

January, 1941

# THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

*A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism*

---

---

## *Working-Class Policy In War and Peace*

**Lenin in the First World War and  
the Marxists in the War Today**

**Trade-Union Control of the Army?**

**The Struggle for Socialism and  
The Defense of the Fatherland**

**A Criticism of the S.W.P.**

**By MAX SHACHTMAN**

**THE FUTURE OF THE JAPANESE EMPIRE**

*By Sherman Stanley*

---

---

**Fifteen Cents Single Copy - - - Subscription Per Year \$1.50**

# Manager's Column

The advent of a New Year usually calls for resolutions and expressions of optimism on January 1. The resolutions are generally forgotten on or before January 2 and the optimism gives way to hopelessness and dejection. Though the second World War is already an actuality and reaction in America is on the order of the day, Revolutionary Marxists can make resolutions and not forget them, for they have a task to perform. They can be optimistic and maintain their optimism for they are certain of the correctness of their theory and the direction of their goal.

Most readers of *The New International* are either organizationally connected with a Marxist party or they are sympathetic to it. For those who have made resolutions and those who haven't, make one now that will require little effort on your part—but will mean so much to the maintenance of *The New International*—one subscription besides your own in 1941. Help us establish a 32 page magazine in 1941. If every reader obtained one additional sub, a 32 page N.I. would be assured.

Max Shachtman's article on the Russian Question in last month's issue we were sure would bring requests from branches and individuals for additional copies. We were correct in assuming this so we increased our press run considerably. Though many extra copies were mailed out, we still have several hundred left. If orders are placed immediately, we will supply anyone with a reasonable number of the December issue for the cost of postage only (1½ cents per copy). Branches should take advantage of this offer for promotional work and free distribution. Or if you want us to mail copies to anyone, anywhere, send us the name and address with the accompanying postage and it will be attended to immediately.

Last month we made a request for contributions for defraying the expenses of foreign mailings of the N.I. So far we have received very little, but one contributor writes as follows:

DEAR FRIENDS:

Enclosed find \$1.00 that I hope will enable you to send some *New Internationals* to foreign countries. It seems to me that it is even more important for the *New International* to be read abroad than here at home. There is no problem of censorship here yet, and if you are able to break through in the countries that are already at war you should continue to reach every possible reader.

I'm sorry that I cannot send a bigger contribution for this purpose, but I have a family and my job doesn't pay too well—but I will send some more in next month.

Comradely yours,

B.C.

Another writes:

DEAR COMRADES:

Here is 50 cents to be used for your foreign mailing. I pledge 50 cents a month if I don't get fired.

Fraternally,

R.N.

If we could get 20 people to contribute 50 cents per month or 10 to contribute \$1.00 regularly, the foreign mailing problem would be solved. We are sure that among our readers there are 10 or 20 who can.

A new bundle order from Baltimore leads us to believe that the comrades there are as serious about literature as they are about their jobs. A little cash and an increase would convince us.

## THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

*A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism*

Volume VII January, 1941 No. 1 (Whole No. 50)

Published monthly by NEW INTERNATIONAL Publishing Company, 114 West 14th Street, New York, N. Y. Telephone CHelsea 2-9681. Subscription rates: \$1.50 per year; bundles, 10c for 5 copies and up. Canada and foreign: \$1.75 per year; bundles, 12c for 5 and up. Entered as second-class matter July 10, 1940, at the post office at New York, N.Y. under the act of March 3, 1879.

Editor: MAX SHACHTMAN

Editorial Board:

ALBERT GATES, J. R. JOHNSON, MAX SHACHTMAN

Business Manager: JOHN BILLINGS

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| WORKING-CLASS POLICY IN WAR AND PEACE—Once more on the New Policy Towards Militarism and War of the Socialist Workers Party, <i>By Max Shachtman</i> ..... | 3  |
| INTELLECTUAL IN DEFEAT<br><i>By John Melvin</i> .....  | 10 |
| FUTURE OF THE JAPANESE EMPIRE<br><i>By Sherman Stanley</i> .....   | 13 |

Though somewhat reduced from their original bundle order, the Akron Debs Branch has now stabilized their bundle and they're paying up.

We were gratified to have the Akron Branch settle their bundle order obligation completely. Their bill was once \$21.00. They have done a magnificent job in liquidating it. Akron now takes its place with Boston, Worcester, St. Louis, San Francisco and Youngstown in owing nothing to this office. We were particularly pleased to hear from Youngstown having almost given up hope of ever hearing from them.

St. Louis has found a bookstore that is willing to handle the N.I. regularly. Literature agents in other branches might do well to try to place the N.I. in bookstores. We'll do the mailing, you get the customers.

Chicago Central is slowly but surely catching up on its back bills and Bob Sherman, their literature agent, is really getting some results in gathering subscriptions.

Chicago South Side now takes a separate bundle and we're not worried about their paying or their activity.

A little cash and an occasional letter would be very much appreciated from Cleveland. We won't be harsh until we know the circumstances.

Los Angeles has made a colossal effort to liquidate a colossal bill. We hope they continue with the effort.

Newark better show a little life in the matter of payments commensurate with your increased bundle.

The same goes for South Philadelphia. Your balance is still too high.

Last, but not least, New York is catching up on what once was a big debt. The new literature agent is working hard and efficiently. All we need now is a real increase in circulation.

Don't forget your New Year's resolution. At least one new subscriber for each reader in 1941.

THE MANAGER

# THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

*A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism*

VOLUME VII

JANUARY, 1941

NUMBER 1

## Working-Class Policy in War and Peace

*Once More on the New Policy Towards Militarism and War of the Socialist Workers Party.*

**T**HE SECOND WORLD WAR is here, and it is only a matter of time before the United States is an open belligerent in words as well as in deeds. Of all the havoc caused by the war, none is so tragic as that produced in the working-class movement. Suppressed, atomized, corrupted, demoralized or misled, labor has missed its second great opportunity in the twentieth century to lift society out of the dreadful morass in which it is floundering and to reorganize it socialistically, on the foundations of orderliness, brotherhood, abundance, security and peace for the peoples.

The weight of the old parties, the old leaderships, the old theories and programs, has again proved so heavy a burden on the working class as to prevent it from rising to its feet and acting as the revolutionary savior of society threatened by barbarism. The fate of mankind is being fought out on the battlefields of the Old World. The American working class, still comparatively fresh and free, can play a decisive if not the decisive rôle in determining the outcome of the war in favor of world revolution and world socialism. But only on one condition, the all-importance of which is emphasized by labor's defeats in Europe: that it develops as speedily as possible a revolutionary Marxist party capable of leading the oppressed to victory. An indispensable prerequisite and concomitant of this task is the maximum of clarity and preciseness—hence, of effectiveness—of such a party's theory and program. Especially now, in the midst of war, ambiguity and carelessness in this domain can become crimes for which punishment will not be lacking. Errors and worse which had only white paper as their background in yesterday's peace times, have a far greater importance today with the flames of war as their background, and a still greater one tomorrow when the irresistible revolution rises to throw its light upon them.

With these thoughts in mind, I began a few weeks ago to write a series of articles in *Labor Action* on proletarian policy towards war and fascism, the subjects uppermost in everyone's mind. In the articles, I reviewed briefly the representative views on these subjects held by some of the radical publicists and organizations in this country—Dwight Macdonald, the Socialist Workers Party, Sidney Hook, the Lovestone group. I submitted them to a criticism from the standpoint of revolutionary Marxism, and ended with an exposition of our own views, those of the Workers Party. On these two most vital of all current problems, war and fascism, the articles aimed at eliminating some of the prevailing confusion, opportunism and even treachery, and at

reaffirming and fortifying the revolutionary internationalist position by means of arguments related to present-day realities.

The article criticizing the Cannonite position on the war and war policy (*Labor Action*, Nov. 4, 1940) elicited a reply in the form not of one but of three articles in the *Socialist Appeal* (Nos. 47, 48, 49), written by Cannon himself. If it were merely a question of a debate with Cannon, the matter could be safely allowed to rest with the last of his articles, for the sufficient reason that there has seldom been any point or profit in a debate on fundamental theoretical or political questions with one who lacks most of the elementary equipment for it. He usually enters such a discussion, to use his own words, with "a pair of hip boots and a shovel," noble proletarian tools in their field, handy for spraying a debate with such compliments as "unscrupulous twister", "perverter of historical incidents", "political underworld", but yet not quite enough for a political debate. But much more than Cannon's touching plight is involved in this discussion. It is a matter of clarity in the policy of a section of the Fourth International on vital questions of our period. This alone warrants a return to the discussion of Cannon's position.

Let us first recall this position, as formulated by Cannon in two speeches delivered at the S.W.P. Plenum in Chicago last September. "These are new times," he said. "The characteristic feature of our epoch is unceasing war and universal militarism." The workers must be armed, and trained in the use of arms, for every important problem of our epoch will be settled with arms in hand. Even before the first world war, socialists said capitalism was outlived and ripe for socialism. But when the war broke out "none of the parties had the idea that on the agenda stood the struggle for power. The stand of the best of them was essentially a protest against the war. It did not occur even to the best Marxists that the time had come when the power must be seized by the workers in order to save civilization from degeneration. Even Lenin did not visualize the victory of the proletarian revolution as the immediate outcome of the war." The present war is not our war, but as long as the mass of the proletariat goes with it, we will go too, raising our own independent program in the army, in the same way as we raise it in the factories. The workers do not want the country overrun by Hitler's hordes; neither do we. Because workers must be armed and trained, and because we have no confidence in the ruling class and its officers, we are for compulsory military training but under trade-union control.

"The workers themselves must take charge of this fight against Hitler and anybody else who tries to invade their rights. That is the whole principle of the new policy that has been elaborated for us by comrade Trotsky." (See *Socialist Appeal*, Oct. 12, 1940.)

Except for the utterly false estimation of Lenin in the last war, and the more than ambiguous slogan of trade-union control of military training, there was little to be quarreled with in the above exposition. But what, we asked in our criticism, was the "new policy" that it marked? To this, we concluded, Cannon gave sufficient answer in his summarizing speech at the Plenum:

The gist of the problem, said Cannon, is that the workers "require a program of military struggle against foreign invaders which assures their class independence." If Hitler attacks us, the social-democrats used to ask, what will you do about it? "Well, we answered in a general way, the workers will first overthrow the bourgeoisie at home and then they will take care of invaders. That was a good program, but the workers did not make the revolution in time. Now the two tasks must be telescoped and carried out simultaneously." (See *Socialist Appeal*, Oct. 26, 1940.)

This "new" position—that the workers should be for "national defense" while the bourgeoisie is still in power, and "simultaneously" fight against the bourgeoisie—I characterized with restraint as a concession to social-patriotism and a corresponding abandonment of the revolutionary internationalist position.

I hope the reader will forgive me and not interpret what I say as cheap boasting or as anything but a simple statement of fact if I write that I regarded my criticism of Cannon's views as so elementary, conclusive and unassailable that I freely predicted Cannon would not reply to it. Frankly, I expected that he would strike a posture and reply to those of his members who are perturbed by the "new line" with one of two statements: "Trotsky himself was for our line; he even originated it; and that's good enough for us"—or, "We are too busy doing mass work to bother with the criticisms of a sect." I was wrong, at least in part. He said both these things, to be sure, but he did write a series of three articles for his public press, commenting on the criticism in *Labor Action*. He even said in the first of his series: "His entire article from beginning to end is a mixture of confusion and bad faith—a Shachtman 'polemic'. Not a single one of his 'points' can stand inspection. In my next article I shall undertake to prove this, point by point." But while I was wrong, as indicated, yet I was right. Cannon's reply is no reply. What he undertook to do, he did not do, either in the next article or in the third and last article. And, as will be shown below, he not only failed to take up my criticism "point by point" but deliberately omitted *any reference whatsoever* to the principal point I made.

In contrast, I intend to deal with all of the very few points Cannon does make, both the relevant and the irrelevant. Let us take them one by one, beginning with the latter.

### Military Policy? What About Burnham?

I write a criticism of Cannon's "military policy" which is either good, bad, or indifferent. Cannon's first retort is: What about Burnham? Shachtman's article, you see, "is not directed at Burnham; it is intended to drown out the

question of Burnham by shouting loud and long against others." The reader here gets his first example of what Cannon means by replying to a criticism "point by point"!

Yes, Burnham deserted the socialist movement and socialism. He is not the first deserter and probably not the last. But just what is that supposed to prove against our party and its political position? Does Cannon want to say that Burnham's desertion is a logical outcome of his previous adherence to that party and its position? That will take a bit of proving.

Maria Reese was received and hailed by us when she quit the German Stalinists. When she deserted to the Nazis, the Stalinists argued that her desertion was the "logical outcome" of her adherence to Trotskyism. The proof that they were disloyal and unscrupulous liars lay in the fact that the condition for Reese's flight to the Nazis was her renunciation of everything the Trotskyist movement stood for.

Diego Rivera was "protected" by us—by Trotsky, Cannon and me—for years from the criticisms of the other Mexican Fourth Internationalists. Suddenly, he turned up in the camp of the reactionary wing of the Mexican bourgeoisie, even arguing that this was the only way effectively to fight Stalinism. What the Stalinists said about Rivera and Trotskyism is known, or can also be easily imagined.

Similarly with Chen Tu-hsiu, whom we elected a leader of the Fourth International despite the criticisms of the Chinese comrades. He has now passed into the camp of the imperialist democracies. Suppose I were to say about Cannon's article: "It is not directed at Rivera and Chen; it is intended to drown out the question of these deserters by shouting loud and long against Shachtman."

Similarly with virtually the whole leadership of the Russian Opposition, who, with the renowned exception of Trotsky and a few others, deserted the fight and went over to Stalinist counter-revolution. In reply to those, who like Souvarine, concluded from these desertions that the distinction between Trotskyism and Stalinism is insignificant and that the one leads easily to the other, we always pointed out that for the capitulators to go to Stalinism they had to break with the Opposition, its platform and traditions, and that there was not "development" from one to the other.

With due respect to the difference in proportions, the same holds true in the case of Burnham. A *scrupulous* and *loyal* commentator would say: "I have read the Workers Party statement expelling Burnham and I have read Burnham's statement. I must take note that he broke with the Workers Party, in his own words, precisely because it was a Marxist party, precisely because it rejected (as Burnham truthfully points out) every attempt to revise or undermine its Marxian position. I must take note, likewise, of the fact that Burnham did not take a single member of the Workers Party along with him in his desertion, that he did not find a single supporter in the party's ranks, that his departure did not create the slightest disturbance in its midst—all of which would indicate that, so far as the character of the Workers Party is concerned, his desertion had a purely individual and not a broader political or symptomatic significance." That is what a scrupulous and loyal commentator would say. A demagogue, of course, would speak differently. But our cruel times, and long years of them, have inured us against demagogues.

## Lenin Has a Defender

One of the motivations for the "new policy" (which really isn't a new policy at all, we are assured, but only "an extension of the old policy, and adaptation of old principles to new conditions"), is that in the first world war, not even Lenin—much less others—had the perspective of revolution breaking out in direct connection with the war, that "even Lenin did not visualize the victory of the proletarian revolution as the immediate outcome of the war." Cannon seeks to justify his present policy (otherwise, why the reference to Lenin?) by contrasting to Lenin's perspective of 1914-1916, the 'immediacy of the revolutionary perspective in connection with the present war.'

In my *Labor Action* article, I quoted from Lenin to show that his whole course in the last war was based on the conception of a socialist revolution in Europe (in Russia, a "democratic revolution") in direct connection with the war, a fact which we thought was generally known in the Marxist movement. But this is too much for a patient and tolerant Cannon, who will stand for a lot, but not for anybody tampering with Leninism. Choking with indignation, he accuses me of literary charlatanry, quotation-twisting, distortion, mutilation and common forgery. "It is a matter of simple respect to his [Lenin's] memory to protect him from the hypocritical support of an advocate who is known among Leninists only as a betrayer of Leninism." As a betrayer, and what's more, only as a betrayer of Leninism. The steam behind these blows is terrific and they are delivered with all the weight and effectiveness of a Tony Galento boxing with his own shadow for the benefit of the customers assembled at his bar. But not even a graceful fighter ever hurt anybody shadow-boxing.

It seems, you see, that I left a sentence out of the middle of my quotation from Lenin, and ended when I should have continued. And what did I omit? Nothing less than Lenin's reference to the need of revolutionary propaganda "independent of whether the revolution will be strong enough and whether it will come in connection with the first or second imperialist war, etc." The italics are triumphantly supplied by Cannon. This triumph is buttressed by two other quotations from Lenin in 1916 and early 1917, straight from the original Russian edition: (1) "It is possible, however, that five, ten and even more years will pass before the beginning of the socialist revolution," and (2) "We, the older men, will perhaps not live long enough to see the decisive battles of the impending revolution." Cannon is so carried away by his researches into the original Russian, that where Lenin said "it is possible" and "perhaps", he sums it up by saying: "Lenin wrote in Switzerland that his generation would *most probably* not see the socialist revolution." (My italics—M.S.)

Now, what is the point of this otherwise absurd counterposing of quotations? We shall soon see that it has more of a practical than an academic aim. Let us begin by examining what Cannon set out to prove by his reference to Lenin in the last war.

In the first place, he declared that "when the World War started in 1914 none of the parties had the idea that on the agenda stood the struggle for power. The stand of the best of them was essentially a protest against the war. It did not occur even to the best Marxists that the time had come when the power must be seized by the workers in order to save civilization from degeneration."

In reply I quoted several statements made during the war by Lenin and the Bolsheviks which sound as though they were uttered in anticipatory refutation of the assertion by Cannon. According to the latter, none of the parties, not even Lenin's, had the idea that the struggle for power, the socialist revolution, was on the order of the day. In October, 1914, the Bolsheviks wrote: "The war has placed on the order of the day the slogan of a socialist revolution" in western Europe. At the end of 1916, Lenin wrote: "In the years 1914 to 1916 the revolution stood on the order of the day."

Cannon wisely ignores this and takes refuge in his second assertion: "Even Lenin did not visualize the victory of the proletarian revolution as the immediate outcome of the war." To make even plainer what he meant by this statement made at the September Plenum, he points out to me in his *Appeal* articles that Lenin of course had a revolutionary program during the war—but, he had been preaching revolution since 1901, as Marx had since 1847; more to the point, he was not dead certain that "we, the older men" would live to see the victorious revolution, that it was possible for the revolution to be postponed to a period long after the first world war. "Shachtman twisted it [i.e., what Cannon said] and distorted it into a denial that Lenin had a 'program of revolution,' during the war. But I think it is thoroughly clear to a disinterested reader that I was speaking of something else, namely, Lenin's *expectations* as to the *immediate outcome* of the war, and not at all of what he wanted and what he advocated."

But Cannon is no better off with his second assertion than with his first. He either does not understand or does not want to understand what is involved, either in Lenin's time or now, by the conception of "revolutionary perspective." In the first world war, Lenin *did* have a revolutionary perspective. He did believe and he said that the socialist revolution is on the agenda. But he did not and could not divorce this belief from the state of the *living revolutionary forces* at hand for realizing this perspective. He knew then, as he put it years later, that there is no "absolutely hopeless" situation for the bourgeoisie—either in the last war or in the present one. That, and that alone, is why he could say, not only in January, 1917, a few weeks before the uprising in Russia, but from the beginning of the war, that it was "possible" that years and even decades would pass before the socialist victory, that his generation would "perhaps" not see it. In October, 1914, he wrote to Shliapnikov about the slogan of converting the imperialist war into a civil war: "No one would venture to *vouch* when and to what extent this preaching will be justified in practise: that is *not* the point (only low sophists renounce revolutionary agitation on the grounds that it is uncertain when a revolution would take place). The point lies in such a *line* of work. *Only* such work is socialistic and not chauvinistic and it *alone* will yield socialistic fruit, revolutionary fruit." All his writings and doings in the period of the war were equally animated by this conception and spirit.

In other words, while Lenin *had* a revolutionary perspective, and repeated that the struggle for power *was* on the order of the day, he did not *guarantee* that the actual proletarian rising would occur on this or that day, and he did not guarantee either that the first rising would lead to victory. He would not and could not say whether the revolution "will come in connection with the first or second imperialist war". Not only Lenin, but Trotsky as well. Dealing

in his *War and the International* in 1915 with the alternatives of revolution or capitalist peace and temporary stabilization, Trotsky wrote: "Which of the two prospects is the more probable? This cannot possibly be theoretically determined in advance. *The issue depends entirely upon the activity of the vital forces of society*—above all upon the revolutionary social democracy." (My emphasis—M.S.) And so it does today also.

"Lenin," writes Cannon, "obviously was not arguing about the immediacy of the revolution as we visualize it in connection with the present war, but about the necessity of *advocating* it and *preparing* for it." Cannon's persistency in arguing this point is noteworthy. Lenin didn't see revolution as the *immediate* outcome of the war. Presumably, Cannon's repetition of this statement means that he, on the contrary, *does* have the perspective of an *immediate* revolution in connection with the war. Lenin wasn't entirely sure of "the victory of the proletarian revolution as the immediate outcome of the first world war", whereas Cannon is sure of the victory this time. And it is this difference that apparently warrants the "new policy" which, remember, is only an "extension," an "adaptation" of the old.

But is it not obvious that the only "difference" that Cannon could establish with Lenin's perspective in the last war is if Cannon *did guarantee* that "victory of the proletarian revolution" which Lenin did not visualize? "I was speaking of something else, namely, Lenin's *expectations* as to the *immediate outcome* of the war," Cannon repeats. But it is clear that he hasn't read his own program, or else doesn't remember it. Trotsky's last important political document was the *Manifesto* on the war written for the Fourth International less than a year ago. There we find (1) on Lenin's perspective in the last war: "Only the Russian party of the Bolsheviks represented a revolutionary force at that time [the outbreak of the first world war]. But even the latter, in its overwhelming majority failed, except for a small émigré group around Lenin, to shed its national narrowness and to rise to the perspective of the world revolution." (Remember Cannon on Lenin? that the position of even the best Marxists in 1914 "was essentially a protest against the war"?) And (2) on the Fourth International's perspective in the present war: "The capitalist world has no way out, unless a prolonged death agony is so considered. It is necessary to prepare for long years, if not decades, of war, uprisings, brief interludes of truce, new wars and new uprisings." Long years, if not decades—that is entirely correct, not because we believe the revolution's triumph will be postponed for decades, but because we cannot *guarantee* that the victory will come six months from now or a year.

If Cannon had wanted to say that world capitalism has less right to expect long life in connection with the second world war than the first, that its *objective* possibilities of stabilization are fewer in our time than in Lenin's, he could have done it without all his revealing juggling with words and quotations about Lenin's "expectations" and "perspectives". If he were concerned in reality with the objective question of perspectives and tasks in Lenin's time and in our own, he would simply have said: "Like Lenin, we of the Fourth International today have the same revolutionary perspective. The socialist revolution is here, on the order of the day. Only, the working class is not prepared for it. The revolutionists are few in number, and isolated. The task, now as then, is the preparation of the revolutionists and the mobilization of the working class, for the realization of this

perspective which is, always was and always will be indivisible from our own policies and activities."

But that is not the point with which Cannon is concerned. He pursues much more practical aims than the somewhat academic dispute over what Lenin's expectations were and what his perspectives were. His aims relate precisely to "policies and activities." The reference to Lenin is only calculated to "prove" that "we" must have a *different policy* in the second world war because Lenin had a *different perspective* in the last one. The fact that Cannon had to distort Lenin's views in the last war already speaks badly for the "new policy" he is currently advocating.

Before proceeding to it, let us deal with one other little matter, in accordance with the promise that no point made by Cannon will be left unanswered.

### Trotsky, Too, Has a Defender

"Against whom is Shachtman really defending Lenin?" asks Cannon. "To be sure, he mentions only 'Cannon' but it is perfectly obvious that Cannon in this case is only serving Shachtman as a pseudonym for the real target of his attack. My remarks about Lenin's perspective during the first world war were no more and no less than a simple repetition of what Trotsky said on the subject." And further: "Shachtman's attack on 'Cannon' in behalf of Lenin is in reality aimed against Trotsky in a cowardly and indirect manner. He wants to set Lenin against Trotsky, to make a division in the minds of the radical workers between Lenin and Trotsky, to set himself up as a 'Leninist' with the sly intimation that Leninism is not the same thing as Trotskyism. There is a monstrous criminality in this procedure. The names of Lenin and Trotsky are inseparably united in the Russian Revolution, its achievements, its doctrines and traditions, and in the great struggle for Bolshevism waged by Trotsky since the death of Lenin. 'Lenin-Trotsky'—those two immortal names are one. Nobody yet has tried to separate them; that is, nobody but scoundrels and traitors."

There it is, both barrels, but the reader can sit quietly in his chair. The noise is nothing but stage thunder, the brandished sword is only a lath, and the theatrical posturing is nothing but theatrical posturing.

My article did not aim at polemizing against Trotsky. It did not even aim with monstrous criminality to intimate slyly that the names of Lenin and Trotsky should be separated. I know fairly well where and on what points and in what struggles the two names are inseparable; I know also on what points the names represent differences of opinion, even sharp ones. If Cannon wants to set up a privately-owned two-headed deity exempt from profane criticism, he may be allowed to imitate the Stalinists in this procedure as he has in others. But that is not my concern here any more than it was in my original article.

I did not criticize Trotsky explicitly in my article, although I stated that Cannon's policy apparently *originated* (but was not necessarily identical) with Trotsky. Why didn't I? What Trotsky's views were on the questions covered in Cannon's new policy, I know only from a couple of brief letters reprinted in the *Fourth International*, and from a few paragraphs in the disjointed notes drafted for an article which Trotsky's death prevented him from elaborating and completing. From these fragments I have not the possibility nor the right to formulate a rounded opinion of what Trotsky's views on the subject really were, nor to

what extent they jibed with the views developed by Cannon at his Plenum after Trotsky's death. Assassination prevented Trotsky from developing his point of view, from motivating it fully, from defending it critically or polemically, and from revising it in one or another direction in the light of further reflection or of criticism. I feel perfectly free in polemizing against Trotsky's views on the class nature of the Soviet state, for example, because they are views that he had the opportunity to state elaborately and over a period of years. The same does not hold for views which, so far as I am aware, are presented in the course of a few paragraphs or pages, and no more; views which, moreover, it is no longer possible for their author to elaborate upon or to defend from criticism. Hence, I refrain from criticizing Trotsky on the question at issue, and direct my remarks instead at Cannon.

And Cannon? He makes no serious effort to answer the criticism. He weaves and bobs around a bit, but in the end he starts whining and running to hide behind Trotsky's skirts. "It wasn't I who said it, it was Trotsky." Let us suppose that Trotsky did say what Cannon writes, although that is not quite the case. That would be beside the point. Our dispute is not over what Trotsky said, but over what Lenin said, what his views were. And in this particular instance, I consider it preferable to conduct the discussion by referring to Lenin's own words than to have Cannon cut off the discussion by referring to what Trotsky is supposed to have said and meant about Lenin.

Finally, I have never considered it a mark of distinction or a special virtue to go around "disagreeing" with Trotsky, or Lenin, or Marx. At the same time, in my twelve years in the Trotskyist movement, I always voiced my opinion when I believed that I had grounds for a serious disagreement with Trotsky, and I argued for my views until one or another of us was convinced otherwise. The organizational separation that occurred last year was not of our choosing and was not consummated without regret. But whatever views we held we stated openly, and whatever steps we took we prepared and took openly. I never went about secretly, among a few close chums, laying the basis for an organizational split with Trotsky over some difference or grievance, real or alleged. As Cannon knows, he cannot say the same.

### Trade-Union Control—Of What Army?

In Trotsky's fragmentary notes referred to above, he points out that Lenin's concept of "Turn the imperialist war into a civil war" was "the basis for propaganda and for training the cadres but it could not win the masses who did not want a foreign conqueror." The Russian masses were won to the revolution by such simple slogans as "Land, Bread, Peace, All Power to the Soviets." We tried in vain to explain this to Cannon during the last discussion in the S.W.P.

The transitional program of the Fourth International adopted three years ago, while animated through and through with revolutionary internationalism, at the same time took into account the progressive, or potentially progressive, anti-fascist patriotism of the masses. At present, this sentiment is hideously exploited by the ruling classes for the most reactionary objectives. It is necessary, we said, to utilize this sentiment of the masses, their hatred and fear of fascism, for working-class objectives. Given the world social crisis and the imminence of the second world war, knowing from

old times the futility and worse of pacifist opposition to militarism and war, we raised the slogan of Workers' Defense Guards and a People's Army. In effect, we said to the workers: You want to fight fascism, to preserve your rights and labor institutions? Good, so do we. We even want to go further, and extend those rights, make them more genuine and durable. Only, we warn you that under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, and in the course of the war that it will carry on in the democracies against Germany, we will merely end up under a totalitarian régime in our own country. Organize armed and trained forces of your own, under your own leadership and control, and then you will not only be able to meet the threat of fascism at home and abroad, but you will be assured that in the course of the fight imperialist interests will not be served and all democratic rights destroyed.

These ideas, and the slogans represented by them, were and remain entirely correct and we, for our part, continue to put forward and defend them.

The new policy of the Cannonites, however, is something else again. First, with the adoption of the new policy, they dropped entirely the fight against bourgeois militarism represented concretely by the drive to impose conscription upon the American people. Not only dropped the fight, but by their repeated nonsense in the *Socialist Appeal* about how the workers were overwhelmingly in favor of conscription, by their ridicule of any opposition to conscription as "poisonous" and "sinister" and "petty-bourgeois pacifism," they sabotaged any fight against it, introducing, at best, only confusion among the radical workers. On the score of this indictment I made of the Cannonite policy, Cannon, who is to answer "point by point", is utterly silent.

In the midst of the bourgeois conscription campaign, the Cannonites came forward with the slogan of "Trade-union control of conscription" or "Compulsory military training under trade-union control." The objective effect of this slogan, in so far as it would have an effect among the workers, could only be to facilitate the drive of the imperialists. The slogan could represent one of two ideas, but not both at the same time. (1) It means that the trade unions and other workers' organizations should take the initiative in organizing their own training camps, their own armed and trained forces, entirely under their control and management and democratically run by the workers themselves. But if this is what Cannon means by the slogan, wherein, except in words, does it differ from the slogan the S.W.P. had up to yesterday and which we still advocate, namely, Organize a People's Army? In my article, I asked that question specifically of Cannon. There is no reply. Or (2) the slogan means that the trade unions should demand of the government that they be put in control of the present U.S. army. Such a slogan, however "attractive" and "practical" it may seem, no Marxist could support. As I pointed out, it can only have class-collaborationist significance, it can only help preserve capitalist illusions among the workers.

Cannon tries to explain in a vague sort of way that advocating the socialist revolution is a propagandist task, whereas pressing the transitional program and slogans is agitation, calculated to bridge the gap between the present working-class mentality and the revolution and to lead the workers across this bridge. Good. But a transitional slogan must bring them across the bridge and not keep them where they are. It must help break down bourgeois and reformist prejudices among the workers, and not preserve these prej-

udices. If the Cannon slogan has the second meaning we indicated, then it does the latter.

Why? The basic distinction between reformists and revolutionists, according to Lenin and to all the lessons of modern history, is that the former believe or say that the bourgeois state machine can be taken hold of by the workers and, with some reforms, be used as the instrument for ushering in socialism, whereas the Marxists point out that the bourgeois state machine must be shattered and an entirely new and different one erected in its place before any serious progress to socialism is possible. The army and the police, the armed forces in general, are the principal prop of the bourgeois state machine. To tell the workers that they can reform this machine is to abandon one of the principles of revolutionary Marxism. The latter calls neither for "trade-union control of the government" nor for "trade-union control of the army." These are essentially *slogans of reform*.

Whatever may be said about Lenin's "perspective" before the February, 1917, revolution, it would surely take a bolder historian even than Cannon to deny that Lenin had an immediate and direct revolutionary perspective after that revolution—the struggle for state power which culminated in October of that year. Yet, while Lenin and the Bolsheviks put forward the slogan of "workers' control of production", they never advanced the slogan of "workers' or Soviet control of the army"—not even of the disrupted Czarist army, not even during the period of dual power. Why? We demand workers' control of the factories because the socialist revolution has no need or desire to replace factories with any substitute. We do not demand workers' control of the army because we do not want to foster the illusion that the proletariat can reform the imperialist military machine, because it is *the* instrument of the capitalist state, because that state, in Lenin's view, has to be shattered and cannot be reformed.

It is interesting to note, that before Lenin's return to Russia, Stalin and the right wing who controlled the Bolshevik party and its press, did put forward a slogan analogous to Cannon's: The Soviets should control the Provisional Government. But Lenin, who was a Marxist and who had a revolutionary perspective, made short shrift of the slogan immediately upon his arrival.

Now, in my article, I asked the Cannonites which of the two meanings indicated above is the one they give to their slogan of "Trade-union control of military training"? The question was calculated to open an avenue for explanation. Cannon wrote three articles in reply. One would think that so bold and forthright a politician, who does not, like his critics, stoop to "sly intimation", would give a categorical answer to the question. But it is clear: whatever Trotsky may have had in mind with regard to the slogan of military training for the workers, Cannon is not sure enough of himself to say, simply and directly, that it is the one thing or the other. The reader must lumber through a thick mass of verbal undergrowths and tree-stumps, so unusual in Cannon's style when he has something straightforward to say, before he comes to the inescapable conclusion: The Cannonite slogan means "Workers'" control of the imperialist army, and not the agitation for an independent People's army. Which was to be expected. As we pointed out weeks ago, that has been the line of the Cannonite press, even if there also with what, we must repeat, can only be deliberate ambiguousness.

Yet the two slogans, the two concepts, are as different as

day and night. Each stands on a different class basis, as we have indicated. The social-democrats consider that the present national bourgeois state is, fundamentally, theirs, the people's. Hence, they demand that the people control it. If that were possible—not just theoretically, but in actual life—then reformism could bring about the socialist society and revolution would be superfluous. What applies to the state as a whole, applies with equal if not more force to the army of that state.

Does a policy of "boycotting the army" follow from our rejection of the reformist concept? That is an accusation the social democrats have hurled at us with reference to participation in bourgeois parliament. It is groundless, however. We are for participating in elections. We call upon the workers to elect their own class representatives to Congress and Parliament and Reichstag. But we know, alas, that the proletariat cannot capture the bourgeois state; at best, it can remain its captive. Hence, we do not delude the working class with slogans of "workers' control" of Parliament or Congress. Again, the same with the army. When the proletariat is conscripted, naturally, we go along with the working class. We do not conduct an individual struggle against the bourgeoisie. In the army, we continue to represent the best interests of the working class. We stand for the extension of the democratic rights of the soldiers. We stand for their right to organize and present their demands collectively. We stand for their right to elect their own officers. But we do not delude them or ourselves with slogans of "workers' control" of the army. Quite the contrary, the slogans we do put forward have a distinctly different objective . . . At the same time, we continue to popularize the idea of a People's Army, an army organized, trained, led and controlled by the workers and their organizations. Utopian? Yes, to those for whom only war in permanence, capitalist domination for another century, working-class servitude forever, barbarism and misery are *not* Utopian! But the German workers built up their Reichsbanner and Rotfrontkämpfer Bund, the Russian workers their Workers Guards and Red Militia. The relationship of these movements to the German Reichswehr and the Czarist Army, respectively, is the way we understand the relationship between the People's Army and the present imperialist army. They are the organs of different classes.

Cannon, who was so insistent on dealing with the class nature of the Soviet state as a substitute for answering the questions raised by Stalin's invasion of Poland and Finland, is mum as a sphinx when it comes to the class nature of the army he wants "controlled." More accurately, he implies that the army is or can become a working-class institution. Indeed, one of his satellites whose ignorance of Marxism and politics has already qualified him for the appointment as editor of Cannon's theoretical organ, writes a truly venomous polemic against the conscientious objectors in the *Socialist Appeal* (Nov. 23, 1940) and says:

"These pacifists who oppose military training must be rejected with the utmost contempt by the class-conscious worker, just as he would reject with scorn and hate a scab who said: 'Unions? No, I will have nothing to do with them. They lead to tear gas! I choose independence!'"

Roosevelt's army is like—a union! Whoever refuses to go along with the army-union must be treated by the workers like a scab. And what about the Fellow-worker Judge who sentenced the eight pacifist-student-scabs of the Union Theological Seminary to a year and a day in prison—doesn't



he deserve a kind word for the thorough promptness with which he administered justice? And Roosevelt—shall we forget him altogether, after the vigorous way he established the conscript-army-union?

The reader may say: After all, the quotation is only an accidental outburst by an overzealous dunderhead who was mistakenly allowed to write on political questions. The reader may be right, at least with reference to the accidental nature of the outburst. But, as I pointed out in my original article, we have already had from the Cannonites the accidental reference to the war industries as "defense industries." We have already had the accident of the *Appeal* stating at first that millions of workers and farmers opposed conscription, only to change its tune to say that "the workers were for conscription" as soon as Cannon changed the line. We have already had the accident of Goldman's proposing to drop the slogan of a People's Referendum on War, a proposal rejected by Trotsky. We have already had the accident of Goldman proposing that "once conscription is made into law, we cease to struggle against it", a proposal also rejected by Trotsky. We have already had the accident of the Cannonites giving up completely, yes, completely, any struggle against social-patriotism. Now we have the accident that the army is like a union. We are ready to call all these things "accidents," but we refuse to ignore the fact that *all* the accidents are of *one* type, that they all lead in one direction.\*

## We Used To, But We Don't Any Longer

Armed with his favorite weapons, "a pair of hip boots and a shovel," Cannon assured his readers that he would answer my article "point by point".

We asked Cannon, who calls us petty-bourgeois pacifists, to specify just what is pacifist in our program or activities—our opposition to imperialist war and to bourgeois conscription, our advocacy of workers' defense guards and a People's Army, our economic and political demands for the drafted workers? No answer from Cannon, not a word, unless bluster is an answer.

I asked Cannon why there was not one single, solitary syllable in his two speeches at the Plenum and in the Plenum resolution, and, nowadays, in general in the *Socialist Appeal*, about *social-patriotism*, about the need of combating it. The answer he made to this point is satisfactory enough—complete and unrelieved silence.

I asked Cannon if he really believed, and could motivate this belief, that what caused the downfall of reformism in Europe was Blum's "pacifism" (and not his social-patriotism and class collaboration), and that the main danger in the American working class today, in connection with the war, is pacifism. The answer made by our "point-by-point" answerer was, once more, silence.

Perhaps these are, after all, minor points. But what about the principal point that I indicated in Cannon's new line? I refer to the section I quoted at length from Cannon's summarizing speech in Chicago. In it, Cannon says: We used to answer the social-democrats by saying *first* we would overthrow the bourgeoisie and *then* we would be for national defense. "*That was a good program, but the workers did not make the revolution in time. Now the two tasks*

*must be telescoped and carried out simultaneously.*"

I argued that this, and this mainly, was what is new in Cannon's policy, and I characterized his formula as essentially social-patriotic. And what do we hear in reply from the "point-by-point" man? Not a word, nothing but the swish and slosh of his hip boots and the dull thud of his shovel. He just pretends I never mentioned it. He does not give the slightest hint that he ever said what I quoted or read what I had to say about it. Yet, these sentences are the most important part of his two speeches.

In my earlier article I already pointed out their meaning. Cannon used to say: We will be defensists when we have a country to defend, that is, when the workers have taken power in the land, for then it will not be an imperialist war we are waging but rather a revolutionary war against imperialist assailants. But that is only what he *used* to say. Now he says something different, because the revolution did not come in time. Now the two tasks—the task of bringing about the socialist revolution and defending the fatherland—"must be telescoped and carried out simultaneously." Evidently, not even Cannon's ability to squirm and twist sufficed to explain away his new formula, and silence became the better part of valor. For if the formula means what it says, and it cannot possibly mean anything else, it signifies: We will continue to fight capitalism and at the same time ("simultaneously") we will defend the Fatherland, that is, support the war.

What part of Lenin's garments can Cannon hide behind in defense of this formula? What part of Trotsky's writings, what little fragment of them, can Cannon find now to enable him to say, "Shachtman is attacking Trotsky although he names only Cannon"? It would be interesting to get an answer, if not a "point-by-point" answer, then at least some kind of answer.

In his first article, Cannon "answered" everybody. The Oehlerites, he points out, are against his line. What they say about it, he does not even hint at. But they have a sectarian mentality in general, and so he passes on to his next critic. Who? The S.L.P. What do they say about Cannon's line? He doesn't know. "The S.L.P. will surely reject our military program if they have not already done so. (God forgive me, I don't read the *Weekly People* as attentively as I should and don't know whether they have yet expressed themselves)." This disposes of the S.L.P. in that effective manner which marks out Cannon from ordinary men. Then, before proceeding to his annihilating, "point-by-point" answer to Shachtman, he lingers for a fanciful moment with the Lovestoneites. "The Lovestoneites have not yet commented on our military resolution, as far as I know. But if they find it possible to take time off from their frenzied defense of Great Britain, they will surely attack our resolution 'from the left' . . ."

Ah, Cannon, you spoke too soon, forsooth! The Lovestone paper, *Workers Age*, of the same date as the *Appeal* carrying Cannon's above-quoted remarks (Nov. 23, 1940) prints an article which gives Cannon's new line the *salut fraternel* on both cheeks. It is written by one Donald Graham, a finished social-patriot who is hell bent for leather to get England all the aid she needs in the war. In his article, he defends Lovestone from his critic, Wolfe. He knows, mind you, that it's an imperialist war. He is not, God forbid, a mere British patriot. Oh no, he's as revolutionary as the next man and just as much for socialism now as yesterday. He would have liked to see the workers in power in

\*As we go to press, we have the latest accident. The leading article in the *Appeal* after Roosevelt's Fireside Chat and Message to Congress has not one word to say in criticism of the President's latest and longest step to war—not one word.

England and even in this country, but, you know, "the workers did not make the revolution in time," as Cannon says. Now, the foreign invaders must be driven off, Hitlerism—"counter-revolution on the march"—must be halted. The reader will surely allow the importance of the quotation from Mr. Graham to excuse its length:

"The struggle to defeat fascism is inseparable from and inextricably related to the struggle for socialism. Only the victory of socialism, as the majority resolution states, could solve the problem of the menace of fascism in a 'fundamental' sense. Hitlerism cannot be defeated by suspending the class struggle. On the contrary, the taking of socialist measures is required to ensure the defeat of Nazism. As Lovestone points out, the slogan of Laski (which is also that of the I.L.P.), 'Through Socialism to Victory over Hitlerism' is a correct one. This does not mean that you do not begin to struggle against a Hitler invasion until the day you have socialism in England. It means that the struggle for socialism and against Hitlerism are inseparable. Therefore, the duty of the socialist is not the simple one of aiding England to defeat Hitler, but also one of aiding the struggle for socialism in England, America and every other country in the world. There is no contradiction."

Lovestone-Graham also used to say, "the workers will first overthrow the bourgeoisie at home and then they will take care of invaders." But the war came, and not the revolution. Now, says Lovestone-Graham, "the two tasks must be telescoped and carried out simultaneously." We must "take care of invaders" ("struggle against a Hitler invasion") and "simultaneously" we must fight for socialism.

"There is no contradiction," for it is all done with the aid of mirrors.

Here we can just see Cannon striking another posture: "Shachtman, scoundrel and traitor, dares call me a social-patriot," and so on to the usual point. The indignation will be wasted. I do not call Cannon a social-patriot for the good and simple reason that I do not believe he is one. I do say, however, that Cannon put forward an essentially social-patriotic position in the vitally-important sentences we quoted. He has neither explained, defended nor withdrawn this position. One or the other he will have to do.

We said at the beginning of this article that just because we are in the midst of wars and revolutions, ambiguity, lack of preciseness, theoretical confusion are less permissible than ever. Such vices are paid for heavily. It means nothing for us to have an "immediate revolutionary perspective" unless there is a revolutionary vanguard so trained up in theory and activity as to enable it, at the right moment, to reduce that perspective to reality. One uncorrected error, Trotsky once wrote, leads to many others. Cannon has already imposed more than one error upon his party, the most serious of which are now involved in his "new" military policy. His resistance to correction is notorious, but not always very consequential. In the given case, it can prove to have the most harmful effects on the future of a party which, as another section of the Fourth International, is of direct concern to us.

MAX SHACHTMAN

## Intellectual in Defeat

FOR MORE THAN fifteen years now Louis Hacker has been actively engaged in historical journalism, and for almost a decade he has been the mainstay of the Marxist school in American scholarship. It was hardly a matter of difficulty, then, to anticipate the substantial outlines of the book Hacker would write. It would be, as the body of his articles and reviews suggested, an attractive and formidable volume of rigorous economic analysis—in essence, to be sure, little more than a shrewd rewrite of familiar historical materials—yet nevertheless a very significant advance in American social science. Hacker's whole career as a talented journalist and a facile Marxian theoretician had defined his future. And there were only a few real questions about the study of the development of American capitalist society that has been in preparation for some seven years. First, to what extent would Hacker (who has a glib new thesis for every occasion, and who on most problems in American history has over the years been dashing wildly in all directions) achieve a certain organic stability in historical interpretation by anchoring himself in original research? And second, to what extent would his Marxism hold up in a time of growing political reaction and in the face of depressing academic adversity? *The Triumph of American Capitalism*,\* which carries the story of the bourgeoisie through its banner nineteenth century, pro-

vides eloquent and instructive data for an answer to both questions.

It ought first to be said that Louis Hacker is not now, and never has been, in any real sense a scholar. He has yet to publish his first documented historical article; he has yet to show a sure command of anything beyond the general secondary and monographic materials. It would be a grave error to underrate the importance of this, to see in footnote documentation the mere meaningless insignia of the academician; for despite the abuses of myopic scholarship, it is in fact the measure of the competency and seriousness of the historian. In Hacker's case the undocumented discursiveness explains the fundamental irresponsibility of all his writings. From his first article which appeared a great many years ago in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (our first-ranking scientific journal of American history) to his latest, Hacker's statements of both fact and theory have been shrouded in tentativeness and uncertainty. He has constantly to employ phrases like ". . . the chief preoccupation must have been . . ." and ". . . we have every reason to assume . . ."—and these are not stylistic elisions but simple signs of ignorance. His first thesis on The War of 1812 was a good guess. (Hacker's work at its best consists of a body of shrewd, informed guesses.) There had been only the stale stereotype of "the impressment of American sailors"

\**The Triumph of American Capitalism*. By Louis M. Hacker. Simon & Schuster, \$3.00.

in the accounts of the causes of the War; but Hacker sensed that the dynamics of the international conflict were located, not at sea, but in the West, and consequently he contrived a story about "land hunger". Subsequent scholarship substantiated the idea of a Western interpretation, but revealed that on all other matters he had been talking through his hat. Hacker had made his first mark in historical writing—and to the path of primary, scientific empirical investigation which he originally neglected he never returned.

Hacker's real importance in American historical writing—and it is no little contribution—is his introduction with a certain sharpness and stylistic power of the basic theoretical concepts: merchant capitalism, industrial capitalism, bourgeois revolution, class power, and the like. And these he employed not as mere economic categories, but as the central pivots of social and political history. His general discussions of these problems could hardly be uninfluential as the new researches which Beardian history had stimulated got under way. But with the new terms and vocabulary of materialist interpretation Hacker himself has really done nothing more than toy and juggle a bit. Consider his variety of pieces on the American Civil War. Working essentially from Charles Beard's remarkable chapters in *The Rise of American Civilization*, he has embraced and abandoned innumerable distinct and mutually incompatible theoretical positions. At one point (*The Marxist Quarterly*) the War turned on the overnight transformation of merchant capitalism into industrial form; at another, it became a war against Southern landlordism (a point which Hacker "illuminated" by a few handy references to the infinitely manipulable French Revolution); and at a third, the Civil War becomes the expression of the seizure of state power by an expanding industrial capitalism. This third, and present, position is surely the most accurate, but one can scarcely help feeling, after Hacker's flights, that its relationship to the historical truth is almost purely coincidental. Again, on the matter of the Radical Republicans who pushed Lincoln forward and took over the reins in the Reconstruction days. Here were the militants of the American bourgeois revolution, men who freed the Negro chattels . . . and enslaved the proletariat. The problem was: Were they heroes? At one point, Hacker insists that "the so-called 'progressive tasks' of the Radical Republicans were a sham and a deception", and vigorously protests against the fixing of "revolutionary haloes over the heads of Stevens and his colleagues"; he finds that the presentation of the Radical Republicans as social revolutionaries in Mathew Josephson's *The Politicos* makes "little or no sense". At another point, he makes an important distinction between the Old Radicals (militant idealists like Stevens, Sumner, Schurz, Julian and Wade) and the New Radicals (corrupt bourgeois politicians like Roscoe Conkling, Sherman and Garfield). At the present point, he goes one step forward and sees the Old Radicals as heroic rebels and the New Radicals as renegades. Once again, this last revision corresponds more to historical accuracy; but once again, too, it seems more of a coincidental conversion to the truth than a conclusion based on a sure sense of the temperament, the mood, the values and ideals of the War protagonists.

It is highly unfortunate that Hacker has never sunk himself in the original materials of the historical drama, the letters, the debates, the diaries. It is this failure, in a sense, to "participate" in the actual historical experience which is responsible not merely for the systematic inconsistency in

his work, but also for a certain barren schematism. Hacker makes very good outlines. But one never gets the feeling that here is an historian who is exhibiting the evidence and submitting both his data and interpretive judgments to be authenticated. One always senses the want of impact and energy in his work. He offers us skeletons, and the trouble is not only that skeleton lacks flesh and blood but equally that the frame can't be given by a Hacker any dimension or balanced proportion of its own. Hacker simply doesn't know, for example, whether the impulses of "material causation" in any given problem are of a selfish, calculating variety, or a kind of generalized political or ideological drive. Consequently, he is driven to speak loosely of the universal necessities of abstract economic system, and to effect transcendental transformations of whole societies in a sort of metaphysical magic. This, I feel, is why Hacker in the end is such a dull historian. Certainly he has none of the range or sensitivity, or even technical control, of a Mathew Josephson, though in many ways he is far more gifted. Narrow in method, he remains narrow in perspective.

And there is a moral too in this Hacker story. For there is a corrupt, and unfortunately not uncommon, notion in Marxist circles that historical materialism is to consist of a body of theoretical commentaries on the empirical materials which are to be laboriously collated, apparently on assignment from the Marxian deity, by the unworthy slaves of bourgeois historiography. One doesn't have to say how alien Marx himself was to this tradition, or to recall how consistently Engels used to admonish the socialist intellectuals to devote themselves to original and scientific social research. No one knew better than the "old men" what life and movement the writing of history might have. And the mere lack of excitement is the measure of the ultimate difference between the sort of thing a Hacker goes in for, and history written by a Trotsky.

•

Yet it would perhaps be ignoring some of the most serious and vital aspects of Hacker's influence and reputation to see him as a mere historical technician. Hacker has been far more than that, for in a real sense he has been the historical conscience of the radical political movement in America. "The history of the United States," he used to write, "is the history of revolution," and the strength of that revolutionary tradition in our past he counterposed against the 20th-Century Americanism and "petty-bourgeois sloganeering" of the Earl Browders. "The problem of the immediate future," Hacker said, "is not how to sustain an edifice whose foundation is slipping and which displays vital flaws in most of the parts of the superstructure; not where to continue patching farther or even what to salvage, but what to substitute." He was concerned about "the building of a revolutionary party" and the achievement of "a militant peace program that will not be pacifist on the one hand and that will still make realizable the conversion of the imperialist war into civil war". In a world of the decline and degeneration of capitalist society he saw only war abroad and reaction at home. And the hope? The hope lay only in the workers' use of "mass power to free themselves from a system of production—the profit system—which was every day proving that it had outlived its usefulness." Hacker, clearly, was not merely one of that familiar breed of academic Marxists, but a social revolutionist. With the publication of his new book, *The Triumph of American Capitalism*, Hacker has disowned that whole political and intel-

lectual structure, and almost completely cut himself off from his past.

The case is not a rare or isolated one. Surely one of the most remarkable phenomena of our time has been the tragic collapse of that formidable revolutionary culture which was represented to one extent or another by men like Sidney Hook, Lewis Corey, and others. If they bore up under the long list of defeats of the revolutionary movement in Europe, they simply disintegrated with the onset of the war tensions and reactionary political hysteria. To the last man they became "intellectuals in retreat". The times had tried their souls—and, after all, intellectual integrity and common honesty are saved these days at such a high cost of personal comfort and professional opportunity. So much of their work now stands exposed as irresponsible and unprincipled anti-Stalinism. And for middle-class intellectuals, who never really managed to break with the old society, there is now a prohibitive price on the old revolutionary poses, the familiar proletarian attitudinizing and literary gallantry.

In the case of Louis Hacker the break was equally drastic but the process was slow and gradual. For some years he has been speaking in softer, more hushed tones of American imperialism, and in strange new accents on the matter of American capitalist society. Here, at long last, Hacker makes his peace with the *status quo*. Capitalism, he now discovers and joyously proclaims, is to have a "new beginning"—it is to be "our servant and not our sovereign"—and it is heralding an economy of "abundance"! His volume ends with Andrew Carnegie and the rise of finance-capital at the turn of the century, but Hacker goes out of his way, with a shameless obtrusiveness, to append a commentary on contemporary America, announcing in grand organ-tones the news of his reconciliation. Yet, as a matter of cold fact, his whole historical study had prepared the path back to the middle-class.

ITEM 1: There is, first, throughout the whole volume a loose and sloppy employment of the concept of "capitalism", and it almost appears as if Hacker were sedulously cultivating every possible ambiguity on the question. Precisely used, capitalism would refer to the particular modern form in which organized society has been developing, a ruling-class structure manipulating masses and economic potentials according to certain historical formulæ of social exploitation. More broadly used, it refers to the *whole* society, the total cultural complex seen from a height which embraces in perspective all the existing class forces and struggles. The consistent confusion of the two has been the great historical error of liberal reformism. In every social crisis, the democrat pays his allegiance to the ruling class on the pretense of saving the progressive achievements of the "whole" society. So with Hacker, who now speaks in accents of thanks and appreciation for "our rich democratic heritage" which Capitalism Gave Us. If New York workers in the 1820's and '30's militantly battle both Tammany and the Whigs at the polls and in the factories for a public school system, *capitalism has given us free education*. If the American proletariat gets its head smashed in bloody strikes and military riots in the struggle for trade-union organization and collective bargaining, *capitalism has given us a free labor movement*. No one for a moment denies that progress and reform have been by-products of the general development of capitalist society. But at every point they were fought for and earned in great historical mass movements. And it is that tradition of class struggle and plebian solidarity which Hacker dis-

graces and betrays in his anxiety to show deference to the *status quo*.

ITEM 2: Nor does Hacker confine his abandonment of a Marxian perspective to this erratic general outlook on social development. On the specific questions of war and fascism, Hacker is backfiring even more loudly. He just barely manages to catch himself on the first matter by noting in an offhand sort of way, "I cannot lose sight of the facts, obviously, that many of these democracies are really sated imperialisms and that at home the state mechanism has as its prime function the protection of the property relation." A strange spectacle indeed: a Marxist graciously *conceding* truths to Marxism! The strong suggestion of pro-war defensism is reinforced by Hacker's scrapping of the notion of the class character of the fascist state. What Italy and Germany are coming to is nothing less than "state socialism". Obviously both the fascist demagogues and the Nazi theoreticians have been telling the truth about their 'brave new world'. . . .

ITEM 3: Precisely what Hacker accused Earl Browder of doing some four or five years ago is now suddenly legitimated. Browder starting out on a hunt for middle-class allies brought with him a knapsack full of new heroes, heroes of yesterday's petty bourgeoisie, slogans of a bygone past. Now Hacker seems to be rushing back to the fold along the same road and with the same kit on his shoulder. The "American Tradition" embraces . . . the Enlightenment . . . Jeffersonianism . . . Populism—a tradition and an idea, he writes with a rare optimism, "strong enough to withstand physical might . . . and I firmly believe it will make us economically secure and keep us politically free". From an unexpected quarter indeed comes a new ally for the Stalinist and the bourgeois democrats.

ITEM 4: Apparently a little worried whether his little Popular Front could stand on its own legs, Hacker proceeds to throw a couple of capitalists into the front line. He manages to create an amazing moral contrast between the monopoly-finance capitalists (the Evil Ones, too, in the Nazi Primer) and "the expansive and progressive characteristics of free industrial enterprise". As if the monopolists, from a capitalist point of view, did not mean greater efficiency, progress, expansion! And as if such a crudely-contrived fiction could gloss over the moral poverty of the pecuniary life, the disgusting money-grubbing of the Andrew Carnegies, who now become something of heroic pioneers. (Even Max Lerner was embarrassed by the apparent "apologetics".) Once again Hacker is shamelessly abusing and exploiting a clear-cut Marxist idea. Marxists do recognize the progressive character of the expanding capitalist technology. But that certainly is a very shabby rationale for Hacker's descent into the rhetoric of the Chamber of Commerce.

ITEM 5: To cap it all, Hacker appends a short chapter on some problems of contemporary capitalism, an essay which is typical of the character of the intellectuals' retreat to the bourgeoisie. First, it is unnecessary—the confession is wholly gratuitous. Second, it is irresponsible—the repentance is hardly genuine when the sinner refuses to face his own past. Why trouble oneself with fifteen years' work on the nature of modern social problems? Why bother with reconciling facts with theories and theories with conscience? Our's is a social-service state. Our's is a bright future. Capitalism is here to stay. Everything will work out all right. . . .

And apparently it is. The New York *Daily News* hailed the book gleefully, pointing to the author's "brilliance",

"scholarship", "reputation", flaunting his thesis that American capitalism has wonderful things ahead. And then the jackpot: Allan Nevins, the stalwart of bourgeois orthodoxy who has been the whip against Charles Beard and all liberal-materialist tendencies in American historical writing, put

his Columbia seal of approval on "a fresh and sound interpretation". To the credit of Hacker's "triumphant American capitalism" you can put down another little conquest—Louis Hacker himself.

JOHN MELVIN

# Future of the Japanese Empire

IT IS AN AXIOM of capitalist economics that those countries and powers which came to age in the modern world of imperialism at the latest stage are precisely the ones that experience the greatest difficulties in solving their inner economic problems. The colonial areas of the world do not expand, but rather contract. Furthermore, increased resistance by the colonial peoples (witness China for 3 years) makes the successes of imperialist wars of conquest doubtful.

It is significant that Japan, the *last* of the imperialist powers to put in its bid, was about the *first* actually to participate in the present war for world redivision. Its wars in Manchuria and China over the last decade have been but introductory and, at present, parallel phases of the Second World War. It was not until 1868 that the restoration of the Emperor Meiji by means of a *coup* on the part of the small Japanese bourgeois class wrested Japan out of the grip of total feudalism (rule of the Shogunate) and launched the industrial revolution under the slogan of "Westernization." The Russo-Japanese war which ended in 1905 was a blunt military *communiqué* to the effect that henceforth the Western powers would have a formidable rival in the Far East.

But with 1905 began Japan's imperialist woes and tribulations. There are numerous important reasons for this: the natural poorness and poverty of the small island Empire; its notorious lack of basic resources needed by a modern military power; the early and incredible monopolization of its economy by the "Two Families"—a result of the fact that Japan never had a bourgeois revolution but had to build its capitalist structure on a rotten feudal base; the intense competition of better equipped rivals; the proximity of the Russian Revolution, *etc.*

For Japan therefore, there could be no peaceful internal development or "normal" expansion overseas. Almost from the start it had to butt and fight its way around in the imperialist world. Japan's property class has faced one constant crisis; its masses have suffered to such an extent that its living standards and standards of life have always been comparable to those "enjoyed" by a *foreign-dominated, colonial people*. It is only natural to expect, given the existence of capitalism in the country, that Japan would early experience the technique of economic autarchy, currency manipulation, export jobbery and total reaction in its political and social structure. The stage of liberal, *laissez-faire* bourgeois democracy passed like a fairy's magic wand over the Land of Cherry Blossoms, without touching the soil. It existed in the minds of the liberal intellectuals, the masses never even heard of it!

But does it not appear now as if the reward for the "blood and sweat" régime of the past 70 years is close at hand? Korea is conquered and subdued; Manchuria is con-

quered and in process of conversion into Manchukuo; China has been partly defeated, at any rate, and a treaty giving economic monopolies has been signed with the Nanking government; and, above all, the most important foreign rivals (America, England and France) are all in such embarrassing difficulties that there appears to be no alternative but for each of them to toe the mark drawn by Japan. Is not Japan's day finally at hand?

So it would appear to superficial observation. Lush, ripe plums are about to fall to Japan. Will not some of the rich juice dribble down into the parched mouths of the long patient masses of Dai Nippon? The answer is an emphatic *No!* The economics and politics of world imperialism cry out, "*Too late!*"

What is the concrete case with Japan today? Planning fresh adventures which we shall describe below, it must store up huge supplies of basic materials (coal, iron ore, oil, gasoline, armaments). This requires equally huge expenditures of fresh capital by a poor nation. Most of this is spent without reproducing itself—that is, thrown down a bottomless pit. For example, the upkeep of the army of 1¼ million men in China, plus another million in Manchukuo along the Soviet frontier.

Then, after a particular area has been conquered fresh capital is needed once more. In the process of conquest a large percentage of those things sought after (mineral and metal mines, factories, plantations, *etc.*) are totally or partly destroyed. Again, fresh capital for reconstruction is needed—likewise to re-establish smashed communications. But Japan cannot do this! For example, although conquered several years back, those sections of Shanghai, Nanking and Canton caught in the military struggle still have the appearance of ruined cities. Ruined and blasted factories dot the landscape—as they were 3 years back. Finally, expansion and further development of occupied territories has proved a total failure. If Japan cannot reconstruct, surely it cannot construct! Exploiting monopolies with long-winded names are set up. They shrivel and wither away for lack of investment capital. Japan's conquests—particularly in the case of China—simply pays no dividends. Meanwhile, the Yen sinks lower; the need of raw materials for finished products to ship abroad and obtain American dollars to prop up the Yen, increases but the amount available declines due to the war; the demand for capital grows with each fresh event—in a word, a vicious cycle is strangling the country. One can only say that Japanese imperialism is self-consuming; *it is devouring itself.*

Striking illustration of this inability of Japan to reap dividends from its conquests are furnished by its turning to the lowest and vilest imaginable methods to obtain some profits. Unable to exploit their Empire through the "normal" methods of imperialism, the government and monopo-

listic companies foster the opium and hashish den, the licensed brothel, the gambling house, the saloon. The most shameful degeneracy is encouraged among the colonial people, although no Japanese is permitted to engage in or "enjoy" these privileges. Not only does it bring profit but it helps break the will of the population. Manchukuo's opium dens and Shanghai's "Badland" gambling houses are the best known examples. If one may distinguish varying degrees of imperialist corruption, that of Japan has reached the lowest point yet.

### Manchuria—The Great Failure

Japan instituted a "planned economy" in Manchuria after its conquest. That is to say, it handed over this rich territory to monopoly exploitation and closed the door to all exports but Japanese. What have the results been—for Japan and for Manchuria?

Faced with severe shortages of raw materials, capital and consumption goods, Japan can neither maintain her export level to Manchuria nor provide its colony with funds and supplies necessary to transform it into a gigantic Far Eastern military base directed against the Soviet Union. Since 1938 it has been found necessary to constantly curtail allotments of capital and materials to Manchuria. The China war made necessary a definitive postponement of many important military and industrial developments that had been scheduled.

After nine years of Manchurian "planned economy" the Yonai Cabinet of recent date was forced to reduce investments for 1940-1941 by 24%. This affected 105 special corporations of Manchuria. Now, the Konoye Cabinet no longer denies the necessity of further reductions in capital outlay. The value of Japanese exports for the current year is below the average of the last few years. The Fushun coal liquefaction plant construction has been indefinitely postponed; metal-factories, instead of being erected in Manchuria, are being transported from Japan. As for the corporations of the Northeastern Provinces, so unsuccessful have they been that the Hsinking régime in a recent press release announcing their forthcoming re-organization admits, "There has been a tendency of these concerns to be pitted against each other, resulting in great waste of materials, funds and personnel and the irregular development of industry." It speaks of "reckless use of materials, funds and personnel," but what is really meant is that *capital is lacking*.

As for Manchuria proper—inflation in recent months has been even more rapid than in Japan. The level of officially controlled prices has increased almost 100% over pre-China war level, while actual prices are much higher. A shortage of rice, sugar and other food staples has resulted in the issuance of food and ration cards. Japan cannot export to its colony, but it permits no other powers to export. At the same time, payment of low monopoly prices to Manchurian farmers caused a distinct reduction in cultivation, particularly of the soya bean crop which is the standard crop. Manchurian agriculture, too, is caught in the same vicious cycle. The only real business successes appear to have been in the opium and hashish trades.

### Renovation Of The Superstructure

Precisely at the moment when one might expect a slight relaxation of the war-time economy due to the favorable international situation, Japan is tightening up, particularly where its masses are concerned. These measures fall basically

into two categories—measures preparatory for fresh military adventures in the South Pacific and/or participation directly in the European War; measures for the final "totalitarianization" along Japanese lines of the governmental and state structure.

The first measures call for storing up of supplies, favorable disposition of troops and naval forces, lowering of general living standards. The second measures demand erasure of last democratic remnants, keen political manoeuvring, bureaucratic reorganization. The first step in this direction was taken early in August when unprecedented power was given into the hands of Prince Konoye, the new Premier. Coinciding with his assumption of supreme power over the army and navy, an "Advisory Council" of his personal aides was created. Its objective? This was explained in a Tokyo cabinet statement of August 1 which called for reorganization of the Empire so as to mobilize the whole of its resources for the establishment of a "new order in East Asia, which must be made self-sufficient in the interests of a larger life devoted to the state." General Koiso, special envoy to the Dutch East Indies, became more specific on August 4 and stated that "The Netherland East Indies should definitely form part of the economic sphere of Greater East Asia envisaged by the new order to be established by Japan." And finally, drawing practical conclusions, the Tokyo Hochi announced that Matsuoka, new Foreign Minister and Minister of Overseas Affairs had decided to establish a "national company" with an initial capital of Yen 500,000,000 (ap. \$125,000,000) to develop Japanese interests in the South Seas. Modelled on the monopolistic South Manchuria Railway Company, it will have authority over industrial and commercial development, with particular emphasis on collecting raw materials needed by Japan.

In various manifestoes, press statements and speeches Prince Konoye and Foreign Minister Matsuoka amplified the meaning of the "new policy." "... it goes without saying that the South Seas areas should not be left out in speaking of the welfare of East Asia. Our aim thus includes not only Japan, Manchukuo and China, but French Indo-China and the Netherlands East Indies as well." "Japan will therefore develop . . . towards the fulfillment of this policy by swiftly setting up an unshakeable national structure . . ." "The Government will strive for the replenishment of armaments for the execution of national policies . . ." "Laying the foundation of National defense economy of which the keynote will lie in the autonomous development of the economy of Japan, Manchukuo and China, with Japan as the center." "Reorganization of the foreign trade policy . . ." And finally, the totalitarian appeal to ultimate national unity. "The aim of the new national structure," declared Prince Konoye on August 28, "is the uniting of the total energies of the State and people to make one living whole of our 100,000,000 fellow countrymen and to enable them to fulfill perfectly their duties as the Throne's subjects . . . Whether or not Japan can establish such a strong national structure will decide the very rise or fall of the nation." We must not neglect to include the religious touch! "The new structure is to construct a new order in East Asia in accordance with the principle of the eight corners of the universe under one roof (*Hakko Ichiu*), thereby contributing to the establishment of world peace." Thus Shintoism, Japanese version of Indian Buddhism, gives its idealistic touch to the plan. "The universe under one roof!"

## Shintaisei—The New Structure

A preparatory committee consisting of 30 representative leaders of the Army, the Navy, disbanded political parties, finance, economy, universities and the press are now drawing up principles of the new structure. Although nothing has been completed, preliminary outlines of the scheme in so far as it affects Japan's internal régime make it quite clear that another totalitarian swindle is on the fire. Amidst the confusion created by ornate Japanese diplomatic double-talk the following essential points can be picked out:

(1) All political parties (actually, there were only two bourgeois parties) are to be dissolved. This step has already been consummated. Their place is to be taken by the as yet nameless "New Structure", with ex-party leaders receiving posts in various departments and secretariats.

Wherein does this differ from the one-party structure of Nazi Germany? Konoye has gone to great lengths to explain that such is not the plan. Germany's system is "un-Japanese," and besides even a "one-party structure" may clash with the Throne and the State. In reality, the sole distinction is that totalitarianism in Japan is to be carried to a degree not even reached by the Nazis. The "one-party" of the imperialists, the monopolists, the exporters and the gigantic State bureaucracy which carries out the bidding of Japan's bourgeois class is to be merged into one tightly knit unit. Behind the whole structure stands Japan's "Two Families."

In the "New Structure" the most important core will be the "Council of Key Industry Control Organizations," possessing decisive weight in the nation's economy. Who makes up this Council? Representatives of the iron and steel, power, coal, shipping, shipbuilding, Portland cement, etc., industries. Japan's "New Structure" is but the political counterpart of the country's unprecedented economic centralization.

(2) The Diet—Japan's elective Legislative body—will be reduced to the status of the German Reichstag. First, no party tendencies are permissible. More important, an appointed "Central Guiding Body" of the "New Structure" will control "the Diet, economic, cultural and other divisions . . ." "The Central Guiding Body," incidentally, will be nominated by the chairman of the Preparations Committee—that is, Prince Konoye!

(3) The "New Structure" will have branches and units all over Japan. Everyone must join, as an individual. Instead of a selected totalitarian "party" stratum—as in the Soviet Union or Germany—the object in Japan, apparently, is to totalitarianize the entire population!

(4) The head of the "New Structure" will likewise be the head of the government—that is, the same Prince Konoye.

(5) The effectiveness of male suffrage is apparently to be nullified. The all-important "Central Guiding Body" is, as noted above, to be nominated by the Premier. Half of those selected will be persons recommended by Prefectural (district) Councils of the "New Structure." Thus, all the authoritative sub-bodies are non-elective.

The only serious distinction between this totalitarianization of Japan's political superstructure and that of other fascist powers is one of secondary importance, flowing from the important feudal hangover that still remains. In some respects it is a modernization of the old military-dominated *Shogunate*—remodeled to suit the imperialist needs of today. In this sense only is it "typically Japanese." It has already been suggested—and dark hints in Konoye's speeches have

been pointed to—that the "New Structure" will be a permanent thing and its officialdom hereditary, like that of the Shogunate and the Imperial Throne. The sinister shadow of a hereditary, feudal-imperialist Asiatic barbarism is arising in the gentle "Land of the Lotus Flower."

## The Royal Road to Adventure

We have examined the economic motivations and the political preparations behind Japan's Asiatic aims, the construction of an East Asia Japanese Empire. Military preparations in the form of strategic shifts and placements, are taking place daily. Wherever possible forces from the Chinese and Manchurian armies are withdrawn and placed in position elsewhere. Supplies are mobilized in essential centers of operation. The mysterious Japanese Navy has shifted the **bulk of its unknown power** southward, around Hainan island and the Tonkin Gulf. It is worth our while to list some of the concrete imperialist adventures planned by the **High Command**, in conjunction with the "Two Families."

(a) *Shanghai*: Final occupation of China's most important commercial and industrial city. The British bugle has already sounded "retreat"—only the Americans, in addition to the capitulatory French Concession authorities, remain. The taking of Shanghai is simply a "mopping-up" operation that can be effected at the proper moment.

In addition, so far as China is concerned, completion of the process of molding its putty, Nanking puppet régime. This is about to be finished. With regard to the Chiang Kai-shek Chungking régime, a policy of armed "peace," stalemate.

(b) *Hongkong*: It is not difficult to believe that before long the same bugle call heard in Shanghai will ring out over Hongkong island, gateway to England's Pearl River Valley sphere of commercial and industrial influence in China. All British naval forces have been withdrawn and large-scale evacuation has taken place. The island is ringed by 50,000 troops of Dai Nippon. Its occupation is a necessary step in Japan's China program.

(c) *French Indo-China*: The press has been filled with the story of Japan's ineluctable penetration into this rich colony. Only determined and overt German-Italian opposition or a successful colonial uprising by the Annamite masses can prevent completion of the process within the next few months. Indo-China, a necessary stage on the road to Singapore, is in itself a valuable raw material source for hard-up Japan.

(d) *Singapore-Malay*: Here the situation differs only in the sense that the present holders, the British, will probably fight for mastery and also that American imperialism may become deeply involved. Upon reaching this area of the South Pacific Japan begins to tread deep and dangerous waters, with a major imperialist war rearing its head.

But the famous peninsula's strategic merits, plus its rich tin, rubber and rice products beckon Japan on. Long ago Japanese "fishermen" spied out the island, with its hidden naval base and four airfields. No doubt plans of conquest already exist. But this will not be so easy, its costs will drive deeper into Japan's economic body the knife of exhaustion and poverty.

(e) *The Dutch East Indies*: These immeasurably rich islands—to a large extent still undeveloped—constitute the apple of Japan's imperialist eye. Precisely because of their

richness in oil, rubber, rice, medicinal products and food staples the East Indies are the sorest point in the southward expansion program. Therefore, the approach to them is correspondingly cautious and delicate. The optimistic variant of Japan is that they fall without a struggle, due to collapse of England and engagement of America elsewhere. The pessimistic variant is one of involvement in a gigantic Pacific Naval War to settle the question of oceanic hegemony for a long time.

In the interim, "slow speed ahead" is the word, with the weather eye on the European War.

This, in outline, is the program staked out by the leaders of Dai Nippon. While its speed and tactics will be influenced by events in Europe, such events can only produce secondary variations. The main course has been clearly laid down. It follows the line of least possible resistance and the line which heads unerringly in a direction most likely to fulfill Japan's insatiable needs.

### A Super-Asiatic Empire?

Assuming the success of today's program, much speculation is heard regarding future and further expansion. In line with the famous "Baron Tanaka program," mention is made of the Philippine Islands, Hawaii, Australia, Thailand, Siberia, India, etc.

In our opinion this is idle "journalistic" speculation. First, in typical bourgeois fashion it assumes the passivity of the colonial masses in the countries involved. Actually, these colonial masses, whom the imperialists of all nations bargain away like so many sides of bacon, will be the decisive element in all cases. Secondly, Japanese realists understand that today's program is far from fulfilled and that imperialism lives a precarious, day-to-day existence. Finally, Japan—no matter the success—simply does not have requisite power for hemispheric programs of conquest. It is a *dying*, not a vital imperialism!

Talk of naval conflict between Japan and the United States has never reached such voluminous proportions as today. While both powers have equally exploited the familiar technique of racial chauvinism, panic and warmongering, nevertheless naval and military specialists are extremely cautious in predicting early warfare. Undoubtedly, there is a basic conflict for imperial hegemony over the Pacific between these powers, particularly with regard to the commercial needs and interests of America in the Far East. But there are many reasons tending to minimize immediate outbreak of hostilities.

First, the gloomy situation of England and the naval threat to the Atlantic coastline has sobered many an American chauvinist. Former Rear Admiral Yates Stirling, Jr. states this prospect with impeccable clarity. "If the war in Europe should end so disastrously that we can count no longer upon the help of the British navy then it may be necessary for us to abandon the Pacific to meet a combination of the German and Italian navies. Japan then surely would seize the possessions of Holland, France and Great Britain in the Orient. . . ." This is unquestionably correct. As to the prospects of a two-ocean navy for waging war in both oceans, realist ex-Rear Admiral Stirling remarks, "Within the next 12 months, our fleet is not likely to be much stronger than it is now." "If it [the navy] took the war to the enemy in Japan's base-studded home waters—the only way to win such a war—it would do so at great risk and would at the same time leave our Atlantic coast

defenseless against attack from Europe." Finally, he points out that in expert naval opinion no less than a *two to one* superiority over the Japanese Navy is needed to wage naval warfare in the western Pacific because of Japan's superior strategic position in that area.

This, of course, is the language of the "appease Japan" section of American militarists. But it rings mighty loud in the ears of the Roosevelt war régime! An unforeseen turn in history has apparently taken place in America. Preparing since 1918 for war with Japan, it may be vital—once the current confusion and uncertainty has passed—to effect a sharp change in its war orientation from the Asiatic world to the Old World. But meanwhile, let no one forget that *Hawaii remains America's greatest naval and military base*, while construction in Dutch Harbor, Alaska, proceeds rapidly. At most, Yankee imperialism will suffer an embarrassing, but momentary delay in its world plans.

Conversely, the same difficulties face the Japanese Empire in any contemplated offensive war on the American west coast. It too must travel 7,000 miles by sea, possess a *two to one* naval superiority, meet the enemy at his strongest point. ". . . a major Japanese offensive to the eastward, where there are no Japanese bases, would be in the same category and quite as dangerous as would be an attack by our fleet in the Orient." (*Ibid.*) Certainly Japan does not possess either the requisite strength or imperialist motivation for such an undertaking.

The greatest obstacles in Japan's way today are its own inner weaknesses, the life-draining wounds of its feeble economic structure. If not for these contradictions, clearly it could go ahead at will. Rival imperialisms are in a previously unknown weak position but—and here is the irony that eats at the heart of the "Two Families"—Japan cannot make hay while the sun shines! Stephen Early presented Japan with a blank copy of the American Monroe Doctrine, but the men of Nippon are having difficulty cashing it. Any Empire it may build in East Asia will rest on clay feet—a caricature in the epoch of capitalist decline of the once great British Empire.

### Japan's Ides Of March

Strictest realism is demanded in any analysis of prospects for an early revolutionary overturn of the present régime. There is no organized opposition, even of a bourgeois-democratic character. Revolutionary proletarian tradition in Japan is lacking. The Comintern in its best days never had a really serious Japanese section. Large sections of the petty bourgeoisie will be absorbed in the huge bureaucracy of the "New Structure," or take flight "prospecting and pioneering" amidst the ruins of China and Manchuria. Women and children, forming a majority of the proletariat, are meek and long-suffering beasts of burden.

Of discontent, yes, there is plenty. It affects all layers, particularly the peasant army and the peasantry itself. And here we have placed our finger—in all probability—on the source of future revolutionary action. *The soldier, the returning soldier* who, upon arrival home, finds nothing but unemployment and his peasant family starving. The mere thought of his empty-handed return already causes the imperialist to tremble and cynically plan further assignments in the field of action. But a soldier's furlough cannot be postponed forever, nor can the imperialist-feudal class of Dai Nippon forever evade the long-needed day of reckoning!

— SHERMAN STANLEY