrow-Morrison amendments while at the same time retaining formulations of the original draft resolution which are in crying contradiction to the incorporated amendments. Perhaps in discussion with the subcommittee I would have been able to demonstrate these contradictions and persuade the subcommittee to remove them.

As the resolution stands, however, were the National Committee given the opportunity to vote on its final text, I would find it impossible to vote for it. Neither of the two proposi-

tions which I considered essential to an agreement appear in the final resolution in reasonably satisfactory form, as I shall show in some detail. Though there are no fundamental, programmatic differences, the disputed questions are important and deserve the study of the party as a whole.

After Comrade Frank and others have reported unanimous agreement, it might have come as an unpleasant surprise to the party to learn that differences remain. This could have been in large part avoided if the reporters at the membership meetings had told the membership—which had a right to know—what the plenum discussion consisted of. There was no political or organizational reason why the reporters could not have stated the nature of the political questions which were in dispute, the precise details of the final decision of the plenum, and the stated intention of Morrow and Morrison to discuss in subsequent articles those important amendments not accepted by the resolution subcommittee.

It would aid the education of the party to make a practice of publishing in the internal bulletin the important material rejected or modified by a plenum. The membership would thus be able better to understand how the plenum arrived at its decisions and whether these decisions were the best possible under the circumstances. For this reason alone it was necessary to publish the Morrow-Morrison amendments. It was an error on my part not to have proposed this at the plenum.

In the following pages I have attempted as far as possible not to repeat the points made in the Morrow-Morrison amendments, or in my plenum speeches. The plenum material is taken for granted, since this is written only for N.C. members, most of whom were present.

The Danger of Ultra-Leftism

The Morrow-Morrison amendments were written from the standpoint that a plenum resolution adopted by us today must primarily occupy itself with the present and immediate future—the *first* phases of the European revolution. On the other hand, the subcommittee resolution obviously proceeded from the point of view that its task was primarily the reiteration of programmatic fundamentals. This difference was especially apparent in the fact that the Morrow-Morrison amendments dealt in some detail with the problem of democratic demands while the subcommittee resolution ignored them entirely in its original draft.

Some of the comrades supporting the subcommittee apparently thought they had a crushing answer to the Morrow-Morrison amendments when they triumphantly quoted from the 1938 Founding Program the idea that democratic slogans are "only incidental and episodic slogans." And this thought appears in the final resolution, which speaks of "the limitations and subordinate character of democratic slogans as a means of mobilizing the masses for revolutionary action."

"Episodic," "incidental," "subordinate"—with these adjectives Comrades Warde, Frank and Cannon sought to minimize the importance of democratic slogans in the coming revolution.

The absurdity of their position should become clear when we answer the question: what are democratic slogans "incidental" or "subordinate" to? Democratic slogans are subordinate to transitional slogans and to programmatic fundamentals; democratic slogans must be constantly connected, in our agitation, to transitional slogans and programmatic fundamentals. That is all that is meant by "incidental" and "subordinate." Obviously, then, it follows that at any time this side of the successful revolution democratic slogans still have an

important place in our agitation. The fact that tactics (democratic slogans) are subordinated to strategy (dictatorship of the proletariat) does not absolve us from the responsibility of outlining the character of the tactics necessary for the coming period in Europe. The fact that democratic slogans are "incidental" and "episodic" does not do away with the fact that more than one revolutionary party has broken its neck by its failure to understand the crucial role of democratic slogans—that before it could make the revolution it first had to win a majority of the proletariat, and that this majority could be won in part only through a phase, "episodic" but indispensable, of democratic demands. That was the terrible lesson we should have learned for all time from the abortive Spartacist uprising of January 1919.

In a revolutionary situation, a democratic demand may be of enormous importance—the way to win the masses to the revolutionary party. To name but one example—the demand for the immediate convocation of the Constituent Assembly, which played such an enormous role in the Russian Revolution and is certain to play an equally important role in one or more of the European revolutions. Let me remind the Comrades that the Bolshevik withdrawal from and boycott of the Pre-Parliament, which was the curtain-raiser to the insurrection, was carried out under the slogan of immediate convocation of the Constituent Assembly. One has only to cite such a concrete example of a democratic demand to indicate the empty—ultra-leftist—radicalism of the resolution's emphasis on "the limitations and subordinate character of democratic slogans as a means of mobilizing the masses for revolutionary action."

In the plenum discussion, a number of supporters of the draft resolution justified its passing over the problem of democratic demands and its preoccupation with reiterating programmatic fundamentals, by referring to the danger within the Fourth International of opportunism and revisionism. The one item of evidence to which these comrades referred was the "Three Theses" of a small group of European comrades (published in the Dec. 1942 *FI*).

Comrade Logan answered this argument irrefutably. He agreed, as we all agree, that the "Three Theses" constitute a revisionist and opportunist tendency. But he insisted that we should make a *systematic* investigation of and give the correct weight to *all* the existing tendencies in the international. In actual fact, the authors of the "Three Theses" represent no one but themselves, are simply an aberration of the emigration. Far more significant than the "Three Theses" has been the consistently ultra-leftist course of our official British section and its consequent deterioration. And this ultra-left deviation took place in a whole section and one which was operating in its own country under conditions of legality and with many possibilities of a healthy development. Thus the present evidence is that within the International the danger of ultra-leftism is far more likely than the danger of opportunism.

To Logan's argument one can add the rich lessons of the first years after the last war. The young parties of the Comintern suffered primarily not from opportunism but from ultra-leftism. It was against this tendency that Lenin in 1920 wrote *Left Wing Communism—An Infantile Disorder*. If, despite the tremendous prestige of the victorious Bolsheviks, the Comintern was so pervaded by ultra-leftist deviations, the same phenomenon is far more likely to confront the Fourth International at the end of this war.

If the leadership of the American party feels it necessary in international resolution today to remind our European com-

rades that democratic slogans are "incidental" and "subordinated" to the grand strategy (dictatorship of the proletariat) of the revolution, then at the very least we should simultaneously and with equal emphasis warn our European comrades that the best strategic line may lead to ruin if it is not coupled with the timely raising of *tactical* slogans, i.e. those democratic and transitional demands which are appropriate to the consciousness of the masses at the given moment.

Isolation, such as the Fourth International parties have always had to endure, can be weathered only by the utmost programmatic intransigence. But to live in isolation with one's programmatic banner nailed to the mast tends to breed an inflexibility unfavorable to an intelligent understanding of the use of democratic and transitional demands when the opportunity arises to launch them in a revolutionary situation. Certainly this has been the experience of our European sections. I have already referred to the British experience; the same is true of our Spanish comrades during the revolutionary period of the civil war.

I repeat: the main danger *within* the Fourth International appears to me to lie in the direction of ultra-leftism. It is necessary, as we approach the first period of the European revolution, to emphasize and underline the role of democratic demands.

Finally, it must be noted that even if Comrade Cannon were correct in assuming that the main danger within the International was in the direction of opportunism, the subcommittee resolution was scarcely the way to combat that danger. The European comrades might well retort to the resolutions: "Thank you, comrades, for repeating the programmatic fundamentals, but we also have a copy of the 1938 Founding Program and we have copies of our other programmatic documents. And we study the program as well as you do. What we want to know from you is what you think we should do in the next immediate period, what are the first problems we face, what obstacles we must overcome." The answer to opportunist tactics is correct tactics, not merely reiterations of the elementary principles of Marxism.

The Tempo of the Coming Revolution

It was perhaps inevitable that, in our attempt to keep the hope of revolution alive during the years of isolation since September 1939, we over-simplified the picture of what is coming. I know that more than one inexperienced comrade drew from our press a picture of the war coming toward its close, the masses rising in all countries of Europe, success crowning their efforts, meaning by success the irrevocable establishment of the Soviet power, and that all this would take place within two or three years after the closing period of the war.

Not that our most authoritative documents were based on such a conception. To mention only one, let us turn to the Manifesto of the Fourth International on *The Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution*. In rejecting a pessimistic outlook for the future, it equally rejected a Pollyanna optimism. It posed the correct outlook in the following manner:

Will not the revolution be betrayed this time too, inasmuch as there are two Internationals in the service of imperialism while the genuine revolutionary elements constitute a tiny minority? In other words: shall we succeed in preparing in time a party capable of leading the proletarian revolution? In order to answer this question correctly it is necessary to pose it correctly. Naturally, this or that uprising may end and surely will end in defeat owing to the immaturity of the revolutionary leadership. But it

is not a question of a single uprising. *It is a question of an entire revolutionary epoch.*

The capitalist world has no way out, unless a prolonged death agony is so considered. *It is necessary to prepare for long years, if not decades of war, uprisings, brief interludes of truce, new wars, and new uprisings.*

A young revolutionary party must base itself on this perspective. History will provide it with enough opportunities and possibilities to test itself, to accumulate experience and to mature. The swifter the ranks of the vanguard are fused the more the epoch of bloody convulsions will be shortened, the less destruction will our planet suffer. But the great historical problem will not be solved in any case until a revolutionary party stands at the head of the proletariat. (Pages 40-41, my italics.)

Let us underline the words: "It is necessary to prepare for long years, if not decades . . ." Trotsky in these words sought to prepare us for the probability that the achievement of the Socialist United States of Europe would take decades rather than the few years immediately following the closing period of the war.

Trotsky was certain, and so are we, that successful Socialist revolutions would issue out of the war. That is to say, that in one European state or another the workers would, after the maturing of their revolutionary party, successfully overthrow capitalism and establish the Soviet power. But Trotsky also wrote scores, and perhaps hundreds, of articles explaining the crucial importance of democratic demands in a revolutionary situation, i.e., he expected that after the revolutions began in Europe there would be a more or less protracted period in which the masses would follow the reformist parties.

Having at last won the masses, the revolutionary party would lead them to the establishment of the Soviet power. But the young workers' state—or two or even more—would face world capitalist intervention. Foreign capitalist intervention, in turn, would lead internally in the proletarian states to a revival of civil war, much as it happened in the young Soviet Russian Republic.

As this conflict deepens, we are confident, the proletarian power will extend to other European states, and lead in the end to the Socialist United States of Europe. But the whole process will in all likelihood not be telescoped into a few supreme, intense and swift efforts of the European proletariat. No, more likely is a perspective of decades of struggle.

This, then, is the conception of the coming revolution which should now be explained to our party. In essence, of course, this conception of the coming revolution is in no way less optimistic than the oversimplified picture which many of them undoubtedly have in their minds. In any event, it has the decisive merit of being the true picture. Moreover, those who firmly grasp it will not have their hopes dashed to the ground in the coming years. They will remain firm revolutionists no matter what obstacles arise in our path.

Let us not only praise Trotsky, but let us also try to learn from him how to deal with political problems. One could cite dozens of examples from his writings of how, on the eve of great events or in their first days, Trotsky considered it politically necessary to estimate the probable tempo of what was to come. Almost at random, I cite a typical example—how Trotsky wrote, on May 28, 1931, under the heading "The Problems of the Tempos of the Spanish Revolution":

A correct determination of the tempo of development of the revolution is of tremendous significance—if not for the determination of the basic strategic line then for the determination of the tactics. *And without correct tactics, the best strategic line may lead to ruin.* It is understood that to guess the tempos in advance

for a prolonged period is impossible. The tempo has to be examined in the course of the struggle, making use of the most varied indicators. Moreover, in the course of events the tempo may change very abruptly. But we must nevertheless keep before our eyes a definite perspective in order to introduce the necessary correctives into it in the process of experience. (*The Spanish Revolution in Danger*, page 30, my italics.)

Having thus enunciated why it was politically necessary to attempt to estimate the tempo of the development of the revolution, Trotsky then went on to indicate the concrete factors which led him to expect a slow development of the revolution in Spain. Such was the method which Trotsky taught us. One seeks in vain for this method in the plenum resolution.

The Morrow-Morrison amendments do attempt to estimate the tempo of the coming revolution. The amendments do not exclude the possibility of the transfer of power to the workers immediately following the fall of Nazism. And from this possibility the amendments draw the conclusion that it is necessary, as soon as the masses begin to move against the Nazi regime or any regime which may follow as a result of a *coup d'etat* such as occurred in Italy, to put forward the slogans of creation of workers' councils and All Power to the Workers' Councils.

But, the amendments then go on to state, "we must also recognize the probability that the bourgeoisie will make a serious attempt to save its rule by means of bourgeois democracy and the temporary success of such an attempt . . ." Why must we recognize the probability of such a temporary success? Because of a number of crucial factors, which are then outlined in the amendments.

Among these factors which will slow the tempo of the European revolution are the revival of democratic illusions among considerable sections of the masses as a result of the fact that in Germany, Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, etc., new generations have grown up without any experience of bourgeois democracy and without active participation in political life. After the collapse of fascism, these masses may well have to go through a certain body of experiences before they will understand that their needs cannot be satisfied within the framework of the democratic republic. Another factor making for revival of democratic illusions is the intensification of national feeling in Europe as a result of Nazi occupation; the masses in the "liberated" countries may well feel for a time that such governments as that of de Gaulle are "our own."

Central to a proper estimate of the tempo of the revolution is a clear understanding of the fact that the principal parties which emerged in Italy after the fall of Mussolini, were the Communist, Socialist and Action (liberal) parties. This fact shows that the traditional workers' parties and the party of the petty-bourgeoisie were not held responsible by the masses for the decades of fascist rule. Nor could the masses test the programs of these parties under the conditions of totalitarian oppression, for programs can be tested only in the course of mass activity. We must conclude from the Italian experience that the traditional workers' parties, as well as centrist and liberal-democratic parties, will emerge throughout Europe as the principal parties of the first period after collapse of the Nazis and their collaborators.

These factors slowing the tempo of the coming revolution can only be overcome by the growth of revolutionary Marxist parties; and such *parties* do not yet exist in Europe. That is why we must emphasize to our European comrades that the problem of building the party is still *before them* as their main task.

Amid the gigantic convulsions which will follow the collapse

of fascism, we are confident that our European comrades *can* and *may* accomplish that main task in a short period. Nevertheless, it is clear that this period will be one of a series of phases of the European revolution in which the bourgeoisie will have a temporary success in saving its rule by resorting to bourgeois democracy, that is, manipulating the democratic illusions of the masses.

Thus the Morrow-Morrison amendments attempt to estimate the tempo of the revolution. One can disagree with the estimate, but at least the amendments constitute an attempt at such a politically necessary estimate.

One cannot say as much for the plenum resolution. It accepts some of the Morrow-Morrison amendments in truncated form, but evades the problem of tempo posed by the amendments as a whole.

Will the European bourgeoisie and its Anglo-American imperialist masters resort to bourgeois democracy as a means to stem the revolution? A clear answer to this question is basic to an estimate of the tempo of the revolution. For it is obvious that, if the bourgeoisie would not resort to democracy, then the democratic illusions of the masses could be dispelled by the Fourth International far more quickly. It would be relatively easy to mobilize the masses against capitalism if the capitalist class as a whole openly and unyieldingly supported dictatorship and opposed democracy. Hence, the importance of an unambiguous answer to this question. The Morrow-Morrison amendments give such an unambiguous answer, stating that: "The bourgeoisie is prepared to evolve in the direction of a bourgeois democratic government in order to prevent the socialist revolution."

On the other hand, the plenum resolution evades the question of the attitude of the bourgeoisie as a class toward bourgeois democracy. Note, for example, the following sentence in the plenum resolution which at first glance appears to have been taken bodily from the Morrow-Morrison amendments: "The fact that the economic preconditions for an extended period of bourgeois democracy in Europe have disappeared does not, however, put an end to the role *that bourgeois and petty-bourgeois democrats* can play to stem the advance of proletarian revolution." This sentence provides us with nothing more significant than the obvious fact that bourgeois democrats like Sforza and petty-bourgeois democrats like the Socialists will play a role against the proletarian revolution. It evades taking a position on the proposition of the Morrow-Morrison amendments that the *bourgeoisie*, i.e. not only the Sforzas but also European capitalism as a class, is prepared to evolve in the direction of a democratic government in order to stem the European revolution.

Two or three sentences further on in the plenum resolution, the same crucial question is again evaded by a similar process of incorporating a sentence from the amendments but changing it so that it loses its precise meaning. The amendments state: "When no other shield can protect them, the forces of capitalism may seek to retreat behind the protection of the democratic republic." In the plenum resolution this is changed to: "When all other defenses crumble, the forces of capitalism will strive to preserve their dictatorship behind the facade of democratic forms, even to the extent of a democratic republic." What does it mean to say that the bourgeoisie will "preserve their dictatorship behind the facade of democratic forms?" If all that is meant by this is the Marxist theory of the state that a democratic republic is also in the last analysis a form of the rule (i.e. dictatorship) of the bourgeoisie, then that should be

stated and no room left for ambiguity as to what is meant by dictatorship. But as the sentence stands, it implies something more; it implies that the bourgeoisie will strive to preserve not only their class rule, but also to preserve their class rule in the form of a dictatorship, dictatorship meaning what it popularly means, namely not a democratic government in the ordinary sense of the term.

Thus the ambiguities and evasions of the plenum resolution straddle between (1) maintaining the false conception of the original draft resolution of the subcommittee which explicitly denied the possibility that the bourgeoisie would resort to democratic governments and (2) making verbal but not real concessions to the Morrow-Morrison amendments which insist that the bourgeoisie will probably resort to democratic governments.

One final example of how the plenum resolution "accepts" one of the Morrow-Morrison amendments. The following paragraph was not in the original draft resolution but was "accepted" from the amendments:

The revolutionary wave may be so overwhelming as to enable the workers to take power immediately following the collapse of the fascist dictatorship. Hence it is necessary to put forward the slogans of Workers Councils (Soviets) and All Power to the Workers Councils, as soon as the masses begin to move against the fascist regime or any makeshift substitute.

Contrast this with the paragraph in the amendments from which it was "accepted":

We do not exclude the possibility of the transfer of power to the workers immediately following the fall of fascist dictatorships. It is necessary for our comrades to take this possibility into consideration at all times and hence to put forward the slogans of creation of Workers Councils and All Power to these Councils as soon as the masses begin to move against the fascist regime or any regime which may follow as a result of a *coup d'etat* such as occurred in Italy. But we must also recognize the probability that the bourgeoisie will make a serious attempt to save its rule by means of bourgeois democracy and the temporary success of such an attempt because of the treachery of the social reformists and Stalinists, the lack of a revolutionary party, and the insufficient political development of the working class.

To summarize on the question of the tempo of the coming European revolution. The Morrow-Morrison amendments estimate the tempo as we have outlined above. The plenum resolution, on the other hand, evades taking a position on the question and simultaneously attempts to convey the impression of a speedy success for the Socialist United States of Europe.

One's estimate of the tempo of development of the revolution, Trotsky pointed out, "is of tremendous significance for the determination of tactics." Determined to convey the impression of a speedy success for the Socialist United States of Europe, the authors of the draft resolution quite logically minimize the role of democratic demands. But if one recognizes the probability of a slower tempo for the development of the European revolution, and in it a period of bourgeois-democratic regimes—unstable, short-lived, but existing nevertheless for a period—then the importance of the role of democratic and transitional demands becomes obvious. For the revolutionary answer to bourgeois democracy in the first instance is more democracy—the demand for real democracy as against the pseudo-democracy of the bourgeoisie. For bourgeois-democracy can exist only thanks to the democratic illusions of the masses; and those can be dispelled first of all only by mobilizing the masses for the democracy they want and need. In this connection it would be worth-while for all N.C. members to read again the Program of Action of the Communist League of France (1934), largely written by Trotsky, which we correctly

recommended as "the model of its type for young parties approaching a pre-revolutionary situation." (*Fourth International*, October 1942.)

Some comrades, reading my criticisms of the resolution's formulations on the role of bourgeois democracy, may consider that I am refusing to give the resolution the benefit of the doubt: if one only would read the formulations of the resolution with a little sympathetic understanding, one could really find agreement with them. After all, the sub-section of the resolution entitled "Bourgeois Democracy" does provide a certain amount of common ground between us on the question of the role of bourgeois democracy in Europe.

Such a criticism of my approach to the resolution would be justified, if the sub-section on "Bourgeois Democracy", in large part consisting of modified sentences from the Morrow-Morrison amendments, were the only section in the resolution where the question of bourgeois democracy is involved.

The Methods of American Imperialism in Europe

However, if one interprets this first section of the resolution as meaning the same thing as the Morrow-Morrison amendments, then there is a flagrant contradiction between that first section and the second section of the resolution, "The Counter-Revolutionary Role of American Capitalism". For then the one predicts that the European bourgeoisie and its American imperialist masters will use bourgeois democracy while the second rules out the use of bourgeois-democracy in Europe by U.S. imperialism.

Perhaps no question is more important today for the European revolution than an analysis of the methods which American imperialism is employing and will employ for its attempted subjugation of Europe. For it is already clear that the European bourgeoisie cannot even hope to survive the coming revolutionary wave without the most direct backing from American imperialism. Already in Italy one can see that the Italian bourgeoisie can rule only as junior partners of American imperialism.

But the Italian experience has also taught us that the U.S. imperialist support of the Italian bourgeoisie is not merely a matter of supporting Italian capitalism on American bayonets. The bayonets are there, of course, but at least equally important are American *food* and the illusion that the United States will solve Italy's economic problems. We must give due weight to the undeniable fact that considerable sections of the Italian masses enthusiastically welcomed the American troops. The illusions of the masses will, of course, collide with reality more and more in the coming period, but we must recognize that for a time the covert blackmail of food and the promises of American economic aid will play a major role in shaping the Italian events. And this process will be repeated elsewhere in Europe.

In the long run, of course, US imperialism can solve none of Europe's economic problems and will inevitably reveal itself as the ruthless exploiter which prevents European recovery. It is not enough, however, to state this long-term perspective. We must also estimate accurately the short-term perspective.

The short-term perspective is that American imperialism will provide food and economic aid to Europe and will thus for a time appear before the European masses in a very different guise than German imperialism. This difference between the two great imperialisms aspiring to subjugate Europe is based on the difference in the economic resources of the two.

The Nazis had nothing to offer to Europe; they had to subjugate Europe purely by means of military force, and after conquering each country, they had to plunder it of its food and other materials. The United States, on the other hand, will in the first instance enter the occupied countries of Europe ostensibly not as their conqueror but in the course of driving out the Nazis. Unlike Nazi occupation, American occupation will be followed by improvement in food supplies and in the economic situation generally. Where the Nazis removed factory machinery and transportation equipment, the Americans will bring them in. These economic contrasts, which of course flow entirely from the contrast between the limited resources of German capitalism and the far more ample resources still possessed by American capitalism, cannot fail for a time to have political consequences.

Hence, it is quite false when the plenum resolution, without distinguishing between the long-term and short-term perspectives, says (December 1943 FI, p. 331): "Europe, today enslaved by the Nazis, will tomorrow be overrun by equally predatory Anglo-American imperialism." Equally imperialist, yes, but not "equally predatory." One could perhaps, permit oneself such language loosely in an agitational speech; but it has no place in a plenum resolution, which should provide a coldly precise estimate of the different methods which are being employed by different imperialisms.

Nazi imperialism could give its domination of the occupied countries only the facade of native rule. That is why the term Quislings became so appropriate. American imperialism too has sought to operate through Quislings; Darlan was little more than that; Badoglio similarly. But it should already be clear that US imperialist penetration of the occupied countries is not going to be limited to the use of Quisling regimes, i.e. regimes which rule entirely by means of force and terror and which have no support in the masses. It is true, of course, that a bourgeois-democratic regime in Italy, for example, would also be a Quisling regime in the sense that it would be dominated by American imperialism. But it may very well differ from the Nazi-dominated Quisling regimes in the sense that, through the medium of the Stalinist, Social-Democratic and bourgeois democratic parties, it could muster a majority in an election as free as Italian elections prior to 1921.

The plenum resolution appears to agree with this conception of the variant methods available to American capitalism when it says, in its sub-section on "Bourgeois Democracy" that "when this device (of military force) proves powerless to control the insurgent masses, the native capitalists, *allied with the invading imperialists*, will push forward their treacherous democratic, social reformist and Stalinist agents in an effort to strangle the revolution in a 'democratic' noose." However, the thought of this sentence, incorporated in the resolution from the Morrow-Morrison amendments, appears nowhere in the section of the resolution on the "Counter-Revolutionary Role of American Capitalism." On the contrary, in that section, the authors of the resolution visualize only one method to be employed by American imperialism: "military monarchist-clerical dictatorships under the tutelage and hegemony of Anglo-American big business." And again: "The choice, from the Roosevelt-Churchill point of view, is a Franco-type government or the specter of the Socialist revolution." The resolution thus rules out the third "choice," the use of bourgeois-democratic regimes.

Incidentally, the article on "The World Role of US Capitalism," by Comrade William Simmons, published in the same issue of the FI as the plenum resolution, takes the position of

the Morrow-Morrison amendments and not that of the plenum resolution. Comrade Simmons writes:

Is a restoration of bourgeois democracy on the European continent—a 'democratic regime'—possible? For a limited time, yes—as an interim regime, because of the absence of an experienced, decisive, proletarian, revolutionary leadership—as an attempt to dam up the floodgates of revolution. *Such a restoration may be imposed and supported from abroad*; but it can never be invested with any degree of stability. (December 1943 FI, p. 336.)

I agree completely with Comrade Simmons concerning the instability of bourgeois democracy, and made this clear with wearisome repetition at the plenum. But this was not the question at issue: the issue was whether or not American imperialism might back bourgeois-democratic regimes in Europe as a way to stem the revolution. Both Comrade Simmons and I answer this question in the affirmative, the resolution answers it falsely in the negative.

The Function of the Slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe

In clarifying our conception of the coming European revolution, it is necessary now to define more precisely the place of the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe. During the plenum discussion Comrades Warde and Frank stated that there was quite a difference between them and me on this question; they said, indeed, that the difference was no less than programmatic. The final resolution has few references to the slogan, which are mutually satisfactory, but which nevertheless leave unsettled the differences which were adumbrated in the plenum. Perhaps some of the statements of Comrades Warde and Frank in the discussion may reflect merely misunderstandings on this question which deserve clarification.

To such misunderstanding I must admit that I myself have contributed. In a discussion article*, I criticized those who define the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe "as a propaganda slogan, i.e. not at present suitable for immediate agitation." The essential criticism I sought to make I still think correct: it was aimed against those who do not accept the slogan of a Socialist United States of Europe as the central slogan of the European movement. However, I did not serve to clarify the question when I indicated that the only correct estimate is that it is an agitation slogan and not a propaganda slogan. In making this distinction, I was defining a propaganda slogan as one which has a purely educational role for the present period and that when it becomes *actual* it will then cease to be a propaganda slogan and become an agitation slogan. I was thinking of the way in which Plekhanov defined propaganda as the dissemination of many ideas to a small group, and agitation as the dissemination of one main idea to great masses.

However, this otherwise useful distinction between propaganda and agitation does not serve to clarify the role of the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe. This will readily become apparent from the following considerations. We all agree, and correctly, that the Socialist United States of Europe is the central slogan for Europe. What, however, do we mean precisely by a central slogan? Some comrades appear to think it means that it is the slogan by which we shall rally the great masses for the overthrow of European capitalism. That is, that the slogan will play the same role in the coming revolution that the slogan All Power to the Soviets played in the October revolution.

But the central slogan of an epoch is not at all the same
* "Our Differences with the Three Theses" by Felix Morrow, *Fourth International*, December 1942.

thing as the slogan or slogans under which the party leads the masses to make the revolution. The classical example of a central slogan—the slogan which determines the whole course of the revolutionary party in a period—is the slogan raised by Lenin, "Turn the Imperialist War Into Civil War." This was the central slogan without, however, being a slogan for the masses. This central slogan was a party, a cadre slogan. That is, it served to educate the party but did not show how to win the masses to the proletarian revolution. Trotsky once characterized "Turn the Imperialist War Into Civil War" as an algebraic formula whose concrete content was yet to be found, as it was found, in "All Power to the Soviets" and other slogans.

That did not mean that the Bolsheviks did not publicize "Turn the Imperialist War Into Civil War" in their literature. But the place where it is found most often is in the Bolshevik literature written in isolation and directed to party members and small circles of sympathizing workers. Once the Russian Revolution broke out, the slogan receded into the background and seldom appears in the Bolshevik press and speeches of February to October. Thus it was not one of the principal slogans around which the Bolsheviks rallied the masses. Yet anyone who has the slightest understanding of the Bolshevik strategy knows that it remained the central slogan in the sense that it was the basic motivation of Bolshevik agitation and action.

In his last unfinished article, Trotsky refers to the limited role of the central slogan, "Turn the Imperialist War Into Civil War" as follows:

The attention of the revolutionary wing was centered on the question of the defense of the capitalist fatherland. The revolutionists naturally replied to this question in the negative. This was entirely correct. But this purely negative answer served as the basis for propaganda and for training the cadres, but it could not win the masses who did not want a foreign conquerer . . . True enough, the Bolsheviks in the space of eight months conquered the overwhelming majority of the workers. But the decisive role in this conquest was played not by the refusal to defend the bourgeois fatherland but by the slogan: 'All Power to the Soviets!' And only by this revolutionary slogan! The criticism of imperialism, its militarism, the renunciation of the defense of bourgeois democracy and so on could have never conquered the overwhelming majority of the people to the side of the Bolsheviks.

There has been much misunderstanding of this distinction between the central slogan which served to train the cadres and the slogan under which the Bolsheviks overthrew capitalism. One could document this with numerous references to the literature produced by the infant communist parties after 1919, in which they used the slogan "Turn the Imperialist War Into Civil War" as if it were a magic key which would bring the masses to them. Nor did this ultra-leftist nonsense cease with the early years of the communist movement. As late as 1935 the ultra-leftists in our party, the Oehlerites, accused us of reducing Lenin's central slogan of the last war to "merely a party slogan."

It is my contention that the Socialist United States of Europe is the central slogan of our epoch for Europe but that it is unlikely to be the slogan under which the masses will be rallied for the direct struggle for power. This does not mean that the place of the slogan Socialist United States of Europe is precisely the same as that of "Turn the Imperialist War Into Civil War." Obviously, the Socialist United States of Europe is capable of moving larger masses than Lenin's central slogan. Equally obviously, however, the Socialist United States of Europe is not a mass slogan in the sense of the slogan All Power to the Soviets; it is an algebraic formula whose concrete

content will be found by us in appropriate mass slogans during the revolution similar to those the Bolsheviks employed between February-October 1917.

The best and most thoughtful of the European workers—and this means not merely cadres but hundreds of thousands and even millions—will understand that the Socialist unification of Europe is the only way out. But the best and most thoughtful workers will not be enough to make the revolution by themselves. They will succeed only by rallying behind them not merely millions but tens and hundreds of millions. And those will not be rallied by the relatively abstract conception of the Socialist United States of Europe.

The direct struggle for power will in all probability arise out of the question of which institutions shall have the authority to rule the country or the army at a given moment—bourgeois institutions like a provisional government and perhaps a revived parliament, or the representative bodies thrown up by the workers, peasants and soldiers, which will be essentially Soviets, whatever their actual name: city, regional, district or factory committees directly elected by the workers, peasants and soldiers.

These alternatives will be stark enough to compel the masses to choose one or the other. That does not mean, however, that the masses will be choosing consciously between the continuation of capitalism and the Socialist United States of Europe. It will not even mean that in Germany, for example, the masses will be choosing between Socialism or capitalism for that country. Both capitalism and Socialism are abstractions to the great masses even when they are making the proletarian revolution. The masses will be giving their mandate to the revolutionary institutions which are expressing their concrete life-needs—for bread, land and freedom—and the determination to achieve them. But it will not be a conscious mandate for Socialism or the Socialist United States of Europe.

The Stalinist Danger to the European Revolution

Comrade Wright has written more than once in recent months in our press that the Red Army and Soviet industry have revealed fighting power beyond anything we had dreamed they were capable of. That is correct; and of course we all agree that this power expresses the prodigious vitality of the October Revolution despite Stalin's strangulation of the revolution. But, from a short-term perspective, we must also realize that this Soviet industry and this Red Army are, and are quite likely to remain for a time, in the hand of Stalin. That means that he will throw this power—which is greater than we had dreamed of—on the side of the European counter-revolution.

The Morrow-Morrison amendments attempted to indicate this Stalinist danger but they received short shrift in the final resolution. As in the draft resolution, the section entitled, "Significance of the Soviet Victories" consists merely of reiteration of programmatic fundamentals and of one reassuring repetition after another that Stalinism will not succeed in its counter-revolutionary plans. Even the absurd sentence in the draft resolution "explaining" the failure of the Spanish revolution was stubbornly retained: "A pre-war revolution in the corner of Europe could be isolated, strangled and sold out as part of the Kremlin's diplomatic maneuvers." I shall not repeat here the analysis I made in my plenum speech of this sentence and the paragraph it appears in, except to recall again that, far from being isolated in a "corner of Europe," the Spanish revolution was simultaneous with the revolutionary situation

in France which Trotsky had correctly hailed with an article entitled: "The French Revolution Has Begun."

At one point or another the Fourth International will be compelled to say frankly to the workers what I said in my plenum report, that the Soviet victories are not a one-sided matter of progressive consequences, even though we give the main weight to the progressive consequences.

The Two-Sided Character of the Soviet Victories

The Morrow-Morrison amendments put the second side of the Soviet victories as follows:

At present because of the victories of the Red Army the prestige of the Soviet Union has grown tremendously but unfortunately it has been misappropriated by the parasitic bureaucracy. The power and ideological influence of Stalinism has been strengthened temporarily. As a result, we must recognize a serious danger to the coming European revolution. The Stalinist bureaucracy will either help the capitalist democracies in the attempt to crush the revolution by force or, if the revolution assumes too great a sweep to be crushed, it will attempt to gain control of it in order to save its own rule. What Stalin has done in Spain he will try to repeat in other countries of Europe. The continental European revolution will surely offer stronger resistance than the Spanish proletariat, but the danger to the revolution from the Stalinist bureaucracy is very great and we must constantly warn the masses to struggle against this danger.

This amendment was rejected by the resolution sub-committee. In its place the sub-committee only added to the draft resolution the sentence that: "Stalin, exploiting the enhanced prestige of the Soviet Union as a result of the Red Army victories, seeks to gain control of the popular movements in Europe . . ." And this sentence is larded in between many paragraphs of reassurances that Stalinism will fail, so that the whole effect is precisely the opposite of that sought by the Morrow-Morrison amendments: we wanted to warn and arouse against the danger from Stalinism, and the plenum resolution provides merely reassuring anodynes. By all means let us voice our confidence in the revolutionary future. But that does not suffice. We must also *say what is*.

I said at the plenum that the prestige of the Soviet victories has resulted in the fact that Stalinism is the principal organized force in the European working class today and that this situation will not disappear before the first stages of the European revolution. The resolution sub-committee agreed with me to the extent that it included, in its subsection on bourgeois democracy, the idea from the Morrow-Morrison amendments that: "It is possible and even probable that the treacherous parties of social reformism and Stalinism can play the leading role in the first stages of the revolution." Similarly in its section on the "End of the Comintern", the sub-committee included from the Morrow-Morrison amendments the idea that "the Italian events have shown the capacity of the Stalinists for perverting the struggle of the workers." But these two sentences, in the contexts in which they appear, are merely passing observations and do not convey the conception of the great danger to the revolution from Stalinism. The place where Stalinism is treated systematically in the resolution is in the section entitled, "Significance of the Soviet Victories", and there the danger from Stalinism is in effect denied.

The refusal to distinguish between short-term perspective and long-term perspective, which we have noted in other parts of the resolution, is perhaps even more evident in the sections on Stalinism. They "ignore" the short-term perspective, that is, they fail to describe the real situation of the present and the

immediate future. As a result they can have but a purely ritualistic character, convincing only those already convinced. (Let us hope that no one will repeat the slander voiced at the plenum, that I called the program of the Fourth International ritualistic; what I said and repeat is that the resolution subcommittee employed the program in a ritualistic manner.)

A large amount of the time of the plenum was taken up with charges hurled at me that I was a pessimist. Had I desired to reply in kind, there was a suitable handle available. During the first weeks after the fall of Mussolini, the comrades

who wrote the draft resolution were undoubtedly much more "optimistic" than I concerning the Italian revolution; but in their draft resolution, lo and behold, they were already speaking of the "temporarily defeated Italian revolution". I, on the other hand, saw no defeated revolution precisely because I had not seen a revolution, but only a revolutionary situation. Who, then, are the optimists: those who say the Italian revolution was defeated or those who do not? This incident alone should indicate that charges of pessimism and boasts of optimism have no place in discussions in our leadership. December 1943.

The European Revolution -- Its Prospects and Tasks

Speech Delivered in the Name of the National Committee of the SWP, at New York Membership Meeting, October 4, 1944

By E. R. FRANK

In opening this discussion on the political resolutions now before the party, the resolution passed by the November 1943 Plenum of the National Committee and the draft resolution of the National Committee to be presented to the coming convention, I am inviting the comrades to study, to consider, to view the question of the European revolution in its entirety, to proceed to a Marxist, and therefore to a many-sided analysis of this crucial problem.

Nothing is so futile in revolutionary politics as to begin a discussion of this character by getting lost on some incidental question, or to attempt to answer or solve this or that immediate problem of the day by divorcing it from your fundamental analysis, from your whole perspective. Before a Marxist can answer an immediate question of the day, he must be clear on his perspective, on his *line*. And that is precisely what the resolutions attempt to provide. These resolutions are not a new program. As a matter of fact, they are not even a full restatement of our old program. They are simply timely documents; they are documents that, on the basis of our program, analyze more concretely the new events, show the underlying forces at play, delineate the underlying tendencies and more sharply point to the tasks that lie ahead.

To understand the European revolution, its tasks and its perspectives, let us begin by a rough analysis of Europe, its economy and the forces at work on the continent. Capitalism began its absolute decline in Europe some 30 years ago at the time of the first World War. Capitalism in Europe was no longer expanding, but contracting. In addition to the internal decline, the capitalist states in Europe were further suffocating because of the Balkanization of the continent, because the national boundaries had become fetters on the economy. Each national state was choking to death behind its tariff walls and the Gargantuan militarisms were eating up the substance of Europe's wealth. The first World War, with its unparalleled destruction smashed Europe's pre-eminence and further accelerated its decay. Economic hegemony was shifted to American imperialism.

Two revolutionary waves swept over Europe like a terrible paroxysm. One, started by the October revolution, shook Europe to its very foundations and wrenched the territories of the

USSR out of the grip of capitalism. The second wave of incipient revolutions during the 30's in Spain and France was betrayed by the Stalinist and Social-Democratic traitors. With the revolutions aborted and defeated, the path was cleared for the plunging of the European peoples into the second world slaughter.

European capitalism, I said, lost its economic pre-eminence to the United States after the first World War. As a result of the destruction wrought by the second World War, capitalism in Europe is shattered, is finished as a world power. Europe today is ruined and prostrate, and its peoples are starving and dying.

Now as Marxists, we know that the political superstructure is determined in the last analysis by the committee foundation. We are historical materialists; we know that bourgeois democracy is a specific political form, which arose and flowered during the rise and growth of capitalism. Bourgeois democracy was made possible as the form of capitalist rule in the more advanced and wealthy capitalist countries because of the advances of capitalism, because of the increasing wealth of the nation, by the ability of capitalism to buy off, to corrupt the middle classes and the labor aristocracy, and thus to moderate and attenuate the class struggle. Bourgeois democracy has certain definable and easily recognizable features: parliamentarism, more or less free elections, accompanied by the traditional bourgeois rights: freedom of press, speech, assembly, etc.

The Fate of Bourgeois Democracy

With the economic decline of Europe after the last war, bourgeois democracy likewise declined. It was virtually wiped out throughout eastern Europe. As for western Europe, the class struggle came to a breaking point in Italy immediately after the war and the question was sharply posed: either fascism or socialism. With the inability of the working class parties to lead the revolutionary struggle forward to the conquest of power, the successive bourgeois-democratic governments quickly gave way to the fascist dictatorship of Mussolini. Bourgeois democracy was ground to dust between the forces of the sharpening class struggle. Ten years later the same process took place in Germany.

And even France, the victor of Versailles, possessor of a

great colonial empire, even victorious France reached a blind alley. The class struggle between the two fundamental classes grew so acute that even before the disastrous plunge into the maelstrom of the second World War, bourgeois democracy gave way to one semi-Bonapartist regime after another followed in the end by the imposition of the Bonapartist dictatorship of a Petain propped up by the Nazi bayonets. Bourgeois democracy was not simply destroyed in France by military intervention *from without*. It was decaying and falling apart because of the unsolvable crisis of French capitalism and the sharpening class struggles *from within*.

Such was the course of bourgeois democracy, between the two world wars. Today the European masses, who have gone through five years of devastation and slaughter, are in a furiously revolutionary mood. Throughout Europe! The masses are entering the political arena as an independent force. Capitalism in Europe is so shaken, so weak, decrepit and compromised, so bankrupt, that with its own forces it is unable to preserve its rule, to rehabilitate its power. For five years capitalism in Europe has been propped up by the bayonets of Nazi imperialism. Today, if European capitalism is to preserve its rule, it must be propped up by the bayonets of Anglo-American imperialism.

The masses in Italy and now in France, and so it will be throughout Europe, quickly brushed aside the capitalist and liberal parties and gave their support to the traditional parties of the working class. The masses support the Social-Democrats and Stalinists not because the Social-Democrats and Stalinists are betrayers, but because the masses mistakenly believe that these parties will lead them forward in the struggle for socialism, for communism. Just the other day we had a first-hand report from Italy. We were informed that everybody must talk for socialism in Italy today if they wish to get a hearing from the workers. We can put it down as a definite fact: the workers of Europe want *a decisive revolutionary change*. But the workers are not alone. Fascism, which for a while attracted and hypnotized the middle classes, exposed itself after a brief period as simply the bloody tool of decaying monopoly capitalism. Fascism, the last bulwark of capitalism, has pauperized and disillusioned one section of the population after the other. Today the peasantry and great sections of the urban petty-bourgeoisie follow the lead of the working class in seeking a revolutionary road out of the madhouse of capitalist war, starvation and death.

I have read and heard it bruited about that there is going to be a tremendous revival of democratic illusions among the masses because the younger generation has not gone through the school of parliamentarism, that it must first go through this "body of experience" until it is able to shed democratic illusions. What inability to understand the meaning of events and to sense the mood, the aspirations, the feelings of the masses! The Russian masses, as we all know, had far fewer democratic illusions in 1917 than did the German masses who had a rich parliamentary tradition. Yet the Russian workers didn't go through any extensive parliamentary school. The political consciousness of the Russian masses was conditioned by their experiences, by the blind alley in which the Russian autocracy thrust the country, by the fact that the bourgeoisie and the landlords had disgraced themselves by their support of the bloody Czarist dictatorship. The Russian masses were forced, because of the intolerable situation, to seek for bold and revolutionary solutions and to support the boldest and

most intransigent, the most extreme of the left-wing parties. A similar process is taking place in Europe today. The capitalists have disgraced themselves by collaborating with Hitler and will today further disgrace themselves by their collaboration with the Anglo-American imperialists. The European masses are finding the situation intolerable. The very conditions of their existence are forcing them to seek for bold revolutionary solutions to extricate them from the death crisis of European capitalism.

It is interesting in this connection to recall the profound analysis of the consciousness of the European masses made by Trotsky in his 1940 Manifesto.

"Today almost nothing remains of the democratic and pacifist illusions. The peoples are suffering the present war without any longer believing in it, without expecting any more from it than new chains. This applies also to the totalitarian states. The older generation of the workers who bore on their backs the burden of the first imperialist war and who have not forgotten its lessons are still far from eliminated from the arena. In the ears of the next to the oldest generation which went to school during wartime the false slogans of patriotism and pacifism are still ringing. The inestimable experience of these strata who are now crushed by the weight of the war machine will reveal itself in full force when the war compels the toiling masses to come out openly against the governments."

Main Illusions of the Masses

And even more decisive than this analysis, than this prediction, if you will, are the events themselves which are now taking place before our very eyes. Even the least perspicacious of the bourgeois commentators have understood and informed us that the European masses are in a revolutionary mood. The masses have many illusions, to be sure. They do not yet support the parties of the Fourth International. But their illusions, if correctly analyzed, concretized and properly broken down, are found to be not at all those pictured by Morrow. The masses have few illusions about the bourgeoisie. They do not have too many illusions that they can solve their problems within the confines of the capitalist system. Even the illusions concerning the Allies are a more or less transient affair and will quickly give way before the realities of the situation. We saw that in Italy. A year ago the Italian masses of the South undoubtedly greeted the Allies with great enthusiasm and hope. In the course of a few months this enthusiasm was converted to hatred and deadly opposition. So it will be in France on the morrow. So it will be throughout Europe.

The greatest and most dangerous illusions of the masses, if this question is properly analyzed, is found to be their belief, their trust, in the Social-Democratic and Stalinist leaders, especially the latter. They do not yet understand the counter-revolutionary role of these scoundrels. A great dynamic process is taking place in the revolutionary education of the masses, and in this first period it is probably strengthening Stalinist influence. While small sections of the most advanced workers may be recoiling before the treachery of these misleaders, millions of people, first entering the political arena, seeking a way out of the death crisis of capitalism, naturally throw their support behind the parties which in their minds have stood traditionally for socialism, for communism. That is why the struggle to help the masses overcome their illusions is, in one of its most important aspects, the struggle to expose Stalinism and destroy its influence.

There is no question at all that Europe today is a red-hot cauldron of revolution. Everyone admits it. Into this seething

cauldron is now entering the new imperialist overlord—American imperialism. This unbridled imperialist power, which aims to make Wall Street the center of world tribute, which seeks to establish its hegemony over all the continents and all the seas, must now strangle the European revolution and prop up decaying capitalism if it is to realize its imperial program. I see in this connection that Morrow objects to our characterizing American imperialism as *equally predatory* as Nazi imperialism. The objection is not well taken.

German imperialism, which emerged so late on the world scene, which was starved for resources and colonies, attempted to unite all of Europe around highly organized German industry. But the unification of Europe is a task which capitalism is unable to accomplish. Hitler, despite his military might, could only bring havoc to the continent, could only further ruin its economy, enslave its masses and turn the continent into a prison house. American imperialism, which is not a European power, and whose empire lies outside of Europe, aims not to unify the continent, but to dismember it and to keep it dismembered. Wall Street wants not the rebuilding of European economy, but to render impossible its revival as a competitor. Wall Street's program of dismemberment, despoliation and plunder can only deepen Europe's ruin. Allied rule over Europe spells thus not the mitigation, but the aggravation of Europe's catastrophic crisis. The least you can say about American imperialism, whether on a long-term or a short-term basis, is that it is as predatory as Nazi imperialism.

Program of American Imperialism

The study of the role, the motive forces, the aims and the program of American imperialism shows why the political program of Wall Street calls and must call for military occupation, for policing of Europe for ten, twenty, or as the late unlamented Secretary of the Navy Knox proposed, for one hundred years. This study makes clear why American imperialism must seek to refurbish the decrepit monarchies, why they must seek to build up the prestige and power of the Vatican, why they must elevate a lot of royalist and fascist generals to the seats of power, why they must prop up police-military dictatorships. This political program is not something accidental or arbitrary. It is the necessary program for American imperialism, the *only* program to realize its economic, its imperialist aims; the *only* method by which they can put over their predatory, their savage program to keep Europe prostrate, helpless and subservient to American imperialism.

On the basis of a rounded analysis, not only of the general historic decline and decay of European capitalism, but of the specific stage in this process of decay, we affirm: bourgeois democracy is outlived in Europe today. Bourgeois democracy is incompatible with the continued existence of capitalism in Europe. If it was possible for American imperialism to stabilize European capitalism after the last war by loans on the basis of a bourgeois-democratic regime in Germany, then today American imperialism sees as its only program the dismemberment and destruction of Germany as an economic power and the preservation of capitalism with its own bayonets propping up dictatorial regimes.

Naturally we Marxists understand that economics do not automatically determine politics. The bourgeoisie, the Anglo-American imperialists, will practice all kinds of trickery, of deception, to sidetrack the revolutionary anger of the masses, to strangle the revolution, to save their rule. Our resolutions call specific attention to the fact that when the sweep of the

revolution threatens their rule, the imperialists and their native accomplices will push forward the Social-Democratic and Stalinist agents and, if necessary, will even set up bourgeois-democratic regimes for the purpose of disarming and strangling the workers' revolution. But we also point out that these regimes, by their very nature, can only be interim regimes—transition regimes, very unstable, very short-lived. Society cannot exist very long on the basis of a fierce class struggle, of an uncompleted revolution, of a split. A new equilibrium must be established. These interim regimes must either give way to the dictatorship of the proletariat or to the savage military dictatorship of the capitalist counter-revolution. There is no third road.

Now what is Morrow's objection to this perspective, which is the logical, the necessary link in the perspective on Europe held by our movement from its first days. What is Morrow's position? The final conclusion you must arrive at is that Morrow anticipates the revival of bourgeois-democracy in Europe for a period of time. Reminding himself that for this extraordinary thesis he must provide proof, he must provide a foundation, Morrow proceeds to give us an appreciation of the difference of program between American and Nazi imperialism, how American imperialism is not as predatory as the German variety.

I am reading this right out of Morrow's article:

"The short-term perspective is that American imperialism will provide food and economic aid to Europe and will thus for a time appear before the European masses in a very different guise than German imperialism . . . Unlike Nazi occupation American occupation will be followed by an improvement in food supplies and in the economic situation generally." Morrow, then warming up to his theme, tells us: "Where the Nazis removed factory machinery and transportation equipment, the Americans will bring them in. These economic contrasts, which of course flow entirely from the contrast between the limited resources of German capitalism and the far more ample resources still possessed by American capitalism, cannot fail for a time to have political consequences."

Morrow's Theory -- and Reality

Thus we have a more or less rounded thesis for the revival, from however short-term a point of view, of European capitalism and for the improvement, however temporary, of the standard of living. If that were true, there would exist, of course, some solid justification for the idea that illusions would revive among the European masses concerning the role of American imperialism and that on some basis, however low, bourgeois-democracy could be revived for a time. But this perspective has nothing in common with cruel reality. It is quite clear that Morrow is himself the victim of illusions about American imperialism, its supposed unlimited powers, its role, its purposes, its program. We called specific attention in our resolution to the statistics of the results of *one year* of Allied rule in Italy. It is unnecessary to go over all this data again. It adds up to growing starvation, disease, unemployment, a monstrous rising of the death rate, the worsening of the crisis. And Allied treatment of Italy will appear as beneficent compared to their rule of Germany. Yet it is on this flimsy economic foundation, and only on this foundation, that the theory of the revival of bourgeois democracy in devastated and ruined Europe, rests. Without it, it falls to the ground.

Now some comrades have informed us that the proof of Morrow's theory of bourgeois democracy can be found in the Bonomi and deGaulle regimes, that we already have bourgeois democracy in Europe today, or reasonable facsimiles thereof.

I described before the historical origins of bourgeois democracy and what a bourgeois-democratic regime is. I told you that a number of its features included free elections, government by elected parliament, various bourgeois-democratic rights, etc., etc. What is the first thing that hits you in the eye when you analyze the Bonomi and deGaulle regimes? They haven't the first pre-requisite of a bourgeois-democratic regime or any other kind of independent regime—sovereignty. Power rests in the hands of the foreign conqueror. The very first democratic right is lacking—the right of the Italian and French people to determine their own fate. Secondly, the cabinets are hand-picked. There is no parliament and there are no elections. These governments “rule” by decree. Is it necessary to argue that governments which “rule” by authority of the military forces of the foreign conqueror, whose troops are stationed in the country; governments which are hand-picked, governments which “rule” by decree, with no parliament and no elections, is it necessary to argue that these are facades of a military dictatorship?

We are told that some democratic rights exist both in France and Italy. To be sure. These rights have been grabbed up by the masses in the course of the struggle, they attest to the rising class struggle in Italy and France but do not prove the democratic character of the Bonomi or de Gaulle regimes. Even under blood-thirsty Czarism, the Bolsheviks were able to publish for a time a legal daily newspaper. There existed, for a time, a consultative parliament with elected deputies. Up until the world war the Bolsheviks, as well as the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries, sent their deputies to this assembly. The argument that deGaulle's democracy is revealed by the fact that he rests on the left-wing organizations is equally unimpressive. Every Bonapartist regime attempts to balance itself between the two conflicting forces of society.

Isn't deGaulle, however, evolving in the direction of a bourgeois-democratic regime? The whole manner in which this is posed is false. It is not our business to indulge in idle speculation. We know that deGaulle, that the European capitalists, that the American imperialists, will grudgingly grant this or that democratic right or even, if necessary, set up a full-blown democratic regime if the sweep of the revolution rises to great heights and they fear for their existence. How deGaulle, or how Bonomi, or how any other regimes will “evolve” *depends on the course of the struggle and on nothing else*. It is, I repeat, not our business to indulge in idle speculation. It is our business to expose the treacherous maneuvers of deGaulle. It is our business to teach the masses that every concession deGaulle or the Allies are forced to grant has the sole purpose of sidetracking the struggle, lulling their revolutionary vigilance in order to gain time to organize the forces of the counter-revolution for a definitive settlement with the working class. It is not our business to lose our sense of proportion and falsely paint up deGaulle's regime as democratic because of every episodic concession won as a by-product of the revolutionary struggle, but to utilize all concessions to penetrate more deeply into the worker-mass, to further heighten their class consciousness, to expose the fact that all concessions are transitory, that all promises of improvement are lies, that outside of the destruction of capitalism and the establishment of the Soviet power, there is no salvation for Europe and its peoples.

The perniciousness of this theory of the renaissance (with whatever qualifications are attached) of bourgeois democracy is clearly revealed in the two questions I have just discussed.

This theory has so disorientated and confused its proponents that in the first instance they proceeded to paint up American imperialism and even altered the facts to suit the exigencies of their false perspective. In the second instance, they proceeded to paint up the thinly veiled military dictatorships imposed on the people of Italy and France as bourgeois-democratic governments or something very close to it. The imperialists have succeeded beyond their wildest dreams. By covering up their military dictatorship with a little —and very little— democratic veneer, they succeeded in fooling even a few Trotskyists. The job of the Trotskyists is not to accept for good coin the fraudulent democratic facades that cover the military dictatorships. The job of the Trotskyists is to expose this facade and show how behind it stands the military force of the conqueror who denies to the people their right to select governments of their choosing, to show that the shadow regimes are subservient to the conqueror, propped up by Anglo-American imperialism which aims not to liberate but to oppress.

This false perspective of Morrow has a further implication if it is really drawn to its logical end. If American imperialism has such inexhaustible powers, that it can, as he thinks, improve the standard of living in Europe, then of course there exists a certain basis, on however low a foundation, for the establishment of bourgeois-democracy in the immediate period ahead. From that we must assume the softening of class conflicts for a period, that the class struggle will be very largely refracted through the parliamentary struggle, that for a time the parliamentary arena will dominate the stage. If that were true, we would have to revise our conception of American imperialism. And of course the Trotskyist movement would have to attune its work to these new conditions—conditions for a while of slow painful growth, propaganda, election campaigns, etc., etc.

The Question of Democratic Demands

Morrow apparently draws back and cannot get himself to enunciate this perspective in clear-cut fashion . . . except to give exaggerated emphasis to democratic demands . . .

While I am on the subject of democratic demands, let me ask this: Why all this agitation suddenly on democratic demands? Why this insistence upon involving our party in this totally artificial debate? We accused Morrow at the Plenum of wanting a blueprint, of trying to draw up a concrete program of action and set of demands for the European proletariat. Here is Morrow's answer to our accusation, as given in his speech to the Plenum:

“By a blueprint is meant an unwarranted attempt to anticipate what concrete situations our European comrades will be faced with, which democratic demands our European comrades should raise at various conjunctures and in what sequence they should raise them . . . Frank said for the Subcommittee that they don't want a blueprint. Neither do I. Their objection is not well taken. Frank said, what is true enough, that the sequence and formulation of democratic demands are things which will have to be left to our European comrades to work out in the heat of battle as they sense the mood of the masses. True enough, but irrelevant to my points on democratic demands. For my points do not at all attempt to anticipate which democratic demands and in what sequence they should raise them, but I simply indicate why the METHOD of democratic and transitional demands will have to be employed under the general conditions which are likely to prevail in Europe in the next immediate period.”

If that is what Morrow wanted—an affirmation of the method of fighting for democratic as well as transitional demands, in order to mobilize the masses—he has got it. This is incorporated in the Plenum resolution, and we have included

a section on it in the convention resolution. The clamor for and around and about democratic demands, however, has not ceased.

Today Logan comes forward, speaking presumably for the Morrow position, and presents us with a demand not only for the "method" of democratic and transitional demands (a strange "demand" to be put to our party in 1944) but with a full-fledged program of action, a veritable blueprint, —with slogans and all— just how the French, Italian, German and other Trotskyists can win over the masses and make the revolution. Of course, every experienced comrade will simply laugh such blueprints out of court. The attempt is ludicrous. Slogans, especially if we are speaking of democratic, episodic slogans, depend by their nature on the consciousness, the mood of the masses, the flow and tempo of the class struggle, the relationship of forces. That is what determines which slogan is put forward as against another one. That is what determines exactly how the slogan is advanced. Sometimes events alter sharply overnight and the slogan of yesterday must be withdrawn and a new one substituted in its place. What particular slogans to push, to agitate for at a given time, what slogans take precedence—these are all questions which can be determined fully only by the people involved in the struggle who have the necessary information, can gauge the sentiment of the masses and understand the relationship of the forces that obtain. This question of slogans and demands and immediate programs of action cannot be decided by the American party, much less incorporated by us in resolution form, because we do not have adequate information.

Moreover, we are writing a resolution on the *European* revolution. If we would attempt to sloganeer and write blueprints, we would have to write separate programs of action for a half dozen or a dozen different countries, because we know that revolutionary developments do not proceed uniformly, that the conditions, tempo of development, mood of the masses, vary from country to country . . .

On the Danger of Ultra-Leftism

The attempt to create a thoroughly artificial and uncalled-for debate over democratic slogans, the attempt in a thoroughly unwarranted manner to magnify their proper importance in our full program and constantly push them to the forefront as a kind of panacea designed to solve every problem and overcome every difficulty, stems from the completely one-sided, tendentious, arbitrary and therefore false theory that ultra-leftism represents the main danger in the Fourth International today. Morrow tells us: "The main danger *within* the Fourth International appears to me to lie in the direction of ultra-leftism." And of course, as everyone knows, ultra-leftists are opposed to fighting for democratic demands. That is why "it is necessary," according to Morrow, "to emphasize and underline the role of democratic demands."

What is the proof for this amazing theory that in the period of revolutionary upsurge the main danger is ultra-leftism? It is laughable to even talk about it. Proof number one is historical. According to Morrow, "the rich lessons of the first years after the last war" reveal the fact that "the young parties of the Comintern suffered primarily not from opportunism but from ultra-leftism." And we are told that "the same phenomenon is far more likely to confront the Fourth International at the end of this war."

History does not confirm this theory. As a *general proposi-*

tion it is far more correct to say that in the period of revolutionary rise the main danger comes from the opportunist direction. Consider Lenin's own party. In 1917, before Lenin's arrival, virtually the whole Central Committee of the Bolshevik party approved the policy of conciliationism with Menshevism, and only by Lenin's own timely and energetic intervention was the crisis solved and the helm turned toward a correct revolutionary course. A few months later Trotsky was defeated in the Bolshevik fraction on his and Lenin's policy of boycotting the Pre-Parliament, which caused another minor crisis in the Bolshevik ranks. And then, on the very eve of the revolution, the Bolshevik party was thrown into a new terrible crisis by the crackup of Zinoviev and Kamenev under the pressure of bourgeois public opinion. The 1919 revolution in Hungary was defeated in part because of Bela Kun's policy of conciliation with the Social-Democrats. The young Italian party was unprepared for the critical events of 1920 because the Serrati leadership refused to break with and purge the party of its incorrigible opportunist wing. We can, as a matter of fact, sum up the first years of the Comintern by stating that this period was devoted to a fight for the 21 demands, the fight to purge the parties of opportunist elements and destroy the opportunist tendencies. It was only at the Third Congress of the Comintern, after the first wave of the revolutionary tide had already passed, that the struggle was first launched against the ultra-leftist danger.

Proof number two consists of a consideration of the situation inside the Fourth International today. And here again we are treated to a one-sided analysis with the facts arbitrarily selected to fit a preconceived theory. We are informed of "the consistently ultra-leftist course of our official British section and its consequent deterioration." And from this evidence the sweeping conclusion is drawn: "Thus the present evidence is that within the International the danger of ultra-leftism is far more likely than the danger of opportunism." How is it, in discussing England, that less than one-half of the situation is described? Why is there no attempt, if England is to be discussed, to discuss the *whole* English problem as far as the British Trotskyist movement is concerned? As a matter of fact, the more important half of the information has been left out—the fact that the old WIL leadership, for a number of years manifested, in our opinion, traits of national exclusiveness. Today the ultra-leftists represent a truly insignificant tendency inside the fused party. The main problems of the British Trotskyist movement lie in an entirely different direction.

We are further aware that a group of German comrades submitted to the Fourth International and still support the "Three Theses" (published in the December 1942 FI), a thoroughly opportunist, revisionist as well as liquidationist document. Our Cuban section has just recently been guilty of what is, in our judgment, an opportunist error when it supported, even though critically, Grau San Martin in the recent presidential elections in that country, etc., etc.

To make any definite judgments today on the *varying* tendencies within the Fourth International is *distinctly premature*. And in any case it should never be made in the one-sided manner attempted by Morrow.

We have always been taught that as a general rule the main danger comes from the opportunist direction in the period of revolutionary rise. Trotsky established in his "Lessons of October" that in every revolutionary crisis, bourgeois public opinion beats down upon the proletarian party and creates a crisis

inside the central leadership itself. This, said Trotsky, is an historic law.

The question at hand, however, raised by Morrow, stands on somewhat different ground. When someone proposes that we write a resolution or devote a section of a resolution exorcising a deviationist tendency, then it is not permissible to confine oneself to generalities. One is obliged to tell us *where* is the danger, *what groups* or *individuals* represent it, *how* have the tendencies manifested themselves. We stand ready at all times to fight *real* dangers, whether from the left or the right. We will not launch a struggle, however, against dangers that have not yet arisen, but which somebody simply conjures up out of thin air, based on a misreading of the history of the Comintern and a one-sided analysis of the parties of the Fourth International.

We Do Not Change Our Course!

Proceeding from our perspective on the death agony of capitalism in Europe, on the predatory counter-revolutionary and tyrannical role of American imperialism, on the clearly revolutionary mood which pervades the masses of Europe and the fact that the European revolution has begun, we are steering the course toward building Trotskyist parties in the very heat of battle. We understand that the class struggle is not about to be softened, nor primarily refracted through parliamentary prisms. We know the very contrary is true. The class struggle is growing more fierce. And in the period of revolutionary rise, basing ourselves on the lessons of the October Revolution, we stress first and foremost to our European co-thinkers the necessity of unfurling our full banner and stepping forth before the masses as the intransigent fighters for the socialist revolution, for working class internationalism, for the

Socialist United States of Europe. We step forth as the most indefatigable builders of the soviets and the boldest fighters for the soviet power. Our transitional program is not of a propagandistic character now, but is invested with immediate burning importance in Europe today. Many of the slogans will unquestionably become slogans of the day and will be taken up by the masses. And of course, of course, the Trotskyists, who aim to be not only propagandists or agitators, but leaders of mass action, will issue at every turn of the struggle those necessary sharp fighting slogans of an immediate character dictated by the moods of the masses and the needs of the struggle.

For us it is not a question of speculating whether the process will take months or years. That will be decided only in the struggle and by the struggle. We do not view the European revolution as one gigantic apocalyptic event, which with one smashing blow will finish with capitalism. The European revolution will probably be a more or less long drawn-out process with many initial setbacks, retreats, and possibly even defeats.

We know full well the military might of American imperialism and what treachery its Stalinist and Social-Democratic agents are capable of. We know all their counter-revolutionary designs. We know they aim to drown the German revolution in its own blood and that they are already proceeding to draw a cordon sanitaire around the German nation.

But more decisive than their schemes and plots and grandiose plans is the disintegration of capitalism, the melting away of its reserves. Once the inexhaustible power of the proletariat is unleashed, once the proletariat creates a Bolshevik leadership, it will prove mightier than all the foul conspiracies, than all the military prowess of the imperialists, and it will emerge triumphant in the end.

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An Appeal for Aid to the 12 Class-War Prisoners and Their Families

Dear Friends:

Twelve members of Minneapolis Truckdrivers Local 544—CIO and of the Socialist Workers Party have been in prison now for over ten months, solely because of their labor activities and political opinions. Six others were released on October 20th.

The imprisonment of the 18 under the vicious Smith "Gag" law makes the Minneapolis Labor Case the most important civil liberties issue in the Second World War. Already over 350 unions and other progressive organizations representing more than 3,500,000 members have supported the work of the Civil Rights Defense Committee.

Ever since the 18 went to prison the CRDC has provided relief for their wives and children. Without this aid the families of these persecuted labor leaders would suffer great hardships and privations. Today, with the high cost of living, feeding and clothing their unfortunate ones becomes an ever-increasing problem for the Committee.

The Minneapolis Labor Case directly involves you and the democratic rights of your union. Our campaign to free the 18 and repeal the Smith "Gag" Act is a campaign to defend the hard-won rights of the American labor movement.

HELP US TO MAKE THEIR CHRISTMAS CHEERFUL!
PLEASE SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE CIVIL RIGHTS DEFENSE COMMITTEE, 160 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK CITY 10, N. Y.

Fraternally yours,

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and Shipbuilding Workers-CIO

JULIUS HOCHMAN
General Manager, N. Y. Joint Board,
Dress and Waistmakers Union
ILGWU-AFL

GEORGE BALDANZI
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