

Bulletin

OF THE WORKERS PARTY

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
THE CLASS CONCEPT SUBSTITUTED FOR POLITICS - By Leonard and Marco.....	1
THE INEVITABILITY OF SOCIALISM AND THE LAWS OF MOTION OF CAPITALIST SOCIETY - By Freddie Forest.....	16 15
AN UNDERSTANDABLE DILEMMA By E. Garrett and Max Shachtman.....	22
THE PALESTINE QUESTION - PHRASES AND SOLUTIONS - By L. Shields.....	24

VOL II NO II

March 27, 1947

10¢

1500

INTRODUCTION

The facts in the matter of the document of Comrades Leonard and Marco which follows are these:

Comrade Leonard submitted the article signed by himself and Comrade Marco to the Editor of the PARTY BULLETIN. The Editor of the BULLETIN informed him of the rule that articles for publication in the BULLETIN may not exceed 8 pages. This rule was adopted a long time ago in order to establish some sensible procedure for contributions to the BULLETIN. The Party obviously cannot undertake to publish articles regardless of their length simply because a contributor has decided by himself and for himself that his article must be 10 or 15 or 20 pages long. Naturally, this was never conceived as an absolutely iron-clad rule to which there are no exceptions. Provision was also made for such exceptions in the case of articles of exceptional importance, etc., decision in the matter being reserved by the Editor of the BULLETIN or in case of appeal, by the Secretariat or the Political Committee. The Editor, therefore, requested Comrade Leonard to reduce the article to an appropriate size, especially since Leonard, like any other Party member, has the full right to contribute additional articles on the same subject or any other subject in other BULLETINS. Leonard simply refused to conform to the rule. This is not surprising in view of the fact that Leonard has taken the position that he is obligated to abide by party rules or decisions only insofar as he happens to agree with them, and to act, even in public, in accordance with his own views in all other cases. Since we have not agreed to convert the Party into a loose federation of more or less sovereign tendencies, we could not share Comrade Leonard's attitude.

Comrades Leonard and Marco state in the preface to their article that "The three political discussion bulletins issued since the convention (nos. 18, 19, and 20) each contain a contribution of 10 pages or longer, in spite of a "warning" of a 4 page limit." The implication is clear. The editors request that the authors cut their contribution to within the 8 page limit was an act of political discrimination. (Reference to the "4 page limit", was obviously an error and was subsequently corrected, as the Comrades Leonard and Marco very well know.) Let us examine these three "exceptions" to the rule.

Vol 1 No 18 carried a 10 page article by Comrade Forest (Marxism and the Negro Question). This article was a PRE-CONVENTION discussion article submitted to the New International and referred to the BULLETIN due to lack of space in the N.I.

Vol 1 No 19 carried a 10 page RESOLUTION by Comrades Ed and Al Findley. (Resolution on the Jewish Question) The 8 page limit obviously does not refer to resolutions.

Vol 1 No 20 carried an 11 page article by Comrades Armstrong and Merrigan (In Defense of "Revisionism") There were two reasons why the editor of the Party BULLETIN did not request the authors to cut this. First, because it was submitted as a pre-convention discussion article to the British section. And second, because Comrades Armstrong and Merrigan happen to live in Ireland

As stated above, the 8 page rule is not an iron clad rule. Several articles of 9 and 10 pages have appeared in both the BULLETIN and the BUILDER. But in every case (except one submitted prior to the 8 page rule in the BUILDER--Article by Stan Grey on Recruitment--Party Builder Vol 1 No 4) these articles were longer and were returned to the author for cutting. In every case the authors cooperated and reduced the size of their article. Comrade Leonard, as in all other cases of articles which exceeded the page limit, was asked to reduce his article. Only Comrade Leonard refused.

Further, Comrade Leonard did not seem to find it necessary to go through the simple procedure of appealing the decision of the Editor to the Secretariat or the Political Committee. The question of his article, nevertheless, did arise in the Secretariat and later in the PC, where more than one discussion was devoted to this question. This naturally occasioned a further and, it might be added, regrettable delay in the appearance of the article. Nevertheless, the PC decided to publish the article as submitted, in spite of the fact that it did not conform in length to the rule indicated above, in order to remove any grounds for confusing the theoretical and political discussion of the question dealt with by Leonard-Marco with any discussion of inner organizational or administrative questions. Meanwhile, however, Comrade Leonard mimeographed the article himself, in a revised and still further lengthened form, and provided the National Office with copies for distribution in the Party. We are herewith sending it out as part of the regular Party Bulletin.

1502

1 -----

THE CLASS CONCEPT SUBSTITUTED FOR POLITICS

(Note: This article was submitted for the party bulletin Oct. 25. Six weeks later, we found on inquiry that it had been rejected because of its length. So we have put it out ourselves.)

The issue of the Party Builder which appeared shortly after our article was submitted had a lead statement entitled "The Builder Needs More Copy." The last Party Builder has an article of 11 pages. We were told that the limit of eight pages applied, however, only to the political discussion bulletin. The three political discussion bulletins issued since the convention (nos. 18, 19 and 20) each contain a contribution of ten pages or longer, in spite of a "warning" of a four-page limit in no. 19.)

A number of comrades have come to us and said, "I agree with many of your points and criticisms*, and you have some good ideas and suggestions, but I cannot agree with your theoretical generalizations, what you call 'unionitis'." They go on to say, "Granted that the party neglects political work outside the unions to some extent, even granted that perhaps the party directs too much of its attention to the unions, isn't a shift of emphasis all that is necessary to rectify the situation? Why do you make a principled question out of it?"

The answer is that 'unionitis' is only the manifestation of the real trouble, only the particular form. The root of the problem, the basic cause of the failure of the party to break out of its isolation, lies in a mistaken conception of the role of the revolutionary party. 'Unionitis' is not so much the cause as the effect, the symptom, the place where theoretical blunders have become impotence in practice. If, for example, the party were to concentrate 85% of its work and attention on veterans' work, veterans' organizations, contacts with veterans, discussions of how to function among veterans, etc., the disease would not be basically altered, because the party would still be conceiving the class struggle and itself onesidedly.

A worker becomes socialist, not in proportion to his militancy against the boss, but in proportion as he sees his problems and struggles as part of a larger problem and struggle. The party, as the intellectualizer and broadener of the scope of workers' thinking, functions as the intellectual center of society. Just as socialist understanding comes with the integration of ideas, with the perception of the relations of all classes in society, with the realization of the whole struggle against capitalism, on all its many fronts and with all its many weapons, so the revolutionary party must conduct its activities.

In its over-emphasis of the economic struggles the party has maneuvered itself into the position of maintaining that the working class itself (that is, by the magical power of its class existence and organization) is everything, that there is no "public" in a strike,

*Contained in our pre-convention discussion article "Political Party or Trade Union Party", our "Resolution On the Party", and the IKD's "The Crisis of Socialism and How to Overcome It."

and that the working class can administer industry or society competently. The party members who achieved the wearing of overalls during the war ought to recall what they saw rather than what they expected to see: the workers are cogs in the productive apparatus; without the trained sections of the middle class, society, and especially socialist society, would fall apart. And "trained sections" does not mean only engineers; it means farmers, school teachers, production managers, professors, artists, writers, intellectuals, scientists.

The party is the indispensable catalyst, the all-important third ingredient, by means of which the objective calamities of capitalism react upon the subjective feelings and ideas of the people to produce an organized movement for the renaissance of society. The party is the only instrument by which the working class can become competent, and the party must therefore attract competents to itself, and train the workers who come to the party so that they are competent in the theoretical and practical aspects of revolutionary work. Our party is no such instrument today. It is even further behind its historic tasks when we remember that it is much easier to take power than to hold it; i.e., the party must not only lead the revolution, but it must lead society afterwards.

Our party conceives of the revolutionary process as a parade, with the WP and the Reuther wing of the UAW at the head, then the rest of the CIO, then the rest of the working class, and bringing up the rear, the middle classes. The assumption is that the union workers see what good leaders the party members are in the unions--and the rest of the masses fall in behind. For it has been foretold by St. Marx in the Revelations of Capital, and as it has been prophesied, so it shall come to pass. You see, the workers must lead the revolution, so we will recruit them first, then the middle classes will fall in...

There will be those who cannot see anything in the above paragraphs except an implication that the party should orient toward the middle classes. They cannot see that organizing workers into the revolutionary party means changing them and, in a sense, making intellectuals out of them; that it is not a question of appealing to any class, as a class, but of appealing to the more progressive groups in society as political people, of winning the more politically advanced layers to us. Some comrades cannot understand that because the best elements, in general, will turn out to be the worker elements that one does not, on that account, make a blind jump into working class organizations. The problem of how to get the workers is not solved that simply. The same comrades cannot understand that the party by its very nature cannot be all-inclusive; that an organization is more importantly judged by its political composition than by its social composition; that the economic struggles and the political struggles are not mechanically connected in real life. (For example, we saw during the war that the only union which again and again was willing to go out on strike against the national defense program, against the government, against the entire screaming bourgeoisie and the rest of organized labor's leadership was--the backward United Mine Workers. Conversely, in the UAW there was launched the Reuther plan for making more tanks faster.)

The Cannonites carry the a-political conception of class to the nth degree: Their faction represents one class, and their "comrade" opponents' another. This kind of "analysis" is found in chapter 2 of

M.J. Olgin's "Trotskyism--Counter-Revolution in Disguise" ("The Social Basis of Trotskyism"). Our party never assimilated the methodological error involved: the mechanical derivation of politics from economic factors. We would not decide the character of a war directly from an economic analysis, but we decide our orientation and arenas of political work in this over-simplified way.

The consequence has been that the conception of the revolutionary party has been seriously vulgarized. Draper's re-issued "APC of Marxism" contains such things as "The revolutionary party...consists of...workers, who organize themselves (shades of Johnson's "self-mobilization of the masses")... and act as a directing staff...other... parties are incapable of carrying on a militant and consistent struggle against the bosses...because of their position in the productive process..." Erber's educational bulletin on "The Role of the Party" talks more about unions and workers than about the party. The list of "demands" in Labor Action was headed "WP Program for Organized Labor." And so on.

The party has come to equate class struggle with economic struggle. The whole political struggle against the bourgeois state, all the issues which can set masses in motion, are subordinated and except for "recognition" in Labor Action, ignored. In the name of "practical politics" the WP has become a-political; under the slogan of being realistic ("we have limited forces at our disposal") the WP has thrown political tactics out of the window and substituted instead a Johnsonite conception of "Capital" as a political guide. Historical perspective (the historical role of the proletariat) replaces an approach to the problems of today on their own level, and "practical considerations" lead to abstentionist sectarianism.

The party believes that it is taking sufficient cognizance of a political issue if it features some articles in Labor Action. Literary activity is a necessary part of most political struggles, but why doesn't the party content itself with this type of activity on trade union questions? The party believes that one must be in the unions and shops to do effective work, but for political issues it is content with a couple of "demands" in Labor Action. Why the dichotomy? Mustn't we be in the political arenas, participants in the political struggles and in the most promising and active organizations?

At all stages of the struggle it is necessary to build political capital. Only a party of many thousands can go into the trade unions as a concentration; for us it is necessary to function, work and gain a reputation as a party; our two or ten people in a factory must be members of the party that did this or is doing that. Then our members in the unions will gain a real hearing and following: "These guys are connected with the Workers Party. That's the party that held the demonstration on X; is active in Y organization; predicted that Z would happen...exposed, rallied, said, did."

We will never be able to fight the Stalinist machines as isolated members of an unknown party. (Our members have forgotten the days when we used to joust Stalinists out, infiltrate organizations they controlled, bait them politically, and beat them so often that they wrote into their constitution "No personal or political relations with Trotskyites...") It is the party, its functioning, its press, its reputation, that will give us the basis for going into the unions and forming our own machines. Today the only way our people get influence in the unions is as unionists (Erber remarked in reporting on his tour, that

the Detroit branch is "in a stalemate" and what it needs to break the stalemate is "A new strike wave." Isn't this tail-ending the masses?)

We have been putting the cart before the horse. First, we hope to build a party, then we will function as a party. First, we will work on contacts, then we will try to form, say, a pricing committee with them. The party bulletins endlessly repeat the stupid advice: "We must ask people to join. Our comrades do not ask people to join but wait for the contact to suggest joining." Anyone who has recruited to the party as a result of political work (that is, activity where party members and non-party members have functioned together around some political issue or issues) knows that recruiting is not primarily an organizational problem, and certainly not a problem in etiquette.

In Bayonne, where a branch of minorityite SWP members functions, four members organized a housewives' committee. They got: two mass demonstrations supported by three unions and one veterans' organization; front-page publicity in the newspapers, and real roots and contacts. Of course, this was only a flash in the pan; the activity of one branch cannot substitute for the all-inclusive activity that a party should carry out. But it ought to suggest that we are not going to link our party with the political masses until we engage in serious, bold, and varied political work. And that means revising our conception of what the party should be.

----- SOME CRITICISMS

1) "You place too much emphasis on leading the masses. The party's continued isolation is due to the discouraging world developments."

If the party cannot grow as long as the working class is not winning victories, then the party is simply the tail-end of the working class movement. The party must take the initiative in rallying the masses; the defeats of the last quarter of a century are more a consequence of the failure of leadership than a cause of the non-existence of such leadership. There has been no shortage of revolutionary situations during the last 20 years; the shortage has been in revolutionary parties that knew how to place themselves at the head of the mass movements.

Our party is caught in a vicious, closed circle: the failings of the Fourth are due to the working class defeats, but the working class defeats are due to the failure of the Fourth to lead. To break out of this circle there is needed, desperately needed, the kind of a party that will be in a position to set the date for the revolution (not predict, but set). Those comrades who talk glibly of mass revolutionary parties need to "understand that without the 'dozen' of tried and talented leaders....no class in modern society is capable of conducting a determined struggle." Those comrades who spread the myth that the Bolsheviks owed their success to their "practical" slogans (like "Peace, Land, and Bread") and slide over the fact that they had painstakingly built up a socialist working class do not understand that "leadership" means leading at all stages of all struggles. The Bolsheviks could lead on big questions because they had led on small ones; they could make proper use of "practical" slogans because they made proper use of "impractical" ones (like their war-time slogans). What does our party lead today?

2) In 1935-39 the American Trotskyist movement was an esoteric, romantic sect contemplating its own navel. (Many comrades think this means that we were a propaganda group.) Then came the war, the prognosis that we were in a pre-revolutionary situation and the decision to "proletarianize". (One comrade remarked, "It is biologically impossible.") We are asked by our critics, "Wasn't this a step forward, a looking outward, an end to our sectarianism?"

All that was accomplished was that for a time we stopped stewing in our own juice and started drowning among the masses. Paradoxically, the more we concentrated on the unions, the less able we were to politicalize our work in the unions. This was to be expected, not because inadequate forces were left to carry on political activity outside the unions, but because the party went to the workers in general, a-politically, and had therefore to concentrate its efforts on assimilation, on trade union politics. The more we tried to "proletarianize" ourselves, the more we came to regard the revolutionary party, not as leading, but as advising political struggles. The concept of the party as advisors was unchanged from the "closed sect" days: the masses were going to come to us then because our ideas were better than anyone else's. All we did was substitute the minutiae of union faction fights for literary criticisms.

3) "How can the party have unionitis when less than one-third of our members are in the unions?"

The party's failure to do anything with its members who are not in unions (Erber spoke of "branches on wheels") is not due to carelessness, but to the party's approach to political work. For example, take the Coolidge position on the negro question. It asserts that the Negro cannot hope to emancipate himself except in alliance with the white working class. This is true historically; the struggle of the Negroes for democratic rights is doomed if it remains limited to Negro organizations. But the Coolidge position goes on to conclude, both in theory and in practice, that today we should concentrate all our efforts for Negro rights in the unions. This means, and has meant for the past few years, that the party has looked to the unions instead of to itself as the integrator of political struggles, and that the party has, in practice, turned its back on Negro organizations and serious political work among the Negroes. (Individual contacting, or getting LA subs in a Negro project is not the same thing.) The party has failed to perceive that the struggle of the Negroes in their own behalf is the pre-requisite for drawing white workers into the struggle.

The story repeats itself with every political issue and arena, and does not depend upon how many comrades hold union cards, or will succeed in getting factory jobs in the next year. We do not let the historical truth that the Jews cannot solve their problem under capitalism deter us from writing in our program the slogan for free immigration to Palestine. But because we do not understand that this slogan although "historically utopian" can galvanize the working class into action (that is, the Jews today can, to a certain extent, lead the workers) the only place we are liable to use the slogan is in the unions. One could go through the entire transitional program and show, on issue after issue where we "raise" correct slogans, how unionitis as a method of thinking prevents the party from "making politics."

Even those comrades who are in the unions are hamstrung. The concept of "getting roots" has prevented their taking the lead on such issues as prices, or our slogan of nationalization of the meat industry. This article and its predecessors is not an objection to sending comrades into unions, but a challenge to the reasons why we send them there. Given the correct reasons, perspective, and orientation, our union work would prosper (as it has not for the past six years) along with the other work with which it would be integrated.

4) "Doesn't your position boil down to advocating election campaigns and street corner meetings?"

We are talking of a different method of building the revolutionary party, not doorbell ringing or soap-box oratory. The party has lost the road, and we are proposing a new slant on how to root its program in the masses. We advocate, not Burnham's 1940 principle of a "campaign party," but an all-sided party. Not only unions, but any other one, or two arenas of work are too narrow for socialist activity.

Our position is not limited to different organizational and agitational tactics; it includes propaganda also. This means, not a perpetual chewing of the Marxist Bibles a la Johnson, but such questions as vocational versus academic education (The Dewey-Hutchins controversy, for example); the capitalist versus the socialist conception of penology; the importance of democratic rights in the conception of historical progress; some real thinking in answering the theories of the Hooks, Eastmans, Burnhams, Koestlers, Druckers, and Macdonalds; the extension of Marxist economic theory; a critique of psycho-analysis. If the revolutionary party hopes to lead the masses it must better the efforts of the bourgeoisie in all spheres, and especially in all intellectual spheres. Capitalist decline has increased the number, the weight and the urgency of the party's tasks; in carrying them out the party will be readying itself in the only possible way for the socialist reorganization of society.

ALL INCLUSIVE PARTY--WITH CADRE

In a trade union or other mass organization, there are many people who are on the right side for the wrong reasons. It would be sectarian to insist that everything be right in everyone's mind; organizations must seek to be inclusive.

It is otherwise with the Marxist party. The party is the "idea-giver" of society; the party bears a different type of relationship to the prevailing ideologies from that of any other organization. We are not just another political party, not just another collection of ideas, not just another band of would-be leaders. The party cannot be all-inclusive in the same sense as a trade-union; it cannot be content with "willingness to function loyally toward commonly accepted goals." Lenin split the Russian party in 1903 on this question. It proved to be an historically significant question, but the Marxist movement has not assimilated the lesson.

Nevertheless, the party must, in Shachtman's phrase "preserve inconsistency." It is not simply a question of democratic procedures, or that "where everyone thinks the same, nobody thinks very much." It is a question of the method by which the party defends and changes its ideas, trains its members, ensures its ideological growth, and prepares itself for coming to power. Paradoxically, the party must

preserve inconsistency by fighting against inconsistency. Because there will never be a party whose members have all thought out their positions clearly to the end, and all of whom agree, the party can never achieve complete ideological homogeneity. On the other hand, it is only by constantly trying to force every tendency and opinion in the party to push itself to its logical conclusion that the party will be able to develop itself in a healthy way.

Just what does it mean to make a minority in the party draw all the conclusions from their position? Won't that drive every opposition and minority out of the party? Not at all. The only ones it will drive out will be those that should go out. A healthy party does not need to rely primarily on organizational measures or on a sectarian list of "basic propositions" (checking off how many the heretic has called into question) to purge itself; the sheep and the goats separate themselves.

No one who supports the concept of an all-inclusive party can answer the question: "How can the party preserve inconsistency?" They cannot answer because they are afraid that to fight properly against such a minority as the Johnsonites would drive some of the Johnsonites out of the party. And why does this prospect terrify them? Because we are so small. We cannot afford such a loss. Later perhaps, we will try to act like a Bolshevik party, but now we must forget the difference between the Marxist party and a mass organization. (If the party really believed that it was seriously hampered by "inadequate forces," it would concentrate, not colonize, its forces so that it could function somewhere with adequate forces.)

We called Trotsky a "shame-faced defensist" when he did not declare publicly for the victory of the Red Army in 1940. We pointed out what his position implied and dared him to take his own position seriously. Basically, that is the method of attacking a political opponent. Ably and loyally done, everyone learns from it. The majority and minority must expect each other to have the courage of their own convictions (if for no other reason, because the revolutionary party and all the tendencies within it seek to lead the masses.)

A group faced with the horrible consequences of their position can (a) modify their position and move toward their attackers' position; (b) stop dead in their theoretical tracks; or (c) accept the implications and deepen their error. The last alternative carries the risk of splitting the party, but he who forgoes attacking an opponent out of fear of forcing a split prefers unity to clarity--and "prestige politics" to democracy.

There are those in the party who will agree with the above paragraphs as far as they apply to the CP-SP dispute, or the Labor Party question. But what about the Johnsonites? The Johnsonites claimed to be the Bolshevik tendency in the party, yet they dissolved their faction, and turned the working class over to the Menshevik wing. Instead of winning back the better elements among the Johnsonites, the majority prefers to "let sleeping dogs lie." They hope, like liberals, to keep peace by "not stirring up trouble." By letting Johnson keep his "caucus" secret, the majority only postpones the struggle and lowers the level of the party.

Why doesn't the majority say: "Your arguments indicate that you believe you could attract the masses with your propaganda. Why don't you put out your own organ? If your ideas are effective, the movement will gain; if you expose yourself as a windbag--the movement will gain also." The majority is afraid to say this, especially as it knows that a Johnsonite organ would disgrace the movement. But isn't this just a backhanded way of saying that the Johnsonites are a tendency that should not be in the party? How can the party (on a permanent basis, not just in regard to an occasional political bender of one or two comrades) insist on keeping within its ranks a tendency it would not allow to "disgrace the movement?" How can we believe that we must keep the Johnsonite tendency in the party, permanently, at the same time that we believe that if they won a majority we would split and leave them?

Johnson's doctrine of pre-revolutionary situations clearly implies Zinoviev's theory of the offensive, but the majority does not believe in "pushing" Johnson. The very process of production has matured revolutionary consciousness among the workers. All that is needed to shake up the workers, to start the ball rolling, is for the party to sound the call to action, put up a few barricades, or maybe plant a little dynamite under some public building. The workers aren't in the streets today, right now, only because our party doesn't offer to lead them to socialism. So--the party must proclaim its revolutionary intentions in the strongest and most immediate fashion; the workers will see that the revolution is "on" and will swarm to us.

The majority's attitude toward Johnsonism has not kept the Johnsonites from developing new and deeper differences at every turn, but it has allowed Johnson to take the offensive in every discussion, to mark out the area of the discussions and the level on which they will be held. But the Johnsonites have been denied the right of proportional representation on the National Committee, which is only a dishonest way of saying that the Johnsonites do not belong in the party. If there is a qualitative difference between the Johnsonite minority and other minorities in the party, what is this difference except incompatibility in the so-called all-inclusive party? If we believe in making all opponents bear full responsibility for what they say and do, we must insist that the minority accept its share of leadership in the party.

The concept of an all-inclusive party implies that minorities are to be regarded as embodying purely platonic differences, to be aired at stated intervals. A minority is supposed to be "loyal", that is, suppress any differences that might rupture the party. The content of the dispute is regarded as the filling of a pie inside the all-inclusive crust, or inside an internal bulletin. There has resulted an emphasis on discipline, a belief that loyalty to the party stands higher than loyalty to one's own ideas. This is the road to totalitarianism.

The party has come to act as if democracy consisted in tolerating minority views ("We include 'em all") rather than in insisting that the minority try to take over the leadership of the party. Democracy implies searching for new ideas and criticisms, not merely providing an official channel for their expression. The low theoretical level of the party and the failure of the party to develop new cadre material are ominous signs.

In 1940 the American Trotskyist movement split into two sections of nearly equal size. Counting the YPSL, we had a slight majority. In the years since the split the SWP, in spite of a high turnover about which they do not speak, has grown faster than the WP. Today it has a functioning ratio to the WP of nearly 3 to 1. In addition the SWP is "rooted" in the unions, and the end of the war did not dislodge them as it did us. These things have a profound effect on a party like ours.

The WP and the SWP are moving in the same direction. There exists within our party already a group who tend strongly to the SWP's way of thinking even on the theoretical questions in dispute. It is already agreed by the entire leadership that we and the Cannonites can live together in one party. Moreover, Shachtman and Erber and others have repeatedly referred to our "all-inclusive" type of party as "an experiment. If the experiment continues to lead nowhere, if our party continues to stand still, and if the SWP should seem to be growing, there are references already among some comrades to a "new French turn" (into an SWP much larger than the WP).

The WP has been unable to make a historical evaluation of the Cannonite tendency, to draw a real political balance sheet between them and us. Bureaucratism does not grow because Cannon is a mean man; nor can we use as a formula: "they are bureaucratic, that's why they make political mistakes." The devil theory of bureaucratism is as unsatisfactory as the devil theory of war (wars are caused by man's pugnaciousness and the greeds of nations, or the devil theory of capitalism (the bosses exploit the workers because they are selfish and grasping). If bureaucratism is serious and deep-rooted, it must correspond to the type of work the party is doing and not doing. The way to analyze bureaucratism, or to fight it, is to attack what it does wrong; that is, the weaknesses and failings in the party's work. A corollary is: a party that follows a wrong political line, that remains isolated or snarled up in reactionary politics, will become bureaucratic. Democracy is not simply a question of vigilance it is a question of correct politics. The WP should give some thought to why Cannon has had such an easy time capturing the various sections of the Fourth International. The WP must answer the question: Where are the Cannonites headed?

Perhaps Naville is a forerunner. Naville, a former Cannonite leader of the French section, has written a book telling the masses of Europe to welcome the Red Army. The Stalinist bookstores sell this book. The prospect of the WP going back to such a swamp in hope of "hitching up with a going concern" is not pleasant. It is too early to say yet whether a section of the SWP will make a rapprochement with Stalinism, but it is not too early to say that the SWP grows on the same historical basis as the Communist Party.

This does not mean that the WP could not unite with the SWP and convert it, but it does assume that the WP would have to have a clear political orientation if it is to defeat the Cannonite tendency politically. The maneuveristic conceptions of Shachtman, Goldman and Cannon, as displayed during the unity negotiations, will not suffice. In the opinion of the authors of this article, the WP will not find any consistent fundamental position between the SWP and the IKD; the WP will either capitulate to Cannonism (which can happen without organizational unity) or choose the line of "The Crisis of Socialism."

The split and collapse of the Fourth International is a consequence of the failure of the Fourth to extend its influence, reach political maturity, or link itself up with the mass movements. Our explanation of that failure is given in the articles referred to in the footnote on the first page of this article, and in this article. These same ideas are dealt with also in the last chapter of Lenin's "Left-wing Communism" and in Walter Held's article in Fourth International of December, 1942, and January, titled "Why the German Revolution Failed."

The SWP and the WP are founded, and foundered, on the same rock. The SWP is worse off; but precisely because they have more nearly completely given up the concept and practice of a Leninist party, they are not hell back as much as we, who are half on and half off. A consistent line, even when wrong, is often more effective than a muddled one. Even so, it is extremely doubtful that the Cannonites will ever become a real force in America.*

The Cannonite leadership is bureaucratic for the usual reason-- it is politically helpless. (Of course, the interaction works both ways, but the two directions are not equally important.) Their theory that Russia is still a workers' state is not so much the source of their helplessness as an outgrowth of it. They believe in the "worker formula": Russia is a big trade union, the UAW is a smaller trade union, the party is a group of trade unionists, etc. The Cannonites, even sicker than we are with unionitis, have converted their party into a trade union party, and their thinking follows the same lines. They are more consistent than we are; they really set out to "get roots" in unions, and we have seen the cowardly results in more than one situation. Similarly, the automatic dependence of political struggles upon economic ("Class") factors has led them into white-washing the Stalinists because Russia has nationalized property. Cannon can build a party, perhaps, but he cannot build a Marxist party. The SWP is an obstacle to a truly revolutionary party; historically, it is reactionary. Politics is a tough racket; if you are 90% right, you are wrong. Just as a single discord can ruin a harmony, or one mistaken digit makes the whole calculation useless, so in the SWP a formally correct set of slogans only serve to cover up a monolithic, dead-end organization.

Two tendencies are developing in our party. One tends today to accept the present state of affairs. This implies the idea that the party will, and should, remain tiny and isolated until the week before the revolution. The members of the Socialist Labor Party have reconciled themselves in this way. Our resolutions used to speak of recruiting masses; now, without any political motivation for the change, the resolutions speak "realistically" of "ones and twos."

This is the same tendency that talks forever of advertising the name of the party, as though politics were like selling a brand of toothpaste. Our party has held two "mass" meetings in the last six months: (1) the Goldmanites coming over to the WP, and (2) the sixth anniversary of Trotsky's death. What kind of "practical" politics is * Note added after SWP convention: The proletarianization policy is proving itself sterile in practice. In spite of their 14 union local presidents, the SWP has had to curtail its staff of functionaries, cut the Militant to 6 pages, and Fourth International to 16 pages.

behind this "tradition"? Meetings of this kind, given our isolation from political currents, indicate that the WP cadre thinks like a hopeless sect.

The same cynics attack the IKD faction as believing in a "magic formula." They have given up the belief that our party can break out of its isolation, so they regard as foolishly optimistic any position which claims that a correct party orientation would have profound results. But the cynicism cannot find solace forever in the sweet lemon theory "we like things just as they are; if we had it to do over again, we'd do it the same way." The cynics may reach the conclusion that our "experimental" party is not working out too well, and that "the obvious thing to do" is unify with the SWP. This is capitulation to Cannonism.

Not all the cynics will embrace Cannonism. There is a turnover in our membership, a dropping out of the movement by those cynics who prefer acknowledging "tiredness" to new forms of cynicism. Every frank recognition of failure carries the danger of demoralization, the black prospect of making a fresh beginning. And nothing less than a thorough going "new turn" is required.

There is another tendency developing in our party--the IKD faction. More and more comrades are coming to see that the party's failures, and the failures of the Fourth, have a systematic cause. They are looking for the keys to the problems that have stymied the movement, and they are finding themselves in agreement with the IKD'ers. At the very least, they are looking and discussing, rather than excusing and giving each other "pop-talks." The first step in scientific inquiry is to clearly pose the problem. You cannot discuss alternative solutions with a person who sees nothing to be solved.

APPENDIX

The first post-war convention of the party was unprecedentedly long (5 days), and the pre-convention discussion was unprecedentedly short (90 days). The convention was a dreary affair which decided nothing, and the pre-convention period was featured by NC resolutions appearing towards the end of the discussion, and Johnsonites concentrating the discussion around themselves.

Since the convention, the party has been going all out for "efficiency." New rules for application for membership; new book-keeping on dues; lists; "break-downs"; a long "minutes of the convention" instead of a meaningful report on what transpired; weekly "letters" to the membership; arithmetical "balance sheets"; mimeographed forms to be filled out by members who go contacting (what an insult to our members!), and printed forms of "notification of removal from membership rolls." What is to be expected of our party in power if already it is fouling itself with red-tape and "chicken?" The party, according to the first Party Builder, has eight national committees and departments in addition to the National Committee itself, and each of them is ^{already} announcing that it will prove its right to existence by issuing directives.

Another unhappy aspect of the new spirit of getting-things-done-while-standing-in-one-place that has come over our leadership is the

new emphasis on discipline. In the traditional fashion of bureaucracy everywhere, the problem of morale is being met by insistence on obedience. The basic upon which the party rests, the ideology that is our reason for being and doing, are put into the background; instead, comrades who miss assignments are threatened with "charges." Those who aren't up on dues, or who have let their feelings be betrayed by missing meetings are told, "We have rules, and to hold the party together we must enforce them." As always with bureaucracy, the technicalities come to the fore, the procedural questions drown the political questions. Party growth and functioning and morale are political questions, but the leadership does not know the answers, so we are being treated to the only answer they do know: "Tighten up the organization."

Shachtman is fond of comparing the failure of our party to ^{now} since its inception to the decline of the Bolsheviks from 1906 to 1910. The Bolsheviks, Shachtman said at the New York meeting on the state of the party, "lost thousands." Shachtman forgets that the Bolsheviks had thousands to lose because of the leading role they played in the Revolution of 1905. What revolutionary movement have we led that is now in decline after a defeat? Does an analysis of the American scene justify the use of the "objective situation" as an excuse for our failure to extend our influence? The resolutions passed at every convention assert that the situation is favorable for the party making real strides, and anyone with half a political eye can see that today significant sections of the population are restlessly searching for leadership and clarity, and have been for some time. Gates and some of the other leaders escape this difficulty by being a little more vague than Shachtman: They speak of the ups and downs of the party the way Republicans speak of the business cycle. "There are periods of growth, and there are periods of stagnation. No one should be alarmed. There has always been a period of growth after a period of stagnation."

The end of the war precipitated a difficult situation in our party. Our comrades were thrown out of industry almost at once; the veterans came back to a party even more isolated than the one they left. The question arises: Why did we lose our roots so completely and so quickly? It is not merely, or primarily, a matter of our people not having job seniority, but of what happened to our political work, the roots we put down among the workers. We lost all our contacts; with the collapse of our industrial fractions, the branches collapsed also. The blame for this cannot be passed off onto the bourgeoisie and the inconsiderate way they ended their war; the blame lies with the kind of roots the party obtained with its orientation. If we had made a political dent in the factories, the people we had affected would not have become inaccessible to us when we lost our jobs, and the war years would not have been so fruitless for us.

The party tried a mayoralty campaign, a sub drive, a fund drive and a convention. Now it is trying a half-hearted exploration of veteran and Negro organizations, a Congressional election campaign in New York City, an eight-page Labor Action, and an increased amount of internal mimeographed organizational material. This is the history of the party since the end of the war.

THE NYC ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The current election campaign in New York is conceived of as an interruption of party political work. All the errors of the miserable

mayorality campaign are being repeated. The leadership simply cannot understand the difference between a political campaign and an organizational campaign, that the former is aimed at involving outside people while the latter is simply a technical affair of times, places and arrangements for leaflet distribution or loud speakers.

The City Committee made no effort to involve any of the masses the party wants to lead. In getting signatures on the petitions, it never occurred to them to involve outsiders. (In Buffalo, some years ago, two party members ran an entire election campaign. The Negroes who had been involved politically, i.e., around issues on which the party was active, although none of them were then members of the party, got the signatures on petitions.)

The rest of the campaign has been conceived in the same spirit. Pointing the campaign toward the workers, getting invited to speak before organizations, bringing up proposals for debates in unions or veterans' and Negro organizations, agitating around "laws we will introduce if we are elected." studying the record of the incumbents and exposing them, organizing neighborhood committees on prices and other issues, studying the neighborhoods and showing a full knowledge of employment and housing statistics in the area--these and many other proposals were suggested in vain. The party appears before the people as just another radical sect, functioning in the same way as the bourgeois parties and taking advantage of the tribunal provided by the bourgeois election campaigns to run off at the mouth before disappearing into obscurity again. (Many people, when asked to sign the petitions, answered: "But I've never heard of him or his party; how do I know what kind of a party it is?" Or, "Where is he the rest of the year?")

The party cannot, by such tactics, expect to be taken seriously by the people, to be chosen as an alternative to the other parties. The fact is that the party itself does not take seriously what it says in electioneering. To say that we have not made an impressive showing even compared to the bourgeois parties (with whom there is mass disgust) is understating. We have hardly shown ourselves at all. The only thing that got McKinney to speak in Harlem more than two weeks before election day was--mind you, with a dozen "hot" issues on all sides-- a protest meeting against his being kept off the ballot, which was attended by as many outsiders as you might expect. Shachman and McKinney have not appeared five times before "their" electorate; even street meetings without our candidates have been few and snarled up by poor arrangements for loud speakers.

Political ingenuity was conspicuous by its absence. "Reaching the workers" is not considered a political question but simply a matter of passing out leaflets or shouting a speech that begins, "Our party's program..." (To make matters worse, the leaflets flamed with such original slogans as "Smash the Profiteers" or "Break the Lynch System.")

Five minutes of serious thought about the housing situation would bring forth such suggestions as: the real solution lies in filling in and building up the ten square miles of Jersey marsh which could be made only 15 minutes from Times Square by subway. Or, a leaflet pointing out the similarity between the meat shortage

and the shortage in building materials, and advocating as an answer to the sit-down strike of industry, governmental "competition" or nationalization. We could show our seriousness on the discrimination question in Harlem by organizing a committee around, say, a proposed law to forbid refusal of dwelling space on account of race. We might have gone through every apartment in some slum block and publicized the results, with pictures; we might have even been able to organize a housing committee in this way. We could have attacked the Republicans and Democrats by playing up how they each repudiate their own Tafts, Hoovers, Bilbos and Rankins. We could have exploited the way the ALP withheld its support from Democrats who had patronage disagreements with Marcantonio. And so on and on.

Our leadership chose, instead, to continue Red Sundays (in spite of M. Slater's unanswerable pre-convention article "On Sub Drives"). They chose to answer all suggestions with "we haven't the forces" at the same time ~~they~~ ^{that} steadfastly refused to amalgamate the branches' activities into the two election areas. This article is written before election day, so we do not know yet how many votes will fall into our hopper. But we do know that the election campaign has failed to raise the party's stature in the eyes of the people.

Joe Leonard
Chet Marco

THE INEVITABILITY OF SOCIALISM
AND THE LAWS OF MOTION OF CAPITALIST SOCIETY

A Reply to Comrade Gates

By F. Forest

I. The Dialectical Method

Com. Gates has found it necessary to take issue with the final section of my Outline of Capital, entitled the "Law of Motion of Capitalist Society." By the time he reaches the conclusion of his criticism, he declaims:

"It would be an exceedingly sad day for our movement, if its younger, inexperienced, and not-yet educated elements, were to be educated with this kind of 'historical materialism', and in the spirit which gives rise to it."

What, may I ask, is the "spirit" which engenders my allegedly distorted view of historical materialism? Com. Gates's zeal to save the youth and the "not-yet-educated elements" in the party from "a foolish error which is exactly contrary to Marxian dialectical thought and method" is commendable, but isn't he "putting it on rather thick"? In any case, since I fail to understand all the implications in Com. Gates's reference to the "spirit" which has caused me to present Marxism as Hegelianism, I shall proceed to handle more tangible things.

I wrote: "It is because Marx based himself on the inevitability of socialism that he could discern the law of motion of capitalist society, the inevitability of its collapse."

I had added, further, that it was this concept of the inevitability of socialism that gave Capital its profundity, force and direction. Since Com. Gates does not quote this final statement that followed the above quotation, I do not know his view of it. But Com. Gates leaves no doubt at all that he considers the above quotation "pure idealism," from which would flow the conclusion that, had Marx not based himself on the concept of the inevitability of socialism, he would have been unable to perceive the inevitability of capitalist collapse. "Yet, actually," concluded Gates, "it was because Marx discerned 'the law of motion of capitalist society, the inevitability of its collapse,' that he was able to affirm the 'inevitability' of socialism."

Reread the above statement and you will see that what is involved here is nothing less than the whole method of dialectical materialism. Com. Gates's interpretation of the method of historical materialism transforms dialectics into the sheerest kind of empiricism. He evidently thinks that one is scientific if one discerns, and then predicts; the discernment arises out of contemplation over assembled data.

Unfortunately, using a similar point of departure, the bourgeois and petty bourgeois critics of Marx proved, to their own satisfaction, that Capital is an unscientific work because Marx had believed in socialism long before he gathered data about the economic organism of

capitalism. Revolutionary marxism, on the other hand, asserted that had Marx not based himself on the inevitability of socialism, he could not have discerned the law of capitalist collapse; he would have been unable to get out of the web of capitalist phenomena to perceive its contradictory essence. In this age of atom-smashing, must we really go back to a conception of science which is so narrow as to bury the dialectic in the debris of pragmatism?

Let me refresh Com. Gates's memory with Rosa Luxemburg's revolutionary defense of the historic concept of the inevitability of socialism as a prerequisite to a scientific analysis of capitalism:

"What precisely was the key which enabled Marx to open the door to the secrets of capitalist phenomena and solve, as if in play, the problems that were not even suspected by the greatest minds of classic bourgeois political economy?" asked Luxemburg in her Reform or Revolution. "It was his conception of capitalist economy as an historic phenomenon--not merely in the sense recognized in the best of cases by the classic economists, that is, when it concerns the feudal past of capitalism--but also in so far as it concerns the socialist future of the world," she answered, and proceeded further to explain: "The secret of Marx's theory of value, of his analysis of the problem of money, of his theory of capital, of the theory of the rate of profit, and consequently of the entire existing economic system, is found in the transitory character of capitalist economy, the inevitability of its collapse, leading--and this is only another aspect of the same phenomenon--to socialism. It is only because Marx looked at capitalism from the socialist's viewpoint, that is, from the historic viewpoint, that he was enabled to decipher the hieroglyphics of capitalist economy. And it is precisely because he took the socialist viewpoint as a point of departure for his analysis of bourgeois society, that he was in the position to give a scientific base to the socialist movement." (Ibid, p. 34, my emphasis, ff)

It is impossible that a leader of our movement should be unaware of this classic statement of the concept of the inevitability of socialism as the only possible basis for scientific socialism. Why, then, did Com. Gates ignore it? Is he ready to class this among the "silly things" that have been said on the subject of inevitability? Was Luxemburg one of the "early socialist writers and theoreticians (who) dealt with this question in a false way, more precisely, in an idealistic manner, treating socialism as though its realization was automatic."? Surely, the question of "automaticity" appears nowhere in my outline. Against whom is Com. Gates arguing? More important still, what is he arguing against? Com. Gates's key to knowledge is a key that fits many locks, but opens few doors, and least of all the door to the Marxian dialectical method.

Com. Gates appears much agitated and I do not doubt his anxiety to save "the inexperienced" from the "pure idealism", if not sheep mysticism, of Forest's views. But, in his desire to accomplish his aim, he has freed the "not-yet-educated" from so many unspecified "silly things" about the inevitability of socialism, that he has left the door wide open to one philosophic method, the method of unadulterated American pragmatism. Alas, he himself has walked into that open door both in the matter of the inevitability of socialism as in the analysis of the law of motion of capitalist society, his other criticism of my outline.

II. The Single Capitalist Society vs. The Single World Trust

1. The Outline of Capital and the Russian Question

Com. Gates violently opposes the following paragraph in my outline:

"The centralization of the means of production ends, first, in trustification, and, ultimately, in statification...This dialectical development is accompanied by centralization reaching a point where the entire social capital is united, either in the hands of one single capitalist, or in those of a single corporation."

Com. Gates accuses me of combining "a visible fact about capitalist development (centralization of means of production and trustification)...with a possible development, a prognosis made by Marx in recognition of a tendency." I have thus made it "appear that Marx unconditionally predicted the realization of the tendency...Forest has amputated Marx's thought to serve her own ends." May I ask: what ends?

To answer that, Com. Gates descends from his lofty realm of unconscious spirit. But he descends not upon the ground upon which the dispute is being held --my Outline of Capital--but charges boldly into territories uncharted there.

For the benefit of the readers who may be unaware that Com. Gates has by now entirely departed from the Outline, and who may be further mystified about the abstract persons in whose hands a passage from Engels' Anti-Duhring "has been mutilated, misrepresented and misinterpreted", let me hurry to inform them that the passage quoted by Gates has indeed been used by me--not, it is true, in the Outline, but in my articles on Russia (See N.I., Jan. 1947). Now, place the F. Forest of Nature of the Russian Economy next to the F. Forest of the Outline, and you will see that, to serve my "own ends", I have not only "mutilated" Marx's statement that the extreme development of the law of centralization is reached when the entire social capital is concentrated in the hands of "one single capitalist", but have likewise mutilated Engels who had written that statification of the means of production "does not deprive the productive forces of their character of capital." And all this, dear readers, I (pardon me, the unnamed persons) did "for the sole purpose of proving that capitalism exists in Russia today."

Finally the cat is out of the bag, What is bothering Com. Gates is not my Outline, but my Russian position. If he wishes to discuss the Russian question, why not say so? For six years I have been writing that Russia is a state capitalist society, without too much response from Com. Gates. If he now wishes to engage in such a discussion, I am ready as I always have been. But I shall strongly resist bringing this dispute into an educational Outline of Marx's Capital.

"I am opposed," argues Com. Gates, to presenting theory in such a way that the reader is forced to accept implications which are contrary to the spirit of Marxist inquiry and to party policy as well." (My emphasis, ff)

What is the party policy on the question? I was unaware of any Party Resolution on the question of Marx's theory of capitalist production. I am aware of a Party Resolution on the question that Russia is a new social order, "bureaucratic collectivism." But I shall leave the question of party policy till later, and now limit myself to a defense of my Outline. Far from violating "the spirit of Marxist inquiry," my outline is an attempt at popularizing Marx's monumental work. It is the first venture of its kind in the Trotskyist movement. Com. Gates evidently does not think highly of this venture. Good.* But let us come to grips with the problem involved, and not hide behind the shield, who correctly represents the party policy, and who does not.

2. The Problem at Stake

Before his death in 1883 Marx was working on a new German edition of Capital, in which he was incorporating the changes he had introduced into the French edition. Engels completed the work, and Capital as we now know it includes these changes. Marx considered these additions to be of such a serious nature that he advised the reader who was acquainted only with the original German edition of his work to consult the French edition since "it possess a scientific value independent of the original." (Dona Torr edition, p 842). From the "scientific value" of these changes Marxists of this generation have a great lesson to learn. Let us see how Gates grasped this lesson.

The most important of these changes includes the passage presently under dispute, which reads: "This limit would not be reached in any particular society until the entire social capital would be united, either in the hands of one single capitalist, or in those of one single corporation." (Capital, I p. 688)

Gates has much to say about my "mutilation" of Marx, but what has he to say about the passage as Marx wrote it? Supposing that I stated that I was wrong, in 1947, in a brief summation of the first volume, a few short pages after the quote was made in full,** to use the word "is" where Marx, in 1875, used the word, "would", how would that change anything in the crucial matter as to whether Marx did, or did not, postulate such an abstraction as a given single capitalist society?***

So befuddled has Gates become by his forced attempt to introduce the Russian question into the dispute on the Outline that it is impossible to make head or tail out of his arguments. He began to

* The majority of the comrades, unfortunately, are in no position to judge for themselves since, due to shortage of paper, only a few copies of the Outline have been released.

** Com. Gates writes as if I had never given the full text of the quotation. No doubt that utterly false idea arises from the fact that he rushed to criticize one section before he had had "the opportunity to examine the whole outline carefully." The comrades can find the quotation when the Outline is released, on p.43.

*** The expression Marx used in his Theories of Surplus Value was:
"an isolated nation."

criticize my Outline because I had there combined "a visible fact... with a prognosis". It now develops that this prognosis was not even implied by Marx!

"Forest presents the tendency as a finished, completed process in a sentence whose grammatical structure suggests something which Marx did not say, explicitly or implicitly." (The last three words are underlined by me, FF)

Hold there! Did, or did not, Marx postulate such an abstraction? Are you now implying, Com. Gates, that since Marx said that this extreme limit to the law of centralization "would not be reached until ..." that, in actuality, Marx did not "explicitly or implicitly" formulate such a theoretic possibility? If that is so, I can only state that there ought to be a limit to what case one is permitted to elaborate on the basis of a "grammatical construction"!

Without explaining his contradictory statement, Com. Gates continues:

"The task of Marxists today is to determine how tendencies develop, whether or not they have been realized in modern society, or whether society has taken other turns, in opposition to the tendency."

And what turn has modern society taken "in opposition to the tendency"? Gates has nothing to offer.**** He writes that "The big bourgeoisie, the dominant monopolists are compelled to oppose statification." Since they are compelled to oppose, the opposition cannot be merely because of their free will, they would prefer not to have their means of production statified. Marxists, in any case, know that bourgeois society is government by economic laws. What economic law compels them to oppose statification?

Com. Gates continues: "As a matter of fact, two parallel developments occur in modern bourgeois society springing from a common cause."

These include centralization in a given society, with which we are acquainted, and "the tendency toward world monopoly, toward the single world capitalist trust." What is their "common cause"? The law of centralization? If so, the "two parallel developments" are not opposing tendencies but different manifestations of the same law. If the parallel tendencies are opposing tendencies, then what common source do they spring from? Surely, it would be a discovery worthy of note if Com. Gates had discerned an economic law that had not been discerned by Marx in his time. Why keep it a secret?

In any case Marx did not postulate the variant of a single world trust; Kautsky & Lenin contended that, given the inter-imperialist rivalry and the sharpness of the class struggle, such a possibility was "not conceivable". This writer thinks that if such a possibility did occur, that is, if a single world trust existed and the world

****We are charitable enough to disregard the instance of reprivatization of some decrepit industries in Nazi Germany that Com. Gates cites in the hope that it is only an instance and not a tendency.

market were abolished, we would no longer be living in a capitalist society. But what has this to do with the Outline? What relation to the Outline has Gates's further flights on the question of state capitalism "under conditions of proletarian state power"? If any such state capitalism were implied in my Outline, then, indeed, the "spirit" which led me to "mutilate" Marx and miseducate the youth, turned around and mutilated (without quotation marks) my own point of view of Russia as a state capitalist society.

3. Russia Again

Against whom is Com. Gates arguing when he writes that "We have also learned today that mere nationalization, even where it is complete, it is not necessarily progressive..."? Is he trying to square things with his own, and the party's past position; that: "The social order of bureaucratic collectivism is distinguished from the social order of capitalism primarily in that the former is based upon new and more advanced form of property, namely, state property." (See Party's Thesis on The Russian Question in the Bulletin under that name.)

Surely he isn't arguing against Forest, who, back in 1941, supported a resolution which stated that state capitalism, under totalitarian politics, made Russia a "fascist state"! What is bothering Com. Gates?

In one place, Com. Gates writes: "A concrete examination of bourgeois society reveals that 'the centralization of the means of production' has not anywhere ended 'ultimately in statification.'"

In another place, he writes "Statification of economy is to be found only in one country in the world: Stalinist Russia."

After suddenly admitting the existence of the statification of production, Com. Gates makes two qualifications: (1) It came about in Russia as a result of a proletarian revolution, and (2) "statification reveals itself now as an anti-capitalist tendency."

Only one point needs to be made regarding the first qualification, and in essence, Marx has made that point back in 1875. Right below the disputed passage, Marx wrote "whether centralization is accomplished by the violent method of annexation...or whether the fusion of a number of capitals... takes place by the smoother method of joint-stock company formation--the economic effect remains the same."

In any case, I was not writing a history of society and was not interested in how statification had occurred. I was interested only in tracing Marx's analysis of the logical development of an economic law of capitalism--centralization of the means of production--in order to show that none of the economic laws we analyzed obviated the "absolute general law": "This ultimate development in no way", I wrote on p.53, "saves capitalist production from its 'absolute general law'--the reserve army of labor", which signals the doom of capitalism.... The law of motion of capitalist society is therefore the law of its collapse." (p.54)

And, finally, we must deal with the second qualification of Gates, that "statification reveals itself now as an anti-capitalist tendency," This brings us back to the question of party policy. I know of no

Resolution which states that statification of production as such is "anti-capitalist". I am well aware of a Party resolution which states that Russia is a new social order. Now, I wish to ask Com. Gates: Is he implying that I include the party policy on Russia in a study outline of CAPITAL?

Why not leave to the Stalinists revisions of Capital to suit every changing party policy?

By E. Garrett and M. Shachtman

Having been so sternly rebuked in Johnson's article on the general strike, it would seem that we are under an obligation to make some comment. Fortunately or unfortunately, our comment is brief because of the dilemma in which the article places us.

Our own views on the slogan of the general strike are well known. They are not open to misinterpretation. We have set them forth in several discussions in the Political Committee and have dealt with them in the public party press. The reasons for our views have also been presented, even if briefly.

We are not in favor of employing the slogan of the general strike as an active political slogan of the party at the present time, and we are certainly not in favor of making it our main slogan.

While we hold this view firmly, we are prepared, as always, to be persuaded by superior arguments to adopt the contrary view. But for that, we must first be confronted by someone who actually holds and actually presents the contrary point of view. Up to now we have had no such luck. Hence our dilemma.

In the recent period the Political Committee has had more than one discussion of the strikes that have taken place and the party's position toward them. Almost as often, Johnson has raised the question of the general strike slogan. Did Johnson propose that the party put forward the slogan of the general strike? The records of the Political Committee answer with an unambiguous "No". Did Johnson ever make a motion that the party put forward the slogan of the general strike? The P.C. records again are unambiguous: No. Did Johnson in general favor the party's adoption of the general strike slogan? Not a single member of the Political Committee can answer that question. All that can be said is that Johnson spoke about the slogan, but made no proposal or motion for the slogan. The merit of these assertions, unlike many of those contained in Johnson's article, is that ours are easy to confirm.

In order to put an end to this unedifying situation, the Political Committee adopted a motion inviting Johnson to present his views on the general strike in the Party BULLETIN so that the party as a whole might know what his views are. This would make possible a fruitful discussion. Johnson availed himself of this invitation. To expound his views he even required more than the ordinary allotment of space which was, in his case, granted by the PC. In the article he emphasizes that he hesitated for some time before deciding to bring up the question for discussion. (Why anyone should have to hesitate about opening up a discussion on such a question in the Workers Party, where discussion is not prohibited or even frowned upon, only God knows.) He lays emphasis upon the fact that the process of the statification of production continues in the United States. This idea is very interesting and very important, even though, having been proclaimed in the Communist movement for more than a quarter of a century and been incorporated repeatedly in resolutions, documents and articles in our own party, it is not an entirely new idea. He includes in his article many other ideas, some of which are interesting, some of which are not, some of which are cogent to

the main question to be discussed, most of which are not. But in the article, which was supposed to open up the discussion on the slogan of the general strike - that, as we recall, is what Johnson was invited to write on - we do not find even one sentence which says, in language that people like ourselves can understand, that Johnson is for the slogan of the general strike being raised now or that he proposes that the party put that slogan forward. Hence our dilemma.

We cannot deny a certain prejudice in our approach to Johnson's writings. This prejudice has gradually seeped into us as a result of many experiences. These experiences have imposed upon us the conclusion that Johnson's political writings are something less than a model of clarity, preciseness, concreteness and cogency. Our prejudice has even driven us, reluctantly, to the conclusion that these defects, as they might be called, are not due to a lack of literary ability or style. Since we are very conscious of this prejudice and are anxious not to have it influence unduly our conclusions, we must ask the help of others in extricating us from our understandable dilemma.

So we refer all readers once more to Johnson's article, especially those readers who are not handicapped by our prejudice, and we ask them: What, as you read and understand it, is Johnson's position on the slogan of the general strike? Is he for the slogan? If he is, what purpose is the slogan to serve? If he is, what is the slogan to lead to, what perspective would it open up in the class struggle? If he is not, what is he for? Has he ever proposed that the party should adopt and popularize this slogan? If so, when did he propose it? If he hasn't proposed it, why not? (Perhaps because our leadership does not tolerate the presentation of different opinions in the Committee or in the party as a whole?) Lastly, does he propose now that the party should adopt the slogan of the general strike and make a campaign for it as the main or outstanding political slogan of the party?

Whether or not an answer to these questions would help Johnson, we are not in a position to say. Us, at least, it would help.

THE PALESTINE QUESTION - PHRASES AND SOLUTIONS

-L. Shields

In the January 20th issue of Labor Action there appeared an analysis of the Zionist Congress by William Gorman, which gives us an opportunity to write some comments, not only on this article, but also on other and more important, opinions on the Jewish question which have been expressed in the Marxist movement during the past year or so.

Comrade Gorman finds nothing whatsoever in the deliberations of the congress to take seriously enough to analyze, comment upon, and indicate what, given the same problems, the Bolshevik solution for the Jewish people would be. He finds it sufficient, from the vantage point of an enlightened Marxist, to laugh at the whole procedure, solutions and problems alike. Yet he does think that the speech of Zrubavel a Left-Poale Zion representative, to the effect that "the best chance for the realization of Zionism lies in the hands of the workers of the world, British and Arab included, who do not agree with their rulers", "is much closer to the solution." Yet, he continues, "Zrubavel and his followers fail to realize that it is utterly impossible to expect the Jewish bourgeoisie which controls the Zionist movement to join hands with the workers of Britain and the Arab countries. Only the Jewish workers themselves can do this." If the Jewish workers did this, then we would have the solution to the problem.

This, of course, is a very good conclusion - for an article in a newspaper. But since this is advanced as a solution, i.e. as a course of action, just what can it possibly mean? How do the Jewish workers go about "joining hands" with the British and Arab workers? Should they go to the marketplace, hunt up proletarians of British and Arab origin, and attempt to hold hands with them? But obviously this is ridiculous. The British and Arabs would object - and perhaps so would the Jews. It might even have such serious consequences as to lead to a permanent and irreparable rupture between them, which might endure even after the triumph of socialism. No, in all soberness, we must reject this tactic.

Perhaps Comrade Gorman will give us a clearer idea of what he has in mind later on? In the last paragraph we find this: "They must begin to look elsewhere - to the peoples of Egypt, India, Indo-China, Burma, Malay, the Philippines, Indonesia - all of whom are struggling valiantly to free themselves from imperialist exploitation and terror. When the Jewish people join in this decisive struggle, it will sound the final death knell of political Zionism, and the beginning of national and social liberation."

Ah! Now we have a more definite picture of what is in Comrade Gorman's mind. Only, again, there's this business of joining in there. We suspect that Comrade Gorman has invented a secret and marketable hand-shake which will enable the Jewish people to join hands not only with Arabs and Britishers, but with all kinds of assorted peoples from all over the world. (Note: Only a while ago the trouble with Zrubavel lay in his failure to differentiate the proletariat from the rest of the Jewish people. Now the Jewish people are good enough for Comrade Gorman himself. Maybe there's

something to this business of joining hands all around after all. Note also: all the other peoples whom Comrade Gorman mentions, he supports simply by virtue of the fact that they are struggling against imperialism, and lays down no other condition for his support. For the Jews however, this is not enough. They must not only struggle against British imperialism (which they are doing, and which is the only serious meaning that the phrase "join hands" can have), but they must also shake hands with all kinds of exotic peoples before Comrade Gorman will support them.)

But of course we have taken Comrade Gorman too literally. He has no secret handclasp at all. What he really means is that the Jews should simply take up arms and start fighting the British. But no! He has already told us that unless they hold hands with someone, this would be sheer terrorism which no Marxist can support. Well then, he means that they should support the political parties of the proletariat all over the world. This means, above all of course, that they must throw their full strength behind the Labor Party of Britain. But wait--this too doesn't seem right. The Labor Party is precisely the one which had made it "a tragic joke" to speak of Palestine as a "national home", and has converted it into "an armed camp on the brink of a gigantic bloodletting". (It doesn't occur to Comrade Gorman that a Homeland may become an armed camp, or conversely, that an armed camp may become a Homeland.) This too cannot be his meaning.

But enough of this forced facetiousness. What Comrade Gorman really means, if he means anything at all, is that the Jews of Palestine should accept the program of the Trotskyist Party, naturally the Trotskyist Party of England and of Palestine. Let us examine seriously this possibility. Leon Trotsky stated that it is the duty of the revolutionary party to gain the confidence of an oppressed nation. How has the REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN fulfilled this dictum in relation to the Jews?

Throughout the war, the British government waged what was in effect a war in alliance with Germany against the Jews; while the latter carried out the murders, the former conducted a blockade of Palestine, the only possible source of mass escape, against the Jews. Under the circumstances, it might have been reasonable to expect the RCP to conduct a struggle against its government on this question. Well, if not a struggle, then a protest, some token of disapproval, just for the record? But if there is such a record, neither we nor anyone else we know of has heard of it. Can it be possible that this is the one phase of the conduct of the war by the British government with which the RCP found itself in agreement? Let us see.

During the war, while the heart of the Jewish nation was being slaughtered, the RCP found no reason to express itself on this question. But immediately after the war, when British police headquarters were blown up in Tel Aviv, and a physical struggle developed between British imperialism and the Jews, suddenly the RCP woke up, and took active position on this question - against the Jews!

What was the essence of the struggle between the Jews and the British Empire? Above all, it concerned the right of Jewish refugees to migrate to Palestine. There was not the slightest possibility for the Jews to come out victorious in this fight, except through the

mobilization of popular opinion in their behalf, above all in America and in England. As Ernest Bevin recently said, "I could have solved the Palestine problem in a way which would have insured peace for twenty years, except for the pressure of American Zionists" - on the basis of securing the agreement of the Arab delegates to continue admitting 18,000 Jews into the country in a year! On whose side is the RCP fighting in this extremely important battle for popular support?

One quotation from their paper, the Socialist Appeal (Supplement Mid-October, 1945) will suffice. "Is there any truth in the claim that these survivors want to go to Palestine? The answer is no." (the italics are S.A.'s) "The Jews never really wanted to go to Palestine. They were forced to go there, because the gates of all other countries were closed to them." This is the essence of the role of the RCP in the struggle, they and their Palestinian theoretician T. Cliff, supply the necessary ideological ammunition from the Left, with which to combat the struggle of the Jewish nation to survive. In this country the SWP parrots their position, and in our party too, Comrades Gates is of the opinion that "with world borders closed to the Jews, they have turned to Palestine..." (N.I. 8/46). In contrast to the rest of the world, the gates of Palestine are, of course, wide open to the Jews - as any fool can plainly see.

Am I reading too much into this quotation? Then let us see more fully what the position of the British Trotskyist party is on Palestine. (From the same issue of the S.A.):

"Ever since the Zionist colonization in Palestine started, the Arab masses tried to resist by one means or another, this invasion of their land. Every four or five years, the Arab masses led, or more correctly, misled, by the most reactionary elements among the Effendis, would rise against the unwelcome invaders, only to be betrayed again and again by the same leaders. The Arab landowners, like the feudalists in all other feudal or semi-feudal countries, are the strongest supporters of imperialism, and once the masses get involved in a struggle, these same "leaders" quickly bring the struggle to an end and come to terms with British imperialism.

"But this is only half of their betrayal. At the very same time that the men whom they rallied to the struggle perish in battle... the so-called leaders make profitable business by selling their land to the Zionists. As a result of which, hundreds more peasants are expelled from the land."

Could anything be more clear? The Arab masses rise against the invaders-that is, not against the English, but against the Jews-but their leaders betray them by bringing the struggle to an end. What then does the RCP require of a loyal and honest Arab leadership? Quite obviously, an honest leadership, one acceptable to the British Fourth Internationalists, would not call the struggle off until - until what? - until every Jew in Palestine is either killed or driven from the land. No? Is there some other meaning, too subtle and recondite for me to grasp in the sentences I have just quoted? If so, someone please show me what it is.

But this is only one-half of the betrayal. The Arabs who sell

their land to the Jews are also traitors - for "hundreds more peasants are expelled from the land", in this way. In his excellent article on the Stalinist record on the Jewish question, LA 2/3/47, Comrade Al. Findlay pointed out that the "number of peasants landless as a result of Jewish settlement" amounted to no more than 600. In the opinion of our fellow historical materialists of England, the significance of 600 landless Arabs outweighs the fact that the remnant of a whole nation, through heroic efforts, has been given a fighting chance to survive. Incidentally, note how cleverly the RCP leaders both create the impression of vast numbers of Arabs being driven off the land ("hundreds more will be expelled") and yet at the same time stay within the confines of literal truth. After all, didn't they speak only of hundreds? Aren't the Jewish masses lucky to have such clever champions in England?

Since then, this party has not changed its position. Its Palestinian theoretician, T. Cliff, writes articles which can only be termed as slenderous to the Jews. Like the RCP leaders, he also is very clever, and does not write anything which is literally untrue. In every article he mentions a cert in Arab market which is picketed by some Jewish boys; he implies that the magnitude of the Jewish problem in Palestine is simply on a par with that of the Jews in Egypt; in estimating the number of proletarians in the Middle East, this Marxist excludes the Jews from his figures because, you see, they are not proletarians, but Zionists, etc.

With remarkably penetrating insight, the RCP informs its readers (today!) that "the British deliberately imported Jews into Palestine for this reason alone: as a brake in the struggle of the Arab masses for independence." They are, consequently, not only opposed to the admission of 100,000 Jews into Palestine, but they attack the British government for having permitted as many Jews to enter the country as it did: "The effect of the limited immigration which British imperialism has allowed has been to sidetrack the anti-imperialist struggle of the Arab masses, and turn it into anti-Semitic channels." (S.A. Aug. 46) As though there is any country in the world to which any nationality could migrate in any great number, without an upsurge of nationalistic feeling! (On a much smaller scale, the difficulties of the Polish soldiers in Scotland might be cited.) They raised the slogan of "open the gates of all countries (except Palestine - L.S.) to the oppressed Jews", which they had not raised during the war, and which no one takes seriously now, but which does have the purpose and effect of shaking the determination of the Jews and their supporters by instilling doubts as to the justice of their struggle to enter Palestine, the only country where a struggle for their survival as a nation is possible.

On the whole one can say that this party's leaders agree with the opinion of W. Brooks (who has essentially their position) that "the Arab world is awakening. It is only a question of time when a powerful movement for national liberation and unification will set in." And since no equally powerful movement of Jewish refugees can be envisaged, they understand, quite as well as Brooks, that it behoves them "to take sides for the Arabs." (N.I. 11/46) (as an aside it is interesting, though hardly surprising, to note that this same Comrade Brooks is of the opinion that "Zionism, as all varieties of Jewish nationalism, is based on a racialist ideology and is at least as old as, and, by no means on a higher level than, Hitler's"

and that "this ideology permeates all strata of the Jews, unfortunately including the working classes..." As a matter of curiosity, it is interesting to speculate as to what would have happened if Comrade Brooks had expressed the opinion that "all varieties" of say, Polish or Italian nationalism were "racialist", and "by no means of a higher level than Hitler's"? Would he have been booted out of the movement? I do not of course, dare to even wonder what would have happened if he had suggested that German nationalism "of all varieties" was on no higher a plane than Hitler's. But since it is only Jews "of all strata" whom he has insulted, of course it is understandable that the NI editorial board should see no reason why he should not be invited to review books dealing with Jewish subject matters for the theoretical organ of our party-where of course, he has repeated the same highly objective opinions about Jewish nationalism.

(However, I wish to make it clear that the RCP has no connection with this particular opinion of W. Brooks.)

Trotsky once said: "The desire of a ruling nation to maintain the status quo frequently dresses up as a superiority to nationalism, just as the desire of a victorious nation to hang on to its booty, easily takes the form of pacifism. Thus MacDonald in the face of Ghandi feels as though he were an internationalist. Thus too the gravitation of the Austrians toward Germany appears to Poincare an offense against French pacifism." Brooks, in his desire to be on the side of the more powerful, Arab nation, (but above all, in his desire not to be associated too closely with the threatened and strategically hopeless Jewish minority in his own country), inveighs bitterly against Jewish "chauvinism" and "racism". And unfortunately it is necessary to say, T. Cliff and the British Trotskyite party in the face of the remnant of the Jewish nation fighting with its last breath to survive, adopt a lofty "internationalist" attitude toward it all.

Evidently this too is not the party Comrade Gorman had in mind when he spoke about joining hands as a solution.

One more possibility remains, as to what he meant. He meant that the Jews of Palestine should read the majority resolution of the WP, as interpreted by Albert Gates, who has become the party spokesman on the Jewish question, and apply to to the Palestinian situation. Let us examine this last remaining possibility.

There is no comparison between the position of the RCP of Britain and that of the WP on the Palestine question. The resolution of the WP, despite its many errors, does not confuse simple anti-Jewish prejudice with internationalism. Its intentions are good, but unfortunately completely incapable of offering the Jews a solution to their problems. The following are some of the resolutions more basic mistakes:

First, its categorical rejection of the right of self-determination for the Jews: "It is not a problem of today, of self-determination of Jews against Arab rule or vice-versa, but of Palestinian self-determination against British rule." An analogous position would have been if in 1917 the Bolsheviks had decided to deny the right of self-determination to the Ukrainians, a great many of them whom lived in Poland, on the basis that it was "not a problem of self-

determination of Ukrainians against Polish rule or vice versa, but of Poland's self-determination against Russian rule." Would a single Ukrainian have been won over to the Bolshevik side in such a case?

Second, (and this is basic to the resolution) there is the idea that it will be on the basis of a joint economic struggle against exploitation that the unity of the two nationalities will be secured: "The proletarian class struggle against economic exploitation unites all toilers and serves as the bridge across all reactionary nationalist barriers." Rub our eyes as we may, the sentence still remains. We have no space to explain the anti-Leninist character of this very important, fundamental mistake. We will only say that had the Bolsheviks decided that this, the joint strikes let us say of Russian and Finnish workers for some economic advantages, rather than the slogan of national self-determination, was the type of activity by which unity of the nationalities of Russia would be achieved, there would never have been a successful Russian revolution. And we can say quite categorically that if we depend primarily upon joint economic action by Jewish and Arab workers to unite the two peoples, there will never be Jewish-Arab unity in Palestine.

There is also the inevitable repetition of Trotsky's opinion that the attempt to achieve a Jewish state under capitalism "is to pose a reactionary Utopia". Let us ask, comrades, why so? Is it the contention of the Majority that the struggle to achieve independent political statehood under capitalism by any oppressed nation is a reactionary utopia, or is this dictum reserved only for the Jews? If the former, then it is simply one more fundamental and very false revision of Lenin's concepts on the national question, which it is the duty of the NC to explain. If the latter, then again we must ask, what is the reasoning behind it? Is it due to the exceptionally weak strategic position of the Jewish nation? But if there is only this practical reason, then it is our manifest duty to strengthen this position, rather than to repeat unreasoned phrases about "reactionary utopias" which only weaken it.

In his defense of the Majority's denial of the right of self-determination to the Jews, Comrade Gates has emerged in the completely unexpected role of a great explorer of the twentieth century: He has discovered, all by himself, the existence of a Palestine nation (hitherto we had always thought that Palestine was not a nation, but a country, in which lived two nations: the Jews and the Arabs). Just to make sure that no one makes a mistake as to what kind of a nation it is, Comrade Gates says: "...The fact is that Palestine is an Arab nation." It is upon the invention of this fantastic and non-existent nation that the whole defense of the majority position is based. How else could a denial of the fundamental right of self-determination be justified?

Comrade Gates assures us that if an independent Arab state were established, the Jews need not fear a repetition of their fate at the hands of the Germans, the Poles, etc. The fact, he tells us, that the relationship of the population is "as two to one and not 100 to one (Germany)... in itself creates a better possibility for harmonious cohabitation of the peoples..." This is another of Comrade Gates' original discoveries. (We leave aside the fact that if the Jews had followed Gates' advice, they would never have achieved this pro-

portion of the population whether in Palestine or anywhere else in the first place.) The rest of us have observed the exact opposite: by and large, under capitalism the greater the proportion of the minority to the dominant population, the greater is the friction and bitterness between them. (Unless of course, the minority organizes itself into a powerful militant organization in defense of its rights, in this case, acts as a nation; but this is in fundamental conflict with Comrade Gates' program for the Jews.)

And lest anyone remain unconvinced, Comrade Gates assures us that it is only due to the attitude of reactionary Zionism that there is any antagonism among the Arab masses against the Jews, and that "the Jews could appear before them as liberators if they adopted a correct policy free of imperialist overtones."

Vicious, childish chatter! The Jews have always fought in the wars of liberation of the various European countries; in Poland especially they have been conspicuous in these wars, both against the Russians, and, in the last war, against the Germans. Yet somehow the result has never been that they came to be looked upon as "liberators" or even as co-fighters for liberty, but rather they have always been rewarded with a new and ever more intense wave of anti-semitism among the people. Has Comrade Gates thought about the meaning of this fact? Anti-semitism has arisen where the Jews were led by socialists Bund (in Poland), Zionists (in Palestine) and where they have had no leadership at all, (Germany). In the past there has not been a European anti-semitism among the Arabs for two reasons: one, the comparatively undeveloped state of Arab nationalism; and two, the relative strength of the Jews. But if Palestine is set up as an independent Arab state (as Syria and Lebanon have been) it can be predicted with mathematical certainty that the first result would be the organization of an anti-semitic campaign which, as in Europe, would end in the destruction of the Jews.

The reason for this is that in decadent capitalist society the state is held together to a large degree with ideological cement, the most important element of which is nationalism. It is for this reason that national minorities, no matter how "good" their behavior come to be tolerated less and less. This is the basic cause of modern anti-semitism. This, incidentally, is also the reason for the pressure for assimilation exerted by all countries, and also of extermination, which is simply an extension of the policy of assimilation by other means.

Comrade Gates states that the trouble with the Jews lies in their "rejecting a policy of genuine equality in respect to the Arab population" and he tells us also that the reactionary position of the Jews is shown precisely in their rejecting a constituent assembly, based on universal suffrage and majority rule.

What can one do when confronted with such statements by a leader of the Party? Throw up one's hands in despair? Doesn't Comrade Gates, and everyone else more than two years in the Marxist movement know that every minority nationality throughout the world reacts in precisely this way? So, for example, Leon Trotsky, in speaking of the February revolution, stated, "The proclamation of equal rights

meant nothing to the Finns especially, for they did not desire equality with the Russians, but independence of Russia. It gave nothing to the Ukrainians for their rights had been equal before, they having been forcibly proclaimed to be Russian" (History of the Russian Revolution, Vol 3, p 39) "They did not desire equality. Isn't this clear enough? And somehow the Bolsheviks, instead of proclaiming that the trouble with the Finns was that, basing themselves on their superior culture, they didn't want equality with the rest of the population of Russia, made this the cornerstone of their policy on the national question - the proclamation of the right of self-determination for each people.

So also for the slogan of a constituent assembly. In speaking of the oppressed nationalities of Russia, Trotsky notes that "references to a future constituent assembly only irritated them." Why so? Because these peoples understood that this assembly would only continue "to defend the tradition of Russification". Clear enough? Is it any wonder then that references to the constituent assembly only irritate the Jews now, and would only irritate the Arabs in the future, if the Jews should succeed in getting a majority of the population? (The slogan of a constituent assembly has a place in Palestine, but only if linked and subordinated to the slogan of the right of self-determination for the Arabs and the Jews.)

I cannot here set forth my own ideas on a Leninist position for Palestine. But it is necessary to mention the two basic principles which Lenin developed on the national question: one, there can be no unity between nationalities without equality Two, there can be no talk of equality without the right of self-determination, including the right of separation. (Compare this with Gate's opinion that "Equality lies precisely in the fact that the majority can exercise its majority.")

Abstractly, it would be correct for a Bolshevik party to champion the right of the Jews to a separate existence, but at the same time also to urge their unity with the Arabs (even under a setup of majority rule, if the two nations agree to this). Actually however, there is no question that in this historical situation the Jews would choose to form a state of their own. Under socialism, it would be the duty of the stronger nation, the Arabs, to win the confidence of the Jews, so as to make them willing to give up their own state and become a part of an Arab-Jewish Federation,

Is there no place then, whatsoever, for a policy of international "joining hands" in the struggle for Jewish freedom? In view of the foregoing, surprisingly enough, there is. Its place is here: we must urge the workers of all countries, especially those of England, to "join hands" by demonstrations, etc., with the Jews in support of the struggle that they are actually conducting, against British imperialism. This in itself is our simple duty as socialists and revolutionists. Such a policy would also permit us to begin to gain the confidence of the Jewish masses, among whom the ideas of socialism traditionally have a far more powerful root than among those of any other nation in the world. It would also permit us to begin to replace the heroic, but short-sighted and chauvinistic youths who are at present leading the Jewish resistance against Britain, and enable us to conduct it in such a way (indicated above) as to permit the achievement of a united Arab and Jewish struggle against British imperialism.