

# Fourth International

## Wall Street's War Against Labor: The Meaning of the GM Strike



*Manifesto of European Trotskyists*

*On Solidarity*

*With the German Workers*

**Lenin Lives in the Fourth International**

*By The Editors*

*Articles on Indo-China—The Role of Zionism—  
Revolutionary Policy in Europe*

January, 1946

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1946

## Manager's Column

New York: Literature agent Carolyn Delaney reports that, following the success of putting *The Militant* on stands, 224 copies of the December *Fourth International* were placed on newsstands in Manhattan. Scores of additional news dealers are now carrying the magazine as a result of this well-organized distribution. Plans are under way to extend this campaign to the other boroughs.

Another part of this promotional campaign to gain new readers for the F. I. is the series of educationals which are given at branches of the Socialist Workers Party in New York. In a recent talk Jules Jackson analyzed the contents of the magazine, with special emphasis on its value to workers who are studying Marxism. He reported a new reader's comment that because of the understanding gained from political analyses in the F. I., she was able to read the capitalist press news accounts with her eyes open to the broad implications of world events. Suggestions for improving the F. I. made during the discussion included a demand for book reviews of Marxist classics, as well as of non-Marxist novels, scientific works, etc.

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Newark: Frieda Kalb writes: "Enclosed are two F. I. subs from *Militant* subscribers who were visited.

"After New Year's week the Newark branch will start its call-back campaign for *Militant* subscription renewals. The branch will be divided into two teams and will be scored by a point system. We intend to emphasize F. I. subscriptions by giving them a high point value."

Other literature agents should consider the *Militant* call-back campaign as an extremely fruitful field for introducing readers to the F. I. Flint: It is always a pleasure to report an increase in bundle orders. J. H. Sloan asks for a 50 percent increase to start with the December issue.

Portland, Oregon: For the past three months, Portland has requested a larger bundle order each month. The F. I. is not only sold at forums and lectures but also at social gatherings. C. M. Hesser has ordered extra copies for a New Year's eve social. He writes further: "I don't know just what to make of it—but the newsstand where we place the F. I. is always selling out the F. I.—the first time we gave them five copies. When we checked in a week they were sold. If it were not for the bill we would order about 30 copies just to see how many could be sold in a month.

## FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

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Managing Editor: E. R. FRANK

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"It's the only stand of its kind in Portland and they seem to sell more magazines than papers. I am sure that if it was displayed (and *The Militant* too) the sale would pick up even more."

We sent Portland 30 copies of the December issue, so that agent Hesser will have an opportunity to explore the possibilities for further sales in his area.

\* \* \*

Toledo: Maggie McGowan notifies us that she has become our new

literature agent. She writes of future plans: "To date, sales of the F. I. on newsstands in this city have been rather spotty, but I believe this has been primarily due to the location of stands. We have five stands which carry our magazine, but with the exception of one, they are all in out-of-the-way places with little traffic. However, there are several large, bustling newsstands in Toledo and I am going to attempt to place the F. I. on these stands when the December issue

comes out. I believe the greater traffic in these stores will account for increased sales of *Fourth International*.

"I would like to compliment the editors of *Fourth International* on the job they are doing with the cover-page. It has been transformed from a hodge-podge in which nothing stood out to an exceptionally well-organized cover with a lot of sparkle to it."

\* \* \*

From subscribers: Many favorable comments have been received on Charles Carsten's article "Behind the Argentine Crisis" in the November F. I. One subscriber writes that until she read Carsten's class analysis of the political groupings in Argentina, she could not make head or tail of events in that country. An Argentine reader compliments the author on the excellence and accuracy of his analysis of the interrelations between the British and American imperialists and various sections of the Argentine ruling class. M. B., New Jersey, writes: "I liked the article on Argentina in the November F. I. so much. It is a relief to read something on Argentina which makes sense, after all the hog-wash which is dished up for public consumption.

"The article by the German communist was also interesting."

From France on the September F. I.: "Read the F. I. from cover to cover tonight. Very good. The Review section was as good as any ever printed, even if long. In fact, every single piece was very well done. The International Notes were good too, French part superior. . . ."

From England: "I would like a regular copy of *Fourth International* sent to me direct. Through all the years of the struggle of our movement (I have been in it since 1933) your publications have been the most helpful and one always looks forward to their coming.

"If you have any bound copies of *Fourth International* for the 1940's (and *New International* for the 1930's,) would you please let me know the prices."

We have answered this reader that the following bound volumes are available:

1938 <i>New International</i> .....	\$3.00
1939 <i>New International</i> .....	8.00
1940-41 (one volume) <i>New International</i> .....	7.00
1942 <i>Fourth International</i> ....	7.00
1943 <i>Fourth International</i> ....	4.50
1944 <i>Fourth International</i> ....	4.50

These volumes may be obtained from the Business Manager, *Fourth International*, 116 University Place, New York 3, N. Y.

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## Lenin Lives In the Fourth International

By the Editors

The 22nd anniversary of the death of Lenin is a timely occasion for the revolutionary workers of all countries who cherish his memory to remind themselves once again that Lenin, like Marx, his predecessor and teacher, and like Trotsky, his heir and continuator, was first of all and above all an internationalist; any and every form of national limitedness was completely alien to him. He approached all political questions from the world view and tirelessly explained that the emancipation of the working class, the precondition for the salvation of all humanity from a horrible relapse into barbarism, could not be achieved otherwise than by their international organization and the international coordination of their struggle.

More than that, Lenin would not admit that the ties of international organization uniting the revolutionary workers could be suspended for a single day. His first and immediate response to the betrayal of the Social Democracy at the outset of the first World War was to issue the slogan: "The Second International is dead—Long Live the Third International!" The Third International, formally constituted in 1919, really began its existence with that slogan of Lenin and the handful of scattered Marxists who rallied to it in the summer of 1914. For an international organization, in the Leninist sense of the word, begins not with the federation of fully formed national organizations but with the proclamation of an international program and the collaborative efforts of its adherents, however few and dispersed they may be, to create national organizations on the basis of the international program.

### "INTERNATIONALISTS IN DEEDS"

Expressing that conception three years later—in April 1917—and two years before the first formal congress of the Communist International, Lenin boldly asserted that "this new International is *already established* and working." He said:

It is we who must found, and immediately, without delay, a *new*, revolutionary, proletarian International; or rather, we must not fear to acknowledge publicly that this new International is *already established* and working.

This is the International of those "internationalists in deeds" whom I specifically enumerated above. They and they alone are representatives of the revolutionary, internationalist masses, and not corrupters of the masses.

True, there are few Socialists *of that type*; but let every Russian worker ask himself how many really conscious revolutionaries there were in Russia *on the eve* of the February-March Revolution of 1917.

The question is not one of numbers, but of giving correct expression to the ideas and policy of the truly revolutionary proletariat. The essential thing is not to "proclaim" internationalism, but to be an internationalist in deeds, even when times are most trying.

### THE DISEASE OF NATIONAL REFORMISM

The Third (Communist) International, which was born out of the death agony of the Second International, in time shared the fate of its predecessor, succumbing to the same fundamental disease: national reformism. The Stalinist theory and practice of "Socialism in One Country" was at bottom only a variation of the Social Democratic policy of "national defense" and had the same fatal results. The Comintern died ingloriously, but its Stalinist betrayers and assassins were no more able to destroy genuine revolutionary internationalism and its concomitant, international organization, than were the Social Democratic betrayers of 1914.

Speaking of the downfall of the Second International, Lenin wrote: "When it is said: The Second International died after suffering shameful bankruptcy—one must be able to understand what this means. It means that opportunism, reformism, petty-bourgeois Socialism became bankrupt and died."

The same applies fully to the downfall of the Stalinized Comintern. It was not the program of International Communism but its national reformist substitute that died. The doctrines, traditions and methods of Lenin's Comintern passed over and found expression and organization, without any interruption or lapse of time, in the Fourth International of Trotsky. Lenin and Leninism continued to live in the Fourth International.

### IDEOLOGICAL SOLIDARITY

The Fourth International, proclaimed by Trotsky immediately after the shameful capitulation of the Comintern to German fascism in 1933, and formally constituted at the World Conference in 1938, claimed the allegiance of all revolutionary Marxists the world over, including ourselves. The Voorhis Act passed by Congress in 1940 compelled the Socialist Workers Party, as is known, to disaffiliate from the Fourth International. It goes without saying, however, that this did not in any way diminish our concern with the fate of the International, nor did it weaken the ideological ties binding us to our co-thinkers the world over. How did these ties of ideological solidarity, which united all Fourth Internationalists throughout the world, survive the catastrophe of the death of Trotsky and the harsh experiences of a five-year World War?

For our part, even in the darkest period of the wartime reaction, when the Nazi terror machine held Europe in its grip and all communication was broken off, we never doubted that the cadres of the Trotskyist parties would survive every test. The facts which are now coming to light, with the partial re-establishment of communications, reveal that this confidence

has been far more than vindicated. Ideological firmness and international solidarity, under the harshest circumstances, have been demonstrated in a manner unprecedented in history.

It is now clearly established that neither the ravages of war nor the ruthless suppression suffered by the sections of the Fourth International in all the warring countries succeeded in smashing the Fourth International. The Trotskyist parties arise everywhere stronger in their internationalism than ever. More than that, the Fourth International is today the only workers' International in existence.

## THE ONLY LIVING INTERNATIONAL

The Second International collapsed for the second time at the outbreak of World War II. The Third International, a pliant tool of the Stalinist bureaucracy, was dissolved by a simple ukase from the Kremlin. It was traded by Stalin for American Lend-Lease. The centrist "London Bureau" which at one time appeared as a pretentious challenger of the Fourth International disappeared without a trace.

This does not mean that there will not be attempts made to reconstitute the defunct, outlived Internationals. The report that a recent congress of the Greek Stalinists called for the reconstitution of the Stalintern may be one sign of such an attempt. The emergence of the socialist parties in European countries will most likely lead to attempts to revive the corpse of the Second International as well. The centrist ILP and POUM may, as Comrade Trotsky predicted, make "new attempts to build an international organization on the pattern of the two and a half international, or, this time, a three and a quarter international." But nothing good can come from such attempts. Nothing useful to the emancipation struggle of the workers can be built on a foundation of centrist futility and national-reformist treachery.

One fact stands out like a beacon. The Fourth International is the only one that lived at the outbreak of the war; lived during the darkest days of war reaction; and lives today more virile than ever.

## HEROIC WORK OF OUR MILITANTS

Many were the militants on the European continent who died heroes' deaths in order that the International might live. The group of German soldiers, inspired by the ideas of the Fourth International, who together with French Trotskyists, published an illegal paper, *Arbeiter Und Soldat*, and who paid for it with their lives, held aloft the banner of the Fourth International. This demonstration of working class internationalism at a time when the Stalinists and the treacherous Socialists preached national hatred and rabid jingoism will go down into history as the proud heritage of the Fourth International. It was work such as this which impelled an old German Communist, a former leader of the Communist Party of Germany, to write:

Even if we German communists encounter in Germany a certain discouragement on the question of aid from a real International we will not have to hang our heads. On the contrary, we will be able to say: The International lives, in spite of Hitler, the war, imperialism, the degeneration of the party and in spite of Stalin; the International lives and wants to help you, German workers, so that you may at last fight victoriously for your October!

The European comrades of four parties who in the darkest days of Nazi rule held joint conferences and issued an illegal

press in defiance of death and concentration camps—they carried on the work of the Fourth International. The Greek Trotskyists, hounded by their own reactionary government, by the Nazis and above all by the Stalinists, and who retained their organization—they carried on the work of the Fourth International.

The persecuted comrades in India, China, Indo-China and the other colonial countries ruled by bestial imperialist masters—they carried on the work of the Fourth International. So also did the Trotskyists in the most powerful and arrogant imperialist America carry on the fight despite persecution and imprisonment. And so also did the British and Latin-Americans and the Australians, the Canadians and South Africans. A new section of the Fourth International came to life in Italy after twenty years of fascism. No information comes to us from the realm dominated by Stalin, but who can doubt that in the Soviet Union, *the fountain-head of the Fourth International*, some of its cadres have survived the terror and carry on the fight?

## COMMON ANSWERS TO MAIN PROBLEMS

Even more remarkable than the unremitting activity which the cadres of the Fourth International carried on under conditions of war and terror is the *solidarity of ideas* which they maintained in enforced isolation from each other; the *common answers* they gave to all the fundamental questions. This is now also clearly established. Four European parties meeting in conference early in 1944 under Nazi occupation were able to record agreement on a programmatic resolution. Other parties, operating under more or less legal conditions in Britain, the United States and other countries revealed, in their separately adopted resolutions, a similar identity of views. The sections of the Fourth International, cut off from each other by the war, with communications disrupted, nevertheless saw eye to eye on all the main problems confronting them.

When the European sections of the Fourth International first had an opportunity to read and study the Socialist Workers Party resolution adopted by the Plenum in October 1943, the editors of *Quatrieme Internationale* introduced it as follows:

The members of the European section of the Fourth International will not fail to note the striking coincidence of the general line of the text with that of the resolutions of the European Conference of February 1944. This is a further proof of the solidity of the program of the Fourth International and of the organic ties that unite all the sections in their thought and action.

On the same theme the European Secretariat of the Fourth International wrote on November 24, 1945:

There is one quality of which the Fourth International is outstandingly proud. It is precisely its internationalism. This was demonstrated politically when with the gradual reestablishment of communications as the second imperialist war drew toward a close, it was learned that in country after country, cut off and isolated by the barriers of censorship and occupation, the world Trotskyists had drawn practically identical theoretical and tactical conclusions from the innumerable historical developments occurring during their isolation.

The Fourth International covered itself with glory during the war in its defense of working class internationalism. When the history of the Fourth International during World War II is written, it will be the richest chapter in the entire history of the revolutionary-socialist movement. It will be a history of the endurance, tenacity and principled firmness of small parties faced with insuperable obstacles, hated and persecuted

by the government and by the government-agents of the Second and Third Internationals.

These now well established facts, briefly recited here without the slightest embellishment, are sufficient to explain why all the various Trotskyist parties, reassured by this remarkable demonstration of programmatic solidarity and courageous struggle in times of storm and stress, are now moving forward at a faster pace, expanding their activities on national grounds, and taking steps to coordinate their work internationally. The Fourth International has emerged from the five-year wartime test as a self-confident movement, imbued with a fighting optimism.

### THE MOURNERS— AND SLANDERERS

As against this, the real situation in the ranks of the international workers' vanguard, we hear, like a voice from another world, the lamentations of those who, at the outbreak of the war, broke away from the Fourth International and have seen no good in it since. They sought to deal a "catastrophic" blow to the Fourth International and do not yet realize that it is they, not the Fourth International, who suffered the catastrophe. In the face of all the facts which demonstrate the indestructible vitality of the Fourth International, Shachtman, writing in the September



1945 number of *The New International*, lugubriously announces: "During the war the Fourth International simply ceased to exist as any kind of real movement." Then, to make sure nobody misunderstood this preposterous statement, he adds a funereal question: "Why did the International die during the war and who and what are responsible for this tragedy?"

Ordinarily, such ostensibly solicitous wailing about the "death" of the organized movement of international Leninism, which contains a strong undertone of malicious slander, could quite easily pass unnoticed by the militants of the Fourth International. We have heard it many times before from people who, putting self-justification ahead of objective truth, consciously or unconsciously substituted the wish for the thought; and it never prevented the Fourth International from continuing to live and to grow. This time, however, the unauthorized obituary has the stamp of an impudent provocation, since it follows closely behind a proposal of the Shachtmanite Workers Party to unite with the Socialist Workers Party and is intended, it is to be presumed, as a contribution to the discussion preparatory to such a unification. For that reason we shall discuss it

briefly, but only for the purpose of exposing its discredited antecedents, and of demonstrating its worthlessness and the necessity of rejecting it *in toto* as a prerequisite to any serious talk of finding a common language with the Socialist Workers Party.

**HOW SHACHTMAN'S THEORY EVOLVED** Shachtman's theory about the death of the Fourth International, like many of his other theories, sprouted from a seed planted by Burnham. The successive stages of its evolution from seed to flower can be traced roughly as follows:

(1) In his notorious document, "Science and Style," written in February, 1940, Burnham said: "Comrade Trotsky, in the course of your intervention in the present dispute, you have struck such heavy blows against the Fourth International that, for my own part, I am not convinced that the International will be able to survive them. I say advisedly that your blows have been directed 'against the Fourth International'."

(2) A few months later Shachtman in company with Burnham led a split from the Fourth International.

(3) Shortly afterward they set up a "Committee for the Fourth International" in opposition to the elected Executive Committee of the Fourth International. Under that banner they tried to organize a rival international organization.

(4) In a circular letter to Workers Party branches, reporting the decisions of the December, 1944 meeting of the National Committee, Shachtman explained their opinion of the Fourth International as follows:

The Committee had a discussion, finally, on the question of the Fourth International. It was the common view that the International, as any kind of organized body worthy of recognition by us or by any serious revolutionist, no longer exists.

And what is to be done?

Of the steps to be taken, the most important and immediate is the formation of a *bloc* with the International Communists of Germany (IKD) with whom we have developed increasingly fraternal political and organizational relations. . . . With this bloc, we shall endeavor to group the other groups which generally belong to the Trotskyist movement.

Here we see the "organic" development of a position over a period of nearly six years, from the malicious suggestion planted by Burnham early in 1940 to the final announcement of 1945. The record shows—for the benefit of those who did not know it before—that the Fourth International all this time has been deprived of the participation and help of Shachtman, but it does not show that the International ceased to exist because of that. Quite the contrary. In the light of the facts previously cited it is clear that the report about the "death of the Fourth International" is, as Mark Twain would say, "greatly exaggerated."

The truth is that Shachtman & Co. tried to kill the Fourth International, but they did not succeed. They tried to replace it by another International organization, but they did not succeed in that either. All they got was a "bloc" with the revisionist authors of the "Three Theses," the so-called IKD. That is not much. In fact, Shachtman's "bloc" with the new revisionists, like his ill-fated "bloc" with the revisionist Burnham, is a terrible liability, compromising both parties to the "bloc." It brings them both into sharper, more irreconcilable conflict with

us and with all the main cadres of the Fourth International who survived and grew stronger precisely because they held firmly to their orthodox positions and rejected all revisionism.

## OUR SLOGAN IS "BACK TO LENIN"

The Fourth International has every right to call itself the International of Lenin and to claim his memorial day as their own; no other party, group or tendency in the whole world has any right to it. The program of the Fourth International is built squarely on the principles laid down by the first four congresses of the Leninist Comintern. The Marxism of the Fourth International is the rigid orthodox Marxism of Lenin, scornfully rejecting any and all attempts to smuggle in revisionist contraband. The "organization methods" of the Fourth International—more correctly, its methods of building the proletarian combat party—are the methods expounded by Lenin, not in resolutions only but in life, in his life-long struggle to build the Bolshevik party of Russia.

The revisionists, the "innovators," in the Soviet Union, in matters of theory and organization, were not the oppositionists headed by Trotsky but the bureaucrats headed by Stalin. The slogan of the Left Opposition—and our slogan today—was "Back to Lenin!" It was not for nothing that the Russian founders of the world-wide movement of the Fourth International called themselves "Bolshevik-Leninists." In the language of the Fourth International "Trotskyism" and "Leninism" mean the same thing.

The Fourth International wrote no new programs during the long period of the war, and had no need of any. Its sections throughout the world, living for the most part in isolation from each other, lived through the harsh experiences of the war, found the right answers to the main questions, and kept unbroken their ideological solidarity with each other, precisely because they remained faithful to the old program.

As long as that basic standpoint is maintained—and we have no doubt it will be—the errors which have been made, and which will be made in the future, insofar as they relate to secondary questions of tactics, of estimation of the situation at a given moment, etc., can and should be corrected by free democratic discussion without interrupting the practical work of the parties or menacing their unity. It is only when assaults on the basic program are attempted, and when undisciplined petty-bourgeois elements try to put themselves above the party, refusing to submit to the will of the majority—these two manifestations usually go together—it is only then that the unity of a revolutionary workers' organization is endangered. Lenin taught us, by precept and example, how to deal with either or both of these dangers.

## LENIN'S TEACHINGS ON ORGANIZATION

The program is decisive, but the organization is important too; without organization the program remains on paper. So taught Lenin, and after him, his great collaborator and disciple, Trotsky. The ruthless intransigence of our great teachers in matters of principle—of program—is well known and has been assimilated into the flesh and blood of the main cadres of the Fourth International. Their teachings on organization, however, are unfortunately not so well known; or, at any rate, not so well understood, especially by those comrades whose experience has been limited, more or less, to propaganda circles.

This, in our opinion, is a great weakness which can endanger the future work of the parties of the Fourth International.

Organized, systematic work; strict accountability; responsibility, dependability and firm discipline, especially on the part of the leaders; attentive hearkening to the voice of the workers in the ranks—these features, absolutely necessary in a real workers' organization, play a minor role in propaganda circles and discussion clubs, especially those which have very few worker members. But it should be borne in mind that the task of the propaganda circle, as Lenin and Trotsky understood it, is not to stew in its own juice, but to find a way to the workers with its ideas and create a broad workers organization. That means, to dissolve itself within the broader organization and shake off the old habits of its former existence.

Trotsky was so preoccupied, in the last period of his life, with the consuming struggle over great principles, especially against the theoretical revisionism of the Stalinists which turned into outright betrayal in the class struggle, that his expositions of the "organization question" had to be subordinated. His task, in the first place, was to clarify principles and build new cadres, and he performed it magnificently. He conceived the cadres, however, not as ends in themselves, but as the initiating nuclei of genuine workers' organizations, and he spoke about it more than once. Indeed, since 1934 he waged an unremitting struggle for this transformation. In this connection one should study his great polemics against the Petty-Bourgeois Opposition in the Socialist Workers Party in 1939-40 (*In Defense of Marxism*). Our task now is to transform the cadres created by the monumental work of Trotsky into *broad workers parties*. We cannot do that if we remain indifferent to the problems of party organization.

## WE MUST BUILD LENINIST PARTIES

What kind of parties do we need to build? There can hardly be two opinions on that subject among those who really wish to be disciples of Lenin, for both his teachings and his practice were so clear as to leave no room for misunderstanding. His writings on the subject are voluminous, and besides that there is his work—the building of the Bolshevik party. Lenin believed in discipline, that is well known, but he demanded discipline first of all and above all for the leaders. Advising the delegates at the Second Congress of the Comintern, who were debating the problem of party control of parliamentary representatives, he said:

Unless you prepare the workers for the creation of a really disciplined party which will compel all its members to submit to its discipline, you will never prepare for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

His great co-worker and continuator, Trotsky, gave the same advice to the new generation of militants whom he was rallying around the banner of the Fourth International:

It is indispensable to have an organization of the proletarian vanguard welded together by iron discipline, a genuine selection of tempered revolutionaries ready for self-sacrifice and inspired by an unconquerable will to victory.

The observance of the 22nd anniversary of the death of our Lenin would be, in our opinion, a proper occasion for all the cadre-parties of the Fourth International, who have learned and assimilated the political principles of Lenin so well, to pause and think about the type of party which Lenin deemed necessary to realize the victory of these principles.

# Wall Street's War Against Labor

## *The Meaning of the GM Strike*

By **GEORGE CLARKE**

American imperialism emerges from the war at the pinnacle of its power. Its rivals have either been physically eliminated from the scene or reduced to tributaries living on the handouts of Yankee generosity. Triumph of American arms is only half the victory, however. The task of capitalizing on its victories, opening the world market for its investments, garnering immense super-profits from exploitation of the colonial peoples—in short the reorganization of the entire world as a feeding trough for Wall Street—this work lies ahead. Its hegemony, no longer seriously challenged by competing capitalist nations, is called into question only by the slaves, i.e. by the millioned-masses throughout the world out of whose sweat and toil “The American Century” is to be erected.

Stupendous as is the economic and military might of the United States, its task of world reorganization remains extremely formidable. Instead of the flourishing, expanding capitalist world over which Great Britain once enjoyed domination, American imperialism takes over the sceptre of world empire with capitalism in its death agony, with half the world in ruins and the peoples of Europe and the colonies in opposition or revolt. Where its British predecessor could cope with movements of opposition one at a time, American imperialism comes to world mastery amidst universal insurgence. It cannot isolate and crush rebellions one at a time. It must face them simultaneously.

### **Wall Street's Dream of Empire**

Just as U.S. monopoly capitalism is learning that the world is no single unit to be handed down like an inheritance of gilt-edged bonds or stolen as loot, so it is learning that its power cannot be wielded on a world scale unless it is securely established at home. The nation has to be “united” and unresisting in accepting the costs of the war and Wall Street's plans to dominate the world. Above all, the American working class cannot be permitted the luxury of a higher standard of living. The organized labor movement can be tolerated only on condition that it enter the same type of “partnership” internally that Great Britain has been obliged to accept on the world arena, i.e. acceptance of crumbs from the banquet table of the master which will signify an absolute decline in standards compared with the past. Refusal of the American proletariat to submit to this servile role in the world scheme of Wall Street is the ugliest nightmare disturbing its dream of empire.

From the first day after the surrender of Japan, it became clear that the Wall Street plutocracy had by no means completed its war. It had merely transferred the front of operations from Okinawa, Leyte and Saipan to Detroit, Pittsburgh and Akron. The main enemy has no navy or airforce at its disposal, it is unarmed and at home—the American working class. If war is the continuation of politics by other means, then “peace” for American imperialism involves the continuation of its wartime measures and aims. Only the regimentation of the American working class, only the abjuring of the strike weapon and the curbing of the class struggle gained by the voluntary surrender of the trade union bureaucracy enabled

the American bourgeoisie to throw the full weight of its immense productive capacity into the conflict, to provide the bulk of the equipment and materiel for several full-scale armies, to wage war on two gigantic fronts. The same type of restraints are equally vital for the organization of their “peace.”

In the very midst of the war, Wall Street was preparing for the offensive it has launched at home immediately after V-J Day. Fortified by the greatest profits in its history, U.S. capitalism has piled up mountainous reserves to carry it through a long battle. Through free grants of government-built plants, tax rebates and special “reconversion” financing, public funds have been manipulated to cover any losses suffered during a lengthy siege against the labor movement.

General Motors was the indicated corporation to spearhead this offensive against organized labor. Of all the war profiteers, it is the most bloated. GM is the keystone of the Morgan-du Pont empire, a monster that bestrides American economy. Feeding on the most important durable goods and raw-material producing industries, GM stands likewise at the very hub of “reconversion.” At its signal peacetime production could get off to a flying start or the wheels of “revival” could be brought to a grinding halt.

It was obvious from the first day of the opening of negotiations between the union and the corporation that GM had no intention of listening to the fantasies of Henry Wallace echoed by union leaders about “60,000,000 jobs” or “planning for peace to take the place of planning for war.” The terms GM placed before the union could be summarized in two words: unconditional surrender. With the same calculated brutality and arrogance with which the State Department abruptly cut off its British rival from lend-lease, by cutting out overtime, scaling down production and shutting down the plants, GM and the other corporations abruptly terminated wartime wages and inaugurated a nation-wide wage cut. GM bluntly rejected the UAW's demand for a rising wage to meet the rising costs of living and the cut in take-home pay. By this action it flung down the gauntlet before the entire nation. The machines would idle and rust before Wall Street would yield an inch to the union. Through its monopoly controls America's 60 families are determined to dictate the most brutal and exacting terms to labor. Indeed, in the eyes of the Morgans and the du Ponts, the American workers are regarded as no less a subject people than the conquered Germans or Japanese.

### **Government Partner of Big Business**

Before the GM strike started, Washington had already intervened directly on the side of monopoly capital. Prior to V-J Day the close links between government and Big Business had been passed off as essential in “planning” for war. The fabulous profits the trusts accumulated from government orders were explained as a spur to “patriotism,” a ransom that had to be paid for victory. The present eruption of class conflict has quickly burned these fictions to cinders and revealed the naked essence of the partnership between the government and Big

Business. At one blow the illusion of the impartiality of the state so carefully fostered by four Roosevelt administrations was shattered.

Truman's first pronouncement in face of the strike was an open act of war, summoning Congress to enact anti-labor legislation that would disarm the unions before the Big Business offensive. The reason for the differing approaches of Roosevelt and Truman is to be sought not in the character of the men but in the character of the times. Roosevelt could shield the true nature of the government as the executive committee of the capitalist class only because under wartime compulsions the labor leaders were able to clamp the brakes on trade unions. So long as the labor leaders could persuade the working class to disarm voluntarily, it was superfluous for the state to disarm the workers by compulsion. Truman quickly revealed himself as the direct agent of Wall Street because ambiguity and deception, the essence of class collaboration, could no longer be so effective a policy. The demands of Big Business to fetter the trade unions could no longer count upon the ability of Murray, Thomas and Co. to keep the workers passive while they were being shackled. Truman's role was, consequently, a foregone conclusion.

The growing impotence of the trade union bureaucracy in stemming the tide of mass struggles is an international phenomenon. Disillusionment with the war and the conditions arising in its aftermath produced the leftward swing which put the Labor Party in power in Great Britain and gave a majority to the Communist and Socialist parties in the recent French elections. In the U.S. it has likewise terminated the class peace which existed for almost four years. The scope and militancy of the struggles which broke loose following the cessation of military hostilities indicate that wartime class peace was at best an uneasy truce.

It would be false to assume, however, that the object of the present strike movement is simply to complete the unfinished business left over from the war years. The accumulated grievances, the unanswered company provocations, the thwarted rebellions, local and sporadic in nature—all these served merely to prime the charge for the explosion which had been held in check by government regimentation, the no-strike pledge and the prevailing passive patriotism. If the abortive struggles of the war years were primarily defensive actions against the encroachments of the government and the corporations, the present strike movement takes the form of an offensive, although Big Business occupies the unquestioned role of aggressor.

## The Nature of New Strike Wave

The present strike wave, which threatens at any moment to engulf all the basic industries, is unfolding upon a far higher level than the strikes following World War I. Powerfully organized mass unions in the basic industries stand in the place of the weak, unorganized forces of 1919. The CIO unions were prepared for the present struggle by the victories of the pre-war sit-down strikes and the growth of the unions even under adverse wartime conditions. The great self-confidence displayed by the workers today contrasts sharply with the desperate last-ditch nature of the 1919-1921 strike movements in which the workers were overwhelmed by the colossal power of their foes. Whereas the industrial workers were then fighting for the elementary right to union organization, today the labor movement is firmly entrenched and demanding a greater share of the national income.

The issues between the unions and the corporations have acquired accordingly a more fundamental class expression and

encompass far broader social questions. Under pressure from the workers, the union leaders are obliged to voice more radical proposals than in the past. For example, the UAW leaders refuse to base their demand for a 30 percent increase on the corporation "arithmetic" that higher wages must depend upon increased productivity. They are demanding that increases be paid to meet labor's needs regardless of the effect on the rate of corporation profit. The great sacrifices of the war, called forth by even greater promises, impel the workers to insist with more and more vigor upon their own interests as against interest on investments.

Flat rejection by the corporation both of the union's demand and of the premises for the demand led inexorably to the next logical step in the struggle: the proposal by the union that corporation secrets be divulged to the public. Here again the stakes are much higher than the ability of the corporations to afford wage increases. Once the books were opened, there would be revealed beneath the intricate subterfuges of corporation bookkeeping the anti-social and parasitic nature of monopoly capitalism. Suppression of inventions, price-fixing, capital reserves built up for high-interest foreign investment while home industry is sabotaged and kept at low capacity levels—all the reactionary monopolistic practices would emerge from the corporation books like the hideous creatures that came forth upon the opening of Pandora's box. The present indignation against the huge profits of the trusts would be redoubled by the disclosure of their malpractices, or rather the common daily activity of so-called "free enterprise." The battle would then surge forward relentlessly to its next logical positions: workers' control of production and nationalization of the big monopolies.

## Logical Goal of the Union Movement

Spurred by life and death necessity, matured by the experiences of two world wars, the consciousness of the American workers is climbing out of the valley of individualistic thinking onto the plane of social, i.e. class action. Irrespective of its lack of conscious, generalized expression, the direction of the American working class is clearly indicated. It is seeking instinctively to transform its mass unions from appendages of the monopoly capitalist government into revolutionary instruments challenging capitalist property and rule. This is the underlying logic of the present nation-wide class conflict. This is the direction in which the most advanced industrial workers are being compelled to move.

"The trade unions in our epoch," Trotsky pointed out before his assassination in 1940, "cannot simply be the organs of democracy as they were in the epoch of free capitalism and they cannot any longer remain politically neutral, that is, limit themselves to serving the daily needs of the working class. They cannot any longer be anarchistic, i.e. ignore the decisive influence of the state on the life of peoples and classes. They can no longer be reformist, because the objective conditions leave no room for any serious and lasting reforms. The trade unions of our times can either serve as secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of workers and for obstructing the revolution or, on the contrary, the trade unions can become the instruments of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat."

As the struggle unfolds it becomes more evident that the first condition of success is to shake loose from the unions the dead hand of the past—the trade union bureaucracy. For Murray, Hillman, Thomas and Co., trade unionism reached its zenith under the government regimentation of the war years. Strikes were forbidden in fact, if not by law. In return for

maintenance of membership and a few miserable concessions, the union leaders played the role of police agents against the militants. But for the great upsurge of the mass production workers, they would still be playing this role—and be very happy in it.

Catapulted to the head of the class movement they appear like palsied old men in the van of a vigorous, combative army. Each step forward has been taken by them under the prods and kicks of an insistent, aroused rank and file. Still they falter and seek for avenues of retreat. To limit the scope of the strikes, they contrived the “super-slick” strategy of hitting the automobile manufacturers one at a time. Scarcely had the GM picket line been formed than the union leaders offered to breach the front by allowing GM parts plants to operate and permitting office workers the right to go through the lines. While the union is sending shivers down the backs of the GM tycoons with its demands to “open the books,” a section of the leadership conducts secret negotiations with Ford and offers to put the union in a company straitjacket. They received in return . . . a cynical rejection of their wage demands.

In face of the united offensive of capital, Murray restrains the steel workers for more than a month. This great general thinks to frighten the enemy in the very midst of war by shaking his fist! His voice rumbles with anger at the anti-labor actions of Truman and the capitalist parties. But the terrible protest remains no more than a complaint; the obvious conclusion for an independent labor party is unspoken. It is no tribute to the valor of Murray and Co. that they have not yet fled the field of struggle and capitulated. That road has been barred at both ends: by the intransigence of Big Business on the one side and the determined militancy of the workers on the other.

What are the prospects of the present strike movement? It would be folly to attempt specific predictions at a time when all the unions in the basic industries are poised for strike action. The consequences of such a gigantic class battle cannot be foreseen in all its ramifications. Nevertheless, two eventualities are already foreshadowed.

In the face of the united resistance displayed by the organized workers, it is unlikely that Big Business will at this time attempt to go through with its plan to smash the unions through direct frontal assault. Its representatives are already feeling out Murray and his associates for a rotten compromise. The

employers have discovered that they are not dealing with the weak, ineffectual craft setups of 1919 but with the mightiest labor movement in the world, undefeated and swelling with the strength imparted by its maturing social consciousness. Only fascism could smash such a powerful working class. But the climate is unseasonably bad for fascism.

Big Business finds itself increasingly isolated in the population. Where it had counted on using the returning veterans against the labor movement, it finds them either being absorbed in employment produced by the spurt of consumer goods industries and the service trades or, worse yet, in the forefront of the unions and the strikes. Truman's feeble request that the corporations open their books to government arbitration committees can only be interpreted as an attempt to consummate a truce until the contending forces are less evenly matched.

On the other hand, the left wing in the unions, fortified by the experiences of the struggle, will develop with greater rapidity and in greater strength than ever before. Despite the resistance of Murray, Hillman and Co., the movement for a labor party has already received a great impulsion. The demand of the Flint auto workers that the UAW initiate a labor party as a counter-weapon against the unconcealed Truman-Big Business partnership indicates coming developments. Each new stage of the struggle must accentuate and broaden the demand for a labor party. This demand is being thrust forward by the needs of the struggle itself and cannot now be so easily sabotaged or squashed by the top bureaucrats.

Out of the sit-downs of the '30's was born the most dynamic class organization of the American workers, the CIO. Its further development along independent political lines, permitting it to challenge the entrenched state power of monopoly capitalism, was arrested by the war. The present strike wave marks the resumption and intensification of this significant development, thus confirming the prediction made by Leon Trotsky shortly before his assassination in 1940:

*The second stage of radicalization in the United States will assume a more sharply expressive character. The problem of forming an independent labor party will be put on the order of the day. Our transitional demands will gain great popularity. . . . Ahead lies a favorable perspective, providing all the justification for revolutionary activism. It is necessary to utilize the opportunities which are opening up and to build the revolutionary party.*

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## *Workers of the World, Unite!*

Another such war, and the hope of Socialism will be buried under the ruins of imperialistic barbarism. That is more than the ruthless destruction of Liège and of the Rheims Cathedral. That is a blow, not against capitalist civilization of the past, but against Socialist civilization of the future, a deadly blow against the force that carries the future of mankind in its womb, that alone can rescue the precious treasures of the past over into a better state of society. Here capitalism reveals its death's head. . . .

But here is proof also that the war is not only a grandiose murder, but the suicide of the European working class. The soldiers of socialism, the workers of England, of France, of Germany, of Italy, of Belgium are murdering each other at the bidding of capitalism, are thrusting cold, murderous irons into each others' breasts, are tottering over their graves, grappling in each others' death-bringing arms.

“Deutschland, Deutschland über alles,” “long live democ-

racy,” “long live the czar and slavery,” “ten thousand tent cloths, guaranteed according to specifications,” “hundred thousand pounds of bacon,” “coffee substitute, immediately delivery” . . . dividends are rising—proletarians falling; and with each one there sinks a fighter of the future, a soldier of the revolution, a savior of humanity from the yoke of capitalism, into the grave.

This madness will not stop, and this bloody nightmare of hell will not cease until the workers of Germany, of France, of Russia and of England will wake up out of their drunken sleep; will clasp each other's hands in brotherhood and will drown the bestial chorus of war agitators and the hoarse cry of capitalist hyenas with the mighty cry of labor, “Proletarians of all countries, unite!”—The conclusion of the famous “Junius” pamphlet, written in 1915 by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg and Franz Mehring against the “Socialist” supporters of the first imperialist war.

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# The Middle East at the Crossroads

## II. The Role of Zionism

By T. CLIFF

*Following is the second section of an extensive survey of the present situation in the Middle East, written by a Palestinian Trotskyist. The first section appeared in the December issue of Fourth International. The concluding section will be published in the February issue. The translation is by R. Bod.*

According to the number of communal riots one may determine the number of days that imperialism and its agents in the colonies have to live. For decades, therefore, French imperialism has caused serious friction between the Christians and Moslems in Syria and Lebanon, British imperialism between Moslems and Copts in Egypt, Arabs and Assyrians in Iraq. For this reason Zionism was supported in Palestine as a force against the Arab national movement.

At the end of the second world war, however, the problems confronting British imperialism become much more difficult. On the one hand Britain is interested in pushing France aside in Syria and Lebanon and cannot therefore accept with pleasure communal friction between Moslems and Christians, as this can only help to strengthen the position of France which leans upon the Christian minority. On the other hand Britain is interested in putting stumbling blocks in the way of American penetration into the Middle East, and therefore cannot look favorably upon the disputes between "independent" Arab rulers and "independent" Arab states, as it is interested in building a united front of reactionary kings and ministers—hence the Arab League.

Moreover the endeavour of imperialism to incite communal friction between Moslems and Copts in Egypt failed dismally (for reasons which cannot here be dwelt upon). And seeing that Egypt is the weakest link in the imperialist chain of the Middle East as social antagonisms are the deepest there, Britain's difficulties in diverting the attention of the masses to chauvinistic aims are very great. British imperialism must therefore solve a very grave problem: how to keep a unity of all the Arab countries—a unity, of course, whose aims and limits are determined by Britain—and to preserve the peace between the different communities of the Arab people on the one hand, and on the other to carry out its policy of "divide and rule" in its most extreme form.

Here imperialism calls to mind a weapon which it has used for more than twenty years to subjugate the population of one of the Arab countries and which it now desires for much larger-scale purposes.

### Zionism

Zionism occupies a special place in imperialist fortifications. It plays a double role: first directly as an important pillar of imperialism, giving it active support and opposing the liberation struggle of the Arab nation, and second as a passive servant behind which imperialism can hide and towards which it can direct the ire of the Arab masses.

If in Tel Aviv which has 250,000 inhabitants there is not one Arab worker, if a rumor that there are three Arabs working

in a Jewish cafe is enough to bring a crowd of thousands to the spot to smash the windows and break the furniture, if an Arab fellah who dared, before the war, to come and sell his products in the Jewish market was subjected to beatings, spoliation of his products, etc. (during the war such occurrences were not customary nor are so today as there was and still is a scarcity of products), if at one stroke twenty villages in the Jezreel valley were wiped out when the land was bought from a Syrian banker, Sursuk, if thousands of evicted peasants were prohibited from looking for work as wage laborers on the land on which their families had toiled for generations, if there were constant "purgings" of Arabs from the economy, so strongly reminiscent of the "purgings" practised by the Nazis against the Jews from 1933-39, if from such "innocent" acts the Zionists pass over to speaking about making Palestine a Jewish State and expelling all the Arabs from the country—then is there any wonder that the Arabs oppose Zionism to the very death?

Zionism frees imperialism from the responsibility for any act of spoliation and oppression. Let us look at a few examples. An English Electric Company which builds an enterprise in Palestine nominates a Jew as general manager. The result is that while in every colony a struggle having an anti-imperialist character is being conducted—with strikes, demonstrations and boycotts—against the foreign concessionary companies, in Palestine the boycott declared by the Arabs against the Palestine Electric Company wears another guise—anti-Jewish demonstrations. In this way the Zionists, who for propaganda's sake declare the key positions of the economy to be in their hands, although they are merely junior partners or even only managers, help imperialism to suck the blood of the country.

Another example will make this even clearer. While in Syria and Lebanon there were demonstrations, even bloody ones, which were crowned with victory, against the establishment of the Steel Bros. truck company there, in Palestine the "Socialist" Zionists, the General Federation of Jewish Labor (Histadrut) put themselves, for some petty recompense, at the service of Steel Bros. and assured the company's firmly planting itself in the country.

In Palestine there is one policeman or ghaffir (special policeman) for every 100 inhabitants as against one for every 676 in England. The police budget in Palestine accounted for 27 per cent of the 1941-42 budget (excluding public works undertaken for police purposes, such as the building of police stations, etc.) as against 0.3 per cent in England in 1942-43. Such a tremendous police force is not—God forbid—intended to serve imperialism. No, it was Zionism which for years insisted on increasing the police force, insisted on the reign of order and a strong hand against the Arabs!

If the health and education budgets together do not make up 1.65 of the police budget (in England they are five times

larger than the latter) then the Zionists by no means protest against this but instead make a great ado over the fact that the government distributes the education budget to Jews and Arabs proportionally to the number of children in the two communities. Instead they demand that the government give a greater part of the budget to the Jews, as they pay more taxes (being richer). This is demanded even by those Zionists who call themselves socialist! Imperialism is thus freed from responsibility for the widespread illiteracy and bad health conditions prevailing in the country.

Imperialism does not have to shoulder the responsibility for the fact that the big foreign companies and the big capitalists and landowners, Jewish or Arab, practically do not pay taxes. All the Zionists, from right to extreme "left," oppose the income tax, as this will harm Zionist construction.

In Palestine there are even no minimal laws for the protection of tenants. Neither Arab landowners nor the government need take responsibility for this either. On the contrary, the government from time to time, in order to appear as the benefactor, states a desire for laws for the protection of tenants and even maps out schemes for agricultural development. Again it is the Zionists who oppose any such laws and schemes, on the grounds that it will harm Zionist colonization which requires the eviction of tenants.

If in Palestine there is a completely autocratic regime without any parliament or even any elected representative body, imperialism again evades all responsibility very easily: the Zionists oppose the setting up of any such democratic institution, again as it will hinder Zionist expansion.

If the British army during the years 1936-39 killed thousands of Arab partisans (in the same way as Italians killed Abyssinians, or the Japanese, Dutch and British the Japanese today). it did not do so in order to maintain its position—God forbid!—but to protect the Jews!\*

It is a tragedy that the sons of the very people which has been persecuted and massacred in such a bestial fashion, and which today is the unprovoking victim of national hatred—of fascism, the highest form of imperialism—should itself be driven into a chauvinistic, militaristic fervour, and become the blind tool of imperialism in subjugating the Arab masses. In the same way that the existing social order is to be blamed for the calamity of the Jews, so is it to be blamed for the exploitation of their catastrophe for reactionary, oppressive aims.

Zionism does not redeem Jewry from suffering. On the contrary, it imperils them with a new danger, that of being a buffer between imperialism and the national and social liberation struggle of the Arab masses.

The recent Zionist terror appears to cast the above estimation of the relation between Zionism and imperialism into doubt. If the Zionists struggle today against the British government, is that not proof that it follows an anti-imperialist policy?

Zionism and imperialism have both common and antagonistic

\*It is interesting to observe that the English companies active in Palestine do everything possible to accommodate themselves to the Arab-Jewish antagonism, and to increase it. Thus, for instance, the Anglo-American Tobacco Company has intentionally built two separate enterprises. One in Tel Aviv (Maspero) supplies the Jewish market, employs Jewish workers, and sells under the slogan "Buy 100 percent Jewish products". The other (Karaman, Dick & Salti) supplies the Arab market, employs 500 Arab workers and works under the guise of an Arab national enterprise. Thus, for instance, it combined the sale of its cigarettes with propaganda against the selling of land to the Jews.

tic interests. Zionism wants to build a strong Jewish capitalist state. Imperialism is indeed interested in the existence of a capitalist Jewish society enveloped by the hatred of colonial masses, but not in order that Zionism should become too strong a factor. So far as this is concerned, it is ready to prove its "fairness" towards the Arabs, and its readiness to give in to their just demands at the expense of Zionism. In order to gain the service of the Zionists as direct supporters in any anti-imperialist insurrection, and what is even more important, as a buffer, imperialism does not necessarily have to let Zionism flourish. A Zionist population of six hundred thousand can satisfactorily enough fulfill such a task.

## Can Zionism Be Anti-Imperialist?

Imperialism can safely draw its plans either to widen the bounds for Zionist development or restrict them, but it need suffer no doubt about one thing: that whatever happens during an uprising of the people of the East against imperialism, Zionism will not go over to the revolutionary side. This is clearly revealed in all the activities and declarations of the most active terroristic organization in Palestine—the National Military Organization. In one of its pamphlets "In Memory of D. Razieli" it wrote: "We must fight the Arabs in order to subjugate them and weaken their demands. We must take them off the arena as a political factor. This struggle against the Arabs will encourage the diaspora and consolidate it. It will draw the attention of the nations of the world which will be compelled to honor the people which struggles with its arms. And an ally will be found which will support the peoples' army in its struggle." (May 1943.)

It is true that the Zionists are not satisfied with the fact that it is not they who fix the limits for co-operation between Zionism and imperialism but the latter who does so. Nevertheless even in the days of the greatest strain in the relations between them and the British government they never stopped saying that the interests of Zionism do not go against the interests of imperialism.

Thus, for instance, one of the members of the Jewish Agency wrote a few days before the great terrorist acts of November 2 (the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration): "One of the bad principles of the traditional system (of British policy—T. C.) is that the British authorities compromise only with the one who knows how to disturb and to break their peace while these authorities are accustomed to treat lightly and to betray a faithful, patient and peaceful ally. If this is the way to win the alliance of Britain, we cannot avoid trying to follow this path, as we are very interested in Britain's alliance with us. We cannot long maintain this one-sided alliance in the place of a mutual alliance. The Yishuv (Jewish population in Palestine—T. C.) does not intend to expel the British from the country and be their heirs. We do not see any contradiction whatsoever between mass immigration, a Jewish state, and wide and strong British bases in this country. On the contrary, we shall look upon it very favorably." (Dr. Y. Sneh, "Concerning the Essence of the Crisis," Ha'aretz, October 26, 1945.)

The same theme is harped upon interminably day after day. It is interesting that even when imperialism reveals its great desire to use the Jews as scapegoats, the theme does not change. The arms trials of the last two years have been clear proof of the provocative intentions of imperialism. For many years now thousands of Arabs have been arrested without trial, and every Arab found with arms during the national uprising of 1936-39 was condemned to death or at least to long imprison-

ment. The Zionists did not utter a word of protest against this so that the ire of the oppressed Arab masses was vented against the Jews.

Then an attempt was made to complete the provocation: Jews in possession of arms were publicly tried. In the whole East the Arab papers began to write that the Zionists were arming against the Arabs and England was the protectress of the Arabs. But of course the Zionists did not say that the arms trials of the last two years were only a link in the chain of the imperialist policy of "divide and rule."

Even at this hour they did everything to prove that they were not the enemies of imperialism but on the contrary its allies. Thus, for instance, in the arms trial that took place on November 28, 1944, Epstein, a member of Hashomer Hatzair, the "Revolutionary Socialist" Zionist party, said to the judges: "You who come from England will surely know how to appreciate the difficulties and dangers involved in development and colonization undertakings in backward countries. No colonizing undertakings in the history of mankind have taken place without being met by the hatred of the natives. Years, and sometimes generations pass till these men (the natives—T. C.) become capable of appreciating and understanding the blessing inherent in the undertaking also for their future. But the British people did not recoil from developing these backward countries (imperialist conquest—i.e. "development"—T. C.) knowing that by doing so you were fulfilling an historical and humanitarian mission. The best of your sons you sacrificed on the altar of progress (what did the petroleum companies get for this?—T. C.)."

If the Zionists are not anti-imperialist (and of course to be against the Arab people and imperialism at one and the same time is impossible), then why all these terroristic acts? The answer is simple. The Zionists have come into a blind alley. The victory of the proletariat of the West and the masses of the East will put an end to Zionist dreams. The continuation of the existing social regime makes every little people into a puppet in the hands of big imperialist powers. This is especially true as regards the Jews of Palestine whose relations with their neighbors are very strained.

If imperialism continues to rule over the world, then whatever the Jews do they are doomed. If the world revolutionary wave rises to the heights, then all the weak peoples, including world Jewry, will be saved. But the Jews of Palestine in their special position can be saved only if they cease to be buffers between the national and social liberation struggle of the Arab masses. The Jewish capitalists of Palestine as a class are doomed whatever happens. They are therefore incapable of anything except blind adventurism based on belief in miracles or at best a struggle to hold out a little longer.

The best prospect the Zionists can hope for is that Britain will give them a Jewish State, even though a pocket state in a small part of tiny Palestine. They think that the partition plan for Palestine can suit the interests of British imperialism under certain conditions. Such a plan will ensure the existence of two irridentist movements, a sharp Zionist struggle for every place of work and foot of ground in the Jewish State, and economic weakness of the mutilated Arab state. These are the pros of the plan from the standpoint of imperialism.

The Zionists base their calculations on this factor and on one other. It is true that the position of Zionism in the struggle between the colonial people and imperialism is predetermined, and it will not change no matter how imperialism behaves, but its place in the struggle between the different

imperialist Powers is not predetermined. Ben-Gurion and Weizmann can be American agents with the same enthusiasm as they have been British agents for nearly thirty years. The recent Zionist terror was intended to threaten Britain with the possibility of a Zionist switchover to America, and at the same time to make it easier for the British politicians, if they so desire, to permit the construction of a Jewish State in spite of Arab opposition. (They would be able to say to the Arabs that there was a material and moral necessity to give in somewhat to the Zionists.)

Even if this "solution" is arrived at—which is far from being certain—it will be only a temporary, short-lived postponement of Zionism's burial. The Jews of Palestine and the Arabs will only be involved by this plan in terrible sacrifices, clashes and bloodshed. The only real solution for the Jewish workers of Palestine is to bridge the gulf between themselves and the tens of millions of Eastern peoples by renouncing Zionist dreams of domination.

The latest terroristic acts—the blowing up of the railways done with the full collaboration of all the Zionist military organizations (Hagana, National Military Organization, and Stern group)—in reality did not harm imperialism but instead served it very well. They intended to "compel" the British government to open the gates of Palestine to Zionist immigration and colonization despite the opposition of the Arab inhabitants of the country and those of neighboring countries (the former having discovered the true face of Zionism from first hand, and the latter learning from them). It therefore only added fuel to the fire of the Arab-Jewish hatred. The bombardment of the railways on the eve of November 2 was an excellent weapon in the hands of British agents for the organization of pogroms in Cairo, Alexandria and Tripoli.

## The Fate of the Assyrians— A Precedent and a Warning

The rank and file Zionists are misled by their leaders into believing that they are not simply puppets motivated by imperialism for its benefit and their harm. Such things have many precedents in the history of the bloody domination of imperialism over the East. The most characteristic example, miniature but illuminating, of imperialism's technique, is the use that Britain made of the Assyrians. As this teaches much, it warrants recounting in some detail.

The Assyrians are a Semite Christian tribe who speak an Aramaic dialect. Before the first world war they numbered about forty thousands and inhabited the Hakari Mountains in Turkey, north-east of the present Iraqi border. At the outbreak of the first world war the Hakari Mountains acquired great strategic importance since it was on the border of Turkey, Russia and Persia. Russian officers came to incite the Assyrians to fight against Turkey promising them an independent state of their own. This promise was affirmed by the British officer, Capt. Gracey of the Intelligence Service, who came for this special purpose to the Hakari Mountains, and other liberal offers were made to the Assyrians by British and Russian emissaries.

The Assyrians were won over into believing in the possibility of the revival of their ancient empire. Their dreams became more and more aggrandized until they were imbued with the hope of setting up an independent kingdom from their mountains right up to Kifri, which is south of Kirkuk—a region mainly inhabited by another people, the Kurds. On May 10, 1915, the Assyrians declared war on Turkey.

The League of Nations reports about this: "There is no doubt that this people rose in armed revolt against its lawful government at the instigation of foreigners and without any provocation on the part of the Turkish authorities. It is also established that the conditions of life enjoyed by the Assyrian people within the Ottoman Empire were rather better than those of the other Christians, since they were conceded a fairly wide measure of local autonomy under the authority of the patriarchal house." (League Report, p. 83, from Toynbee, "The Islamic World Since the Peace Conference," 1927, pp. 483-4.)

Malek, an Assyrian who wrote a damning book against the English, called "The Betrayal of the Assyrians," (1935) writes: "They (the Assyrians) were welcomed also in Turkey for the last two thousand years and were able to preserve their church and people as a national entity, until they were used by the British authorities as a military force" (p. 61).

From this point begins the chapter of their wanderings and terrible sufferings. For years the Assyrians fought an unequal fight against the Turkish army, were cast out of their homeland in the course of the fighting, but continued to fight side by side with the British army. With the conquest of Iraq, the British conscripted military troops from among the Assyrians, as they did not succeed in getting Arabs. At the close of the war there were tribal uprisings in Iraq which Britain needed much manpower and money to crush. (It cost the British taxpayer about 80 million pounds to suppress the 1919-20 revolt.) In this undertaking the British made excellent use of the services of the Assyrians.

The Assyrians continued to be a plaything in the hands of the British in the latter's struggle against the Turks, Kurds (who inhabit Mosul which is so rich in petroleum), and the Arab inhabitants of Iraq who sought the independence of their country from imperialism. As Dr. W. A. Wigram, who knew the situation of the Assyrians from first hand, said: "By the admission of the then High Commissioner it was the Assyrian force which saved the swamping of our rule in the Arab revolt of 1920 (Sir A. Wilson, 'Mesopotamia' p. 291) and they who (as the C.O. in the field, Colonel Cameron, declared) rolled back the Turkish invasion of Iraq in 1922-23. . . . But this very fact caused the Iraqis to hate them" (RCAS Vol. II, Jan. 1934, p. 38-41).

Thus British imperialism brought it about that the Assyrians were expelled from Turkey, fulfilled an important task in the cruel suppression of the Kurds and Arabs in Iraq, and were therefore surrounded on all sides by bitter animosity. In this way they came to be more attached to, and dependent upon British imperialism. B. S. Stafford, in "The Tragedy of the Assyrians" could rightly state that the question of the Assyrians was not a religious but a political question pure and simple.

The Arabs and Kurds in Iraq believed that Britain's intentions were to set up an armed conclave in the north of the country. Articles and speeches were publicized in the Iraqi parliament saying that it was Britain who had instigated friction in Iraq. Her calling for the defense of the Assyrians had immersed Iraq in complications solely for her own purposes, and she now wished to create an autonomous Assyrian state in the north of Iraq, i.e., she wanted to create in Iraq a second Zionist problem.

In 1930 the mandate over Iraq ended. This gave an independence to Iraq, which was, however, purely formal, as Britain's control over the oilfields, three aerodromes, etc., remained. It nevertheless made the conscription of Assyrians

for British needs superfluous as now, instead of mass land forces, Britain based herself mainly on the air force. But Britain still had one use for the Assyrians—to let them be themselves massacred as scapegoats.

With the declaration of the abolition of the mandate, the Assyrians turned to Britain with a strong request to be discharged from the army in order to annul the doubts and fears of the Iraqis that they might be used to damage the integrity and independence of Iraq. But Sir Francis Humphreys, the British High Commissioner, attempted to postpone the matter by all possible means, saying that the League of Nations had to look into the matter, and so on. He threatened that if the Assyrians were discharged they would not be used in any government service in the future. Sir Francis succeeded in doing as he wished.

When anti-British articles began appearing in the Iraqi papers, the British Embassy intervened, and some papers were banned. But when propaganda began to appear that the main task of the Iraqis was to fight against the Assyrians, and that Britain was the enemy of Iraq because she defended them, then the British Embassy remained silent. This served to encourage all the black elements, the clergy and the feudal reaction, to hasten their preparations for a crusade against the Assyrians, the blind victims of imperialism.

The result of the British policy for seventeen years now produced its fruits. There were terrible riots against the Assyrians, under the command of Iraqi authorities and with the participation of the army. British aircraft flew above the region of the massacres and took photographs, but brought no help to the victims.

After the riots Britain called to mind again her promise to establish a large independent Assyrian state, and decided that the time had come to permit the Assyrians to settle in a continuous stretch of land, however small. Plan after plan sprang up for the settlement of the Assyrians (in Brazil, Guiana, etc.), but all were rejected except one, which was to settle them in Syria, in the region of Latakia. A program was decided on to settle 30 thousand people, which would cost 1,140,000 pounds. Of this sum, according to the agreement, Britain was to pay 250,000 pounds, Iraq 250,000 pounds, France 380,000 pounds and the League of Nations 80,000 pounds. A source for the remaining 180,000 pounds was not found, and so the settlement was held up.

The Archbishop of Canterbury on February 11, 1936 asked the government in the House of Lords how it intended finally to settle the question of the Assyrians, which in his opinion, lay like a heavy burden on the conscience of the countries who were parties to the agreement in general, and England in particular, and even pledged himself to get part of the sum lacking for the execution of the plan of settlement by an appeal to the British people. Lord Stanhope replied on behalf of the government: "The government hoped for volunteering from other sources after it had contributed 250,000 pounds, and had influenced Iraq to make her contribution double her first offer bringing it up to 250,000 pounds. The government could not add to its contribution, and it would not support the Archbishop's appeal." What, after all, do the Assyrians expect of unfortunate British imperialism, which makes millions every year from the oilfields which were defended for it by the Assyrians?

And the final result of all these grand settlement plans was that nine thousand Assyrians succeeded in settling in Syria on the Syria-Iraqi border in the region of Jezira!

(To be continued)

# International Solidarity With the German Proletariat

*This January marks the 27th anniversary of the assassination of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg in 1918 by Junker hirelings of the Social-Democracy. There could be no better way to honor the memory of these two outstanding leaders of the revolutionary German working class than the publication of this manifesto recently issued by the principal European sections of the Fourth International. This proclamation of international solidarity with the German proletariat demonstrates that the Trotskyists alone remain true to the heritage of the martyred Liebknecht and Luxemburg and carry forward the work of the socialist revolution in their spirit.*

Hitler-fascism lies prostrate—broken by armed power—and it would seem that a breathing space for humanity is possible. Finally, after 12 years of frightful suppression and five terrible years of war full of blood and tears, it would seem that the working people of Germany above all should be free to breathe and hope for a better future.

But it is turning out quite differently. The lie propagated through the years by Goebbels' propaganda machine—that Hitler and the German people are one and the same—has now become the official pretext for the treatment imposed by the victorious Allied powers. Vansittart in England, Morgenthau in America, and Ehrenburg in Russia all preach with equal hatred that the entire German people bear the guilt for Hitler's crimes. The partitioning of Germany, the annexation of territories, the forced agrarianization of Germany, the plundering of machines from factories, requisitioning of all types, the confiscation of arms, deportations, the evacuation of millions from their native homes, the hunger blockade, reparations running into billions—this is the "peace" given the German people under the excuse that they are collectively guilty.

German working people in the cities and on the farms! In this situation, we, the International Communists, feel obligated to stand by you with all the power and conviction of our class solidarity. Understand that we are not Social Democrats—who with cowardly opportunism support the label of collective guilt and act as agents of Anglo-American and French imperialism in Western Germany. Understand also that we are not Stalinists—who shout still louder under Russian command in declaring the German people guilty and who hail the annexations in the East carried out by the same Stalin who once declared he didn't want an inch of foreign territory. We are Communists in the spirit of Lenin and in the tradition of the forever glorious Russian October revolution. We simply defend the basic principles of this revolution when we oppose all imperialist exploitation and assaults no matter from what power they come and no matter against whom they are directed.

**Today it is you, the German proletariat, the proletariat of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, who above all need the solidarity of the proletariat of other countries.**

We International Communists wish to testify for you, the German proletariat, who have stood to a man through hundreds of class battles, bleeding at a thousand wounds, you, who have lost tens of thousands of your best representatives in concentration camps. We do this despite the fact that we know we shall suffer persecution and the lies of the prostitutes of the press and corrupt labor bureaucrats labelling us as "Hitlero-Trotskyites." Let them attack us. Solidarity remains solidarity. And truth remains truth despite everything.

Truth demands that we tell the world proletariat Hitler-fascism was not a pure "German" phenomenon, but the most violent dictatorship of German monopoly capitalism against the German working people. Hitler first waged war against the German proletariat before launching into World War. Hitler had to smash the German workers' organizations and slaughter the entire workers' leadership before he could build his war machine unmolested and then commit his war crimes. So long as Hitler directed his butchery against the German proletariat, the foreign capitalists backed him. It was the foreign capitalists who encouraged and did business with Hitler. The guilt of international capitalism in supporting Hitler-fascism is only underlined in retrospect when it plasters the label of "guilty" on the German people in order to squeeze billions in reparations out of them.

Truth further demands that we note the Second World War broke out when Hitler attempted in the interests of German monopoly capitalism to secure a world redivision of markets and spheres of influence. If Hitler, representing belated German imperialism on the world market, appears as the aggressor, the other imperialists cannot thereby be labelled peace-loving democrats, since they simply defended imperialist robberies made at an earlier stage. Their lack of innocence is all the more emphasized by the fact that scarcely did they militarily defeat their competitor Hitler than they began new imperialist quarrels among themselves, organizing new blocs and laying the foundation for another war. And these imperialist squabbles are being fought at the expense of the German proletariat in particular.

## Capitalist System Creates Wars

We International Communists therefore denounce as the main culprit above all the capitalist system which creates war and fascism. We say to the German proletariat and all other workers that the fall of Hitler-fascism has not assured world peace. Peace can be secured only through the struggle for socialism and the Socialist United States of the World.

But from the viewpoint of the working class, to fix responsibility it is necessary first of all to point to the former leaders of the German proletariat.

From the murder of Liebknecht under Noske to the administration of Severing, a straight path leads to the development of Hitler, a path passing through the whole coalition politics of the Social Democrats and their participation in the capitalist government. The Stalinist leadership on their part with their idiotic theory of "Social-fascism" contributed decisively to the victory of Hitler by deepening the split in the

already broken class unity and thereby further weakening the German proletariat.

The German workers, despite the betrayal of their leadership, heroically defended themselves. The thousands of martyrs alone make the thesis of "collective guilt" an insult to these heroes of the German proletariat. Even up to the end, when the Allied armies were laying carpets of bombs over the workers' sections and seriously paralyzing any full scale resistance against Hitler, the German revolutionary workers engaged in strikes and demonstrations against fascism. Deserters from the German army together with foreign workers rose against the SS. In some towns the workers in daring insurrections even seized power before the Allied armies arrived.

These same military powers, who blame the German people for not overthrowing Hitler, did everything to liquidate and suppress the news of these uprisings. In the final analysis the victorious imperialists, as well as the defeated Hitler-fascists and the now hypocritically democratic German bourgeoisie, all find their main enemy to be the proletarian revolution. The treatment of the German people on the principle of collective-guilt provides the fascists precisely with new possibilities to fish in the murky waters of nationalism. The danger is all the greater since if the German people are collectively guilty then the Nazis who are the real guilty ones can logically hope to escape punishment.

We warn the German proletariat not to trust this bourgeoisie which now declares itself to be democratic. These new "anti-fascists" in reality are the same capitalist cliques who are already utilizing their connections with the international trusts to reorganize their class front against the German proletariat, and who want to make a pact with the foreign imperialists to load German reparations on the backs of the German people.

We International Communists in the so-called victor countries, therefore see in you German workers and farmers victims whom we are duty bound to help.

In the spirit of Lenin we are ready to fight together with you for your release from the imperialist yoke.

We protest with you against the partitioning of Germany, against the confiscations, requisitions and against the billions in reparations.

We greet every instance of fraternization between the soldiers of the occupation armies and the German proletariat and at the same time ask these soldiers not to let themselves be used for imperialist and reactionary purposes against the German workers.

(A line is missing here in the leaflet—Translator) . . . and forced labor. We demand trade union rights, decent wages, houses worthy of human dignity, and adequate food for all these German workers deported abroad for reconstruction work.

Together with you we demand the treatment of war prisoners in accordance with the humane Red Cross rules and their earliest possible release.

We are against the evacuation of millions of working people from their native homes. We demand the lifting of the hunger blockade which stifles the German workers and first of all their children, and threatens the world with epidemics. We are for brotherly mutual aid.

We are for self-determination of the German people.



ROSA LUXEMBURG

We International Communists will fight for these demands wherever we are. We will try to organize the proletariat of all lands to conduct this struggle. We owe this to the teachings of a Liebknecht, a Luxemburg and the thousands of martyrs of the German proletarian revolution.

And in this spirit we call to the workers of the world: practice solidarity with the German workers! Help them to throw off their imperialist yoke.

German class brothers! We do not doubt that you for your part will build your organizations with renewed energy. Build strong, militant and unified class organizations. Above all steer your working class movement away from all coalition horse-trading with the bourgeoisie and the imperialists; for the task of freeing the working class still rests with the workers themselves. The independence

and self-reliance of the German workers' movement is of utmost importance today in fighting imperialist enslavement. Only with class independence, only in clear struggle and with clear class aims does the international character of the workers' movement become manifest.

Just as Lenin after the collapse of the Second International built the Communist International, so today the Fourth International has replaced the Communist International after its degeneration and dissolution. This Fourth International has kept alive the heritage of Marx and Lenin. The German section of this International must be built up into a party to lead the German working class in the coming struggle to victory. That is the great task facing the German proletariat.

We know how difficult your struggle is under the harsh conditions of occupation. Freedom to organize, freedom of assembly and demonstration, freedom of the workers' press and the right to strike—these are the democratic rights which you will have to win through mass action.

To solve the housing problem, to control the distribution of food, to supervise prices, to organize the rebuilding and reopening of factories, organize yourselves into a network of committees of all the working people.

Don't let it come to pass that only Nazis and war criminals selected by the Allies receive punishment, but see to it that everyone who ever played a role as stool-pigeon or executioner of the German workers is punished. Only revolutionary workers' courts are capable of convicting them. Understand that only as a united and solid proletariat can you stamp out fascism. Recognize that in itself "anti-fascism" means nothing. Fascism and imperialism can only be ended with the downfall of capitalism and the victory of international socialism.

**Long live the German proletarian revolution!**

**Long live the Socialist United States of the World!**

(Signed by the following parties of the Fourth International)

*Revolutionary Communist Party* (British Section of the Fourth International).

*Internationalist Communist Party* (French Section of the Fourth International).

*Communist Workers Party* (Italian Section of the Fourth International).

*Revolutionary Communist Party* (Belgian Section of the Fourth International).

*The Dutch, Irish, Spanish, Swiss, Greek and German Sections of the Fourth International.*

# The Indo-Chinese Revolution

*The following summary of the situation in Indo-China and the powerful anti-imperialist movement which is shaking the entire country has been written by an Indo-Chinese comrade. It is reprinted and translated from the Sept.-Oct.-Nov. issue of Quatrieme Internationale, organ of the European Executive Committee of the Fourth International.*

The density of the essentially agricultural population in the North of Indo-China is extremely thick; it reaches 400 to 800 inhabitants to the square kilometer in the Tonkin Delta. The peasant of these regions cultivates his land with very primitive agricultural equipment and methods. The land has been partitioned to the extreme and most of the peasants do not possess more than a single hectare. On the other hand the complete absence of industry does not permit the peasants to secure a complement to their resources in the factory, a fact which entails extremely miserable conditions of life for the greatest part of the population.

In order to be able to exist and to pay their taxes, the small Indo-Chinese peasants are forced to borrow on their land and this is passing piece by piece into the patrimony of the Church or to the Indo-Chinese banks. The proletarianized peasants must then go to work as unskilled laborers in the mining pits or as agricultural workers on the estates of the big landed proprietors. Salaries are very low and barely came to 2 to 4 francs a day before the war of 1939-1940.

The middle peasantry (possessing an area of approximately some ten hectares) are likewise seeing their lands mortgaged and the medium-sized domains are also passing into the hands of the Chinese usurers and the agricultural credit banks.

On the great plantations belonging to the French colonists there lives an extremely miserable agricultural proletariat recruited from the overpopulated deltas of Tonkin and rather sold than hired out to the planters who, so to speak, have the power of life and death over the coolies in their employ. In the Southern part of the country the great Indo-Chinese landed proprietors to whom the French administration has conceded immense domains because of their "collaborative" attitude during the colonization possess almost the whole of the country.

In the towns there lives a population of little shopkeepers beside a restricted urban proletariat as miserable as the agricultural proletariat.

## Domestic Uprisings

The special conditions prevailing in Indo-China cause revolutionary waves to come from the countrysides and then to reach the urban centers, contrary to what has generally happened in the West. Actually, there is no significant industrial proletariat in the towns which are inhabited above all by small shopkeepers. On the other hand the agricultural proletariat and petty proprietors constitute the greatest part of the population whose standard of living is extremely low.

The situation in Indo-China has been revolutionary since the last war and the study of the successive uprisings enables us to assert that when the Indo-Chinese masses demand their independence through an expulsion of the French colonizers they likewise have in view the expropriation of their own national bourgeoisie and feudalists.

In 1917 the Monarchy supported by the feudal layers attempted to recover its independence: Annam rose up.

The years from 1917 to 1923 are marked by the success of the bourgeois nationalist movement.

The years from 1923 to 1927 witnessed the upsurge of the petty bourgeois and peasant nationalist movement which was climaxed by an insurrection followed by massacres in 1929.

The year 1933 is marked by manifestations of peasants and workers led by the Communist Party and followed by a ferocious repression.

The sweep of the workers' movement in France in 1936 has its repercussions in Indo-China where there was seen great mass movements for several years and which were savagely repressed in 1939. The beginning of the war is marked by the arrest of the Communist leaders.

These uprisings do not stop with the Japanese occupation but nipponese imperialism aids French imperialism in the task of repression.

The departure of the Japanese finally permits the armed insurrection of the Viet Minh.

Despite the cruel repression of French imperialism which each time beheads the revolutionary vanguard, the recurrent rhythm of the uprisings shows very well that Indo-China has long since matured for the revolution.

## The Workers' Parties

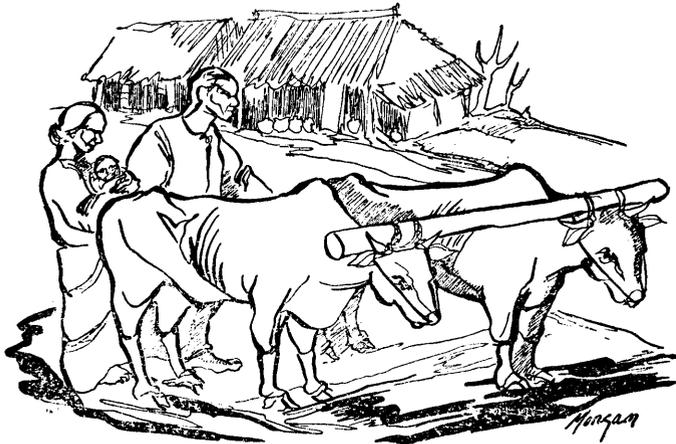
The Trotskyist organization was, as you know, especially strong in Cochin-China.

In so far as the Communist Party, which is the principal political party in the country, is concerned, its influence differs according to the regions. In the North and in the Central section, its activity is clandestine, but despite unfavorable conditions in 1938-1939 it had reached a strength of around 300,000 members. In Cochin-China the Communist Party is semi-legal and even a Popular Front policy has not permitted it to assemble any such significant strength. Thus in spite of a restricted title-holder's method of suffrage the elections gave 15 percent of the votes to the government party, 80 percent to the Trotskyist party, and only 1 percent of the votes to the Communist Party.

At Tonkin and in Annam on the contrary the Indo-Chinese Communist Party has a very strong influence especially in the peasant sections. Thus peasant unions, of communist inspiration, have been constituted to resist the mandarins and big landed proprietors. They defend the wages of the agricultural workers, organize mutual aid among the small peasants to enable them to fight against the mandarins and usurers and, by husbanding their products during the good years, to prevent a sale of their property during the years of scarcity. Moreover these unions often also acquire the form of cooperatives: with the resources of the union the peasants buy lands which they cultivate in turn and whose harvests they share.

The beginnings of the Japanese occupation were marked by very important uprisings. In October 1940, these occurred in Tonkin, in November 1940 in Cochin-China, in January 1941 in Annam. Japanese and French imperialisms united to ferociously repress these popular movements. The Viet Minh, league for the independence of Indo-China, was constituted at that time. It was formed by two nationalist parties embracing the petty bourgeoisie and the left wing of the liberal bourgeoisie, of two Communist Parties (Stalinist and Trotskyist), organizations of women, peasants, workers, soldiers and youth. The program it worked out in 1941 is a program of democratic liberties.

The question of agrarian reform is not contained in it, but the confiscation of the property of the Japanese, the French, the Indo-Chinese "fascists," and of the Church really amounts to the same result, for all the possessors in Indo-China have collaborated with the Japanese occupier and have very easily accommodated themselves to the government of Petain. The second important point of the program is the struggle even by armed force against every aggressor country.



During the Japanese occupation the French bourgeoisie tried to obtain the support of the Indo-Chinese bourgeoisie which preferred to serve Japanese imperialism. Actually the absence of industrial development in Indo-China does not permit the Indo-Chinese bourgeoisie the hope of being able to dispense with a foreign imperialism. That is why the Indo-Chinese bourgeoisie always tried to support itself upon the strongest imperialism. That is why it was pro-nipponese during the Japanese occupation, and now turns its eyes toward American imperialism, the master of the Pacific. The pro-nipponese parties led by the Indo-Chinese bourgeoisie have not had any profound influence among the masses. An "independent" government was constituted by Japan. At its head was Bao-Dai who had covered the exploitation of the country by the French bourgeoisie with his imperial authority and who then put himself at the service of nipponese imperialism.

After the surrender of Japan, the Viet Minh took over the governmental authority, forced Bao-Dai to abdicate, and expelled his pro-nipponese ministers. All power has therefore fallen into the hands of the Viet Minh. French imperialism is very desirous of reconquering its positions in Indo-China, but left to itself it would be quite incapable of achieving its ends. It demands support from British imperialism. British imperialism also has aims in Indo-China but before openly opposing France is awaiting the eventual checkmate of the western bloc which would permit her to peacefully achieve the same ends. On the other hand the English bourgeoisie fears the effect of

the example of the Indo-Chinese people upon her neighboring possessions: Burma, Siam, the Indian Empire. The Indian National Congress Party has actually passed motions of solidarity with Indo-China. A powerful anti-imperialist movement is developing throughout all Asia.

## International Proletarian Solidarity

The imperialists of the United States wish as well as the others to impose their domination on this part of the world. They do not act openly but through the intermediary of China. They are trying on the one hand to limit English expansion in Indo-China and on the other hand to impose their creatures upon the Viet Minh to dispel the communist danger. For this purpose they support themselves upon the Revolutionary Union for Independence, the old Nationalist Party, right wing in the Viet Minh, which is seeking to extend its bases in the petty bourgeois class and in the bourgeoisie.

The Indo-Chinese revolution faces a double danger. It is menaced by the nationalist parties within, which support themselves upon Yankee imperialism and by the three imperialist sharks which are laying siege to the country. If the Indo-Chinese revolution is isolated it cannot triumph over these difficulties.

The Viet Minh is menaced by the development of the nationalist parties on the right which are seceding in order to combat the revolutionary tendencies as soon as that will be possible and following a course similar to that we have witnessed in Greece. The Indo-Chinese revolutionists ought to demand of the Viet Minh that it carry out its program fully and demonstrate to the masses that neither the bourgeoisie nor the petty bourgeoisie can realize these reforms.

But the Indo-Chinese people alone cannot triumph over its powerful adversaries. The proletarians of all countries in the world must solidarize themselves in action with the Indo-Chinese people and protest by every means against their governments to frustrate the crime which is being prepared against their Indo-Chinese brothers. The Australian workers have given the example by going on strike to prevent the English bourgeoisie from dispatching war materials to the Dutch Indies. The workers of the world must follow this example and never forget that the victorious Indo-Chinese revolution can soon spread throughout the Pacific and could even be the prelude to the European and world revolution.

## MANIFESTO of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

### TO THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS OF INDIA

This pamphlet contains an analysis of the role in India of British domination, of American "mediation," and of Stalinism. It counterposes revolutionary methods of struggle to the impotent Congress methods that have dominated India and presents the basis for a revolutionary program of emancipation of the colonial peoples through the agrarian revolution, democratic committees of struggle, and a Workers' and Peasants' Government.

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# Tactical Problems of the European Movement

By FELIX MORROW

## 1. The Struggle for the Republic in Italy and Belgium

For two years there has been a dispute in the Socialist Workers Party concerning problems of the European revolution.\* The position of the SWP majority was last stated comprehensively by William Simmons in his "Trotskyist Tasks in Europe" in the July *Fourth International*. His article is very useful because it serves to make clear what still remains in dispute.

In particular it makes clear that we remain in disagreement on the correctness and importance of democratic demands in general and two in particular: the republic in Italy and Belgium; the Constituent Assembly in Italy, France, Belgium and Holland. We of the minority insist that these demands have been and continue to be of primary importance. Comrade Simmons, as we shall see, denies that.

### One Question Removed from Dispute

Originally our disagreement on this question flowed from our differing estimates of the present stage of political consciousness of the European proletariat. As early as 1943 we predicted the emergence from underground of the traditional workers' parties as the principal leadership of the masses; that on the one hand this fact would be the result of the revival of democratic illusions during the war; that on the other hand these parties would foster these illusions, teaching the masses that their needs can be satisfied within the framework of the bourgeois-democratic state; that this situation dictated to the parties of the Fourth International an emphasis on democratic demands as the lever with which to reach the masses and arouse them to struggle for ever more thoroughgoing demands.

The SWP majority, on the contrary, either denied the existence of these democratic illusions or, if it granted them for a moment, it was only to predict their speedy disappearance because of the catastrophic economic situation. As crushing proof they quoted Trotsky's 1940 statement that "Today almost nothing remains of the democratic and pacifist illusions"—and refused to understand that the further development of the war since 1940 had revived these illusions: the revival of national feeling under the Nazi occupation, the rise of a generation without experience of bourgeois democracy (not only in Italy, Germany and eastern Europe, but also in the five years of Nazi occupation in western Europe), the acute dependence on America for food and economic aid, etc.

Typical of the original position of the SWP majority was this statement of its spokesman E. R. Frank:

\*The position of the SWP majority was stated in the December 1944 issue of *Fourth International* and in articles by William Simmons in the April and July 1945 issues. The position of the SWP minority was stated by Felix Morrow in the May 1945 *Fourth International*.

I have read and heard it bruted 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! (December 1944 *Fourth International*, p. 378.)

And in an editorial condemning the minority, the majority stated:

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. (*Ibid*, p. 359.)

The majority deduced the impossibility of democratic illusions, from the economic situation. It was thus guilty of a false theory of the relation between economics and politics, deducing automatic political consequences from the economic situation. The minority, on the other hand, insisted that the (political) democratic illusions could disappear only as the result of a *political* experience of the masses with bourgeois democracy.

Now, at long last, the minority position is conceded by Simmons, who writes:

Among the important factors emerging from European developments, as listed by Morrow, are the following: "the revival of democratic illusions among considerable sections of the masses" because ". . . new generations have grown up without any experience of bourgeois democracy and without active participation in political life." This is undeniably so. He estimates that "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." No doubt this is true, although the experience may be gained in a concentrated form and within a brief period.

Comrade Morrow also concluded from Italian experiences so far 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." This is already the case in a number of European countries. It cannot yet be said for Germany, the most decisive sector of the European revolution, although, to a much more limited extent, it may also come true there.

Still there is no need, or desire, on my part to quarrel with these general formulations cited in the above paragraph . . .

In this situation the parties of the Fourth International, whether small or large, must go with the masses through this body of experience . . . In conformity with the needs of each situation they must advance, and fight for, democratic demands . . . (*Fourth International*, July, p. 216.)

We of the minority can only welcome this statement, which removes an issue hotly disputed since October 1943.

## But the Dispute Continues Anew

Unfortunately, however, Comrade Simmons and those he speaks for fail to understand the logical conclusions which follow from recognizing the existence of democratic illusions.

If the masses have democratic illusions, what follows? How shall we prove to the masses that their needs cannot be satisfied within the framework of the bourgeois-democratic state?

This is of course not a new problem, and our answer is the Leninist answer: The more complete democracy we can win, the more it will become clear to the workers that it is not their lack of liberties but capitalism itself which is the cause of their suffering. In the fight for the most complete democracy, the Bolsheviks can demonstrate to the workers that it is the revolutionists and not the reformists who are the most devoted fighters for the needs of the people.

Against this approach the SWP majority interposes an objection which, if true, would dictate an entirely different attitude toward democratic demands. The objection is that reformists also advance democratic demands and that therefore the advancing of democratic demands cannot distinguish the revolutionists from the reformists in the eyes of the workers. Simmons states this objection as follows:

In Northern Italy the militant partisan movement, evidently under the leadership of Stalinists, Social Democrats and left wing liberals, demand the republic. Even the Belgian Social Democrats have given feeble voice to such a demand. In France and elsewhere demands have been made by these parties for a constituent assembly, always taking care, of course, that actual measures are delayed as much as possible . . .

*The mere advancing of democratic demands will not serve in itself to distinguish the Fourth Internationalists from the position of these parties. It is important therefore to recognize the fact that democratic demands are for us only incidental and episodic in the independent movement of the proletariat; and they are now especially so in view of the utter capitalist collapse. (My italics.)*

From this assertion of the impossibility of distinguishing ourselves from the reformists on the plane of democratic demands, Simmons quite logically draws a very sharp distinction between my approach and his:

How are the revolutionists to win out in this crucial conflict for leadership? By emphasizing and underlining the role of democratic demands? No! Our conclusion must be the exact opposite to that drawn by Morrow. This conclusion must proceed from the idea that the parties of the Fourth International possess the enormous advantage of a revolutionary program. This is the main program which they must bring forward now. Therefore, if in this main struggle anything is to be especially emphasized and underlined, it is the revolutionary content of this program. They must emphasize the socialist way out of the capitalist collapse in clear and precise revolutionary slogans. *In fact they must put forward as their most pressing demand the expropriation of the capitalists and the socialization of the means of production. (My italics.)*

The issue, then, is clear: we of the minority assert the tremendous importance of such democratic demands as the republic and the constituent assembly precisely from the point of view of enabling the revolutionary party to find its way to the masses. On the other hand Comrade Simmons asserts that the revolutionary party cannot distinguish itself from the reformists on the plane of democratic demands and that there-

fore the revolutionists must make "their most pressing demand" the expropriation of capitalism. While Comrade Simmons doesn't make it clear we shall see that in actual practice his position means either opposing or ignoring the slogans of the republic and the constituent assembly.

Unlike the earlier period of this dispute when we were limited to theoretical considerations, we can now argue in terms of the experience of our comrades and the proletariat since the expulsion of the Nazis from western Europe. Even now we have only fragmentary information from our comrades, but it is enough to settle this dispute.

## The Leopold Crisis in Belgium

Very early in the Leopold crisis, and before we were able to hear on it from our Belgian comrades, the question arose how to treat the events in *The Militant* and *Fourth International*. Here was an acid test of the difference in approach between us and the SWP majority for whom Comrade Simmons speaks.

At the Political Committee meeting of June 21, I introduced the following motion:

That in our analysis of the Belgian working class struggle against the return of King Leopold, we condemn the Socialist and Communist parties for having failed to take the following steps:

1. Expulsion from the government of the bourgeois ministers, who are favorable to Leopold's return. Thereby the government would be transformed into a Socialist-Communist government.
2. Arrest of the royal family, including the Regent, and other reactionaries and industrialists who are plotting with Leopold for his return.
3. Immediate proclamation of the democratic republic.
4. Authorization of election of soldiers' committees by the Belgian regiments.
5. Arming of the workers. Control of production by elected factory committees to assure continued production for the needs of the workers.

My motivation for this motion, briefly, was that the problem of problems for the Trotskyist movement is to tear away the masses from the Socialist and Communist parties. This is not to be done by propaganda for the virtues of socialism, of which the socialist-minded proletariat of Belgium is well aware, nor by equally abstract propaganda for the proletarian revolution, which the Communist party workers and many of the Socialist party workers believe their parties stand for. Our task is to contrast what their parties obviously should do with what their parties actually do in the concrete critical situations which arise. One such situation was the attempt of Leopold to return; the Socialist and Communist parties opposed his return but advocated retention of the monarchy. To those workers who follow the Socialist and Communist parties, we say: Your parties refuse even to break with the monarchy, at a moment when it is clear they could have gotten rid of it once for all; when such parties will not even proclaim a republic when it can be done, how can you expect them to lead you to socialism?

The Political Committee majority rejected my motion, and adopted one as follows:

That in exposing the role of the Social Democrats and their sham fight against Leopold, we base ourselves on the program of the Belgian comrades and especially emphasize the demand for the withdrawal of the Allied troops.

The "program of the Belgian comrades" to which this motion refers was one issued months before: *it had in it no reference to the question of the monarchy.*

The question at issue was the monarchy. That was what the Belgian crisis was about, and that was what my motion was about. My answer was the republic. The Political Committee rejected my motion and their own gave no answer to the question at issue.

"Let us hope," I wrote at the time, "that our Belgian comrades didn't also look up a program of action written at a different time and with other situations in view. Let us hope that our Belgian comrades answered the actual question with which life had confronted them. If they did so, however, they followed a very different method than our Political Committee."

My hope in the Belgian comrades proved justified. Four days after the above motions, the Socialist and Communist parties called a mass demonstration in the industrial center of Charleroi, to demand Leopold's abdication, i.e., continuation of the monarchy in the form of the regency of Leopold's brother. Over 10,000 workers came out in spite of the tepid character of the demand.

Our comrades entered the demonstration with their own slogans and were able to report a signal success: "From the beginning, the slogans launched by our comrades of Charleroi: 'Leopold to prison,' 'Down with the monarchy,' 'For the republic,' were taken up by the overwhelming majority of the demonstrators," reports the July 14 issue of *La Lutte Ouvriere*, organ of our comrades, the Revolutionary Communist Party of Belgium. This success was followed by similar responses to the leaflets and press of our comrades.

In his eagerness to demonstrate that the mere advancing of democratic demands will not serve to distinguish revolutionists from reformists, Simmons says the Belgian Labor Party gave "feeble voice" to the demand for a republic. Actually, however, it did nothing of the sort. Together with the Communist Party, it opposed the return of Leopold but accepted the continuation of the monarchy. What *is* true is that the Labor Party has inscribed traditionally in its program the slogan of the republic. This fact, however, far from blurring the difference between the reformists and the revolutionists, opened to our comrades a tremendous opportunity for successful agitation among the Labor Party members, calling upon them to force their leaders to carry out the republican plank of the Labor Party's own platform.

In their agitation in the Leopold crisis, our comrades did not of course limit themselves to the slogan of the republic. Their agitation followed the same method as my motion: expulsion of the bourgeois ministers; arrest of reactionaries; arming of the workers; workers' control of production, etc. This is the method of democratic *and* transitional demands—both woven together.

Instead of my proposal for factory and soldiers' committees—an abstract proposal—the Belgian comrades made a concrete proposal, based on (what I had not known) the existence of Committees of Vigilance which date from the Nazi occupation and which are now merely top committees of the Labor, Communist and Liberal parties. Our comrades proposed to enlarge the committees, transforming them from committees of the "democratic alliance" into really popular organs by expelling the (bourgeois) liberals and by sending into the committees democratically-elected delegates of the workers in the factories and neighborhoods. These committees would take charge of the fight for the republic, arrest the officers who are preparing a royalist dictatorship, organize the workers' militias, etc.

What are such committees? They are soviets. Note well, however, that they are to be launched under the slogan of the struggle for the republic. In other words, at this stage it is the democratic demand for the republic which enables our comrades to popularize the idea of soviets. It is too often forgotten that soviets begin as *the organs of the united front of the proletariat specifically created to struggle for a commonly-accepted demand*. Far from hampering our propaganda for soviets, it is precisely the fact that the Belgian Labor Party is on record for a republic which facilitated the demand of our comrades for the mass committees required to fight for it.

Comrade Warde (who of course voted against the slogan of the republic for Belgium) now seeks to find a "profound" distinction between the slogan as used by our Belgian comrades and as used by Morrow\*: for the Belgian comrades, he says, it is "merely a point of departure." And I, presumably, want the republic to remain. . . . Yes, in Belgium and in Italy too, the slogan of the republic is merely a point of departure. But without it one cannot today depart in the direction of soviets. And there is the whole point.

Some comrades try to make a profound distinction between calling for a republic and calling for a democratic (i.e., bourgeois) republic, the implication being that our Belgian comrades are in reality calling for a socialist republic when they speak of republic. What *is* true, of course, is that the day the reformists proclaim the (bourgeois) republic we shall condemn the content they give it as being a betrayal of the workers' aspirations for a better life. In this sense the demand for the republic is an algebraic formula, the revolutionist giving it a very different content than that given it by the reformist: for the revolutionist proclamation of the republic is a step forward in the struggle for socialism whereas for the reformist the republic is an end in itself. But this does not change the *democratic* character of the demand for the republic; it is not a socialist demand; it does *not* mean that we are proposing to replace the monarchy by soviet power, for in the latter case we would not be calling for the republic but for the soviet republic. The whole point of the present situation in Belgium and Italy is precisely the untimeliness of the slogan of the soviet republic.

## The Republican Question in Italy

In the case of Italy, too, the Political Committee of the SWP has refused to endorse the slogan of the republic, even though it is in the program of our Italian comrades.

Comrade Simmons argues: "In northern Italy the militant partisan movement, evidently under the leadership of Stalinists, Social Democrats and left wing liberals, demands the republic." This is one of his arguments to prove that "The mere advancing of democratic demands will not serve in itself to distinguish the Fourth Internationalists from the position of these parties."

Even in terms of his own argument, Simmons fails to say that for two years after the fall of Mussolini the Communist Party, the leading party of the workers, *opposed* the abolition of the monarchy. Wasn't this a perfect opportunity for the

\*The Belgian party leadership writes in a letter of September 10: "As you could see from our paper and also from our leaflets, we had a firm stand during the king's crisis the last months, more in accordance with the Morrow resolution than with the Stein (Political Committee) resolution."

Trotskyists to hammer away in favor of the slogan of the republic, gaining prestige among the workers especially after the "left" turn of the Stalinists showed that the Trotskyists were right all the time?

That, however, is only one side of the question. Even more important is it to understand that official endorsement of a slogan by the Social Democrats and the Stalinists in no way detracts from the importance of the slogan for us. Under the pressure of the workers, Togliatti and Nenni are giving lip-service to the slogan of the republic. Good! Our task then becomes to demonstrate—and a wealth of material is available—that they have done nothing to get rid of the monarchy since the fall of Mussolini, and that meanwhile the monarchist generals are building an army for use against the proletariat.

If we could not distinguish ourselves from the reformists when they raise identical or similar slogans to ours, then we would be hard-put to find anything to agitate about. Not even Simmons' proposal that our "most pressing demand" must be "the expropriation of the capitalists and the socialization of the means of production" is exempt from reformist imitation. For, as he himself admits (p. 216) "demands have been made for a certain degree of nationalization" by the reformist parties. More precisely, the Communist Party in Italy and France, for one example, stands for nationalization of the banks and all key industries. "The mere advancing of democratic demands will not serve in itself to distinguish the Fourth Internationalists from the position of these (reformist) parties," complains Simmons, but the same could be said for many of our socialist demands. It should be obvious that something is wrong with Simmons' approach.

Trotsky answered a Spanish Simmons on just this point in 1931 when the reformist Caballero endorsed workers' control of production:

... to renounce workers' control merely because the reformists are for it—in words—would be an enormous stupidity. On the contrary it is precisely for this reason that we should seize upon this slogan all the more eagerly and compel the reformist workers to put it into practice by means of a united front with us; and on the basis of this experience to push them into opposition to Caballero and other fakers.

We succeeded in creating Soviets in Russia only because the demand for them was raised, together with us, by the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries, although, to be sure, they had different aims in mind. We cannot create any Soviets in Spain precisely because neither the Socialists nor the syndicalists want Soviets. This means that the united front and the organizational unity of the majority of the working class cannot be created under this slogan.

But here is Caballero himself, forced by the pressure of the masses, seizing upon the slogan of workers' control and thereby opening wide the doors for the united front policy and to forging an organization that embraces the working class. We must seize hold of this with both hands. Certainly, Caballero will try to transform workers' control into the control of the capitalists over the workers. But that question already pertains to another domain, that of the relationship of forces within the working class. (*Fourth International*, October 1943, p. 319.)

Certainly Togliatti and Nenni will try to transform the proclamation of the republic into the control of the capitalists over the workers. But that question will be settled by the relationship of forces within the working class at that point. Meanwhile, however, our Italian comrades have to grasp with both hands Togliatti and Nenni's affirmations of the republic. The difference is that in calling for united front organs (soviets) for the republic we call for class struggle against the monarchy whereas the reformists promise to remove it eventually by

means of class collaboration. Is it so difficult to make this distinction clear to the advanced workers?

Today's newspapers (October 14) report great mass meetings in Rome, Milan and other cities demanding abolition of the monarchy and speedy elections to the Constituent Assembly. Of course the meetings are under control of the Communist and Socialist parties. According to the method of Simmons, their advancing of these demands negates the importance of these demands for our Italian comrades.

But note well that the bourgeois partners of the Communist and Socialist parties in the government write in opposition to the meetings. The *Liberale* condemns the sponsors of the meetings as lacking in good faith since they know perfectly well that the Constituent cannot be convened before next spring at the earliest. The *Popolo* of the Christian Democrats argues that the Constituent cannot solve the economic problems which must come first. And so on. Here is an excellent opportunity for us! We say to the Socialist and Communist party members: Your leaders sit in one cabinet with the Christian democrats and Liberals, where ostensibly all together are preparing the Constituent as soon as possible, so your leaders say. But when you workers demonstrate for the republic and the Constituent, the bourgeois ministers condemn your demonstrations, in reality condemn the purposes for which you are demonstrating. They are using their government posts to sabotage convocation of the Constituent which will abolish the monarchy! Down with the bourgeois ministers, drive them out of the government. For a government of the workers' parties and the trade unions.

True, Comrade Simmons and his associates support the slogan of a government of the workers' parties in Italy. But they do not support the slogan of the republic and therefore would be unable to agitate along the lines indicated above. For they don't understand that at this stage the slogan of the republic is an indispensable lever for advancing the slogan of a government of the workers' parties.

Another example: At the great mass meeting in Rome against the monarchy, the Action party leader, Federico Comandini, himself frightened out of his wits at the extent to which his criminal policy has permitted the royalist forces to arm themselves, tries in turn to frighten the royalists with the warning that if they try to prevent the elections to the Constituent, then "the parties that organized the Rosselli, Matteotti and Garibaldi Brigades will not refrain from appealing directly to the working classes."

Our comrades must grab hold of Comandini's words with both hands. If the Comandinis, whose policy made it possible for the royalists to arm, have to admit so much, the truth must be even more serious. Sound the alarm! Workers, there may be no elections unless the working class prepares immediately to defend the elections against the royalists! When the workers had the Partisan Brigades, the royalists cowered in hiding, but when the workers gave up arms and disbanded the brigades, the royalists came out into the open. Let us speedily correct the mistake—Committees of Vigilance in every factory, village and neighborhood! The committees to prepare the electoral lists, purging them of collaborators and fascists; to guarantee the holding of the elections against the royalists; to discuss the steps to be taken in order to assure a worker-peasant majority in the Constituent: a land program for the peasants, a social program for the workers, etc. Delegates from the Committees shall convene in Rome simultaneously with the Con-

stituent, in order to keep the local committees informed of how well or ill the Constituent is carrying out the wishes of the masses, what steps must be taken everywhere to enforce the decisions of the Constituent against the king, the landlords and capitalists, etc. In a word, Comandini's "left" gesture provides a perfect opportunity for revolutionary agitation for arming the workers and for soviets. But on one small condition: the revolutionary party must also support the slogan of the republic which is today in Italy the lever for the other slogans.

### An Anarcho-Syndicalist Error

The masses want bread, not the republic. The Constituent Assembly will not feed us. Such were the arguments of the Spanish anarcho-syndicalists, and today of the Bordighists in Italy. And at bottom it is the same ultra-left error which Comrade Simmons and his associates make. This becomes clear when, after perfunctorily conceding the need of democratic demands, he writes:

On the other hand, revival of democratic illusions among considerable sections of the masses, due to lack of participation in political life of the younger generation, is not the only present phenomenon. Far more pressing for them is the very lack of the most meagre means of subsistence. Therefore, with all its weight this catastrophic crisis pushes the proletariat relentlessly on the road toward the revolutionary mass struggle for power. (P. 216.)

Comrade Simmons here makes the usual ultra-leftist error of counterposing the republic and the Constituent Assembly to the hunger of the masses. In the real world today, however, it is precisely their hunger which impels the masses to demonstrate for the republic and the Constituent Assembly. True enough, the republic and the Constituent will not satisfy the hunger of the masses. But the understanding of this by

the masses still lies in the future. Today the great masses believe the republic and the Constituent will help them. It is necessary to disabuse the masses of these illusions, but a century of Marxism teaches us that doctrinal lectures is not the way. The way lies through the struggle for the republic and the Constituent, there is no other way. In his "revolutionary" assertion of another way, counterposing socialist demands to democratic demands, Comrade Simmons leaves the road of Marxism—and all this he does, if you please, in the name of orthodox Marxism!

I leave detailed consideration of the Constituent Assembly—today the most important problem of tactics which confronts our French comrades (and tomorrow our Italian comrades)—to another article. But the whole problem can be summarized in one question which I address to Comrade Simmons: Of what body, dear comrade, do you demand expropriation of the capitalists and socialization of the means of production? To limit oneself to saying the workers should do it is anarcho-syndicalism; it is necessary to demand socialization by a *state power*. Which? The non-existent soviets? But in that case you are merely making abstract propaganda for a future society. The essence of agitation, on the other hand, is to direct a demand to an *existing address* or to one which the masses are ready to create. They are not now ready to create soviet power, but they are already moving to establish or have already established the Constituent Assembly. Which means that today—and as long as the masses do not create soviets—the demand for socialization is addressed to the (bourgeois) Constituent Assembly. He who does not understand the necessity for this paradox of demanding socialism from a bourgeois body does not understand revolutionary tactics. This lack of understanding is expressed in the attitude of the SWP majority toward the slogans of the republic and the Constituent Assembly.

# Revolutionary Policy in Western Europe

## *An Answer to Comrade Morrow*

By WILLIAM F. WARDE

The discussion article by Comrade Morrow published in this issue continues his criticism of the positions taken by the Socialist Workers Party majority on several important issues of European politics. In order to deal with the questions of revolutionary policy he raises, it is necessary to have a clear and accurate picture of the present political situation in Western Europe. That in turn requires a survey of the main trend of events since the downfall of Italian Fascism in August 1943.

The final stage of the war gave rise to a mighty offensive of the masses beginning in Italy and extending to all the occupied countries. The workers of Italy, France, Belgium, Greece, Holland acquired arms and created their own military formations; took possession in many places of the factories, means of transportation, etc.; established popular control over the distribution of food, the dispensing of justice, the administration of local affairs. These embryonic elements of dual power, if coordinated,

developed and expanded, could have provided the basis for the complete overturn of capitalist rule and the institution of the sovereignty of the toiling masses in these countries.

Three main factors prevented the victorious consummation of the uprising of the workers. First, the full weight of the preponderant military forces of the Anglo-American invaders in counter-revolutionary alliance with the Kremlin was flung against the insurgent masses to arrest their struggles. The Big Three conspired to set up puppet regimes obedient to their will. Second, the Stalinist and Socialist parties which commanded the allegiance of the working masses worked hand in glove with the Allied powers to save capitalist rule by disarming the workers militarily and politically. Third, the Trotskyist groups and parties were too weak and immature to intervene as a decisive force and head off this disaster.

For these reasons the first wave of revolution fell short of

its goal throughout Western Europe. The bloody crushing of the ELAS-EAM in Greece, combined with the cowardly capitulation of its Stalinist leadership before the British-backed capitalist-monarchist counter-revolution, marked the close of this first period. Since then a marked recession in the revolutionary tide has set in. The repulse of the proletarian offensive has afforded the capitalist rulers a breathing spell and enabled them to regain a transitory and precarious equilibrium.

Aided by Anglo-American imperialism and the complicity of the Stalinist and Socialist misleaders, the Western European bourgeoisie are utilizing this pause to strengthen their shaken positions, to further undermine the power of the proletariat, and to prepare for the launching of their own counter-offensives. The capitalists, the church, the army are mobilizing their forces to fortify and reestablish their dictatorial rule. In Belgium they are plotting to bring back King Leopold. In France they support de Gaulle's drive to legitimize and buttress his Bonapartist aspirations. Under British tutelage in Italy and Greece the monarchists and other reactionaries are displaying growing impudence and activity.

However, it is extremely important to note that in no case has the native bourgeoisie as yet succeeded in stabilizing its rule. The resistance of the masses frustrated the plans to restore Leopold to his throne. The majority given the Communist and Socialist parties in the elections to the Constituent prevents the consolidation of de Gaulle's personal power. In Italy, although the downfall of Parri has resulted in a slight shift to the right, the six-party coalition is impotent as ever to create a stable governmental combination. A similar series of cabinet crises keeps unsettling Greece. Arbitrary rule persists in Holland in the face of the mounting demand for immediate elections which the bourgeoisie seeks to postpone until a more propitious occasion.

These political developments show that, despite the setbacks suffered by the workers of Western Europe, they have not undergone a definitive defeat. The decisive class battles lie ahead.

The fundamental cause of the instability of bourgeois rule is the continuing and deepening social crisis ravaging these ruined and impoverished countries. The capitalist regimes are manifestly incapable of solving, or even indicating a solution, to the most pressing problems. They cannot give peace, freedom, bread, work, shelter to the peoples. Economic reconstruction lags amidst raging inflation and black markets.

These conditions keep the toiling masses in a constant state of unrest. The strikes which erupt against all opposition from above, the demonstrations, the results of the French elections, show the will of the workers. They are ready to struggle for their demands. They want socialism. They are looking for leadership in their instinctive striving for power. Revolt in the colonies accompanies this incessant ferment at home.

While the entire objective situation remains revolutionary, the dominant working class organizations do their utmost to stifle the revolutionary sentiments of the masses by diverting them into the safe channels of parliamentary maneuvers. They restrain the combativeness of the workers and barricade the road to power. Although the workers have time and again signified their determination to break once and for all with the bourgeoisie and its parties, the CP and SP cling to collaboration with them. Their Popular Front coalitions are supplemented by class collaboration on the industrial field. Instead of taking power and initiating a revolutionary reconstruction of the social system, these perfidious parties work to shore up collapsing capitalism and content themselves with meagre reforms and governmental posts.

This in brief is the political situation within which the revo-

lutionary vanguard of the Fourth International must operate and work out its policy today in the Western European countries. Only against this background can our differences with Comrade Morrow be properly explained and understood.

## Two Different Methods

Morrow states that our disagreements arise from "differing estimates of the present stage of political consciousness of the European proletariat." We have such differences; they flow from our divergent analyses of the present objective situation and its main lines of development. Morrow denies that the prevailing situation in Western Europe is revolutionary. We maintain that despite the temporary ebb in the tide of struggle, it remains objectively revolutionary.

Morrow contends that the dominant trend is "an evolution toward bourgeois democracy in Europe as the objective resultant of the class struggle and of the struggle between the contending capitalist classes." (*Fourth International*, May 1945.) Why must this be the organic and inevitable development? The European bourgeoisie, he tells us, is pushing in this direction. U.S. imperialism favors democratic methods of rule. The workers are dominated by democratic illusions. The CP and SP are pulling the masses into this channel. Finally, the Trotskyist parties are too weak to change this course of events.

In our opinion this appraisal is false and misleading. The main lines of political development in Europe do not converge on the single track of bourgeois democracy, as Morrow's scheme depicts it, but diverge sharply according to the interests and aims of the principal contending classes. The capitalists seek the solution to their problems, not in bourgeois democracy, but through military-monarchist dictatorships. They find a rear-guard and reserve in Anglo-American imperialism. But owing to the depth of the social crisis, their discreditment and manifest incapacity, the revolutionary temper of the workers, the discontent of the middle class, the capitalists are not now in a position to carry through their own political plans. They are thus forced to resort to democratic maneuvers and play around with parliamentary forms in order to dupe the workers and obstruct independent working class action. Meanwhile they are building up their own forces in the army, the police, the bureaucracy, and even within the masses (the *Mouvement Républicain Populaire* in France, the *l'Uomo Qualunque* movement in Italy, etc.). Resisting to the utmost the efforts of the people to democratize political life, they are nevertheless compelled by the relationship of class forces to yield concessions here and there in order to gain time for the organization of their counter campaigns.

It is true that the Stalinists and Socialists seek to solve the crisis by means of social reforms through "democratic" collaboration with the bourgeoisie and its "liberal" parties. But this program is nothing but the reactionary utopia of the petty-bourgeoisie covered with socialist phrases. It is *reactionary* because this policy runs counter to the basic course of development which imperiously commands the proletariat to take power in order to lead the nation on to the road of socialism. It is *utopian* because it fails to reckon with the acuteness of the social crisis and the sharpening of the class antagonisms which forbid the restoration of durable bourgeois-democratic regimes based upon class collaboration. It is *petty-bourgeois* because it rests upon a denial in theory and a blunting in practice of the class struggle.

At the bottom of all our differences with Comrade Morrow is the question of *method*. As scientific socialists, we proceed

in all questions from an analysis of the objective situation which is determined by the class relationships. From the results of this analysis we derive our program, strategy and tactics.

Morrow here as elsewhere proceeds in a different fashion. He takes as his point of departure, not a rounded examination of the existing economic and political conditions, but his impressions of "the present stage of political consciousness of the European proletariat." This is the method of literary impressionism, not Marxism.

When Trotsky first projected in 1938 the program of transitional demands which was later adopted by the Founding Conference of the Fourth International and is today its political guide, certain comrades objected that the program was too advanced for the mentality of the American workers. "We have repeated many times," Trotsky replied, "that the scientific character of our activity consists in the fact that we adapt our program not to political conjunctures or the thought or mood of the masses as this mood is today, but we adapt our program to the objective situation as it is represented by the economic class structure of society. The mentality can be backward; then the political task of the party is to bring the mentality into harmony with the objective facts, to make the workers understand the objective task. But we cannot adapt the program to the backward mentality of the workers. The mentality, the mood is a secondary factor—the prime factor is the objective situation. That is why we have heard these criticisms or these appreciations that some parts of the program do not conform to the situation . . .

## What Kind of Illusions?

"Question: Isn't the ideology of the workers a part of the objective factors?"

"Trotsky: For us as a small minority this whole thing is objective, including the mood of the workers. But we must analyze and classify those elements of the objective situation which can be changed by our paper and those which cannot be changed. That is why we say that the program is adapted to the fundamental stable elements of the objective situation and the task is to adapt the mentality of the masses to these objective factors. To adapt the mentality is a pedagogical task. We must be patient, etc. The crisis of society is given as the base of our activity. We must change it. We must give a scientific explanation of society, and clearly explain it to the masses. That is the difference between Marxism and reformism." (*Internal Bulletin* No. 6 of the Socialist Workers Party, July 1938.)

The capitalist crisis in the United States at that time was far less grave than in Europe today. The American workers were incomparably less ready for the socialist revolution. Yet, as Trotsky affirmed, Marxist science demanded that the *program* be fitted to the needs of the objective situation and not be bent to suit the passing moods of the masses.

But even in regard to "the present stage of political consciousness of the European proletariat" Morrow is incorrect. All his arguments and tactical proposals hinge upon the assertion that the mind of the masses is dominated by democratic illusions.

This appraisal is wide of the mark. The people of Western Europe have passed through an extensive experience with bourgeois democracy. It has brought them two world wars, a world depression, loss of liberties, catastrophic ruin, hunger and hopelessness—all in a generation. They have seen with their own eyes how bourgeois democracy transforms itself into outright dictatorship. The workers have long-established socialist

and communist traditions. At the same time they have been deeply impressed by the results of the first successful socialist revolution in so backward a country as Russia which even under Stalin displayed such economic and military power.

Morrow asserts that the war has wiped out the lessons of these events in the minds of the masses and led to a tremendous revival of bourgeois democratic illusions. We have not denied the existence of such illusions nor of the need to reckon with them. But they are a minor and not a major factor. The political swing of the masses away from such traditional bourgeois democratic parties as the Radical-Socialist party, which has suffered total eclipse, and their entrance by the millions into the Socialist, and especially the Communist parties, provides both negative and positive proof of this fact. They have discarded the bourgeois democratic outfits and adhered to the working class parties not because they yearn for a return to the prewar days of decaying democracy but above all because they want to go forward to socialism.

This does not mean that the workers are free of illusions. On the contrary, their movement has been derailed precisely because of their lack of political clarity. Morrow's error on this question comes from his misunderstanding of their principal illusion. What so cruelly deceives the workers is not naive trust in bourgeois democracy, as he declares, but their misplaced confidence in the Communist and Socialist parties.

The Communist Party is today the most powerful party in France, the continental home of bourgeois democracy. It has a million members and received five million votes. The working masses have not swarmed into this party because it appears to them as the champion of bourgeois democracy but because they regard it as the party of communism, as the opponent of capitalism. The urge to satisfy their social needs is so compelling that it serves to override revulsion against the monstrous crimes of Stalinism and its totalitarian regime in the USSR. In the eyes of millions of workers and peasants the Communist parties in Western Europe appear not as the counter-revolutionary agencies of Stalin but as the Bolshevik combat parties of Lenin. They support the CP not because they want to maintain private property and revitalize bourgeois rule under democratic forms but because they desire to take over the means of production and establish workers' democracy. Similar anti-capitalist sentiments, although to a lesser degree, animate the Socialist Party ranks. But instead of leading the workers forward to their own October Revolution, the Stalinists—and Socialists—pull them backward through the People's Front coalitions into collaboration with the capitalists.

## Leninist Tactics

Thus the European workers have been led into their present blind alley primarily because of their erroneous belief that the CP and SP could satisfy their demands for a revolutionary change and show them the way to socialism. *This* is the illusion which must be broken down. This is the great tactical problem now confronting the Trotskyists.

Morrow's recipe is simple. The Trotskyists must take the lead in fighting for democracy, more democracy, and still more democracy. "In the fight for the most complete democracy, the Bolsheviks can demonstrate to the workers that it is the revolutionists and not the reformists who are the most devoted fighters for the needs of the people." This is Leninism à la Morrow.

But Leninism proceeds from the proposition that even the broadest arena of democracy under capitalist rule cannot satisfy the pressing needs of the people. It certainly cannot overcome

the profound economic, social and political crisis gripping Western Europe. This is not an anarcho-sindicalist error, as Morrow asserts, but sober socialist truth which must be hammered home to the masses. They must be taught that the fight for democracy acquires significance and can have fruitful results only in connection with their class struggle for power, for the expropriation of the capitalists, and the establishment of worker's control over economic life.

What the working class must do now is fight for power, more power and still more power. In order to accomplish this central task the workers must first free themselves from captivity to the Popular Front alliances which shackle them to the bourgeoisie. They must regain their independence of action. That is why the Trotskyist parties in Western Europe address the following slogans to the workers who adhere to the CP and SP: "Force your parties to break the coalition with the capitalists and expel their representatives from the government. Let the worker's organizations take power on a socialist program of action. Form a Communist-Socialist Government." This is Leninist tactics because it is based upon the dynamics of the class struggle and directed toward the conquest of power.

Our divergent estimates of the political situation and our contrasting conceptions of the tasks confronting the revolutionary vanguard have naturally also engendered disagreements over the application of the program of the Fourth International in Western Europe today. In words it appears that we subscribe to the same formula expressed in the resolution adopted by the 11th Convention of the Socialist Workers Party: "to rally the masses for 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. . . ." But the differences in our viewpoints emerge as soon as it comes to the practical application of this formula.

## Transitional and Democratic Demands

In general, we consider it necessary for the revolutionary vanguard to place its emphasis upon the transitional demands which can mobilize the masses in struggle under the leadership of the advanced workers for the conquest of power. It is necessary to place before the masses *a program of revolutionary action* which clearly poses the problem of power. This is the key question in political life today. That is why, as Comrade Simmons insists, the parties of the Fourth International must put forward as their most pressing demand the expropriation of the capitalists and the socialization of the means of production.

Does this mean that we ignore the value or deny the necessity for democratic demands? Not at all. Such sectarianism and ultra-leftism is totally alien to the realistic revolutionary politics of Bolshevism. We fight for democratic demands just as vigorously as for immediate economic demands. It is obvious that the more democracy the workers can wrest from the capitalist rulers, the more their confidence in their independent strength will be enhanced, the easier will be the further struggle for power, the greater prestige will accrue to the party which heads the fight for democratic rights.

Parenthetically we may add that it is odd of Comrade Morrow to attribute such ultra-left infantilism to our party which in the Minneapolis Labor Case under conditions of wartime repression and reaction conducted the most intransigent fight in defense of democracy the American labor movement has ever known. To be sure, Morrow may object that this was done

in the United States from 1941 to 1945 while we are here concerned with Europe in 1945. Nevertheless how does he account for the apparent contradiction that the same party which stands in the forefront of the fight for democratic rights in the United States has, if he is to be believed, suddenly denied the necessity for an equally uncompromising struggle for democracy in Europe today?

But even from the standpoint of democracy this is only one side of the question. As Comrade Simmons pointed out, at the present stage of social developments the success of the fight for democratic liberties is itself bound up indissolubly with the success of the struggle for socialism. The bourgeoisie will grant political and economic concessions only to forestall the loss of all its privileges. Thus the democratic concessions which have already been won and will be won by the masses must be viewed as by-products of their revolutionary struggle. Moreover, they can be secured and guaranteed only by the complete conquest of power.

Democratic slogans, properly employed, can promote the class struggle and have an important place in any realistic program of revolutionary action today. But by themselves such slogans are entirely inadequate to meet the needs of the present revolutionary situation. They have only a subordinate and episodic role to play in comparison with the transitional demands which correspond to the vital economic needs of the workers and clearly indicate the path to power.

For Comrade Morrow, however, they have a quite different significance. He maintains that democratic demands and slogans must be emphasized above all and made predominant in the activities of the vanguard during the present period. He is very explicit on this point. "The way (to win the masses) lies through the struggle for the republic and the Constituent, *there is no other way* (our italics)," he tells us. "The slogan of the republic . . . is today in Italy the lever for the other slogans." The primary and central role he assigns to the democratic demands leads to the inescapable conclusion that the transitional demands must be subordinated to them.

This program which Morrow proposes as the master key to the present stage of the class struggle in Western Europe could only serve to divert the workers from the correct course and hamper the growth of the Fourth International. The future of the Fourth International can be assured only along the road of intransigent struggle for socialism at the present time. While fighting for the widest extension of democracy under bourgeois rule, while defending the immediate interests of the masses, the Trotskyists must come forward first and foremost as the tireless champions and organizers of the revolutionary struggle for state power through independent mass action. This is the method by which they can liberate the masses from the deadly influence of the Stalinists and Socialists; mobilize them against the unfolding bourgeois reaction; win them to the revolutionary ranks; and rearm them for the new offensive.

In this connection it is relevant to recall that in *Whither France* Trotsky lashed the Stalinist leaders for proposing a program of "immediate demands" when the situation demanded a broad political offensive to capture power based upon a well-elaborated transitional program. "The chief obstacle on the path to the development of the revolutionary struggle right now," he wrote, "is the one-sided, almost maniacal program of 'immediate demands,' which contradicts the whole situation. . . . A revolutionary offensive, which opposes one class to another, cannot be developed solely under slogans of partial economic demands"—pp. 61-62.

In what respect is Morrow's program of "democratic demands" superior to the Stalinist program of that time? It may not be amiss to mention that the theoretical motivation for Morrow's program of "democratic demands" is the same as the Stalinists then gave for their program of "immediate demands"; the situation is not revolutionary.

Morrow attempts to fortify his position by means of a theory of stages. First, the European proletariat must pass through a period of bourgeois democracy and later will launch into a direct struggle for power. Now the revolutionists must go along with the masses in their democratic illusions to help get rid of them. The main theme of his reply to Simmons is that the masses are too immature, too unprepared, too unclear in their consciousness to realize the necessity to fight for power. To date they've advanced only far enough to demonstrate for the democratic republic and the Constituent Assembly. Their understanding that these democratic institutions are insufficient "still lies in the future."

Even if this were so, it would not obligate the revolutionary party to subordinate the transitional demands to the democratic ones. But the most pernicious feature of this theory is its misrepresentation of the mood of the masses. They are not simply demanding greater democracy, as Morrow would have it. In France, Italy and elsewhere they are insistently clamoring for the nationalization of the banks and key industries. This is not a democratic but a socialist demand. So powerful is their pressure that even de Gaulle is obliged to appease them by sham nationalization measures. Here the task of the revolutionists is to expose the fraud of such measures and lead the struggle for genuine socializations under the control and through the class action of the workers.

But "of what body . . . do you demand expropriation of the capitalists and socialization of the means of production?" Morrow inquires with an air of triumph. He infers that this demand can only be presented either to "non-existent soviets" or to already established Constituent Assemblies. In reality, the demand for expropriation must be directed at the Communist and Socialist parties, whether they are in the Constituent or in the Soviets. They have the majority; they presumably base themselves on a socialist program. Bolshevik tactics teaches that the most effective way to expose the servility of these parties to capitalism is to demand that they carry out their professed program.

Morrow's attempt to impose upon the unfolding class struggle the idea of two separate stages—the present when democratic demands are paramount and the future when the transitional program will be pushed to the fore—would be disastrous. It would in practice place the Trotskyist vanguard in the shameful position of trailing behind the reformist parties which are forced to pay lip-service to the masses' desires for such thoroughgoing social demands as nationalization. It would facilitate the schemes of the bourgeoisie and their agents to confine the struggle exclusively within the restricted parliamentary framework where they hope to strangle it. At every turn of events today the unpostponable need to reconstruct the shattered national economies on new foundations raises the questions of property and state power. Recognition of this fundamental fact which determines the character of the present stage must be the point of departure for revolutionary tactics.

This brings us to our third main point of difference with Comrade Morrow. He does not share our conception of the tasks of the American party in regard to the European struggle and therefore follows a different procedure than we do.

The conditions under which the class struggle unfolds and with which the revolutionary vanguard must reckon in Europe today are extremely complex, unstable and shifting. Sharp and abrupt turns are inherent in the situation. It would be highly doctrinaire to lay down in advance tactical recipes for the conduct of this struggle in any country. It would be no less foolhardy for any person or party removed from the theater of action to do so.

## Tasks of the American Trotskyists

To issue the right slogans at the right time it is necessary to be in intimate connection with the developing struggle, to feel the inner rhythm of events, to know the temper, the moods, the willingness of the masses to engage in action. We do not intend to offer detailed advice from afar to our European comrades on questions of the tactical application of the program of the Fourth International. Such advice would be gratuitous and presumptuous on our part. They can feel much better than we the pulse of the masses in their own countries. Our resolution on "The European Revolution and Tasks of the Revolutionary Party" was designated to set forth the *strategical line* which in our opinion the Trotskyists should follow. The political resolutions adopted by the European Trotskyists essentially coincide with our positions. What combination of tactics can best serve to promote the strategy of the struggle for power outlined in our respective resolutions only the individual parties are competent to determine and decide.

That is why we have steadfastly rejected every proposal made by Comrade Morrow and others to prescribe tactical injunctions to our co-thinkers abroad. That is the meaning of the position we took in the case of Belgium which Morrow singles out as "an acid test of the difference in approach" between us. The practical question involved was how to treat the events surrounding the Leopold crisis in our press. We proceeded from the premise that the chief agitational task of the American revolutionists is not to lay down tactical steps for the Belgian militants but to arouse the workers in this country against the conspiracies of U.S. imperialism. That is why the Political Committee motion stressed our campaign around the slogan: "Withdraw All American Troops From Europe." That was the slogan required for our sector of the international class struggle in connection with the Belgian events. We left to our Belgian co-thinkers the task of deciding what slogans were most fitting in their country.

Morrow, however, has a different conception of the tasks to be undertaken by the American Trotskyists and the functions they must perform in relation to Europe. In addition to collaborating in the development of a strategical line, he proposes to instruct the European sections of the Fourth International on how to apply it in detail. This is to be done in accord with his tactical blueprint for this period which consists in pushing to the fore a random collection of democratic demands.

We are opposed both to Morrow's procedure and Morrow's program. Instead of fitting slogans to the real development of the class struggle, Morrow proposes to subject the struggle to a preconceived set of democratic slogans. This is formalism of the worst kind.

What we have said about Belgium applies by and large to Italy as well. But our respective views can best be put to the test by applying them to France where the situation is most favorable for Comrade Morrow since there democracy has already had the chance to express and prove itself in life through the recent elections.

In the May 1945 *Fourth International* Morrow defined Gaullism as "a bourgeois-democratic tendency" whereas we together with the French Trotskyists characterize it as essentially Bonapartist. What do the results of the elections show? These elections are supposed to be the quintessence of bourgeois democracy. Yet de Gaulle's government coupled the elections to the Constituent Assembly which is to draft a new Constitution for France with a disguised plebiscite for himself. Thus in the very process of gestation the new bourgeois democracy in France bears the stigmata of personal dictatorship.

The governmental crisis following the elections confirmed this even more strongly. In "free and democratic" elections the voters gave an undisputed majority to the workers parties. This majority has therefore been delegated by the people to rule the country. The Constituent Assembly presumably possesses sovereign powers. But what has actually happened?

In a contest for power de Gaulle challenged the right of the workers parties to decide either the composition or policies of his government. He impudently indicated that he holds himself above the Constituent, above its CP-SP majority, above the democratically manifested will of the people. Is de Gaulle's victorious defiance a mark of bourgeois democracy or of Bonapartism?

De Gaulle's regime does not directly and immediately rest upon the democratic Constituent Assembly or its democratically elected majority but upon the reconstructed professional army, the bureaucracy still staffed with ex-Vichyites and representatives of the banks and trusts, and the police. In the newly-risen MRP it has mobilized a supplementary base among the masses. Moreover, de Gaulle remains dependent upon the Anglo-American imperialists who originally placed him in power. When on December 11 he called upon the American troops to stay in Europe "until peace is secure," he had in mind not only their usefulness as gendarmes of the capitalist counter-revolution in other countries. He counts upon the Anglo-American forces as a reserve to uphold the present precarious "class peace" within France.

The most significant feature of de Gaulle's Bonapartism is its extreme shakiness. All his support on the right would mean very little without the support he receives from the left through the CP-SP leaderships. He could not long maintain his lofty position without their sanction because these parties command the allegiance of the most active class force, the proletariat, and have the bulk of the nation behind them. The actual power therefore resides in the principal working class parties from whom de Gaulle has obtained it at second hand.

That is why the present governmental combination of Bonapartism-plus-democracy is so unstable. The slightest conflict threatens to upset its equilibrium. The momentary show of opposition put up by the Stalinists shook the regime to its foundations. The abyss of civil war opened up before the contending parties. The subsequent capitulation of the Stalinists to de Gaulle cannot obliterate this fact which arose from the objectively revolutionary situation.

Whatever kind of constitution emanates from the Constituent Assembly, this is the *real constitution* of the political regime in France today. In a Bonapartist government covered with a few democratic figleaves Morrow sees a bourgeois democracy in flower. It is evident that not all the "democratic illusions" are in the heads of the French workers.

## Political Trends in France

What are the perspectives of political development in France? Morrow forecasts without reservations the strengthen-

ing of a stable bourgeois democracy within which the masses must shed their democratic illusions before they can become a full-fledged revolutionary force. He leaves out of account the sharpening conflict of the classes which expresses itself on the one hand in de Gaulle's efforts to heighten his personal power and on the other hand in the urge of the workers to escape from capitalist domination and create a government of their own. This conflict may be concealed by cabinet combinations and postponed by parliamentary maneuvers but it cannot be fundamentally resolved except by direct class struggle. The problem of state power has never been settled in any other way, and that is the key question at issue not only in France but throughout Western Europe today.

The representatives of capitalism are seeking to save their society and consolidate their rule by first deceiving and then brutally subjugating the toilers. The Stalinists and Socialists hope to continue their policy of compromise and capitulation within a bourgeois-democratic framework. The Trotskyists must expose the fallacy of such a policy and perspective by teaching the workers that they cannot realize any of their basic economic and political demands except through the conquest of power and the victory of the socialist revolution on a continental scale.

The emergence of a Constituent Assembly or any other democratic institution does not alter this perspective. Even if the French Constituent should give birth to a new Republic, it is doomed in advance to impotence and destruction because it cannot settle a single important problem. Torn by irreconcilable class contradictions, such a Republic could only pave the way for the final showdown between the capitalist counter-revolution and the resurgent proletariat. For this reason, whatever stages intervene and whatever political combinations and groupings may take the helm in France, our analysis and prognosis retains its full validity.

The resolution adopted by the 11th Convention of the SWP last year said:

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 can only be very unstable, short-lived and transitional in character. They will constitute a brief episode in the unfolding 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.

These are the real perspectives arising out of the present critical situation in France and Western Europe. They are based upon the logic of the intensified class struggle, and not upon the false assumption of a progressive amelioration of the social crisis and moderation of class conflict which really lies at the root of Comrade Morrow's glib and unwarranted assurance that Western Europe is irresistibly "evolving toward bourgeois democracy"—and in several countries has already arrived there.

## The Main Danger

Our controversy with Comrade Morrow takes place at a time when other individuals and groups are shouting to the world that the program of the Fourth International has become outmoded, unrealistic, inadequate to cope with the problems of European politics. This is not a new cry and this time too it has produced familiar results. In their quest for a new revela-

tion, the would-be innovators have fallen back upon the tattered formulas of democracy.

Comrade Morrow's "method of democratic demands," sanctified as a panacea for the solution of the manifold problems confronting the European revolutionists, can only help to feed and fortify these revisionist tendencies. But there is a still greater danger. Life for the worker and peasant masses in Europe has become intolerable under the existing capitalist chaos. Having turned to the Stalinist and Socialist parties for a radical way out of their terrible predicament, they are already exhibiting signs of disappointment. The Popular Front coalitions are aggravating the crisis and not alleviating, let alone solving, it.

If the Fourth International should follow Morrow's prescriptions and appear as nothing more than the extreme left-wing of the "democratic front," the advanced workers would find no alternative party to lead them in the coming revolutionary struggles. The masses, bereft of firm revolutionary socialist leadership, could then again become the prey of neo-fascist formations which will demagogically promise to satisfy their social needs by direct action. Such tendencies have already sprung up in Italy and elsewhere.

Only by resolutely adhering to the program of the Fourth International and correctly applying it can the Trotskyists frustrate further disillusionment of this kind and become mass revolutionary parties in Western Europe.

## Facing the New Revolutionary Period in Spain—II

*We publish below the second section of the thesis approved by the Internationalist Communists, Spanish section of the Fourth International, at their conference in May 1945. The first section of the document was printed in the December issue of Fourth International. Translation by Chris Andrews.*

### The POUM, Centrist Party

28) The most genuine centrist Party in the workers' movement, the POUM, undertook to demonstrate in Spain, where a policy leads which tries to merge revolutionary language with centrist formulas, intermediary between the revolution and reformism.

To continually invoke the revolution, and to turn one's back on its needs when they arise, can only lead to alienating the confidence of the masses, to deprive them of leadership, and, what is worse: to deceive people into believing that such a leadership exists.

29) The POUM proclaimed from the mouth of its most typical and best known representative that the Spanish revolution presented the "particular case" of being able to achieve the proletarian dictatorship without the necessity of an insurrection, since the workers' representatives were already in the government of the Generalidad. This position it maintained up until shortly before the May Days. The POUM trampled on the Marxism that it professed and disarmed itself and disarmed the working class in the face of the events which were threatening both the Revolution and its own head.

This characterization of the Spanish revolution, contradicted by the May Days when the masses instinctively sought power, demonstrates the congenital incapacity of centrism to comprehend the tasks and problems of the proletarian revolution.

30) The participation of the POUM in the Popular Front of February 1936 demonstrated that when, forced by the pressure and interests of the masses, it is necessary to pass from the terrain of revolutionary propaganda to actions, centrism shows all its weakness, and falls into the morass of reformism. Far from swimming

against the stream, the POUM saw itself dragged into the infamous bloc of the Popular Front, not by the masses (who were in their turn being forced into this policy) but by the reformist and Stalinist leadership—subscribing to a program which gave substantial support to the maintenance of the capitalist regime.

It was sufficient to have one's ear attuned to the masses in order to realize the revulsion which they felt toward collaboration with the bourgeois republicans, who had condemned the Asturian insurrection. A superficial analysis of the situation at that time would have sufficed to make clear that when the bourgeoisie rushed to substitute elections for repressive methods (Asturias) it was because of the aggravation of the crisis, and a resurgence of the revolutionary movement, which brought forth the Popular Front government as the first violent eruption of the class struggle.

31) Participation in this government was nothing more than the corollary to all its former policy, a policy which led the POUM to agree to the dissolution of the Central Committee of the Catalan Militia, and to the reestablishment of the Catalan Municipal Governments which displaced the local Revolutionary Committees in the Catalan region.

The dissolution of the Committees was agreeable to the traditional leaders of the Spanish proletariat and their policy of maintaining the bourgeois Republic. This counter-revolutionary policy was aided by the POUM leadership by its endorsement of these first measures of the reestablishment of the state apparatus.

32) The policy of the POUM towards the CNT was no more brilliant and was impregnated with this spirit of accommodation, characteristic of centrism. Far from attempting to provoke a break

between the masses and their leadership—whose separation was revealed in the May Days—the POUM leaders at all times trailed behind the "non-political" CNT government officials, in whom they sought a bulwark to protect themselves against the blows of Stalinist repression.

The counter-revolutionary offensive of Stalinism could not be stopped except by mobilizing the workers and peasants, including the "syndicalists," with revolutionary slogans. The POUM preferred the policy of adjusting themselves to the anarcho-syndicalist leadership.

33) The POUM policy in relation to the trade union problem was disclosed in its worthlessness before the Revolution of 1936 with the setting up of the FOUS. Instead of persevering in propaganda for trade union unity and for the reinclusion in the CNT of the excluded trade unions, the POUM further divided the trade union movement by the establishment of the FOUS—an organization which has disappeared without leaving behind it the slightest trace.

34) To sum up, the failure of the POUM as a party which aspired to be the Party of the Spanish Revolution is at the same time the failure of the false political orientation followed in its last period by the Left Communists (Spanish Section of the International Communist Opposition). From the majority policy of the old Workers and Peasants Bloc, in which confusion vied equally with opportunism, the Spanish revolution could draw no benefit. Only by defeating this policy under the blows of a Bolshevik-Leninist criticism was there hope to make of the POUM a point of departure for the building of the Revolutionary Party. In actuality, the Workers and Peasants Bloc by fusing with the Left Communists only took a small step towards shaking off some of its confusionism. The Left Com-

munists for their part simply took two steps backwards with the fusion, but afterwards never advanced again at all.

35) The origin of this orientation of the old Left Communists has its roots in two historical factors which limited the Fourth International movement in all countries.

Despite its policy of adventurism, and later, of class collaboration, the Spanish Communist Party gathered around itself the nucleus of industrial workers and youth who were moving toward Communism and who saw in it the Party of the USSR and of the October Revolution. Thus they prevented the formation of an authentic revolutionary party.

This reflected the retrogression and the defensive situation in which the revolution found itself in the entire world, causing the Left Communists to become a political nucleus, organized

on the basis of some complex political principles. Its working class composition was small compared to the petty bourgeoisie, intellectuals and students, who unconsciously permitted their methods of life, of work and of thought, alien to Communism, to penetrate into the organization. The abandonment of intransigent struggle against the current, the lack of confidence in its own ideas, characteristics typically petty-bourgeois, all pushed the (Spanish) Left Opposition in spite of the advice and the warnings of the International Opposition, into opportunism with the setting up on an intermediary, centrist base of the POUM.

36) Although the POUM recognized the postulates of Trotskyism in words, thus reflecting the unconscious aspirations of the masses, in the arena of deeds the POUM leaders broke with these principles and adhered to organizations

on the international field that represented an obstacle to the building of the World Party of the Revolution.

The London Bureau, heterogeneous merger of centrist groups, was where the POUM took refuge, fleeing from Trotskyism, that is to say, from a true internationalist program. On the other hand, their adherence to the other hybrid conglomeration, the "Workers International Front against Imperialist War," constituted in 1939, and which proposed to struggle against the world conflagration, proved the incapacity of revolutionary centrism, which separated into two distinct parts the struggle against imperialist war and the struggle for the proletarian revolution.

The political impotence of the London Bureau as well as that of its creation is the destiny that is reserved for centrism when great events appear (imperialist war and the revolutionary crisis).

## The Crisis of the Franco Dictatorship and the New Revolutionary Period

37) Naturally, the Franco regime has not been able to provide any stable solution for the chronic crisis of capitalism and of the Spanish bourgeoisie. All the counter-revolutionary forces (the bourgeoisie, army, church), which completely supported the military rebellion, were able to conquer the proletariat, paralyzed by its traditional bureaucratic leadership. In spite of the favorable economic conjuncture that the international situation and their neutrality made available to them, they could not succeed in placing Spanish economy upon a solid base.

This country "which was going to rebuild itself" has seen on the contrary an increase in forced unemployment, ridiculous salary levels, the ruin of complete layers of the petty-bourgeoisie and the disorientation and growing apathy of the bourgeoisie themselves.

38) Notwithstanding the revival of production, especially in the metallurgical and mining industries, brought about by the war demands of the belligerent countries, working class unemployment continues without being reabsorbed and the cost of living increases in greater proportion each day.

Franco's neutrality and all his plans of economic autarchy have been transformed into greater dependency upon foreign capital, to which Franco must turn in an attempt to ease the crisis. Exports, however, have not come to represent an actual economic counterweight capable of permitting the real equalizing of the balance of trade.

39) The Franco regime, by smashing the workers' movement, has thereby accomplished the tasks of a Fascist regime. All its present policies against the predominance of the Falange with the aim of subordinating and integrating it under the leadership of the military, as well as the projects for restoration of the monarchy and "democratization" of the dictatorship, reveal the bourgeoisie's need to "find a way out" of the situation, characterized by the decomposition of the regime and the international rise of the revolution. It is unnecessary to say that the bourgeoisie, while wishing to discharge Franco, understands the necessity of clinging to the Army, the

only guarantee against a thunderous overthrow of the State apparatus. The bourgeoisie seek a way of replacing Franco through the expedient of some other governmental combination essentially supported upon the Army. This bourgeois perspective fits into the general perspectives of Anglo-American imperialism.

40) What makes it necessary to replace the Franco regime is the fact that the present situation is not being resolved but that the materials for a new revolutionary explosion are accumulating and becoming aggravated, even though the replacing of Franco offers no guarantee—quite the contrary—against the revolutionary peril. The Spanish bourgeoisie again find themselves in the situation defined by Lenin: "the ruling classes cannot continue to go on living as they have up to now."

### MASSES WILL DEPOSE FRANCO

Only under the pressure of the masses and in order to avoid greater evils will the bourgeoisie turn to the "democratic" solutions which its former servitors are offering. Whatever the official combinations may be, the fall of Franco will be determined by the acuteness of the decomposition of the regime, already begun, and by the entry on the scene of the masses, factors which closely condition each other.

41) The new revolutionary crisis toward which Spain is heading, in spite of any measures the bourgeoisie take or can take, will be marked by the three following characteristics:

a) Its rhythm, depth, and unfolding will not develop separately and in isolation, but will dialectically enlase itself with the world revolutionary crisis, particularly that of Europe.

b) The proletariat and broad layers of the impoverished petty-bourgeoisie of the city and countryside will approach this crisis with democratic illusions much less firmly rooted than those which existed in the initial phases of the revolution of 1931. The whole series of lessons and experiences, more or less assimilated since then, have educated and disillusioned them.

c) The development of the revolution will not follow a simple and direct line, but a great num-

ber of zig-zags and ebbs, of great complexity.

d) The absence of a revolutionary Party, known to the masses, linked to their struggles and experiences, is still a factor of great weight.

e) The immense experience the Spanish workers have lived through will not make them spontaneously advance, however, to the revolutionary Marxist position. That advance will have to be made through new struggles and new experiences.

### NO STRAIGHT ROAD

42) Different facts indicate that the new revolutionary period which will open in Spain will not be a simple, schematic and automatic progression from the Franco dictatorship to the proletarian revolution. One can predict, on the contrary, a development and a succession of advances, retreats, partial actions, combined developments which will test the leadership capacity of the revolutionary party.

The party will have to adapt its tactics with great flexibility to these developments in the situation. It will need to know how to conduct an orderly retreat as well as an audacious attack. Without abandoning one iota of its revolutionary principles, the revolutionary leadership will have to avoid all simple repetition of the "sacred principles," all tendency to a sterile sectarianism which in such a period is the principal danger for a revolutionary party.

43) It is probable that the new revolutionary crisis will recapitulate very rapidly the rich experience of the past and that it will accelerate the rhythm of the revolutionary radicalization of vast layers of the workers and peasants. But this first wave is destined not to reach its goal, precisely because of the lack of a potent revolutionary party, firmly rooted in the masses. The strategy of the bourgeoisie is conditioned by its determination to prevent this revolutionary crystallization. Its policy is naturally based not on a return to 1936, but upon the establishment of a new military dictatorship which should cautiously open the door for "the reconciliation" of the Spanish people.

But the first revolutionary wave, even while

not achieving its goal—the taking of power by the proletariat—will cut openly across the plans of the bourgeoisie. The events in the other European countries will intimately influence the rhythm of the Spanish revolutionary developments. The role played by Stalinism in Europe will also be evidenced in Spain where its policy of class collaboration can still refurbish the anarchist shield, which hides its reformist content behind “revolutionary” phrases.

44) In this complex development of the revo-

lutionary crisis, wherein the bourgeoisie will try to maintain its domination by economic and political concessions, aided by the policy of the Stalinists, reformists, and anarchists, it is probable that situations will appear in which the democratic slogans and the transitional slogans (republic, constituent assembly, freedom of the press, speech and assembly, dissolution of the Army, etc.), skillfully combined with the slogans for the arming of the masses and with systematic propaganda for the whole program

of expropriation of the bourgeoisie, will play an important part in the formation and expansion of the influence of the revolutionary party.

45) Similarly, situations will be produced in which it would be fatal for the revolutionary party to fossilize itself around such slogans when the situation demands a rapid and audacious transition of our policies, placing in first rank the struggle for the complete program of the proletarian revolution, the seizure of power by the working class.

## The Working Class Leadership at the Present Moment

46) The bureaucratic leadership of the traditional working class organizations mould their policies upon the plan of softening the shock of the fall of Franco, wishing to make history retreat to the date of the 14th of April. This policy of betrayal clashes with the instinctive aspirations of the rank and file. Their discontent shows itself in a great confusion, which grows to the degree that the revolutionary party is not present. In the CNT, in the PSOE (Socialist Party), in the Communist Party, in the POUM, internal struggles, cleavages, and embryonic splits are on the order of the day.

47) While the reformist bureaucracy busily strives to return to their positions under the Republic, in the ranks of the Socialist Party voices are rising of elements that reject this policy as insufficient. However, they apparently identify themselves with the rest of the Party under the sign of opposition to the maneuvers and attempts at hegemony by the Stalinists, such as the *Union National*, whose existence definitely strengthens the reformists of the PSOE.

48) The fact that the Social Democratic leaders, who in the past led opposing tendencies, today find themselves united in the policy of collaboration, does not mean that the differences have been liquidated in the rank and file of the Party. The opposition to the *Union National* by the reformist bureaucracy is not so much determined by the contradictions on the national scale as by those which exist between Anglo-American imperialism and the USSR. The anti-Stalinism common to reformists of every kind is not based upon a revolutionary position. It is purely and simply anti-Communism and consequently the taking of a position with reference to the possible future imperialist aggression against the USSR.

49) The possibility of a come-back by Prieto in the ranks of the Socialist Party, as a conciliatory—and anti-proletarian—figure, can count on the full support of foreign capitalism and of a considerable part of the Spanish bourgeoisie. For them, the “Prieto solution” is a suitable solution in the events which will follow the fall of the Franquistas. The anti-Stalinism of Prieto can combine in itself the different currents of the Party—currents among the bureaucrats—and could also obtain the support of the anarchist leaders and the POUM.

50) The policy of the *Union National* carried out by the Communist Party has placed it within the framework of the policy carried out by Mos-

cow in the different European countries, and of which mention has already been made in the course of this thesis. Today, as well as yesterday, Stalinism seeks in Spain an ally for the USSR. Its policy of the *Union National*, opposed to that of the Junto of Liberation, has no other perspective than that. The pressure of London and Washington shows itself in Spain as well as in the other spheres of world politics. Consequently, one cannot exclude the hypothesis of new Stalinist turns, withdrawals, and adaptations of policy to the demands of the policies of the imperialist allies.

51) The influence of the Communist Party in Spain is less than in other countries, France, for example. Its market value as a brake upon the revolution has a limited importance. From this fact flow its desperate efforts to reach an agreement with the most reactionary layers that would permit it to raise itself into an instrument of counter-revolution, in exchange for a possible Spanish-Soviet Pact.

This action and orientation of Stalinism makes its most class-conscious militants feel more and more separated from the leadership. The prestige and influence of the USSR, the absolute lack of democracy in the country, and above all, the absence of a real revolutionary Party in the Spanish scene, causes the most advanced militants still to remain in the ranks of the Communist Party.

52) Jesus Hernandez' break with the Communist Party assumes its real significance in the evolution of a part of the Stalinist bureaucracy which is starting to leave the tutelage of Moscow, not in order to join in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, but in order to place themselves directly at the service of a section of the Spanish bourgeoisie and of world imperialism. Nothing else could be expected from Jesus Hernandez who played a pre-eminent role in the counter-revolutionary politics of Stalinism before, during, and after the Civil War. In the struggles that may develop between the Stalinist leadership and Jesus Hernandez, it is not excluded that we shall see him described as a Trotskyist. Nobody will accept such a coarse slander. The principal preoccupation of Hernandez has been precisely to differentiate himself from Trotskyism. That is to say: from the interests of the proletarian revolution. This movement emerging from Stalinism will not even reach the level of a centrist party, despite its apparent evolution in that direction. It will regroup, in

a transitory manner, so to speak, the proletarian part of the Communist Party. It does not hold any perspective of long life.

53) The strength of a revolutionary party lies, among other things, in its capacity to enrich itself with the lessons of its own wounds and errors. That is not the case with the POUM. The opportunist, Catalonian petty-bourgeois current, inherited from the loose group which called itself “Workers and Peasants Bloc,” has exposed itself completely in the present crisis of the POUM. The right wing faction seeks to abandon Marxism entirely, orienting itself toward the building of a Catalan reformist Party (Socialist Movement of Catalonia) and towards a full integration in bourgeois politics (adhesion to “Catalonian Solidarity”).

54) This orientation clashes violently with the sentiments of the worker militants that adhered to the POUM in the belief that party was a revolutionary Marxist formation. But this proletarian current was not able to find the necessary leadership in the actions and orientation of the POUM's left-wing, which today centers all its activity in defending and rebuilding the traditional POUM. That is to say, the hybrid intermediary policies which from 1936 to 1939 showed not only their impotence, but also the injury these intermediary centrist formations can inflict in a revolution as an obstacle to the formation of a true revolutionary leadership. The POUM left wing has not been able to comprehend the fundamentally false character of all its previous policy, neither on the plane of Spanish politics nor on the plane of international working class politics. Consequently, it proposes to continue in the same way.

In the political documents of this left wing, the perspective outlined is that of the restoration of the Republic and the workers' conquests. The Spanish Revolution, it is added, impelled by its three essential forces (the workers, the peasants, and the nationalities), will be a “democratic-socialist” Revolution. It is then not a question of a revolution, proletarian in content, in its organic form, of the political hegemony of that class which is fundamentally revolutionary, that resolves the problems still pending from the democratic bourgeois revolution, but of a revolution impelled by its *three essential forces*, and unfolding itself within the framework of the republic.

(To be continued)

## Inside the Fourth International

### Holland

*De Rode October*, weekly organ of the Committee of Revolutionary Marxists (CRM), Dutch section of the Fourth International, is in its fourth year. Having appeared illegally under the Nazi occupation, it is now being published legally and was recently enlarged from four to six pages.

In its main articles and editorials the paper concentrates on the three major political problems immediately facing the Dutch workers, which are also expressed in the papers' main slogans scattered over its pages in heavy print: "Indonesia loose from Holland now!"; "Immediate Elections!"; "No annexation of German Territory!"

Together with a group of Indonesians, who were expelled from the now conciliatory Perhimpoenan Indonesia (Indonesian Society) because of their stand for absolute independence, our comrades have taken the initiative in founding the Anti-Imperialist Committee of Struggle.

This committee has issued leaflets to the Dutch workers and to the Rotterdam dockworkers and sailors, appealing to them to support the Indonesians by refusing to load or man ships destined for Indonesia.

*De Rode October* proves how the Stalinists, while ostensibly opposing Dutch suppression of the independence struggle, are playing a double game. In Holland there are no Stalinist-led strikes of dockworkers in support of the Indonesians, although it is known that the Stalinists have considerable influence in the EVC, The Unity Trade-Union Center, which led the recent dock strikes in Rotterdam for increased wages. The Stalinists openly state that they stand by their withdrawal in 1937 of the slogan "Indonesia Loose from Holland," because they wish to maintain the "tie" between Holland and Indonesia. For this reason they favor Queen Wilhelmina's promise of "independence" for Indonesia, i.e., keeping it within the framework of the Dutch Commonwealth.

The question of immediate elections is a timely one in Holland. We quote from an article in *De Rode October* of October 27:

"There is in Holland a government which claims to exercise its powers in the name of the Dutch people. It claims to be democratic, but the Dutch people have

never had a chance to express their confidence or their distrust. The Schermerhorn government came without ever having been confronted by a representative body of the Dutch people. It takes important decisions. It decides whether workers can strike and what wages they will receive. It decides whether elections will be held or not. Whether Indonesia will be independent or not. What is this government? Where does it come from?"

"The Gerbrandy government (in London during the occupation) was not popular with the Dutch people and the opposition assumed ever sharper forms. After the German capitulation the promise that this government would resign was kept. A more representative and progressive government would be formed. It was decided in higher regions to launch the Schermerhorn-Drees government, a supposedly democratic and progressive government. The face of this government was formed by the Social Democrat Drees and the 'personalistic' Socialist Schermerhorn. But to every face there is the back of the head and the brain. And these were formed in the present government by a large number of representatives of trusts and banks."

This is the government which refuses elections with the excuse that there is chaos in the election registers. *De Rode October* pointed out that the rationing system could be used as the basis of emergency elections. This was borne out by the National Advisory Committee, a national body representing bourgeois and reformist organizations which rejected the reasons given by the government and demanded council elections in December and elections for the lower house in April of next year.

Our comrades do not want to see the lower house elections postponed until next April; they urge the workers to demand immediate elections. They point out that the government is afraid of elections this winter, when the mood of the workers will be most militant due to cold and hunger. The government cannot now afford elections because it needs a free hand for the suppression of the Indonesian masses. What is more there is the threat of the new rising trade-union organization, the EVC, which is not playing the game of the government like the old NVV.

The government clearly wishes to wait until the population, which has travelled

further left, returns through apathy or discouragement to their old reactionary parties. Minister Drees brazenly said so in a speech at the party conference of the Social Democrats: "Large sections of the population, especially from the old church parties have gone adrift. All this must simmer out before the people is capable of elections. . . ."

*De Rode October* carries a number of regular features. The back page is almost completely devoted to a feature called the Free Tribune. Its original function was to have readers send in pieces exposing conditions in the factories and government bodies. But frequently readers raise questions of a wider political character. One issue carried a discussion on the defense of the Soviet Union. In another a Communist Party member who had attended a Trotskyist meeting urged our comrades to enter the CPN and band together with the opposition inside it to get the party to return to a revolutionary course.

*De Rode October* is a lively paper. It deals with many minor events which loom large in the day-to-day life of the Dutch workers. It ridicules the benevolent suggestion of the government that the workers who can't make ends meet should start saving for textiles which will be on the market in the summer of 1946. It speaks up for the Jews who still have not reacquired their rights, for the war victims (mostly women) whose allowances have been cut to the bone, for housewives' committees protesting high prices. In a word, the paper speaks with the authentic voice of the oppressed, with humor and indignation which is always fresh.

In several of the issues there are appeals for the formation of a revolutionary party. Our comrades address themselves to revolutionists outside the organization, to the opposition within the ultra-left "Spartacus," and to the oppositionists in the Communist party. They have opened the pages of *De Rode October* for discussions on this important question. According to our latest information the Trotskyists are planning a conference soon during which they hope the Committee of Revolutionary Marxists will be dissolved and the Revolutionary Communist Party of Holland founded. They are also planning an enlargement of the paper, a theoretical magazine *Permanente Revolutie*, and general expansion of the organization.

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