

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A MONTHLY ORGAN OF REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

**The Ludlow Bill for a Popular
War Referendum** By the Editors

**The Socialist Workers Party Is
Founded** By James P. Cannon

**President Roosevelt Faces the
Future** By James Burnham

**The Truth About the Kronstadt
Uprising** By John G. Wright

**Marx and Engels on the Civil
War in America** By George Novack

**The Brandlerites and the 1923
German Uprising** By Leon Trotsky

Book Reviews:

**Sender, Wolfe, Fischer, Souchy,
De Santillan, James, Arnold**

**FEBRUARY 1938
TWENTY CENTS**

At Home

AS WE go to press with the February issue, individual and bundle orders continue to come in for the January number. Regretfully, we cannot fill all the orders, since the first issue is a complete sell-out, despite the fact that January had the largest number of copies ever printed of any issue. Let that be a lesson to you: get your orders in on schedule.

Chicago, directed by the widest-awake agent of all, it appears, Karl Shier, is setting a hot pace. The Youth comrades are especially alert to the need and value of selling THE NEW INTERNATIONAL as widely as possible. Paul Picquet of the Youth is spurring the N.I. work. The bundles of the magazine were distributed to the branches on the day they arrived in Chicago. To date 425 copies have been ordered, "but the Chicago Bureau believes this number can be boosted to 600 copies". Reva Craine, Chicago, thus far tops everybody in subscriptions. It is planned to run several affairs for the benefit of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL specifically. Chicago has started out well. Go, Chicago!

But let's look afar for a moment. From Sydney, Australia, six mail weeks away, the Secretary of the Workers Party, comrade Origlasso, sends in an initial order for 30 copies (others have placed orders too), and comments: "In view of the magazine's previous popularity, we are confident that the sales will grow. Our payments will be regular. We await with impatience THE NEW INTERNATIONAL'S appearance."

London, England. Margaret Johns, secretary of the Militant Group: "Send 120 copies to begin with; we will undertake to cover other points in England." Wake up, America! A London bookshop places an order for fifty copies, pays for them in advance, and says, "Pleased to hear of the re-publication of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL."

Capetown, South Africa. From a bookshop: "I saw a notice in the *Socialist Appeal* that THE NEW INTERNATIONAL is coming to life again. Hooray! Please send me 20 copies of first issue until further notice."

From various spots in Canada: Vancouver, British Columbia, "Am sure the magazine will go over here and it won't be long before we double the order [ordered 25]. . . Hope that THE NEW INTERNATIONAL grows and prospers, and if it comes up to the same high standard as its predecessor, there can be no doubt as to its success." . . . The Toronto literature agent: "We are pleased with the contents of the first issue and glad to see THE NEW INTERNATIONAL published again. It fills a long-felt want in the revolutionary movement."

In New York the magazine got off to a fine start also and the N.I. is selling well on newsstands, book-

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shops and in the Party and Youth branches. A large number of copies were sold outside the hall at the mass meeting of the International Commission of Inquiry on the Moscow Trials. Branches are planning subscription drives during the months of January and February. Comrade Mary Green of the Upper West Side Branch has been the most successful sub-getter so far in New York, and Hilda Ageloff of the same Branch has been runner-up. New York will soon put on speed and then the names of excellent sub-getters will pile up.

A Detroit subscriber encloses a check of \$5.00 as a contribution and pledges \$2.00 monthly. Let our readers emulate him by making pledges for the maintenance of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

An ex-class war prisoner, Norman Mini, Sacramento, Calif., subscribes and hopes, too, that "THE NEW INTERNATIONAL turns out a bigger success, even, than did the previous one". We think it can; with the co-operation and support of our readers. The Berkeley, Calif., Y.P.S.L. pledges to push the N.I. to the fullest extent.

The first issue of the N.I. got a good start. We're sold out. But help us build the circulation still higher. More bundle orders and prompt payment of bills, literature agents. AND SUBS, SUBS, SUBS! Send them in; we're equipped to handle any amount. It's cheaper that way, and a subscription is insurance that anyone who wants to read the N.I. will get a copy. Can't depend on picking it up on a stand or through an agent. The magazines sell out too fast.

Since the January column was written, orders flowed in from many localities. The St. Paul, Minn., literature agent has sent in a number of subscriptions and comrade H. Geller says further: "Am sure that

every member will subscribe, and we also have quite a few contacts in line and are waiting for first issue to sign them up."

Newark, N. J., has done very well with sales of the magazine. Disposed of 70 of the first issue, and also sent in contributions on a monthly pledge fund started for THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. Newark comrades are wide-awake to the need and needs of a bona fide publication of revolutionary Marxism. Boston, Mass., too, has made a monthly pledge. Other cities, please follow suit.

Orders have come in from Cleveland, New Haven, Lynn, Toledo, Indianapolis and other points. Columbus will undertake a subscription drive, saying, "I do not know of any other literature that can be sold as readily as the N.I." Akron, Ohio, ordered a large bundle of the magazine and has been busy after subscriptions. Allentown, Pa., comrades write, "We are trying to get subscribers for the N.I. though most of our members are unemployed." A McKeesport, Pa., subscriber says that "THE NEW INTERNATIONAL must be made the classical magazine of today. I am alone here and have to work under the greatest of difficulty, but am pounding away to get response."

The foregoing speaks for itself. There is a solid base for such a publication as THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

But it needs, besides bundle orders and subscribers, DONATIONS in order to maintain itself. Run with the greatest economy, THE NEW INTERNATIONAL nevertheless is not yet able to sustain itself through circulation income only. When you have read "At Home" and this issue, won't you proceed to send us a check or money order to help sustain THE NEW INTERNATIONAL? Thank you—a receipt is enclosed.

THE MANAGER

Notes

SCARCELY launched, we are already confronted with the problem of an annoying limitation of space. In this issue, we were compelled to leave out a number of interesting and important articles. Reluctant to omit any of the more topical articles, we finally decided to hold over an anniversary article on Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin by Max Shachtman, dealing with their differences above all on the organizational question. In addition, we were unable to print an article on "The Frame-Up That Failed" by Carlos Hudson, dealing with the attempt of the Stalinists to implicate the revolutionary trade unionists of Minneapolis in the recent murder of Patrick Corcoran, leading officer of the Teamsters' Union.

Beginning with this issue, we inaugurate "A Review of the Month" which will appear regularly hereafter.

We call attention also to the beginning we have made in the field of foreign collaboration with the letter from Paris by Alfred Rosmer. He will continue to keep readers of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL informed on the important developments in France, and all the indications are that there will be many of them in the months to come.

On hand, for publication in the coming number, is a thoroughgoing analysis of the new position on the situation in the Soviet Union taken by Brandler and Thalheimer in their recent pamphlet on the subject. Our analysis is made by another collaborator abroad who has been added to our list, Walter Held of Norway.

Also planned for speedy publication is a study of the economic and political situation in Mexico, next to the United States the most important country in the Western Hemisphere. It is hoped that a good deal of clarity will be introduced into the confusion created by the conflicting reports coming from Mexico about the Cárdenas régime and the attitude towards it of the trade unions, the Stalinists and the adherents of the Fourth International.

Scheduled for publication is an article by Arne Swabeck, known to old readers of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, dealing with the trade union movement in the United States as it is related to the shifting political scene.

As for discussions, we have heard in reply to our last month's invitation to the anarchists, from two men well known to the anarchist movement: Guy Aldred of Glasgow, Scotland, and T. H. Bell of Los Angeles, Calif. Their contributions will appear together with a reply in which our standpoint is presented. We suggest meanwhile a close reading of J. G. Wright's analysis in this issue of the Kronstadt uprising of 1921, which constitutes such a large part of the anarchist criticism of Bolshevism.

THE EDITORS

A Review of the Month

Five Years of the New Deal: From Crisis to Profits to Depression—Roosevelt Meets with the Economic Royalists — The New Budget: The Largest War Appropriations in America's Peace History
 The Revealing Debate Over the Ludlow Resolution for a Popular Referendum on War — The Totalitarian Arguments of the Defenders of Democracy — The Revolutionary Position on the Ludlow Bill—The "Robinson-Rubens" Case

FIVE YEARS OF THE New Deal have proved President Roosevelt to be a zealous and effective executive of American capitalism. If the interests of the latter have compelled him to encroach from time to time upon the preserves of an individual capitalist or even a group of capitalists, his course has nevertheless been dictated by a concern to restore the prosperity of the ruling class and to save its social régime. Thus far he has succeeded in fulfilling his task, a fact which is not in the least nullified by the criticisms levelled at him in the past by the big industrialists of the country. Their grumbings are an essential part of the political mechanics by means of which the Administration functions and is controlled. Their complaints about what they consider the unnecessarily large overhead costs expended in the process of maintaining their profits and their rule—costs represented by Roosevelt's social reforms, governmental spending and the like—are a necessary background for the President's social demagoguery and an anticipatory check upon "excesses".

In this connection, the figures recently made public by Assistant Attorney-General Robert H. Jackson are quite interesting. In his address of December 29 before the American Political Science Association, this Presidential spokesman asked opponents from the right to temper their criticism in light of the significant "profit record of 'big business' under the 'coöperative' Administration of President Hoover and the 'hostile' Administration of President Roosevelt". The estimates presented by Mr. Jackson are contained in the following table:

INDUSTRY	Profit (+) and Deficit (—)	
	1932	1936
<i>Building materials:</i>		
United States Gypsum Company.....	+\$1,599,416	\$5,328,114
Johns-Manville	— 2,829,062	4,188,787
Certain-Teed Products	— 1,600,077	—791,550*
<i>Glass:</i>		
Pittsburgh Plate Glass	— 60,737	15,321,834
Owens-Illinois Company	+ 2,067,886	10,099,131
<i>Mail-order houses:</i>		
Montgomery Ward	— 5,686,784	13,527,310
		(Jan. 31, 1936)
Montgomery Ward		20,198,914
		(Jan. 31, 1937)
Sears Roebuck	— 2,543,651	21,519,218
		(Jan. 29, 1936)
Sears Roebuck		30,660,119
		(Jan. 1, 1937)
<i>Chemicals:</i>		
E. I. du Pont de Nemours Company....	+26,234,779	89,884,450
American Cyanamid Company	+ 349,725	4,454,930
Monsanto Chemical Company	+ 1,012,698	4,605,593
<i>Communications:</i>		
Western Union	— 842,596	7,200,000
<i>Heavy machinery:</i>		
Fairbanks Morse	— 2,547,231	2,252,941
Briggs Manufacturing Company.....	— 1,798,470	10,411,076
Worthington Pump Company	— 1,668,287	248,497
Mesta Machine Company	+ 327,871	4,266,964

<i>Farm implements:</i>		
International Harvester	— 7,582,879	29,760,372
J. I. Case Company.....	— 2,611,082	3,083,281
Deere & Co.	— 5,167,104	11,601,306
<i>Textiles:</i>		
American Woolen Company	— 7,269,822	1,929,983
Ludlow Manufacturing Associates	— 400,632	1,918,845
<i>Amusements:</i>		
Radio-Keith-Orpheum	—10,695,503	2,485,911
<i>Steel:</i>		
United States Steel Corporation.....	—71,175,705	50,583,356
Crucible Steel Company	— 3,613,616	3,120,356
National Steel Corporation	+ 1,662,920	12,541,842
Jones & Laughlin Corporation	— 7,910,149	4,129,600
<i>Other metals:</i>		
Anaconda Copper Mining Company.....	—16,855,870	15,881,830
American Smelting & Refining Co.....	— 4,506,175	17,131,036
<i>Motors:</i>		
Chrysler Corporation	—11,254,232	62,110,543
General Motors Corporation	+ 165,000	238,705,193
<i>Oils:</i>		
Phillips Petroleum Company.....	+ 775,766	17,875,489
Sun Oil Company	+ 4,198,046	7,563,554
<i>Electrical supplies:</i>		
Westinghouse Elec.	— 8,615,398	15,099,291
	*Deficit.	

Roosevelt Meets the Economic Royalists

WHILE THE PRESENT Administration has helped to lift American capitalism out of the depths reached during the regime of the Great Engineer, it has not succeeded in abolishing the iron laws governing the capitalist mode of production or its inevitable economic consequences. It did not and could not set itself such a task. The income of the masses has not kept pace with the rise in the national income, as a result of which the *social* standard of living of the workers has not been raised but lowered. Nor has the purchasing power of the masses kept pace with the increased productivity of labor. Like every other boom, therefore, the Roosevelt boom has only served as a prelude for a sharper crisis. The present "recession", which may be succeeded by a brief rise before breaking out into a full-blooded crisis, only shows how unstable is the economic equilibrium attained under Roosevelt. The apologists for Roosevelt who, like the eminent economists of the Communist party, explain away the familiar phenomenon of capitalist production which re-appeared a few months ago with the precipitate fall in securities on the Stock Exchange and was immediately accompanied by mass lay-offs in industry and the launching of a wage-cut drive, by reference to a "sit-down strike" by "wicked" capitalists, are apologists for capitalism itself.

Roosevelt's real concern was immediately shown by his conferences with gentlemen who bore a suspicious resemblance to those Economic Royalists and Tories against whom he has so valiantly taken the oratorical field in the past. When Mr. Lamot du Pont,

one of the outstanding Princes in the House of America's Economic Royalty, declared darkly to the Senate Committee on Unemployment on January 10 that "it is evident that we are in a pronounced recession"; when he added in a none too indirect manner that "industry" chafes under the capital gains tax, the undistributed profits tax, big taxes in general and, above all, the lack of "industrial peace", he was only suggesting the broad outlines of the coming Administration program. That his was no isolated voice was shown by the echo of his proposals in the statement presented to Roosevelt by his Business Advisory Council.

"Renewed prosperity" demands a continual shifting of the growing tax burden upon the shoulders of the middle classes and the workers. It demands "labor responsibility" which, translated into English, means tearing all the bones of militancy and independence out of the labor movement and reducing it to a gelatinous mass easily molded to conform with the pattern of capitalism's interests. The fact that John L. Lewis is such an indispensable part of Roosevelt's conferences with Big Business shows how essential to capitalism is class collaboration in the labor movement and what a disastrous danger to the working class is represented by the present trade union bureaucracy and its policies. The moment when the trade union movement must be more vigilant than ever in defending itself and the living standards of the workers from capitalist attack, is precisely the one chosen by the leadership of both the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O. for closer collaboration with the arch-representatives of labor's enemies.

The New Roosevelt Budget

THE BUDGET SUBMITTED by the President shows the direction in which the government is moving. For the fiscal year of 1939, estimated receipts from income taxes are reduced by almost \$280,000,000 from the estimate for the preceding year—generous relief for the ruling class. Expenditures for public works for 1939 total only \$619,500,000, the lowest figure since 1934, more than a quarter of a billion dollars less than last year and almost half a billion dollars less than the year before. Direct unemployment relief—in a period of growing unemployment—is drastically reduced to \$35,900,000, little more than one-fourth of last year's allotment and barely one-tenth of what was spent in the fiscal year of 1933, when Roosevelt took office. Work relief expenditures for 1939 are lower than the 1938 figure by almost a third of a billion dollars, and expenditures for the C. C. C. are reduced by more than one-fourth.

At the same time, the war (euphemistically called "defense") budget is to be the largest in the post- or pre-war history of the United States. When Herbert Hoover declared that "We are leading the arms race", he was merely stating a fact. In his budget proposals on January 5, Roosevelt asked for appropriations for the Army, Navy and the Marine Corps for the fiscal year of 1939 totalling the stupendous sum of \$1,010,835,187, an increase of more than \$77,000,000 over 1938 and of more than the \$157,000,000 odd actually spent in 1937. In addition to the regular budget, Roosevelt is expected to demand shortly a supplementary \$125,000,000 for the navy, since there has not been, after January 1, 1938, when the London Naval Treaty expired, any theoretical limitation upon American naval expansion. Two weeks after his budget message, the House Appropriations Committee recommended an appropriation of \$553,266,494 in reporting the annual Naval Supply Bill for the year ending June 30, 1939, the largest bill since 1921 and an increase of \$26,723,186 over current appropriations.

John T. Flynn, the liberal economist, is substantially right when he says in a recent issue of the *New Republic* (Jan. 5, 1938) :

Statement No. 1: The President is preparing to lead the country into a vast program of armament as a means of spending money to avert another depression—houses for the dogs of war rather than the mutts of peace. Statement No. 2: He is preparing deliberately to sell to this country a war

scare as a prelude to the armament program. Statement No. 3: He is attempting to shift the psychological reactions of the nation to the patriotic motif in order to distract attention from the disintegrating economic situation. Statement No. 4: One reason for this is to build up the attitude embodied in the slogan "Stand by the President"—a trap into which the inept Mr. Landon leaps head first. This is to be the President's chief resistance to the clamor for investigations of his régime which will presently become insistent.

But more than all this is involved. The larger "defense" budget is not merely calculated to avert a depression and to achieve that one-sided prosperity which England has attained* with her more than seven billion dollar five-year armaments campaign. Nor is the whole story told by saying that the "war scare" was but a prelude to the armament program.

The American bourgeoisie, like its Chief Executive, knows it must expand beyond its frontiers, enslave the world, or collapse after a series of strangulating crises. Not only is its foreign trade inadequate but from the standpoint of colonial power and spheres of influence abroad the United States belongs rather among the "have-nots" than among the "haves". Given the present partition of the world market, the eyes of American imperialism gaze longingly at the Far East. Japan's conquest of China means not only the end of the latter's doubtful national independence—but the closing of a door leading to a great field for American economic expansion. Sooner or later, the United States will speak a decisive language to Japan (and eventually to England!)—the language of arms—in settling the question of mastery of the Pacific and the Far East. That is why there is not merely a "war scare" but a real and increasingly acute war danger. Neither the Soviet Union, for its part, nor Great Britain, is prepared to engage Japan in conflict, for both know that the conclusive force in the Far East is, or will be, the United States. And the latter, quite conscious of its imperialist interests and objectives, is deliberately preparing to display that force.

That is the reason for the joint manœuvres of the Philippine Islands' Commonwealth Army and the Philippine Department of the United States Army (a total of some 50,000 armed men) which began on January 10 and were to last two weeks. That is the reason why three American cruisers are going, first, to Sydney on the Sesquicentennial of the founding of the Australian Commonwealth, and then, to attend the ceremonies at the opening of the new British naval base at Singapore on February 14. That is the reason why, for two months after that, the United States will have the largest naval manœuvres in its history, over an area of several million square miles of the Eastern Pacific, westward from California to Hawaii and Midway and southward from Alaska and the Aleutians to Samoa, with about 175 men-of-war, 500 fighting planes, and about 50,000 to 60,000 men.

It is absurd to think that the war budget, or the navy, or its manœuvres are planned for the "defense" of the soil of the United States from an "aggressor". Leaving aside for a moment the utterly false division of imperialist bandits into "aggressors" and "defenders" (scholars all over the world, poring over documents for more than twenty years, are still at odds or uncertain about who "started" the World War), there is no responsible personage who seriously believes that the United States is liable to a real danger of invasion from a foreign power. Hugh S. Johnson has stated that "There is no great power that could invade continental United States". Major-General Douglas McArthur has called an attack on American ports impossible. The late Admiral William

*A glance at England reveals the delights which Roosevelt has in store for American munitions and associated manufacturers. Although the then Minister of War, Duff Cooper, stated in the House of Commons (May 6, 1937) that "I am convinced that there are no undue profits being made out of arms in this country" and added (on May 26, 1937) that "Of all the disgusting features of war, perhaps there is nothing so loathsome to decent-minded people as the making of vast profits out of the sufferings associated with it", a number of very "loathsome" profit figures are already available. Profits of Hawker Siddeley Aircraft jumped from £502,920 in 1935-1936 to £783,438 in 1936-1937. In the same period, Short Brothers, marine aircraft, increased their profits by 50 percent, to £133,976. John Thornycroft and Company, shipbuilders, announced profits of £125,502 in the last year—125 percent higher than the previous year. United Steel Companies showed an increase from £1,545,278 to £2,075,322. (The English pound sterling is almost exactly \$5.00 U.S. at the present time.)

S. Sims said that no foreign power or group of powers could operate across the oceans and stand a chance in combat with forces operating from the home base. Smedley D. Butler is authority for the statement that an invading nation would have to bring over a million men and use 7,500,000 tons of ocean-going craft to transport supplies, whereas the whole merchant marine of the world, including that of the U. S., totals only 3,500,000 tons. Even Mauritz Hallgren, an adversary of the Ludlow amendment and scarcely suspect of "Trotskyism", basing himself on the records of the American Expeditionary Forces, writes in the *New York Times* (Dec. 26, 1937) that "an expedition of a hundred thousand men would require a transport fleet not including auxiliary vessels and naval escort of a hundred and twenty to two hundred ships. It would take a minimum of six weeks to land such an expedition".

By its very nature, the American navy is an instrument for the protection of imperialist interests; the increased naval budget is a means of assuring aggressive imperialist expansion, particularly in the Far East. And whoever endorses it, openly or tacitly—as is the case with the Stalinists, who have not uttered one single word of criticism of the Roosevelt armament budget, not one!—is pledging his support in advance to the coming war of imperialist conquest by the United States.

Moreover, whoever supports the policy enunciated by Roosevelt in his "Quarantine the aggressor" address in Chicago, is supporting in reality the policy of keeping a foreign imperialist pirate in check so that the treasures of his victim may become the booty of "our own" imperialist pirate. Whoever hails Roosevelt's departure from "isolationism" as a welcome step towards "internationalism", as the launching of a "democratic" crusade of the "peace-loving" powers against the "fascist aggressors", is enlisting in reality in the army of conquest of the American ruling class. Its pretensions to sublimity of motive and objective are mendacious and deceitful. If Captain Kidd had quit his "isolation" policy of exploiting the Spanish Main and sent his marauding galleons to "quarantine" the Algerian pirate "aggressors" off the North African coast, and done it in the noble name of the "Freedom of the Seas", he would have to be written down today by our ardent advocates of "collective security" as one of the most peace-loving and democratic corsairs that ever scuttled a bottom or slit a throat.

The Debate on the Ludlow Bill

THE DEBATE AROUSED BY Representative Louis I. Ludlow's resolution to provide constitutionally for a national referendum before Congress can declare war upon another country, unless the territory of the United States is actually invaded, has been infinitely more revealing than a thousand rolling periods by the President about how "I hate war!" or Jackson Day speeches about "the battle to restore and maintain the moral integrity of democracy".

1. The first observation about the debate is the fact that the Ludlow resolution is overwhelmingly popular among the masses. When Mr. Harry Gannes, in whom moral depravity vies with political duplicity, both of which qualify him as chief Trotsky-baiter of the *Daily Worker*, suggests in his paper (on Jan. 18, 1938) that only the Nazis, the Italian Fascists, the Trotskyists and Lovestoneites lament the defeat of the Ludlow resolution, he is simply indulging a congenital and well-paid proneness to fabrication. Apart from the detail that the "Trotskyists" are not, as he writes, "advocates of the Ludlow amendment", the fact is that the great majority of the people, especially the war-hating, democracy-loving, anti-fascist masses, are supporters of the Ludlow resolution and have nothing but a perfectly well-founded suspicion of its vociferous antagonists, the Stalinists included. A recent poll of the Institute of Public Opinion, which has an impressive record in its field, showed that 72 percent of the American people favored the Ludlow amendment. Numerous large and small pacifist or-

ganizations—the National Council for Prevention of War, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Emergency Peace Campaign, etc.—many of which only yesterday worked elbow to elbow with the Stalinists in their Leagues For or Against One Thing or Another, and are even today scarcely suspect of Nazi influence, are supporting the Ludlow amendment. The International Executive Board of the United Automobile Workers Union, voted unanimously (Stalinists too!) to support the amendment. Similar action has been taken by the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, the National Farmers' Union and countless other organizations.

Furthermore, in the voting in the House on January 10, the progressives of both parties, with few exceptions, voted for the amendment, while the conservatives, the machine-men and the reactionaries, as a rule, voted against it (almost half the Democratic votes against the amendment came from the not very revolutionary Solid South). For the amendment, which Mr. Gannes considers a fascist blow to peace and democracy, were Representatives like Coffee (Wash.), whom the *Daily Worker* has on other occasions called part of "the rising generation who stand for progress". All five Farmer-Labor Congressmen from Minnesota—Bernard, Buckler, Johnson, Kvale, Teigan—whom Hathaway the day before called "the best of the Progressives", voted with the defeated minority. The whole LaFollette Progressive group—Amlie, Boileau, Gehrman, Hull, Sauthoff, Schneider, Withrow (Wisc.) and Havenner (Calif.)—voted the same way; so did Dunn (Penn.), Mrs. O'Day (N. Y.), Biermann (Ia.), Voorhis (Calif.); and with the exception of Maverick (Texas) and Scott (Calif.), so did virtually all the others who work together, more or less, in the House Progressive bloc. Support of the amendment by such accidental figures as Hamilton Fish was given on purely demagogic grounds and need not be taken seriously.

2. On the other hand, the opposition to the proposed amendment was doubly revealing. It not only showed how solidly aligned against it were all the groups of imperialism and reaction, but it also showed that in the question of foreign policy and above all of war, which is so vital and crucial to capitalist imperialism, the profit-hunting bourgeoisie is unanimously prepared to entrust its interests and fate to the present Administration. Mr. Walter Lippmann, who is not quite the most zealous supporter of Roosevelt, puts this point exactly and significantly when he writes in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* (Jan. 8, 1938):

However much opinion may be divided on domestic policies, in regard to American foreign policy there is today a greater unity of opinion than at any time since the end of the World War. . . . The President, who has an instinctive sense of the realities in foreign affairs, will have no difficulty in persuading the people that to increase the strength of the American navy is to take the one most effective means toward preserving the peace.

Against the amendment, and fighting it tenaciously if not with ferocity, stood virtually the entire big bourgeois press of the country. The *New York Times* and its main Washington correspondent Mr. Arthur Krock, returned to the lists time and again. The *New York Herald-Tribune*, organ of the Liberty League, of the Economic Royalists, of the Tories, of Wall Street, of Landon and Hoover, called by the *Daily Worker* "the most embittered organ of fascist-minded Toryism in America", joined hands on this issue with its contemporary near Union Square. Herbert Hoover spoke to the Women's National Republic Club on a nation-wide hook-up against it; Alfred Landon hastened to wire Roosevelt his sentiments of solidarity and expressed his categorical opposition to the amendment; Roosevelt's Cordell Hull and Hoover's Henry L. Stimson united their voices in denunciation; Daniel J. Doherty, National Commander of the American Legion, assailed the amendment and exerted his organization's pressure upon the "veterans' bloc" in the house to defeat it, just as Clarence Hathaway, editor of the *Daily Worker*, announced in his paper that he had exerted pressure on the "progressive bloc" to act likewise.

3. Not only was Roosevelt personally summoned to intervene

with a special message, read in the House by Speaker Bankhead, in order to whip laggards and doubters into line, but a detestable lynch spirit was kindled to gain a majority against the amendment. Representative Celler baldly suggested a Nazi origin for the whole idea. Even the dignified Speaker of the House declared just before the vote:

I think it is reasonable to assume that there are forces in this country—alien influences—that are aiding and abetting the “war referendum” movement to let certain countries in the world believe that this democracy is not standing behind its constitutional rights in national defense. (N. Y. Times, Jan. 8, 1938.)

For a while, the almost forgotten days were significantly back again, the days of 1917 when the gentlest inquiring voice was drowned with the lynch cry: “An agent of the Kaiser!” How eloquently the hysteria forecasts the days ahead, when the next War for Democracy breaks out!

4. The fourth observation about the debate is that all those who have thus far spoken up against the Ludlow amendment, all the supporters of imperialist war—and they range all the way from the Liberty Leaguers through the New Dealers to the Communist party—disclose their awareness that the coming war, which they all rightly regard as inevitable, will not be fought for the defense of American territory from invasion, but will be fought abroad for the defense of American imperialist interests or for their extension into fields now dominated by other powers.

Put tersely by the President in his message to Speaker Bankhead, the argument reads:

Such an amendment to the Constitution as that proposed would cripple any President in his conduct of our foreign relations, and it would encourage other nations to believe that they could violate American rights with impunity. (N. Y. Post, Jan. 10, 1938.)

Or, in expanded form, the argument is presented thus by the Stalinists:

... it would tie the hands of the United States government in striving to achieve already democratically expressed desires of the American people for maintaining peace. It would be an instrument to AID FASCISM by lessening American influence, activity and coöperation in those spheres where fascism was lighting the fires of world war. . . . [Passage of the amendment would mean] To intensify the danger of a world war, by encouraging the fascists . . . to give advance notice to Japan in China and to the fascist interveners in Spain that they could extend their aggression because the American people had diverted their peace efforts from the international sphere. (Daily Worker, Jan. 18, 1938.)

Finally, the statement of Democratic Congressman Sam McReynolds (Tenn.), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, that

the Japanese have got the impression that regardless of what we do or say diplomatically the American people will in no circumstances use force to see that their rights are maintained. (Daily Worker, Dec. 28, 1937.)

The whole argument, on the lips of Landon, Roosevelt and Gannes, is reduced to this: Neither we nor the Japanese have any reason to believe that the American masses will vote for a war; and unless we have the unrestricted power to threaten our enemies with war and to declare it at the proper time, “American rights” (Roosevelt) or our “peace efforts” (Gannes) will be rendered ineffective.

Now, the Ludlow resolution does not pretend to deal with “American rights” in the United States, for Mr. Ludlow provides that in defense of them Congress still has the power to declare war without popular referendum. The only other “rights” of Americans are those presumably existing *abroad*. But what “rights” or interests have the American masses abroad? Do they demand the “right” of American gunboats like the *Panay* to be used to escort the *Meiping*, *Meihsia* and *Melan*, three Standard Oil vessels? Or the right to protect the billions of dollars invested abroad by American capitalism, and used to squeeze profits out of the masses of Europe, Latin America and Asia? Are those the “rights” and interests which Rep. McReynolds proposes to “use

force”, that is, war, in order to protect? They are, for the simple reason that there are no other.

And the struggle against fascism abroad? the Stalinists ask. Yes, that is necessary. But we do not entrust this task to the ruling class of any bourgeois country or to its government or to their wars. The idea cultivated by the Stalinists that the American capitalist class will go to war for the defense of democracy and the curbing of fascism, is a perfidious, fraudulent, corrupting idea, put forth only by paid scribes of imperialism—or of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Only an utterly ignorant person or a noisome scoundrel would say that the bourgeoisie of the U. S. and its government, which, in Latin America alone, are both the props and the masters of a dozen bestial dictatorships, will conduct *any* progressive or democratic war, worthy of the workers’ support, will conduct *any* but a war for plunder and imperialistic power, that is, a reactionary war.

5. The very arguments made by the imperialists, far from being democratic, are distinctly and specifically *totalitarian* in substance. They reduce themselves to this: When we, the bourgeoisie, have decided in favor of war, we want an absolutely united people behind us; we want no criticism, no discussion, no opposition. The “defenders” of democracy against fascism thus begin their crusade with weapons taken right out of the arsenal of fascist totalitarianism!

For example, National Commander Doherty of the American Legion argues that the amendment would be

... productive of dissension and confusion and in the final analysis result in a divided nation. At best [!], the decision would be a majority one. The proposed amendment implies lack of confidence on the part of our people in their Congressional representatives. This is not in accord with the facts. Other nations would readily interpret it as a sign of weakness. (N. Y. Times, Jan. 10, 1938.)

A veritable masterpiece! “At best”, you see, only a majority would vote for war. And “at worst”—they would vote against war, which, apparently, is the rub. It would show a “divided nation”, that is, it would show the reality that exists and which the Dohertys want to suppress in advance. But if the “Congressional representatives” really represent the people—and if they do not, they have, it would seem, no right to legislate for them—would they not also show a “divided nation” when the question of war came up, for they would presumably reflect the differences (the “dissension”) existing among the population? Is that not, therefore, as sound a reason against taking a “referendum” of Congress before war is declared? Is that not, therefore, a sound argument for leaving the question of war or peace entirely in the hands of the Führer-President?

The arguments from all opponents are, we repeat, *totalitarian*. The “democratic” New York Times, in one of its several editorials (Dec. 16, 1937) against the resolution, wrote that “the very act of holding such a referendum” would be

... to destroy an essential sense of unity and to advertise to all the world such differences of opinion as existed within the nation on a crucial question.

The foreign editor of the “liberal” Scripps-Howard chain, Mr. William Phillips Simms, sings from the same notes:

The referendum over, and the ballots counted, the figures would be of inestimable value to the enemy, whichever way the votes went. They would provide an official count of exactly how many Americans were for war and how many for peace at any price. And the enemy would proceed accordingly. (N. Y. World-Telegram, Jan. 10, 1938.)

The Hoover Secretary of State, Mr. Stimson, goes even further. To his mind (N. Y. Times, Dec. 22, 1937), the “*mere bringing forward*” of the idea of the popular referendum is already a breach in the totalitarian front because “it may be regarded among our neighbor nations as indicating weakness of national policy and behavior at a time when stability and steadfastness are preëminently required”.

What could be clearer? All these illustrious democrats are serving notice that when war breaks out (if not before!), the most

brutal régime of suppression, gagging, hounding and lynching of opponents of war and advocates of peace will be instituted and only one-party (the pro-war party) elections will be permitted. For would not the continued existence of anti-war, pro-peace organizations, press and assemblies also "advertise to the world" Doherty's "divided nation"? And would not the running of election candidates by an anti-war, pro-peace party and the casting of votes for that party during a war provide, as Mr. Liberal Simms says, "an official count of exactly how many Americans were for war and how many for peace"?

How tiny a gust of wind is required to raise the shabby garment of democratic pretensions of American capitalism and its lackeys and to disclose beneath it the iron-shod hoof of brutal, intolerant imperialist dictatorship!

And what a flush of shame would burn the cheeks of the "democratic" and Stalinist prostitutes of imperialism, were they any longer capable of such virtuous reactions, at the thought that a Bourbon like Herbert Hoover had to point out that "those who would have us again go to war to save democracy might give a little thought to the likelihood that we would come out of any such struggle a despotism ourselves". And Mr. Hoover, who helped recruit cannon fodder for the last War to Save Democracy, is in a position to know.

6. A final observation on the debate is necessary and most illuminating. Not only is the United States supposed to be a Great Democracy but, according to the Stalinists, it is called upon to preserve democracy, that is, the rule of the people, where it is now imperilled. Ignoring, or ignorant of, the true character of U. S. "democracy", the sponsors of the Ludlow resolution proposed that the people shall indeed have the democratic and final word on the life-and-death question of war. Whereupon the imperialists curtly retorted:

Stop deluding yourselves and others about so important a question as war! What we call "democracy" may be all right for normal, quiet times. But in critical periods, talk about "democracy" is a nuisance and a burden. Do not imagine for a moment that even if your amendment were part of the Constitution, we would allow your damned "people" to have anything to do with declaring war or not. War is not caused by "declaring" it. As Lenin used to emphasize: War is the continuation of politics by other (*i. e.*, forcible) means. Or as our own Mr. Stimson recently paraphrased this perfectly correct thought: "International war is merely the final act of a long drawn-out national policy, the product of many prior decisions and the weighing of many divergent considerations." If our national policy brings us to war tomorrow, there will be war, amendment or no amendment, democracy or no democracy.

This perfectly cynical and no less accurate revelation of the *real* and not *juridical* relationship between imperialist war and democracy, is coolly made by Mr. Walter Lippmann, who assumes for a moment that the Ludlow resolution has become constitutional:

Suppose, for example, that instead of wanting to prevent a war, Mr. Roosevelt wanted a war with Japan: what could he do under the Ludlow resolution? He could do what Japan has done in China, what Italy did in Ethiopia and in Spain. He could go to war without asking Congress to declare war. There is nothing in the Ludlow amendment to stop him. He could still break off diplomatic relations. He could still mobilize the American Navy across the Japanese trade routes. He could land more marines at Shanghai. He could send warships up the Yangtze River. He could fire on Japanese airplanes. How would Mr. Ludlow prevent that? Did not President Wilson bombard and seize Vera Cruz, did he not send an army under General Pershing deep into Mexico, all without a declaration of war by Congress, much less a popular referendum?

If an American President wants to go to war, he can go to war no matter what the Ludlow amendment says. (N. Y. *Herald-Tribune*, Dec. 18, 1937.)

Mr. Ludlow, says Lippmann, you are merely proposing to put a special premium upon imperialist hypocrisy and dictatorial despotism, and you are deceiving yourself in the bargain.

The Marxists and the Ludlow Bill

OF THE RADICAL LABOR groups, both the Lovestoneites and Norman Thomas and his *Socialist Call* have endorsed the Ludlow resolution, the former supporting it a little shamefacedly and the latter flatly. Neither one of them represents the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism in the matter. Neither one, that is, represents the interests of a consistent proletarian struggle against imperialist war.

The first point to bear in mind is that reactionary imperialist opposition to the Ludlow resolution does not necessarily signify that revolutionists should support it, any more than, let us say, fascist opposition to capitalist democracy should determine our support of it. Just because Lovestone and Thomas, or even the trade unions in general, are in the camp of petty bourgeois pacifism today, is no reason why the revolutionary Marxists should join them.

The war which the working class must conduct against imperialist war is not furthered by pacifist or middle class illusions; it is hindered by them. One of the roads along which the masses are led into imperialist war is paved with good petty bourgeois pacifist intentions. Let the opportunists of the Lovestone school, who know better, or of the Thomas school, who never knew better, travel this road and seek to drag the working class along with them. The revolutionary Marxists have learned from the great experiences of the class struggle that the working class cannot be led forward a single step unless it is told the truth, which may not be popular at the moment. The workers cannot advance and become more conscious of their position and their rôle in society unless we *speak out what is*.

Where pacifist nostrums are not outright frauds and deceptions, they are pernicious illusions which drug the masses into pleasant dreams and hallucinations and paralyze their fighting power. To teach the masses that they can "prevent war" by a popular referendum is to foster a disastrous illusion among them. The honest pacifists foster it unwittingly; Lovestone, who, as has been said, knows better, fosters it deliberately out of habitual opportunistic considerations.

The Ludlow resolution nurtures the absurd idea that there can be a distinction among imperialist antagonists between "aggressor" and "defender". This spurious distinction is cleverly put forth by each imperialist power in its own country for the purpose of winning the support of the masses for the war. The workers must learn that regardless of which imperialist power *seems* to strike the first blow, they are bound in duty to their class not to support their own imperialist government in any war it undertakes to fight. Matters are quite different in wars between imperialist and colonial or semi-colonial countries, where the former are historically the aggressor. In such wars, regardless of who *really* launches the offensive, we stand on the side of the colonies against the imperialists, for China against Japan, for Ethiopia against Italy, for Nicaragua against the United States.

Furthermore, the Ludlow resolution, as amended by its supporters, puts the entire Western Hemisphere in the same category as the territory of the United States, thus acknowledging the reactionary protectorate established by U. S. imperialism over Latin America through the Monroe Doctrine.

Like the panacea of "disarmament", or "international arbitration courts", the referendum illusion diverts attention from the need of an intransigent class struggle policy against war every day in the year, because it cultivates the idea that when the "real" war danger faces us in the remote future the masses will be able to avert it by the mere casting of a ballot. Like all pacifist dreams and preachments, "it inoculates the workers", as Lenin remarked in his polemic against the Kautskyan disarmament advocates, "with the thought that the present bourgeois governments of the imperialist powers are *not* entangled in thousands of threads of finance capital and dozens or hundreds of corresponding (*i. e.*,

predatory, murderous, preparatory to imperialist wars) *secret treaties* between themselves". It propagates the totally false notion, so rudely shattered by Mr. Lippmann, that if only the masses could write down their opposition to declaring war on a slip of ballot paper, war could be averted without further ado.

In sum, to support the Ludlow resolution is to inculcate in the minds of the workers the idea that war can be "prevented" or fought *by some means other than the class struggle*, that imperialist war can be averted otherwise than by the revolutionary socialist overturn of capitalist rule. In one form or another, this idea has been advanced by pacifists from the days of William Jennings Bryan down to the present, including the program of the various Stalinist Leagues For or Against One Thing or Another and of the Ludlow movement. Its illusory character is too well established for us to adopt it, especially today when pacifism has reached the very nadir of its bankruptcy.

But while explaining patiently the utopian and misleading nature of the Ludlowian variety of pacifism, let our heaviest blows continue to fall upon the combination of Liberty Leaguers, New Dealers and Stalinists who have revealed themselves to be, each in their own way, trailblazers for the tyrannical totalitarian dictatorship they will seek to impose in the course of their coming imperialist war.

The Robinson-Rubens Case

THE AURA OF MYSTERY and intrigue which has surrounded the so-called "Robinson-Rubens" case would seem to qualify it as the fantastic basis for an E. Phillips Oppenheim mystery thriller. Unfortunately it cannot be brushed aside as melodrama. The issues in this strange affair are far too sinister, far too serious in their possible consequences.

Very little is yet known with certainty. The man, who had apparently been seen by no one willing to talk, disappeared one night from the National Hotel in Moscow. The woman disappeared six days later. The Kremlin has made only one brief announcement, implying though not stating explicitly that the two were under arrest. The passports under the name of Robinson turned out to be faked. The woman is allegedly identified as an American citizen, Ruth Boerger Rubens. That is about what the accredited public statements boil down to at the time we go to press.

Indirect evidence, however, sifted rumors and gossip, as well as a knowledge of the habits and methods of the G.P.U., already lead legitimate conjecture in certain fairly well defined directions:

1. Every single lead so far uncovered in this case, when followed even a step or two, heads straight into Stalinism. The various addresses which have appeared are well known hang-outs of Stalinists. The "travel bureau" and other organizations which appear have Stalinist connections, when they are not outright Stalinist outfits. Any inquiry into the backgrounds of the Messrs. A, B, C, D, etc., of the passport fixers bumps up against Stalinist surroundings.

2. The above characteristic, taken together with the circumstances of the disappearance in Moscow, the prominence given to the name "Robinson" some months ago by the G.P.U., together with the general course of the G.P.U. during the past year and a half, suggests irresistibly that the two "Robinsons" or "Rubens" or whatever their real name may be are themselves either G.P.U. agents or in some way implicated with the G.P.U. now or formerly.

3. All of these considerations, together with a reference in the first Kremlin announcement (in *Izvestia*) and unguarded remarks by Stalinists in this country, foretell at least the *attempt* at a new frame-up in which the "Robinsons" are slated to act as chief tools, perhaps featuring public confessions of the standard variety. But this frame-up would evidently be directed primarily not against the internal Soviet opposition but against *American* anti-Stalinists. The present stage both of Soviet and American policy suggests that the main theme of the frame-up would in all probability be

founded in the war crisis: that is, it would be a preparation for the drive against those who in this country are opposed to the threatening war, and would perhaps include charges of espionage and "diversion" in the interests of the main immediate enemy of American imperialism—namely, Japan. Trotsky would, of course, as always be included, perhaps this time as the leader of the Mexican fascist movement, as well as chief agent for the Mikado in both the Americas. But this time a direct blow at the growingly influential revolutionists and anti-Stalinist militants in the American labor movement would be the main object.

4. From the beginning of this case it has been apparent that the State Department has been acting with something much less than candor. It has seemed anxious, most eagerly anxious, to wash its hands of the whole business. The disappearances occurred more than a month ago. There is a clause in the agreement which accompanied Soviet recognition that the United States must be fully informed within 72 hours about any arrest or detention of a United States citizen. Nothing has been done except for a routine—and still unanswered—note to Moscow, in spite of the fact that it is now established with certainty (what must have been known by the State Department from the beginning) that at least the woman is a U.S. citizen. What accounts for this unusual modesty and backwardness, coming at the very time of the intransigent attitude taken by Hull in the Panay incident? Can it be that the State Department would not be averse to a "spy scare", that it would be quite prepared to make itself a passive partner to a frame-up against those who oppose the war? Is its concentration on preparations for the war toward which it has set its course the reason back of its dilatoriness, if not complete inaction and silence, in the Robinson-Rubens case?

We must demand and know the truth in this affair, and search it out for ourselves where it is not revealed. Pressure on the State Department to open its files on the case is entirely in order, as well as investigation by a Senate Committee into the conduct of the State Department with respect to it. This will by no means solve the problem, but may well aid in bringing out the truth. Above all, the revolutionary and militant workers must be on guard. As in the Corcoran case, we must smash the Moscow frame-up system every time it tries to raise its bloody head in this country, must in fact drive it further back into its hole every time it even *tries* to raise its head. In this way we will do our part in rooting it altogether out of the international arena.

Latest Developments

AS WE GO TO PRESS, the "Robinson-Rubens" case has taken a new turn. With consummate hypocrisy, the Moscow authorities have finally avowed what the entire world knew, namely, that it had both Mr. and Mrs. "Robinson" in custody and under arrest. The man was allegedly apprehended by the police somewhere in the Urals, a very significant ingredient in the coming frame-up trial since that is the region where a good deal of Soviet military industry is concentrated—an excellent spot for a "Japanese-Trotskyist-Hitlerite" spy to be "found". Meanwhile, the State Department at Washington has requested that one of its representatives be permitted to interview Mrs. Rubens, whose position as an American citizen has been confirmed. Moscow has simply refused to grant the request until the "preliminary examination" has been concluded, that is, until the necessary "confessions" have been duly extorted and rehearsed. A curt repetition of the request for permission to see Mrs. Rubens has been sent from Washington, unanswered as this is written.

To what extent pressure can be exerted in Washington upon the State Department to make public its files on the case—which we have every reason to believe both ample and revealing—remains to be seen. In any case, it is now beyond dispute that another of those odiously sinister trials is in preparation, at which the customary monotonous "revelations" will be made.

The New Party Is Founded

ALL THE EXPERIENCE of the class struggle on a world scale, and especially the experience of the past twenty years, teaches one lesson above all others, a lesson summed up in a single proposition: The most important problem of the working class is the problem of the party. Success or failure in this domain spells the difference between victory or defeat every time. The struggle for the party, the unceasing effort to construct the new political organization of the vanguard on the ruins of the old one, concentrates within itself the most vital and progressive elements of the class struggle as a whole. From this point of view every concrete step in the direction of a reconstructed party has outstanding importance. The convention of the left-wing branches of the disintegrated Socialist Party at Chicago over the New Year's week-end, which resulted in the formal launching of a new organization—the Socialist Workers Party, section of the Fourth International—thus claims first attention from the revolutionary internationalists throughout the world. For them—and their judgment is better than any other because they foresee and prepare the future—it marks a new milestone on the historic road of workers' liberation.

The reconstruction of the revolutionary labor movement in the form of a political party is not a simple process. In the midst of unprecedented difficulties, complications and contradictions the work goes ahead, like all social movements, in zig-zag fashion. The new movement takes shape through a series of splits and fusions which must appear like a Chinese puzzle to the superficial observer. But how could it be otherwise? The frightful disintegration of the old movements, on a background of world-wide social upheaval, disoriented and scattered the revolutionary militants in all directions. They could not find their way together, and draw the same basic conclusions, in a day. The new movement is fraught with catastrophic reverses, forward leaps and deadening periods of seeming stagnation. But for all that it is a movement, with an invincible historic motor force, and it moves along. The Chicago convention, which brought all the preceding work of the Fourth Internationalists in the U. S. to a fruitful culmination, is a forceful reminder of this fact.

The Chicago convention itself was a striking illustration of this contradictory process of fusion and split—and a step forward. It crossed the last *t* and dotted the last *i* on the split of the moribund Socialist Party. At the same time, it recorded the complete fusion of the left-wing socialists with the former members of the Workers Party, just as the Workers Party earlier came into existence through a fusion of the Communist Left Opposition and revolutionary militants of independent origin. The invincible program of the Fourth International is the magnet which attracts to itself all the vital revolutionary elements from all camps. It is the basis, and the only basis, on which the dispersed militants can come together and forge the new movement.

This was demonstrated once again at the Chicago convention when the resolution for the Fourth International was carried without a single dissenting vote. The two currents—former Workers Party and “native” socialists, which were about equally represented—showed complete unity on this decisive question. The 76 regular and 36 fraternal delegates from 35 cities in 17 states, who constituted the convention, came to this unanimous decision after due consideration of the question and ample pre-convention discussion. Although the great bulk of time and discussion at the convention were devoted to American affairs—and properly so—the great matters of principle embodied in the international question inspired and guided everything.

This significant victory of the Fourth International in America cannot be without far-reaching influence on the international arena. The brief period of struggle as a faction within the Social-

ist Party comes to a definite end, and the American section of the Fourth International takes the field again as an independent party, with forces more than doubled, without any losses or splits, and with a firmer unity than ever before. Principled politics in this case also has proved to be the best and most effective kind of practical politics.

Those too-clever politicians of the centrist school have sought to avoid clear-cut answers to the international question in the hope of keeping divergent forces together. They have nothing to show for it but disintegration and splits, and the creeping paralysis of blind-alley pessimism in their ranks. The “Trotskyists,” on the other hand, have held their own ranks firm, and have united with other serious revolutionary forces in an expanding movement inspired by enthusiasm and confidence in its future. That is, first of all, because they put the main question of internationalism squarely. Experience showed that the left-wing socialists who mean business—and they are the only ones worth counting—preferred this kind of politics.

When our plenum-conference last July decided to take up the impudent challenge of the gag-law bureaucrats of the S.P. and fight the issue out without compromise, some comrades questioned the wisdom of this strategy, fearing disintegration in our ranks. The convention removed all ground for argument on this score. In the five-months campaign from July to New Year's we not only held our own, but gained. Numerous branches not affiliated to the organized left wing in July, were represented by delegates at the convention. Denver; Salt Lake City; Kansas City, Joplin and St. Louis in Missouri; Rochester; Quakertown, Sellerville and a third branch in Pennsylvania—these were among the new branches enlisted under the banner of the new party at the convention. As for the remnants of the Socialist Party, it did not claim the attention of the convention in any way. Nobody felt the necessity for discussion on this dead issue of the past. All attention was directed to the future—to the problem of penetrating the mass movement of the workers and the struggle against Stalinism.

The outstanding point on the agenda, and the one allotted the most time in the discussion, was the trade union question. And even this discussion was pretty much limited to the narrower question of practical work and tactics in the trade unions and the exchange of experience in this field. The principles and strategy of Bolshevism in regard to the trade unions were regarded as clearly established and taken for granted.

The predominance of the trade union question in its practical and tactical aspects corresponded to the most pressing needs of the hour, and to the composition and temper of the convention. The slogan “to the masses” dominated the convention from beginning to end. The conception of the Fourth Internationalists as primarily a circle of isolated theorists and hairsplitters—a conception industriously circulated by the centrists who manœuvre all the time with non-existent “mass movements” in a vacuum—could find little to sustain it at Chicago. The great bulk of the delegates consisted of practical and qualified trade unionists who have done serious Bolshevik work in the labor movement and have modest results to show for it.

The discussion and reports from the various districts clearly showed that we already have a good foundation of trade union activity to build upon. Our positions and influence in various unions—such as they are—have not been gained by appointment or sufferance from the top, but by systematic work from below, in the ranks. That is all to the good. What is ours is ours; nobody gave it to us and nobody can take it away.

It must be admitted that the preoccupation of our national movement with problems of theoretical education carried with it a

certain neglect and even a minimizing of trade union work. A serious weakness and a danger which should not be concealed. The Chicago convention was one continuous warning and demand to correct this fault and to do it by drastic measures. But if systematic national organization and direction of our trade union work have been lacking, our comrades in various localities and unions, guided by a sure instinct and a firm grasp of their theory, have gone to work in the unions with a will and have achieved good results. In some cases the fruits of their work stand out conspicuously. The convention heard matter-of-fact reports from all sections of the country. In sum total this work and its results, considering the size of our movement and its freedom from "big" pretensions, impressed the convention as fairly imposing.

This discussion, and the concrete program which issued from it, gave the convention its tone and its buoyant spirit of proletarian optimism. Revolutionary activists in the class struggle, in general, have no time for skeptical speculation and pessimistic brooding. Our proletarian convention reflected no trace of these diseases, so fashionable now on the intellectual fringes of the movement. The trade union discussion was a striking revelation that the revolutionary health of a party, and of its individual members, requires intimate contact with the living mass movement, with its struggle and action, its hopes and aspirations.

The whole course of our convention was turned in this direction. It was decided to "trade unionize" the party, to devote 90 percent of the party work to this field, to coördinate and direct this work on a national scale, and to establish the necessary apparatus to facilitate this design.

Our trade union work in the days ahead is concerned, of course, not as an end in itself—that is mere opportunism—but as a practical means to a revolutionary end. In order to aim seriously at the struggle for power a party must be entrenched in the sources of power—the workers' mass movement and especially the trade unions. Our convention could devote itself so extensively to the practical side of this question only thanks to the fact that the theoretical ground had been cleared and firm positions on the important principle questions consciously worked out.

The party arrived at these positions by the method of party democracy. Six months of intensive discussion preceded the convention. Three months of more or less informal discussion on the Spanish, Russian and international questions after the July plenum, were followed by another three-month period of formal discussion. This discussion was organized by the National Committee. Internal discussion bulletins were published, membership meetings were held, *etc.* All points of view were fairly presented. The bulk of the space in the bulletins and approximately equal time in the membership meetings were given over to minorities—which turned out in the end to be tiny minorities.

In a live and free party, where members do their own thinking—and that is the only kind of a party worth a fig—everybody does not come to the same conclusion at the same moment. Common acceptance of basic principles does not insure uniform answers to the concrete questions of the day. The party position can be worked out only in a process of collective thought and exchange of opinion. That is possible only in a free, that is, a democratic party.

The method of party democracy entails certain "overhead charges". It takes time and energy. It often interferes with other work. On occasions it taxes patience. But it works. It educates the party and safeguards its unity. And in the long run the overhead expenses of the democratic method are the cheapest. The quick and easy solutions of bureaucratic violence usually claim drawn-out installment payments in the form of discontent in the ranks, impaired morale and devastating splits.

Discussions among the Bolsheviks, sometimes taking the form of factional struggle, are carried on in dead earnest, corresponding to the seriousness of the questions and of the people involved. A philistine reading one of our pre-convention discussion bulletins,

or listening by chance at a membership meeting, might well imagine our party to be a mad-house of dissension, recrimination, revolts against the leadership and, in general, "fights among themselves". But, to get a clear picture, one must judge the democratic process at the end, not in the middle. True, Bolsheviks are in earnest and they readily dispense with polite amenities. They put questions sharply, because as a rule, they feel them deeply. And nobody ever thinks of sparing the sensibilities of leaders; they are assumed to be pupils of Engels who warned his opponents that he had a tough hide.

But it is precisely through this free democratic process, and not otherwise, that a genuine party arrives at conclusions which represent its own consciously won convictions. The discussion is not aimless and endless. It leads straight to a convention and a conclusion—in our case a conclusion so close to unanimous, that its authority is unshakeable. Then the discussion can and must come to an end. The emphasis in party life shifts from democracy to centralism. The party goes to work on the basis of the convention decisions.

The resolutions submitted to the convention by the National Committee on all the important questions, formulating the standpoint which has been advocated in our press, were all accepted by the convention without significant amendments. Much pre-convention discussion had been devoted to the Russian question, as a result of the unspeakable Moscow Trials and the subsequent blood purges. Some comrades challenged the designation of the Soviet Union as a workers' state, although frightfully degenerated, which can yet be restored to health by a political revolution without a social overturn. This minority opinion, however, found little echo in the ranks.

The resolution of the National Committee, which calls for the unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack—a position which necessarily presupposes an uncompromising struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy in war or peace—was adopted by a vote of 66 against 3 for one minority position and 2 for another. This virtual unanimity is the best assurance for the future theoretical stability of the party. A false position on the question of the Russian revolution, now as always since 1917, spells fatal consequences for any political organization. The revolutionary Marxists have always said they would be at their posts and be the best fighters for the Soviet Union in the hour of danger. As this crucial hour draws near the American soldiers of the Fourth International have renewed this declaration and pledge.

With a firm theoretical position and a decisive orientation to mass work the new party of the Fourth International has every right to face the future with confidence. This confidence is also fortified by the objective political situation and by the present state of affairs in the radical labor movement. All signs point to a mighty acceleration of the class struggle as the country slides into another devastating crisis and the inevitable war draws ever nearer to the point of explosion. Meanwhile the situation among the radical labor groupings and tendencies is clearing up. Stalinism is self-disclosed as the movement of jingo-traitors. The Socialist Party of Altman, Thomas & Co.—having expelled its vitalizing left wing—presents only the pathetically futile spectacle of an opportunist sect, lacking the merit of consistent principle on the one side or of mass support on the other. The Lovestoneites, the one-time unacknowledged attorneys of Stalinism are now merely the attorneys and finger-men of pseudo-progressive labor bureaucrats in a couple of important unions. The various groups and cliques which challenged the *bona fide* movement of the Fourth International and attempted to fight it from the "left" have all, without exception, fallen into pitiful disintegration and demoralization.

The Socialist Workers Party, unfurling the banner of the Fourth International from the hour of its birth, has no rival in the field. It is the only revolutionary party, the heir of the rich traditions of the past and the herald of the future. James P. CANNON

Roosevelt Faces The Future*

1.

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT is probably the most daring and brilliant politician whom this country has yet produced. He is, in the first place, remarkable among American Presidents in being in the fullest sense a trained, professional politician, and not a lawyer, general, or schoolteacher raised to political office as a temporarily convenient spokesman for the ruling class. He has fitted himself with the most precise and painstaking care, acquiring every knowledge and talent relevant to his chosen function. He has studied the history of the United States itself until he handles it and molds its tradition to his purpose with easy and conscious mastery. A magnificent orator, he has not been content to learn from the past, but has adapted his delivery to the new requirements of loudspeakers and above all the radio. His speeches—whose continuity of style proves that their final form is not left in the hands of ghost-writers—show an amazing grasp of wide fields of contemporary science and culture. Much more remarkable—indeed almost unprecedented—in an American politician, his actions prove him a close and critical student of international politics and their methods; he has made his own the lessons to be drawn from the political experiences of the great European nations.

In addition, in striking contrast to the three Presidents who preceded him, especially to Coolidge and Harding, and indeed to the great majority of Presidents from the beginning, Roosevelt is in the full sense a political *leader*. Harding and Coolidge, for example, were narrow, stupid, weak, uncultured men, trivial pawns pulled back and forth by the major forces within American society. They had no coherent and distinctive policies. They were not conscious of the true meaning of their own rôles. In entire contrast, Roosevelt is fully conscious; and vigorously, indeed ruthlessly, pursues integrated and deliberately thought-out policies.

Roosevelt knows that it is his business to represent, in the political sphere, the general interests of the American bourgeoisie as a whole, knows that he is the standard bearer of American imperialism in its present phase. It is precisely because of this, and because he is by far the ablest present representative of American imperialism, that he enters so frequently into collision with individuals and groups within the bourgeoisie. The very nature of capitalism, with its life-and-death internal competitive struggle, makes it exceedingly difficult for any member or section of the bourgeoisie to rise to the point of view of the historical interests of the class as a whole. The struggle of individual against individual, corporation against corporation, monopoly against monopoly, one branch of industry against another, blots out the longer-term perspective, and makes the individual bourgeois—unless confronted with a definite social crisis—grasp at immediate practical advantage at the expense of the general interests of the class. When such an individual is told, in effect, that he must sacrifice in one degree or another some immediate practical advantage for the sake of the longer perspective, he is ordinarily resentful and resists. It is the very bitterness against Roosevelt on the part of such large numbers of the bourgeoisie that is the surest sign of Roosevelt's class leadership.

This bitterness is increased by the boldness and imperiousness with which Roosevelt announces his policies and carries them through. He hurts people's feelings because he tells them what to do instead of waiting around and asking advice, and flattering Congressmen or bankers by suggesting that he is merely following their superior wisdom. Roosevelt closes the banks, launches the NRA, PWA, WPA, builds dams, changes the gold content of the dollar, makes treaties, reforms Stock Exchange practise, demands

a change in the Supreme Court; and in all such measures, he calls the turn first and lets the grumblers and delayers fall into line afterwards.

But more than this: Not only does Roosevelt understand clearly his rôle as general representative of American imperialism; he knows too that a chief—perhaps the primary—task of the bourgeois politician is to keep the confidence of the masses in the bourgeois state and the capitalist order. He is extraordinarily sensitive to the moods of the masses, and unscrupulous to the last degree in exploiting those moods. And this is why Roosevelt, in spite of all his brilliance and knowledge and abilities, is and must remain a demagogue; why every successful bourgeois politician, in the epoch of the decline of capitalism, must be a demagogue. They cannot tell the truth to the masses; for that would be to tell them that the continuance of capitalism dooms them to increasing misery, starvation, tyranny, war. They can only exploit, pervert, distort, with one or another brand of demagoguery, the moods of discontent and despair, and the half-conscious search by the masses for a way out. In 1932, these moods of discontent and despair were enormously wide-spread in this country. It was Roosevelt's dramatic actions and his far more dramatic demagoguery that seized hold of these moods, transformed them, and re-forged the chains that tied the minds of the masses to capitalism. It is hard to see how it could have been done in any other than Roosevelt's way.

Roosevelt enjoyed four and a half years of virtually uninterrupted success. Against the business upturn—part of the international upturn, but also in part stimulated and supported here by Roosevelt's own measures, against the grandiose plans and real though much less grandiose governmental achievements, against the triumphant New Deal ideology, no attack from any quarter stood a chance. A popular whirlwind carried him into office for his second term.

His first major political crisis occurred over the Bill to reorganize the Supreme Court. But it would be a superficial error to imagine that the rejection of this Bill was half the defeat to Roosevelt that his opponents fondly imagined and his friends timorously feared. On the one hand, through advocacy of the reorganization, Roosevelt terrorized the Court into upholding all of his important measures which came before it last year; and he has already forced out two of the anti-Roosevelt Justices. On the other hand, through his championing of the Bill, Roosevelt was mightily aided in maintaining his psychological position as the leader of the masses against the "Tories".

The real crisis, or rather its beginning, has a more substantial foundation: the economic slump which began last autumn and continues downward with a velocity twice that of 1929; and the deepening of the war crisis. It is these which Roosevelt is now called upon to solve, after his own manner.

2.

How does Roosevelt understand his own general problem? It would seem to be something as follows: American capitalism is the most vigorous and powerful section of international capitalism. It does not yet need to turn toward fascism for preservation. It can continue, and thereby uphold and even extend the strength and privileges of the American bourgeoisie, for a considerable future period. But it can do so only if three conditions, themselves integrally related, are fulfilled.

First, it must "modernize". It must abandon the remnants and the attitudes of *laissez-faire*. It must draw the lessons from the older capitalisms of Europe, including the lessons from reformist politics and from the totalitarian states. It must try to reduce the excessive anarchy of industry on the one side; and in the relations

*This article is the first of several by the same author on current problems of American politics. It will be followed in the next issue by an analysis of the Labor Party movement.—ED.

between capital and labor on the other—recognizing that a working class organized and closely related to the governmental structure can, if properly managed, be less dangerous in the present period than a disorganized and chaotic working class. The parts must accept “controls” for the sake of the well-being of the whole. Above all, it must recognize that modern capitalism can work only with the extension of the function of the state into wider and wider spheres.

Second (as I have already discussed), the loyalty of the masses toward the capitalist order must be kept. This cannot be done through the ideologies carried over by the Republican and Democratic parties from earlier and no longer relevant periods. Those ideologies make use of myths no longer convincing. The United States requires a New Deal in ideology. The New Deal ideology is not, of course, an invention by Roosevelt, but merely an adaptation. He has taken over traditional reformism, up to and including the Popular Front, mixed in an American sauce of Jeffersonianism and Populism, and with new seasoning and decoration brought up to date as a native American product. The object of the ideology is to convince the masses that the government—at least while Roosevelt is at its head—is *their* government; that their enemies are neither capitalism nor its state, but merely “the sixty families”. This ideology must be backed up with a necessary minimum of actual or apparent concessions, a running expense which American capitalism cannot at present afford to eliminate.

This third and most vital condition for the continuance of American capitalism is the extension of its capital market. The most vigorous and powerful section of international capitalism must take its place openly and aggressively as the dominant power in the world. The internal market is already completely inadequate to sustain U.S. economy on a profitable basis; but today’s inadequacy is only a foreshadowing of the future. The economy *must* expand, or be destroyed. From the beginning Roosevelt has understood this. That is why he and his lieutenants have brushed aside so unceremoniously the Borahs, the isolationists and provincials, and have made one series after another of commercial treaties designed to further trade. That is why the Soviet Union was recognized as one of the first acts of his régime. It is this that explains the “good neighbor” policy toward South and Central America, Cuba, the Philippines, Porto Rico—a policy which in exchange for surface concessions in terms of political prestige strengthens the base of economic advantage and genuine political control. That is what explains the participation in and domination of the Buenos Aires Conference a year ago.

But all of this is not enough. Roosevelt knows that not alone the United States, but all of the imperialist powers need, to stave off death, expansion, or at the very least preservation of what they now have. And therefore he knows that this primary condition for the continuance of American imperialism entails necessarily and inevitably war. Consequently, as a serious politician, his course is deliberately and consciously set toward war, and toward the creation of the most favorable circumstances for the conduct of the war. There is no other way to understand his policy.

3.

Right now, then, Roosevelt stands faced with the economic recession, the foreshadowing if not the first act of a major economic crisis; and with the deepening war crisis. His specific problem now is: (a) to shift the blame for the recession and impending crisis to the “Tories” and at least to a certain extent to Congress; (b) to meet the slump in such a way as not to alienate the masses from capitalism; and (c) to prepare for the war which he regards as certain. These three factors are naturally related, since in reality the war is Roosevelt’s solution for the economic crisis.

It was thought for several months that Roosevelt would meet the slump by abandoning the New Deal. The Special Session gave some evidence for this view. But in actuality Roosevelt utilized

the Special Session to discredit Congress as against the Executive. And free rein, for a while, to the *views* of the Tories only makes it easier for Roosevelt to attribute the slump to the “sabotage” of the “sixty families”; and thus also easier to prevent the masses from discovering its true causes in capitalism itself. In this way, he is breaking up the strategy of the Republicans, with its attempt to ride back to popular favor by holding Roosevelt and the New Deal solely responsible for the slump—an attempt doomed to failure, since it proceeds from an ideology which can no longer win the faith of the popular majority.

The toothache and fishing trip of the Special Session were quickly followed by a sortie from the Roosevelt camp. Jackson and Ickes took the air and sent their New Deal shafts against the wicked monopolies. Why this, at this moment? Clearly: a major, and in this country always congenial, way to slough off responsibility for the evils of capitalism. But in addition: The appeal of an “anti-monopoly” campaign is primarily to the middle classes; Roosevelt realizes that the onslaught of the “Tories” makes its chief effect upon the middle classes, and he must move now to keep them in line. The working class is still with him, and will besides be far less affected in any case by “big business” propaganda. Roosevelt himself followed up Jackson and Ickes with a much more “reasonable” address to Congress. He is willing to cooperate with “all loyal Americans”; the “disruption” does not come from his side. But a few days later he openly declares that he is not going to balance the budget; and the tone of the Jackson Day speech is much sharper.

The New Deal is by no means dead. It is simply entering a new and fuller stage.

Roosevelt’s great and crucial weapon, however, is the war. With his Chicago speech, in October, he began its open preparation. For Roosevelt, first things come first; and in the Address to Congress, the opening and by far the most forceful section dealt with the war crisis. The new armament program is already on the way. The notes on the Panay incident, the blows at the proposed Ludlow amendment, the new tone of State Department releases, all make unmistakably clear the direction and meaning of Roosevelt’s international policy.

But his utilization of the war crisis serves not merely the general interests of the future of American imperialism; it serves also and is made to serve Roosevelt’s own interests. The war question is the decisive question. By demanding and getting pledges of national unity on the decisive question (even Landon has telegraphed his pledge of loyalty to Roosevelt’s foreign policy), the strength of the opposition on the other and subsidiary issues is dissipated—just as the British government undermines the Labour Party opposition on internal questions through the Labour Party’s support of the government’s foreign policy. Still further, Roosevelt keeps control of his mass following by explaining the war in the terms of the Popular Frontist conceptions of a crusade against fascism and dictatorship, and for peace and democracy. More and more, the Popular Frontists proper, as the *Daily Worker* of the last months so eloquently witnesses, become mere appendages of Roosevelt. And, just as the war itself is Roosevelt’s answer to the major crisis of U. S. capitalism, his foundation for America’s future, so does the armaments program aid in the immediate task of alleviating the threatening slump in profits.

4.

There is no political leader in this country at present comparable to Roosevelt. It was for Roosevelt, and not for the Democratic party that the people voted a little more than a year ago. It is in Roosevelt, and not in his party, that the majority still has faith. The Democratic party itself is a strange and complex medley. Its historic origin under Jefferson, its development as the party of the slave-holders, have both little bearing on the contemporary United States. Within its ranks are represented diverse

and gravely conflicting interests. Only the crisis and Roosevelt's leadership have held it together during these past five years. It is almost certain that, within the next three years, it will undergo a major split; there are many indications that Roosevelt is deliberately preparing for a split. The only thing that might prevent the split is the pressure of the war.

In point of fact, the split in the Democratic party did begin in a small way during the 1936 election, with the break by Al Smith, Davis, Raskob, and other prominent party members. During the past year the most bitter fights in Congress have been between fellow-Democrats; for the most part the Republicans have been content to bloc up with the anti-Roosevelt Democrats, and to let the latter take the lead. Such a bloc won the majority against the Court Reorganization Bill; and sent the Wages and Hours Bill back to Committee during the Special Session. It was and is the Democratic Senator, Connally, who has lead the filibuster against the Anti-Lynching Bill; and he has made the debate a violent attack against the loyal Roosevelt Senators. It seems likely that Roosevelt will drive the wedge deeper during this current Session.

In the Republican Party there is a similar division—the division, roughly, between a kind of Americanized Popular Frontist liberals and the more traditional kind of conservatives. In the House of Representatives, especially, the outstanding progressives are Farmer-Labor, Wisconsin Progressive, or Republican, and not Democrats. The New York City mayoralty election, with the Republican LaGuardia receiving the support of most of those who voted a year before for Roosevelt, showed a complication in the same development.

At the same time, a Popular Frontist Labor Party movement is gaining headway. Though this movement represents from the side of the workers, a genuine advance in class consciousness, there is little to distinguish its avowed program or its leaders from the left Republicans or the Roosevelt Democrats.

A re-shuffling is thus in process, the first deal of which should

be finished by the time of the 1940 presidential elections. The exact outcome cannot yet be predicted, but the probable general plan is already reasonably clear. On one side will be the Rooseveltians, the left Republicans, the Farmer-Laborites, Progressives, and the Labor Party movement. On the other will be a coalition of the old-line Democrats and the bulk of the Republicans. This division, however, might take any of several organizational forms. Roosevelt will probably retain the majority in the Democratic party. He might sweep into such a "purified" party all of the other forces. But it is more likely that there will be an electoral coalition. The left Republicans may well retain for a while an independent organization. The various Labor Party groups, either on a local scale or nationally, profiting by the example of the American Labor Party in New York, may and probably will keep organizational independence in an effort to hold a balance of power position for bargaining purposes. However, if (as is unlikely) Roosevelt loses the Democratic party, he may well take the initiative in forming a single all-embracing Third Party set-up for the 1940 campaign.

Whatever the alternative, it may be remarked, it is far from excluded that Roosevelt will himself be the presidential candidate. If he retains his health, who is there to take his place? If the war has not already started, it will be close enough to be made the excuse for the abandonment of the no-third-term tradition. No one will be able to claim the right to lead the war with half the justice of Roosevelt.

In any case, we are now witnessing the breakup of the inherited pattern of American politics. American capitalism is coming of age at the same time that capitalism internationally is in its death throes. This paradox promises a rate of change and a scale of struggle never before seen in history. The resulting ferment, the drastic uprooting of fixed ideas and accepted institutions, for the first time offer the revolutionary party in this country a real path of entry to the masses. These next three years may well be decisive for the next decades.

James BURNHAM

Marx and Engels on the Civil War*

ENGELS CALLED THE American Civil War "the first grand war of contemporaneous history". Marx later hailed it as "the greatest event of the age". Today when the Nineteenth century has receded into the distance and the bourgeois power that issued out of the Civil War bestrides the world, we can realize the colossal magnitude of that conflict far better than they. The Second American Revolution stands out as the decisive turning point of Nineteenth century history.

All the more valuable therefore are the views of these two great working class leaders on the Civil War in the United States while it was still in progress, now made available as a whole for the first time in English. These writings consist of seven articles contributed to the New York *Tribune* and thirty-five to the Vienna *Presse* in 1861-1862 together with sixty-one excerpts from the correspondence between Marx and Engels during 1861-1866. The editor has also appended two addresses written by Marx for the First International, one to President Lincoln and the other to President Johnson.

In turning to these writings for the first time this reader received three immediate impressions. First, the evergreen quality of these articles written so many years ago. How little faded they are by the passage of time! Then the astonishingly intimate knowledge of American history possessed by Marx and Engels, which would go far to dispel the ignorant prejudice that these Europeans were unfamiliar with the peculiar conditions of the United States. Finally, the incisiveness of their most casual comments on per-

sonalities and events coupled with the remarkable insight of their observations. Again we see what inexhaustible vitality and prophetic power is lodged in the materialist interpretation of history discovered by these master minds, which enabled them to plumb deep below the billowing surface of events and fathom the underlying formations and motive forces of history in the making.

These genial powers shine forth in the following quotation from the first article, which summarizes the sixty years of American politics before the Civil War in five succinct sentences.

The progressive abuse of the Union by the slave power, working through its alliance with the Northern Democratic Party, is, so to say, the general formula of United States history since the beginning of this century. The successive compromise measures mark the successive degrees of the encroachment by which the Union became more and more transformed into the slave of the slave-owner. Each of these compromises denotes a new encroachment of the South, a new concession of the North. At the same time none of the successive victories of the South was carried but after a hot contest with an antagonistic force in the North, appearing under different party names with different watchwords and under different colors. *If the positive and final result of each single contest told in favor of the South, the attentive observer of history could not but see that every new advance of the slave power was a step forward to its ultimate defeat.*

The rise and fall of the slave power is the grandest example of the dialectic in American history. The slaveholders had to be lifted to the heights before they were dashed to the ground and annihilated forever in the Civil War, an historical precedent it is good to keep in mind when the advancing world reaction seems to be carrying everything before it.

The first two articles of the series contributed to the Vienna *Presse*, written in refutation of the arguments disseminated by the

*THE CIVIL WAR IN THE UNITED STATES. By KARL MARX and FREDERICK ENGELS. Edited with an introduction by Richard Enmale. xxv+325 pp. New York. International Publishers. \$2.50.

Southern sympathizers in England, are the meatiest portions of this collection. The pro-slavery advocates contended, first, that the war between the North and South was nothing but a tariff war; second, that it was waged by the North against the South to maintain the Union by force; and, third, that the slave question had nothing to do with it.

Marx easily explodes the first argument with five well-placed facts to the contrary. In answer to the second, he points out that the war emanated, not from the North, but from the South. The Civil War originated as a rebellion of the slaveholding oligarchy against the Republican government. Just as the bombardment of Fort Sumter started the war, so Lincoln's election, gave the signal for secession. Lincoln's victory was made possible by the breach between the Northern and Southern wings of the Democratic Party, and the rise of the Republican Party in the new Northwest. The key to secession was therefore to be found in the upsurge of the Northwest. By splitting the Democratic ranks and supporting the Republican candidate, the Northwestern states upset the balance of power which had enabled the slave power to rule the Republic for six decades and thereby made secession necessary and inevitable.

With the principle that any further extension of slave territory was to be prohibited by law, the Republicans attacked the rule of the slaveholders at its root. A strict confinement of slavery within its old terrain was bound according to economic law to lead to its gradual effacement, in the political sphere to annihilate the hegemony that the slave states exercised through the Senate, and finally to expose the slaveholding oligarchy within its own states to threatening perils from the side of the "poor whites". The Republican election victory was accordingly bound to lead to the open struggle between North and South.

The assumption of state power placed a noose in the hands of the Republican bourgeoisie which they could draw as tight as they pleased around the neck of the slave power until they had succeeded in strangling it. Having lost control of the government to their adversary and faced with the prospect of slow death, the slaveholders determined to fight for their freedom—to enslave others!

The political contest which resulted in civil war was but the expression of profound economic antagonisms between the slave and free states. According to Marx, the most important of these was the struggle over the possession of the territories necessary for the expansion of their respective systems of production. In a striking phrase, Marx states that "the territorial contest which opened this dire epopée was to decide whether the virgin soil of immense tracts should be wedded to the labor of the immigrant or prostituted to the tramp of the slavedriver". The Western lands were the rock on which the Union was shipwrecked.

To those who represent the slaveholder's rebellion as a defensive, and, therefore, a just war, Marx replied that it was the precise opposite. The dissolution of the Union and the formation of the Confederacy were only the first steps in the slaveholders' program. After consolidating their power, the slavocracy must inevitably strive to conquer the North and to extend its dominion over the tropics where cotton could be cultivated. "The South was not a country . . . but a battle cry"; the war of the Southern Confederacy "a war of conquest for the extension and perpetuation of slavery". The slave-owners aimed to reorganize the Union on the basis of slavery. This would entail the subjugation of North America, the nullification of the free institutions of the Northern states, the perpetuation of an obsolete and barbaric method of production at the expense of a higher economic order. The triumph of the backward South over the progressive North would deal an irreparable blow to human progress.

To those who affirmed that slavery had nothing to do with the Civil War because the Republicans feared to unfurl the banner of emancipation at the beginning of the conflict, Marx pointed out that the Confederacy itself proclaimed the foundation of a republic for the first time in modern history with slavery as its unquestionable principle. Not only the secession movement but the war itself was, in the last analysis, based upon the slave question.

Not in the sense of whether the slaves within the existing slave states would be emancipated or not, (although this matter, too, must sooner or later be settled), but whether twenty million men of the North should subordinate themselves any longer to an oligarchy of three hundred thousand slaveholders; whether the vast territories of the republic should be planting-places for free states or for slavery; finally, whether the national policy of the Union should take armed propaganda of slavery in Mexico, Central and South America as its device.

Thus Marx proceeds from the political to the economic and finally to the social core of the Civil War. With surgical skill he probes deeper and deeper until he penetrates to the heart of the conflict. "The present struggle between the North and South," he concludes, "is nothing but a struggle between two social systems, between the system of slavery and the system of free labor. The struggle has broken out because the two systems can no longer live peacefully side by side on the North American continent. It can only be ended by the victory of one system or the other." If this conclusion appears elementary to us today, it is only because history has absolutely confirmed it. But one has only to compare Marx's words at the opening of the Civil War with the writings of the other politicians of the period to appreciate their foresight.

In connection with this admirable account of the causes of the war, Marx underscores the crucial political, economic, and military importance of the border states. These states, which were neither slave nor free, were a thorn in the side of the South on the one hand, and the weakest part of the North on the other. The Republican government was inclined toward a weak, cowardly, and conciliatory policy of waging the war out of regard for the support of these ambiguous allies and did not throw off their constraining influence until the war was half over.

Marx and Engels followed the military aspects of the conflict with the closest attention. "The General" in particular was absorbed by the tactics and strategy of the contending forces. He was justly impatient with the Fabian policies of McClellan and his "anaconda plan" for surrounding, constricting, and crushing the South, advocating instead a bold and sharp stroke launched at the middle of the South. He thus anticipated in 1862 Sherman's decisive march through Georgia two years later. Exasperated by the manifold blunders and half-heartedness of the Union generals as well as the reluctance of the Republican bourgeoisie to use revolutionary methods in waging the war, he at one time despaired of a Northern victory. But Marx, with his eye upon the immensely superior latent powers of the North and the inherent weaknesses of the South, chided him for being "swayed a little too much by the military aspect of things".

The majority of these articles deal with various international aspects of the Civil War, among them the diplomatic jockeyings of the great European powers, so reminiscent of the present Spanish Civil War, as well as the intrigues of Napoleon the Little in the chancelleries of Europe and his adventures in Mexico. Marx and Engels were concerned with the international events as foreign correspondents, as residents of England, but above all as revolutionary proletarian internationalists. Marx kept close surveillance over the efforts to embroil England in a war against the Union and exposed the factors that kept the Palmerston government in check: the increasing dependence of England on American foodstuffs, the superior preparedness of the United States for war, the rivalry between the Whigs and Tories in the coalition cabinet and, last but not least, the fear of the people. Marx played a leading rôle in frustrating the plans of the warhawks by mobilizing the English workers in huge public meetings of protest against the Southern sympathizers among the English upper crust.

These miscellaneous writings do not constitute either a comprehensive or definitive treatment of the Civil War and the revolution interlaced with it. Marx and Engels would undoubtedly have revised and elaborated not a few of the judgments they expressed at the moment in the light of subsequent developments. The last extracts from their correspondence show them in the act of changing their previous opinion of Johnson.

Here are a few points that call for correction or amplification. In concentrating upon the more immediate causes of the Civil War, Marx and Engels do not delve into the general economic background of the conflict. Their survey needs to be supplemented by an account of the maturing crisis within the slave system and the impetuous rise of Northern capitalism which provided the economic premises of the Civil War.

Marx was mistaken in attributing the removal of Frémont solely to political intrigue. This Republican General was caught *in flagrante delicto*. His wife accepted expensive gifts from army contractors while the Department of the West under his command was a grafter's paradise. In one deal Frémont purchased 25,000 worthless Austrian muskets for \$166,000; in another, financed by J. P. Morgan, he bought for \$22 each condemned guns which the War Department itself had illegally sold a few months before for \$3.50 each! And the House Committee of Investigation uncovered even worse cases of corruption. Possibly Marx became acquainted with these facts when he studied the official reports. That would account for his failure to return to the subject, as he promised.

The principal lack in these writings from our present standpoint is the absence of distinction between the separate and potentially antagonistic class forces allied on the side of the Union. In particular, insufficient stress is laid upon the special political position, program, aims, and interests of the Republican big bourgeoisie who headed the state and led the army. This was not accidental. Marx and Engels emphasized the broad outlines and major issues uppermost at the moment and more or less set to one side for future consideration the forces and problems which lurked in the background and came to the fore at a later stage of the struggle.

A few words must be said about the editor's introduction. It is liberally smeared with Stalinism. This substitute for Marxism is, like certain substitutes for mayonnaise, concocted by omitting or adulterating the principal ingredients. Mr. Enmale would have us believe that out of the Civil War a truly democratic government emerged in the United States. "In its Civil War phase, the revolution abolished chattel slavery, and destroyed the old plantocracy," he remarks. "At the same time it insured the continuance of democracy, freedom, and progress by putting an end to the rule of an oligarchy, by preventing further suppression of civil liberties in the interests of chattel slavery, and by paving the way for the forward movement of American labor."

How Marx in his wrath would have hurled his Jovian thunderbolts at the head of the vulgar democrat who uttered such deceitful phrases—and in his name! The Civil War put an end to one oligarchy and marked the beginning of another, which Marx himself characterized, in a later letter to Engels, as "the associated oligarchy of capital", which in its turn became the bulwark of reaction, suppressed civil liberties, and exerted every effort to check the advance of American labor. It is not impossible that Mr. Enmale is unacquainted with this letter, written on the occasion of the bloody suppression of the great railroad strikes of 1877 by the Federal troops, since it was omitted from the English edition of the *Correspondence* issued by the same house. But Enmale's ignorance of Marx's views does not excuse his crude falsification of American history since the Civil War. In fairness to the editor, it must be said that his notes and biographical index are accurate and very helpful.

The Civil War opened the road for the final triumph of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the United States. During the fight to the death with the slavocracy, Marx and Engels in their capacity as revolutionary labor leaders correctly stressed the positive, democratic, progressive and revolutionary significance of the struggle waged by the bourgeois republic. They based their practical political policy on the fact that the struggle of the working class for its own emancipation would be promoted by the victory of the North and thrown back by the triumph of the Confederacy. At the same time they never proclaimed their political confidence in the Republican bourgeoisie, freely criticized their conduct of the war, and maintained their independence *vis-à-vis* their temporary allies.

In the years that have elapsed since its conquest of power, the capitalist régime has become the mainstay of reaction in the United States and throughout the world. While giving full credit to the achievements of the Second American Revolution, contemporary Marxists are first of all obliged to expose the negative, bourgeois, reactionary sides of its character which historical development have thrust to the forefront. In this way they will remain true, not to the dead letter, but to the living spirit of Marxism embodied in these precious pages.

George E. NOVACK

The Truth About Kronstadt

The following article is a summary presentation of material contained in a pamphlet on this subject by the writer, which is planned for early publication.

THE MORE INDEFENSIBLE and iniquitous becomes the course pursued by the Anarchists in Spain, the louder their confrères abroad cry about Kronstadt. During the years of revolutionary upsurge, the Anarchists, the Mensheviks, the S.R.'s *et al.*, were on the defensive. Today, Stalinism has provided them with a demagogic cover for an offensive against those principles which alone made October possible. They seek to compromise Bolshevism by identifying it with Stalinism. They seize upon Kronstadt as their point of departure. Their theorem is most "elementary": Stalin shoots workers only because it is the essence of Bolshevism to shoot down workers; for example, Kronstadt! Lenin and Stalin are one. *Q.E.D.*

The whole art lies in distorting historical facts, monstrously exaggerating every subsidiary issue or question on which the Bolsheviks may have erred, and throwing a veil over the armed uprising against the Soviet power and the *real* program and aims of the mutiny.

Our task is primarily to expose the distorters and falsifiers at

work on the historical "facts" that serve them as a basis for their arraignment of Bolshevism.

First, as to the background of the mutiny. Far from occurring at a time when the Soviet power was out of danger (as the ideological adversaries of Bolshevism imply), it occurred in the year 1921, a crucial year in the life of the workers' state. By December 1920 the fronts in the Civil War were liquidated. There were no "fronts" but the danger still remained. The land with the barbaric heritage of Asiatic Czarism had been literally bled white by the havoc of the imperialist war, the years of Civil War and of imperialist blockade. The crisis in foodstuffs was aggravated by a fuel crisis. Vast sections of the population faced the immediate prospect of dying from hunger or freezing to death. With industry in ruins, transportation disrupted, millions of men demobilized from the army, the masses on the point of exhaustion, fertile soil was indeed available for the intrigues of the counter-revolution.

Far from reconciling themselves to defeat, the White Guards and their imperialist allies were stirred to new activity by the objective difficulties confronting the Bolsheviks. They made attempt after attempt to force a breach "from the inside", banking largely upon the support of petty bourgeois reaction against the

difficulties and privations accompanying the proletarian revolution.¹ The most important episode in this series took place in the very heart of the revolutionary stronghold. In the naval fortress of Kronstadt, a mutiny flared on March 2, 1921.

Nowadays a Dan says blandly: "The Kronstadters did not at all begin the insurrection. It is a slanderous myth."² But in 1921, the S.R.'s crawled out of their skins to make light of the uprising and all that it implied, while the Mensheviks tried to minimize and explain it away as something really unimportant in itself. The S.R.'s vowed that "the peaceful character of the Kronstadt movement was beyond any doubt"; if any insurgent steps were taken, they were only "measures of self-defense". Here is what the Mensheviks wrote not in the year 1937 but in 1921 when the events were still fresh:

The fact that Kronstadt's break with the Soviet power assumed the character of an armed uprising and ended in a bloody tragedy is of secondary importance in itself and, to a certain extent, accidental. Had the Soviet power evinced a little less granite hardness towards Kronstadt, the conflict between it and the sailors would have unfolded in less grave forms. This, however, would have in no way changed its historical significance. . . . Only on March 2, in reply to repressions, threats, and commands to obey unconditionally did the fleet reply with a resolution of non-recognition of the Soviet power and place two commissars under arrest.³

When Mensheviks originally presented their version of the Kronstadt events, they did not at all deny that Kronstadters began the mutiny. To be sure, they tried to convey the impression that there was more than ample justification for this in the alleged "repressions, threats, and commands". But you will observe that they simultaneously tried to evade the nub of the issue, the uprising itself, as a fact, after all, of little importance, secondary, and even "accidental". Why this glaring contradiction? They themselves supply the answer. It is their open avowal that this mutiny unfolded on the basis of anti-Soviet aims and program.⁴ The truth being what it was, it is hardly surprising that Berkman rushed to give us his oath for it that the Kronstadt mutineers were really "staunch adherents of the Soviet system" and were "earnestly seeking to find, by means friendly and peaceful, a solution of the pressing problems".⁵ In any case, these purveyors of "truth" are all agreed upon one thing, namely, that these "staunch" partisans of the Soviet power proceeded in the friendliest spirit of peace to take up arms—on the basis of a resolution of "non-recognition of Soviet power". But they did it, you see, "only on March 2".

"Only on March 2"! Every pertinent detail must be dolled up, otherwise the truth might not be so palatable. By this formulation, the Mensheviks, who only echo the S.R.'s, intend to evoke in the reader's mind, if not years and months then at least weeks of "provocation", "threats", "commands", "repressions", etc., etc. But stretch their chronology as they will, these historians together with their neophytes cannot antedate March 2 except by reference to events "towards the end of February". Their history of Kronstadt dates back as far as (and no further than) February 22—for occurrences not in Kronstadt but in Petrograd. As for Kronstadt itself, they can anticipate March 2 only by reference to February 28! Count as they will, they have at their disposal: three days and three resolutions. March 2 with its resolution of non-recognition of the Soviet power is preceded only by March 1 with its resolu-

tion for "freely elected Soviets". What happened within this interval of less than 24 hours to cause this swing from one alleged pole to its diametrical opposite? The only answer we get from the lips of the adversaries is the following: a Conference took place at Kronstadt. And what happened there?

Each "historian" gives his own account. Lawrence⁶ would have it, that the Conference was called for the purpose of drawing up and passing a resolution. Berkman insists that it was rather a gathering "to take counsel with the representatives of the Government."⁷ The S.R.'s swear that it was an electoral body, gathered for the specific purpose of electing a new Soviet, although the incumbent Soviet's term had not yet expired.⁸ To believe Berkman (and Lawrence), the Kronstadters were provoked to mutiny by Kuzmin's speech. In this they only improve on the S.R.'s who blame Kuzmin and Vassiliev.⁹

The most complete account of Kuzmin's speech is to be found in *Kronstadt Izvestia*, i.e., the organ of eye witnesses and chief participants at the Conference. Here it is:

*Instead of calming the meeting comrade Kuzmin irritated it. He spoke of the equivocal position of Kronstadt, patrols, dual power, the danger threatening from Poland, and the fact that the eyes of all Europe were upon us; assured us that all was quiet in Petrograd; underscored that he was wholly at the mercy of the delegates and that they had it in their power to shoot him if they so willed. He concluded his speech with a declaration that if the delegates wanted an open armed struggle then it would take place—the Communists would not voluntarily renounce power and would fight to the last ditch.*¹⁰

We leave it to future psychologists to decide why the S.R.'s chose to treat the contents of Kuzmin's speech in a different manner from Berkman's, and why they refrained from resorting to quotation marks as Berkman and Lawrence do in referring to Kuzmin's concluding statement. We cannot here take up in detail the glaring discrepancies in the various versions. Suffice it to say that the more we learn about Kuzmin's speech the more acutely the question poses itself: Just who did play the part of provocateur at this meeting?

A special point is made in all accounts of the fact that Kuzmin insisted that Petrograd was quiet (Berkman adds—on whose authority?—"and the workers satisfied"). Why should this have provoked anybody who was not being goaded into provocation? Was Kuzmin telling the truth? Or did the *Kronstadt Izvestia* lie when in its very first issue, on the next day, it carried a sensational headline: *General Insurrection in Petrograd?* Moreover, why did *Izvestia* keep lying about this and other alleged insurrections? Why did it even reprint dispatches from Helsingfors to bolster up its campaign of slander? In short, take Kuzmin's speech point by point as reported by *Izvestia*—or in any of the alleged summaries of it, yes, with or without Berkman's insidious quotation marks—and tell us not whether you are "simple men", "men and not old women", etc., etc., but whether if you had been delegates at this meeting to "elect a new Soviet", you would have thereupon stayed and appointed a "Provisional Revolutionary Committee"? Tell us, furthermore, whether you would have taken up arms in mutiny against the Soviet State? If not, why do you peddle this S.R. garbage and seek to confuse the vanguard of the working class with regard to what actually took place in Kronstadt—and especially at this meeting?

An incident far more ominous and elucidating than anything that Kuzmin might or might not have said took place at this gathering, which all the Berkman's slur over in a very tell-tale fashion. The Conference was thrown into a frenzy not by anything said by Kuzmin or Vassiliev (or Kalinin who was not present), but by a statement made from the floor that the Bolsheviks were marching arms in hand to attack the meeting. It was this that precipitated the "election" of a Provisional Revolutionary Committee. We look

⁶ *Vanguard*, Feb.-March, 1937.

⁷ *Loc. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

⁸ *Loc. cit.*, p. 11.

⁹ Victor Serge believes that it was all Kalinin's fault. "The Central Committee committed the enormous mistake of sending Kalinin. . . ." (*La Révolution Proletarienne*, Sept. 1937.)

¹⁰ *Izvestia of the Prov. Rev. Com. of Kronstadt*, No. 11, March 13, 1921.

¹ In Jan.-March 1921, occurred the Tumensk mutiny in the Tobolsk area in Siberia. The insurgents numbered 20,000 men. In May 1921, White Guard detachments aided by the Japanese descended on Vladivostok, which they held for a short time. After the signing of the Riga treaty (March 18, 1921), White Guard bands, some numbering thousands, others mere handfuls, invaded the Ukraine and other points of Soviet territory. Another series of raids followed into Karelia which began in October 23, 1921 and was liquidated only in February 1922. As late as October 1922, Soviet territory was dotted with roaming guerilla bands of the counter-revolution.

² *Sotsialisticheski Vestnik*, Aug. 25, 1937.

³ *Sots. Vestnik*, April 5, 1921. Our emphasis.

⁴ The S.R.'s were a trifle less precise on the political and seamy side of the mutiny. They said: "The working class organizations demanded a drastic change of power: some in the form of freely elected Soviets, others in the form of convoking the Constituent Assembly." (*The Truth About Russia, Volya Rossii*, Prague, 1921, p. 5.) In publishing this book the S.R.'s abroad made only a belated acknowledgement of their political part in the mutiny, even though their spokesmen in Russia at the time hid behind a mask of non-partisanship. This book has served as the principal, if not the only, source drawn upon by all the past and present critics of Bolshevism. Berkman's pamphlet, *The Kronstadt Rebellion* (1922) is merely a restatement of the alleged facts and interpretations of the S.R.'s, with a few significant alterations.

⁵ *The Kronstadt Rebellion*, p. 12. Emphasis in the original.

in vain in the writings of the "truthful" historians for any clarification as to the source of these "rumors". More than that, they conveniently "forget" (Berkman among others) that the Provisional Revolutionary Committee officially laid this rumor at the door of the *Bolsheviks themselves*. "This rumor was circulated by Communists in order to break up the meeting." (*Izvestia*, No. 11.) *Izvestia* furthermore admitted that the "report" that the Bolsheviks were about to attack the meeting with "fifteen carloads of soldiers and Communists, armed with rifles and machine guns" was made by "a delegate from *Sevastopol*". Even after the suppression of the mutiny the S.R.'s insisted that "according to the testimony of one of the authoritative leaders of the Kronstadt movement", the rumor about Dulkis and the *Kursanti* was true. Not only were rumors spread throughout the meeting, but the chairman concluded on this self-same note. From the account in *Kronstadt Izvestia* we learn that: "At the very last moment, the *comrade chairman* made an announcement that a detachment of 2,000 men was marching to attack the meeting, whereupon the assembled body dispersed with mingled emotions of alarm, excitement, and indignation. . . ." (No. 9, March 11, 1921.)

Who spread these rumors and why? We say: The ones who circulated them were the same people who spread the lies about the insurrection in Petrograd; the very ones who raised the slogan of the Constituent Assembly at the beginning and then switched to the "more realistic" slogan of "*Down with the Bankrupt Commune!*" (resolution adopted in Kronstadt on March 7); the very ones who charged that the "Bolshevik power had led us to famine, cold and chaos"; those who, masquerading as non-partisans, were duping the masses in Kronstadt; those who were seeking to capitalize on the difficulties of the Soviet power, and who headed the movement in order to guide it into the channels of the counter-revolution.

There is not a shadow of doubt that the S.R.'s were the prime, if not the sole, movers of this campaign of "rumors", which brought such infamous fruit. Any possibility for a peaceful solution of the Kronstadt crisis was eliminated, once a dual power was organized in the fortress. Time was indeed pressing, as we shall shortly prove. However one may speculate about the chances for averting bloodshed, the fact remains that it took the leaders of the mutiny only 72 hours to lead their followers (and dupes) into a direct conflict with the Soviets.

It is by no means excluded that the local authorities in Kronstadt bungled in their handling of the situation. The fact that the best revolutionists and fighters were urgently needed at vital centers would tend to support the contention that those assigned to so relatively "safe" a sector as Kronstadt were not men of outstanding qualifications. It is no secret that Kalinin, let alone Commissar Kuzmin, was none too highly esteemed by Lenin and his colleagues. The affinity between "mistakes" and such individuals as Kalinin is wonderful indeed but it cannot serve as a substitute for political analysis. In so far as the local authorities were blind to the full extent of the danger or failed to take proper and effective measures to cope with the crisis, to that extent their blunders played a part in the unfolding events, *i.e.*, facilitated for the counter-revolutionists their work of utilizing the objective difficulties to attain their ends.

How was it possible for the political leaders to turn Kronstadt so swiftly into an armed camp against the October revolution? What was the *real* aim of the mutineers? The supposition that the soldiers and sailors ventured upon an insurrection merely for the sake of the slogan of "Free Soviets" is absurd in itself. It is doubly absurd in view of the fact that the rest of the Kronstadt garrison consisted of backward and passive people who could not be used in the Civil War. These people could have been moved to insurrection only by profound economic needs and interests. These were the needs and interests of the fathers and brothers of these sailors and soldiers, that is, of peasants as traders in food products and raw materials. In other words, underlying the mutiny was the

expression of the petty bourgeois reaction against the difficulties and privations imposed by the conditions of the proletarian revolution. Nobody can deny this class character of the two camps. All other questions can be only of secondary importance. That the Bolsheviks may have committed errors of a general or concrete character, cannot alter the fact that they defended the acquisitions of the proletarian revolution against the bourgeois (and petty-bourgeois) reaction. That is why every critic must himself be examined from the standpoint as to which side of the firing line he finds himself. If he closes his eyes to the social and historical content of the Kronstadt mutiny then he is himself an element of petty bourgeois reaction against the proletarian revolution. (That is the case with Alexander Berkman, the Russian Mensheviks, and so on.) A trade union, say, of agricultural laborers may commit errors in a strike against farmers. We can criticize them but our criticism should be based upon a fundamental solidarity with the worker's trade union and upon our opposition to the exploiters of the workers even if these exploiters happen to be small farmers.

The Bolsheviks never claimed that their politics were infallible. That is a Stalinist credo. Victor Serge, in his assertion that the N.E.P. (*i.e.*, a limited concession to unlimited bourgeois demands) was belatedly introduced, only repeats in a mild form the criticism of an important political error which Lenin himself sharply recognized in the spring of 1921. We are ready to grant the error. But how can this change our basic estimate? Far outweighing a speculation on the part of Serge or anybody else that the mutiny could have been avoided if only the Bolsheviks had granted the concession of the N.E.P. to Kronstadt, is the mutiny itself and the categorical declaration of *Kronstadt Izvestia* that the mutineers were demanding "not free trade but a genuine Soviet power" (No. 12, March 14, 1921).

What could and did this "genuine Soviet power" signify? We have already heard from the S.R.'s and Mensheviks their estimate of the basis of the mutiny. The S.R.'s and Mensheviks always maintained that their aims were identical with those of the Bolsheviks but only that they intended to attain them in a "different" way. We know the class content of this "difference". Lenin and Trotsky contended that the slogan of "Free Soviets" signified materially and practically, in principle as well as essence, the abolition of proletarian dictatorship instituted and represented by the Bolshevik party. This can be denied only by those who will deny that with all their partial errors the policies of the Bolsheviks stood always in the service of the proletarian revolution. Will Serge deny it? Yet Serge forgets that the elementary duty of a scientific analysis is not to take the abstract slogans of different groups but to discover their real social content.¹¹ In this case such an analysis presents no great difficulties.

Let us listen to the most authoritative spokesman of the Russian counter-revolution on his evaluation of the Kronstadt program. On March 11, 1921, in the very heat of the uprising, Miliukov wrote:

This program may be expressed in the brief slogan: "Down with the Bolsheviks! Long live the Soviets!" . . . "Long live the Soviets", at the present time, most likely signifies that the power will pass from the Bolsheviks to the moderate socialists, who will receive a majority in the Soviets. . . . We have many other reasons for not protesting against the Kronstadt slogan. . . . It is self-evident for us, that leaving aside a forceful installation of power from the right or the left, this sanction [of the new power—J. G. W.] which is of course temporary, can be effected only through institutions of the type of Soviets. Only in this way can the transfer be effected painlessly and be recognized by the country as a whole.¹²

In a subsequent issue Miliukov's organ, *Poslednya Novosti*, in-

¹¹ In his recent comments on Kronstadt, Victor Serge concedes that the Bolsheviks once confronted with the mutiny had no other recourse except to crush it. In this he demarcates himself from the assorted varieties of Anarcho-Menshevism. But the substance of his contribution to the discussion is to lament over the experiences of history instead of seeking to understand them as a Marxist. Serge insists that it would have been "easy" to forestall the mutiny—if only the Central Committee had not sent Kalinin to talk to the sailors! Once the mutiny flared, it would have been "easy" to avoid the worst—if only Berkman had talked to the sailors! To adopt such an approach to the Kronstadt events is to take the superficial viewpoint: "Ah, if history had only spared us Kronstadt!" It can and does lead only to eclecticism and the loss of all political perspectives.

¹² *Poslednya Novosti*, March 11, 1921.

sisted that the Bolshevik power could be supplanted only through Soviets "freed" from the Bolsheviks.¹³

In their defense of the Kronstadt mutiny, the Mensheviks, as staunch partisans of capitalist restoration, held essentially the same viewpoint as Miliukov. Together with the latter, the Mensheviks defended in Kronstadt a step towards the restoration of capitalism.¹⁴ In the years that followed they could not but favor in the main Stalin's course (advised by Abramovich and others in 1921) of "decisively breaking with all adventurist plans of spreading the 'world revolution'", and undertaking instead the building of socialism in one country. With a reservation here and a bleat there, they are today quite in favor of Stalin's gospel of socialism in one country. In this, as in remaining true to the banner raised by the Kronstadt mutiny, they only remain true to themselves—as the arch supporters of every open or veiled trend toward capitalist restoration in Russia and capitalist stabilization in the rest of the world.

The connection between the counter-revolution and Kronstadt can be established not only from the lips of the adversaries of Bolshevism but also on the basis of irrefutable facts. At the beginning of February when there was no sign of any disturbances either in Petrograd or nearby Kronstadt, the capitalist press abroad published dispatches purportedly relating to serious trouble in Kronstadt, giving details about an uprising in the fleet and the arrest of the Baltic Commissar.¹⁵ These dispatches, while false at the time, materialized with amazing precision a few weeks later.

Referring to this "coincidence", Lenin in his report to the Tenth Party Congress on March 8 1921 had the following to say:

We have witnessed the passing of power from the Bolsheviks to some kind of indefinite conglomeration or alliance of motley elements, presumably only a little to the right and perhaps even to the "left" of the Bolsheviks—so indefinite is the sum of political groupings who have attempted to seize power in their hands in Kronstadt. It is beyond doubt that concurrently the White Guard Generals—as you all know—played a major part in this. This has been proved to the hilt. Two weeks prior to the Kronstadt events, the Parisian press already carried the news that there was an insurrection in Kronstadt. (*Works*, Vol. XXVI, p. 214.)

It is an easily established fact that when these dispatches came to the attention of Trotsky, before any outbreaks in Kronstadt, he immediately communicated with the Commissar of the Baltic fleet warning him to take precautions because the appearance of similar dispatches in the bourgeois press referring to other alleged uprisings had been shortly followed by counter-revolutionary attempts in the specified regions. It goes without saying that all the "truthful" historians prefer to pass over in silence this "coincidence", together with the fact that the capitalist press seized upon the mutiny to conduct an "unprecedented hysterical campaign" (Lenin).¹⁶ News items in this campaign could be adduced to any number, but no list would be complete without the reports on the same subject that appeared in the *Kronstadt Izvestia*:

First issue, March 3: "GENERAL INSURRECTION IN PETROGRAD."

March 7: Headline—"Last Minute News From Petrograd"—"Mass arrests and executions of workers and sailors continue. Situation very tense. All the toiling masses await an overturn at any moment."

March 8: "The Helsingfors newspaper *Hufvudstadsbladet* . . .

¹³ *Idem.*, March 18, 1921.

¹⁴ In the programmatic theses on Russia proposed by the Central Committee of the Mensheviks in 1921, we find the following: "Inasmuch as in the immediate period ahead the capitalist forms will retain their sway in world economy, therefore the economic system of the Russian Republic cannot but be consonant with the capitalist relations prevailing in the advanced countries of Europe and America. . . ." (*Sots. Vestnik*, Dec. 2, 1921.)

¹⁵ "The Revolt of the Baltic Fleet Against the Soviet Government"—a signed article in *L'Echo de Paris*, Feb. 14, 1921. On the same day *Matin*, another Parisian newspaper, carried a dispatch under the heading: "Moscow Takes Measures Against the Kronstadt Insurgents." The Russian White Guard press carried similar dispatches. The specified source was Helsingfors, from where the dispatches were sent out on Feb. 11.

¹⁶ In his concluding speech on March 16, Lenin read to the Congress a report covering the campaign in the press. Here are a few headlines in the papers referred to by Lenin:

"Moscow Rising Reported. Petrograd Fighting." (*London Times*, March 2, 1921.)

"L'Agitation Antibolchévique. Petrograd et Moscou Seraient aux Mains des Insurgés qui ont Formé un Gouvernement Provisoire." (*Matin*, March 7.)

"Kronstadt gegen Petrograd, Sinowjew Verhaftet." (*Berliner Tageblatt*, March 7.)

"Les Marins Révoltés Débarquent à Petrograd." (*Matin*, March 8.)

"Dex Aufstand in Russland." (*Yossische Zeitung*, March 10.)

"Petrograd Fighting. Red Batteries Silenced." (*London Times*, March 9.)

prints the following news from Petrograd. . . Petrograd workers are striking and demonstratively leaving the factories, crowds bearing red banners demand a change of government—the overthrow of the Communists."¹⁷

March 11: "The Government In Panic." "Our cry has been heard. Revolutionary sailors, Red Army men and workers in Petrograd are already coming to our assistance. . . The Bolshevik power feels the ground slipping from under its feet and has issued orders in Petrograd to open fire at any group of five or more people gathering in the streets. . . ."

It is hardly surprising that the White Guard press abroad launched an intensive drive to raise funds, clothing, food, etc., under the slogan: "For Kronstadt!"

How explain away this array of facts and incontrovertible evidence? Very simply: By charging the Bolsheviks with slander! No one is more brazen than Berkman in denying the connection between the counter-revolution and the mutiny. He goes so far as to declare flatly that the Czarist General Kozlovsky "played no rôle whatever in the Kronstadt events". The admissions of the S.R.'s themselves, and Kozlovsky's statements in an interview he gave to the press, establish beyond all doubt that Kozlovsky together with his officers openly associated themselves from the outset with the mutiny. Kozlovsky himself was "elected" to the "Council of Defense". Here is how the Mensheviks reported Kozlovsky's interview: "On the very first day of the insurrection the Council of Military Specialists had elaborated a plan for an immediate assault on Oranienbaum, which had every chance for success at the time, for the Government was caught off guard and could not have brought up reliable troops in time. . . The political leaders of the insurrection would not agree to take the offensive and the opportunity was let slip."¹⁸

If the plan failed, it was only because Kozlovsky and his colleagues were unable to convince the "political leaders", i.e., his S.R. allies, that the moment was propitious for exposing their true visage and program. The S.R.'s thought it best to preserve the mask of "defense" and to temporize. When Berkman wrote his pamphlet, he knew these facts. Indeed, he reproduced the interview of Kozlovsky almost verbatim in his pages, making, as is his custom, a few significant alterations, and hiding the real source of what appears as his own appraisal.

It is no accident that Berkman and his neophytes have to plagiarize from all the Kozlovskys, and the S.R.'s and the Mensheviks. The rejection by the Anarchists of the Marxian analysis of the state inevitably leads them to the acceptance of any and all other views up to and including participation in the government of a bourgeois state.

How much time was there to "negotiate"? The mutineers were in control of the fortress on March 2. Both Kozlovsky and Berkman vouch for the fact that the Bolsheviks had been "caught by surprise". Trotsky arrived in Leningrad only on March 5. The first attack against Kronstadt was launched on March 8. Could the Bolsheviks have waited longer?

Many military experts hold the opinion that the failure of the mutiny was largely due to the failure of the ice to thaw. Had the waters begun to flow freely between Kronstadt and Leningrad, land troops could not have been used by the Soviet Government, while naval reinforcements could have been rushed to the insurgents already in control of a first class naval fortress, with battleships, heavy artillery, machine guns, etc., at their disposal. The danger of this development is neither a "myth" nor a "Bolshevik slander". In the streets of Kronstadt ice was already thawing. On March 15,

¹⁷ The Mensheviks in Russia had no press of their own, and therefore could participate only clandestinely in the campaign of the imperialists abroad, and their S.R. allies in Kronstadt. Here is an opening paragraph in one of their leaflets, dated March 8, 1921, and issued in the name of the "Petersburg Committee of S.D.L.P.D.": "The structure of the Bolshevik dictatorship is cracking and crumbling. Peasant uprisings—in the Ukraine, in Siberia, in Southwest Russia. . . Strikes and ferment—among workers in Petersburg and Moscow. . . The sailors in Kronstadt have risen. . . Starvation, cold, misery and unprecedented embitterment rife among the population in the rest of Russia. . . This is the unalluring picture of the Soviet Republic three years after the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks. The structure of the Bolshevik dictatorship is cracking and crumbling. . ." (*Sots. Vestnik*, April 20, 1921.)

¹⁸ *Sots. Vestnik*, April 5, 1921. Our emphasis.

three days before the capture of the fortress in a heroic assault in which 300 delegates of the Tenth Party Congress participated, No. 13 of *Kronstadt Izvestia* featured on its front page an order to clear the streets "in view of the thaw". Had the Bolsheviks temporized, they would have precipitated a situation that would have taken an immeasurably greater toll of lives and sacrifices, let alone jeopardizing the very fate of the revolution.

When all these historians cite the names of the fortress and the names of the warships, *Petropavlovsk* and *Sevastopol*—"the ships that in 1917 had been the main support of the Bolsheviks"¹⁰—they carefully avoid mentioning the fact that the personnel of the fortress as well as of the warships could not have possibly remained static throughout the years between 1917 and 1921. While the fortress and the ships remained well-nigh intact physically, a great deal happened to the revolutionary sailors in the period of the Civil War, in which they played a heroic part in practically every sphere. It is of course impossible to paint the picture as if the Kronstadt sailors had participated in the October revolution of 1917 only to remain behind in the fortress and on the ships while their comrades-in-arms fought the Wrangels, Kolchaks, Denikins, Yudenitches, etc. But that is, in effect, what the opponents of Bolshevism attempt to imply with their harping on the words "Kronstadt", "revolutionary sailors", and so on. The trick is all too obvious. Trotsky's recent reply to Wendelin Thomas which pricks this bubble could not but have aroused their ire. With contemptible hypocrisy, all of them rise in fake indignation against Trotsky's pretended slur on the "mass". Yet in replying to Thomas, Trotsky merely rephrased the facts he brought out in 1921: "A great many of the revolutionary sailors, who played a major part in the October revolution of 1917 had been in the interim transferred to other spheres of activity. They were replaced in large measure by chance elements, among whom were a good many Latvian, Eston-

ian and Finnish sailors, whose attitude to their duties was that of holding a temporary job and the bulk of whom were non-participants in the revolutionary struggle."

There is no spectacle more revolting than that of people who have, like the Anarchists and Mensheviks, been among other things the co-partners of Stalinism in its People's Frontism, and who bear the responsibility for the massacre of the flower of the Spanish proletariat, pointing an accusing finger at the leaders of the October revolution for putting down a mutiny against the revolution: It was all the fault of the Bolsheviks. They provoked the Kronstadters. . . . *Etc., etc.*

There is no denying that the S.R.'s and Mensheviks are experts, if not final authorities, on provocation. Nothing that Kerensky and Co. did ever provoked them even to justify the taking up of arms against the Provisional Government. On the contrary, the Mensheviks were very emphatic in 1917 in their demands that revolutionary Kronstadt—and Bolsheviks in general—be "curbed". As for the S.R.'s, they did not long hesitate to take up arms in the struggle against October. Bolshevism always did "provoke" these gentlemen who have invariably taken their positions on the other side of the barricades.

These are the incontestable facts. The sailors composed the bulk of the insurgent forces. The garrison and the population remained passive. Caught off guard by the mutiny, the Red Army command at first sought to temporize, hoping for a shift in the moods of the insurgents. Time was pressing. When it became obvious that there was no possibility of tearing the grey mass from the leadership of the S.R.'s and their henchmen, Kronstadt was taken by assault. In so doing the Bolsheviks only did their duty. They defended the conquests of the revolution against the plots of the counter-revolution. That is the only verdict that history can and will pass.

John G. WRIGHT

Workers Front and Popular Front

AFTER AN absence of five months I found a Popular Front apparently more solid than ever, ratified by universal suffrage after more than a year of the exercise of power, consolidated by the cantonal elections at the beginning of October in which all the political parties composing it gained something while the conservative parties registered setbacks and the pro-fascist formations of La Rocque and Doriot rallied only a tiny number of voters.

That's the appearance. The reality is quite different. The Popular Front still is in power but it maintains itself there only on the condition of renouncing its program on every point, of submitting more each day to the pressure of the adversary and of yielding to it constantly and openly.

Parallely, and this is much more serious, the Workers' Front, after its important victories of May-June 1936, finds itself reduced to the defensive. The dash which impelled it has progressively diminished. It is now the employers' organizations that attack and before this counter-offensive which was easy to foresee the workers are poorly defended by their trade union organizations. The gains of the past year have already been broken through at more than one point. When they seek to defend them by the strike, which is their only weapon in the long run, they collide regularly with

the government, which is still one of the Popular Front and which the socialists and Stalinists support with their votes on every occasion.

The distinction between Popular Front and Workers' Front may seem arbitrary. It is rarely that they are distinguished or that the question is thus put; still more rarely that they are counterposed. Yet this distinction expresses the real situation; it is not formulated this way but the events themselves show it up and as they unroll they render it increasingly visible. It already manifests itself in the growing discontent of the workers towards a policy whose pernicious consequences they feel directly.

In order to be oriented in a fairly complicated situation, the political and social agitation of the recent years must be briefly summarized.

The Popular Front movement was born of the miscarried insurrection fomented by the conservative parties and the pro-fascist leagues on February 6, 1934. What exactly did this street action and the attempted assault upon the Palais-Bourbon represent? What did the men who unleashed them want? Simply to drive from power the Radicals and to take revenge, even by a rising, for the elections that had been unfavorable to them? Or did they have a program, a plan, a new governmental crew

ready to install a dictatorial or fascistic régime? To this day it is still hard to say. But I am, for my part, absolutely convinced that what was involved was nothing more than the overturning by violence of the verdict of universal suffrage—a repetition of the operation successfully realized in 1926 by the launching of a financial panic which compelled Herriot to yield power to Poincaré. The big bourgeoisie does not want to see the Radical petty bourgeoisie installed in power. But the form which the action of its leagues assumed this time—a rising against the parliament and, it seems, against the republican institutions—alarmed the country as a whole; the provinces replied spontaneously to the Parisian rising; everywhere the workers, the small peasants, the artisans, the petty functionaries mobilized by themselves in order to organize the resistance. It was a repetition of the crises through which the Third Republic has passed since its establishment: the 16th of May in 1876-1877, Boulangerism in the early '90s; the Dreyfus affair of 1898-1900: the "reds" against the "whites", the old political struggle colored this time by the fascist threat. A spontaneous union occurred in the ranks, desired by the workers who no longer have confidence in the Third International. The amazing capers of the Stalinists, leaping suddenly from the

¹⁰ Berkman, *The Kronstadt Rebellion*, p. 8.

Third Period—the direct struggle for the seizure of power—to the simple defense of bourgeois democracy, cemented the Popular Front by solidly welding the workers to it. “Anti-fascism” provided a convenient propaganda slogan and an even better electoral weapon, which guaranteed easy successes and the triumph of the Popular Front in the legislative elections of May 1936. A Popular Front government was then constituted, the leadership of which was demanded by the party that elected the largest number of candidates: the Blum ministry was set up.

But the ascent to power of Blum occurred under absolutely exceptional conditions. The workers did not confine themselves to voting for the candidates of the Popular Front. Right in the midst of the electoral agitation, they launched a potent strike movement which, beginning in the Paris region and the metal plants, very rapidly spread throughout the country and to all the industries, the big plants and the small. And no ordinary strikes, but strikes conducted under the new form of occupying the plants. The employers had profited by the economic crisis to impose upon the workers substantial wage reductions and harsh working conditions; in the textile industry, for example, a daily wage of less than 20 francs was the rule rather than the exception. Here too the movement began with the rank and file. In the metallurgical industry of the Paris region, where the first strikes were launched, the percentage of unionized workers was very small. The militancy of the workers had been aroused by the reactionary riot of February 6 and developed by the rodomontades of Colonel de la Rocque and his *Croix de Feu*, by the frequent mobilization of his well-disciplined troops at various points of the country. In turn, they profited by favorable new conditions created by a substantial program of new armaments: the industrialists were crammed with government orders that had to be filled rapidly.

It is this specifically labor action that assured the workers the 40-hour week, paid vacations, shop delegates, collective agreements allowing everywhere substantial increases of wages, above all of those that were shamefully low. The Blum cabinet confined itself to recording in the labor legislation the gains already realized in fact. The bills it submitted to the parliament were adopted virtually without discussion. The Senate, particularly retrograde in matters of social legislation and hostile, by its very make-up, to workers' demands, voted without discussion for what the government proposed out of fear of worse; the Senators were trembling, literally and not only figuratively. The trade union heads, Stalinists as well as friends of Jouhaux, had a hard job to make the workers accept compromise settlements, the strikers demanding the full acceptance of their demands.

This point must be insisted on. It is by their own action, by their direct action, by the occupation of the factories, that the workers gained the great reforms mentioned above and obtained substantial wage

increases. But the Popular Front attributed them to itself, inscribed them on its credit side and more particularly, inside the Popular Front, on the credit side of the Léon Blum cabinet. In fact, the governments of the Popular Front were not only not going to consolidate the gains but their policy was to have the exclusive effect of taking back some of them indirectly—the rises in wages by the devaluations of the currency and the rise in the cost of living—and of compromising others.

The cantonal elections at the beginning of October were to provide a very valuable general indication of the state of mind of the whole population towards the Popular Front and towards its policy as experienced in sixteen months of governmental action. As I said at the outset, they were a success for all the parties belonging to the Popular Front—a result all the more important and significant because the mode of balloting peculiar to these elections greatly favors the country as against the city: one councillor per canton, be it rural with a few thousand inhabitants, or industrial with tens of thousands. Another fact no less important: the real victors were the socialists. The Radicals gained in votes but lost several seats. The Stalinists, who had till then penetrated the cantonal assemblies with the greatest difficulty—especially because the last general elections had taken place while they were still in the “Third Period”—quadrupled their very small number of councillors, which makes it possible for them to try to cover up their defeat. Only, the defeat was definite and too obvious to be dissimulated; their few successes were absolutely out of proportion to the enormous efforts they made, the great sums of money they spent, the means they employed to pick up votes at any price, the most typical of which was the slogan: *Votez français!*—which confused them with the candidates of La Rocque or Doriot. Of *Votez communiste!* there was no longer a sign. Not only the incontestable victory reserved to the socialists but the very dimensions of this victory surprised everybody—the socialist leaders included. In point of fact, it was thought that the socialist candidates would suffer from the wear upon their leaders in the government, above all from the manner in which Léon Blum, since the month of March, had capitulated to the bourgeoisie by proclaiming the need of a “breathing spell” in the workers' actions, with the aggravation that four months later he accepted defeat without struggle, consenting, under the brutal injunction of the reactionary Senate, to concede the direction of the ministry to the Radicals, to allow Georges Bonnet to be brought from Washington as minister of Finance, a position of primary importance under the present circumstances. Georges Bonnet was openly a right wing Radical, belonging to the group of Radicals basically hostile to the Popular Front. His first concern was to destroy progressively and systematically the timid reforms accomplished by his socialist successor, Vincent Auriol. It was a matter of reassuring and tranquillizing the bourgeoisie, of restoring its confidence.

The socialists, who remained in the ministry in a reduced position, swallowed all these disavowals of their governmental action.

On the other hand, in foreign policy, the shameful attitude of Léon Blum towards the pro-fascist rebellion of Franco against a simply republican régime, itself also the outcome of a Popular Front movement, had provoked the indignation and the anger of the workers.

On these two central points, Léon Blum strove methodically to justify his policy. He invoked two “alibis”.

For his domestic policy, he said repeatedly: “The government which I headed was not a socialist government; it was, as everyone knows, a government of the Popular Front; therefore there could be no question of applying the program of our party but rather that of the Popular Front. That is just what I did to the best of my ability. There are other parties besides our own in the Popular Front, notably the Radicals. A movement like the Popular Front has its limitations. That must not be forgotten. Nor must we forget what we have done, the great reforms that we realized.” An easy defense, a convenient *distinguo* to explain away everything, even the disavowals and the retreats before the bourgeoisie, but still of a kind with which to impress the voters.

As to Spain, the adherence to the so-called non-intervention policy seemed more difficult to justify. It is not necessary to be privy to the chancelleries to know the real reason for it: it was imposed on the French government by the British cabinet, stout defender of the interests of the British bourgeoisie and resolutely hostile to a socialist revolution in Spain. But Léon Blum carefully refrained from admitting this. He affirmed that the non-intervention policy had saved the peace; intervention meant inevitable war. Take note that for the French government nothing more was involved than permitting the delivery of orders placed in France by a regular government, a government of the Popular Front, against a pro-fascist military rebellion already kept in check at Madrid and at Barcelona, the two capitals of Spain, by the Spanish proletariat. But by repeating, falsely: intervention meant inevitable war, Léon Blum profoundly perturbed the workers and the peasants, above all the latter who, having a deep aversion to war, were quite disposed to accept this justification of an indefensible policy.

Another element of the socialist success must be sought in the growing discreditment of the Stalinists among the proletariat in France. Their renunciation, now complete, of communism and the duplicity by means of which they sought to cover it up, their pursuit of the “Front of Frenchmen”, in preparation of the next imperialist war, alienated from them the best and the most conscious people in the working class. To be sure, this discreditment should not be exaggerated. The Stalinist grip upon a large part of the French proletariat still remains serious and disturbing. But it is nevertheless a significant and important fact that in the North, the industrial region

par excellence. and in various others, notably in Marseilles and throughout Provence, the cantonal elections showed them on the decline. The votes they lost went to the socialist candidates.

At the moment when the Popular Front triumphed in the elections, the workers had already lost a part of the gains that they had wrested by the strike in May-June 1936. The enormous rise in the cost of living—about 50 percent—had progressively destroyed the wage increases they had obtained. Only those workers, in very rare trades, had been preserved who had demanded, in the collective agreements, the sliding scale—wages following, even if tardily, the rise in living costs. Whereas those most sacrificed were the surest voters for the candidates of the Popular Front: the functionaries. Their salaries, very low, did not vary. Vincent Auriol, then Minister of Finance, had asked them to be patient, the cashbox of the State being too poor and the budgetary deficit too high to suffer an increase in expenditures. As a consequence, their *real* salaries had substantially declined and had become so inadequate that a lively agitation was manifested among them, the strike itself being envisaged as a supreme resort. After some horse-trading to which the leaders of their organizations lent themselves they had to be content with the derisory alms that the all-powerful Georges Bonnet was willing to grant them: 100 francs per month.

The taking back of the 40-hour week—the other great workers' gain—could not be realized in so simple nor, above all, in so automatic a fashion. The workers are resolved to defend it. But the bourgeoisie, which has already begun its attack, does not conduct it frontally; it operates very skillfully. It laments over the consequences of the reduction in the working time; over the slowing down of production which prevented French industry from profiting by the economic boom as most of the great nations did; and the increase in the price of manufactured commodities which puts it in an unfavorable position at the moment when competition is becoming sharper on the world markets. It is especially alarmed by the slowing down of war manufacturing which the "enemy"—Berlin-Rome—is pursuing at an accelerated rhythm.

Heeding these complaints, the Chautemps government charged the National Economic Council to proceed to a general investigation of production and to study, more particularly, the effects of the establishment of the 40-hour week. The conclusions of the report of this investigation have just been published. A large section is devoted to the 40-hour week. To be sure, it is not proposed to abrogate it: so drastic a measure is, for the moment, impossible. But it speaks of the necessary "regulations" for giving the law the indispensable "flexibility". Several of these "regulations" have forthwith been realized by decrees. Others will be the object of a more thorough examination. But it can already be seen that the attack will go through the war industries. The report dwells, in fact, on the absolute necessity of accelerating the manufacture of armaments and munitions and underlines the fact that both the workers' and employers' delegations found themselves fully in agreement on this point. Since, on the other hand, a big campaign is now being conducted in all the press and the newspapers repeat each morning that France has already been greatly outdistanced by Germany and by Italy in the field of aviation and in the construction of new naval units, it appears clear that the 40-hour week is being scheduled to disappear soon in the factories working for the war, which are today nationalized. And it is not the Stalinists who will defend it, for they are now in the front ranks of the most inflamed nationalists and keep repeating that they want a strong France.

This action, pursued on legal soil against the recent gains of the working class, and directed by the Popular Front government itself, is accompanied by a direct action pursued by the employers. The latter constantly provoke their workers by various violations of the stipulations in the collective agreements. It is a period of "taking soundings": when the workers fail to react, a first breach is made which will be enlarged by other attempts; if they defend themselves energetically by the strike and the occupation of the factories or stores, the employers hasten to accept a compromise in which they always win something.

To these two actions, which are public, is added a third, which is clandestine. At

the very moment when the employers declare their acceptance of the collective agreements, when they sign the contracts with their right hand, the left distributes subsidies to La Rocque or Doriot for the organization of shock troops whose first task is the destruction of the workers' organizations. They also subsidize a secret organization known as *Comité Secret d'Action Révolutionnaire*, which has already been functioning for a long time, formed by the most active elements of the *Croix de Feu* and of the *Camelots du Roi*, accumulating arms, munitions and explosives in specially arranged cellars, and which the police of the Popular Front has only just now discovered.

Thus the present situation, fairly dark, is characterized by the following features: the workers are progressively despoiled of the fruits of their victories by the Popular Front government which they brought to power; they feel it more or less plainly. Nevertheless, something of their confidence in the Popular Front still subsists and the discontentment manifests itself solely in the form of a certain push towards the socialists. The bourgeoisie, surprised by the sudden attack of May-June 1936, has already regained enough strength and self-confidence for the methodical preparation of a counter-offensive. The workers' drive is not, however, completely broken; the recent occupations of factories and stores have just proved it. But the workers have been left to themselves. On the socialist side, a return of the socialists to power is vaguely envisaged, a second Léon Blum ministry, provided *this time* with a precise and "socialist" program of action. In the General Confederation of Labor, there is a lot of chatter about the "plan" and "structural reforms". The paradox of the present moment lies in the fact that it is the bourgeoisie that is arming and thinking of resorting to revolutionary action, while the workers will be turned over to it disarmed by the Stalinists who are preoccupied primarily with realizing the "Front of Frenchmen". Such are the fruits of the Popular Front.

PARIS, December 1937.

Alfred ROSMER

90 Years of the 'Communist Manifesto'

IT IS HARD to believe that the centennial of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* is only ten years away! This pamphlet, displaying greater genius than any other in world literature, astounds us even today by its freshness. Its most important sections appear to have been written yesterday. Assuredly, the young authors (Marx was 29, Engels 27) were able to look further into the future than anyone before them, and perhaps than anyone since them.

Already in their joint preface to the edition of 1872, Marx and Engels declared that despite the fact that certain secondary

The translation of the following article which appeared in the last issue contained a number of unfortunate errors, some of which were so serious as to distort the thought. Rather than print a list of the corrections, we are publishing the article in full for the convenience of our readers and in a translation which the author has had an opportunity to check and revise. The article was written as a preface to the first edition of the *Manifesto* in the Afrikaans language. An editorial note last month erroneously stated that it is the language of the natives of the Union of South Africa; it is in fact the language spoken by the people of Dutch or Huguenot ancestry in South Africa.—ED.

passages in the *Manifesto* were antiquated, they felt that they no longer had any right to alter the original text inasmuch as the *Manifesto* had already become a historical document, during the intervening period of twenty-five years. Sixty-five additional years have elapsed since that time. Isolated passages in the *Manifesto* have receded still further into the past. We shall try to establish succinctly in this Preface both those ideas in the *Manifesto* which retain their full force today and those which require important alteration or amplification.

1. The materialist conception of history,

discovered by Marx only a short while before and applied with consummate skill in the *Manifesto*, has completely withstood the test of events and the blows of hostile criticism. It constitutes today one of the most precious instruments of human thought. All other interpretations of the historical process have lost all scientific meaning. We can state with certainty that it is impossible in our time not only to be a revolutionary militant but even a literate observer in politics without assimilating the materialist interpretation of history.

2. The first chapter of the *Manifesto* opens with the following words: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." This postulate, the most important conclusion drawn from the materialist interpretation of history, immediately became an issue in the class struggle. Especially venomous attacks were directed by reactionary hypocrites, liberal doctrinaires and idealistic democrats against the theory which replaced "common welfare," "national unity" and "eternal moral truths" as the driving force by the struggle of material interests. They were later joined by recruits from the ranks of the labor movement itself, by the so-called revisionists, i.e., the proponents of reviewing ("revising") Marxism in the spirit of class collaboration and class conciliation. Finally, in our own time, the same path has been followed in practise by the contemptible epigones of the Communist International (the "Stalinists"): the policy of the so-called "People's Front" flows wholly from the denial of the laws of the class struggle. Meanwhile, it is precisely the epoch of imperialism, bringing all social contradictions to the point of highest tension, which gives to the *Communist Manifesto* its supreme theoretical triumph.

3. The anatomy of capitalism, as a specific stage in the economic development of society, was given by Marx in its finished form in *Capital* (1867). But already in the *Communist Manifesto* the main lines of the future analysis are firmly sketched: the payment for labor power as equivalent to the cost of its reproduction; the appropriation of surplus value by the capitalists; competition as the basic law of social relations; the ruination of intermediate classes, i.e., the urban petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry; the concentration of wealth in the hands of an ever diminishing number of property owners at the one pole, and the numerical growth of the proletariat, at the other; the preparation of the material and political pre-conditions for the socialist régime.

4. The proposition in the *Manifesto* concerning the tendency of capitalism to lower the living standards of the workers, and even to transform them into paupers has been subjected to a heavy barrage. Parsons, professors, ministers, journalists, social-democratic theoreticians, and trade union leaders came to the front against the so-called "theory of impoverishment". They invariably discovered signs of growing prosperity among the toilers, palming

off the labor aristocracy as the proletariat, or taking a fleeting tendency as permanent. Meanwhile, even the development of the mightiest capitalism in the world, namely, U. S. capitalism, has transformed millions of workers into paupers who are maintained at the expense of federal, municipal or private charity.

5. As against the *Manifesto*, which depicted commercial and industrial crises as a series of ever more extensive catastrophes, the revisionists vowed that the national and international development of trusts would assure control over the market, and lead gradually to the abolition of crises. The close of the last century and the beginning of the present one were in reality marked by a development of capitalism so tempestuous as to make crises seem only "accidental" stoppages. But this epoch has gone beyond return. In the last analysis, truth proved to be on Marx's side in this question as well.

6. "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." This succinct formula, which the leaders of the social democracy looked upon as a journalistic paradox, contains in fact the only scientific theory of the state. The democracy fashioned by the bourgeoisie is not, as both Bernstein and Kautsky thought, an empty sack which one can undisturbedly fill with any kind of class content. Bourgeois democracy can serve only the bourgeoisie. A government of the "People's Front", whether headed by Blum or Chautemps, Caballero or Negrin, is only "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie". Whenever this "committee" manages affairs poorly, the bourgeoisie dismisses it with a boot.

7. "Every class struggle is a political struggle." "The organization of the proletariat as a class [is] consequently its organization into a political party." Trade unionists, on the one hand, and anarcho-syndicalists on the other, have long shied away—and even now try to shy away—from the understanding of these historical laws. "Pure" trade unionism has now been dealt a crushing blow in its chief refuge: the United States. Anarcho-syndicalism has suffered an irreparable defeat in its last stronghold—Spain. Here too the *Manifesto* proved correct.

8. The proletariat cannot conquer power within the legal framework established by the bourgeoisie. "Communists openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions." Reformism sought to explain this postulate of the *Manifesto* on the grounds of the immaturity of the movement at that time, and the inadequate development of democracy. The fate of Italian, German, and a great number of other "democracies" proves that "immaturity" is the distinguishing trait of the ideas of the reformists themselves.

9. For the socialist transformation of society, the working class must concentrate in its hands such power as can smash each and every political obstacle barring the

road to the new system. "The proletariat organized as the ruling class"—this is the dictatorship. At the same time it is the only true proletarian democracy. Its scope and depth depend upon concrete historical conditions. The greater the number of states that take the path of the socialist revolution, the freer and more flexible forms will the dictatorship assume, the broader and more deep-going will be workers' democracy.

10. The international development of capitalism has predetermined the international character of the proletarian revolution. "United action, of the leading civilized countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat." The subsequent development of capitalism has so closely knit all sections of our planet, both "civilized" and "uncivilized", that the problem of the socialist revolution has completely and decisively assumed a world character. The Soviet bureaucracy attempted to liquidate the *Manifesto* with respect to this fundamental question. The Bonapartist degeneration of the Soviet state is an overwhelming illustration of the falseness of the theory of socialism in one country.

11. "When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character." In other words: the state withers away. Society remains, freed from the straitjacket. This is nothing else but socialism. The converse theorem: the monstrous growth of state coercion in the U.S.S.R. is eloquent testimony that society is moving away from socialism.

12. "The workingmen have no fatherland." These words of the *Manifesto* have more than once been evaluated by philistines as an agitational quip. As a matter of fact they provided the proletariat with the sole conceivable directive in the question of the capitalist "fatherland". The violation of this directive by the Second International brought about not only four years of devastation in Europe, but the present stagnation of world culture. In view of the impending new war, for which the betrayal of the Third International has paved the way, the *Manifesto* remains even now the most reliable counsellor on the question of the capitalist "fatherland".

* * *

Thus, we see that the joint and rather brief production of two young authors still continues to give irreplaceable directives upon the most important and burning questions of the struggle for emancipation. What other book could even distantly be compared in this respect with the *Communist Manifesto*? But this does not imply that, after ninety years of unprecedented development of productive forces and vast social struggles, the *Manifesto* needs neither corrections nor additions. Revolutionary thought has nothing in common with idol-worship. Programs and prognoses are tested and corrected in the light

of experience, which is the supreme criterion of human reason. The *Manifesto*, too, requires corrections and additions. However, as is evidenced by historical experience itself, these corrections and additions can be successfully made only by proceeding in accord with the method lodged in the foundation of the *Manifesto* itself. We shall try to indicate this in several most important instances.

1. Marx taught that no social system departs from the arena of history before exhausting its creative potentialities. The *Manifesto* excoriates capitalism for retarding the development of the productive forces. During that period, however, as well as in the following decades, this retardation was only *relative* in nature. Had it been possible in the second half of the 19th Century, to organize economy on socialist beginnings, its tempos of growth would have been immeasurably greater. But this theoretically irrefutable postulate does not, however, invalidate the fact that the productive forces kept expanding on a world scale right up to the world war. Only in the last twenty years, despite the most modern conquests of science and technology, has the epoch begun of out-and-out stagnation and even decline of world economy. Mankind is beginning to expend its accumulated capital, while the next war threatens to destroy the very foundations of civilization for many years to come. The authors of the *Manifesto* thought that capitalism would be scrapped long prior to the time when from a relatively reactionary régime it would turn into an absolutely reactionary régime. This transformation took final shape only before the eyes of the present generation, and changed our epoch into the epoch of wars, revolutions, and fascism.

2. The error of Marx and Engels in regard to the historical dates flowed, on the one hand, from an underestimation of future possibilities latent in capitalism, and, on the other, an overestimation of the revolutionary maturity of the proletariat. The revolution of 1848 did not turn into a socialist revolution as the *Manifesto* had calculated, but opened up to Germany the possibility of a vast future capitalist ascension. The Paris Commune proved that the proletariat, without having a tempered revolutionary party at its head, cannot wrest power from the bourgeoisie. Meanwhile, the prolonged period of capitalist prosperity that ensued brought about not the education of the revolutionary vanguard, but rather the bourgeois degeneration of the labor aristocracy, which became in turn the chief brake on the proletarian revolution. In the nature of things, the authors of the *Manifesto* could not possibly have foreseen this "dialectic".

3. For the *Manifesto*, capitalism was—the kingdom of free competition. While referring to the growing concentration of capital, the *Manifesto* did not draw the necessary conclusion in regard to monopoly which has become the dominant capitalist form in our epoch, and the most important

pre-condition for socialist economy. Only afterwards, in *Capital*, did Marx establish the tendency toward the transformation of free competition into monopoly. It was Lenin who gave a scientific characterization of monopoly capitalism in his *Imperialism*.

4. Basing themselves primarily on the example of "industrial revolution" in England, the authors of the *Manifesto* pictured far too unilaterally the process of liquidation of the intermediate classes, as a wholesale proletarianization of crafts, petty trades and the peasantry. In point of fact, the elemental forces of competition have far from completed this simultaneously progressive and barbarous work. Capitalism has ruined the petty bourgeoisie at a much faster rate than it has proletarianized it. Furthermore, the bourgeois state has long directed its conscious policy toward the artificial maintenance of petty bourgeois strata. At the opposite pole, the growth of technology and the rationalization of large scale industry engenders chronic unemployment and obstructs the proletarianization of the petty bourgeoisie. Concurrently, the development of capitalism has accelerated in the extreme the growth of legions of technicians, administrators, commercial employes, in short, the so-called "new middle class". In consequence, the intermediate classes, to whose disappearance the *Manifesto* so categorically refers, comprise even in a country as highly industrialized as Germany, about one-half of the population. However, the artificial preservation of antiquated petty bourgeois strata nowise mitigates the social contradictions, but, on the contrary, invests them with an especial malignancy, and together with the permanent army of the unemployed constitutes the most malevolent expression of the *decay* of capitalism.

5. Calculated for a revolutionary epoch the *Manifesto* contains (end of Chapter II) ten demands, corresponding to the period of direct transition from capitalism to socialism. In their Preface of 1872, Marx and Engels declared these demands to be in part antiquated, and, in any case, only of secondary importance. The reformists seized upon this evaluation to interpret it in the sense that transitional revolutionary demands had forever ceded their place to the social-democratic "minimum program", which, as is well known, does not transcend the limits of bourgeois democracy. As a matter of fact, the authors of the *Manifesto* indicated quite precisely the main correction of their transitional program, namely, "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes". In other words, the correction was directed against the fetishism of bourgeois democracy. Marx later counterposed to the capitalist state, the state of the type of the Commune. This "type" subsequently assumed the much more graphic shape of Soviets. There cannot be a revolutionary program today without *Soviets* and without *workers' control*. As for the rest, the ten demands of

the *Manifesto*, which appeared "archaic" in an epoch of peaceful parliamentary activity, have today regained completely their true significance. The social-democratic "minimum program", on the other hand, has become hopelessly antiquated.

6. Basing its expectation that "the German bourgeois revolution . . . will be but a prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution," the *Manifesto* cites the much more advanced conditions of European civilization as compared with what existed in England in the 17th Century and in France in the 18th Century, and the far greater development of the proletariat. The error in this prognosis was not only in the date. The Revolution of 1848 revealed within a few months that precisely under more advanced conditions, none of the bourgeois classes is capable of bringing the revolution to its termination: the big and middle bourgeoisie is far too closely linked with the landowners, and fettered by the fear of the masses; the petty bourgeoisie is far too divided, and in its leading tops far too dependent on the big bourgeoisie. As evidenced by the entire subsequent course of development in Europe and Asia, the bourgeois revolution, taken by itself, can no more in general be consummated. A complete purge of feudal rubbish from society is conceivable only on the condition that the proletariat, freed from the influence of bourgeois parties, can take its stand at the head of the peasantry and establish its revolutionary dictatorship. By this token, the bourgeois revolution becomes interlaced with the first stage of the socialist revolution, subsequently to dissolve in the latter. The national revolution therewith becomes a link of the world revolution. The transformation of the economic foundation and of all social relations assumes a permanent (uninterrupted) character.

For revolutionary parties in backward countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa, a clear understanding of the organic connection between the democratic revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat—and thereby, the international socialist revolution—is a life-and-death question.

7. While depicting how capitalism draws into its vortex backward and barbarous countries, the *Manifesto* contains no reference to the struggle of colonial and semi-colonial countries for independence. To the extent that Marx and Engels considered the social revolution "in the leading civilized countries at least", to be a matter of the next few years, the colonial question was resolved automatically for them, not in consequence of an independent movement of oppressed nationalities but in consequence of the victory of the proletariat in the metropolitan centers of capitalism. The questions of revolutionary strategy in colonial and semi-colonial countries are therefore not touched upon at all by the *Manifesto*. Yet these questions demand an independent solution. For example, it is

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Archives of the Revolution

DOCUMENTS of the HISTORY and THEORY of the WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

Two Letters on the Question of the German October

Letter to Albert Treint

DEAR Comrade
Treint:

As I was able to convince myself from our correspondence and now from our conversations, your mind turns constantly not to questions of program and policy but rather to isolated incidents in the past.

Tirelessly and—if you will allow me—with

the bias of a prosecutor, you ferret out the mistakes of others, thinking in this way to minimize your own. Previously in correspondence and now in personal talks, I made several attempts to shunt you from this, in my opinion, barren path to the path of the *vital and actual problems of the revolution*, but you stubbornly persist on your own. Pursuing the tradition of the period when you stood at the head of the French party, you continue to demand of everybody the admission of their mistakes. I am forced to take my stand on the level to which you reduce our political discussion in order once and for all to draw a line under certain questions. Inasmuch as in your researches you operate with isolated petty episodes, data, chance conversations and so on—elements, that is, which do not at all allow of verification, I prefer to answer you in writing.

First, I shall begin with an “admission of my mistakes”.

Yes, in the early part of 1924 I did allow my name to be signed, in my absence, to Radek's theses on the German revolution. These theses were erroneous—to tell the truth, not so grossly in error as were the theses of the Comintern—and were in conflict with everything that I wrote and said prior, during, and after their compilation by Radek. Doubtless it was a blunder on my part. But there was nothing “principled” in this mistake. The plenum of the E.C.C.I. found me ill in a village, 40 kilometers away from Moscow. Radek communicated with me by phone, which functioned very poorly in winter-time. Radek was being hounded at the plenum. He was seeking support. He declared to me categorically that the views presented by the theses were identical with those I had developed in my speeches and articles, and that Piatakov had already signed them. He asked me to add my signature without insisting upon reading the theses since he had only half an hour before the decisive ses-

One of the aspects of the abortive German revolution of October 1923 which has not been sufficiently illuminated, is the position taken by Leon Trotsky before the Fifth Congress of the Communist International early in 1924 on the course pursued by Heinrich Brandler and August Thalheimer, the leaders of the German Communist Party during the fatal 1923 days. His position has not only been misrepresented by the official historians of the Communist International, but also by Brandler and Thalheimer themselves. The latter based themselves, in this connection, largely upon the theses, generally ascribed to the then Russian Opposition, which were formally presented in the names of Karl Radek, Yuri Piatakov and Leon Trotsky. The circumstances under which Trotsky's name appeared under that resolution are dealt with in the following two letters.

Albert Treint of France and Alois Neurath of Czechoslovakia became the leaders of their respective parties in the period following the Fifth World Congress, generally known as the Zinovievist “Bolshevization” period. Beginning not only as anti-Brandlerites but also as anti-Trotskyists, they followed the course of Zinoviev and finally joined with the latter in the famous Trotsky-Zinoviev bloc. They were both members of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, from which they were at last expelled as “Trotskyists”. In more recent times, while Neurath has remained to a large extent a supporter of the movement for the Fourth International, Treint has developed a completely anti-Marxian position, ending in association with the group of George Valois in France.—ED.

sion. I agreed—not without inner wavering—to give my signature. Yes, I committed an error in placing too much confidence in the judgment of two comrades, Radek and Piatakov. For, as a matter of fact, the two of them, perhaps even in agreement with Brandler, introduced into the theses a number of formulations which were intended to mitigate Brandler's guilt, and to justify the conduct of Piatakov and Radek themselves, who supported Brandler in many things.

After acquainting myself with Radek's theses, I did not hide either from their author or from any other comrade my disapproval of the theses. In speeches and articles that were issued as pamphlets, and later in entire volumes, I formulated time and again my appraisal of the German situation, which had nothing in common with Radek's theses. This appraisal which I arrived at approximately in July 1923, I have upheld unaltered in its essentials to this very day. Herein I naturally include the appraisal of Brandler's politics, that of the Zinoviev faction of the Comintern and so on.

It is a noteworthy fact that not a single member of the Zinoviev clique utilized in Russia my signature to Radek's theses, for my attitude towards the Brandlerites was far too well known. From September 1923 to January 1924, Zinoviev and Stalin even defended Brandler against my allegedly unjustified attacks. But far more important is another aspect of the matter which has apparently completely slipped your memory. With all its errors as regards the past, Radek's resolution contained a most important warning as regards the future: it stated that the directly revolutionary situation had passed, and that a period of defensive struggles and of preparation for a new revolutionary situation was in store. In my eyes this was the central point. On the other hand, the resolution of the Comintern continued to steer a course toward armed

insurrection. Hence flowed the ill-fated policy of ultra-leftism of 1924 to 1925. Had I been present at the Plenum, and had the adoption of one of these two resolutions hinged upon my vote, I would have voted for Radek's resolution, notwithstanding all of its mistakes in regard to the past. But you, comrade Treint, voted for the resolution of the Comintern which re-

sulted in the greatest calamities and devastations. That is why you are hardly the proper prosecutor even as regards Radek's poor resolution.

In 1924 you couldn't of course be acquainted with the behind-the-scenes history of Radek's resolution. At that time, you had the right to invest my signature to Radek's theses with an exaggerated importance, without juxtaposing them with what I had personally said and written on this very question. But since that time, almost eight years have elapsed. All the most important documents have long been published in all languages. My French book on the Comintern* states everything essential in so far as the policy of the Brandlerites in 1923 is concerned.

I ask you: What do you expect to glean now, in the autumn of 1931, from the chance episode of my signature to Radek's theses? Why not give yourself an answer to this question? Why not formulate your reply in writing?

Furthermore, you persistently cite my declaration that in all fundamental questions on which I disagreed with Lenin, Lenin was right as against me. This declaration is contained in the platform of the opposition bloc of 1926. You, like Zinoviev, seek to draw directly or indirectly from this declaration the conclusion that you were correct in the criticism which you and your faction directed against me from 1924 to 1927—if not entirely then at least partially so.

And here, too, I begin with an “admission of my mistake”. And this time likewise the error was not of a principled character: It rests completely and exclusively on the plane of inner factional tactics.

In its general form, my declaration that Lenin was right as against me is unquestionably correct. I made it without doing the least violence to my political con-

*Cf., *The Third International After Lenin*, pp. 91 et seq. New York, 1936.

science. Not Lenin came over to me, but I came to Lenin. I came to him later than many others. But I make bold to think I understood him in a way not inferior to others. If the matter involved the historical past alone, I would make no exceptions to my declaration. It would be unworthy of Lenin's memory, and at the same time beneath my dignity, for me to attempt, now that Lenin is no longer among the living, to demonstrate out of mere ambition that on such and such questions I was right as against Lenin.

Nevertheless I violently opposed the declaration which you now so avidly seize upon. Why? Precisely because I foresaw that a declaration on my part would be seized upon by all those who were and who remain equally wrong both as against Lenin and myself. On the question of my disagreements with Lenin, the Zinoviev faction and its French section have written a great many pages, theoretically absurd, politically reactionary, and in considerable measure, slanderous. With my acknowledgement of Lenin's correctness, Zinoviev sought, if only partially, to throw a veil over the previous criminal "ideological" work of his own faction against me.

Zinoviev's position at that time was truly tragic. Only yesterday a recognized leader of anti-Trotskyism, he on the next day bowed to the banner of the 1923 Opposition. At the sessions of the C.C. all the speakers took every occasion to fling in his face his own declarations of yesterday to which he could say nothing in reply. The same thing was done day in and day out by *Pravda*. On the other hand, the advanced Petrograd workers, followers of Zinoviev, who had engaged honestly and seriously in the struggle against "Trotskyism" could by no means reconcile themselves to the sudden turn of 180 degrees. Zinoviev was confronted with the danger of losing the best elements of his own faction. In these conditions, a number of comrades from the 1923 Opposition insistently argued with me: "Let us give Zinoviev some general formula that would enable him, if only partially, to defend himself against the blows of the Stalinists on the one hand, and against the pressure from his own Petrograd co-thinkers on the other." I had no objections in principle to a defensive formula of this type, but on one condition, namely, that it contained no principled concessions on my part. The struggle around this question lasted for weeks. At the last moment, at a time when it was already necessary to hand in a finished platform to the C.C. a clear-cut diplomatic break occurred between us and the Zinovievists precisely over the question of this formula which interests you so much. We were ready to introduce a platform independently in the name of the 1923 faction. As is always the case, intermediaries were found. Changes and corrections were introduced. In our own (1923) group, it was decided to make a concession to the Zinovievists. In our group I voted against the concession, finding it excessive and equivocal. But I did not break on this question either with the leading center of my own group or with the Zinovievists.

However, I did warn my friends that I would not raise the question so long as only the historical past was concerned. But as soon as it would be posed as a programmatic or political question, I would of course defend the theory of the permanent revolution. This is precisely what I did later.

That is what really took place. Now you know it. You naturally could not have known it in your time. But a great deal of water has gone under the bridge since 1926. We passed through the experience of the Chinese revolution. It has been revealed with absolute clarity that the sole antithesis to the theory of nationalistic socialism is the theory of the permanent revolution. The same question was posed with regard to India, and gave us, in particular, a test of the theory of "bi-composite (two-class) parties". Now the problem of the permanent revolution unfolds before us on the arena of the Iberian peninsula. In Germany the theory of the permanent revolution, and that theory alone, stands counterposed to the theory of a "people's revolution". On all these questions the Left Opposition has expressed itself quite categorically. And I myself, in particular, have long since explained in the press the mistakes of the Russian platform of 1926, in so far as it contained concessions to the Zinovievists.

I ask you: What do you desire to glean *today*, in the autumn of 1931, from the circumstance that in the autumn of 1926 I deemed it necessary—rightly or wrongly—not to protest publicly against the purely formal concessions which my then political friends thought it necessary to make to the Zinovievists? Why not reply to this question in writing!

Now I could with complete justification raise some questions concerning your own past. Have you understood that whatever might have been this or that partial mistake or sin, the basic nucleus of the 1923 Opposition was and remains the vanguard of the vanguard; that it conducted and still conducts a struggle for the theory of Marxism, for the strategy of Lenin, for the October revolution; whereas the opponent grouping to which you belonged carried through the fatal revision of Leninism, shook the dictatorship of the proletariat and weakened the Comintern? Have you understood that *in the struggle against "Trotskyism" you were the unconscious tool of the forces of Thermidor?* Yes or no?

However, I shall not insist on your answering this question, although it is of far greater importance than all those petty incidents on which you vainly waste your time and mine.

But while I am ready to put aside questions relating to the past, I can't permit any ambiguity or half-statements in principled questions that concern the present and the future.

What is your attitude to the theory of the permanent revolution, comrade Treint? Do you still uphold today that arch-reactionary criticism, Thermidorian in its social roots, which you developed in your time jointly with all the epigones and in com-

plete solidarity with them? On this cardinal question there are and cannot be any concessions. There is no room here for any reservations and equivocations. The question has been dealt with in theses, articles and books with utmost clarity. It has been tested in the experience of colossal events. All the sections of the Left Opposition—above all the Russian section—stand exclusively and completely on the basis of the theory of the permanent revolution. Your clear and unambiguous answer to this question is a necessary *preliminary* condition for solving the question of whether we can work together within the framework of one and the same faction.

This cardinal programmatic question, which counterposes the Bolshevik-Leninists to the Centrists and the Rights, contains a whole series of questions that flow from it:

What is your attitude in general to the slogan of the democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants for colonial countries in particular, and especially for India?

What is your attitude to the idea of workers' and peasants' parties?

Do you consider correct the formation of the Peasants' International and the policy of the Anti-Imperialist League?

What is your attitude to the slogan of the Soviet United States of Europe?

All these questions which met with anti-Marxian decisions at the Fifth World Congress of the Comintern retain a great importance even today.

A correct answer to these questions is, as was already stated, from my point of view absolutely indispensable for establishing a programmatic precondition for joint work. But programmatic premises are not enough. There remain questions of tactics and of organization.

In this sphere our correspondence has already revealed very serious and sharp differences which my initial talks with you have unfortunately not at all mitigated. So as not to repeat myself, I refer you here only to two documents: my letter to you of May 23, 1929, and my criticism of your draft declaration upon your entry into the French League for May 23, 1931. I enclose copies of both documents.

In conclusion I should like to express a general consideration which might perhaps prove of assistance in better understanding my estimate of your position. In the ranks of the Left Opposition, especially its French section, a spiritual disease is rather widespread, which I would, without going into an analysis of its social roots, call by the name of its most finished representative: *Souvarinism*. It is—approaching the question on the plane of political psychology—a disease combining the paralysis of political will with hypertrophy of rationalizing. Cabinet wit, without roots, without an axis, without clear aims, criticism for criticism's sake, clutching at trifles, straining at gnats while swallowing camels—such are the traits of this type, concerned above all with the preservation of its narrow-circle or personal "independence". A circle of this kind, too irresolute to join the social-democrats, but likewise incapable of the

politics of Bolshevism, incapable of active politics in general, is primarily inclined to jot notations on the margins of actions and books of others. This spirit, I repeat, is most graphically expressed by Souvarine who has finally found an adequate medium for his tendency in the shape of a bibliographical journal, in which Souvarine subjects to criticism everything and everybody in the universe as if in the name of his own "doctrine". But the whole secret lies in the fact that Souvarine has no doctrine, and by virtue of his mental make-up, cannot have. In consequence, Souvarine's spiritual creative work, which lacks neither wit nor resourcefulness, is by its very nature *parasitic*. In him are combined the calcined residues of communism with the as yet unfolded buds of Menshevism. This precisely constitutes the essence of Souvarinism, in so far as it is at all possible to speak of any essence here. . . .

[We omit here a brief personal reference by the author of this letter, which has no bearing on the subject dealt with throughout the rest of the contents. ED.]

You wage a stubborn struggle not for a given system of ideas and methods but for your own "independence" and there too it is altogether impossible to obtain any conception of just what is the content of this independence. Comrade Treint, this is nothing else but the disease of Souvarinism. With all my heart I hope you will be cured of it.

This question, which is to a considerable degree personal, would have far less significance if both of us were members of a large healthy proletarian party. But with us, it is as yet a question of a small faction which defends under exceptionally difficult conditions the banner of Marx and Lenin. For a fighting faction of this kind, the bacillus of Souvarinism is far more dangerous than for a big party. It would of course be criminal to split frivolously with isolated groups and even isolated individuals. But it is even more criminal to permit such an initial composition of a factional organization as would paralyze or weaken its aggressive propagandist spirit, its political fighting capacity. That is why there are certain conditions when it is necessary to say: We defend a certain sum of ideas; but you defend a given sum of commentaries to our views. Let us try not to interfere with each other, and function separately. Perhaps experience in its purer form will teach us both something. When we shall meet again on a new stage, we shall draw the balance, and will perhaps be better able to arrive at an understanding than we can today. I do not say that this is the *sole* conceivable solution, or that it is the best one. But I do not at all consider it as excluded.

KADIKOI, September 13, 1931.

L. TROTSKY

Letter to Alois Neurath

DEAR Comrade Neurath:

. . . Now to Brandler's letter. He is correct that my signature stands below the

theses of Radek and Piatakov, which do not rightly reflect my views on the events, and which, in many parts, are perhaps opposite to them. (Unfortunately I do not have the text.) How did this become possible?

The plenum of the Executive was convoked towards the end of 1923, when the revolutionary situation in Germany had already been hopelessly missed. I was ill and was in the country, about 40 kilometers from Moscow. The German delegates (I remember Remmele, Koenen—but there were 5 or 6 of them) came to me in the country in order to learn my opinion on the situation. All of them, like Brandler for that matter, were of the opinion that the revolutionary situation would grow continuously sharper and break out in the immediate future. I considered this position catastrophic for the fate of the party and placed this question above all the others. Zinoviev, like the Russian Political Bureau as a whole, confirmed the course towards the armed uprising in Germany. I could only regard this as disastrous. Radek called me on the telephone from Moscow at the last hour with the query if I would be prepared to support his theses with my name. The telephonic conversation took place half an hour before Radek's appearance at the plenum. I replied to him: "If your theses openly assert that the German situation is in a state of ebb and not of flow and that it is necessary to make a corresponding strategical turn, then I am ready to support your theses without having read them." There was no longer any other practical possibility. Upon Radek's assurance that this opinion was very clearly expressed in the theses, I gave my name over the telephone. At the same time, however, I insured myself by the fact that I had very precisely formulated my conceptions of the German situation, its phases of development and its perspectives, in a series of articles and reports. My attitude towards the Radek theses may be deemed correct or false. An outsider, who neither knows the circumstances nor had read my writings of the period, can of course be led into confusion by my signature to the theses of Radek (who had to defend himself, too, and thereby also Brandler). But Brandler knows the circumstances very well and when he refers to Radek's theses, it is deliberately misleading on his part.

I must however add that in the Russian Central Committee I personally protected Brandler, because I was always against the policy of scape-goats. But that this goat has the inclination to leap to the right—on that score I had no illusions even then. What completely disqualifies Brandler politically in my eyes, is his attitude towards the Chinese revolution and the Anglo-Russian Committee.

While Brandler is formally in the right with regard to the Radek theses, I cannot, however, at all understand what he means when he says that in 1926 I offered him, Brandler, a testimonial from Zinoviev on his, Brandler's, strategical flawlessness. I learn of this story now for the first time. Was it in writing? Was it oral? As I recall,

I had neither written nor oral contact with Brandler in 1926. I scarcely got to see him at all in that period. Radek, to be sure, oscillated between the Left Opposition and Brandler. He had doubts concerning the economic questions and referred constantly to the authority of Brandler as an official of the V.S.N.K. (Supreme Economic Council). Brandler asserted that an accelerated industrialization was impossible. During the working out of the Platform, Zinoviev put the demand that Radek must abandon his ambiguous attitude towards Brandlerian opportunism. I supported this proposal with the greatest readiness and we put a friendly ultimatum to Radek. He begged for 24 to 48 hours for reflection. It occurs to me now that he may have utilized this time to win Brandler for our Platform. This is a belated hypothesis of mine, but it is also the only explanation of Brandler's muddled contention. That our bloc with Zinoviev was unprincipled, I cannot admit for a single instant. The principled basis of the bloc was our Platform, which I regard to this day as the most important programmatic document of post-Leninist Bolshevism.

How the Brandlerites regarded Trotskyism in 1923, is shown by the enclosed review from the *Rote Fahne*. A German comrade recently sent me the interesting document. The *Rote Fahne* was at that time in the hands of the Brandlerites (Böttcher and Thalheimer). I assume that Thalheimer wrote the review. Brandler, at the very least, tolerated it. I do not want to dwell upon the inaccuracies in the review. I did not stand at the left wing of the Mensheviks. From 1904 to 1917 I was organizationally outside of both factions and never called myself a Menshevik. But that's neither here nor there at the moment. You know, moreover, what proposal the Brandlerite Central Committee unanimously made to me as late as September 1923.* The most fateful matters were involved, and the proposal was motivated accordingly.—But that's enough on the matter for the moment.

Buyukada, June 14, 1932.

Leon TROTSKY

Fred Beal Arrested

AT THE last minute, we learn of the arrest in Lawrence, Mass., of Fred Erwin Beal, who has called himself—and it is no exaggeration—a fugitive from two worlds. Fred Beal was the leader of the famous Gastonia, N. C., textile strike in 1929, when, together with six other union leaders, he was framed-up on a conspiracy charge in connection with the slaying of Police Chief Aderholt. Railroaded to prison, he and his fellow-defendants fled to the Soviet Union. A few years there and he returned, bitterly disillusioned with the Stalinist régime and the Communist party of which he was a member.

*The Central Committee of the German Communist Party asked the Political Bureau of the Russian party to send Trotsky to Germany in a capacity which would have meant, in effect, that he direct the impending insurrection. Zinoviev, offended at not having been proposed, stood in the way, offered various pretexts for not concurring in the German request; and, together with Stalin and Kamenev (they were the then ruling trio) nominated Piatakov for the mission.

BOOKS

The War in Spain

- COUNTER-ATTACK IN SPAIN. By RAMON SENDER. Trans. from the Spanish by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell. 288 pp. Boston. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$3.00.
- AFTER THE REVOLUTION. By D. A. DE SANTILLAN. Trans. from the Spanish by Louis Frank. 127 pp. New York. Greenberg. \$2.00.
- CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN. By BERTRAM D. WOLFE. Introd. by Will Herberg. 112 pp. New York. Workers Age Publishers. 25c.
- THE WAR IN SPAIN. By LOUIS FISCHER. 55 pp. New York. The Nation. 10c.
- THE TRAGIC WEEK IN MAY. By AUGUSTIN SOUCHY. 48 pp. Barcelona. C.N.T.-F.A.I., 10c.

It is a truism, is it not, that this is a period of great defeats, of terrible degeneration in the world labor movement, and the character of the period is inevitably reflected in the current literature of the movement. One is reminded, by these books and pamphlets, of the literature produced by the social-patriots and centrists during the World War. The war tore down the plausible logical structures erected by a Bernstein, a Kautsky. Bernstein's able and persuasive defense of class collaboration, written during the pre-war years, employed a certain intelligence, a feeling for contradictions, for the architecture of thought. Events did not immediately rise up to demonstrate the full meaning of what he advocated. Few could, in the nature of the case, visualize that the "common sense" he proposed as a methodology meant to deliver tens of millions of workers to the slaughter house, meant the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, the massacre of the flower of the Berlin and Hamburg proletariat, the stewardship of the social-democracy on behalf of the impotent capitalists and Junkers, the paving of the way for Hitler. But in the full tide of the war, when the bare meaning of class collaboration stared every worker in the face, the social-patriots lost the ability to argue plausibly from premises, to develop a consecutive line of thought, even lost the ability to write well. They spumed forth a literature of hatred for the revolution, of contempt for the international working class; they wrote on the level of a police mentality, their threat of the machine gun and prison underlining the words. Gone were their suavity, their rhetoric, their civilized approach. So, too, in the onslaught of the social patriots and centrists against the Russian Revolution. Who would have believed that Kautsky would descend to the level of his diatribes against the Russian Revolution?

So, too, when the issues were posed in Spain without possibility of ambiguity. For or against the revolution? Read Santillan's *After the Revolution*, a compilation of the ideas elaborated by Spanish anarchism during the years immediately preceding the civil war: it is a sane, reasonable, intelligent presentation, employing to

great effect a sense for logical coherence. Then turn from this able little book to the hysterical and maundering defense of the treacherous and cowardly rôle of the anarchist leadership in the *The Tragic Week in May*. Augustin Souchy is at least as able and as authoritative a spokesman of Spanish anarchism as was Santillan. But Santillan was arguing about ideas which had not received the acid test of civil war; Souchy is writing after libertarian anarchism has gone all the way into the camp of class collaboration. The idealized program enunciated by Santillan has been completely abandoned because unworkable and Souchy has only a few tag ends of old libertarian doctrines with which to cover up the naked fact that the anarchist leaders deserted the Barcelona proletariat and banded with the class enemies of the workers to drive them off the barricades, whence the Stalinists drove the outstanding workers to the firing squad or prison.

As much as any of the war pamphlets of the social-democracy, Souchy's pamphlet is an involuntary and terrible indictment of anarcho-reformism. The overwhelming majority of the proletariat of the main industrial area of Spain—Catalonia—stood under the banners of the C.N.T.; over a third of the armed forces at the front carried C.N.T. membership cards and another third—in the left wing in the Socialist Party and the U.G.T.—shared the revolutionary spirit of the C.N.T. masses; the workers and peasants had signified in the very first days of the civil war their desire to end capitalism by their seizures of the land and factories. Only naked counter-revolutionary terrorism could hurl back the masses: and the bourgeois-Stalinist bloc openly took the road of counter-revolution. And the Barcelona proletariat rose to halt the counter-revolution.—And those whom they looked to for leadership joined the counter-revolution in tearing down the barricades. On the barricades anarchist workers tore up copies of the anarchist press appealing to them to leave the streets, and shook their fists and guns at the loud speakers from which came the voice of their leaders exhorting them to disperse. The C.N.T. leaders did not hesitate to denounce the left wing anarchists—the Friends of Durruti—as *agents provocateurs*. Camillo Berneri, spiritual head of Italian anarchism, died under the stiletto points of Stalinist assassins while his erstwhile friends, Montseny, Garcia, Oliver, etc., were handing over the Barcelona proletariat to his executioners. The government representatives had promised that if C.N.T. troops did not come from the front, the government would not bring troops into Barcelona; the government broke its promise; and the C.N.T. leaders sent no word to the C.N.T. troops and suppressed the news that government troops were on the way. The government violated its agree-

ment with the C.N.T. for the withdrawal of both sides from the Telephone Building; so the C.N.T. leaders suppressed the news that the government had occupied the building! While one terrible event after another piled up to reveal that the government was utilizing the peace pact with the C.N.T. leaders to carry through its counter-revolutionary repressions, the C.N.T. leaders occupied themselves with issuing manifestos to calm the masses. And when the government had broken all its promises, the C.N.T. leaders came fawningly to ask more promises, none of which was ever kept. It is a terrible story, and the analytical reader will find it all set down in *The Tragic Week in May*. Anarchism has here written the most terrible indictment of itself.

Hitherto, in the history of the working class, anarchism has never been tested on a grand scale. Now, leading great masses, it has received a definitive test. Anarchism consistently refused to recognize the distinction between a bourgeois and a workers' state. Even in the days of Lenin and Trotsky anarchism denounced the Soviet Union as an exploiters' régime. Precisely the failure to distinguish between a bourgeois and a proletarian state led anarchism into the ministry of a bourgeois state. Class collaboration, indeed, lies concealed in the heart of anarchist philosophy. It is hidden during periods of reaction by anarchist hatred of capital oppression. But, in a revolutionary period of dual power, it must come to the surface. For then the capitalist smilingly offers to share in building the new world. And the anarchists, being opposed to "all dictatorships", including of course the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, require of the capitalist merely that he throw off the avowed capitalist outlook, to which the capitalist agrees, naturally, the better to prepare the crushing of the workers. The Spanish civil war has clearly revealed anarchism as a variety of reformism.

The dominating rôle of the Stalinists in the counter-revolutionary repressions, and the fact that the persecutions were directed at anarchists as well as the P.O.U.M. and left socialists, obscured for many the culpability of the anarchist leadership. Now, however, the great responsibility of the C.N.T. leaders for the triumph of the counter-revolutionary forces is fully revealed. The old alibi that the counter-revolution was solely carried on by the Stalinists backed by Soviet threats to withdraw arms, no longer can prevail. The opening of the French border for shipment of raw materials to the Catalan war industries, and the almost complete cessation of Soviet shipment of arms to Spain, have resulted in a definite shift of the relationship of forces. Prieto has pushed the Stalinists to one side, and all camps court the C.N.T. leadership. Nevertheless, the counter-revolution goes on in full blast. The P.O.U.M. is persecuted as bestially as ever, thousands of outstanding anarchist workers remain in the prisons, the de-politicalization of the army goes on, etc. The complicity of the

anarchist leadership in the counter-revolution is evident.

Those who might be inclined to think that, in abandoning their defense of the Moscow trials, the Lovestonites have changed their colors, will be disillusioned by a reading of Wolfe's *Civil War in Spain*. In a certain sense, for some time the great dividing line within the working class was the position taken by each group on the Moscow trials. But this fact had to be understood concretely in each case. Most social-democratic groups, for example, did not really fight against the Moscow trials; few of them gave any real support to the Trotsky Defense Committee or to the International Commission of Inquiry; they merely utilized the foulness of the Moscow trials as justification for their continued opposition to the principles of the Russian Revolution, and embarked on no struggles to save the victims of the G.P.U. in Russia, in Spain, or elsewhere. The P. O. U. M., itself a victim of the G.P.U., went on record against the Moscow trials, but simultaneously entered a bourgeois coalition together with the Stalinists. The Lovestonites clung to a Stalinist position on the G.P.U. until the execution of the Red Army generals completed the universal collapse of belief in Stalinist justice. To turn at this point scarcely involved revolutionary courage.

The intellectual dishonesty of Wolfe's pamphlet is positively repulsive. If these terms seem too sharp, let me inform the reader that Wolfe achieves the feat of writing a pamphlet of 112 pages, identifying himself with the political position of the P.O.U.M., in which he does not deal at all with the two key questions: the entry of the P.O.U.M. into the Catalan bourgeois coalition in December 1936, and the P.O.U.M. leadership's abandonment of the Barcelona workers on the May barricades. Think of it! The question of the entry of the P.O.U.M. into the government is the question of the concrete meaning of the Marxian theory of the state. The P.O.U.M. denied the fundamental Marxian conception that a coalition is a bourgeois régime. This "detail" is not even referred to by Wolfe. In May 1937, the P.O.U.M. ordered its forces from the barricades at a time when the masses were still determined to smash the counter-revolution. That decision was based on an explicit perspective of peaceful cohabitation with the counter-revolution until after a victorious conclusion to the civil war—in other words, on a perspective that the counter-revolution could lead the masses to victory. That "detail" also finds no place in Wolfe's 112 pages.

What does find a place in Wolfe's brochure—indeed one of the nine chapters is entirely devoted to it—is an attack on Trotskyism. Here, again, Wolfe reveals how utterly corrupt is the political leadership for which he speaks. It is hard to believe, if one does not know the morals of these people, but it is a fact that nowhere in this chapter does Wolfe refer to the specific criticisms of the P.O.U.M. made by the Fourth Internationalist movement.

Wolfe calls the P.O.U.M. "the best mass revolutionary party in the entire capitalist world" and having so designated it, he denounces Trotskyism as "a disruptive and destructive force" because it "makes open war upon it [P.O.U.M.]; calls for a split; substitutes destructive criticism and division for constructive criticism and support". But the reader of Wolfe's pamphlet is given no hint of what the Trotskyist criticism of the P.O.U.M. is! That the P.O.U.M. abandoned the Marxian theory of the state—that it participated in the coalition government which decreed the disarming of the workers, the turning over of the workers' militia to an officer caste, dependence on the democratic capitalist powers, which failed to legalize the land seizures, left the banks in the hands of the capitalists, failed to demand of the central government the legalization of collectivization of the factories, etc.—that the P.O.U.M., after being thrown out of the government in December 1936, continued on a program of return to a similar government—that from this whole disorientation flowed the P.O.U.M.'s failure to prepare for the struggle against counter-revolution—that the P.O.U.M. was merely the tail of the C.N.T. bureaucracy instead of contending with it for the masses—that the P.O.U.M. leadership capitulated miserably in the May Days—that to this day the P.O.U.M. (if its Paris representatives speak for it) has failed to orient itself correctly—that the P.O.U.M. leadership courted and fawned upon its semi-Stalinist right wing which in Valencia brazenly followed a pure People's Front line, while left-wingers were expelled and driven from the armed forces when the P.O.U.M. still controlled the militias—these are some of the criticisms which Fourth Internationalists have made of the P.O.U.M. Wolfe does not even refer to these, let alone attempt to answer them. Thereby he demonstrates that the Lovestonites remain Stalinists in method in their relations with other political groups.

Of the Stalinist literature on Spain, it seems to me fruitful here to comment on Fischer's book and Sender's. They typify the "unofficial" school of Stalinist propaganda which, since the régime of Peoples Frontism, has in many ways eclipsed the official literature. The official literature in its narrowness, its polemical pogromism, its inability to characterize revolutionary opponents of Stalin except as agents of Hitler and the Mikado, fails to carry conviction to large audiences outside party ranks. The unofficial literature seeks to make up for these deficiencies.

It is significant that Louis Fischer's brochure was published by *The Nation*. As the struggle against the Russian Revolution in 1917-1919 was aided and abetted by the liberal weeklies, so now they join the world-wide campaign against the Spanish revolution. Indeed, *The Nation* and *The New Republic* are merely repeating, now, their old arguments against the Russian Revolution: the country is backward, it needs democracy, i.e., capitalism; first win the war then make the revolution, etc. Handed out by such notorious Stalinist

agents as Fischer and Ralph Bates, these old Menshevik alibis are the sole "information" which the "free-thinking" liberal weeklies permit to get to their readers.

Fischer's pamphlet is interesting to us for the number of points at which he is constrained to admit facts which the Stalinists officially deny. According to the Stalinist myth, "feudalism" is the cause of the Spanish civil war, and by definition that means that the bourgeoisie can and do play a progressive rôle. If you don't accept this myth, the official Stalinist literature denounces you as a fascist agent. Stalinist journalists writing outside the party press, however, are less fortunate; Fischer cannot deny the obvious fact that the industrial bourgeoisie as a whole sided with Franco.

In his attempt to reconcile this fact, which the Stalinists officially do not admit, with the official Stalinist theory of "feudalism" Fischer offers a labored explanation which gives the show away:

"Strangely enough, Spain's small industrial class supported the reactionary position taken by the landlords. The industrialists should have welcomed a land reform which would create a whole market for their goods. But they believed that more than economics was involved. They feared that the granting of land to the peasantry would rob the owning classes of political power. The manufacturers therefore who should have encouraged the republic in its attempts to stage a peaceful revolution which would have enriched the country, actually leagued themselves with the backward-looking landlords to prevent all amelioration and reform."

It does not occur to Fischer to wonder whether landlord and capitalist are not often one and the same, or of the same family, or whether the manufacturer, dependent on the banks, is not fearful for the banks' mortgages on the land. But even as Fischer poses the problem, the answer is clear. The manufacturer fears diminution of the political power of the owning classes. Why? Because the weakening of the police power permits the workers in his factory to organize and make inroads into his profits. Spanish fascism is the weapon not of "feudalism" but of capitalism. It can be fought successfully by the working class and the peasantry, and by them alone.

Ramon Sender is a novelist who has written some distinguished prose, a conscious craftsman who knows how to get his effects, and now, turned Stalinist, he is able to put his technique at the disposal of reactionary ends. His propaganda for Stalinism and the People's Front is superior to that of Fischer, Bates, etc., for the simple reason that they are constrained to argue in terms of ideas, while Sender employs the novelist's right to assert what he believes without recourse to logic or proof, and his sheer ability to weave references to the rôle of the Communist party into a concrete picture of struggle against fascism suffices to carry the kind of conviction that all good fiction carries. It is pointless to cite the falsities, the errors, the downright lies—all flowing from a deliberate magnifying of

the rôle of the Stalinists during the first months, when they were a small party. Any informed or critical reader will immediately perceive that he is reading a story which may or may not be true, but certainly is not accompanied by any serious evidence. More gullible readers, of course, will be carried along by the stream of the story.

And yet, one wonders whether this kind of book will do the work which is its objective, namely, win "broad" non-proletarian elements to the anti-Franco camp. The Fascists are painted as very devils, but no material explanation is provided for their genesis. There are a few references to the landlords' oppression of the peasantry—no references to the oppression of the factory workers!—but since the Stalinist stand for continued private property on the land, Sender cannot make clear what the land question involved nor what he believes will do away with the land question. And without such a material explanation, many a reader, though tending to sympathy with the anti-fascist cause, must ask himself whether Sender is not merely telling atrocity stories, on the level of those retailed by both sides during the World War. Without an economic program for wiping out the capitalist roots of fascism, the Stalinist writers can only repeat and repeat that the fascists are bad; and the superficial "simplicity" of this approach must undoubtedly wear away for many readers after the first hundred pages. Despite Sender's craftsmanship, and despite the fact that the war against fascism is a progressive war, the net effect of his book is on no higher level than the war propaganda of the social-patriots during the World War.

Felix MORROW

History of the C. I.

WORLD REVOLUTION 1917-1936: The Rise and Fall of the Communist International. By C. L. R. JAMES. 429 pp. New York. Pioneer Publishers. \$3.50.

C. L. R. James is a leader of a British Trotskyist group. His book is an outline history of the last two decades of the world socialist movement. The only other book which covers the same period and scope is Rosenberg's *History of Bolshevism* (1934). Rosenberg, who is a former leader of the German Communist Party, presented the widely accepted explanation of Stalinism: it is the legitimate offspring of Bolshevism whose character was always bourgeois-democratic or Jacobin rather than socialist. From this he deduces Lenin's conception of the party and argues that already in 1921, at the Third Congress of the Comintern, the International was subordinated to the national-state interests of Russia. Stalin merely completed the process.

While James does not directly polemicize against Rosenberg's basic views on the Bolshevik Party, he nevertheless supplies in positive terms a refutation of the view that national-socialism had its origin in Lenin's leadership. He disposes of both this and the more directly Stalinist view on Lenin's

conception of the relation between the Russian Revolution and the world revolution.

The dispute between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in 1917, he shows, was not as to whether Russia was ripe for socialism but rather whether the Russian working class should seize state power in order to give an impetus to the maturing socialist revolution on the entire European continent. Lenin reiterated time and again that Russia by itself could not build socialism but that world capitalism was rotten ripe for socialist transformation. He considered the Soviet state and the Communist International as two instruments serving a common aim: the world socialist revolution. West European social-democracy set out to "prove" the theories of its Russian co-thinkers: with state power in its hands it destroyed the revolutionary workers' movements, helped restore capitalist stability and handed back power to the traditional bourgeois parties.

The repressive excesses of early Soviet Russia, the limitations on political democracy, the suppression of rival parties—which necessarily led to restrictions in trade union and Soviet democracy—were due not to the centralist conceptions of Lenin but to the need, in the condition of frightful isolation and hostility made possible by social democracy, to maintain workers' power in a backward country; and thereby further the world working class struggle for emancipation. These emergency measures undoubtedly facilitated the victory of Stalinism.

As political relations between workers' Russia and the capitalist world, and internal economic conditions improved, Lenin and Trotsky put forward plans for the struggle against bureaucracy and the gradual extension of workers' democracy (1922-1923). However, the defeat of the German working class in 1923, which made possible a new period of capitalist stabilization, facilitated the victory of the more conservative strata of Soviet society. Stalin rationalized the views and feelings of these strata, particularly the bureaucracy: its lack of faith in the working class revolution, its desire for peaceful co-existence with the capitalist world, in a word, its conservative nationalism. The result was the reactionary theory that Russia by its own forces, without revolution in other countries, could build a socialist society within its national boundaries if . . . there were no military intervention. Here is the fountain-head of the conversion of the communist parties into mere appendages of the Russian Foreign Office (and more recently of the G.P.U.).

James however assumes that Stalin (and national-socialism) completely triumphed in 1923. In any case he underestimates the decisive effect of the economic, social and political events subsequent to this date on the definitive victory of Stalinism.

Most striking is his treatment of Stalin's relation to the German events of 1923. He mars his otherwise valuable chapter on these events by an interpretation expressed by the title of the chapter, "Stalin Kills the 1923 Revolution". To substantiate this view

he cites two facts: Stalin's letter to Zinoviev and Bukharin in 1923 wherein he expresses his views on the German situation; and Stalin's conversation with Zinoviev and Brandler, when he urged the latter to form a coalition government with the left social-democrats in Saxony. But these merely prove that Stalin *shared* the views of the others and therefore shares their responsibility. James finds this insufficient: "Stalin, master of the apparatus, imposed his views." He calls the International of 1923 the "Stalin-ridden International" and Zinoviev "his [Stalin's] mouthpiece of these days". In this he mistakes the beginning of the process for its culmination. He therefore overlooks the most important specific lesson of the German events, *viz.*, the inevitable crisis of leadership on the eve of revolution, when a sudden break must be made with the old habits of life and methods of work. Brandler's share of the responsibility is overshadowed; he is pictured as a political puppet of Stalin—which is a gross exaggeration of the actual situation.

The real weakness of the book is its treatment of the rôle of the party and leadership. James constantly reiterates the paramount importance of this problem but offers the most hazy view of Lenin's conceptions. He accepts Lenin's 1903 position as applicable today. Yet in his explanation of it he writes that it was conditioned by the existence of Tsarism. He does not succeed in conveying a clear picture of the specific episodic disputes of 1903 and differentiate them from the more permanent aspects. Nor is it correct to write that Lenin favored "democratic centralism" in 1903. Lenin's views were avowedly centralist at that time. Nor did Lenin receive a majority on the organization question at the 1903 Congress of the Social-Democratic Labor Party. He was in a minority (23 votes for Lenin, 28 against. Martov's proposal was adopted by a vote of 28 for, 22 against, one abstention). Lenin's followers received the name Bolshevik when later at the same Congress, after the Economists and Bundists had left, Lenin received a majority on his proposal for the composition of the editorial board of *Iskra*.

James of course does not pretend to give a history of this period. Despite the above criticisms his book is a very valuable summary of the causes for the degeneration of the Comintern. He effectively explodes the myth that Stalin is responsible for the industrialization and collectivization plans in Russia. His treatment of the Anglo-Russian Committee, the Chinese revolution and the origin and significance of the People's Front is an excellent introduction to contemporary events. The book has already made its mark in England where it has been favorably received.

If there is to be another edition of the book a few errors should be corrected:

P. 39: Bernstein, Liebknecht, Bebel and Kautsky are incorrectly credited with having ". . . preached the necessity of the working class seizing the State-power by *armed insurrection*".

P. 57: "This plan of linking the *prole-*

arian revolution with the agrarian revolution was . . . Lenin's own." The phrase "proletarian revolution" is obviously out of accord with James' correct exposition of Lenin's view.

P. 78: James incorrectly cites Lenin's "third of the Letters from Afar, March 21" as the occasion for the latter's adoption of Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution. The date is undoubtedly a typographical error, the letter of March 24 is meant. But a closer reading of this letter will show that Lenin repeats his old views—though in more advanced terms; he repeats his slogan of "democratic dictatorship" and does not exclude a capitalist development for Russia.

P. 203: "Fourth Congress" should read "Twelfth Congress".

P. 283: "Fifteenth Party Conference" should read "Fifteenth Party Congress."

P. 310, footnote: "It seems that Stalin is the only leading member of the party whom he [Lenin] ever asked to remove from an important position." As a footnote to "Witness his treatment of Zinoviev and Kamenev", the remark is incomprehensible. Lenin had advocated the expulsion of these two leaders on the eve of the revolution.

P. 417: "Friedrich Adler has proved, in the *Witchcraft Trial in Moscow*, that Abramovitch in a trial in 1931, confessed to committing crimes in Russia at a time when he was being photographed at a Conference of the Second International." Adler did not write that Abramovitch confessed, since the latter was not at the trial. Others "confessed" for him.

These errors do not detract from the real merit of the book: a popularization of the Marxist criticism of the theory and practice of Stalinism.

Joseph CARTER

Modern Mythology

THE FOLKLORE OF CAPITALISM. By THURMAN ARNOLD. 400 pp. New Haven. Yale University Press. \$3.00.

Here is an anthropological analysis, admirable for its scholarly objectivity, of a strange and interesting tribe inhabiting the central portion of the North American continent. Professor Arnold is more interested in the cultural myth which this tribe has evolved to justify its activities than he is in the actual techniques which it has invented in order to feed and clothe itself; he is inclined to assume that his readers will already be reasonably familiar with the latter. Both because things have changed since it was invented as an idealized description of an actual society, and because all tribes have an incurable itch to improve their folklore artistically, this cultural myth is at once seriously inconsistent with the facts, and a beautiful thing in itself. Professor Arnold is above all interested in the tragi-comic consequences of this inconsistency between an artistically elaborate myth and the actual society which it is supposed to describe.

In the world of this myth a group of cultural heroes, called sound business men,

move about, curiously intent on satisfying their personal desires by their own unaided efforts. By the introduction of a daring and beautiful paradox, the myth shows this to be the only moral means for fulfilling the complex needs of the community as a whole. These gods occasionally, of course, misbehave and become minor devils. But the main devils of this mythology are the politicians or government officials and hell is conceived to be a place where the needs of the community are fulfilled by governmental enterprises directed by them.

Actually, of course, the society's needs are fulfilled by large impersonal enterprises which function in much the same way whether they are manned by gods or devils. But by a fiction which develops quite logically within the myth, such enterprises when manned by business men are thought about and treated as god-like individuals, and under these circumstances they are called corporations. It is only when these corporations refuse to pretend to be competing individuals or when they grow so large that no one can any longer think of them as such, that they, like the gods who misbehave, become wicked; they are then known as monopolies. When such enterprises are manned by government officials, however, the fiction that they are individuals does not apply. They are not then corporations which are thought of as competing in an active and godly fashion and therefore doing the community good; these enterprises are branches of the state which are thought of as great impersonal units suffering—since such units cannot compete like individuals—from blemishes unknown to corporations, such as graft (the wages of management, bonuses, etc.) and bureaucratism (service company charges, etc.). They are cases of government in business, and no matter what their actual results, no pious member of this tribe can ever believe that the consequences of government in business are anything but immoral.

Professor Arnold's description of his tribe is high comedy of the finest sort. For here is a community caught between the necessity of keeping in operation the system of enterprises which constitutes its industrial organization and the necessity of serving an almost completely irrelevant folklore. We are shown the ludicrous and pathetic spectacle of a people striving, on the one hand, to create the huge industrial

units demanded by highly developed technology, and, on the other, to pay their ceremonial respects—through anti-trust laws and similar rituals—to such ancient and divine edicts as the one which holds that only good can come of competition and only bad of monopoly. We see them struggling manfully to avoid governmental enterprises when they can, and to conceal them when they cannot. For as Professor Arnold explains, "Private waste of funds would take care of itself, since the profit motive prevented business men from wasting. Government had no profit motive and therefore was bound to waste more because of the extravagant theories habitually entertained by those who do not work for profit. And then, anyway, private funds, when wasted, only affect the individual who wastes them (and corporations were individuals) . . ." Worse still, governmental enterprises mean taxes, and this tribe is most terrified by death and taxes; whereas corporate enterprises lead only to prices, which one is free to avoid altogether by the simple process of refusing to purchase food or whatever the commodity may be. Thus these people can be comfortable only if the government pretends to be improving the navigable waterways when it is actually in the business of providing electricity, or if it pretends not to be government at all but a corporation (and corporations are of course individuals). Furthermore, it is only by allowing individuals to do as they please that the welfare of the community can be served, so that to interfere with these corporate individuals is to court disaster.

For sheer drama, at once tragic and funny, this spectacle would be difficult to equal, and Professor Arnold's talents are such that he is able to do full justice to it. It seems to this reviewer unfortunate, therefore, that he seems also to have felt it necessary to sprinkle his account with hints toward a theory of how things got this way. It is not that Professor Arnold has not a right to his own folklore—no one can get along without one—but that it seems out of place in this book. Furthermore, Professor Arnold appears to have little talent for, and, you gather, less interest in, the special kind of scholarship necessary for this task. The result is that he produces a theory which lacks the æsthetic charms of learning and abstract argumentation; and æsthetic charm is, as no one knows better than Professor Arnold, the only justification for "a theory of history", for it is only by this means that such a theory can attract the emotional loyalties of men and thus become a living folklore. The talents for historical research and eloquent exposition which go to make an Adam Smith or a Karl Marx are necessary for such work. Professor Arnold does not possess these talents, and it is quite possibly an ironic proof of the power generated by the folklore of scholarship that even so independent a mind as his needed to save its conscience by going rather awkwardly through a little scholarly ritual of theorizing about the historical causes of observable facts.

Arthur MIZENER

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90 Years of the 'Communist Manifesto'

(Continued from page 55)

quite self-evident that while the "national fatherland" has become the most baneful historical brake in advanced capitalist countries, it still remains a relatively progressive factor in backward countries compelled to struggle for an independent existence.

"The Communists," declares the *Manifesto*, "everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things." The movement of the colored races against their imperialist oppressors is one of the most important and powerful movements against the existing order and therefore calls for the complete, unconditional and unlimited support on the part of the proletariat of the white race. The credit for developing revolutionary strategy for oppressed nationalities belongs primarily to Lenin.

8. The most antiquated section of the *Manifesto*—not with respect to method but material—is the criticism of "socialist" literature for the first part of the 19th Century (Chapter III) and the definition of the position of the Communists in relation to various opposition parties (Chapter IV). The movements and parties listed in the *Manifesto* were so drastically swept away either by the revolution of 1848 or the ensuing counter-revolution that one must look up even their names in a historical dictionary. However, in this section, too, the *Manifesto* is perhaps closer to us now than it was to the previous generation. In the epoch of the flowering of the Second International when Marxism seemed to exert an undivided sway, the ideas of pre-Marxian socialism could have been considered as having receded decisively into the past. Things are otherwise today. The decomposition of the social-democracy and the Comintern at every step engenders monstrous ideological relapses. Senile thought seems to have become infantile. In search of all-saving formulas the prophets in the epoch of decline discover anew doctrines long since buried by scientific socialism.

As touches the question of opposition parties, it is in this domain that the elapsed decades have introduced the most deep-going changes, not only in the sense that the old parties have long been brushed aside by new ones, but also in the sense that the very character of parties and their mutual relations have radically changed in the conditions of the imperialist epoch. The *Manifesto* must therefore be amplified with the most important documents of the first four Congresses of the Communist International, the essential literature of Bolshevism, and the decisions of the Conferences of the Fourth International.

* * *

We have already remarked above that according to Marx no social order departs from the scene without first exhausting the

potentialities latent in it. However, even an antiquated social order does not cede its place to a new order without resistance. A change in social régimes presupposes the harshest form of the class struggle, i.e., revolution. If the proletariat, for one reason or another, proves incapable of overthrowing with an audacious blow the out-lived bourgeois order, then finance capital in the struggle to maintain its unstable rule can do nothing but turn the petty bourgeoisie ruined and demoralized by it into the pogrom army of fascism. The bourgeois degeneration of the social-democracy and the fascist degeneration of the petty bourgeoisie are interlinked as cause and effect.

At the present time, the Third International far more wantonly than the Second performs in all countries the work of deceiving and demoralizing the toilers. By massacring the vanguard of the Spanish proletariat, the unbridled hirelings of Moscow not only pave the way for fascism but execute a goodly share of its labors. The protracted crisis of the international revolution which is turning more and more into a crisis of human culture, is reducible in its essentials to the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

As the heir to the great tradition, of which the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* forms the most precious link, the Fourth International is educating new cadres for the solution of old tasks. Theory is generalized reality. In an honest attitude to revolutionary theory is expressed the impassioned urge to reconstruct the social reality. That in the Southern part of the Dark Continent our co-thinkers were the first to translate the *Manifesto* into the Afrikaans language is another graphic illustration of the fact that Marxist thought lives today only under the banner of the Fourth International. To it belongs the future. When the centennial of the *Communist Manifesto* is celebrated, the Fourth International will have become the decisive revolutionary force on our planet.

COYOACAN, October 30, 1937.

Leon TROTSKY

History by Scissors

The unfortunate experience of the London *News-Chronicle* which sought permission from the Communist Party of Great Britain to reprint serially John Reed's *Ten Days that Shook the World*, is reported in the London *Evening Standard* (Nov. 12, 1937).

THIS contemporary account of the Bolshevik uprising was written by John Reed, the American Communist, who was a close personal friend of Lenin. When he died in 1921 he left the British copyright in his book to the Communist Party.

When the *News-Chronicle* approached the copyright owners for permission to serialize the book it was gladly given. The Communists asked no fee, and made only

CLIPPINGS

The Stalinist Elections

In a Moscow dispatch to the *New York Times* (Dec. 14, 1937), its Moscow correspondent, Harold Denny, quotes from a report of the recently concluded elections which appeared in Pravda and which, from the solemnly mocking tone in which it ridicules the farcical elections, must have been written by one of the numerous "diversionists" who serves Stalin with tongue in cheek until he flings them before a firing squad.

THE WHOLE election procedure is being carried out to the last with the same meticulousness as if a real election campaign were being waged.

Pravda today carried the following description of the ceremony of counting the ballots in the Seventy-fifth Precinct of the Stalin district, where every elector voted and voted for Stalin, who, of course, was unopposed for the Soviet of the Union:

"Midnight has struck. The twelfth of December, the day of the first general, equal and direct elections to the Supreme Soviet, has ended. The result of the voting is about to be announced.

"The commission remains alone in its room. It is quiet, and the lamps are shining solemnly. Amid the general attentive and intense expectation the chairman performs all the necessary formalities before counting of the ballots—checking up by list how many voters there were and how many have voted—and the result is 100 per cent. 100 per cent! What election in what country for what candidate has given a 100 per cent response?"

"The main business starts now. Excitedly the chairman inspects the seals on the boxes. Then the members of the commission inspect them. The seals are intact and are cut off. The boxes are opened.

"It is quiet. They sit attentively and seriously, these election inspectors and executives.

"Now it is time to open the envelopes. Three members of the commission take scissors. The chairman rises. The tellers have their copybooks ready. The first envelope is slit. All eyes are directed to it. The chairman takes out two slips—white [for a candidate for the Soviet of the Union] and blue [for a candidate for the Soviet of Nationalities]—and reads loudly and distinctly, 'Comrade Stalin.'

"Instantly the solemnity is broken. Everybody in the room jumps up and applauds joyously and stormily for the first ballot of the first general secret election under the Stalinist Constitution—a ballot with the name of the Constitution's creator."

The account goes on to tell of the ovation that greeted the announcement of each Soviet of the Union ballot—every one for Stalin.

one stipulation—that all reference to Trotsky should be eliminated from the text.

Confronted with this modern version of Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark, the Liberal organ abandoned the project.

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