

The

NEW

BEGINNING IN THIS ISSUE—
**THE YEAR ONE OF
THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION**

by **VICTOR SERGE**

INTERNATIONAL

The Fullest Report Published on
The Background of
**The Stalinist Road to Power
in Czechoslovakia**

by Ernest Erber

POLITICS OF CONNOLLY'S CATHOLICISM

by James T. Farrell

STALIN'S ROLE IN THE NAZI PACT

by Philip Coben

SOCIALIST THOUGHT ABROAD

A New Department

MARCH 1948

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

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That statement on the cover about Erber's article on Czechoslovakia—that it's the fullest report yet published on the background of the Czech coup, in any periodical—isn't an advertising blurb. . . . While bits of the story have appeared here and there, this issue contains the only story which explains the Stalinists' preparations and machinations for the rape of Czechoslovakia. . . . While the *NI* doesn't try to follow news events as closely as a newspaper, we're quite proud of being able to do this job in the first issue after the events themselves. . . .

Next month we intend to present discussion articles interpreting the Czech events. . . . These articles are in preparation as we go to press. . . . Erber promises one at the end of his article, and there will be one or two others.

Speaking of Erber's article reminds us of a point we intended to make before in this chat with our readers. . . . It's one of those conflicts between theory and practice. . . . The editorial theory of the *NI* is that articles are to be no more than four-five pages in length, with room for exceptions. . . . Well, there's been an exception in each of the recent issues. . . . The importance of the subjects and the quality of the articles have richly justified them in the eyes of our readers, we find, and nobody seems to be worrying about this point except ourselves; but we're still looking on these long articles as exceptions to our rule.

The same goes for our first installment of Victor Serge's great book, *The Year One of the Russian Revolution*, which was originally expected to be the only long piece in this issue. Here in this comparatively small compass Serge presents an illuminating report of the atmosphere and "feel" of the ten days that shook the world, the October days of 1917. . . . It should be read with the Czechoslovakian overturn in mind, to get one side of the contrast between Stalinism and Bolshevism. . . . The second installment next month, shorter in length, will deal with the reaction of the classes in Russia immediately after the revolution. . . .

James T. Farrell's series on James Connolly, to be completed next month, brings the following inquiry from friends of the *NI* in Ireland: "Farrell's articles on Connolly are timely. What's the possibility of Farrell giving us permission to reprint them in pamphlet form?" Such permission has already been given for the publication of the entire series in Ireland, as soon as it is completed. When it appears, Labor Action Book Service will have copies available for American readers.

Articles coming soon. . . . Crowded out of this issue by the Czechoslovakian crisis was an important and thought-provoking article by Ernest Rice McKinney on the civil-liberties program now before Congress, raising the question "Is it possible for American capitalism to abolish Jim Crow?" in a new light. . . . A study by Walter Grey of the effect of military preparation in the United States on science. . . . An analysis of third-partyism in the U. S. by Henry Judd, and from the pen of the same writer, a summary appreciation of the meaning and role of Gandhi.

Henry Judd's new department on *Socialist Thought Abroad*, starting in this issue, will usually alternate with another new department which will review interesting articles from the American periodical press, to be conducted by Philip Coben. . . . *Notes of the Month*, absent from two issues now, will be back, of course.

We're continually getting requests for the *NI* from European socialists many of whom cannot possibly pay for a subscription, as it is easy to understand. . . . The business department fills as many of them as it can, and we wish that we could send many more copies and bundles over there, but there is a limit to our ability to do this. . . . You who read and appreciate the *NI*—how about making it possible for a European socialist to do likewise? . . . Subscriptions sent in for this purpose will be doubly welcomed.

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BACKGROUND OF THE COUP

Stalinism in Czechoslovakia

"The way to liberated Czechoslovakia leads through Moscow. Soon all Europe will be free."

These words were spoken by Eduard Benes, president of the Czechoslovak Republic, in Moscow on March 17, 1945.

This March, three years later, a broken and cowed Benes, tears streaming down his face, followed to the grave the body of his close collaborator, Jan Masaryk, to whom death had come suddenly and violently as an aftermath of the Stalinist coup. With Masaryk was laid into the grave the last hopes of the Czech bourgeoisie to reconstruct their pre-war parliamentary state and salvage some degree of social and economic power. Czechoslovakia's "liberation" had not only led through Moscow, but "Moscow" had come to Prague to make certain that its special form of "liberation" would become permanent. The Russian armies brought with them not only Benes but also Klement Gottwald. Events soon showed that the "liberation" was not cut to fit Benes's pattern but that of Gottwald.

Public opinion in the West was shocked more by the comparative ease with which the Stalinist machine consolidated its power during the five days of the revolutionary overturn than by its ruthlessness. Yet an analysis of the events in Czechoslovakia during the last two and a half years reveals that the Czech Communist Party had so systematically and thoroughly prepared the ground that the final seizure of power became almost an aftermath. The forces that confronted each other during the February days were so unequal that there could not have been the slightest doubt about the outcome.

Not only were the bourgeois-democratic forces stripped of all *real* power long before the final test, but they were hopelessly disoriented and continually off balance. Appearing in the eyes of the workers less as the defenders of democratic rights and more as the defenders of private property, the bourgeois-democratic camp was, in the very nature of the situation, constantly on the defensive. Their first efforts to take the initiative during the early part of February revealed them to be utterly naive vis-à-vis the Stalinists. The childish strategy of the resignations, designed to force early elections, merely played into the hands of the Stalinists by permitting their coup to appear as a defensive counter-measure. The events assumed the appearance of a contest between raw amateurs and hardened professionals.

While the bourgeois-democratic camp conducted itself as if the parliamentary institutions and rules were inviolable, the Stalinists did not overlook a single possibility that promised to give them added advantage. They exploited every question that permitted itself to be twisted for their use—from the Czech's fear of a revived Germany to Slavic chauvinism and anti-Semitism. Stalinist propaganda was in turn cynical, hypocritical, demagogic and ruthless. It bespoke at all times an

unbending will to conquer to which all else was subordinated. It conveyed to its opponents the well-founded impression that an effort to obstruct the Stalinist march to power would result in oceans of blood. It made effective use of the technique of paralyzing the enemy's will to resistance, first developed in political warfare by the Nazis. Its tactics and propaganda exuded an air of self-confidence, of determination and of overwhelming force, in the face of which its opponents were gripped with a feeling of helplessness, indecision and futility. The advantages on the side of the Stalinists in Czechoslovakia proved so overpowering, that they produced a psychology of terror which sufficed to carry the day.

The Long Shadow of Munich

The factors that combined to set the stage for the Stalinists go back a number of years in recent Czech history, beginning with the Munich betrayals.

The imprint which the latter left upon the Czech people has never been fully appreciated in the West. The Czechs have never forgotten the bitter memories of their national degradation at the hands of the four powers at Munich. As children of Versailles, born of the machinations of Wilson, Clemenceau and Lloyd George, the Czechs regarded the role of France and England at Munich as a form of infanticide against their own offspring. Their very sufferings under the Gestapo were linked in the minds of the Czechs to the role of their Western allies.

In contrast, the Czechs felt a warmth and gratitude to the Russians as a result of the latter's offers of military assistance at the time of Munich. The legend of Russia's fidelity was so strong that not even the Hitler-Stalin pact could destroy it. Munich, in short, left the Czechs with fear and hatred of the Germans, suspicion of England and France, and friendship for the Russians.

Beginning with the German invasion of Russia, the Czech Stalinists began to play an active and increasingly important role in the anti-Nazi resistance movement. Their political line was one of unbridled chauvinism, vying with and outdoing the most ardent Czech nationalists. The forces they brought to the resistance were exceedingly important both in numbers and in composition. The Czechoslovak Communist Party had been a mass workers' party from its inception in 1921. In 1923 it reported 132,000 members, organized in over 3000 local groups and was considerably larger than the Czech Social-Democratic Party. It was the third largest party in the Comintern—only the Russian and German exceeded it. Though it lost much proletarian support to the Social-Democrats in the late twenties as a result of right-wing splitoffs, it recouped much of it during the crisis years of the thirties and added a considerable petty-bourgeois layer during the People's Front period.

In addition to numbers, the Czech Stalinists brought to the resistance movement their valuable network of factory cells. With Czech industry playing a vital role in the Nazis' munitions program, especially after the mass bombings of Germany were under way, an organized resistance among the industrial workers was a power far more weighty for the liberation movement than was represented by the demobilized officer caste, university students, lawyers and shopkeepers. With each Russian military advance after 1943, the influence of the Czech Stalinists rose, especially among the Partisan fighters who received Russian equipment and officers by parachute in the last stages of the war.

As the Russian armies penetrated Czechoslovakian territory from the east toward the west and the Nazi military machine began to crumble, the resistance carried through a successful insurrection in Prague on May 5, 1945. Since the Stalinists played the leading role in the uprising, the Czech capital fell into their hands even before the Russian army arrived.¹ This gave them added bargaining power in the crucial period that followed.

Effect of Russian Occupation

On the whole, the Russian occupation of Czechoslovakia seems to have been accompanied by far less looting and rape than occurred elsewhere. The close cooperation between the Czech Partisans and the Russian army, the similarity of language and a policy of stricter discipline seems to have been effective in restraining the Russian soldiers. Having known German occupation for seven years, the Czech population was inclined to view the conduct of the Russian troops as the inevitable tendency to lawlessness that characterizes every army in a strange country under frontline conditions.

The occupation by the Russian army, bringing with it swarms of GPU agents, was of short duration (some five months) but left a decisive imprint on the political relations within the country. It was during the Russian occupation that the provisional government was organized with the CP receiving the key posts. In keeping with the integral character of Stalinism, once having secured the inside track the Stalinists were never to voluntarily surrender it.

The program of the provisional government had been agreed upon earlier in Kosice in a meeting of the representatives of all political tendencies in the liberation movement, officially known as the National Front of Czechs and Slovaks. Its main provisions were for the establishment of a purely *Slavic* state, the division of large estates among the peasants, and the nationalization of large industry. This program suited the needs of the Stalinists perfectly and they utilized it for all it was worth. Throughout all the later political skirmishes the Stalinists were to parade as the defenders of the Kosice program and to denounce their opponents as traitors to it.

Another factor which colored the Czech political scene in the post-war period and of which the Stalinists made effective use was the fear of a revived German military power. The speeches and writings of all Czech statesmen are studded with references to it. Benes and Masaryk set the pace in whipping up this fear. Fear of Germany played the decisive role in shaping Czech foreign policy. In this instance too, the Stalinists were able to make political capital. They became the most blatant German-haters, ever ready to accuse their opponents of

1. Though the American army was only forty kilometers from Prague at the time and the Russians were 140 kilometers away, the American advance was stopped in order to permit the Russians to "liberate" the city in accordance with an agreement between Roosevelt and Stalin.

weakening Czechoslovakia in the face of the German threat.

The reverse side of the coin of anti-Germanism was, of course, pro-Russianism. If Germany is our main enemy, only an alliance with Russia can save us, ran the Czech argument. "Russia stood by us at the time of Munich." "The Russian army liberated us from the Nazis." "Russia is our only firm friend and ally." These themes were played over and over again by *all* Czech politicians, regardless of party. However, no one could play these themes as loudly, as frequently and in as many different keys as could the Czech Stalinists. When it comes to praising Russia, no one can hope to outdo the experts in this field.

The Stalinists made of "friendship for the USSR" the test of loyalty to the new Czechoslovak state. A politician who dared speak without taking a bow to the east was already suspect. When a writer in the opposition press stated that the price which Czechoslovakia was paying for her alliance with Russia was well worth it, the CP press came down on him like an avalanche, saying, in effect: "What does this anti-Soviet element mean by saying that Czechoslovakia pays a 'price' for its alliance with Russia?" Spanish socialist refugees were expelled from Czechoslovakia on the charges that they had "a hostile attitude toward the USSR."

Czech Stalinists could argue reasonably that if friendship with Russia is Czechoslovakia's only salvation in the future, is not that friendship best guaranteed by having the most pro-Russian party at the head of the state? The protests of the other politicians that "friendship for Russia is not the monopoly of any one party" could not hope to destroy the logic of the Stalinist argument.

Pan-Slavism—Race Theory of Benes-Gottwald

But the pro-Russian orientation was motivated not only by considerations of foreign policy. It found further support in the acceptance by all the large Czech parties of a race doctrine—Pan-Slavism. This vile political philosophy, product of the most reactionary Czarist circles, was revived by the Kremlin during the war to implement its policy in Eastern Europe; an All-Slav Committee was formed with headquarters in Moscow. This Stalinist demagoguery found greater response from the Czech petty bourgeoisie, main support of the Benes National Socialist Party,² than anywhere else among the Slav peoples.

The Czech Stalinists, of course, became the most ardent Slavophiles. If Russia was "our big Slav brother," were not the Czech Stalinists—who not only gloried in Slavic culture and language but also gloried in the political system of the Slavic heartland—the best representatives of Pan-Slavism? Was not Gottwald, whose political home was in Moscow, a better spokesman for Slavism than Benes, whose political home was in London? When Jan Masaryk proudly proclaimed to the National Assembly, "We Slavs now step before the world united" (July 17, 1946), he was merely introducing the thought which thousands of Communist Party agitators completed by adding ". . . under the leadership of the Great Stalin."

The Pan-Slavic doctrine was given a political form and became the basis for state measures as soon as the republic was re-established. It took form in the inhumanly conceived and brutally executed policy of "cleaning" the territory of the republic of all non-Slavic minorities to achieve the Hitler ideal of a pure national state. This goal was achieved by driv-

2. Not to be confused with the National Socialist Party of Germany (the Nazis). The Czech NSP was a bourgeois-democratic party with an economic program comparable to that of the New Deal Democrats in this country.

ing two and a half million Sudeten Germans and a half million Hungarians out of the country (nearly 30 per cent of the pre-war population of Czechoslovakia). This monstrous action is without precedent in modern history before the advent of Hitler and Stalin, and only Hitler's treatment of the Jews exceeded it in cynical brutality.

The Germans and Hungarians were driven from communities they had inhabited for over six centuries. They were forced to vacate their homes, farms and businesses upon notice that varied between ten minutes and two hours. The deportees were rounded up in concentration camps, driven along roads, or loaded into cattle cars and trucks. They were robbed of all their worldly goods with the exception of what they could carry on their backs. They were taken to the Hungarian frontier and to the frontiers of the American and Russian zones of Germany and unceremoniously dumped into the open fields. Many, especially the aged and the children, died by the roadside for lack of food and shelter.³

The Stalinists and the bourgeois nationalists vie with each other in claiming the "credit" for this policy of barbarism. Speaking to the Provisional National Assembly in March 1946, Dr. Ivo Duchacek of the (Catholic) People's Party, which stands to the right of Benes's National Socialist Party, argued:

We want to exclude nobody from this success, though it is true that, e.g., the Communist Party had in the years 1939, 1940 and 1941 no such clear and uncompromisingly Slavonic conceptions in this matter as it has today. However, I regard it as a downright falsification of history and as a building up of legends, which I do not hesitate to call pre-election legends, if the Communists, of all parties, assert that mainly to them or almost alone to them the credit for the transfer of the Germans from our country is due. [*Lidova Democracie*, March 3, 1946, quoted in *Der Sozial Demokrat*, London, May 1946.]

The Communists got the better of the argument, however, by pointing out that the mass expulsion was only possible as a result of agreement with the big powers and that this was secured due to Russian influence at the Potsdam Conference. Furthermore, everyone knew that the actual operations against the Germans and Hungarians were carried out under the jurisdiction of the brutal Stalinist Minister of the Interior, Vaclav Nosek.

The expulsion of the Sudetens resulted in a loot of real estate, buildings, industrial equipment and personal possessions valued at more than *four billion dollars!* In accordance with the nationalization policy, to be discussed later, almost all manufacturing and commercial enterprises were declared state property to be operated by the state. However, the farms (valued at \$1,200,000,000), homes and personal possessions were distributed or sold to "worthy Czech patriots." This accumulation of wealth gave its dispensers political patronage that would make any politician green with envy. Since the Stalinist Minister of the Interior passed on who was a "worthy Czech patriot," there is little need to go into details on what followed.

The Sudetenland and the corner of Slovakia formerly inhabited by the Hungarians were converted into Communist Party strongholds. Not only were the farms settled with loyal

3. Among them were some 400,000 anti-fascist workers, including over 8000 victims of Hitler's concentration camps. Over 3000 had fled to foreign exile in 1938 to escape the Gestapo. Some 630 were executed or died in the Gestapo torture chambers. These figures cover only the socialist working class of the Sudetenland. Thousands of liberals, Catholics and others of the general Sudeten population also suffered at the hands of the Nazis. These figures are based on reports that have appeared in various numbers of *Der Sozial Demokrat*, organ of the Sudeten socialists, published in London since 1939.

Stalinists or those who proved pliable instruments, but a huge bureaucracy, composed of faithful party supporters, was set up to administer the resettled districts. Such settlers as may have had other political views than the Stalinists soon learned that it was not in keeping with their designation as "worthy Czech patriots" to voice them. Slavism as a state policy paid off well for the Stalinists, much better for them than for the traditional Czech nationalists like Benes and Masaryk.

Economic Consequences of Expulsions

The economic consequences of the mass expulsions were catastrophic. "Owing to unforeseen circumstances,^{3a} the eviction of the Germans had to be carried out faster than was anticipated, and the border region was suddenly faced with large ownerless herds of cattle and empty villages." (Report of Minister of Agriculture, October 14, 1946.)

Since the expulsions were carried out during the summer, the crops were left standing in the fields and mostly went to waste. The result was a sudden shortage of foodstuffs, followed by increased prices and growth of black-marketeering. This, too, played into the hands of the Stalinists by making necessary the importation of grain from the Stalinist-dominated countries of Eastern Europe and Russia, thereby tying Czechoslovakian economic relations more firmly to the Russian bloc. The disorganization of agriculture in the resettled regions continued in 1947 and was further aggravated by a severe drought that affected the entire country. The importation of Russian grain became necessary and every delivery was accompanied by a big Stalinist propaganda campaign in favor of Russia to offset the good will for the United States that had been created by UNRRA aid. Inspired telegrams from all over the country were sent to Stalin *personally*. Typical was that of the Slovak Board of Commissioners, ruling provincial body, on December 6, 1947: "The catastrophic harvest caused a serious situation in Slovakia which, without your help, could not be solved."

Another economic consequence of the expulsions was the creation of a sudden labor shortage. Among the expelled Sudetens were Czechoslovakia's most skilled workers in textiles, glass, porcelain, toys, musical instruments and other industries that accounted for a large part of the Czech export trade. Among them also were the indispensable miners from the Sudeten coal fields.

To make sure that the newly nationalized industries in these border regions were a success, the Stalinists (and also the Social-Democratic heads of the Ministry of Industry) did their utmost to attract Czech workers to settle in the vacant cities. They were offered their choice of a home, furniture, bicycles, etc. The resulting movement of workers from the Czech industrial centers created a labor shortage of crisis proportions on a national scale.

To this was added the fact that the farmers in the resettled regions demanded farm labor to get in the crucial crops, and farm labor was already scarce in the rest of the country. As a

3a. In large measure, the "unforeseen circumstances" consisted of a growing possibility that the western powers would reverse themselves and withdraw approval of the expulsions. The English press, especially, was beginning to strike a note of humanitarian protest. The Hungarian government was active in promoting an international protest against the treatment of its nationals in Slovakia. At the Paris Conference of Foreign Ministers, the English and Americans became irritated with the fanatical intransigence of the Czechs in demanding that every last Hungarian and German be expelled and one American representative is reported to have declared angrily that if the Czechs were so anxious not to have a Hungarian minority they could easily achieve this by ceding these border regions to Hungary. In alarm, the Prague regime decided to speed up the expulsions and drive out the minorities en masse.

consequence, the 100 per cent "Slavicizers" decided to keep some 310,000 Sudetens and 200,000 Hungarians on the sacred Slavic soil of Czechoslovakia—but only as laborers and under conditions that make of them virtual slave laborers. Since they are non-Slavs and will be driven out when no longer needed, these technicians, skilled workers and farm laborers are not granted rights of citizenship. They are specifically prohibited from belonging to a trade union. They are not permitted to share in social security benefits. One-fourth of their wages is deducted by the state for "reparations" to compensate for losses due to the Nazi occupation. They are not entitled to the vacations legally granted all Czech workers. Their children have been deprived of public education since May 1945. (*Der Sozial Demokrat*, Sept. 1947.)

Slavism Gives Rise to Anti-Semitism

The old dictum that no people can enslave another without becoming enslaved itself worked with cruel speed in Czechoslovakia. The utilization of the German and Hungarian "slave laborers" proved insufficient to resolve the labor shortage and it became necessary to pass a National Labor Mobilization Act, which provided for compulsory labor. Labor camps were opened to assemble persons judged to be either evading work or working at non-essential jobs.

The right of designating who was to be placed in the labor brigades—assigned mainly to work in mines, construction projects and agriculture—was placed in the hands of the local National Committees, the composition of which, as we will see later, was either directly Stalinist or Stalinist-dominated. The result of the labor shortage and the compulsory labor draft was to place another weapon in the hands of the Communist Party. They put this weapon to effective use, especially during the crucial February days, by threatening those of whose support they were not sure with dismissal from their posts and, as unemployed, assignment to the labor brigades.

The wild chauvinism unleashed by the doctrine of a purely Slavic state had still other consequences. It gave rise to reactionary demands for the expulsion of all residents of *any foreign extraction*. This agitation became serious enough for the government to make an official announcement that no citizen of the Czechoslovak Republic of *Slav extraction* would be forced to leave, thus setting at ease the Polish and Ruthenian (Carpatho-Ukrainian) settlements in Slovakia.

The evil doctrine of racial homogeneity could not be unloosed upon the country without affecting that segment of the population which is always its inevitable victim—the Jews.

Already thousands of Jews had been victimized in the expulsion of the Sudetens and Hungarians. If Hitler refused to accept the German Jews as Germans, the Czech racists now refused to accept the German Jews as Jews. Since the Jews had lived among the Sudetens and Hungarians for many generations and had adopted their language and culture, the Czechs looked upon them as part of those minorities. Those Jews in Sudetenland who managed to escape the Gestapo dragnet were now dumped into Germany along with the Sudetens. Many Jews who returned from Nazi concentration camps found their businesses confiscated and their homes occupied by Czech settlers, and even experienced difficulty in securing ration books. On March 2, 1947, the Prague radio, mouthpiece of the Stalinist-controlled Ministry of Information, denied the charges of Jewish organizations that Jews were being forced to leave Czechoslovakia by means of refusing them jobs and rations.

On August 6, 1946, the evil seeds of racism sprouted in

typical fashion when a rally of former Partisan fighters in Bratislava ended in an anti-Semitic pogrom. The Stalinists attributed it to the machinations of the underground remnants of the Hlinka movement, the Slovakian clerico-fascist allies of the Nazis. How they could have brought about a pogrom by the veterans of the anti-Nazi underground was not made clear.

Most of the Jewish refugees who returned to Czechoslovakia after the war found it impossible to regain their business property which had been taken by the Nazis, even where the size of the business did not make it liable to nationalization. Court actions by Jews to regain such property gave rise to much anti-Semitic agitation among the workers, especially among the employees of such establishments. On May 22, 1947, the Stalinist-led Revolutionary Trade Union Movement (sic!) in Varnsdorff called a strike to prevent a Jewish businessman from operating the establishment that had been legally returned to him. Deputy Hora, of the National Socialist Party, speaking before the Parliamentary Security Committee which investigated the strike, reported that in Varnsdorff the Communist Party was alone in supporting the strike action and that CP speakers made anti-Semitic speeches to the strikers. He also quoted one as saying: "The laws are made in Prague but we shall change them here to suit our needs. Our party will not tolerate a single private enterprise."

CP Purge Kept Going

Another factor in the post-war political scene in Czechoslovakia that served the Stalinists well was the purge policy against those who had collaborated with the Nazis. The big bourgeoisie was, of course, the most collaborationist during the occupation. The proletariat was, again of course, the least. The in-between layers of the population tended to collaborate in proportion to their property and rank. As a consequence the Stalinists, whose main base was in the proletariat, favored as thoroughgoing a purge as possible.

As soon as the liberation took place, the Stalinists took the lead in carrying out the "purge of public life" which all parties had adopted as the program of the National Front. The purge became a terrible weapon in the hands of the Communist Party. Long after the genuine collaborationists had disappeared from the public scene, the Stalinists continued to make fresh charges in their press and demand new trials. When it became impossible to make the charge of collaborationist stick because of the known anti-Nazi role of a public figure, they would accuse him of "shielding collaborationists" by opposing further purges. The result was that the "purge atmosphere" continued to play an important role in Czechoslovakian politics long after it became a dead issue, even with the Stalinists, in the Western European countries.

In large measure, the prolonged "purge atmosphere" was related to the question of Slovak separatism. The latter has roots that go back many years in the history of the Czechoslovak Republic. The Czech bourgeoisie controlled the big banks and heavy industry of the state and their political agents dominated the political apparatus. The Czech petty bourgeoisie—urban, cultured, "Western" and secular in its politics—looked upon the Slovaks—agrarian, poorly educated, priest-ridden—as an inferior people. The Slovaks resented the domination of the republic by the Czechs, especially since the latter did not compose the majority of the population.

In the early period of the Communist Party, when it was still inspired by Leninist principles on the national question, it had been a vigilant defender of the rights of the Slovaks to

equality in the affairs of the republic, despite the domination of Slovak political life by the clergy. As a result, the Communist Party achieved considerable influence among the proletarians of the towns and, to some extent, among the agricultural laborers. These points of support among the Slovak population, although numerically insignificant compared with its position in the industrial centers of Bohemia and Moravia, served the CP well during the resistance and the liberation.

The economic crisis of the thirties had given a considerable impetus to anti-Czech feeling in Slovakia and had also produced the native clerico-fascist Hlinka movement which had definite separatist tendencies. When the Czechoslovak Republic began to disintegrate under Hitler's blows, the Hlinka movement came to an understanding with Berlin and was permitted to set up a separate Slovak state with the diminutive priest-politician, Tiso, at its head. The Slovak state became a German satellite in the war and furnished troops for the German military campaigns in the East, both for the invasion of Poland⁴ and, later, of Russia.

From all appearances, the Tiso regime had a considerable mass support, especially among the peasants. Some estimates of objective observers are that easily 75 per cent of the population supported the regime. This support can be accounted for by such factors as these: (a) The puppet state had saved the Slovaks from Nazi occupation. (b) The influential Catholic clergy gave it ardent support. (c) The peasants received relatively good prices for their crops from the Germans, especially in the first years of the war. (d) The Germans constructed a considerable war industry in Slovakia, including the removal of plants from Germany, because it was beyond the range of enemy bombers.

As a result of the above factors, the *majority* of the Slovak population could be said to be guilty of collaboration with the Nazis. The Slovak CP, therefore, was able to play the leading role in the Slovak resistance, despite its small numbers. Much of the Stalinist resistance took the form of guerrilla bands, since the Slovakian terrain (forests and mountains) lent itself to this type of fighting. After the invasion and occupation of Slovakia by the Russian army, the Stalinist-led Partisans had a field day in cleaning up collaborationists—they had almost a whole nation to work on. Once the Stalinists had entrenched themselves both in Prague and in the Slovakian provisional government, the withdrawal of the Russian troops did not affect their role as the organizers of the purge in Slovakia. Since the bulk of the Slovak public figures, both major and minor, were guilty of collaboration, they were at the mercy of the CP. The most effective way of saving themselves was either to join the CP or to become its docile tool in whatever party or organization they remained.

The Czech population had been justly outraged by the pro-Hitler role of the Slovaks. In addition, they felt that they had been deserted in their hour of trial. As a result, "Slovak separatism" became the most heinous of political crimes—really high treason—in the eyes of the Czech nationalist politicians. They were resolved to weld together the new republic in such a manner that Slovak separatism would never again be a threat. The Czech Stalinists, of course, immediately presented themselves as the firm anti-Slovak-separatist party. Were they not taking the lead in cleaning up the separatist

4. During Tiso's trial after the war, the Prague regime indicted him for cooperating with Hitler in the invasion of Russia but was silent about the 50,000 Slovak troops who joined the Reichswehr invasion of Poland. Since the latter was carried out in cooperation with Stalin, Tiso's role in it was a dangerous question to bring up in the courtroom.

collaborationists in Slovakia? Every manifestation of opposition to the Stalinists in Slovakia was immediately denounced by the CP press with cries of "separatist sabotage of the republic."⁵

In Slovakia, on the other hand, the Stalinists were able to pass themselves off as the only party which could be trusted with the defense of Slovakian interests at Prague. After all, argued the Slovak Stalinists, is not our comrade, Gottwald, an old enemy of the Czech bourgeoisie, at the head of the government?

Post-War Role of the Partisans

If everything else failed them in Slovakia, the Stalinists could always rely upon pressure through their Partisans' organization. The latter, of course, enjoyed great political capital in a nation that had undergone seven years of occupation by the Nazis. The political weight of the Partisans was incomparably greater than that of the war veterans in other countries. Once the liberation had been achieved, the non-Stalinists among the Partisans tended to lose themselves once more in the civilian population. Not so the Stalinist Partisans. Their important function was just beginning. They did not dismantle their organizations and, instead of disarming, secreted their weapons for future use. Demonstrations by threatening Partisans (and who isn't a Partisan when the party needs support?) often carried the day against recalcitrant majorities in local National Committees.

The role of the Partisans in Slovakia became especially pronounced in the summer of 1947 in connection with the invasion of Czechoslovakian territory by the "Banderovici"—the anti-Stalinist Ukrainian Partisans.⁶

Just how many Banderovici penetrated the frontiers is not known. The Stalinists raised a huge alarm and undertook a great propaganda campaign to awaken the people to the Banderovici danger. Prominent in their propaganda were accu-

5. A case in point is the trial of Tiso and its aftermath. The popularity of Tiso called forth widespread support for his acquittal. A number of street demonstrations took place, mostly by women inspired by the clergy. The Czech press generally predicted that the court would not condemn him to death. The reports are that the Cabinet intervened and insisted upon the death penalty. The court condemned him to death. Benes refused to pardon him and he was hanged. (Benes was denounced for his "perfidy" and "ingratitude" in Slovakia since Tiso's support had made possible his election in 1935.) In anger, the Slovak National Council removed Dr. I. Daxner, the president of the court that sentenced Tiso. The CP members, a minority in the SNC, protested and walked out. They appealed to Prague and raised a hue and cry about the dangerous trend toward Slovak separatism represented by this act. The cabinet backed the Slovak Stalinists unanimously and decreed that the removal of a judge is unconstitutional on the basis of the old constitution of the republic! This constitution, though nominally in force, had been observed more in the breach than the application under the post-liberation regime. Though it never proved useful against the Stalinists it sometimes proved useful for them.

6. Little is known in this country about this formidable movement. It had its origins in the Ukraine during the Nazi occupation. It claims to have operated behind the Nazi lines as a guerrilla movement. The Stalinists claim that it was a tool of the Nazis. Which version is true cannot be established at present. Without a doubt it was anti-Semitic. This would not, by itself, establish that it was pro-German. The Banderovici cooperated closely with the Polish anti-Nazi guerrilla movement, which likewise was largely anti-Semitic. After the Russians reconquered the Ukraine they operated behind the Russian lines and claimed to have 100,000 in the field with light artillery. After the Russian conquest of Poland, the Banderovici passed back and forth over the Polish-Russian frontier, fighting the armies of both countries. In the summer of 1947, a joint Russian-Polish offensive sought to trap the Banderovici. Some 50,000 tried to escape to the American zones of Austria and Germany, by way of Czechoslovakia. Only small numbers got through. The Banderovici issued newspapers and pamphlets in the territories they occupied, filled with anti-Russian propaganda. They call themselves the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABBN) and use the slogan "Liberty to the nations, freedom to men." Their leader is a legendary figure called Col. Bandera after whom they are named. Bandera is reported to have been killed in the fighting last summer.

sations that public officials and Slovak Democratic Party members were supplying the invaders with hiding places in the mountains and providing them with food, in preparation for an imminent uprising of the separatists, led by the underground Hlinka movement. The aim of the uprising, they claimed, was to re-establish the separate Slovak state and wipe out the loyal supporters of the united republic.

On the basis of this campaign the Stalinist Partisan movement demanded to be supplied with arms with which to repel the invasion. The non-Stalinists, not only in Slovakia but in Prague, were alarmed at the prospect of the armed Partisans running amok in Slovakia, and the National Socialist Party and Slovak Democratic Party press denounced the whole anti-Banderovici campaign as a "bogy" intended to give the Stalinists control of Slovakia. Despite these protests, Prague radio announced on Sept. 5 that armed Partisan units were cooperating with the army and Security Police against the Banderovici.

The Slovak Stalinists used the anti-Banderovici campaign and the arming of the Partisans as the occasion to demand the renewal of purges in the Slovak civil service. Demonstrations of the Partisans backed up this demand, and on September 2 the Slovak Board of Commissioners announced that it had decided to carry out the purge as demanded by the Partisans. Gottwald used the occasion to call upon the Slovak people to get rid, once and for all, of elements who had served Hitler.

Nationalization and Workers' Control

From the long-range point of view, the most telling blow struck the Czech bourgeoisie was the elimination of the big capitalists as a result of the Nazi occupation, the purge of the collaborationists and the expulsion of the minorities. The elimination of the big capitalists was made permanent by the policy of nationalization of economic enterprises employing 200 or more workers, agreed to by all parties adhering to the National Front. Without the pressure of the Stalinists and the Social-Democrats (the latter proving themselves ardent nationalizers) the bourgeois-democratic parties would have disposed of the industries rendered ownerless for political reasons by finding private interests to take them over. Once the Stalinists got their bearings in liberated Czechoslovakia, they made the nationalized economy their special concern and constantly sought to extend it. This role of the Stalinists coincided with the desires of the workers and did much to enhance the prestige of the Communist Party in the working class.

However, the interests of the Stalinists and those of the workers did not always coincide in regard to the nationalized economy. The workers saw in nationalization the means of ridding themselves of *all* bosses, not merely private owners, and of achieving economic democracy on a plant level. The Stalinists saw in nationalization a means of (1) eliminating the bourgeoisie as rival aspirants for power; (2) providing thousands of bureaucratic jobs with which to build a firm layer of supporters; and (3) coordinating Czech industry with the new economic order being introduced into Eastern Europe by Russia. These differing interests—really the difference between the socialist collectivism of the working class and the bureaucratic collectivism of the Stalinists—gave rise to a number of specific problems.

Many of the enterprises were taken over during the liberation days by the workers in the shops driving out the collaborationist managements and German representatives. The workers sought to organize production through the medium

of the Works Councils or, as they have generally been called in the revolutionary movement, factory committees.

After the decree on nationalization was issued by the provisional government and a Ministry of Industry was organized to coordinate the nationalized economy, frequent clashes occurred between the central direction of the economy and the local Works Councils. On October 14, 1946, Minister of Industry Lausman of the Social-Democratic Party decreed that the engineers and managers have first responsibility in the direction of production. He asked that "The Works Councils and trade unions should give them the greatest support." Yet ten months later, on July 8, a session of the central council of the trade unions was still occupying itself with the problems caused by "usurpations" of authority by the Works Councils, and instructing the latter not to interfere in questions of production since these were the responsibility of the managers.⁷

The leading role in breaking the authority of the Works Councils was played by the Communist Party, operating through the trade-union apparatus. With the liberation, the unity of the trade unions was achieved for the first time since the founding of the Red International of Labor Unions. Having a voting strength that was three times that of the Social-Democracy, and even greater strength among the industrial workers, the Stalinists completely controlled the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement, as the united organization was called. The Stalinists introduced the strictest centralization in the trade unions and thoroughly bureaucratized them. They introduced the practice of voting on the basis of single lists submitted by the leadership. (See "La situation réelle en Tchécoslovaquie" by the anonymous Czech worker, P. L., in *Quatrième Internationale*, 1947.) The Social-Democrats in the trade-union apparatus valued their posts above all, as trade-union bureaucrats always do, and quickly adapted themselves to the Stalinist methods. The trade-union staffs were loaded down with Stalinist functionaries. The national headquarters in Prague had 1500 employees! (Only a tenth as many, some 150 employees, suffice to operate the national headquarters of the Trade Union Congress of Great Britain.) In the nationalized industries, the Stalinists took into trade-union membership *all* non-industrial employees, from the top managers and engineers down, thus diluting their class character and confronting the workers with their direct superiors *inside* the labor movement.

7. The relationship between the authority of the factory committees and centralized economic planning is one of the most important questions for revolutionary socialists to resolve. Lack of clarity on this question proved to be one of the big handicaps in the Russian Revolution. The struggle to deprive the factory committees of their authority in matters of production began one year after the Soviet power was established. It continued until 1920-21, when it merged with the dispute over the trade unions.

NOTE ON SOURCES

The main source of information used in compiling this account of the development of Stalinism in Czechoslovakia is the excellent weekly news bulletin, *East Europe*, published in English in London. All materials referred to as appearing in the Czech or Slovak press are from its weekly press summaries, unless otherwise noted. *East Europe* has supplied a unique and invaluable service in covering the press of the Eastern European countries for the last two years. Though differing widely with the political views of its editors, I unhesitatingly recommend it for its objective, factual news coverage. Its address is: *East Europe*, 16 Chester Row, S.W.1, London, England. The subscription rate is £2, 12s. a year. A single copy sells for one shilling.

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As time went by, the Stalinists succeeded in subordinating the Works Councils to the control of the trade unions, making of the former pliable tools for whatever aims the party leadership was pursuing from time to time. The Works Councils themselves were then increasingly bureaucratized and turned into a source of more patronage jobs for the CP machines. Workers elected to the Works Council no longer were required to do manual work and were paid for all extra time spent on official duties. Instead of functioning as the workers' spokesmen in the front offices of the factory, many of the Works Councils became adjuncts of the management and the means of achieving the latter's aims in the operation of the plant. But above all and in the first place, the Works Councils, composed overwhelmingly of CP members, functioned at the beck and call of the party leadership. As a result of CP control of the Works Councils and the trade unions, the real control over production and over all industrial activity was in the hands, not of the Ministry of Industry nor of the managers, but of the *Central Committee of the Communist Party*. (The role of the trade unions as battering rams to force through the political demands of the Stalinists will be dealt with separately.)

Stalinist Economic Policy and the Workers

The Stalinists were, above all, interested in the successful operation of the nationalized industries. In large measure their political prestige depended upon it. Equally important was their interest in developing Czech industry into the main source of manufactured goods for the integrated economy of Eastern Europe taking shape under Russian direction. The Stalinists' efforts, as a result, were directed toward increasing production. Here, too, they experienced difficulties with the workers.

From all indications, the workers took nationalization to mean an end to the enforced labor discipline and the pressure to produce to which they had been submitted by private capitalism. As a result, the level of production declined in the nationalized industries. Two years after nationalization, the Ministry of Industry was still complaining that most factories were still only achieving eighty per cent of the production per man-hour that had been the norm in 1938. Complaints about the inefficiency of the nationalized industries were a constant theme in the press during 1946 but appear to have become less frequent in 1947. Without a doubt, this reflected to some degree an improvement in the situation.

Judging from the repeated arguments against wage increases that appeared in the CP and trade-union press, there must have been a considerable pressure by the workers for higher wages. The Stalinists stressed the need to first achieve the production goals set in the Two Year Plan before increasing wages. They insisted that the nationalized economy be placed upon a solvent basis. Efforts to secure increased production through piecework appear to have met with resistance from the workers. On May 28, 1947, the Czech press reported that during the course of strikes, which were trade-union inspired but unauthorized, in opposition to the restitution of certain enterprises to private owners, the workers also raised the demand for the abolition of piecework.

It would be false, however, to assume from the above conflicts between CP aims and the desires of the workers that the latter were indifferent to nationalization. All indications are that they wholeheartedly favored it and, despite dissatisfaction over wages and the diminished authority of the Works Councils, the workers found conditions in the nationalized

industries far more tolerable than they had experienced under private capitalism. The strikes to defend individual factories against threats of restitution to former owners appear to have received the firm support of the workers.

Wherever the policies of the Stalinists brought forth too much resistance from the workers, they introduced such concessions and modifications as would not endanger their mass support. The extreme skill which the Stalinists have developed in demagoguery, in maneuvering, in distorting issues, in catering to prejudice, in manipulating and misusing the terminology of socialism, and in diverting attention elsewhere, helped them over many a rough spot. The differences between the CP policy and the desires of the workers assumed, therefore, the character of minor frictions, always subordinate to and overshadowed by the major struggle between the CP and the old ruling class in its various segments—capitalists, civil servants, old officer corps, church hierarchy, landowners, bourgeois politicians, etc. Whenever the friction between the interests of the workers and those of the party threatened to erupt, the Stalinists could always undertake a new offensive against the bourgeois elements and immediately enlist the support of the workers.

Part of the Stalinist strategy in minimizing the conflict between the workers' and the party's interests in the nationalized economy was to avoid placing a Stalinist at the head of the Ministry of Industry. The latter post was given to the Social-Democrats and occupied by Bohimil Lausman, a man known for his independence from Stalinist control. Government policy in the nationalized economy was, therefore, not attributed directly to the CP.

The Stalinists, of course, could well afford not to occupy the Ministry of Industry, since their real control was exercised through the trade-union apparatus and the party fractions in the shops. In addition, the Social-Democrats were the one non-Stalinist party that could be relied upon to follow a pro-nationalization policy. Although Lausman did announce on April 13, 1947 that the nationalizations had been concluded and that the remaining small capitalists and merchants need not fear for their enterprises, the Stalinists always knew that this policy could be changed by sufficient pressure from below, a pressure to which the Social-Democracy, a workers' party, was especially susceptible.

The New Bureaucratic Aristocracy

The Stalinists built up a tremendous base for themselves by always, everywhere, and consistently expanding the number of bureaucratic jobs. The result was that there emerged what the Czech press got into the habit of calling "the new bureaucratic aristocracy." The phenomenon represented by the inflated bureaucracy was frequently discussed in official bodies and in general political polemics. It could hardly have remained unobserved, for by the middle of 1947 public administration absorbed 48 per cent of the national income.

For those who did not follow the statistical reports, the size of the bureaucracy was impressive by its omnipresence. Estimates were made in 1947 that there were from 130,000 to 200,000 more public functionaries than in 1938, despite a considerable decline in the population (due to the cession of Ruthenia to Russia and the expulsion of the Germans and Hungarians). These figures do not include the managing personnel of the nationalized economy. The latter represented an additional layer of bureaucratic posts.

Part of the swollen bureaucracy resulted from the struggle between the Stalinists and the bourgeois politicians over the

old civil service. It was difficult for the Stalinists to remove the old civil servants from their posts without precipitating a major crisis. As a result the Stalinists merely added thousands of their own appointees onto the staffs of ministries and other agencies of government under their control. One of the largest bureaucratic creations of the Stalinists were the administrators of the former German and Hungarian territories. Another factor in swelling the bureaucracy was the National Committees which resulted from the liberation movement and paralleled the old state apparatus (a development that will be dealt with later). The Prague weekly *Hospodar* complained in January 1947 that there was one public official for every 105 inhabitants. In the cities, it added, the proportion was much higher and it cited as examples: in Prague, one official for 42 inhabitants; in Brno, 1 for 35; and in Ostrava, 1 for 62.

There were frequent complaints in the Czech press that the staffs of the nationalized enterprises were top-heavy with directing personnel. In a report that sought to give a balance sheet on the nationalization program, given on March 6, 1947, Lausman listed as one of the problems the disproportion between staffs and workers in the nationalized industries.

The overwhelming bulk of the new bureaucratic apparatus was a Stalinist creation. Most of the non-Stalinist criticisms of the inefficiency of the nationalized enterprises blamed it on the political appointment of the technical personnel. The failure to mention the Stalinists in these accusations was due to the prudent self-restraint which the non-Stalinist press followed. Not only could the Stalinists secure such appointments but incumbents in such posts knew that a membership card in the CP guaranteed them their jobs and offered excellent prospects of advancement. If a member of the managing staff of a nationalized enterprise proved unresponsive to Stalinist wooing, the Stalinists could always create enough "labor trouble" in a given shop to secure the removal of such a person.

The upper layer of the "new bureaucratic aristocracy" lived well, and did so ostentatiously enough to cause widespread comment. On September 3, 1947 the National Socialist press referred to them as "the protégés of the Communists, who hold important administrative positions, draw high salaries and live in great luxury." The People's Party daily, *Lidova Demokracie*, referred to them on January 2, 1948 as being "drunk . . . with their newly gained power and wealth." Almost all of the higher bureaucratic posts rated an automobile and, in many cases, a government-paid chauffeur. Many of them lived rent-free in the villas of the former capitalist owners. The article by the Czech worker, P. L., which we cited previously, documents the standard of living of this new bureaucracy in the following figures, after describing the living standards of the ordinary workers:

Quite different is the situation of the big bureaucrats of industry and the state, currently called "the new aristocracy." The spread between the minimum base pay of the manual worker and the maximum salary of the highest functionary of the nationalized industry is extremely wide; it is easily more than one to ten, fifteen and even twenty. Not infrequently one finds industrial managers earning 40,000 Czech crowns a month (nearly twenty-four times more than the worst-paid workers!) and enjoying in addition the free use of a villa, an auto with chauffeur, etc.

The specific weight of these unproductive expenses in the national economy is enormous. The [Czechoslovakian] magazine *Accounting and Control [Ucetnictvi a Kontrola]* . . . submits the state budget to a detailed analysis to get an approximate estimate of the cost of the bureaucracy. With regard to the governmental administration properly so called—that is, the ministries, not including the administration of the nationalized industry—there were not less than 780 million Czech crowns of expenditure for trips,

and 180 million for the maintenance of automobiles (excluding trucks). What these figures represent becomes clear when it is realized that the amount which the honorable bureaucrats spend for trips could cover, for 300,000 families, the difference between their starvation wages and a minimum living standard.

Structure of the State Apparatus

The new state apparatus that came into being with the liberation was a de facto authority that emerged from the liberation movement (organized officially into the National Front of Czechs and Slovaks) and came into power with the advance of the Russian armies and the Prague insurrection. It began its work as a provisional, quasi-revolutionary regime which aimed to carry out the Kosice program, in which the purge of collaborationists was the first aim. To achieve the main points of this program, it was necessary to short-circuit the old constitution and to act through bodies which would not be encumbered by the traditional legal safeguards.

The bodies formed for this purpose were the National Committees. These assumed supreme state power, both nationally and locally. This extra-constitutional apparatus appointed the provisional government and arranged for the elections to a National Constituent Assembly, which was empowered to adopt a new constitution. Since the National Committees reflected the division of party power in the resistance movement and since they were organized in the period of Russian occupation, the CP played the leading role in them. In keeping with the Stalinist doctrine of never surrendering a position until a stronger one has been conquered, the CP maintained its leading position in the National Committees and fought to preserve the authority of these bodies.

After the elections to the National Constituent Assembly in May 1946, the composition of the National Committees was to reflect the party vote which these elections recorded. For example, the National Committee in Pilsen was composed of the following party representatives: CP, 8; National Socialists, 7; Social Democrats, 3; People's Party (Catholic), 2. Where the CP did not have enough pliable tools among the representatives of the other parties (most often from among pro-Stalinist Social Democrats) to assure their control, the Stalinists managed by one means or another to circumvent the majority. On May 13, 1947, for example, the National Socialist daily, *Svobodne Slovo*, complained about the "undemocratic rules of procedure in district NCs," which resulted in all manner of manipulation. Such manipulation was not too difficult since out of 154,000 members of the NCs, 69,786 were members of the CP, according to a report by Gottwald to a meeting of the Prague CP on June 6, 1946. Since the local NCs organized extensive staffs of their own, in large measure paralleling the civil service, the CP found them a lucrative field for bureaucratic jobs.

The Stalinists did their utmost to preserve the authority of the NC setup against the efforts of the bourgeois parties to "normalize" administration by restoring the power of the pre-war institutions like city councils, etc. On December 31, 1946 the CP daily, *Rude Pravo*, declared that the NCs are repositories of all executive power in Czechoslovakia until the adoption of a new constitution. As executive organs their power cannot be curtailed by anyone except the cabinet (headed by Gottwald) in Prague. It was the strategy of the Stalinists⁸ to keep the governmental machinery in a provisional

8. This did not prevent them, however, from freezing political institutions where it was to their advantage. For instance, on March 5, 1947, the cabinet decreed that political parties were to be incorporated and that new political parties could be formed only with the permission of the government.

state, and consequently in flux, until they could consolidate their own power.

The CP in the Government

The Kosice program provided the basis for collaboration of all parties of the National Front in a coalition government, thus eliminating a parliamentary opposition in the traditional sense.⁹ The National Front regime was the Czech variant of the tactic used throughout the Eastern European countries dominated by the Stalinists. Due to the strong mass base of the CP in Czechoslovakia, the National Front was not quite as totalitarian as its counterparts in Rumania and Bulgaria, where the Stalinists insisted that all parties appear upon a single list in the elections, or even in Poland, where all except the Peasant Party appeared in a single bloc in the elections. The elections of May 1946 in Czechoslovakia permitted a choice of parties. The CP received 38 per cent of the vote. Since the Social Democracy received some 13 per cent of the vote, the two parties that based themselves upon the working class had a slight parliamentary majority, a fact that was to play a role in the February coup.

The CP divided the posts of cabinet rank with an adroitness that revealed how thoroughly Stalinism had learned, and adopted to its own purposes, the Marxist teachings on the nature of the state. As the leader of the largest single party in the Assembly, Gottwald was, of course, called upon to head the government as premier. The CP took for itself the posts of minister of interior (police), information (press and radio), and agriculture (agrarian reform). The Ministry of National Defense was given to an ostensibly non-party military man, General Ludvik Svoboda. The latter had functioned with the Russian army during the war and was a thoroughly reliable Stalinist tool.¹⁰

The important post of foreign affairs, usually regarded as next in importance to the premier in European governments, was given to Jan Masaryk, who had broken all party ties to devote himself to diplomacy as a non-party man. However, the real power in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was Vlado Clementis, a Stalinist wheelhorse. Masaryk served the Stalinists as window dressing in foreign affairs just as Benes served in this capacity for the Gottwald government as a whole. However, since the regime was a coalition of five parties, among which the CP only represented two-fifths of the electorate, the occupation of the key posts by Stalinists created the danger that it might appear as almost total control. The Stalinists sought to offset this by dividing the rest of the government functions, consisting of the more "harmless" departments, into the largest number of divisions. The result was an unusually large cabinet in which all other parties *appeared*

9. Since cabinet meetings were closed, reports of its proceedings confidential, and all of its decisions reported out as the views of the cabinet as a whole, and since these decisions were assured the unanimous support of all parties in the Assembly, at least in theory, the debates in the latter body were never full-fledged, direct presentations of differences between the parties. The deputies limited themselves to insinuations, implications, guarded references and vigorous attacks upon anonymous evildoers. The real debates took place behind the closed doors of the cabinet's meeting room. These gave rise to widely circulated "unofficial" reports and became a substitute for the parliamentary forum. When the CP found it necessary, as we shall show, they would flagrantly violate the confidences of cabinet discussion.

10. The old officer corps was thoroughly purged of all collaborationist elements when the Czechoslovakian army was reconstituted. However, further purges were continually being called for in the CP press. The general secretary of the CP, the Stalinist party whip, Slansky, demanded in a public speech on January 9, 1947, that: "Those [officers] who slander our republic and our Slav allies are not good Czechs or Slovaks, but agents in foreign service." The Stalinized character of the new officers is indicated by the demand made in the Czech press during December 1946 by a number of officers that the officers' corps be permitted representation in the trade unions.

to have adequate representation. There was not only a minister of agriculture but also a minister of food. (The former, a Stalinist, was praised by the peasants for giving them land; the latter, a Social-Democrat, was blamed by everybody for not giving them enough food.) There was not only a minister of commerce but also one of foreign trade. There was not only a minister of posts and telegraph but also one for transportation. There was a Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and also a Ministry of Health, etc. etc.

Stalinist Control of Police

The Stalinists showed little interest in the "economic" posts, which naive Social-Democrats usually go for in the illusion that they can use them to construct "socialism." The Stalinists made a beeline for the posts not of "construction" but of destruction—i. e., destruction of their enemies. Of these, the most potent is the Ministry of Interior. "Interior" to the American means national parks, Indian reservations, oil reserves, forests, etc. "Interior" to the European means but one thing—the national police apparatus. There is no exact counterpart to this institution in the Anglo-Saxon countries. (The trend of the FBI, however, is toward becoming such an instrument.)

The prime function of the national police is the security of the state against its internal enemies. As a result, the national police is always in greater or lesser measure a political police, operating to hinder, harass or destroy the political opponents of the state power. It keeps lists of "dangerous" organizations and individuals, keeps them under surveillance, sends informers among them, organizes battalions of shock troops trained in riot work and street fighting, etc. In total police states the national police operates without legal restraints of any kind, like the Gestapo and the GPU. Under constitutional regimes they operate within the limits of statutory provisions and judicial authority. Therefore, when the Gottwald government organized the National Security Corps as the police arm of the Ministry of Interior, it built upon a solid continental (and, of course, Czechoslovakian) tradition. The function of the Stalinist minister of interior, the notorious Vaclav Nosek, was to convert the Security Police from the traditionally, legally circumscribed, bourgeois-democratic police institution to a Czech replica of the Russian GPU. Nosek proved equal to his task.

If Stalinist aims required the revamping of the army, in the case of the Security Police it required building from the ground up. The Security Police was heavily weighted with Stalinists to begin with, and every effort was made to influence the rest. For instance, the CP organized special classes for Security Police personnel; opposition papers charged that the word was passed around in the force that those attending CP classes would be favored in promotions. A conference of Security personnel in Prague on June 17 was addressed by the Stalinist trade-union chief and CP deputy, Antonin Zapotocky, though the latter had no official position in the Ministry of Interior.¹¹ As things came to a head, the Stalinists acted ever more openly in consolidating their hold on the Security Police. The unconcealed promotions of the CP adherents in January of this year was the incident that set under way the events that culminated in the coup.

The two and a half years between the liberation and the

11. The theme of his speech was to denounce those who said that the Security Corps was tainted with "Gestapoism." "If transgressions have occurred and possibly still occur, they must be regarded as a survival of fascist-reactionary times." The main duty of the Corps, he said, was to guard state property against theft.

coup saw no dearth of activity by the Security Police. The country was kept in a continual state of nerves by the announcement of new plots, conspiracies and subversive movements unearthed by the Security Police. These were always followed by arrests and treason trials that kept most of the country in a state of tension that gradually developed toward that total psychosis of fear which is the normal state of mind in a modern police state.

Given the political situation in Slovakia, which we have described in dealing with Slovak separatism, this part of the country became the main center for Security Police operations against the political opposition. The main aim of the Stalinists in these attacks was to break the power of the Slovak Democratic party. Since it was fairly easy to establish ties between this party and the remnants of the Hlinka movement, the Security agents had a field day in cooking up amalgams.

Toward the Czech GPU

The biggest "plot" was broken to the public on October 7, 1947, when the political situation was beginning to approach a crisis and the Stalinists feared the formation of an anti-CP government. The Slovak Commissariat of the Interior announced the arrest of 380 persons involved in an anti-state conspiracy, among them civil servants, businessmen, priests, public officials, etc. This was soon followed by the "discovery" of a second plot, centering in Bratislava, resulting in the arrest of seventeen "important persons." Most of these arrests were accompanied by the discovery of pro-Hlinka leaflets. Later a scandal broke out when political opponents of the CP announced that they had discovered bundles of such pro-Hlinka leaflets in a provincial headquarters of the CP!

The power of the Security Police is demonstrated by the fact that they searched the offices of the Vice-Premier, Ursiny, in connection with these "plots" and arrested members of his staff.¹² On January 7, 1948, General Ferjencik,¹³ head of the Security Corps in Slovakia, denied that political prisoners were being tortured in the Bratislava prison. Such "denials" in themselves helped create the psychological terror which the Stalinists aim at.

But the operations of the Security Police were not confined to Slovakia. They reached everywhere. On March 23, 1947 all Social-Democratic papers published on their front pages a protest against police supervision of political meetings as directed in instructions from the minister of interior to local and district NCs. The protest called upon political parties to bar police from attending their meetings. Nosek denounced the SDP protest as "a call to public violence against police officials executing their duty." However, the practice was continued. On May 6 the Social-Democratic daily *Pravo Lidu*, complained: "Not a day has passed lately without a public meeting of the SDP having been prohibited or control officials being sent to meetings of party members." On October 9, 1947 a National Socialist deputy exposed a Security Corps agent-provocateur who had approached him posing as an agent of the underground Hlinka movement. Thus the record estab-

12. No public official was immune from the prying of the undercover agents of the Security Police. The zeal of the Stalinists in shadowing their opponents resulted in several CP-controlled ministries resorting to this practice. This situation brought forth from Deputy Firth of the National Socialist Party the following remarks on the floor of the Assembly on June 24: "Much money can be saved by a coordination of the government's intelligence agencies. Why should I, as a member of the National Assembly, be followed by three snoopers—one working for the Ministry of Interior, one for National Defense, and one for Information? If this sort of thing has to be tolerated, let it be done by one man."

13. The Security Corps had been reorganized on military lines on May 21, 1947.

lishes the progress that the Security officials were making in learning their lessons from the GPU book.

Information—CP Style

Next to the Ministry of Interior, the most potent governmental weapon the Stalinists had in the internal life of Czechoslovakia was the Ministry of Information, headed by the blatant party propagandist, Vaclav Kopecky. The Stalinists thoroughly understand that "ideas are weapons" and that without ideological offensives the naked force of the police could not totalitarianize the population. Radio Prague and its provincial subsidiaries became potent mouthpieces for the CP. The party line was woven into all its features whether educational, cultural or entertainment. In April 1947 there was adopted a law on the press, introduced by the minister of information which made provision for a "Union of Czech Journalists" (plus another one for Slovak journalists) in which membership was compulsory for those working at the profession. These journalists' "unions" were in reality semi-official bodies which provided the minister of information with another means of applying pressure upon the press to conform to Stalinist concepts.

Direct censorship of the press was not invoked until the coup. The Czech traditions in this respect were too strong to permit the Stalinists to indulge in the type of open dictation to the press that was imposed in Poland and other Eastern European countries. The need for direct censorship was, in a measure, obviated by the self-censorship which the bourgeois press imposed upon itself. Here, too, the psychosis of fear proved sufficient to achieve the Stalinists' ends.

A picture of the state of Czech journalism under the Stalinist shadow is drawn by F. Perutka, editor of the independent daily, *Svobodne Noviny*, who deserves commendation as one of those rare political specimens—a liberal with a backbone. His paper spoke its mind more openly than any other. On July 28, 1947, he wrote as follows in reply to the questions of some young people who had asked him what qualities were needed "in these days" to make a good journalist:

Above all, good nerves. But there is a more comfortable way if you are prepared to join the mob which never denounces a wrong unless permitted to do so by those who have committed it, the mob which is ready to rejoice or shed tears, or praise or revile at orders. What strikes me most is that we have beautiful ideas and deplorable practices. . . . Our public life is riddled by intrigue. Lying is becoming the rule of the country. . . . Discussion has long ceased to be a means of ascertaining the truth. . . . There is no bad quality in man that the press does not nourish and strengthen. All this is happening to the accompaniment of honeyed phrases by the official Union of Journalists, which claims "only now have the conditions been created for the honorable exercise of the profession of journalism." Those who are active in public life, however, feel as if they are wading in mud up to their knees. . . . The political parties in this country regard their struggle for power as more important than the fundamental principles of decency and fairness. The worst thing is that the liars have learned to imitate the voice of truth.

The Ministry of Information functioned as a "police on the cultural front" and its long arm reached everywhere. It publicly denounced the booksellers for not promoting the sales of "progressive" books. It purged the National Theatre and brought from Minister of Education Stransky, a National Socialist, a protest that appointments to the theatre could not be made "according to election results." It launched a furious attack upon the universities,¹⁴ the bulk of whose students

14. On April 1, 1947, the Central Union of Czechoslovak Students was suspended when non-Communists threatened to become the majority on the executive board.

were politically active in opposition to the Stalinists.

On December 5, when the political crisis was already threatening to boil over, Kopecky addressed the Communist Student Organization to mobilize them against the minister of education, denouncing the latter as the inspiration of "reactionary" agitation by the students. Kopecky predicted that "before six months the Ministry of Education will again be in progressive hands." (The CP had been at its head during the early period of the provisional government.) Many professors were reactionaries, Kopecky said, pointing specifically to the rector of Prague University, Professor Englis. He called for a purge of the faculties. "The ideology of dialectical materialism must be made to assume a leading and dominant position in our educational system." Propaganda against the Communists, he said, was hostile to the spirit of the National Front and the republic. "The patience of the workers has its limits. . . . We made a great mistake in admitting everybody to the universities. . . . In the future, students with a positive attitude toward the regime and the New Order will have priority." He stated that students with anti-Communist records would not be accepted for employment in the ministries headed by Communists or influenced by them. "To be anti-Communist is to be a traitor," Kopecky shouted, and urged all students to join the Communist camp since "there will be nothing else for them to join."

The Ministry of Agriculture also played a key role for the Stalinists. A partial distribution of landed estates had taken place after the First World War. These estates, usually the property of the Hapsburg nobility, were expropriated but usually only a part of the land was distributed among small peasants. The reduced estates, referred to as "remnant estates," found their way into the hands of Czech politicians, officers, etc. The CP carried on a vigorous campaign for the total distribution of such lands. The Ministry of Agriculture under the Stalinist, Julius Duris, set up a vast network of ministry representatives to carry the CP campaign into the countryside and recruit for the party. Protests were made in the press of the other parties upon a number of occasions that peasants were being promised first choice on new land if they joined the CP. On June 24, 1947 a demand was made in the Assembly for an investigation of the Ministry of Agriculture to determine how much money had been expended to finance CP propaganda among the peasants.

Mass Action from Below

The thorough exploitation by the Stalinists of all government posts within their control to build up a mass base did not prevent them from utilizing all the techniques of *mass action from below* to achieve the same ends. Stalinist policy skillfully dovetailed the two forces. This was not always easy, however, for the presence of Stalinists in responsible posts often made them the target of popular discontent. The regime as a whole was, after all, a "Gottwald government" and the Stalinists had to be its foremost defenders. But the strength represented by a mass Communist Party made it possible for them to manipulate the very discontent of sections of the population and turn it against their political opponents.

The most potent weapon for pressure from below at the disposal of the Stalinists was the trade-union movement. At every crucial stage of a political dispute in the cabinet the Stalinists would bring to bear the mass action of the workers. The government would be flooded with telegrams adopted by factory meetings, or visited by workers' delegations, or con-

fronted with mass demonstrations, all demanding the solution favored by the CP. If such pressure was not sufficient, the trade unions would utilize the strike as a political weapon. Strikes against the return of enterprises to their former owners, in cases where the nationalization decree did not cover them, were very frequent. These reached a peak in the spring of 1947 and, on March 22, *Cas*, the daily of the Slovak Democratic party, demanded that legal measures be taken against such strikes, saying that some parties have "the wrong conception of the right to strike." This unloosed a barrage in the CP press and over the government radio in defense of the right to strike.

A case in point was the strike of the employees of the Ara department stores against the decision of the Prague district court to return the stores to their former owner, a Jewish businessman by the name of Andres who had fled to the United States to escape the Nazis. The CP daily, *Rude Pravo*, called for complete support to the strike by the workers. This was repeated on June 10 when the employees of the Franck Coffee Substitute factory in Sered struck against its return to private ownership.

The trade unions used the threat of strikes to bring about changes in the composition of the Slovak provincial government on November 11. As a result, the Board of Commissioners reorganized itself on November 18 and elected a Stalinist, Dr. Husak, as chairman. Four days later, *Prace*, the trade-union daily, said that it was still dissatisfied with the political situation in Slovakia and warned that unless the voice of the working people was respected, the trade unions would mobilize the workers "to assert their will." Another example of mass pressure through the trade unions was the mobilization of factory delegations at the meeting of the provincial NC at Prague to demand a trade-union majority on the Food Supply Commission. The delegations paralyzed the functioning of the NC until it promised to add the required majority, compromising, however, by seating them without decisive votes.

In January 1947 the CP minister of agriculture distributed drafts of his proposed laws on land reform to the workers organizations and asked for mass support. The result was a deluge of resolutions, wires, delegations, etc. In reply to the outraged protests of the non-Communist ministers who had not yet had time thoroughly to discuss the draft, *Rude Pravo* answered, "Never again will this policy be decided behind the shutters of the Zivno Banka and the cartel palaces" (January 27). On February 28 the National Socialist Vice-Premier, Zenkel, gave indirect reply in a speech which said that "the will of the people" is not necessarily synonymous with "mass demonstrations, previously-ordered telegrams, resolutions, etc."

Delegations of farmers were continually brought to Prague to back up the views of the minister of agriculture. On June 11 a delegation of 200 farmers gate-crashed into a meeting of the Assembly's agricultural committee and demanded the immediate consideration of its demands. The CP members of the committee steered them to a session with Gottwald and Duris (minister of agriculture) who pledged their support. Visitations by such mass delegations of farmers continued all through the summer of 1947, since the draft laws of Duris were meeting with considerable opposition from the bourgeois parties. This dispute led to the first big open crisis in the National Front in September, when the CP pulled all

(Continued on last page)

Portrait of James Connolly - - IV

The Politics of Connolly's Catholicism

The historic experiences of Ireland as a subject and exploited nation can be described as the other and non-progressive side of the rise of English capitalism and the Industrial Revolution.

If we look at England, without in any way minimizing the horrors of the new industrialism, we can see the advances made with the rise of capitalism. There was an enormous economic development and, in addition, there were real political gains of a democratic character. England became one of the most democratic countries in the world.

But if we look at Ireland, it is much harder to see these advances. Here was a nation invaded and despoiled by foreigners. Its industry was smashed. Its people were driven off the land and out of the country. Its clan system was broken up. The faith of its fathers was ruthlessly abused by the despoiling invaders who were also the professors of an antagonistic religious creed.

Consider these facts—which are but roughly and hastily generalized here but which were vivid, concrete and intimate to generations of the Irish—and it should not be difficult to understand how and why Catholic Irishmen would not see the progressive side of the Reformation. That liberty of conscience which has historically been so influenced by the rise of Protestantism had to be defended and fought for by Catholics. In their own country, Irish Catholics lost their citizenship. They were exiles in their own country, and in fact it can be said that here are the historic roots of that melancholy sense of alienation which is to be found, even to this day, in so many Irish and even in Irish-Americans who are far removed in space and time from remote and oppressed Catholic Irish ancestors.

Seon O'Faoláin, in his biography of Daniel O'Connell, *King of the Beggars*, writes of Catholic relief bills prior to the rise of O'Connell as a political leader: "... after 1771 an Irishman might lease a bog for a brief period, if it was a mile from a town . . . and if the lessee guaranteed to reclaim at least half of his bogland within twenty-one years." And after 1782, as O'Faoláin also wrote:

... a Catholic, i.e., one of the people was suddenly acknowledged as a species of citizen, if a very inferior species of citizen; so inferior that our historians of Dublin under the Georges have been unable to find a single detail about the people, and all we can gather about them is to be inferred from the contemporary theatre in which they begin to appear as the faithful, if rather foolish, servant . . . every office was closed to the native—unless he apostatized—the army, the law, and the civil service—though he could become a doctor in private practice, or open an apothecary's shop. Not until 1793 . . . could a native Irishman enter the army. . . . But he could take neither hand, act, nor part in the government of his country. . . . He walked with the word Pariah branded on his forehead.

One could add many details concerning the persecution of Catholics, including the clergy, and the ways in which religious persecution was linked with national and social oppression. Connolly himself, in *Labour in Irish History*, wrote:

War, religion, race, language, political reform, patriotism—apart from whatever intrinsic merits they may possess—all serve in the hands of the possessing class as counter-irritants, whose function is to avert the catastrophe of social revolution by engen-

dering heat in such parts of the body politic as are farthest removed from the seat of economic inquiry.

England is noted in the history books for having perfected the technique of divide-and-rule in modern times. The policy of ruling an oppressed nation or race by dividing it was worked out, as it were, in the terrible empirical-historical situation of Britain's seven-century rule of Ireland.

Swift's "Modest Proposal"

The Irish were, then, beggared and oppressed for a long period. The horrible conditions of life in Ireland in the eighteenth century were revealed in Swift's masterpiece of irony and sarcasm, *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of the Poor People in Ireland from Becoming a Burden on their Parents or Country, and for Making them Beneficial to the Public*.

This began:

It is a melancholy Object to those, who walk through this great Town [Dublin], or travel in the Country, when they see the *Streets*, the *Roads*, and *Cabbins-Doors*, crowded with *Beggars* of the female Sex, followed by three, four or six Children, *all in Rags*, and importuning every Passenger for an Alms. These *Mothers* instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in Strolling, to beg Sustenance for their *helpless Infants*, who, as they grow up, either turn *Thieves* for want of work, or leave their *dear native country* to fight for the Pretender in *Spain*, or else sell themselves to the *Barbadoes*.

Swift proposed to find "a fair, cheap and easy method of making these Children sound and useful Members of the common-wealth." And he found a way whereby these children could be used to "contribute to the Feeding and partly to the Cloathing of many Thousands." Calculating that there were about 120,000 children of the poor born annually, Dean Swift pointed out that this number could not all support themselves by agricultural and handicraft work or by thievery. Thus the children, when they reach the age of one, would become "a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome Food, whether *Stewed*, *Roasted*, *Baked*, or *Boyled*, and . . . it will equally serve in a *Fricassie*, or a *Ragoust* . . ." One hundred thousand of these children could be so disposed of, and since as food they would be dear, they would be "very proper for Landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the Parents, seem to have the best Title to the children."¹

This enterprise would be profitable all around, it would even give the mothers a profit, and Swift also suggested that "Those who are most *thrifty* . . . may flay the Carcass; the Skin of which, artificially dressed, will make admirable *Gloves for Ladies*, and *Summer Boots for fine Gentlemen*." Swift, with his melancholy and savage genius, revealed the essential features of the Irish problem. Ireland was despoiled as a cognate part of the capitalist advance of England. Swift's sarcasm draws this out with a genius that has been, to my mind, unmatched in centuries.

At the same time that we consider this long historic oppression, it is necessary to remember that even in national oppression there were class differences. Connolly pointed this out. He

1. Swift also argued that this reform plan would have the added advantage of "lessening the Number of Papists among us."

noted that the poor Protestants as well as the poor Catholics were oppressed and exploited in Ireland, and he declared, in *Labour in Irish History*, that the Penal Laws against the Irish

did indeed make the life of propertied Catholics more insecure than would otherwise have been the case; but to the vast mass of the population the misery and hardship entailed by the working out of economic laws were fraught with infinitely more suffering than it was at any time within the power of the Penal Laws to inflict. As a matter of fact, the effect of the latter code in impoverishing wealthy Catholics has been much overrated. The class interests which at all times unite the propertied section of the community operated, to a large extent, to render impossible the application of the power of persecution to its full legal limits. Rich Catholics were quietly tolerated, and generally received from the rich Protestants an amount of respect and forbearance which the latter would not at any time extend to their Protestant tenantry or work-people.

In 1763, a bill was even introduced "to give greater facilities to Protestants wishing to borrow money from" Catholic money lenders. Though this bill was defeated, Connolly suggested that its mere "introduction serves to show how little the Penal Laws (against Catholics) had operated to prevent the accumulation of wealth by the Catholic propertied classes."

Role of Irish Church

Connolly's historical thesis was, as R. M. Fox has indicated, "that England was the exponent of the feudal-capitalist system in Ireland." The *peculiarities* in Irish history are not to be found only in the modern period. They are to be found in Ireland's long history, and most especially during these seven centuries of English oppression. Let me repeat, then, that Ireland under English rule reveals the cost, the other side of progress.²

In this context, Connolly observed that "one of" the "Slave birth-marks" in Ireland was "a belief in the capitalist system of society: the Irishman frees himself from such a mark of slavery when he realizes that truth that the capitalist system is the most foreign thing in Ireland."

In Ireland, then, the role of the Church was different from that which it played on the continent. There it was bound up with the feudal system and was a rich landowner in its own right. Involved in the bourgeoisie's attack on the feudal aristocracy was its attack on the Church. The ideology of feudalism is penetrated through and through with that of Catholic thinkers. Not only on the planes of politics and economics, but also on that of ideology, the Church was attacked. In France the desire of the peasantry for land and for freedom from many remaining feudal restrictions over-weighed (in many parts of the country) their loyalty to the Church.

Briefly, the Church was not bound up with the system of oppression in Ireland as it was in feudal Europe. Even though Connolly did observe that propertied Catholics in the eighteenth century did not suffer as did the poor, it does remain true that they were discriminated against. In addition, the alleviation of the operation of the Penal Laws, in the case of the rich Catholics, was not a matter of law. The Irish were penalized by the foreign invader and ruler because of their religion. Catholicism and nationalism became bound together in the minds of many Irishmen. The consciousness of individual Irishmen was not divisible into compartments so that Catholicism would be fitted into one compartment while hat-

2. In *Capital*, Vol. 1, Marx has many illuminating observations on Ireland, and these tend to give substantiation to this generalization of mine. Cf. *Capital*, Vol. 1, pp. 767-783. The *Correspondence of Marx and Engels* also contains interesting comments and observations about Ireland.

red of an oppressor and desires for freedom would be placed in another. To be Irish and to be Catholic were, in effect, synonymous.

For an Irishman under these conditions to be free meant to escape from penalization because of his religion as well as his nationality. The logic of this attitude runs through the entire O'Connell movement in the nineteenth century. In fact, Daniel O'Connell is often referred to as the Great Emancipator. The victory of Catholic Emancipation in 1829 and 1830 was a signal step forward in the Irish struggle; and yet, as Connolly observed and as is well known, it was achieved at a time of marked miseries and destitution. Connolly, in fact, described the period between 1830 and 1848 in Ireland as "A Chapter of Horrors." And he wrote about the tithes imposed on the peasantry by the clergy of the Episcopalian and Catholic Churches as follows:

The fact that this was in conformity with the practice of the Catholic Church in countries where it was dominant did not, of course, make this more palatable to the Catholic peasantry of Ireland, who continually saw a part of their crops seized upon and sold to maintain a clergy whose ministrations they never attended and whose religion they detested.

When the discontent of the peasants flared in rebellion, "The Episcopalian clergymen called on the aid of the law, and, escorted by police and military, seized the produce of the poor tenants and carried them off to be sold at auction." And what aid did the peasants get during the period of rebellious struggles which were carried on under the leadership of secret societies? Connolly's answer to this question reads as follows:

The politicians gave neither help nor countenance to the fight, and save for the advocacy of one small Dublin newspaper, conducted by a small but brilliant band of young Protestant writers, no journal in all Ireland championed their cause. For the Catholic clergy it is enough to say that while this tithe war was being waged they were almost universally silent about that "grievous sin of secret conspiracy" upon which they are usually so eloquent. We would not dare say that they recognized that as the secret societies were doing their work against a rival priesthood, it was better to be sparing in their denunciations for the time being; perhaps this is not the explanation, but at all events it is noteworthy that as soon as the tithe war was won all the old stock invectives against every kind of extra-constitutional action were immediately renewed.

The Irish Tradition

With Emancipation, the ground was cut from under O'Connell's feet. As O'Faoláin, his biographer, says, he "could not form a solid block of Irish votes, an Irish Party, immediately after Emancipation, as Parnell did later." The Emancipation Act was, in reality, only a partial emancipation. And it only tended to open up some eyes more clearly to the social question. The Young Irelanders of '48 and James Finlan Lalor opposed O'Connell and O'Connellism. Connolly, in *Labour in Irish History*, justifies their criticism of and opposition to O'Connell. They, and Connolly later, moved in the direction of social emancipation. They—and Connolly after them—were advocates of extra-constitutional action, of rebellion.

The foregoing should reveal that Catholicism is not a separate question in Ireland. In fact, *religion is never a separate question*, divorced from all of the political questions and struggles of a period.

O'Faoláin quotes Balzac's remark about Daniel O'Connell: "he incarnated a whole people." And then O'Faoláin also pointed out how O'Connell, a Tory, frightened by the

French Revolution, became a "Radical." He goes on to say that O'Connell

...toppled on the brink of Atheism. He recovered as a Deist. He ended not quite as a Catholic, but as an Irish Catholic, which among Irish intellectuals is so often little more than two words for one. I doubt if there were more than one or two Irish patriots who did not run a similar course in relation to religion—Tone, Emmet, Lord Edward, Davis, Mitchel, Parnell, Stephens and most of the Fenians, Collins, Clarke, Connolly, almost all wavering in a typically ambiguous way barely stopping short on the edge of complete revolt from orthodoxy.

Rebellion in Ireland was not rebellion against orthodoxy. It was national rebellion. In some instances it was purely national, in others it was both national and social. In the case of James Connolly, he was both nationalist and socialist.

Leftists have criticized him as a nationalist whose socialism was either impure or else abandoned in his last days. Sean O'Casey's first writing was a pamphlet, *The Irish Citizen Army*, in which he declared that Connolly died not for socialism but for nationalism. To discuss Connolly in such terms is to become formal, abstract; it results in the posing of formal questions which can only lead us away from insight. The foregoing parts of this work have offered more than sufficient evi-

dence on the character of Connolly's socialist views. Abstract purists usually see the politics of a man as though they were completely separated from that man.

Just as they fail to see Connolly's nationalism as bound up with his socialism, so do they see his socialism as in flagrant contradiction with his belief in Catholicism. But his works, and the accounts of his life with which I am familiar, would reveal no such glaring contradictions. Connolly as much as O'Connell, or as much as any other Irish patriot or rebel, can be called the incarnation of a people—to the degree that any one man can be so characterized. His writings show to what degree the Irish tradition was fused in his ideas. He studied this tradition and evaluated it, made distinctions, and consciously made choices. At the same time his emotions, his consciousness was molded out of the life of Ireland. His personal religious beliefs were deeply felt and genuine. To assume that he pretended to a belief he didn't hold is really to slander the memory of a great and honest man.

In the next installment of this work we will go into this question further.

JAMES T. FARRELL

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Stalin's Role in the Nazi Pact

Inside the Stalin-Hitler Deal

In the captured German documents dealing with the Stalin-Hitler Pact period, the picture of Stalin which emerges adds little to one's knowledge of his personality but it *does* make completely clear the role that the Boss played in the affair of the pact itself.

At the time there were the inevitable speculations as to whether the new pro-German orientation of Russian policy did or did not reflect the views of the dictator himself, whether it showed the ascendancy of a new clique in the Kremlin, etc. What is perfectly plain now is that *there was no one in the Russian regime who held as thoroughly a pro-Nazi orientation, from the beginning and to the end, as did Stalin himself.*

To begin with, the signing of the pact took place under Stalin's personal push and drive; the initial bid came from his mouth in his speech of March 1939. The Russians' diplomatic campaign for the pact really got under way with the replacement of Litvinov by Molotov as foreign affairs commissar. The German embassy in Moscow considered this important precisely because it showed Stalin's hand: while incidentally noting that Molotov was "no Jew," what the embassy stressed in its interpretation was the fact that the move was the "result of spontaneous decision by Stalin" made "apparently to guarantee that the foreign policy will be continued strictly in accordance with Stalin's ideas." [2-3]

By August Hitler began pressing for a quick achievement of the alliance, in anticipation of a quick attack on Poland; but Molotov hung back from too precipitous action. He kept delaying to fix the date for Ribbentrop's expected visit, until (as Schulenburg, the German ambassador, wired home on August 19) Stalin himself intervened to set it for August 26-27. [65] In response, however, to a direct appeal from Hitler for more speed, Stalin accepted the German proposal for August 23 "for the establishment of peace and collaboration between

our countries." [Stalin's letter to Hitler, 69] The Nazis thereupon achieved their schedule over Molotov's head.

The Nazis, indeed, found more than once that they could get from Stalin what Molotov refused. (Cf. the case of the joint communiqué on Poland, *NI*, February, page 45.) They came to regard Molotov (even Molotov!) as "obstinate" [335] in his attitude on questions, as compared with Stalin. In March 1940 Ribbentrop was trying to get Molotov to visit Berlin, but he added in his secret wire to his ambassador: "it would suit our own needs better, as well as our really ever-closer relations with Russia, if Herr Stalin himself came to Berlin." [135]

Stalin's pro-Nazi orientation seems to have been closely associated with an Anglophobia as firmly held as the Nazis' own. The Japanese foreign minister, Matsuoka, played upon this string and struck the responsive chord:

Matsuoka [reported] that he had discussed with Stalin his ideas about the New Order and had stated that the Anglo-Saxon represented the greatest hindrance to the establishment of this order. . . .

Stalin had arranged to give him an answer when he passed through Moscow again on his return journey to Japan; he had,

This supplementary article completes our presentation, in organized and digested form, of the invaluable historical material brought to light in the State Department's recent publication of the captured German foreign-office archives, *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941*. Together with Ricky Saunders' digest of the bulk of the material in last month's *NI*, all of the important contents are now made available for ready reference; and we feel sure that our readers will be using these two articles for such reference for some time to come. All numbers in brackets refer to pages in the State Department book.—Ed.

however, after some reflection stated that Soviet Russia had never gotten along well with Great Britain and never would. [297]

Further on, Matsuoka quotes Stalin as saying that "he [Stalin] was a convinced adherent of the Axis and an opponent (*Gegner*) of England and America." [324] This was in April 1941. But in the very first recorded conversation with Stalin—Ribbentrop's on the day the pact was signed in 1939—Stalin's feelings about England had burst forth in response to a remark by the German foreign minister about England's weakness:

Herr Stalin eagerly concurred and observed as follows: the British Army was weak; the British Navy no longer deserved its previous reputation. . . . If England dominates the world in spite of this, this was due to the stupidity of the other countries that allowed themselves to be bluffed. It was ridiculous, for example, that a few hundred British should dominate India. [74]

Stalin's Scramble to Hang Onto Hitler

When Sir Stafford Cripps visited Moscow in July 1940 in the vain hope that Stalin could be separated from his partner, the Genial Leader was brusque in his defense of the Nazis. Schulenburg quotes a memorandum of the conversation supplied by Molotov himself:

Stalin's answers are given as follows:

. . . he (Stalin) did not see any danger of the hegemony of any one country in Europe and still less any danger that Europe might be engulfed by Germany. Stalin observed the policy of Germany, and knew several leading German statesmen well. He had not discovered any desire on their part to engulf European countries. [167]

Cripps was virtually slapped in the face and told to run home.

The "several leading German statesmen" whom Stalin knew "well" consisted, of course, of Ribbentrop, the only one whom Stalin had ever talked to. It was in the course of this conversation that

Herr Stalin spontaneously proposed a toast to the Führer, as follows:

"I know how much the German nation loves its Führer; I should therefore like to drink to his health." [75]

But until the pact began to get ragged around the edges, Stalin's interventions were minor and spotty; Molotov carried the ball. In early 1941, however, the rumor of Hitler's intentions to attack Russia began to get thick all over Europe. The Russians denied this vehemently, but at the same time began to feel a touch of panic. It was at this point that Stalin decided to take over completely the job of hanging on to Hitler's coat tails.

His first step was, literally, a bit of back slapping. Schulenburg describes the extraordinary scene at the railway station when Stalin personally came down to see Matsuoka off, an unexpected honor in itself:

Then Stalin publicly asked for me, and when he found me he came up to me and threw his arm around my shoulders: "We must remain friends and you must now do everything to that end!" Somewhat later Stalin turned to the German Acting Military Attaché, Colonel Krebs, first made sure that he was a German, and then said to him: "We will remain friends with you—in any event!" Stalin doubtless brought about this greeting of Colonel Krebs and myself intentionally, and thereby he consciously attracted the general attention of the numerous persons who were present. [324]

This was April 13. Two days later the German embassy in Moscow deemed it necessary to wire home that, in their current routine negotiations, the attitude of the Russians had suddenly become very "compliant"—"seems very remarkable," they add. [325] Two weeks later, in a personal interview with

Hitler, Schulenburg informed his chief that he "was convinced that Stalin was prepared to make even further concessions to us." [332]

About a week later Stalin broke a long-standing precedent: he became the titular head of the country by replacing Molotov as premier. Schulenburg leaves no doubt as to the meaning of this step at this time:

The reason for it may be sought in the recent mistakes in foreign policy which led to a cooling off of the cordiality of German-Soviet relations, for the creation and preservation of which Stalin had consciously striven, while Molotov's own initiative often ended itself in an obstinate defense of individual issues. [335]

A few days later, Schulenburg points up his interpretation by reviewing Stalin's actions in the few days since assuming the new office:

. . . the pronouncements and decrees that have been promulgated since Stalin's assumption of office . . . are all in the realm of foreign policy. The matters involved are: (1) The TASS denial of alleged strong concentrations of military forces on the western border of the Soviet Union, etc. (2) The decree regarding the restoration of diplomatic ranks (Ambassador, Minister, Chargé). (3) The decision regarding the closing of the Embassies of Belgium, Norway, and Yugoslavia, and (3) The government decision regarding the opening up of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Iraq.

These . . . are calculated . . . to relieve the tension between the Soviet Union and Germany. . . . We must bear in mind particularly that Stalin personally has always advocated a friendly relationship between Germany and the Soviet Union. . . .

In my opinion, it may be assumed with certainty that Stalin has set himself a foreign policy goal of overwhelming importance for the Soviet Union, which he hopes to attain by his personal efforts. I firmly believe that, in an international situation which he considers serious, Stalin has set himself the goal of preserving the Soviet Union from a conflict with Germany. [338-9]

This whole scramble by Stalin personally to insure continued partnership with Hitler was, however, quite useless. No humiliating show of friendliness and conciliation on the part of Moscow was able to change Hitler's mind, nor would any further amount of belly-crawling have been sufficient.

Nazi Analysis of Stalin Regime

We turn, lastly, to those few points in the documents where one gets an inkling of the ideological attitudes held by the partners with relation to each other. There are, of course, numerous statements by the Russians to the effect that "ideological differences" need not be a bar to friendly political cooperation; but such statements were also made publicly in the same general terms. More interesting is the passage in which Schnurre, of the German foreign office, explains to Astakhov, Russian representative in Berlin, why the Nazis feel that friendship with Stalin's Russia is possible now. Astakhov had been whining that the bad blood between the two countries was Germany's fault—

I took advantage of this opportunity [reports Schnurre] to explain in detail our opinion concerning the change in Russian Bolshevism during recent years. The antagonism of National Socialism resulted naturally from the fight against the Communist Party of Germany which depended upon Moscow and was only a tool of the Comintern. The fight against the German Communist Party had long been over. Communism had been eradicated in Germany. The importance of the Comintern had been overshadowed by the Politbureau, where an entirely different policy was being followed now than at the time when the Comintern dominated. The amalgamation of Bolshevism with the national history of Russia, which expressed itself in the glorification of great Russian men and deeds (celebration of the battle of Poltava, Peter the Great, the battle on Lake Peipus, Alexander Nevski), had really changed the international face of Bolshevism, as we see it, particularly since Stalin

had postponed world revolution indefinitely. In this state of affairs we saw possibilities today which we had not seen earlier. . . .

At the end Astakhov stressed how valuable this conversation had been to him. He would report it to Moscow, and he hoped that it would have visible results in subsequent developments there. [35]

Thus the Nazis based their justification for *their* own flop on something real: the growth of degeneration in the Russian state, its growing nationalism which the Nazis could recognize with a fellow feeling, the subordination of the Communist Parties to the Stalinist bureaucracy and their conversion into fifth columns rather than instruments of world revolution. In their negotiations with the Russians, the German diplomats—diplomats though they were—never thought it necessary to assume that the Stalinist bureaucrats had anything in common with the Revolution of 1917. There is, on the contrary, a curious passage in which Ribbentrop casually refers to the revolutionary outcome of the First World War as a disaster for Russia—and this in an argument to be presented to Molotov! He is writing Molotov that the “Western democracies” are trying to drive Russia into war with Germany, and he adds: “*In 1914 this policy had disastrous results for Russia.*” [51] This he writes to the men who presumably are the heirs and beneficiaries of that “disaster”! But it is not Ribbentrop whose pen has slipped: he well knows that the men he is addressing would consider a revolutionary outcome of the Second World War to be as “disastrous” as would the Nazis themselves.

Again: more than once the term “Western democracies” is used contemptuously by Ribbentrop to distinguish the Berlin-Moscow axis from the Allies. [33, 51] He obviously had no fear that the Russians would be offended by not being considered a “democracy.” In Ribbentrop’s letter to Stalin, the German foreign minister refers casually and in passing to “authoritarian regimes as ours,” [208] and Hitler, in his personal conversations with Molotov, equally casually brackets the characters of the German and Russian regimes, as if it is an understood question; and Molotov expresses “his entire agreement” [226].

The Stalinists, of course, pass off all such questions as merely “diplomatic talk”; we shall not waste any space arguing this matter here: even naive people should be aware that precisely in “diplomatic talk” one does not gratuitously insult the feelings of others. The whole point is that obviously the German diplomats had no reason to believe that the Russians took their “democracy” seriously; and it is even a separate point to demonstrate that the Nazi totalitarians recognized their similars under the “Communist” labels.

Symmetrical Regimes

But the Nazis’ assumptions about the totalitarian character of the Russian state were not limited to talk; they made this assumption in action. In December 1939, for example, Ribbentrop was annoyed by a report published by TASS, the Russian news agency. He thereupon called in the Russian ambassador and requested that hereafter, before releasing such reports, TASS should clear them with the German embassy in Moscow or Berlin!

Or we read the interesting account by Schulenburg of the reaction inside Russia to the signing of the pact; he notes that on the one hand there has been great relief over the disappearance of the danger of German attack:

However, the sudden alternation in the policy of the Soviet Government, after years of propaganda directed expressly against German aggressors, is still not very well understood by the popu-

lation. Especially the statements of official agitators to the effect that Germany is no longer an aggressor run up against considerable doubt. The Soviet Government is doing everything to change the attitude of the population here toward Germany. The press is as though it had been transformed. Attacks on the conduct of Germany have not only ceased completely, but the portrayal of events in the field of foreign politics is based to an outstanding degree on German reports and anti-German literature has been removed from the book trade, etc. [88]

Both partners were also identical in their attitude toward the conquered Poles. Indeed, on September 28, 1939, a “Secret Supplementary Protocol” was added to the pact providing for mutual aid in suppression of any Polish underground in either’s territory:

Both parties will tolerate in their territories no Polish agitation which affects the territories of the other party. They will suppress in their territories all beginnings of such agitation and inform each other concerning suitable measures for this purpose. [107]

The Germans never had cause to complain about any laxity on the part of the Russians in the enforcement of *this* contract. What they did have cause to complain about was something else: *the Russians refused to accept Jews expelled across the border by the Nazis, insisting on returning them to their Nazi captors!*

Colonel General Keitel found it necessary to complain to his foreign office about this because, obviously, it was a widespread practice and not an isolated incident. The foreign-office memorandum records “repeated wrangles on the boundary” and explains:

The expulsion of Jews into Russian territory, in particular, did not proceed as smoothly as had apparently been expected. In practice, the procedure was, for example, that at a quiet place in the woods, a thousand Jews were expelled across the Russian border; fifteen kilometers away, they came back, with the Russian commander trying to force the German one to readmit the group. [128]

Truly, for the Jews, Stalinism and fascism were symmetrical phenomena! The back reflection of all this upon the meaning of the Moscow Trials and Russian purges, where the hapless victims were accused of being Hitlerite agents, has been noted before, but what should not be missed is the interesting passage in the archives which reflects *ahead* on the post-war purges in Russia.

Weizsäcker, of the foreign office, writes a statement arguing against the advisability of an attack on Russia; and one of his reasons is: “*I do not see in the Russian State any effective opposition capable of succeeding the Communist system and uniting with us and being of service to us.*” [333]

In April 1941, shortly before the outbreak of hostilities, the German foreign office knew of no pro-German movement, no significant pro-German elements, in all of Russia. This after over a year and a half of *friendly* relations. Yet we are supposed to believe, according to the later purges, that such a movement was developed by German spies after years of bitter warfare against Germany, across the battle lines! We here have a new sort of proof of the political meaning of the purges in Stalinist Russia.

To be sure, to the professional apologists of the Kremlin butchers and to their blind adorers, this material will mean no more than the previous piled-up evidence of the degeneration of the Russian state. To many sincerely confused and bedazzled sympathizers of the Russian despotism, however, it should be a revelation.

PHILIP COBEN

Year One of the Russian Revolution

I—The October Insurrection

[Victor Serge's important historical work, *The Year One of the Russian Revolution*, provides the only detailed account of the first crucial year of the new Bolshevik regime in Russia. Published in French in 1930 it covers the period from the insurrection to the outbreak of the German revolution in November 1918, with the exception of the first chapter which summarizes the history of the Russian movement up to 1917.

[Our first installment is the whole of the second chapter, dealing with the October insurrection itself. (The "October Revolution" took place in November according to the western calendar; Serge uses the old-style dates which were in force at the time.) To save space for the text, we have omit-

ted Serge's footnotes, mainly bibliographical. The book is a work of scholarship based on primary materials and is carefully documented.

[It should be made clear that Serge's views changed in later years in the direction of anti-Bolshevism, and that *The Year One* does not represent his last-held opinions. The lasting value of the work, however, lies in the historical material it presents. It is a "must" for students of Bolshevism who wish to arrive at their own conclusions on the important questions raised in the problems confronted by the first workers' state in history.

[For the next installment, see the MEMO column on page 66—ED.]

From the rostrum, Trotsky announced the withdrawal of the Bolsheviks from the Democratic Conference. In metallic tones he voiced the defiance of the workers and peasants before the highest authority of the Republic. He went out, passing in front of the sailors who were guarding the hall. Their bayonets wavered, their hard faces turned, eyes aflame, as he passed. Gesturing with their rifles toward the assembly, they asked him:

"When do we use these?"

It was October 6. The Democratic Conference, called by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries (S-Rs) as a substitute for a revolutionary parliament, had opened in Moscow in mid-September. Strikes had forced it out of the city; hotel and restaurant waiters had refused to serve its members. It had been transferred to Petrograd. It now deliberated under the guard of a picked unit of the surest sailors. Yet their bayonets bowed at the passage of a Bolshevik delegate.

"When do we use these?"

This spirit was general in the fleet. Two weeks before October 25, the sailors of the Baltic Squadron, anchored in Helsingfors, demanded that delay be ended, and that "the insurrection sanctify the apparently inevitable destruction of the fleet by the Germans." They were willing to die; but only for the revolution. Since May 15 the Kronstadt Soviet had refused to recognize the Provisional Government. The commissioners sent by Kerensky after the July riots to arrest "Bolshevik leaders" on board the fleet had received this laconic reply: "Leaders? We are all leaders." It was true. The masses had innumerable leaders.

Delegates from the trenches made threatening speeches at the Soviet. "How much longer will this untenable situation continue? The soldiers have instructed us to say: If energetic measures are not adopted immediately the trenches will be deserted,

the entire army will return. . . . You are forgetting us! If you cannot find the answer we shall deal with our enemies ourselves, at bayonet points—and you with them!" This, Trotsky relates, was the tone of the front.

In the early part of October the insurrection broke out everywhere spontaneously. Agrarian uprisings spread all over the country. The provinces of Tula, Tambov, Ryazan, and Kaluga were in revolt. The peasants, who had expected bread and peace from the first revolution, were undeceived. They were seizing the landowners' stores and burning their houses. The Kerensky government was putting them down wherever it had sufficient strength. Fortunately its forces were limited. "To put down the peasants would kill the revolution," Lenin warned.

In the military and urban Soviets, the Bolsheviks, minority of yesterday, became the majority. In the Moscow Municipal Duma elections, they won 199,377 votes out of 387,262. Of 710 elected delegates, there were 350 Bolsheviks, 184 Cadets, 107 S-Rs, 31 Mensheviks, and 41 miscellaneous. On the eve of civil war the moderate middle-of-the-road parties lost ground. The extreme parties gained. While the Mensheviks lost all real influence and the S-Rs, apparently the influential government party a short time before, took third place, the bourgeois Constitutional Democrats, the Cadets, lined up strongly against the revolutionists. In the preceding elections in June, the S-Rs and the Mensheviks had obtained 70 per cent of the votes cast; they fell to 18 per cent. Of 17,000 soldiers who voted, 14,000 were for the Bolsheviks.

The Soviets were transformed. The strongholds of the Mensheviks and the S-Rs were Bolshevikized. New majorities were formed. On August 31 in Petrograd, and September 6 in Moscow, Bolshevik resolutions obtained a majority for the first time. On September 8, the Menshevik-S-R leading committees of the two Soviets resigned.

September 25 Trotsky was elected president of the Petrograd Soviet and Nogin president in Moscow. On the 20th of September, the Tashkent Soviet officially took power. It was repressed by Provisional Government troops. On the 27th, the Reval Soviet decided in principle for the transference of all power to the Soviets. A few days before the October Revolution, Kerensky's troops fired on the revolutionary Soviet at Kaluga.

Let us here remark a little-known fact. The October insurrection was already victorious in Kazan before it began in Petersburg. An eyewitness at Kazan relates the following dialogue between two workers:

"But what would you have done if the Soviets had not taken power in Moscow and Petersburg?"

"We couldn't refuse power; the garrison wouldn't let us."

"Moscow would have wiped you out."

"No. You are wrong. Moscow couldn't wipe out the 40,000 soldiers we had in Kazan."

All over this immense country, the whole laboring class—the workers, peasants and soldiers—were moving toward revolution. An elemental wave of revolt, an irresistible force.

The Party of the Proletariat

The masses have a million heads; they are not at all homogeneous; they are dominated by diverse and contradictory class interests. They do not arrive at a clear understanding—without which no successful action is possible—except by organization. The revolutionary Russian masses of 1917 arrived at a clear understanding of the necessary means and objectives through the Bolshevik party. This is no theory, it is a fact. The relations between the party, the working class, and the toiling masses at large appeared at that time in admirable relief.

What they all desired—the sailors at Kronstadt, the soldiers in Kazan, the workers in Petrograd, the peasants who were ransacking the landowners' estates—what they all desired without being able to express their desire clearly, without being able to judge economic and political possibilities, to choose their objectives and the most effective means to attain them, to select the favorable moment for action, to be in agreement from one end of the country to the other, to discipline themselves, to correlate their innumerable attacks, without being able, in a word, to constitute an intelligent, educated, directed, prodigious force—what they all wished, the party expressed clearly, and carried into action. The party revealed their own thoughts to the masses. The party was the tie that bound them together from one end of the country to the other; it was their guide, their intelligence, their organization.

When the gunners of the Baltic Fleet feared that the revolution was in danger and sought to help, it was the Bolshevik agitator who showed the way. When the soldiers in the trenches wished to show their desire to end the slaughter, they elected Bolshevik candidates to the army committees. When the peasants, tired of the vacillations of "their" Socialist-Revolutionary Party, wondered if it was not time to act for themselves, Lenin's voice commanded, "Peasant, seize the land!" When workers sensed counter-revolutionary intrigue all about them, *Pravda* anticipated their fears and gave them correct revolutionary slogans. Before Bolshevik posters, the poor passers-by in the street stopped and exclaimed, "That's right! That's right!" That voice was their own.

The march of the masses toward revolution was reflected in a great political overturn. The Bolsheviks, a tiny revolutionary minority in March, became the majority in September and October. It became impossible to distinguish between the party and the masses; they were at one. No doubt

ON THE ROAD TO INSURRECTION

With surprising firmness, clarity, and skill, the Bolshevik party had marched toward the seizure of power ever since the fall of the autocracy. To be convinced of this, it is only necessary to read Lenin's *Letters from Afar*, written by him before his departure from Zurich in March 1917. But perhaps this is too narrow a statement. The party had marched toward the seizure of power ever since the day when its Central Committee, composed of almost unknown émigrés (like Lenin and Zinoviev), affirmed that "the imperialist war must be transformed into civil war" (1914), ever since the even earlier day when it was first formed under the threatening clouds of revolution at the London Congress, 1903.

Arriving in Petrograd April 3, 1917, Lenin, after correcting the political line of the party press, immediately formulated the objectives of the proletariat. Tirelessly he urged the party on to persuade the working masses. In the early days of July, when the infuriated mob rose against Kerensky, the Bolsheviks refused to follow the movement. These leaders—leaders in the true sense of the word—refused to be led. They opposed a premature insurrection; the provinces were not ready; the time was not ripe. They held back, swam against the current, braved a loss of popularity. The interests of the proletariat, represented by the party, entered momentarily into conflict with the revolutionary impatience of the masses.

A dangerous conflict! If the enemy had been stronger and more intelligent, the impatience of the masses would have procured it an easy victory. "Now," said Lenin on the morrow of the July riots, "now they're going to shoot us all." Theoretically Lenin was right: it was, perhaps, the only chance for the bourgeoisie to inflict a bloody preventive repression on the proletariat, a repression that would have been decisive for months if not for years. Fortunately the bourgeoisie was less skillful at its own game than Lenin. It did not dare act; for certainly it was not the will that was lacking.

there were other revolutionists scattered through the crowd: left Social Revolutionaries—the most numerous, anarchists, Maximalists, who also wished the revolution; a handful of men swept along with the tide of events; leaders being led. It was easy to see how little they understood the realities of the situation. The Bolsheviks, thanks to their keen theoretical understanding, fused themselves with the masses, yet kept to their historic course. "The communists have no interests other than the interests of the entire proletariat," says the *Manifesto* of Marx and Engels. How right that phrase, written in 1847, now appeared!

Since the July riots the party had passed through a period of illegality and persecution and was barely tolerated. It was drawn up in an assault column. It demanded devotion, sacrifice, and discipline of its members. In return it could offer only the satisfaction of serving the proletariat. But its membership grew. In April it counted 72 organizations with a total of 80,000 members. By the end of July its membership amounted to 200,000 in 162 organizations.

After July its more energetic leaders thought to repair their weakness. They dreamed of a "strong" government. Power hung in the balance. Kerensky's régime was no more than a stopgap. The unsuccessful Kornilov coup d'état (with Savinkov and Kerensky as accomplices) precipitated a new mobilization of the proletariat. The situation became worse, desperate for the proletariat, whose privations grew daily. The workers correctly felt that if they did not soon conquer they would be conquered.

It became worse for the peasants, who saw the agrarian revolution, promised by the S-Rs, constantly deferred and in danger of being suppressed by some Napoleon of the counter-revolution. It became worse for the army and the fleet, forced to carry on an increasingly hopeless war in the service of enemy classes. It became worse for the bourgeoisie, compromised by the collapse of transport, banking, manufacture, by defeats at the front, by industrial crisis and famine, by the unruliness of the masses, by the lack of authority of the new régime, by the failure of the coercive machine.

After the July riots Lenin said to V. Bonch Bruyevich, "The insurrection is absolutely inevitable; it will soon be obligatory." In the middle of September the party began to line up for the battle. The Democratic Conference, which was supposed to found a parliament, sat from the 14th to the 22nd. Lenin, in hiding at the moment, impetuously demanded the withdrawal of the Bolshevik fraction from the Conference, where a certain number of Bolsheviks tended to accept the role of a parliamentary opposition. Supported by the majority of the party, Lenin's line carried the day. The Bolsheviks marched out of the Conference, slamming the door behind them.

Trotsky read their declaration to the remaining delegates. "The passionate speech of L. D. Trotsky, who had just tasted the pleasures of prison life under the regime of the Mensheviks and the bourgeoisie, cut like a sword through all the plots hatched by the

orators of the Center. In clear, sharp terms, he showed that no retreat was possible; that the workers foresaw no retreat, nothing but the road to a new revolution. His speech was greeted with complete silence. A tremor passed over the benches where the bourgeois leaders sat. Applause thundered down from the balcony. . . . The will to insurrection was clearly expressed, and all the tact and authority of the Central Committee was required to prevent an immediate uprising, for the time was not yet ripe. An even bloodier repetition of the July days was imminent."

In the last days of September and the first day of October, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party—Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Sverdlov, Yakovleva, Oppokov, Zinoviev, Kamenev—met in Petersburg, in the apartment of the Menshevik, Sukhanov. They discussed principles of insurrection. Kamenev and Zinoviev thought the insurrection itself might be successful, but that it would be almost impossible to maintain power thereafter on account of economic hazards and the crisis in the food supply. (Rykov and Nogin held approximately the same position, but they were not present.) The majority voted for the insurrection, which was fixed for the 15th of October.

Let us here clarify a point. This difference of opinion cannot be taken to show any opportunist or Menshevik feebleness in men who had been steeled in years of struggle, and who later displayed no weakness during the whole long siege of the civil war. It showed merely that firm revolutionists overestimated the strength of the enemy, and lacked confidence in the forces of the proletariat. Insurrections are not to be played with. It is the duty of revolutionists to consider every chance beforehand. If they apprehend defeat of the revolution, their apprehension has nothing in common with the fears of opportunists, who fear nothing more than the victory of the proletariat.

However, as these perfectly legitimate apprehensions were based on a misunderstanding of fact, they constituted an immense peril to the political line of the party; they could warp it irreparably. Time works for the revolution in certain hours; works against it once a critical moment is passed; an action which is merely deferred may, as a consequence, be completely lost. The Italian proletariat paid dearly for its delay in 1920; the opportunity offered the German proletariat in 1923 will no doubt recur—but when? The error of the opponents of the insurrection was therefore grave, as they have since admitted.

On October 10, the Central Committee (present: Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin, Trotsky, Sverdlov, Uritsky, Dzerzhinsky, Kollontai, Bubnov, Sokolnikov, Lomov) voted ten to one in favor of immediate preparation for the insurrection. The preparation was assigned to a political bureau consisting of Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Stalin, Kamenev, Sokolnikov and Bubnov.

The Proletarian Leaders

The relations between the working masses and the party are reflected, inside the party, in the relations between the rank and file and the leaders.

The party is the nervous system—and the brain—of the working class. The leaders

and the rank and file play the roles of brain and nervous system in the party. This comparison cannot be taken literally; the functioning of a living organism is much different from the functioning of a social organism. But intelligent as they may be, the ordinary members of the party cannot appreciate the situation as a whole. The information, the contacts, the education, the theoretical and professional preparation of the revolutionist are inevitably lacking, no matter what their personal worth, if they do not belong to that small group which has been tested by long years of struggle and work, which bears the good will of the entire movement, disposes of the party apparatus and is accustomed to collective work. Just as the soldier in the trenches sees only an infinitesimal portion of the battlefield and therefore cannot, no matter what his abilities may be, understand the whole battle—just as the mechanic at his machine cannot take in the whole factory at a glance—the ordinary member, depending solely on his own faculties, can form his opinions only from general ideas, presentiments, and partial understanding.

True proletarian leaders are at once guides, pilots, generals, and directors, for they are engaged in the formidable enterprise of demolishing one social system and erecting a new one in its place. They must discover, by scientific analysis of the historical process, the tendency of events and the possibilities contained therein. They must determine the course for the proletariat, not according to its will or wish of the moment, but according to the laws of history. In a word, they must know reality, perceive possibility, and conceive the course of action which is the link between the real and the possible. Thus they expound the course, the only course, dictated by the larger interests of the proletariat. Their instrument is scientific proletarian thought. Proletarian thought attains its highest expression in the leaders of the organized vanguard of the working class.

LENIN'S ROLE IN THE CRISIS

We have remarked Lenin's powerful unity. He was a man hewn of a single block, entirely devoted at every hour of his life to a single work. He was at one with his party, and through the party, with the proletariat. In the decisive hours he was one with the entire laboring population of Russia, with the proletarians and oppressed people of every country of the world that lay beyond the bloody frontiers. For this reason he appeared as the leader of leaders in October 1917—the irreplaceable leader of the proletarian revolution.

The spirit of the masses in September and October we know. About September 15 Lenin urged the Central Committee by letter to take power without delay—another letter followed almost immediately concerning Marxism and Insurrection. The insurrection was still to come when Lenin, knowing that it is often more difficult to maintain than to take power, and that it is essential to reveal to revolutionists their own strength, wrote his brochure entitled *Will the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?* (end of September). On October 7, a new article, a new call: *The Crisis Has Ma-*

These leaders are only great in the measure that they are an incarnation of the masses. In this sense they are giants—anonymous giants. They must be at one with the masses; their profession demands a terrible impersonality. Their value—the genius of a Lenin—lies in the fact that the development of proletarian thought is not at all foreordained; the consciousness of the masses may remain latent, unexpressed at a given moment; the possibilities contained in a certain situation may remain unperceived; the steps necessary to save or to bring victory to the proletariat may not be discovered. The recent history of Western Europe offers only too many examples of opportunities missed through the failure of proletarian thought.

Let us define the proletarian leader, the man of a new epoch, in contrast to the leaders of the ruling classes of today and of other past epochs. The latter are blind instruments of history. The revolutionist is a *conscious* instrument.

The October Revolution offers an almost ideal example of the proletarian party. Relatively small, it is true, its members lived in the heart of the masses. Long years of experience—revolution, illegality, exile, prison, incessant ideological struggle—formed an admirable group of true leaders, whose common action cemented their common ideas. Individual initiative and strength of character were harmonized by an intelligent centralization, by voluntary discipline, by respect for recognized leaders. The party was furnished with an excellent organizational apparatus, yet suffered not the slightest bureaucratic deformation. There was no organization fetishism, no sickly tradition of equivocation. Its dominant tradition was of a war on opportunism—it was revolutionary to the marrow of its bones. It is all the more remarkable that profound and stubborn hesitation seized on some of its members on the eve of action, and that several pronounced themselves strongly opposed to the seizure of power.

tured. From this moment a flaming impatience possessed him. His letters to the Central Committee, to the party, to the members, followed hard on one another—persuasive, pressing, authoritative, inspiring. Over the head of the Central Committee, he addressed the Moscow and Petrograd Committees: *To Temporize Now Is a Crime*. On October 8 his *Advice from an Outsider* appeared. On the 16th of October a long memorable letter, *To the Comrades*, energetically refuting the objections of those opposed to the uprising.

The last hesitations were overcome. Lenin, leader molded in twenty-three years of battle since 1895, acting in unison with the peasants, workers, soldiers, sailors, the vast laboring masses, had set the hour and given the signal for the final action.

It took all his energy—and the energy of several others—to surmount the hesitations which threatened to become fatal.

His writings of this period have been collected in a volume appropriately entitled *On the Road to Insurrection*. It is a living book, the importance of which can hardly be overestimated—a model of revolutionary

dialectic, a treatise on the theory and practice of insurrection, a lecture on the art of victory in the class war. We believe that it ranks with the *Communist Manifesto*, to which it is, on the eve of the proletarian epoch, a necessary complement.

Lenin's doctrine of insurrection is summed up in these few lines:

"The insurrection, if it is to be crowned with success, should have the support not of a conspiracy, not of a party, but of a class. That is first. The insurrection should rest on a popular revolutionary upsurge. That is second. The insurrection should come at the historical turning point of the upsurge, at the moment when the activity of the masses reaches its height, as the equivocation and indecision of the enemy reaches its height. That is third. In thus posing the three conditions for the insurrection, Marxism differs from Blanquism."—(*Marxism and Insurrection*.)

And the following precept from Marx: "Never play with the insurrection, but remember that once begun it must be carried through to the end."

Why is it that Lenin stands out as the leader among his confrères, many of them men of worth who wished the revolution no less than he, some of whom even saw the course as clearly? Numerous leaders in Petrograd and Moscow—and it is a mistake to limit ourselves to the two capitals and to the leaders—marched consciously toward the insurrection. Trotsky, president of the Petersburg Soviet, had never hesitated from the moment of his arrival in Russia. He was in complete agreement with Lenin on the general line, taking exception only to details of execution. In the party Central Committee, the majority were for action.

But none of these revolutionists enjoyed a prestige comparable to Lenin's. Most of them were his pupils and recognized him as master. Trotsky, whose qualities as an organizer of victories now appeared in striking form, although a member of the Russian Social-Democracy for a long time, was equally distant from the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks—a lone fighter. He had never appeared as the leader of a party. Many Bolsheviks thought of him as of an adversary. Having entered the Central Committee at the end of July (at the Sixth Congress of the Bolshevik Party), a few days after he joined the party, he was new to the members. It is the party that makes the leader, for without a party there can be no leader. It was because he was the creator of the proletarian party that Lenin became the leader of the revolution.

The Red Guard

The action was engaged differently in the two capitals, but with a remarkable basic parallelism.

The initiative in forming the Red Guard in Petersburg belonged to the workers, who undertook it instinctively after the fall of the autocracy. They began to arm themselves by disarming the old order.

In April two Bolsheviks, Shliapnikov and Yerevnev, started to systematize this spontaneous organization. The first regular units, if they may be called such, of the militia were formed in the workers' suburbs, Vyborg principally. The Mensheviks and the S-Rs at first tried to hinder the movement. During a session of the Soviet

when they were in the majority, in June, a session held behind closed doors, the Social-Democrat, Tseretelli, urged the disarmament of the workers. He was too late. Leading committees were formed in every ward; a general staff assured the coordination of the wards. Formed on a factory basis as a general volunteer army—the factory formed its own unit or enlisted as a whole—the first Red Guard units undertook the protection of workers' demonstrations. During the July riots the Vyborg section had been on peaceable terms with Kerensky's troops. There were some ten thousand Red Guards in Petersburg.

Kornilov's coup d'état (September 25-30), the advance of a Cossack division on the capital, and the imminence of counter-revolution forced the Mensheviks and the S-Rs to arm the workers in haste. Not without friction. The Schlüsselburg munitions-factory workers sent a bargeload of grenades. The Menshevik Soviet refused to take delivery, but the Red Guard simply appropriated the grenades over the head of the Soviet. The initiative of the workers made up for everything, canceled the ill will of the pacifist socialists. The mobilization of the proletariat against Kornilov showed that the failure of counter-revolution can be just as disastrous for the bourgeoisie as the failure of an uprising for the proletariat.

By September military drill was taught in seventy-nine Petersburg factories. In many of the factories all the workers carried arms. The military division of the Bolshevik party was unable to furnish enough military instructors to meet the demand.

On the eve of the October Revolution, the Red Guard numbered twenty thousand members, organized in battalions of four to six hundred men. Each battalion was divided into three companies: a machine-gun section, a liaison section, an ambulance section, and sometimes an armored-car section. Non-commissioned officers (workers) led the battalion and the companies. They stood guard in watches: two-thirds of the workers in the factory, the other third

on guard, with wages paid for time on duty. The statutes of the Red Guard required, for admittance, the recommendation of a socialist party, a factory committee or a trade union. Three unexcused absences were punished by expulsion. Infractions of discipline were tried by a jury of comrades. The use of arms without authorization was a crime. Orders were obeyed without discussion. Each Red Guard carried a numbered identification card. The officers were elected; in reality, however, they were often appointed by factory committees, or other workers' organizations, and the higher officers were subject to the approval of the ward Soviets. If they did not already possess a military education, the officers were required to take special courses.

This organization of the Petersburg proletariat fulfilled the earlier imperative advice—which had been ignored—of Lenin. In one of his *Letters from Afar*, written in Zurich, March 11, 1917 and first published after the revolution as an historical document, Lenin in speaking of the workers' militia had urged the workers: "Do not allow the re-establishment of the police! Do not give up your own local organizations!" And form a militia including women and the youth without delay. "A miracle of organization must be performed," he concluded.

At Moscow the formation of the Red Guard went off less smoothly. The authorities, led by the Mensheviks and the S-Rs, succeeded in disarming the workers and part of the garrison. The workers had to manufacture grenades in secret, obtaining explosives from the provinces. The organization of a general staff and liaison department was deplorably neglected. These failings and delays cost the Moscow proletariat six days of bloody street battle.

The military division of the party comprised more than a hundred thousand soldiers and a certain number of officers. It formed Military Revolutionary Committees everywhere, the leading committees for the insurrection.

ON THE EVE OF THE BATTLE

The conflict between the two powers—the Provisional Government, headed by Kerensky, and the Soviet—entered a sharper phase in Petersburg after October 16, when the Military Revolutionary Committee, headed by Antonov-Ovseyenko, Podvoisky, and Chudnovsky, was formed. The president of the Soviet also presided over the Committee. The Petersburg garrison had come over to the Bolsheviks. The government, citing the danger of a German offensive, tried to send revolutionary regiments off to the front.

The Military Revolutionary Committee was furnished with liaison, information, and armament departments. It appointed commissars in every unit of the troops. The bourgeoisie was arming—but the appointment of commissars at the armories put a stop to that. The delegates of the MRC were welcomed by the troops, who knew that the Committee was opposed to the order sending them to the front. The MRC simply refused to countersign the order, a refusal they were artful enough to explain as giving the Committee time to examine the

question. The MRC assumed general power over the troops, and ended by ordering them not to pay any attention to the regular command. From then on, the insurrection was, so to speak, latent. Two powers measured each other, and two military authorities, one of them insurrectional, deliberately canceled each other's orders.

The Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets was to meet in Petersburg on October 15. The Mensheviks managed to postpone the meeting until the 25th (November 7, new style), thus obtaining ten days' grace for the bourgeois Provisional Government. No one doubted but that the Congress, where the Bolsheviks were certain of a majority, would vote for the seizure of power. "You are setting the date of the revolution," said the Mensheviks to the Bolsheviks. In order that the foregone decision of the Congress might be something more than a platonic expression of opinion, it was necessary to support that decision by force of arms.

As to the date for the insurrection, two points of view were manifest: Trotsky

wanted to tie it up with the Congress, believing that an independent insurrection of the party would have less chance of carrying along the masses. Lenin thought it "criminal" to temporize until the Congress, fearing that the Provisional Government would forestall the insurrection by a vigorous offensive. Events failed to justify his fear, which was nonetheless legitimate. The enemy proved to be completely demoralized.

In our opinion, two perfectly correct conceptions, rising from different considerations, here came into conflict. The one was strategical, based on the necessity for tying up the action of the party with an immediate demand intelligible to the widest masses ("All power to the Soviets!"), certainly a condition for success; the other was based on a general policy of shattering every belief in the possibility of proletarian power *before* the insurrection. Once this possibility was admitted in theory, why not admit the possibility of power *without* insurrection? That road could lead far. Since 1906, Lenin had attacked the tendency to "gloss over or forget the insurrection in considering the organization of revolutionary power..." His realistic position might be expressed: Conquer first! Lenin wanted the insurrection to forestall the Congress; faced with an accomplished fact, the Congress could not but sanction the step. He urged his point of view in a personal conference with the organizers of the insurrection. He was passionately concerned with the details of preparation, and would not consent to defer the offensive at any price. Nevsky and Podvoisky tried vainly to convince him that a few extra days of preparation would only increase the chances of victory. "The enemy will also profit by delay," he replied obstinately.

The Last Steps

Antonov-Ovseyenko has left a striking account of an interview with Lenin, which occurred a few days before the battle, in a house in the workers' quarter of Vyborg. Lenin, who was hunted by Kerensky's police, and who, if captured, would probably have been killed by a "stray" bullet, arrived in disguise. "We found ourselves in the presence of a little old graybeard wearing a pince-nez, wearing it well enough, rather debonair; in fact, a musician, a teacher or a librarian, one would have said. He took off his wig and looked about with his usual humorous expression: 'What news?' He was full of assurance. He inquired as to the possibility of calling the fleet to Petersburg. In reply to the objection that this would leave the coast unguarded, he said curtly: 'The sailors must know that the revolution is in greater danger in Petersburg than on the Baltic.'"

Situated in the center of the city on a little island in the Neva River, the fortress of Peter and Paul was a source of worry to the M.R.C. Its guns commanded the Winter Palace; there were a hundred thousand rifles in its armory. Its garrison appeared to be faithful to the Provisional Government. Trotsky proposed to capture this citadel from the interior—by a meeting. He succeeded with Lashevitch.

October 22 was the day of the Petersburg Soviet. It was the day of the plebiscite, so to speak, of the insurrection. It often happens that an event of great impor-

tance rises from an apparently unimportant immediate cause, for the latter is in reality nothing but the last link in a whole chain of causes. The Central Executive, including the treasury of the Soviet, was still in the hands of the pacifist socialists. The Soviet needed a newspaper. It was decided to hold a number of large meetings on the 22nd to raise funds for that purpose.

The bourgeois press, frightened by the mobilization, announced that it was an uprising. Kerensky gave out fine-sounding statements, but they were nothing but sound. "All Russia is with us; we have nothing to fear." And he threatened "the elements, the groups, the parties who dare attack the liberty of the Russian people, who risk opening the front to Germany, who will end by completely liquidating the revolution." A regular Galiffet! But his threats were vain; he was too late. The 22nd saw a formidable mobilization of the masses. Every hall was filled. At the People's House (*Narodny Dom*), thousands filled the auditorium, the galleries, the corridors; in the great hall clusters of human beings clung shakily to the steel framework of the build-

ing. John Reed was there. His notes on this meeting, where Trotsky inspired the crowd, deserve repetition.

"The people around me appeared to be in ecstasy. They seemed about to burst forth spontaneously in a religious hymn. Trotsky read a resolution to the general effect that they were ready to fight for the workers and peasants to the last drop of their blood. . . . Who was in favor of the resolution? The innumerable crowd raised their hands as a single man. I saw the burning eyes of men, women, adolescents, workers, soldiers, muzhiks. Trotsky went on. The hands remained raised. Trotsky said, 'Let this vote be your oath. You swear to give all your strength, not to hesitate before any sacrifice, to support the Soviet, which undertakes to win the revolution and give you land, bread and peace.' The hands remained raised. The crowd approved; they took the oath. . . . And the same scene was repeated all over Petersburg. The last preparations were made everywhere; everywhere they swore the last oath; thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of men. It was the insurrection."

KRONSTADT AND THE FLEET

On the morning of the 25th, the revolutionary forces of Kronstadt received orders to prepare to defend the Soviet Congress (for the offensive was launched under the formal cover of defense). Let us pause for a moment on the preparations at Kronstadt, of which one of the participants, I. Flerovsky, has left an excellent account. The rational element, the element of co-ordination, the perfect organization of the insurrection as a military operation according to the rules of war, appeared most clearly there. The contrast with the spontaneous, badly organized movements which have been so numerous in the history of the proletariat was striking.

"Preparations for the march on Petrograd were carried on during the night. . . . The Navy Club was jammed with soldiers, sailors, and workers, all under arms, all ready for action. . . . the revolutionary general staff followed the plans of operations exactly, designated the various units and sections, made inventory of supplies and ammunition, assigned the different leaders. The night passed in strenuous work. The following boats were ordered to support the operation: the torpedo boat mine-layer *Amur*, the old cruiser *Zarya Svobody* (*Dawn of Liberty*, formerly *Alexander III*), the monitor *Yastrib*. The *Amur* and *Yastrib* were to disembark troops in Petrograd. The cruiser was to take up a station at the entrance of the maritime canal, commanding the coastal railroad with its cannon. A feverish but silent activity went on in the streets. Army and navy detachments marched toward the port. Only the serious, concentrated faces of the first ranks were to be seen by the light of torches. Neither laughter nor talk; only the marital tread of marching men, sharp commands, and the groaning passage of trucks interrupted the silence. In the port, the boats were hastily boarded. The detachments drawn up on the docks waited patiently for their turn to embark. Is it possible, I thought in spite of

myself, that these can be the last moments before the Great Revolution? Everything went off with such simplicity and order that one could believe nothing more at stake than some every-day military maneuver. How little this resembled the revolutionary scenes that one remembers from history. . . . 'This revolution,' my companion said, 'is going off in fine style!'

This revolution went off in fine proletarian style—with organization. That is why it conquered so easily and completely in Petrograd.

Let us borrow another significant scene from these memoirs. On board one of the boats headed for the insurrection, the delegate of the revolutionary general staff entered the officers' mess. "Here the atmosphere was different. They were worried, careworn, puzzled. As I entered and saluted, the officers rose. They listened to my short explanation while standing. I gave the order, 'We are going to overthrow the Provisional Government by force. Power will pass to the Soviets. We do not count on your sympathy; we don't need it. But we urge you to remain at your posts, filling your duties punctually and obeying our orders. We shall spare you superfluous trials. That is all'—'We understand,' the captain replied. The officers fled out to their posts; the captain mounted the bridge."

A numerous fleet came to the aid of the proletariat and the garrison. The cruisers *Aurora*, *Oleg*, *Novik*, *Zabyika*, *Samson*, two torpedo boats and several other vessels steamed up the Neva.

Three comrades, Podvoisky, Antonov-Ovseyenko, Lashevich, had been entrusted with organizing the capture of the Winter Palace. Chudnovsky, a Bolshevik from the earliest days, who was soon to die in the Ukraine, worked with them.

The former imperial residence was situated in the center of the city on the banks of the Neva. It faced the Peter and Paul Fortress which lay across the river at a dis-

tance of six hundred yards. To the south, the palace looked out on a vast paved square which contained the Column of Alexander I. Across this square in a semicircle were the former Army and Foreign Affairs buildings. In 1879 the revolver shots of the student Soloviev, from whom the autocrat Alexander II fled, doubled over, pale with fright, had echoed among these buildings. In 1881, the explosion of a dynamite charge set under the imperial apartments by the carpenter, Stephen Khalturin, had blasted through the square. Here on January 22, 1905, troops had opened fire on the crowd of hymn-singing workers come to petition their "Little Father Czar." There were fifty deaths and more than a thousand wounded—the autocracy most fatally of all, by its own bullets.

On the morning of the 25th of October, Bolshevik regiments, acting in concert with the Red Guard, began to encircle the Palace, now the seat of Kerensky's ministry. The attack was planned for nine o'clock in the evening, although Lenin, ever impatient, urged them to attack sooner. While a wall of steel gradually surrounded the Palace, the Congress of Soviets met at Smolny, a former school for daughters of the nobility. Still hunted by the police a few hours before he was to become the leader of the first workers' state, still in disguise, Lenin strode up and down a small room in the building. Of each new arrival he asked, "The Palace? Not yet taken?" His anger against temporizers mounted hourly. He threatened Podvoisky, "We must shoot him, we must shoot him." The soldiers grouped around bonfires in the streets near the Palace were equally impatient. "The Bolsheviks are turning diplomat too," they muttered. Once more Lenin's view, in a minor detail, was that of the masses. Podvoisky, sure of victory, deferred the attack. Agitators demoralized the already doomed enemy. Every drop of revolutionary blood, now easily spared, was precious.

The Capture of the Winter Palace

The first summons to surrender was sent in to the ministers at six o'clock. At eight o'clock, another ultimatum. Bolshevik orators harangued the defenders. A crack battalion came over to the Bolsheviks, welcomed by a tremendous hurrah as they crossed the square. The Woman's Battalion surrendered a few moments later. The terrified ministers, left alone in the vast palace without lights, guarded by a handful of military cadets, still hesitated to surrender. Kerensky had run out on them, promising to return at the head of a detachment of faithful troops. They expected to be torn to pieces by an infuriated mob. The cannon of the *Aurora*—firing blank cartridges!—finally demoralized the defenders. The attack met only feeble resistance. Grenades exploded on the great marble staircases; there was hand-to-hand fighting in the corridors. In the shadows of a great antechamber, a single file of livid cadets crossed bayonets before a paneled door.

It was the last rampart of the last bourgeois government of Russia. Antonov-Ovseyenko, Podvoisky, and Chudnovsky pushed past the motionless bayonets. "I am with you," one of the youths whispered. Inside was the Provisional Government. Thirteen pitiful, shaking ministers, thirteen fear-strained faces hidden in the shadow. As

they went out of the Palace surrounded by Red Guards, a cry for their death went up. The soldiers and sailors had fancied a massacre. The Red Guard kept them close. "Don't soil the victory of the proletariat with excesses!"

Kerensky's ministers were sent off to Peter and Paul Fortress, the former Bastille through which so many Russian heroes had passed. There they joined the last ministers of the Czar. That was all.

In the neighboring sections of the city, traffic had not even been interrupted. On the wharfs, sightseers looked on quietly.

A detail of organization: in order that momentary successes of the enemy might not interfere with their work, the military leaders of the insurrection had prepared two reserve headquarters.

The Congress of the Soviets

While the Reds surrounded the Winter Palace, the Petrograd Soviet met. Lenin came out of hiding. Lenin and Trotsky announced the seizure of power. The Soviets were going to offer a democratic peace to all belligerent powers; secret treaties were to be published. Lenin's first words emphasized the importance of the bond between the peasants and the workers, which was yet unsealed:

"In Russia, the immense majority of the peasantry has said: 'Enough of this game with the capitalists, we shall march with the workers.' A single decree abolishing the landowners' estates will win us the confidence of the peasantry. They will understand that their salvation is with the workers. We shall set up workers' control of industry. . . ."

The All-Russian Congress of Soviets did not open until evening in the great white ballroom at Smolny. Five hundred sixty-two delegates were present: 382 Bolsheviks, 31 non-party sympathizers with the Bolsheviks, 70 Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, 36 Center Socialist-Revolutionaries, 16 Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, three nationalist Social Revolutionaries, fifteen united internationalist Social-Democrats, 21 Menshevik partisans of national defense, seven Social-Democrats from various national organizations, five anarchists.

The room was crowded and feverish. The Menshevik, Dan, opened the Congress in the name of the former All-Russian executive. Cannon thundered on the Neva as the new officers were elected. The resistance of the Winter Palace dragged on. Kamenev, "dressed in his best and in a holiday mood," replaced Dan as president. He proposed a three-point agenda: "Organization of Power; War and Peace; The Constituent Assembly."

The Mensheviks and the S-Rs took the floor first. For the former, Martov—their most gifted and intelligent leader, whose physical weakness seemed, in spite of his great personal courage, to reflect the feebleness of the idea he served—"Martov, planted as usual with his pale and trembling hand on his hip, his back queerly twisted, shaking his ruffled hair, urged a peaceful solution of the conflict." A little late! Mstislavsky took the floor for the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries. His party mistrusted the Provisional Government and was favorable to the seizure of power by the

Soviets, but had refused to join in the insurrection. He qualified everything he said. All power to the Soviets, certainly! All the more so since they had already seized power. But all military operations must be immediately stopped. How could anybody think in the middle of a cannonade? To which Trotsky replied, "Who is embarrassed by the sound of cannon? To the contrary, we shall work all the better."

The cannon glared in the windows. A sailor from the cruiser *Aurora* appeared in the hall to reply to the Mensheviks and the Right S-Rs who were denouncing "this crime against Country and Revolution."

"A bronzed figure he was," Mstislavsky relates. "His gestures were curt; his words cut through the air like a knife. Stocky and strong, he mounted the platform, his hairy chest showing beneath the high collar that curved gracefully about his shaggy head. The hall crackled with excitement. . . . 'The Winter Palace is finished,' he said. 'The *Aurora* is firing at point-blank range.' 'Oh!' groaned the Menshevik Abramovich, on his feet, distracted and wringing his hands. 'Oh!' The man from the *Aurora* responded

MOSCOW: ECONOMIC CRISIS AND UPRISING

The economic basis of the revolution appeared more clearly in Moscow.

The city was governed by a Duma composed of bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, and intellectual elements, among whom the S-Rs and the Cadets possessed a stable enough majority. They were frequently re-enforced by the Mensheviks. It was an unpopular assembly. The people in the galleries demonstrated their opinion—as in the French Revolutionary Convention—by applauding the Bolsheviks loudly. The election of the ward Dumas on the 24th of September gave the Bolsheviks a chance to sound out the masses. The election returned a majority for the Bolsheviks in fourteen out of seventeen wards. The Cadets also made some gains. The parties of social conciliation came out the losers.

The Bolsheviks owed their victory to their understanding of the needs of the working masses. The famine was growing; the last grain reserves were being exhausted; the day when the city would be without bread was approaching. The bread ration was reduced to a hundred grams per person per day. The collapse of the transport system made any improvement problematical. Extremely energetic measures were needed if the population was to be saved; centralization of the food supply, city control of baking—in other words, expropriation of the bakers, requisition of buildings, the registration of all inhabitants on a single ration list. The Bolsheviks demanded these measures. The food-supply crisis fitted into the class-war plans of the ruling classes. It put a finishing touch on the sabotage of production carried on by the owners. Thus, really to cope with the famine it was necessary to take over all production.

The Bolsheviks demanded:

(1) Demobilization of all industrial enterprises which produced prime commodities before the war. Continuation of war production meant that the proletariat and the army would lose their capacity for revolutionary action.

to this cry with a graceful gesture of unanimity, and consoled him in a loud whisper that trembled with suppressed laughter: 'They are shooting blank cartridges. No harm must come to the ministers and the Woman's Battalion.' A turmoil ensued. The national-defensist Mensheviks and the Right S-Rs, sixty delegates altogether, went out 'to die with the Provisional Government.' They did not get far; their straggling cortège found the streets barred by the Red Guard and they dispersed."

Late in the night the Left S-Rs decided to follow the Bolsheviks and remain in the Congress.

Lenin did not mount the rostrum until the following day when the decrees on land, peace, and workers' control of production were voted. His appearance was the signal for a tremendous acclamation. He waited calmly for it to end, looking out over the victorious crowd. Then he said quite simply, without any gesture, his two hands resting on the pulpit, his shoulders slightly inclined forward toward the crowd:

"We are beginning to build the socialist society."

(2) Requisition of factories in order to put an end to sabotage by owners and in order to facilitate the return to peacetime production, with the ultimate aim of exchanging industrial products for the peasants' grain.

(3) Obligation to work for the employees of industry, who might be misled into striking against socialization.

(4) Requisition of stores in order to put an end to speculation.

By the end of the first week of October the Moscow leather workers entered the tenth week of a strike—and a strike was not easy on a ration of a hundred grams of bread a day! The carpenters, metal workers, textile and municipal workers' unions were preparing to strike. On its side, the owning class organized a sort of strike of capital in production; with partial lockouts, the closing of factories under a number of pretexts, open and secret restrictions of production, sales of machinery and liquidations—all justified by the "untenable situation."

The real condition of the Moscow workers was extremely grave. Since the beginning of the war the cost of living had increased six and a half times; the price of prime manufactured commodities (cloth, wood, shoes, soap) had increased almost twelve times; wages, on the contrary, had only quadrupled. In vain the workers demanded recognition of their factory committees. The Provisional Government, sympathetic to the owning classes, opposed them with thinly veiled ill will. Desperate strikes were imminent every day. The crisis was ripe. On the 19th of October, the Moscow Soviet, after reviewing the situation, adopted on the motion of Bukharin and Smirnov a series of measures which might be called insurrectional.

To satisfy the demands of the strikers and the trade unions the Soviet decreed: the arrest of capitalists guilty of sabotage of production; the remission of rents; the mobilization of the masses for the seizure

of power by the revolutionary workers. The trade unions were instructed to institute the eight-hour day; the striking leather workers were ordered to open the factories themselves.

A few days later a city-wide conference of the party was called. Semashko, Osinsky and Smirnov spoke on the insurrection. "Figures and statistics in hand," writes an eyewitness, "they showed that if the proletariat, which alone could end the war, did not take power Russia would be ruined, bread and fuel would disappear, the railroads and factories would close down . . . their speeches were scientific, almost academic, in tone. This was not an assembly of revolutionists planning a social overturn, but the meeting of a scientific society. The audience, more than half made up of the representatives of military organizations, listened indifferently. Nobody took the floor to contradict. When the insurrection was put to the vote everyone raised his hand. They were unanimous. The insurrection was recognized by everyone as a necessary step.

On the 23rd of October, the Moscow Soviet promulgated its Decree No. 1, giving the power of hiring and firing workers to the workers' own factory committees. On the 24th the Soviet voted to organize the Red Guard. Each of these votes was the occasion for a furious battle with the Mensheviks and the S-Rs, both of whom defended stubbornly every foot of the ground which they called democracy and legality.

On the 25th, while the battle raged in Petersburg, the Moscow Soviet set up—a little late—a Military Revolutionary Committee. The Mensheviks and the S-Rs exhorted the proletariat to control itself, not to follow the vicious example of the usurpers in Petrograd. Only the Constituent Assembly would have the power to rule the destiny of Russia. Beaten in the vote, the Mensheviks nevertheless entered the MRC to "moderate as much as possible the bad effects of the projected Bolshevik coup d'état." In other words, to sabotage the insurrection. They were admitted.

The city Duma, meeting the same night behind closed doors without the Bolshevik delegates, had set up a Committee of Public Safety. The S-R mayor, Rudenev, presided over the preparations for battle. Riabtsev, another S-R, hastily armed the cadets in the military schools—the Junkers—the university students, the youth in the schools; in short, the youth of the bourgeois and middle classes.

Beginning of the White Terror

The street battle lasted six days and was extremely hard fought. The initiative belonged to the Committee of Public Safety which on the 27th, while the Duma was in session, summoned the Military Revolutionary Committee to dissolve within fifteen minutes. There followed a confused, stubborn, and bloody struggle, of which we shall only trace the outline.

Moscow is a city that has been gradually built up during centuries in concentric circles around the palaces and churches of the Kremlin, which is a sort of city within a city, fortified and surrounded with high crenellated walls and towers. A bird's-eye view of the Kremlin reveals it to be a triangle, the base of which lies along the left

bank of the Moscow River. The city, built upon hills, with narrow streets that weave in and out of one another, with innumerable churches surrounded by gardens and encircled by tree-bordered boulevards, offers unlimited possibilities for attack and defense.

But from the first, the strategical problems of the two adversaries were limited. The MRC was quartered, with the Soviet, on Tverskaya Street, in the former governor's residence. The subjugation of this entire quarter was the central task of the government troops. The MRC, on the contrary, endeavored to hold out until the Red Guard, arriving from the suburbs, could take the Whites from the rear. The capture of the Kremlin by the Whites was, under these circumstances, no more than an incident, however important.

The Reds had the advantage of numbers. "Our enemy," says Muralov, "had about ten thousand men, two officers' academies, the military sections of the Menshevik and S-R parties, and the youth from the schools. We had not less than fifty thousand on whom we could count . . . about fifteen thousand active troops, twenty-five thousand reserve troops, three thousand armed workers, six light-artillery batteries and several heavy pieces." On one side, the bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and intellectual elements; on the other, the great gray mass of soldiers and workers. Nevertheless, the faulty organization and the hesitations of the Reds made the outcome of the battle uncertain.

Kremlin Massacre

At midnight of the 28th, the Junkers—students of the military academies—surrounded the Kremlin. The Committee of Public Safety had already occupied the railroad stations, the power works, and the central telephone exchange. Cut off from the MRC, the commandant of the Kremlin, Berzin, who was told that "order had been restored," surrendered on the promise that his men would be spared. He himself opened the gates. He was stabbed, struck, and outraged by the Junkers. A colonel said to him, "What? Still alive? You must die."

The workers in the Kremlin arsenal did not learn of the surrender until their factory committee was arrested. In the morning, they were ordered to line up in the courtyard of the Kremlin wearing their identification discs. Suddenly three machine guns were uncovered in front of them. I quote from the story of one who escaped.

"The men cannot even then believe that they are thus to be shot, without trial, without reason, since they are not combatants. They are commanded to line up at attention. They stand still, hands along the seams of their trousers. At a signal, the chatter of three machine guns mingles with pitiful cries, sobs and death rattles. All who are not killed by the first blast throw themselves toward the only exit, a narrow doorway left open behind them. After a few minutes a heap of screaming, bloody men blocks the doorway . . . into which they continue to fire. The bullets splatter the walls of the surrounding buildings with flesh and blood."

This massacre was not an isolated phenomenon. The Whites arrested and executed everywhere. At the Alexandrovsky Military Academy, a court-martial passed judgment in thirty seconds, judgment which was car-

ried out forthwith in the courtyard. Let us remember these scenes. They show that the defenders of the Provisional Government were all too willing to drown the workers' insurrection in blood. The White terror had begun.

The news of the massacre interrupted armistice negotiations between the MRC and Colonel Riabtsev. The Whites were only trying to gain time, in hope of re-enforcements. The MRC finally understood that it was a war to the death. It was almost surrounded; but from every section of the city Red Guards and revolutionary regiments came to its aid in great numbers, so that its besiegers were themselves surrounded by a wall of steel. On the evening of the 29th, after a terrible day in which the general staff of the insurrectionists almost fell, a twenty-four hour armistice was signed. It was almost immediately broken by the arrival of a shock battalion which joined the Whites.

The Reds, at the same time, were re-enforced by artillery. The batteries opened fire from the squares. The Whites retreated to the Kremlin. After long delays, occasioned by fear of destroying historic monuments, the MRC decided to order the bombardment of the Kremlin. The Whites surrendered on November 2 at four in the afternoon. "The Committee of Public Safety is dissolved. The White Guard surrenders its arms and is free. The officers keep their sidearms. Only such arms as are necessary for military instruction remain in the military academies. The MRC guarantees the liberty and inviolability of all." Such were the principal clauses of the treaty signed by the Reds and the Whites. The counter-revolutionists, the butchers of the Kremlin, who would never have spared the Reds in victory—we have seen proof—went free.

Costly clemency! These Junkers, these officers, these students, socialists of the counter-revolution, dispersed over all the vastnesses of Russia to organize the civil war. The revolution would encounter them once more at Yaroslav, on the Don, at Kazan, in Crimea, in Siberia, and in every conspiracy behind the lines.

Organization and Spontaneity

The Petrograd and Moscow insurrections presented striking differences. At Petrograd the long and carefully prepared movement was essentially political, a conscious seizure of power. The revolution went off at a predetermined date, according to Trotsky himself. Two decisive factors dominated the scene: the party and the garrison. The action was carefully planned and unhesitatingly carried into practice. Its success was rapid; little blood was shed.

The Petrograd insurrection was a model of well-organized mass action.

At Moscow the spontaneity of the masses outran their organization. The movement was essentially the result of economic pressure; political consciousness of the goals and methods of the insurrection was less clear. Vacillation and delay put obstacles in the way of the proletariat. The enemy, while numerically much smaller, was better organized, more resolute, and gifted with a clear vision of its objective—the re-establishment of order—and of its method—terror—and succeeded in holding the proletariat in check for some time, inflicting cruel losses on its ranks.

In the suburbs of Moscow, the workers armed themselves as best they could. They joined battle on their own volition. Arms were lacking, ammunition was lacking. When cannon were found they had no shells. When shells were found there were no fuses. The liaison department was defective. There was no intelligence service. "We fought badly; we were carried along with events," said Muralov, the leader of the Red forces. There was no unified command, the Whites took the offensive. Their rapid occupation of strategic points compensated for their numerical weakness.

Without doubt, the enthusiasm of the combatants was admirable; provided with a capable organization, they would have worked wonders. But by itself this enthusiasm could not prevent a long, uncertain and costly battle.

The Military Revolutionary Committee was formed only on the 25th, much too late,

and hesitated too long after it was finally formed. It entered into superfluous negotiations with the Mensheviks and the S-Rs, made the mistake of signing an armistice on the 29th, at the very moment when the Reds were about to capture the telephone exchange, and indulged in unpardonable generosity toward the vanquished counter-revolutionists.

The Moscow and Petrograd insurrections were, in our opinion, movements of a different type. The Moscow insurrection was reminiscent of—although far from parallel with—the proletarian uprisings exemplified by the revolt of the workers of Paris in June 1948 which were provoked by the economic policy of the bourgeoisie. Economic provocation played a leading role in the events at Moscow; revolt was the reply, an instinctive revolt; the enemy attempted a massacre.

The Petrograd insurrection, on the con-

trary, was a new type of insurrection, of which the Hamburg uprising of 1923 is another example. The action of a large party was co-ordinated with the action of the masses; both were launched at an appointed moment after minute preparations; the element of chance was reduced to the minimum; the forces deployed were used with the greatest economy. At Hamburg the defeat—it was really more a retreat—only resulted in small losses, although as a general rule defeats have cost heavily.

All other things being equal, the events at Petrograd and Moscow demonstrate, in contrast, the immense superiority of well-organized over spontaneous actions. In the light of these experiences, the conditions for a proletarian victory may be reduced to these simple military maxims: maximum of organization and energy in action; the largest forces at the decisive place at the decisive moment.

VICTOR SERGE

Problems of Chinese Trotskyism

Conclusion of the Minority's Document

We here publish the second and concluding section of the discussion document of the minority Internationalist Group of the Communist League of China (Fourth International).

The first part, published last month, dealt with the problem of Marxist policy on China's participation in the Second World War; the present section deals with current problems in China today. As noted last month, the document is addressed to the Socialist Workers Party (Cannonite) magazine, the Fourth International, in answer to their publication of a "Report" by Peng Shih-chi for the majority Struggle Group.

Space considerations have compelled us to condense this second part somewhat, but we believe that none of the points made or important material presented has been omitted. In particular, all references to the Workers Party ("Shachtmanites" or "American minority of 1940" in Comrade Wang's usage) have been given in full, without cuts or condensation. Where passages have been condensed by paraphrasing, these are printed in italics within brackets to distinguish them from the text; brief cuts are indicated by dots. The long eleven-point program of the Internationalist Group is condensed to the leading heads only; this is, however, enough to prove the point for which it is cited by Comrade Wang.

In this document Comrade Wang urges that all Trotskyist organizations "take sides" as between the two Chinese groups only on the basis of sufficient information and discussion. We agree, and take this recommendation very seriously. On the question here raised of attitude toward the Kuomintang-Stalinist civil war, the Workers Party has already expressed its view: no support to either side, each of which is the agent of one of the contending imperialist powers, Washington and Moscow. This is essentially analogous to the position taken by revolutionary Marxists during the war itself, the position of the "third camp." We

are equally in a position to affirm our disagreement with the Luxemburgist views on the national and colonial question described as held by Comrade Yvon Cheng, while agreeing wholeheartedly with the injunction that such views have to be rejected only on their own merits or demerits and not merely because they represent a departure from the Leninist tradition.

On some other points discussed we can hold no opinion, for lack of the necessary information. When, for example, Comrade Wang seems to say that the Struggle Group ostensibly holds a "third camp" position on the civil war (like us) but "in reality" supports the Kuomintang, we are unable to gather from the document whether this is a position actually affirmed by that group or ascribed to it by Comrade Wang, as a deduction either from their activities or from the "third camp" position itself.

This is especially true since Comrade Wang, after declaring that Peng Shih-chi and the Struggle Group supported the defense of "poor little Finland" in 1940, twice adds that this was also the position of the Workers Party, the "Shachtmanites"! As all who are even slightly acquainted with our position on the war know, this is an infamous slander which has been assiduously spread by the SWP-Cannonites. It has apparently been accepted at face value (sad to say) even by comrades like Wang, who are not only the honest victims of this slander but who urge all others to "take sides" only on the basis of adequate information and discussion.

The fact is, of course, that the Cannonites spread this lie precisely in order to avoid meeting, discussing, and defending their views on the question itself—the Marxist policy of supporting neither Western imperialism. This is a tactic which Comrade Wang should be familiar with, judging from his document.

But these questions aside, the plea which permeates this second part and which is

summed up in the concluding section—the plea for an unprejudiced and politically rational re-examination of the Trotskyist positions in the light of the international situation today—must meet with the hearty assent of all who have not been petrified into the monolithic mold of Cannonite "orthodoxy" worship. It is, in fact, exactly this aspect of the group's approach which no doubt convinces the Cannonites of the Chinese minority's affinity with the Workers Party.

THE EDITORS

Our tactical divergences at the present stage are centered on the question of the civil war now being waged between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Stalinists. In January 1946 the Struggle Group adopted a resolution on the civil war which declared the war to be a "meaningless strife between selfish gangs." They ostensibly took the position of the "third camp," but in reality they took the side of the Kuomintang by branding the armed struggle led by the Chinese Stalinists as a manifestation of the "particularism of new war lords," as "military adventurism," and by demanding that the Chinese CP "give up their arms in order to fight for the constituent assembly."

We reject and oppose this bankrupt position of theirs. We maintain that the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party represent different class forces in Chinese society. The former represents the landlords and bourgeoisie, while the latter represents mainly the poor peasants. Thus, if we take only its national factor into consideration, the present civil war in China is a kind of peasant war against the landlords and rural capitalists. As a peasant war, the civil war has a progressive character on the side of the peasants; but, as a peasant war only, the civil war is devoid of any perspective, and is even doomed to fail-

ure because of its Stalinist domination.

Basing ourselves on this estimate of the civil war, our attitude toward it is to defend the peasant forces from the oppression of the Wall Street-Kuomintang alliance on the one hand, and to attack the treacherous Stalinist leadership on the other.

In defending the peasant forces we not only fight side by side with the masses but also call for unconditional peace. This is not a self-contradictory policy. This is so because the slogan "immediate cessation of the war without disarming the Stalinist armies" at the present time would constitute a blow against the Kuomintang war lords, and with the progress of events it would also mean a blow against the Stalinists. In war-weary China today there is no other slogan which can play as great a revolutionary role as the slogan of peace.

In a word, our position on the civil war is as follows: For the immediate and unconditional cessation of the war; in favor of participation in the *de facto* civil war on the side of the peasant forces; and at the same time to point out that the victorious outcome of the civil war can only be secured through the revolutionary leadership of the urban proletariat and the removal of the Stalinists from control of the peasant armed forces.

The Kuomintang Demonstrations

The position taken by the *Struggle* Group on the civil war is quite close to that of the Shachtmanites, but worse than that, they even openly take the side of the Kuomintang. Their participation in the Kuomintang-sponsored "Sovereignty Protection Movement" was an example of this position. In the Report they accused us of "boycottism" and "abstentionism" with respect to the "mass anti-Kremlin demonstrations," while they, as they put it, "boldly plunged into it to expose all the evil intentions of the Kuomintang, expand and deepen it, and try finally to convert its leadership."

[But these "anti-Kremlin demonstrations" were not really supported by large masses. Three such demonstrations have taken place since V-J Day, instigated by the most reactionary clique of the Kuomintang, organized as anti-Russian demonstrations but really intended only to counterbalance pro-Russian feeling and support the failing prestige of the Kuomintang and of American imperialism. The first, in February 1946, drew large mass support, and we did not boycott it. We did not stand aside but participated, in order the better to expose and fight its reactionary sponsors and to distinguish our policy from that of the Stalinists. Our participation also produced good organizational gains for us.

[The second anti-Soviet demonstration, in March 1947, was a great failure. Nobody came out in support of it and no demonstrations of any size took place. Peng Shih-chi and the *Struggle* Group were in favor of "boldly plunging into it" but we considered that it was merely the affair of a few professional red-baiters and advocated boycotting it.

[The third, in June, organized with an equally reactionary motive though ostensibly directed against the invasion of the Mongolian army into Sinkiang province, was an abortive attempt and even more mis-

erable in scope than the second. Under the influence of our criticism, Peng Shih-chi and his followers also took the stand of "abstentionism" in this case.]

This mistake of the *Struggle* Group was not accidental either. Here we believe it fitting to tell you of an old difference of opinion among the Chinese Trotskyists. In 1939, when Stalin waged war against Finland, Peng Shih-chi was the only one in the leadership of the Chinese section of the Fourth International who stood for the "defense of poor little Finland." He stood on the position of national independence of Finland, and favored the adoption of defeatism in the USSR.

In spite of this fact, however, Peng Shih-chi now has the courage to tell you that he and his followers are simply "continuing the internal struggle in the American party" in China. What cheap flattery this is! Peng Shih-chi followed in the footsteps of the American minority and was converted to Trotsky's point of view only after he read the latter's article; but on fundamental points he has not changed his opinion—it reappeared on the question of the civil war and also on the question of "plunging into" an "anti-Kremlin" demonstration.

Legality at Any Price

Since the *Struggle* Group takes a neutral, even pro-Kuomintang, attitude on the question of the civil war; since they identify the left mass movement partially led by Stalinists with the quite isolated "patriotic" movement which was completely conducted by Kuomintang agents, it is quite natural that Peng Shih-chi cannot have correct views on party work.

A sort of liquidationist tendency has invariably decided the direction of the leadership of the Peng Shih-chi group. Their "general line" of activity is to "utilize the antagonism" between the Kuomintang and the Stalinists in order to seek a full legal existence under the Kuomintang regime. In order to attain this goal they are ready to pay, and have paid, no small price; until now, they did not dare to revive *Struggle* [their organ], which had been suspended for five years; they preferred the publication of "theoretical" magazines and "popular" periodicals with bourgeois scholars to the introduction and publication of any book or document of the Fourth International or of Trotsky; they discounted our slogans and adapted them to Kuomintang policy; they echoed the Kuomintang publicity ministry in branding the Chinese Communists as "new war lords" and demanding "the voluntary disarming" of the Stalinist army.

All this was done in the name of the struggle for legalization and in the belief that this was the shortest road for the Trotskyists to reach the "masses." The direction of their policy can be justifiably called one of "legalization at any cost."

Can the present Kuomintang regime grant the Chinese Trotskyists the right to legal activity? If this is possible then it is only on the following condition: that the Trotskyists will fight against the Stalinist party only and put this "fight" under the direction of the Kuomintang. If the Chinese Trotskyists were ready to accept this condition, the Kuomintang government would

grant us not only legal status but "protection" and "subsidies" as well. . . .

With respect to the party work and the party paper, our attitude is precisely contrary to that of the Peng Shih-chi group above mentioned. We maintained and still maintain that, no matter how bad the circumstances of our organs (*Internationalists* from 1942 to October 1945 and *The New Banner* from June 1946 until now), we would rather translate and publish Trotsky's books and the documents of the Fourth International than cooperate with bourgeois scholars in issuing legal magazines. We would rather that our *New Banner* were banned by the Kuomintang (October 1946) than change our attitude toward the government; we would rather assemble insignificant worker revolutionaries under the program of the Fourth International than to recruit more petty-bourgeois sympathizers under the "democratic banner" of a "third party."

Needless to say, we are not fetishists on "underground work," and we know no less than they the significance of the struggle for legality. But at the same time we firmly believe that it would be a betrayal of our cause if we were ready to pay the price of legality: suspension of our party organ, refraining from propaganda for the ideas of the Fourth International and Trotskyism, cessation of fire against the Kuomintang, and finally, supporting the Kuomintang and conducting a one-sided attack against the Stalinists. We believe that a revolutionary party's struggle for legal existence is an uncompromising fight, not an adaptation to the reactionary laws, still less to the reactionary policy, of the ruling class. But the "struggle for legality" made by the *Struggle* Group in recent years has consisted precisely of a series of political concessions. That is why we could do nothing else but criticize and oppose them mercilessly.

Revision on the Colonial Question

The favorite accusation which the *Struggle* Group directs against us is that we "attacked the Transitional Program," that we "revised the colonial program of the Fourth International." . . . According to them, it is absolutely impermissible to "attack" or "revise" the Transitional Program, regardless of how the program is revised and whether the revision is right or wrong. The demand for, or attempt at, revision is in itself in their opinion a sort of "betrayal" or "crime." We consider this attitude far from a healthy one and quite contrary to the spirit of Trotskyism. In this respect Trotsky said correctly: "but a platform is not created so as not to part from it, but rather to apply and develop it." (*Fourth International*, Sept.-Oct. 1947, page 254.)

[The *Struggle* Group attacks Comrade Wang and others as "eclectics."] According to these "eclectics," the anti-imperialist war of a colonial or semi-colonial country is progressive, even if it is under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. This is, of course, the traditional Leninist position and also the position of the Transitional Program. But, these comrades say, if the leadership of the emancipation movement of a colonial country remains in the hands of the bourgeoisie for long, then the progressive movement will sooner or later degenerate into a kind of counter-revolution, serving the interests

of the imperialists and against the interests of the native workers and peasants. In addition these comrades hold the opinion that, once the anti-imperialist war of a colonial country intermeshes with a war waged between rival imperialist powers, it is in no circumstances progressive but becomes reactionary in character. Therefore, according to them, China's anti-Japanese war was no longer progressive since it had become intermeshed with the anti-Japanese war of American imperialism.

This position cannot be found in the Transitional Program of the Fourth International, because at the time the program was drafted such a situation did not exist and consequently there was no need for a corresponding answer to be given to it. Here, quite clearly, it is not a question of revision or non-revision of the program; in this respect there is nothing to be revised in the program. But if we consider the question in the light of the fundamental ideas as well as the writings of Lenin and Trotsky, we can easily see that such a position rather coincides with the tradition of revolutionary Marxism.

In his *History of the Russian Revolution* Trotsky said: the participation of China in the First World War was "the interference of a slave in the fight of the masters." (Page 38.) "The interference of a slave in the fight of the masters" is, of course, not progressive. As for Lenin, it is well known that he had two different views on the first and later stages of Serbia's war of resistance against Austria in World War I in 1916. In a polemic against Rosa Luxemburg, Lenin also admitted, in an article entitled "The Military Program of Proletarian Revolution," that the "national wars may be swallowed up by the war between rival imperialists and become imperialist in character." On this question we believe that we have not revised the program but have supplemented it with something which was not said previously.

Revision is Not a Crime

[However, the Struggle Group's fiercest criticism has been leveled against Comrade Yvon Cheng. They attack him for "revising" the program but do not bother to criticize the content of his "revision." There are two points to Comrade Cheng's view. At first, he said only that China's war had been a part of the imperialist war from the beginning; that it was reactionary from the beginning; but he still agreed that the anti-imperialist war of a colonial country alone is progressive.]

Secondly—that is, later on—having studied Lenin's theses on the national and colonial question, Comrade Cheng arrived at the conclusion that in the imperialist epoch all emancipation movements or national wars led by the colonial bourgeoisie are doomed to be impotent and devoid of progressive significance. He developed this idea in a pamphlet called *The Permanent Revolution and the Chinese Revolution*. It found some supporters in our organization.

This position of Comrade Cheng's is, of course, a revision of a certain point in our Transitional Program. But, whether we support or oppose his ideas, the fact of "revision" itself is not a "crime." Instead of calling it so, we should rather call for its

consideration and discussion. Now, there are not a few comrades in the Fourth International who propose to give up the slogan of "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union." This is also a revision of a very important part of the Transitional Program. We can and should discuss such revisions in the field of theory, fight against or in favor of them; but we cannot simply attack them and refuse to discuss with their proponents on the sole ground that our program is "not to be parted from."

Positions resembling Comrade Cheng's were held thirty years ago by Rosa Luxemburg, and during the first years of the Communist International they were held by some Italian Communists. Yet we never heard that Lenin or Trotsky refused to cooperate with, or refused to make attempts to unite with, Luxemburg or Serrati because of this difference—or called them "traitors." Twenty or thirty years have elapsed since then; during these stormy years there have been revolutions and counter-revolutions in Turkey, Iran and China. Many colonial wars took place during and after the Second World War. History has provided us with a great deal of experience and many lessons which are worth our most careful study and attention. We sincerely hope, therefore, that the Fourth International and its sections will carry on an unprejudiced consideration and decision on the colonial question. Only then can we decide what should be preserved out of our traditional positions, what should be revised, and what should be developed.

[In order to refute the Struggle Group's accusations that we are "opportunist," "sectarian," and "ultra-leftist," we cite our program. You can clearly see whether we have "abandoned the transitional demands," "want no democratic struggles but only socialism," or "yield to the pressure of Stalinist-controlled public opinion."]

1. For the immediate cessation of the civil war. . . .
2. For workers' security and the improvement of their livelihood. . . .
3. Land to the poor peasants. . . .
4. For the democratization of the army. . . . (Kuomintang and Communist). . . .
5. Defend the standard of living of the urban poor. . . .
6. Equality in education and job security for the youth. . . .
7. Freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, demonstration, appeal, striking and picketing. . . .
8. For the national independence of China and self-determination for minorities. . . .
9. Defense of the USSR. Down with the policy of the Stalinist bureaucracy! Against the Kuomintang as the cat's-paw of American imperialism to attack the Soviet Union. . . .
10. Solidarity with the working class and oppressed peoples of the world. . . .
11. For the immediate convocation of an all-powerful constituent assembly elected on the basis of universal suffrage. . . . For a workers' and peasants' government. . . .

At the end of this long letter we wish to say a few words about the publication of the *Struggle Group's "Report"* in your magazine. The writer of that Report repeated

the following many times:

"Our struggle was obviously the continuation of the struggle in the American party in 1940.

"Our minority had the same class basis as the Shachtmanites."

"The Chinese minority was a miniature of the Shachtmanites."

In publishing their "Report," you did not express your opinion of it. That was cautious. But readers of your magazine were naturally impressed with the fact that you were satisfied with the declarations made in the "Report," and that you had thus taken sides in the internal polemics of the Chinese organization. We admit that the ideological groupment in the ranks of Trotskyism will take place on an international scale; but we do not think that such groupment has taken place definitely in the national sections as in the whole International.

For example, on questions like the character of the USSR, the estimation of the international situation, the civil war in China, national questions in Europe, etc., our position still coincides with yours; while on the question of the attitude toward China's anti-Japanese war after it had been merged with the imperialist war, the Shachtmanites took, after the Pearl Harbor debacle, the same position which we held before that event. On the other hand, the *Struggle Group*, especially its leader Peng Shih-chi, took the same attitude toward the Soviet-Finnish war as the Shachtmanites, and their position on the present Chinese civil war was and is quite close to that of the Workers Party of the U. S. But on the question of China's war, their position coincides with yours.

In such circumstances, which group in the Chinese organization shall be labeled as the "petty-bourgeois wing," and which group as the "proletarian tendency"? Again: the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, for example, took the same point of view on the colonial anti-imperialist war, during the World War, as we did; should the B-LPI be called the Indian "miniature of the Shachtmanites"? Of course not!

A sharp process of ideological regroupment is taking place in the world Trotskyist movement. This is a result of the development of the world situation. We are not pessimistic about it. On the contrary, we rather consider it quite natural. But instead of weakening or destroying world Trotskyism, artificial factional prejudices must be carefully avoided in order to strengthen and consolidate it. To reach that goal, we hope that the Trotskyists of all countries will take the trouble to learn and study the polemics arising in the various national sections before taking sides on them.

We agreed completely with Comrade Li Fu-chen when he said in his last letter to us that "it was an error to print the article [the Report] as it was written," although we also agreed with him when he said in the same letter that you "cannot be blamed for it as you are not conversant with the affairs of China."—With Trotskyist salutations,

The Communist League of China
(Internationalists)

M. Y. WANG

November 12, 1947
Shanghai, China

SOCIALIST THOUGHT ABROAD

One of the most interesting new political publications to appear in Europe in the post-war period is *La Revue Internationale*, a monthly political, cultural and literary magazine edited by a group of leading French intellectuals and Marxists, including some ex-Trotskyists (e.g., Pierre Naville).

The publication is interesting not so much for its intrinsic merit (which is rather varied and uneven) but its steady evolution toward pro-Stalinism, or, at best, Stalinist apologetics expressed on a comparatively high ideological plane. We do not want to trace the steady development of this tendency here, but rather to call attention to one particularly significant article which has, like the magazine itself, an interest beyond its own content. *La Revue Internationale* might be called the first important theoretical journal of the neo-Stalinist trend.

A discussion was organized by the magazine's editors around James Burnham's book *The Managerial Revolution*, which hit Europe last year, arousing much the same superficial interest as it had done in America. In this discussion, however, it turned out that it was the Russian state that was being discussed. The articles soon left the field of lofty, if abstract, theory and dealt with Stalin's régime in theory and practice.

Charles Bettelheim, well-known economist, took the first timid but definite step in his contribution (No. 16, June, 1947) which contended that the Russian bureaucracy is a necessary, progressive characteristic of the first stages of socialist society; that each revolution must experience the same bureaucratic growth since such an organism is needed to regulate privileges and material distribution during the first days of a workers' state.

More interesting and clearer, both in content and significance, was the article of Giles Martinet, editorial board member of *La Revue Internationale*, published in July 1947 (No. 17). The article is entitled, "From Trotsky to Burnham," and is a bold and open step in justifying the existence, as a historic necessity, of the Russian bureaucracy together with its methods and manners.

In the course of a violent attack on Trotsky and his movement on grounds of revolutionary "utopianism," the position of Shachtman (Workers Party) is attacked at great length. Martinet cleverly makes use of the numerous contradictions in the Fourth International's analysis of events (based principally on the "approaching revolution" theories held by the European Trotskyist spokesmen), and openly takes his stand with the Stalinist movement and the Russian bureaucracy. The reply of the Trotskyists (*Quatrième Internationale*, October 1947) is ineffectual since it is an elaborate defense of this same "approaching revolution" perspective.

A NEW DEPARTMENT

is inaugurated with the accompanying survey of four discussions from the international socialist press. It is planned for alternate issues, barring unusual demands on our space. It will concern itself with reporting and commenting on efforts of socialists in other countries to grapple with the political and theoretical problems of our times—both those with which we agree and those with which we disagree.—Ed.

Burnhamite Speculation

F. A. Ridley, who conducts a column called "The Shape of Things to Come" for *The Socialist Leader* (publication of the British Independent Labor Party; formerly known as *The New Leader*) speculates on the character of Britain's Labor government after two years in office.

In the November 15, 1947 issue, Ridley theorizes: "Far from being the legatees and last hopes of traditional Capitalism, the Labor Government is effectively digging the grave of that society. It is the authentic forerunner of a new social-democratic, collectivist system. One in which the State controls the economy, and not the economy the State. . . ." And further, says Ridley, the new ruling class "is the State Machine itself, as expressed and represented by its political directors and bureaucratic agents that becomes the new ruling-class. And this, and not either Capitalism or Socialism is 'the state of things to come' in contemporary Britain . . . we may accurately term [this]: 'The Managerial Revolution.'" Burnham pops up here again.

A social revolution is in process in England, says Ridley, but it is not a socialist revolution. What is it then? ". . . why beat about the bush? Such a governmental régime, even if, as may be, it conserves some fig-leaves of formal political democracy, is, in essence, a totalitarian régime, a 'servile state,' as Belloc, a generation ago, called it more bluntly." Its final stage will be, concludes Ridley, the same as "the final stage of Stalinism." It sounds suspiciously as if John Dos Passos' resent article in *Life* magazine derived its original inspiration from the Ridley thesis.

A notorious tout of generalities, Ridley here lightmindedly deduces sweeping conclusions from the existing tendencies and trends. With less than twenty per cent of British economy nationalized, with a halt in the entire program now apparent, and faced with the fact that the really basic branches of British industry are yet untouched (steel, iron, machine works, etc.), Ridley asks us to accept the Burnhamite theory of the gradual growing-over of state-capitalist Britain into a full-blown Stalinist Britain, without suggesting why this will happen or accounting for any intervening political counter-factors. This is speculation

without rhyme or reason and indicates the theoretical poverty of the ILP remnants.

Unfortunately we must simultaneously acknowledge that while the RCP (Revolutionary Communist Party, British Trotskyists) has several times seriously grappled with the problem of the historic significance of the British Labor government, and has fortunately rejected its original viewpoint that this government, like its predecessors, would "do nothing," its analyses have not been entirely adequate. It has related the program and policy of the Attlee régime to the capitalist needs of a declining Britain, but it has failed to deepen this economic side of its analysis either with an accompanying political analysis or, more important, a related political program for itself. The best that can be said for Ridley is that in his blundering way he realizes that "something new" is with us, and his speculative fancy tries to get at this "something new."

Theory of "State Bonapartism"

The problem of the character of Russian-occupied Eastern Europe is common to revolutionists everywhere. Since one's general attitude toward Stalinism as a world phenomenon is, in part, determined by a concrete answer to this problem, the universal concern of Marxists with Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, etc., is understandable. In the November 7, 1947 issue of *Toiler's Front*, publication of the Revolutionary Communist Party of India (an organization in general sympathetic to Trotskyism) Sudarshan Chatterji, in an article dealing with the writings of the now-disgraced Professor Varga on the subject of Eastern Europe, attempts to answer this problem.

Varga, as our readers know, was the man who described the Eastern European régimes as "democracy of a new type." With grim determination, Chatterji reads Varga a lesson in elementary Marxism, but we are not concerned with this aspect of the article. What does Chatterji himself say about the régimes?

Repeating the familiar story of how the Red Army's approach opened up the path "for a socialist revolution," he tells us that the Kremlin stepped into the breach "to refurbish the old capitalist *apparati* with the help of its bayonets." To solve the economic difficulties of the occupied lands, Stalin organized a "managed revolution" (definitely not to be confused with the "managerial revolution"!). A small land-owning peasantry is created by land reforms, and "to weaken the bourgeoisie" (Chatterji's emphasis) some important industries are nationalized. But this, of course, does not undermine the capitalist foundations of these countries. On the contrary, "it will help capitalism to recover." The régimes of Eastern Europe are state-capitalist, with the state power resting in the hands of "the Stalinist generals." But these generals, since they maneuver between the workers and the bourgeoisie, are Bonapartists; and therefore "the states in Eastern

Europe can be called *Stalinist Bonapartist States* . . . a bastard product of Stalinism." (Chatterji's emphasis.)

This neat little package, all tied up with the ribbons of Marxist "orthodoxy," carefully evades taking any position on the political nature of the regimes, the problem of their defense or non-defense, etc. The trouble with the whole thing is its entirely static quality, refuted by the events of each day. Stalin conceives of his pattern for the Eastern European states, imposes it upon them, maneuvers back and forth, and everything is clear! But the continuation of the nationalization process in country after country, the obvious growing totalitarianization of each state apparatus, the tying together of the nationalized economy with Russian economy, etc.—all this is a process to which Chatterji is blind. In "explaining" yesterday, he explains nothing because his theory is shattered with each new day. Between Varga's "New Democracy" and Chatterji's "State Bonapartism" there is little choice in theoretical clarity.

Mixed Theories

Apparently still puzzled and dissatisfied with its explanation of events in Eastern Europe, the French *Parti Communiste Internationaliste* (PCI) has begun a re-examination of the problem in its weekly paper, *La Vérité*. Under the standing head of "Facts, Figures, Documents," a series of articles are being published to examine "What is the exact nature of the profound modifications that have taken place and are taking place in the countries that find themselves integrated into the zone of 'Soviet defense'? Is the Stalinist bureaucracy capable of playing a revolutionary role outside of the USSR? Is the new democracy of Varga a 'necessary step,' an 'original stage' on the road toward socialism?"

Vital questions, all of these, but we are fearful of the reply that the French majority Trotskyists will give to them if we judge by the first article in this series, "The Popular Rumanian Republic."

Denying that Russia's victory has led to "the extension of soviet economic relations to the countries where the Red Army has penetrated," the author claims that Russian efforts aim at fulfillment of two demands: reparations, and seizure of industrial enterprises and capital possessed by Nazi Germany in the conquered lands. Russia replaces Germany as banker and industrialist. All this requires "the maintenance of the economy within the capitalist framework." In Rumania, for example, Russia creates, together with the state, mixed companies (oil, air traffic, banks, etc.). That is, an economic alliance is formed between "the Soviet bureaucracy and the Rumanian bourgeoisie" which exploits the workers, with Russia and the Rumanian capitalists dividing the profits! The author predicts more extensive nationalizations, but only of Anglo-American properties and not touching the country's key industries.

Here we have another neat and equally worthless package, based upon superficial economic rationalizations, fitted into pre-conceived patterns which ignore the role of living politics. Example? In the very same article, the author tells us that King Michael of Rumania, just kicked out by the collaborating Stalinists, was "the biggest

BOOKS IN REVIEW

African Survivals?

TRINIDAD VILLAGE, by Melville J. Herskovits and Frances S. Herskovits. Alfred A. Knopf, 1947, \$4.75.

Trinidad Village is the latest in a series of field studies on Negro cultures in the New World, made by Dr. Herskovits, professor of anthropology at Northwestern University, and Frances S. Herskovits.

Some of the dates served as illustrative material in the earlier study by Dr. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past*, published in 1941 as the first monograph under the Myrdal study. That book documented the author's thesis that there are significant and enriching survivals of the ancestral culture of Africa in the culture of the Negro in the U. S., and proposed (in line with Dr. Herskovits's method since 1930) that the proper field for research on this thesis is Negro life throughout the New World.

The authors point out that a comparative study of rural Trinidad and the South of the United States is important because in both of these areas aboriginal tradition could not revive as a functioning reality. Both Trinidad and the U. S. are also predominantly Protestant in religion. The village studied is Toco, in the northeastern part of the island. The population is almost entirely Negro and the region is untouched by industrialization. The main problem is subsistence. The structure of society in all major essentials is largely European.

To retrace the detailed findings would be interesting—it made good reading—but suffice it to say, the Africanisms found are recognized as minor retentions or reinterpretations of African forms. This was true in relation to the economy, division of labor between men and women, food habits, as well as in the relation between the sexes, the role of the ancestors, etc. Africanisms have persisted to a greater extent in religious life, folklore and music.

Much attention is given to the Shouters, a Baptist sect, which represents a transition between African and European forms. The Shango cult is not present in Toco, although it exists elsewhere in Trinidad. The appendix to the volume gives "Notes on Shango Worship" to illustrate this transition in another form. While Calypso music is not treated extensively, it is pointed out that the Calypso songs follow a pattern fundamental in Trinidad music, a pattern illustrated with local songs.

Perhaps most significant is the placing of Trinidad next to the U. S. at the end of the

banker, industrialist and property owner of Rumania!" And who took over the capital represented by Michael? The Rumanian state, of course—the state which is controlled, dominated and run by the Rumania Stalinist party, handmaid of Russia. But *La Vérité* will cling fast to the "Rumanian bourgeoisie" and its mixed companies—mixed like Molotov cocktails!

H. J.

scale showing the least retention of the African background. It is easier to accept that these two areas are "parallel" than it is to accept that Toco is "without any more Africanisms than would be found in almost any rural Negro community in southern United States." This latter statement is a part of Dr. Herskovits's unproved thesis.

KATE LEONARD

The Wallese Wasteland

HENRY WALLACE: THE MAN AND THE MYTH, by Dwight Macdonald. Vanguard, N. Y., 1948, 188 pp., \$2.50.

Macdonald's book, a development of his two articles in *Politics* magazine, is certainly one of the best pieces of political journalism turned out in a long time. As far as it goes, it is comprehensive: all the material one might want on Wallace's personality is here gathered between two covers and ordered into simple, useful form. It is annihilating: Macdonald has a good eye for the ridiculous and the absurd. Especially good are the paragraphs of semantic dissection in which Wallace's rhetoric is torn to bits. ("Wallese" is spoken in a "region of perpetual fogs, caused by the warm winds of the liberal Gulf Stream coming in contact with the Soviet glacier.") And, what is so rare in political journalism these days, it is extremely well written: fast, wicked, not above some good joke-making (Wallace is a "global backwoodsman").

The book, in fact, is enthusiastically recommended as a "must" for reading. It has to be added, however, that more should not be expected of it than the author apparently set out to do. There is little about Wallace's policies as AAA administrator or the meaning of the AAA program. Macdonald never attempts any sort of correlation between Wallace's personal activity and the social structure (class relationships) of American capitalism. (While I am aware that it is not enough merely to label Wallace a "petty bourgeois," nevertheless a real political study of Wallace would have to make some correlations of this sort.) There is hardly any discussion of the economic meaning of Wallace's back-to-small-business program. And so on.

What it adds up to is that most of the opportunities have been missed (at least, not taken) for interpreting Wallace's apparently personal contradictions as reflections of the contradictions of a social system which could give rise to such a character and lift him to social prominence. The material at hand simply cries out for this kind of treatment. If the ordinary reader will leave the book feeling that Wallace has been shown up to be mainly a bumbling idiot, I am not sure that full justice has thereby been done to the victim. The author, as a sort-of-socialist himself, would also have accomplished something else by a broader treatment: the book's dominant effect would have been more than simply

anti-Wallace, especially in the midst of an election campaign where pure - and - simple anti-Wallacism is objectively pretty much a boost for the Democratic camp. When the original articles appeared in *Politics*, the context of the magazine was perhaps sufficient to take care of this one-sidedness; in the form of a much more widely circulated book, a few parenthetical remarks hardly suffice.

But confronted with such a lively, informative and topical journalistic job, it is perhaps captious to complain that something more serious was not attempted with the subject. Macdonald's book has its own value, precisely because of its limited scope. It helps to fill in a corner which Marxist social analysis rarely bothers to link up with its own basic exploration of social forces and motivations: the human-individual form and appearance through which social forces act.

In this sense Wallace is a rich subject for study. That Wallace really believes himself at the head of a great crusade, a Gideonite army, that he sees himself as leader rather than led, is a conclusion readily drawn from Macdonald's book. Precisely because of his lack of self-awareness, Wallace personifies a prevalent type of mentality. For all his wide reading and scientific interest, he is basically anti-intellectual. His mind is pure fuzz except when confronted with a technical problem. He personifies the typical "engineer mentality" of wide strata of the American lower middle class, but with a basic duality; as David Bazelon has written, "Where technique does not suffice, Wallace fills in with religion. . . . Wallace's self-reliance, his sense of power, proceeds from his technical capacity; his moral nature . . . from religious feeling. He has been unable to bring these two points of view together in any rational framework." Between these two, so often divergent, strands of his thought there is an appalling wasteland of murk, fog, bluff, cowardice and stupidity—thoroughly explored by Macdonald.

When Wallace took a trip through Siberia in 1944, he made a speech in Irkutsk declaring that "Men born in wide, free spaces will not brook injustice and slavery. They will not even temporarily live in slavery." Irkutsk happens to be a center of the slave-labor system of Siberia and Wallace's audience must have included the wardens of those camps.

This is the perfect image of Henry Wallace: vague rhetoric about "wide, free spaces" spoken in friendly fashion to the keepers of the ghastliest slave system of modern society. Can one imagine a deeper split in human consciousness? Could the Stalinists have found a more perfect candidate?

ROBERT FURST

Millionaire "Free Press"

THE MARSHALL FIELDS, by John Tebbel.
E. P. Dutton, New York. 320 pages. \$3.75.

John Tebbel's biography of the Marshall Field family was apparently intended as an apology, as an "understanding" book

about one of America's leading bourgeois families. It does, in reality, reveal some interesting but not flattering truths about the creators and inheritors of one of America's fabulous empires of wealth.

Included are most of the relevant facts about its subject, the more unpleasant ones being explained away from a point of view which is liberal enough and personal enough to be that of the Marshall Field who now owns *PM* and the *Chicago Sun*. There is the rags-to-riches story of the first Marshall Field, an industrious clerk who borrowed \$100,000 from his boss in order to buy a junior partnership in the firm, repaying the money from his salary and profits, a feat highly improbable if not impossible in these days of entrenched capitalism. Here also is the story of the suicide of the second Marshall Field, a version different from the one given in *America's Sixty Families*; this version, however, in no way alters the basic conclusions drawn by Lundberg about the sons and daughters of the millionaire families. And, of course, the biography includes the episode of Marshall Field III's psychoanalysis by Dr. Gregory Zilboorg and his conversion from playboy to publisher. A middle section which is neither valuable nor important deals with the Marshall Field store and its policies. The facts about the history of *PM* and the *Chicago Sun* will prove more interesting to most readers.

Marshall Field the first and his Chicago are as colorful a vision as the background of Theodore Dreiser's *The Titan* and *The Financier*. But the second generation of Fields were the Americans abroad—not those of Mark Twain but those of Henry James: sensitive, complex, burdened individuals unable to cope spiritually with a heritage of wealth and property which they had little interest in expanding, perhaps some shame about its source and which had no purposive connection with their lives. Yet they could not dissolve this structure of property because the social system and the tradition which they inherited was too strong for them, and they would not dissolve it because without it they could not have their life abroad, their speedboats, their hunting preserves and their stables of polo ponies. Like some of the Henry James characters, Marshall Field the second was unable to act decisively at most points in his life; but he eventually desired and brought about his own death.

In the Marshall Field of *PM* and the *Chicago Sun* there is a combination of the driving initiative of the first generation merged with the sensitivity of the second. The outcome, however, is not so much a synthesis as it is a potent chemical weakened by dilution. The dabbler in liberal journalism reflects much of the dilettantism of the young Guggenheims, Vanderbilts and Morgans who study music, paint a little bit, write some occasional poetry, or become the camp-followers of other musicians, artists and writers. Perhaps the most interesting outcome of the book, in fact, is its unintended portrait of the effect of capitalism upon the fibre of its own rulers.

ABE VICTOR

AN AMERICAN DYNASTY, by John Tebbel. Doubleday, 1947.

In an interesting account of the Medill, McCormick and Patterson families, John Tebbel, a former newspaper man, traces the growth and influence of an American dynasty—the interlocking ownership of the *Chicago Tribune*, the *New York Daily News*, and the *Washington Herald*. The total worth of this empire is roughly estimated at between 75 and 100 million dollars; behind it is the Medill Trust with 1050 shares of between 25 and 40 thousand dollars each.

It was the colorful Joseph Medill, abolitionist, Republican and supporter of Lincoln, who took over the *Tribune* in 1855. In forty-four years of work with it, he built up the family fortune and established the pattern of personal journalism and autocratic rule of the newspaper which was handed down through marriage to Colonel McCormick and his Patterson cousins. The methods of news reporting—distortion of facts and ruthless attack on opponents to advance the personal and political interests of the publisher—involved Medill and his successors in more than one libel suit. The "hate objects" of the paper had a wide range, from labor and Communists to Henry Ford and inventor Cyrus McCormick, who had launched a drive against abolitionism.

Medill's abolitionist sympathy should, however, not be confused with that of the militant idealists whose names we tend to associate with the anti-slavery movement. The Negro slave's plight meant nothing to him and ideals of freedom less. His approach may be gathered from a letter to his brother explaining one reason for freeing the slaves: "In future wars black and yellow men will be freely used to fight. We will not be so careful about spilling the blood of n—rs." The John Browns fought for human liberty; the Medills supported them down to the last drop of ink in the name of acquiring new subjects for capitalist exploitation.

The politics of the *Tribune* and the *News* is still rooted in the tradition of the family and particularly in the philosophy of its founder. Medill's anti-Britishism, isolationism and fanatic hatred of organized labor are still there; time has changed only the language. Old man Medill did not feel the necessity for semantic concessions to the progressive spirit: "We shall permit no nation to abuse Mexico but ourselves," he once stated. In 1884 a *Tribune* editorial advocated that arsenic be put in the food of the unemployed—where today its columns would carry a pious denunciation of "doles" which harm the upstanding spirit of American workers. Tebbel notes that since 1920, despite continued business success, the dynasty's press has markedly declined in political and editorial influence; but its total circulation is still nearly five million.

Tebbel himself is primarily concerned with the problem of the freedom of the press and what it should mean, with the increasing monopolization of newspaper publishing and its danger to democracy. To the publishers a "free press" merely means no government restriction. (Answering the suit against the Associated Press monopoly McCormick ranted against any imposition of government controls and "censorship.") To the people, however, the primary respon-

sibility of the press is objective reporting and factual presentation. Tebbel finds almost all publishers guilty but the McCormick-Patterson press the worst offenders. With typical naivete, he offers his solution: the reform must come from the newspaper business itself; the publishers should get together to establish and enforce ethical standards. There is, unfortunately, nothing more here than the time-honored liberal plea that the tiger change his spots, in spite of his verbal recognition of the role of wealth and class interest in creating journalistic bias and falsification.

LUCY CLAYTON

Book Notes

LENIN AS PHILOSOPHER, by Anton Pannekoek (*New Essays*, N. Y., 1948, 80 pp., \$1.00).—Attacks Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* from a viewpoint based on the idealistic deviations in Joseph Dietzgen's philosophy. The latter is taken as equivalent to Marxism, without any discussion of this (to say the least) very moot point. Result is that Lenin is lambasted for being a consistent materialist. Two final chapters sing the Leninism-equals-Stalinism tune, this being somehow sucked out of the preceding philosophic disquisition. All

in all, quite a far-fetched attempt to base anti-Bolshevism on old Dietzgen.—H. D.

COOPERATIVE PALESTINE: THE STORY OF HISTADRUT, by Samuel Kurland, *Natl. Comm. for Labor Palestine*, 1947, 276 pp. \$3.00—A semi-official history of the Palestine trade union federation, by the Director of the Labor Palestine Information Bureau. Therefore emphasizes informational and factual background and description, with a minimum of interpretation and criticism—for example, it gives a complete whitewash to Histadrut's policy toward Arab labor. But useful in its wide coverage of the varied activities carried on by one of the most unusual of labor federations.—P. C.

CORRESPONDENCE

Books for Italy

DEAR COMRADES:

I received for the past two years your paper which has been very useful for me and my friends in studying the international working-class movement and particularly the struggle of classes in America.

I must note that the political situation in Italy has not been dealt with extensively, as you did for instance with Poland by Rudzinski's articles. . . . We shall be very grateful to you if you were able to send us at my address the following books, which are not available in Italy and which are of great interest for us:

Trotsky: *Third International After Lenin, First Five Years of the Communist International, The Revolution Betrayed*; Morrow: *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain*.

We need also a list of books on the Spanish Civil War, since there is absolutely nothing in Italy on this subject. As exchange we can send you Sereni's book on Southern Italy and Gramsci's book on historical materialism against the reactionary philosopher Croce. Gramsci as you know was the founder of the CP in Italy and its theoretician; his book is devoted solely to theoretical questions. . . . Last but not least, I must apologize for my English.

N. C. (Italy)

[Readers who can contribute any of the above-mentioned books toward the education of the new generation of Italian Marxists are urged to send them to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL for forwarding.—Ed.]

CZECHOSLOVAKIA—

(Continued from Page 77)

stops and called for the mobilization of the workers and peasants behind its demands for land reform.

After all governmental levers are given their due importance in the development of Stalinist power in Czechoslovakia, the party apparatus must still be viewed as its greatest asset. It was the mass character of the party, resulting in its control of the trade unions, that made its manipulation of governmental posts possible and effective. The party was the great coordinator and centralizer in the Stalinist drive for power. The hand of the party was everywhere. And everywhere everything was done in accordance with the party's tasks of the day.

On January 16, 1948, the General Secretary of the CP, Slansky, reported in *Rude Pravo* that the party membership stood at 1,329,450, excluding Slovakia. With a total population (i.e., including aged, children, etc.) of 14,500,000, nearly one out of every eight inhabitants belonged to the party, and two out of every five voters voted the CP ticket. During a membership drive last November 31, 657 recruits joined the party on a single day, Sunday, November 23. Of those who joined during 1947, 230,000 were described as "young people."

The CP conducted a vigorous "educational" campaign among its new members. It organized special courses of training for CP members of the NCs and for those in various other government jobs. It organized a Central Party School at which it gave six-month courses for party officials. It published a wide variety of books, pamphlets, magazines and other material to supply the various educational requirements of its membership, which in its bulk was composed of industrial workers.

Perutka's *Svobodne Noviny* on October 27 gave an analysis of the CP membership which was summarized in the November 6 issue of the news report, *East Europe*, as follows:

Its [the CP's] largest group consisted of once exploited and now resentful people, who entered the party as a means to right their wrongs. Most of them were not even aware of the Communist program, yet were "faithful adherents" of the party. It was for the benefit of such people that the party staged mass rallies and processions. The second group, the party's weak point, consisted of pre-war Communists, well trained politically and tempered in the struggle against the occupation. They formed a cadre of brave, cultured and honest people. The fourth group, numerically the smallest, but the most powerful, consisted of professional Communists, "whose ultimate aims were wholly shrouded in mystery." They maintained that their aim was the Communist "single-party state," and that the present regime was a temporary makeshift.

It would be futile to study the events in Czechoslovakia for the last two and a half years for the purpose of discovering the pattern of conquest which Stalinism will follow in Italy or France or some other Western country. There was already a considerable difference in the Czech pattern as compared with Rumania and other Eastern European states that were in the immediate shadow of the Russian army, and also as compared with Yugoslavia, which had its own distinctive features. In turn, the difference between Czechoslovakia (and all the eastern countries) on the one hand and France and Italy on the other is even greater.

However, the detailed study we have made of the Stalinist road to power in Czechoslovakia has great value in casting light upon the nature of Stalinism as a social, political and economic phenomenon. It is this which we must thoroughly comprehend. Few in the world do comprehend it today. The bourgeoisie remains baffled by it. The self-styled "official Trotskyists" are, perhaps, more in the dark than anybody. The views developed by the Workers Party come closer to a real insight than any thus far expressed, but remain to be fully developed. It is my aim to contribute to such a development in an article formulating the conclusions I have come to on the Czech events.

ERNEST ERBER