
August 1943

Fourth International

*To the Memory of Leon Trotsky
November 7, 1879--August 21, 1940*

Italy: The First Phase of the Revolution

**The Court Verdict on the
Assassin of Leon Trotsky**

By Walter O'Rourke

Campaign for a Labor Party by James P. Cannon

The CIO Program by Felix Morrow

The Roosevelt Regime in Crisis . by William Warde

A Report on the Comintern . . by Leon Trotsky

A Manual of Party Organization . by E. R. Frank

INTERNATIONAL NOTES: England, Mexico, Cuba

Twenty Cents

Manager's Column

The picture that has grown out of the correspondence and happenings of the last months is an inspiring one of increased sales in all fields of literature, including **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** — bundles, subscriptions, news-stands, miscellaneous.

* * *

Chicago's subscription campaign is now under way and the first results have just been sent in:

"Enclosed please find money order for \$6.00 (subs enclosed). Our sub-drive started this week and although we are not starting with a bang I think we will do all right."

We sincerely hope that Chicago will be able to live up to their promise quoted in the July Manager's Column "to do as well as Central Branch (New York) or better." Central Branch's four-week subscription campaign netted 51 subs.

* * *

San Francisco is getting ready to increase the subscriptions in their area:

"We just have a few subscription blanks on hand and if you have any available we would appreciate getting them. We are going to make a systematic effort to get subs for both the paper and **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** and would like to have the blanks."

Allentown is making an effort to get subscriptions also:

"Can you send me two more copies of the July issue of the F. I., also the August issue. They are to be used to get subs. . . . We need subscription blanks too."

Seattle's **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** sales have increased considerably:

"Would you please send us 10 additional copies of the June F. I. just as soon as possible? Our Negro drugstore sold out and has requested additional copies. . . . We want to increase our bundle order to 50 copies."

* * *

We have received several complaints from **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** subscribers that they aren't getting their copies of the magazine until late in the month. We want again to remind our subscribers that each month the Post Office holds the magazine until it is released by Washington. The July issue has just been released for dispatch to the subscribers, although we deposited

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the magazine in the Post Office three weeks ago.

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A welcome letter from a friend

in Los Angeles comments:

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great. My spirits were raised considerably.

"You know, I had been suffering somewhat under a delusion that the American working class wasn't as militant as the various European movements. This, even though your analysis pointed out that it hadn't suffered under any real blows and was all there! Well, recent events showed me the real light. Despite tremendous pressure it hasn't given ground. Why, nine-tenths of the so-called radicals would retreat if put in the position of the coal miners and it looks like the larger revolutionary movements in Europe won't get there any faster than the American workers will. And the way the movement for an independent labor party came out just at the time you pushed it to the front would make it look as if you just ordered tens of thousands of party members in the trade union movement to get going."

* * *

A letter from Chile adds to the picture:

"Regarding **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL**, we are receiving it regularly though somewhat delayed. As usual, its excellent material provides us with the most rejoicing confidence in the work and prospects of our Yankee partners. Why do you not publish these words in your Manager's Column? It would be a good demonstration of our organic solidarity.

"The last magazine of which we are able to acknowledge receipt is the March issue. We have especially enjoyed the articles of Morrow and Loris (the answer to Held)."

* * *

Two letters, one from Scotland, the other from England, laud the American miners for the heroic stand they made in their recent strikes:

"The **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** seems to improve each time. The magnificent struggle of the U. S. miners is being watched with intense admiration here."

"We are watching with great interest the militant struggle the American miners are putting up at the present moment and hope soon to get the news direct from **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** and **THE MILITANT**. In this country, too, the miners were the first section of the workers to come out in direct struggle against their conditions."

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME IV

AUGUST 1943

NUMBER 3

To the Memory of Leon Trotsky,
November 7, 1879-August 21, 1940

Italy: The First Phase of the Revolution

Military catastrophe, one of the classical conditions of revolution, has brought the Italian proletariat to its feet after 21 years of prostration under fascist repression. In this sense the Italian workers have been galvanized by an external event. But defeats in war are one of the acid tests of a social order and of the attitude of the masses toward it. Fascism claimed to demonstrate its superiority above all in war. But superiority is evidenced not only in times of success but in adversity as well. The decisive element in war, when the contending powers are at all comparable in fighting forces, is the morale of the common soldier; especially is this true after initial defeats. Even crushing defeats such as the French Army sustained in the first week of the *blitzkrieg* need not have meant final defeat; now, said Trotsky in those days, the question of French morale will be decisive; the lack of that morale was a sufficient indictment of the decomposing bourgeois democracy of France. The fascists then did not fail to underline the connection between the military collapse and the character of French society. Now that connection is to be seen in Italy where the very first defeats in North Africa sufficed to destroy even the semblance of morale.

Contrast this with the magnificent morale of the Red Army after the terrible defeats of 1941-1942. The test of war has proven the superiority of the social order established by the October revolution, and proven it under the adverse conditions of the stifling regime of Stalin. The collapse of morale of the "democratic" French Army and the fascist Italian Army is an index to the lack of inner resources of capitalism both in its democratic and fascist forms. What is happening in Italy is the mirror of the future of Hitler's Army.

The First Week's Events

We should fail to understand the real course of events if we should assume that the dismissal of Mussolini was part of a comprehensive plan of Italy's ruling summits. On the contrary, their conduct has been marked by panicky improvisation. No doubt they had thought of throwing Mussolini overboard in the future in the event of final defeat, both to facilitate negotiations with the Allies and as a sop to the masses of Italy. But it is clear that the moment of dismissal came suddenly, as a negative reaction to a Hitler-Mussolini proposal for the next military steps (apparently abandonment of southern Italy). While rejecting this plan, the ruling summits had not arrived at one of their own, either for resistance or for capitulation. Nor did they have a plan for utilizing the dismissal as a sop to the masses. On the contrary, they presented it as a mere change of Prime Ministers and cabinets: a laconic announcement stated that "His Excellency Cavaliere Benito Mussolini" had "tendered" his "resignation," and short proclamations by

the King and Badoglio said nothing about Mussolini and fascism.

When this news Sunday was followed by gigantic mass demonstrations in Rome and the principal cities, lasting through the night, with rejoicing at Mussolini's fall already coupled with demands for peace, Badoglio could think of nothing more to do Monday than issue a manifesto devoted entirely to detailed instructions for repressing the demonstrations. It is characterized by the provision that "It is absolutely forbidden to hold any meeting in public of more than three persons . . ." Obviously those who issued such an order had no inkling that it could not be enforced; any administrator knows that an order which is successfully disobeyed is infinitely worse than silence in the face of disorders. Tuesday and Wednesday there were mass demonstrations of workers singing the Internationale and carrying red flags, strikes, killings of fascists, storming of fascist headquarters and houses, meetings of outlawed political parties, and at least one assault on a prison (in Milan) to release political prisoners. Only after all this came the announcement, Wednesday night, of the dissolution of the Fascist party. Thursday there were demonstrations in Milan and Turin (at least) with placards demanding peace; and the first reported order to demonstrators (in Milan) to disperse under threat of soldiers armed with submachine guns—but with the order to fire never given in the face of the fact that "the demonstrators had allowed it to be understood from their attitude that they wanted this test of power." Friday thousands of workers successfully stormed the Cellari jail in Milan and released 200 political prisoners, soldiers refusing to obey an order to fire upon them; and the movement spread to Genoa where port workers were marching under red flags. In the face of all this the Badoglio regime could only think of sitting tight at home and broadcasting to other countries that the demonstrations were "entirely misunderstood" abroad: "They are merely expressions of patriotic enthusiasm, loyalty to the House of Savoy and confidence in the new government." This is the muttering of people overwhelmed by events.

The Class Nature of Fascism

This faltering planlessness of the Italian bourgeoisie deprived it of its one opportunity to confuse the picture of its real relations with fascism. The King and the army hierarchy could have staged a palace revolution "overthrowing" Mussolini and immediately issued a manifesto outlawing the Fascist party, freeing political prisoners, voiding anti-Jewish laws, legalizing political parties and trade unions, newspapers, meetings, etc. This maneuver would have made it possible for Roosevelt and Churchill and the labor lackeys to support the Italian capitalist regime with some show of plausibility.

As it actually transpired, however, the circumstances of Mussolini's departure have provided the international working class with an irrefutable proof of the nakedly capitalist nature of fascism. The transition from fascism to "anti-fascism" took the form of a mere change of cabinets. That is, a change within the existing framework of the state. According to a law adopted December 19, 1928, the power to name a new Prime Minister was vested exclusively in the Fascist Grand Council, with the Crown merely approving its choice. Yet the Crown did not even have to violate this law in order to name Badoglio; instead, the Fascist Grand Council, by overwhelming majority, voted to ask the King to name the new government, i.e., voted to dissolve itself! This arrangement throws the most glaring light on the fact that fascism is an instrumentality of capitalism, to be utilized or dispensed with as the interests of the social order of private property require. The democratic rights which the masses are wresting for themselves in the streets and factories of Italy, and which the Italian bourgeoisie will tomorrow formally recognize, are seen to be the achievement of the masses themselves.

Thus Mussolini's dismissal provides a definitive answer to the debate of over two decades concerning the nature of fascism. It is the answer which Trotsky taught the vanguard workers throughout these dark years: "*For the monopolistic bourgeoisie, the parliamentary and Fascist regimes represent only different vehicles of dominion; it has recourse to one or the other, depending upon the historical conditions.*"

The Real History of Fascism

Class loyalty reaches across the battlefronts: the U. S. press and radio are expending millions of words absolving Italian capitalism of responsibility for fascism, taking their cue from General Eisenhower's July 29 declaration that "We commend" the House of Savoy for ousting Mussolini. Let us take as an example the long editorial in the August 1 *New York Times*, and examine its two principal falsifications of the history of Italian fascism.

1. Not capitalism but revolution is to blame for fascism:

"From a historic perspective it represents a nationalistic counter-revolution against the international revolution of Communism, and wherever Communism rears its head Fascism is bound to appear."

It is true that the Italian proletariat was part of the great post-war revolutionary wave; the Socialist Party grew from 50,000 members in 1914 to 216,000 in 1919, the trade unions from 320,000 to 2,250,000, and under pressure of the masses the Socialist Party voted adherence to the Third International and trade union leaders participated in the Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions. Peasants seized land and the workers, climaxing a series of great struggles, occupied the factories in September 1920.

What was the situation of the Fascist party during this revolutionary wave? As yet it had no mass base. Mussolini did not dare as yet to attack workers' headquarters. At this stage the petty-bourgeois masses either followed or sympathized with the advancing workers, and awaited the transformation of society. In a word, fascism was no danger during the stormy rise of the Italian workers' movement.

It was not the fascists who derailed that movement. It was the reformist leadership of the Socialist Party and the trade unions. Instead of going on to seize power, they turned back, evacuated the factories in return for paper concessions, and left the masses without hope of a radical change.

Only then was Mussolini able to recruit masses of petty bourgeoisie and lumpen-proletarians who still wanted a change and were deluded by the pseudo-socialism of the fascists. There

was no longer danger of a revolution (the Communist Party was only being formed at this time) but Big Business and the landowners decided to use precisely the opportunity of the retreat of the workers' movement to smash it altogether. They provided the funds, the army provided arms, and the church hierarchy sanctioned collaboration of the Catholic "Popular Party" with the fascists under the slogan "restoration of public order and the suppression of socialism." In November 1920 came the first fascist assault (in Bologna) on the disoriented, disappointed and passive workers, and two years later the "march" on Rome.

At the Fourth World Congress of the Comintern, December 1922, after Mussolini became Prime Minister, Zinoviev put the situation succinctly: "The reformists declare that they wish to spare the workers the unnecessary sufferings of the revolution. Well, the revolution has not taken place, but many of the workers have fallen as victims."

Likewise in Germany the fascists were not a serious force during the revolutionary wave of 1918-1923; not until the world crisis began in 1929 and the Social Democratic and Communist parties again had their chance to lead the masses to overthrow capitalism but failed to do so; not until then did the petty-bourgeois masses turn to the Nazis. This transition is indicated by the votes for the Nazis: 809,000 in 1928, and 6,401,000 in September 1930.

One of Trotsky's greatest contributions to Marxist theory, in the very last article he wrote, formulates this process as a social law:

"Both theoretical analysis as well as the rich historical experience of the last quarter of a century have demonstrated with equal force that fascism is each time the final link of a specific political cycle composed of the following: the gravest crisis of capitalist society; the growth of the radicalization of the working class; the growth of sympathy toward the working class and a yearning for change on the part of the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie; the extreme confusion of the big bourgeoisie; its cowardly and treacherous maneuvers aimed at avoiding the revolutionary climax; the exhaustion of the proletariat, growing confusion and indifference; the aggravation of the social crisis; the despair of the petty bourgeoisie, its yearning for change, the collective neurosis of the petty bourgeoisie, its readiness to believe in miracles; its readiness for violent measures; the growth of hostility toward the proletariat which has deceived its [the petty bourgeoisie's] expectations. These are the premises for the swift formation of a fascist party and its victory."*

2. Having falsely blamed the revolutionary wave, rather than its decline, for the victory of fascism, the *Times* goes on to concede the fascist connection with Big Business—but concedes it only to convey the thought that the capitalists lived to regret it:

"But though it found support from both the army and Big Business as a means of splitting the revolutionary movement of the Communists, fascism soon declared itself a law unto itself, and proceeded to seize power by means of violence exercised by gangs of thugs tolerated by the authorities. It ended up as a totalitarian party, which took over the whole state, established a one-party, one-man rule and proceeded to take control of the army, the workers and all business."

We can list only a few of the deliberate falsifications of the *Times*. The gangs did not "seize power" by violence. The present King named Mussolini as Prime Minister, a step urged by the heads of the Banking Association and the Federation of Industry. From 1922 until 1926 Mussolini ruled in a coalition with the parties of Big Business and during this period the gangs and the state extirpated the workers' organizations. As

**Fourth International*, October 1940.

he succeeded in this task, Mussolini *also* rid himself of the plebeian masses of the Fascist party who were demanding carrying out of his anti-capitalist promises. During 1923 tens of thousands of fascists who had taken part in the march on Rome were expelled; a second purge took place in 1925-26; a third in 1928 when the federation of fascist "unions" was dissolved. The fascist "squadrons of action" were incorporated into the state militia in 1923, and the next year staffed with army officers while plebeian elements were weeded out. The fascist youth organization, the *Opera Balilla*, lost its autonomy and became a military organization controlled by the army and under army regulations. By these means Mussolini subordinated the fascist movement to the capitalist state, and not the other way around as the *Times* pretends. As the years passed the petty-bourgeois masses lost their illusions about what fascism would do for them and dropped away. The original plebeian elements were replaced by the upper classes.

The nature of this process was formulated by Trotsky in 1932: "Fascism, become bureaucratic, approaches very closely to other forms of military and police dictatorship." The dictatorship leans increasingly less on the original plebeian masses and ever more on the traditional repressive forces of the capitalist state, the army and the police, control over which was never lost by Big Business.

Indeed, is not this fact made obvious by Mussolini's dismissal? As an editorial the day afterward in the conservative *New York Sun* of July 26 put it rather indiscreetly: "For who can fire a dictator? Not a weak king. Not a non-existent parliament. Only a stronger dictator can do it. So the Allied world will have searching questions to ask concerning those who have taken charge of Italy." But the *Sun* and the "Allied world" hastily dropped these searching questions, for to answer them would be to confess that the "stronger dictator," the army and police of the capitalist state, were always Mussolini's master.

The capitalist nature of fascism, proved by Trotsky over and over again, was never admitted by the labor lackeys of capitalism, nor will they admit it now in spite of the decisive proof of the Italian events.

One can understand their present "theories" about fascism best in the light of their previous ones. Both the Italian and German Social Democracy and the liberals conjured it away by dismissing it as a "post-war psychosis." In emigration, they did all they could to blind the European proletariat to the danger. Nitti wrote in 1926: "Any fascist enterprise in the countries which have reached a high degree of economic civilization would only be a vain experiment... In Germany the democratic parties and the republic are solidly established." Don Luigi Sturzo assured the workers in 1927 that "a March on London, Paris or Berlin" was impossible. The German Social Democrats, through their theoretician Decker, proclaimed in 1929: "Fascism, in its Italian form, corresponds to Italian conditions. The organized strength and highly developed political education of the German working class, as well as the relative weakness of the non-proletarian masses in Germany in comparison with Italy, make such a brutal crushing of democracy impossible in our country..." Stalin's theoretician, Martynov, echoed the same theory in July 1929 at the Tenth Plenum of the Comintern: "Fascism of the pure type will be our chief enemy only in backward and semi-agricultural countries." Contradicting this theory but nevertheless coupled with it was the Stalinist designation of the German governments preceding Hitler as "fascist" and of the Social Democracy as "social-fascist."*

*The references for these quotations will be found in the concluding chapter of Daniel Guerin's "Fascism and Big Business."

When these theories collapsed, the Social Democrats and Stalinists invented different but equally false theories. They joined in advocating the Popular Front to save democracy. It saved French capitalism from the revolutionary wave of June 1936, while the decomposition of French democracy continued until the "democrat" Reynaud handed over power to Petain. In Spain the Popular Front, repressing the masses in order to save private property, and serving as accomplice to the "non-intervention" maneuvers of Paris and London, made possible the victory of Franco.

Now the Stalinists, Social Democrats and liberals justify support of the war as a "fight against fascism." To do so they must ignore the fact that the same capitalist class, under varying historical conditions, can rule by fascism or by democratic forms. To admit that fact would be to admit that democracy is in no way an issue in the conflict between the imperialist powers.

The Next Stage in Italy

The counter-revolutionary consequences of these reformist theories of fascism will soon become visible in Italy (and in Germany). The counter-revolution will be waged under the slogan "Down with fascism." The capitalist and reformist definitions of a fascist will be so formulated as to absolve the pillars of the fascist regime during the past 21 years—the monarchy, the church and army hierarchies, and to absolve, above all, the capitalist class. Only the revolutionary Marxist party will summon the workers and peasants to put an end to the capitalist system which bred fascism and which was served by fascism and which will again resort to fascism.

The revolutionists will have the truth on their side, confirmed by the living experience of the Italian and German masses. The very first week after Mussolini's dismissal the Italian masses demonstrated that they have recovered their will to struggle and are determined to decide their own destiny in a way that will forever put an end to fascism and capitalist wars. Nevertheless, the revolutionary developments of the first week cannot be taken as indicative of the uninterrupted tempo to come. Nazi armies are inside Italy, U. S.-British forces are about to enter. Military occupation will inevitably slow the revolutionary tempo. But afterward the occupation will become a new source of revolutionary ferment, as it did in Nazi occupied Europe. A foreign yoke is even more intolerable than a domestic one. Nor will it be lightened by the AMGOT policy of ruling through the Italian provincial and local officials. Even in Sicily, where the masses had not risen, the August 2 *New York Times* reports: "The real anti-Fascists here do not like that so much. Apparently they had expected the whole Fascist set-up to be swept away, but that is impossible and will be so throughout Italy." The masses who have been killing Fascist officials will certainly look upon AMGOT as a device for crushing the revolution and perpetuating the hated officialdom. The Italian masses will face occupation just after they have risen to their feet and feel their own strength, in contrast to the discouraged and apathetic condition of the workers in France at the time the Nazis marched in.

At the beginning of the war, Trotsky wrote the Manifesto of the Fourth International on "The Imperialist War and Proletarian Revolution." For four years we have had the imperialist war. Now, the first stage of the proletarian revolution is beginning, as the Italian events demonstrate. Trotsky was murdered by Stalin before he could see his prediction come true. On the third anniversary of his death we are already permitted to see that his revolutionary optimism was based on the most scientific analysis of the course of events.

August 2 1943

F. M.

Campaign for a Labor Party!

By JAMES P. CANNON

1. Outline of Proposal for a Labor Party Campaign

EDITOR'S NOTE: This outline was introduced last November in the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party, and has since been before the party for discussion.

We must make an important political turn without delay. It is time to start an aggressive campaign for the formation of an independent labor party, to transform the *propaganda* slogan into a slogan of *agitation*. This is the most important conclusion we must draw from the recent elections in the light of the present situation in the labor movement and the attitude of workers and the changes which are sure to come in the not distant future. The labor party is the central issue around which the drive of the workers for class independence can be best expressed in the next period. By becoming the active champion of the labor party the Socialist Workers Party will link itself to an instinctive class movement which is almost certain to have a tumultuous growth, and thus multiply its influence and recruiting power. A brief review of our experiences with the labor party slogan since its adoption in 1938 up to the recent elections will show that now is the time to strike.

I

The adoption of the labor party slogan in 1938 by the Socialist Workers Party was predicated on the stormy development of the elemental mass movement of the workers through the CIO and the assumption that this movement, in the next stage of its development, must seek a political expression. The enormous disproportion between the rate of growth of this mass movement of millions, and that of the vanguard party, showed that we could no longer hope for our party to be the medium for the first expression of political independent action by the mass of the workers.

We concluded that this first expression would take the form of an independent labor party based on the trade unions. Hence, in order for us to link ourselves with the next stages of the political development of the American workers, we had to adapt ourselves to the trend toward a labor party; to work within it in order to influence its development in a revolutionary direction and, at the same time, build the Trotskyist party. Our estimation of the most probable next stages of development, and our reasoning as to the role our party would be obliged to play by the circumstances, were correct. The development was slower than we anticipated at that time. But if we examine the causes which slowed down the labor party development, it will be clear that the movement was only arrested, dammed up, so to speak, in order to break out with still greater strength after some delay. The causes for the delay were transitory and are already passing away.

II

Just about the time that we adopted our labor party position, the economic conjuncture began to improve. This checked the discontent of the workers which had been rising up till that time. Roosevelt still appeared to the workers as their champion and his social reform program was taken as a substitute for an independent political movement of the workers. At the same time, the entire leadership of the CIO, including the Stalinists, who had been the most aggressive proponents of the labor

party idea, supported Roosevelt in a body. They squelched all organized expressions of the sentiment for an independent labor party. The labor party question was thus taken off the agenda of trade union meetings and conventions, and to superficial reasoners the movement seemed to be killed. The campaign of agitation for a labor party which we had planned did not find a favorable field in these circumstances. Foreseeing future developments, we did not abandon the slogan, but in our practical work we had to change it from a slogan of agitation to a slogan of propaganda.

III

War conditions—the huge preparatory development of the armaments industry and later the actual entry into the war—introduced two factors which served to militate against any immediate response to the labor party slogan. The preliminary war prosperity tended to dampen the interest of the workers in the labor party for the time being. They still regarded Roosevelt as their political champion and supplemented their support of him by economic action against individual employers and corporations.

Then began the process of blocking off this economic outlet of the workers' struggle. By a combination of cajolery, threats and treachery—granting of some wage increases, institution of the War Labor Board, labor leaders' pledges of no strikes—the workers have been stymied on the economic field. Once this was accomplished, wages were virtually frozen, while the cost of living rises at a scale which amounts, in essence, to a monthly wage cut. Meanwhile, the employers, taking advantage of the situation, resist the settlement of virtually all grievances. These grievances pile up in the pigeon-holes of the War Labor Board and the workers get no satisfaction.

The workers' discontent is already evident and is bound to grow enormously as the cost of living mounts, as taxes and other burdens are piled upon them and they are denied corresponding wage increases, and they feel balked by the denial of the right to resort to the strike weapon. The entire history of the American labor movement shows that the workers tend to resort to independent political action when they find themselves defeated or frustrated on the economic field. There is every reason to believe that this tradition will assert itself more powerfully than ever in the coming period.

IV

To a certain extent—positively, and especially negatively—the workers asserted a tendency to resort to independent political action already in the recent Congressional and State elections. For the first time the Gallup poll was badly upset and the calculations of all the political experts were refuted by a factor which had not been anticipated—the unprecedented abstention from voting by the workers. The smallness of the workers' vote can be attributed, in part, to the military mobilization, the shifting of vast numbers of workers to new locations, their failure to register, etc. But a very important factor, if not the main factor, in the mass failure of the industrial workers to vote, was their attitude of indifference and cynicism toward the two capitalist parties.

On the other hand, in New York, where the leaders of the American Labor Party found themselves, much against their own desires, conducting an independent campaign, the workers turned out in great numbers to support the American Labor Party. In New York City the A.L.P. polled 18 per cent of the vote, despite the fact that it had an unknown nonentity from Tammany Hall as a candidate, and despite the appeals of Roosevelt—and of Hillman, his chief labor lieutenant—for the Democratic ticket. The vote of more than four hundred thousand for the A.L.P. in New York is a rather convincing demonstration of the deep sentiment of a considerable mass of workers in New York for independent political action.

In the Minnesota election somewhat the same phenomenon is to be observed. Despite the terrible disintegration of the upper circles of the Farmer-Labor Party there, the treachery of the Stalinists, the support of Stassen by the official heads of the CIO and considerable sections of the AFL bureaucracy—despite all this, the Farmer-Labor Party polled a bigger percentage of the vote this year than was the case in 1940 or 1938.

From these two examples, we must conclude that a strong sentiment for independent political action by the workers reveals itself wherever they have a chance to express it through the medium of an independent party.

In the light of the election results in New York, the correctness of the position taken by our party in support of the A.L.P. ticket, and the absurdity of the boycott policy of the Workers Party juveniles, are equally demonstrated. The Workers Party decided to boycott the A.L.P. ticket just at the moment when it was demonstrating its greatest appeal to the workers under the most unfavorable conditions. We, on the other hand, by our policy, linked ourselves to the movement of the future. The lesson of this experience will not fail to impress itself on the minds of the class-conscious workers who are observing developments.

V

We should draw the following conclusions:

(1) The elections in New York and Minnesota positively, and in the other states negatively, show the beginning of a trend of workers' sentiment for independent political action.

(2) The mass sentiment of the workers in this direction must grow tumultuously, as the gap widens between frozen wages on the one side and rising prices, tax burdens and enforced contributions on the other.

(3) The sentiment for independent political action may, and to a considerable extent will, take a very radical turn. To many workers, burning with indignation over grievances which cannot find an outlet for expression on the economic field, the demand for a labor party will signify in a general way the demand for a workers' government—for a change in the regime!

(4) The time is opportune right now for the SWP to start an aggressive campaign of agitation for an independent labor party. It would be a great political error to lose any time in establishing our position in the forefront of this movement.

VI

Our campaign should be developed according to a carefully worked out practical program, designed to swing the entire party into activity and to mobilize its energies for the advancement of the campaign, step by step, in coordination with the tempo of the mass movement itself. The main points of such a practical program are approximately as follows:

(1) Make the labor party the central campaign issue of the party in the next period.

(2) Stage a formal launching of the campaign by means

of a Plenum, an Eastern Conference, or a New York membership meeting at which a thoroughly worked-out motivating speech will be delivered and published as the opening gun in the campaign. The emanation of this published speech from some kind of a formal party gathering will give it more weight than a mere article or statement.

(3) Our literary forces will have to be organized to prepare an abundance of propaganda material on the labor party question—factual, historical, argumentative and perspective. The propaganda material should include a comprehensive pamphlet and leaflets, as well as abundant material in the press. Our comrades in the trade unions must be adequately supplied with information and arguments to meet all opposition on the labor party question.

(4) The campaign should be directed from the center in an organizational, as well as in a political way, following the developments of the work of each branch and giving systematic directions for next steps, and so forth.

(5) At a given stage in the development of the campaign, we should go over to the formation of *labor party clubs* in the unions where circumstances make this feasible, and use these clubs as the center of organization for the labor party fight. These labor party clubs will tend to become, in effect, left-wing caucuses or progressive groups. At the right time, regulating the tempo of our campaign always in accordance with the internal situation in each particular union, we should begin to introduce labor party resolutions. If we can succeed at first in having a labor party resolution passed by a prominent and influential trade union local or body, we can then use this resolution as the model for other unions. From a practical standpoint there is a big advantage in being able to say to a local union that the proposed resolution is the one previously adopted by such and such a trade union organization on the labor party question. Our trade union department, in cooperation with the fractions, can work out this end of the matter without difficulty.

(6) We must proceed according to the conviction that all developments in the trade union movement from now on must work in favor of the development of the labor party sentiment; that the slogan will become increasingly popular; and that we must become the leaders of the fight. Our labor party campaign can be the medium through which we bring the elementary ideas of class independence into the trade union movement. This is the indicated approach for the gradual introduction of our entire transitional program.

VII

Our labor party campaign must be understood as having great implications for the building of our party. *We must conceive of it as our third big political maneuver*, the first being the fusion with the American Workers Party, and the second the entry into the Socialist Party. This maneuver will be different from the others, but the differences will be all in our favor, and the prospects of gain for our party are vastly greater.

(1) This time we will undertake the maneuver with a much better internal situation in our own party. Each of the other maneuvers had to be undertaken at the cost of a fierce factional fight and split in our own ranks. This time, we can enter the campaign with completely unified cadres and without the slightest fear of any internal disturbances as a result of the step. On the contrary, the announcement of the campaign can be expected to call forth enthusiasm throughout the party and a unanimous response to the directions of the center.

(2) The quality of the recruits, on the whole, which we will gain from the labor party maneuver will be different from the recruits gained by the fusion with the A.W.P. and the

entry into the S.P. To be sure, in each of the other two cases we were dealing with the prospect of recruiting politically more advanced people than we will gain directly from the trade unions in the labor party campaign. But in return, the recruits from the other two ventures were in the majority centrists who brought with them the baggage of bad training and tradition and pre-conceived prejudices. That was why the attempt to assimilate them into the Trotskyist movement produced in each case a second factional fight and split. The heterogeneous composition of the Trotskyist cadre of those times also hampered this work of assimilation. The Abern clique based itself on the backward section of the Musteites, and both Abern and Shachtman (not to mention Burnham!) based themselves on the unassimilated elements from the S.P. and the Yipsels.

From the labor party campaign we will get fresh workers whose political education will begin with us. They will come in as individuals without factional attachments from the past, and their assimilation and education will be facilitated by the united cadre of our present party which, in the meantime, has accumulated considerably more political experience.

The third important difference between the labor party campaign and the two previous political turns we have made is in the magnitude of the prospects. This time we must think in terms of thousands—and eventually of tens of thousands—

of recruits who will come in to our party from the labor party movement. And, given the facts that they will come to us not as a previously constituted faction or party, but as individual recruits; that they will enter a party which is homogeneous in its composition, whose unified cadres have serious political experiences behind them, we can confidently expect to assimilate the new members without an internal crisis.

There is no doubt that the key to the further development in the next period of our party and the expansion of its membership lies in the self-confidence, speed and energy with which we plunge into an organized labor party campaign. Big successes are possible for us along this line; even probable, I would say. Naturally, we cannot promise ourselves any miracles overnight. There will be favorable returns from our campaign from the very start, but we must plan a long-time fight.

We can expect big results within a reasonable time. But even the first big results will only be a down payment on the unbounded prospects which lie ahead of us along this road. The modest recruiting campaign we are now conducting should be conceived, in the light of a labor party campaign, as a mere curtain-raiser. We may hope to recruit thousands in the course of the labor party campaign, and our work from the start should be inspired by this confidence.

New York, November 25, 1942.

2. Remarks on the Labor Party Campaign

(A speech at the Political Committee meeting of November 30, 1942)

You all have the outline. I don't have much to add except that some of the points can be elaborated.

The first point, about changing the slogan from a propaganda slogan to a slogan of agitation, I think is an important one to understand. In our work, generally, we ought to distinguish between three types of slogans: slogans of propaganda, slogans of agitation, and slogans of action. A perfectly correct slogan can be either effective or ineffective according to how it is applied in a given situation.

For example, the slogan of workers' defense guards during the height of the fight with the Coughlinites, Silver Shirts, Nazi Bundists, etc., was a slogan of *agitation*, in some cases leading directly to *action*. But with the temporary slowing down of this fascistic movement, we have moderated the tempo with which we press the slogan of workers' defense guards. The practical necessity for them is not clear to the workers. It is now a *propaganda* slogan. We don't conduct an active campaign because there is not enough response in the present situation. A little later, when reaction gets more aggressive, and the labor movement runs up against fascistic hooliganism again, we will have to renew our agitation for the guards.

Similarly, with the labor party. We have been talking about the labor party, but only in an educational, that is propagandistic way because the movement didn't seem to have any wind in its sails during the last year or two. In the next period things will be different. We draw this conclusion from two points of view.

The fundamental point of view: the situation in which the workers find themselves—with increasing pressure and difficulties upon them, and the fact that they are stymied on the economic field—must push them into the direction of political expression through a labor party. We should anticipate this and begin to prepare our campaign so as to get full prominence in the movement.

The second, subsidiary, point of view: the results of the elections, especially the negative demonstration, showing the indifference of the workers to the Republican and Democratic

Parties, should be construed as the preliminary symptoms of a movement in the direction of an independent political expression.

Now is the time, in my opinion, for us to begin beating the drums for a labor party, with the confidence that we are going to get a response, if not right away, a little later. The more active we are right now, when no other tendency in the labor movement is agitating the question, the more we will gain.

Point 3 under section 5 of the outline is a very important point. When the workers begin to make a break from the capitalist parties toward a labor party, it is quite possible that they will not give it the reformistic connotation which has been associated in the past with the labor party, but that it will symbolize to them, even if vaguely, a break with the whole regime and a move for a new one, a regime of workers' power. This idea was first mentioned by Warde when he came back from Detroit. The more I have thought about it, the more it has impressed me as a very plausible deduction. Under present conditions the labor party idea can have far more revolutionary implications than in past periods when it was advanced as a reformistic measure.

There is no need at all for us to speak about a reformistic labor party. What we are advocating is an *independent* labor party, and we are proposing our own program, which is not reformist. In the past, the assumption has always been that a labor party would surely be a reformist manifestation. It may, in some instances. But in others it may have a more profound meaning in the minds of many workers who adopt the slogan. In England, for example, the slogan of "Labor to Power" has no doubt the same double meaning for many workers. For some it can mean a purely moderate demand that the reformist labor leaders take over the government as agents of the bourgeois regime. For others it can indicate a call to the workers to take power and change the whole system. These things should be taken into account when we weigh the feasibility and effectiveness of the labor party slogan in the present situation.

It is very important that a resolution or other political document considered by the National Committee be clearly motivated; that it be completely objective and properly proportioned. That is, it shouldn't be an "agitational" document in any

sense of the word. I have this conception about all documents concerning policy and line and if my outline proposal appears to contain agitational optimism, I don't mean it in that sense at all. The outline is intended as an objective appraisal, from my point of view, of the situation and perspectives.

Comrade Henderson has reminded us of Trotsky's conception that the economic basis for a successful reformist labor party is undermined. That, of course, is the materialistic foundation for the idea which Warde expressed—that the workers will take the move for a labor party, in a vague way at least, as having revolutionary implications.

I don't speak in the outline about existing labor parties, because our tactics in these cases can be easily decided. Naturally, we are not going to propose to start a new labor party in New York or Minnesota. We work within the existing parties. But I should point out, however, that we haven't been working within the ALP. The clubs are scattered all over the five boroughs. The Stalinists are quite active in these clubs and so are the Social Democrats; but we have not gotten around to them yet. Where there are existing parties, we certainly must participate in them if our campaign is to have any serious meaning.

When I speak of labor party clubs in the outline, I don't mean them in the sense of these ALP clubs. These latter are Assembly District organizations required by law, the legal basis for the election machinery. The labor party clubs suggested in the document are groups formed in the unions to fight for the labor party. For example, in a progressive local union a club would be formed for the object of propagating the idea of the labor party in the local. Such clubs will, in the nature of things, become the natural centers of left-wing organization. They will represent a direct challenge to the whole regime—to the state administration, as well as the trade union bureaucracy—without exceeding, in a formal sense, the legalistic bounds. I have the idea that these labor party clubs can become in the next period a tremendous mechanism for the building of the left wing in the unions.

The question has been raised in the discussion whether there is a trend or only the beginning of a trend toward the labor party, whether the election results are exaggerated in the outline. I tried to state it very carefully, that the elections should be taken as representing the *beginning* of a trend. I emphasized the negative manifestations—that is, the abstention of the workers from voting throughout the rest of the country—more strongly even than the positive vote for the labor party in New York and Minnesota. Obviously, it is not yet a very conscious movement for a labor party. But it is a half-break with the old parties, and that necessarily has its logic. This, together with the fact that we are all confident the next period must promote a politicalization of the workers, justifies us in asserting that there is the beginning of a trend toward a powerful labor party movement.

The ALP vote keeps coming up to plague those who have any reservations in this regard. The fact is that the ALP got 400,000 votes in New York, under the most unfavorable conditions. The leaders were scared of themselves; the candidate, a Tammany hack, had never been heard of before; the pressure of Roosevelt and of Hillman, who was, you may say, the co-founder of the party, swung the whole bureaucracy of the Amalgamated away from the ALP. In spite of all that, the ALP got 18 per cent of the votes in New York City and over 10 per cent of the votes in the state. That must signify something. I think it has to be taken as signifying in part that these workers—those who voted the ALP ticket were mainly workers—have

something in mind different from the old idea of voting for the Democratic party.

I don't think it would be correct to say these are votes against Roosevelt. I would venture to say that 90 per cent of them are still pro-Roosevelt. But this vote shows that the workers, still largely for Roosevelt, *are not for the Democratic Party*. That is the important thing. They don't give a hoot for the Democratic Party. All during the time they were led in behind Roosevelt, they weren't led in behind the Democratic Party. On the contrary, their hostility is perhaps greater today than before. I think if you look back at this period of the Roosevelt regime you will see that Labor's Non-Partisan League, the ALP in New York, and other manifestations showed that even then, in order to dragoon the workers to support Roosevelt, they had to provide some kind of labor or pseudo-labor machinery for it. They couldn't just unfurl the banner and say, Vote for Roosevelt.

This election was the greatest test of all. The workers in New York—400,000 of them—stood up independently for the first time. I can't read anything else into this ALP vote except a strengthening of the impulse of the workers to have a party of their own.

What I Mean by a "Maneuver"

I come to a point here which has been discussed and which I am quite insistent upon: that I want to describe this proposed labor party campaign as a *maneuver*, comparing it to the two other big maneuvers we carried through: the fusion of the Trotskyist organization with the A.W.P. and the entry into the S.P. Of course, I don't mean to equate the labor party campaign with the fusion and the entry. It is not the same thing at all. But it is the same *kind* of thing.

What do we mean by a maneuver? It is a tactical turning aside from a predetermined path which has been blocked off in order to accomplish the original objective, to reach the same goal by another road. The thing in common between the proposed labor party campaign and the other two maneuvers in our history is that which is basic: the attempt to build a revolutionary party through another party.

Normally and logically, when you organize a party and adopt a program and invite people to join it, that is the way you build up a party—by recruiting people directly. We came up against the fact in 1934, however, that there was another group developing on the left-wing road. They didn't come over to us, so we had to go over to meet them. This fusion with the A.W.P. was a departure from the line of direct recruitment. Similarly was the entry into the S.P. It was a maneuver, a turning away from the path of building the party by direct recruitment, because a certain set of circumstances confronted us where the most eligible and logical candidates for Bolshevism refused to come into this party. We had to turn about and join them. In the same sense, the united front can be called a maneuver. In the early days of its existence the Comintern reached a certain stalemate in its struggle against the Social Democracy. The majority remained in the Social Democratic ranks and didn't come over and join the Communist Party. Then the Comintern devised the medium of the united front as a means of approach to the Social Democratic workers. This was not a fusion or an entry, but a coming together for concrete actions for specific immediate aims, etc.

What are we trying to do here? It was not a historic law that we must have a labor party in this country, and that we have to become advocates of it and work within it. As a matter of fact, in the early days of our movement Trotsky refused to sanction the advocacy of the labor party. He said *It is not yet de-*

terminated whether the workers will seek their first political expression through a revolutionary party or through a reformist party based on the unions, and we should advocate the revolutionary party based on individual membership. The socialist movement over most of Europe and the world was built up that way. It was only during the stormy development of the CIO, which began to show political manifestations, when it became pretty obvious that the rate of development of this new mass movement of the CIO was so much faster in tempo and greater in scope than the development of the Socialist Workers Party—it was only then that the Old Man revised his conclusion.

The new movement of the masses was developing outside the SWP, on a vastly wider scale. This trend is even clearer now than it was in 1938 when Trotsky first recommended the labor party tactic. In order for us not to be left on the sidelines, we have to go into the labor party movement without giving up our own independent organization. That is what is contemplated in this proposal here. We are going to try, once again, to build our party through another party. We will be inside of it for a long time, although not in the same technical and precise way as in the other two maneuvers. This time there will be no fusion, and no entry. We will maintain the independence of our party all the time. But in some places we can conceive of the S.W.P being affiliated to the labor party; in other places, where we may be denied entrance as a party, we will participate in the labor party through the unions, etc. But, in every variant, we will be trying to build a revolutionary party through a political movement of the masses which is not yet clearly defined as revolutionary, or reformist, or in between.

From an internal point of view, it is very important, in my opinion, to explain to the membership that we conceive this campaign as a maneuver. On the one hand, we must show them the great scope of its possibilities; on the other hand, that we are maintaining our independence all the time. And we are working, not to build the labor party as a substitute for our party, but to build our party as the party that must lead the revolution. The labor party may never come to full-fledged shape at all. The conflict of the two wings—the revolutionary and the reformist—can reach such a state of tension that the movement will split before the party is fully formed on a national scale. I can even conceive of the existence of two kinds of labor parties for a certain time—a labor party with a revolutionary program and a labor party with a reformist program—which would engage in election contests against each other.

A Political Turn

In the past, under the pressure of circumstances, parties based on the unions have taken a far more radical turn than the ordinary reformist conceptions. The Norwegian Labor Party was almost a replica, in its structure, of the British Labor Party. But, following the war, it formally adopted the communist program and joined the Comintern. The Comintern tried to transform it from a loose party based on delegates from unions into an individual membership party. In the process, eventually, a split took place and the Norwegian Communist Party was carved out of the body of the Norwegian Labor Party. When the revolutionary tide receded and the mass of the workers returned to reformism, things fell back into their old place again. The developments of the labor party movement in the United States, with the stormy developments of the class struggle which are clearly indicated, will least of all follow a pre-determined pattern.

I think it is correct to characterize what is proposed here as a political turn. A campaign of agitation, as is proposed, re-

quires a radical change in our activity and, to a certain extent, in our attitude. We have to stir the party from top to bottom with discussion on the labor party question and show the party members that they have now a chance to participate in a fight, in a movement. We should aim to inspire them with the perspectives of the big possibilities which are by no means stated in an exaggerated fashion. At the appropriate time our comrades will begin moving in the unions step by step; perhaps to form a labor party club, perhaps to introduce a resolution, perhaps to circularize this resolution to other places, according to circumstances in each case. All this represents a turn from what we have been doing up to now in our purely routine propaganda in the press without pressing or pushing the issues in the unions.

If we had been imbued with this conception a few months ago we would have taken a different attitude in the New York election. We would have been campaigning for the labor party in New York from the very beginning if we had been as sure then of what was going on as we are now. I personally couldn't support such an idea then because I didn't know; I needed the results of the election to convince me that the ALP was not going to fall apart. It is clear now that we underestimated its vitality.

Comrade Charles has pointed out that the trend of the war, the Allied victories, promoting reaction on the one side, will also provoke more resentment and discontent, and perhaps revolt, in one form or another, by the workers. The assumption is that, in general, there will be a sharpening of the class struggle. How can this manifest itself in the next period? Possibly there will be a wave of outlaw strikes. But I think its strongest manifestation will be in the political field. The two may go together. But, in any case, we should absolutely count on a sharpening of the class struggle and help to give it a political expression.

We must appraise correctly the workers' attitude toward Roosevelt. I believe, also, that the abstention of the workers from the elections in the big industrial centers, did not signify a break with Roosevelt. It showed that they want to make a distinction between Roosevelt's social reforms and the Democratic Party's war program. Their tendency is to support the war under the leadership of Roosevelt, in payment for the social reforms they think they got from him. The thing they consider most is the social reform program. From their standpoint, at the present time, the ideal political situation would be a labor party with Roosevelt at the head of it. Their sentiment is for a labor political expression, but they haven't broken with Roosevelt. We have to be very careful that we don't over-estimate that question or conclude that the elections showed a break with Roosevelt.

The "New Deal" of Roosevelt was a substitute for the social reform program of Social Democracy in the past. That was the basis of its hold on the workers. The bankruptcy of the New Deal can't possibly, in my opinion, push the workers back into an acceptance of traditional capitalist party politics. Their next turn will be toward a labor party.

Once more about kinds of slogans: We must carefully explain to the party the difference between a propaganda slogan and agitational slogan, and an agitational slogan and a slogan of action. I am especially sensitive on this because, in the early days of the Communist Party, in those furious debates we used to have on the labor party, we fell into all kinds of mistakes on the question. In a situation such as there has been in the past few years, the labor party could only be a propaganda slogan. If we had been beating the drums all over the labor movement and tried to form labor party clubs, we would have

simply broken our heads. The time was not ripe, there was not enough response, to justify intense agitation for the labor party. It was necessary to confine it to a propaganda slogan. But now there are possibilities, and even probabilities, of a rising sentiment of the workers and a favorable response to a concentrated agitation for the labor party. In the new situation we would make the greatest error if we were to lag behind events and continue with the routine propaganda of the past period.

There is a difference also between slogans of agitation and slogans of action. This is illustrated by one of the classic errors of the early communist movement in the United States. Propa-

ganda for the idea of Workers' Soviets is, now as always, a principle of the program. But in 1919 the editors of the *New York Communist*, growing impatient, issued the slogan of action in a banner headline: "Organize Workers' Councils." Sad to say, the Soviets did not materialize. The slogan of action was premature and discredited its authors.

It wouldn't be out of order, in connection with the educational preparation of the party for this campaign, if we impart to the whole membership a better understanding of the different ways of applying slogans—as slogans of propaganda, of agitation, or of action—according to the situation, as it is in reality.

The Verdict on the Assassin of Trotsky

By WALTER O'ROURKE

On the third anniversary of the death of Trotsky, his assassin is still attempting to obliterate the GPU's responsibility for the crime. The Superior Tribunal of Mexico, on October 5, will hear the appeal of "Frank Jacson" from the verdict of the Sixth Penal Court which on April 16 found him guilty and (there is no death or life penalty) sentenced him to 20 years imprisonment. If the defense loses, it is certain to carry its appeal the final legal step, to the Supreme Court. These two appeals will cost a great deal and Jacson has no visible resources but, needless to say, the GPU assassin has limitless funds at his disposal. If it gains nothing else, the GPU may convey the thought that the issue is not definitively settled until the Supreme Court acts—a thought the GPU needs not only to confuse the issue but also to maintain the morale of its hireling assassin in jail. Moreover the speeches of its attorney will again, as in the lower court, serve to publicize the Stalinist slanders against Trotsky and the Fourth International. Last but not least, there is always the serious possibility that, by one means or another, the GPU will secure from the higher courts a decision which will serve to water down the damning character of the verdict of the lower court—a verdict which, to any honest analyst, clearly establishes the fact that Leon Trotsky was murdered by an assassin sent by Stalin.

That verdict is indelibly recorded in history, but there should be no illusion that it may not be upset formally. With all due respect to the juridical institutions of Mexico, we cannot forget what happened in two Mexican courts which had before them the machine-gun gang which attacked Trotsky's home on May 24, 1940 and kidnapped and murdered Robert Sheldon Harte, member of the Socialist Workers Party. David Alfaro Siqueiros, the painter, was arrested as the leader of that attack and admitted it, as did others who were arrested—some 27 members of the Mexican Communist Party, among them David Serrano and Luis Mateos Martinez, members of its Central Committee. Yet they all managed to go free. The charge of murdering Harte was dropped, all suspicion for that crime being placed on the Arenal brothers (also prominent Stalinists), who, of course, had disappeared. Although Trotsky's bedroom had been sprayed with 300 machine-gun bullets, a court dropped the charge of attempted homicide despite the testimony of Siqueiros' chauffeur that, when he heard that Trotsky had lived through it, Siqueiros had cried: "All the work in vain." By means of these decisions, the judges of two courts reduced the machine-gun attack to the minor charges of housebreaking, unlawful use of uniforms, robbery (of the two cars in the house to prevent pursuit) and damaging another's property. On these, Siqueiros was admitted to bail and promptly fled the

country, with his documents in perfect order—the Secretariat of Gobernacion (State Department) pretending not to know that he was under bail and therefore forbidden to leave the Federal District, much less Mexico. Arrested in Chile as a fugitive from Mexican justice, his release was obtained by the Mexican Ambassador!

It is well to recall, therefore, what Natalia Trotsky wrote to the Mexican press last year: "If there had not been judges to maintain that Siqueiros assaulted our house only to rob two automobiles which he abandoned a few hundred meters away . . . if there had not been judges to maintain that the gangsters of the GPU were not a gang but 'co-thinkers' and that the shots fired over our beds were only for 'psychological' effects, we would say beforehand: the GPU will fail in its attempt. But Siqueiros, assailant, assassin, incendiary and agent in the service of the GPU, is free. Why not Jacson?"

As a matter of fact, it may well be through the medium of Siqueiros that the GPU will make its next move on behalf of Jacson. At the time he led the attack on Trotsky's home Siqueiros claimed he did so to obtain compromising documents showing Trotsky's "fifth column" activities; but he never claimed then to have secured a single document, much less one that would compromise Trotsky. Now, however (he is in Cuba), in an interview with a reporter for the Mexican daily *La Prensa*, Siqueiros claims that he has a "good part" of Trotsky's documents! The paper paraphrases what he said as follows: "And he left the Trotskyist fortress carrying with him in his automobile those precious documents, which he has in safe custody and which, when necessary, will enable him to demonstrate the service he did Mexico and the sinister work carried on by Trotsky." "When necessary" may turn out to be the Jacson appeal.

Nevertheless, not even Siqueiros' forgeries will be able to obliterate the verdict against Jacson in the eyes of all honest people, no matter what the appellate courts do. I should like here to give a more rounded description of the defense line and the court verdict than I was able to do in my news-reports to *The Militant*.

Jacson's "New Version"

On Jacson's person, it will be recalled, was a "confession letter," obviously written for the eventuality that he would be killed while attempting to escape; it pretended that he was a "disillusioned" Trotskyist who had decided to kill Trotsky. Jacson had prepared for the crime by destroying all his documents, but the false passport he had used was traced and proved to be that of a dead member of the International Brigade, i.e., one collected by the GPU and provided for Jacson. Under ques-

tioning, Jacson admitted premeditation, how he entered Trotsky's office under the pretext of getting his comments on an article, had taken a position behind Trotsky seated at his work table, and struck the fatal blow. All this Jacson admitted, his main preoccupation being to conceal his connection with the GPU. This version was not changed until the end of September 1941, thirteen months after the crime.

On January 8, 1941 an able lawyer, closely connected with the Stalinists, Octavio Medellin Ostos, entered the case and over a period of months prepared a "new version." Jacson never again submitted to questioning in court and refused to make any statements. His only act was to write the "new confession," a document presented to the court in French on the last day permitted. Its purpose was to change his previous account of the cowardly execution of the crime and to develop his former statements about Trotsky's wanting him to go to Russia into a theory of provocation on the part of Trotsky. The provocation was said to be both psychological and physical, the key sentences of the new version being: "he said to me with a contemptuous tone, . . . 'you are nothing more than a military blunderer.'" And further on Jackson writes:

"I want to note that Leon Trotsky began to fight and shout before the blow in order to free himself from the pressure of my left hand on his coat, no doubt so as to draw his revolver but I was faster than he . . ."

Another interesting innovation of the new version demonstrates that the change in line since June 22, 1941 even applies to a GPU agent's defense in court. It will be recalled that in his original "confession letter," Jacson intimated that United States imperialism and the Dies Committee were in league with Trotsky and would help him to send saboteurs to Russia. The Stalinist press at the time declared that Trotsky was an agent of Wall Street and "an instrument of the Yankee war of nerves against Mexico." In Jacson's new version, of course, not a word of this appears.

Now Jacson presents himself as a Belgian patriot: "I want to take advantage of this same statement to declare that I have always considered it an honor to die on the battlefield against the forces representative of the greatest barbarism typified by the Nazi hordes!" In an interview at the same time the summaries were presented in court, Jacson is quoted as endorsing even more frankly the current Stalinist slanders against Trotsky:

"You came to believe that Trotsky was an agent of Hitler as the Communists say?"

"Absolutely!"

"Why?"

"In the first place because of the proposition he made to me to go and commit acts of sabotage in Russia, acts that only were of interest to Germany. [Jacson forgets that in his original statement the United States and the Dies Committee were supposed to be behind this project.—W.O.] In the second place because of his confession to me that the Moscow Trials had annihilated his movement in Russia—those trials in which it was proven, as Davies confirms in his book, that the guilty were in the service of Germany and Japan. In the third place because of Trotsky's mysterious income whose origin nobody knows.

"Do you think that the existence of Trotsky would represent a danger for Democracy?"

"It would be a source of confusionism and doubt which the Fifth Columnists would utilize to undermine confidence in victory and in Democracy! It would be a focal point of espionage and sabotage. With good reason in the United States they imprisoned Goldman, the lawyer for Trotsky's wife; with good reason in the United States they imprisoned also gunmen that Trotsky had at his service in Mexico, and with good reason also are the mailing and sale of Trotsky works and newspapers

prohibited in the United States. The Americans know what they are doing. (ASI, Mexico, February 13, 1943.)"

The new version written by Jacson was the only new document presented to the court. It was supposed to replace the hundreds of pages in the court record of statements—including the first four months of Jacson's own testimony—which contradict his new version. Trying to explain away this contradiction, it was contended that the assassin was in no condition to make statements after the crime; the bandages prevented his being able to read the documents he signed; he was maltreated by the police; he suffered from a moral depression after his crime that caused him to lose all interest in what he was saying and signing, etc. But it is clear that such allegations carry little weight if they are not supported by facts.

Medellin Ostos failed to obtain any such facts. He called in police and detectives who had questioned Jacson during the first days following the murder. Their testimony invariably showed that although Jacson had been badly beaten up when Trotsky's guards seized him, he was in full control of his senses and was thinking quite clearly. In jail he was subjected to no maltreatment but on the contrary enjoyed favorable conditions that provoked public protests in the press against such a criminal receiving privileged treatment. It will be remembered that during the first weeks he was not held in jail but in a hospital under special guard. Thus from the very first day he was able to use his plentiful funds to buy what he wished. As for the so-called "secret injections" supposedly applied to make him talk, the lack of evidence, or rather the contrary evidence was so striking that the defense did not even mention it in its final summary before the court.

The attempt to show that the murder occurred during a fight was equally a fiasco. According to Mexican legal procedure in order for a new version to be accepted in place of a legally obtained confession, the evidence and logic in its favor must be overwhelming. For the best part of a year, the GPU's lawyer fished for evidence. He only managed, by some very "clever" questioning, to establish that Trotsky was an agile man, that he was fairly strong, that he owned a couple of pistols and always carried one of them and such facts that a dozen or more people connected with the house could have given in five minutes.

Twice during the trial, the defense appealed to higher courts against the trial judge's decisions: When the judge ordered the trial closed and the summaries prepared, Jacson's lawyer pretended that the more than one year of trial-investigation was insufficient; he appealed and lost; and again, on the very day he should have presented his summary, he presented an accusation of partiality, basing it on an article in the magazine *Estampa*, which quoted the judge as expressing a low opinion of Jacson. However, when the author was called to testify, he declared he had never written the words quoting the judge; the article had been "improved" in the editorial office. In addition, Jacson's attorney systematically sought adverse rulings by presenting "evidence" and asking questions of witnesses which the judge had to rule out as irrelevant. This was clearly preparation for the present appeal to the higher courts.

Jacson's attorney likewise made strenuous efforts to discredit the Trotskyists, for the double purpose of smearing important witnesses and publicizing the stock GPU lies about Trotsky and the Trotskyists. At the head of the list of witnesses stood Natalia Trotsky, whose testimony corroborated Jacson's own original story of the events of August 20 and placed in evidence Trotsky's account of the attack as told in his dying breath to Natalia. Even more important, Natalia was the most authoritative witness who established that Jacson's relation with Trotsky and the house was a distant one, limited to only a few

visits. Since, above all, the GPU was interested in presenting Jacson as a Trotskyist, Natalia's testimony, which proved just the opposite, had to be discredited if possible. This, however, proved to be impossible. To begin with, not even the GPU's lawyer dared openly to accuse Natalia of lying about this most tragic event in her life. So he took a "benevolent" attitude, pretending to respect her suffering and years while at the same time describing her as incapable of thinking. Likewise Jacson described her as hysterical and senile and that she did not know what was going on about her; and his lawyer, in his summation, repeated this abuse. Natalia's testimony was sufficient refutation.

The final hearings and summations brought out perhaps more clearly than any other single part of the case the fundamental political motives involved. With written conclusions presented some time before for the court to consider at its leisure, these final hearings as a rule are almost completely ignored, defending lawyers not even attending. For there is no jury system, cases are finally decided by a court of three judges; this system does not lend itself to speeches or emotional appeals. The GPU, however, submitted only a half-page of conclusions and made its entire appeal in a speech to the court. This more dramatic method was sure to get more publicity for the Stalinist anti-Trotskyists slanders which flowed from the attorney's mouth for the greater part of his five-hour summation.

During the year of trial-investigation, when evidence could have been presented, the defense never attempted to prove that Trotsky was a saboteur. The only mention of this charge was in the two Jacson "confessions." There is not a word in the court record about the Minneapolis trial or about Trotskyists in other lands. But during his summary—in which the rules of evidence do not apply—Jacson's attorney tried to prop up the Jacson-GPU lie that Trotsky had wanted to send him to the Soviet Union. Here is a sample:

"Mornard [Jacson] says: 'He proposed to me that I go to Russia to commit acts of sabotage.' Is this an absurd proposition from Trotsky's point of view? Were there not Trotskyists in China, Manchukuo, in 1940 trying to enter Russia to commit acts of sabotage? . . ."

"Several of the persons who have filed through this trial, such as Jake Cooper, Albert Goldman, etc., many days before the events of Pearl Harbor in the United States were summoned to court to answer charges of two crimes; one of conspiracy, and the other of crimes of sabotage and treason . . ."

The political motivation of these and many other similar statements could not be clearer. In a document presented to the court by Natalia Trotsky in answer to the summation for Jacson she sums up its Stalinist character as follows:

"Of all the evidence that the murder of Trotsky was organized and executed by agents of Stalin's GPU, the defense speech made by Octavio Medellin Ostos is, perhaps, the most convincing . . ."

"The defense of Trotsky's murderer has rested its case in a very real and legal sense on the usual Stalinist slanders against Trotsky. . . It is implicit in its content that the entire alibi stands or falls on the truthfulness or falseness of the Moscow Trial lies about Trotsky, the 'saboteur.' For, says Jacson's defense, the murderer was provoked by Trotsky who tried to threaten him into going to the Soviet Union to commit acts of sabotage and to kill Stalin. If, as Stalin says, Trotsky was a saboteur, then the story is credible; if, as every section of the working class movement except the Stalinists says, Trotsky was not a saboteur, then Jacson's entire story is absolutely and completely impossible. The political nature of the crime could not be posed more sharply than it has been posed by the defense."

The Verdict of the Penal Court

In their lengthy written verdict, the judges rejected the following lies of Jacson's defense:

1. Jacson's story that he was sent by a "member of the Fourth International" from Paris to serve Trotsky as secretary and was in his confidence. This was the keystone of Jacson's defense, designed to make the killing appear an "inside job" and thus absolve the GPU of responsibility for the murder.

The evidence, on the contrary, demonstrated irrefutably that Trotsky had seen Jacson only a few times—and only once alone prior to the assassination—and only as the new husband of a friend of the household, Sylvia Ageloff. Refuting the assassin's claim of intimacy, the verdict states:

"That affirmation is inadmissible, for it is illogical that an individual like Mornard [one of Jacson's aliases] who according to his own confession took part in no activity of that party, who did not even belong to it, who [allegedly] worked as a sports writer living a life of luxury and who had only given trifling financial assistance to the party and this together with [his wife] Sylvia Ageloff, was sent to be at the side of the chief of this party and even more inadmissible is his statement that he should be held in such confidence that Trotsky would entrust him with tasks of notorious consequences in the political activity of that same political party, and that without a background in the work of the party he should be at the side of the persecuted politician."

2. Jacson's pretense that he became a "disillusioned Trotskyist" in Mexico and therefore killed Trotsky under a provocation.

On the contrary, states the verdict, Jacson deliberately came to Mexico to murder Trotsky:

"Mornard's attitude since he undertakes his trip to Mexico until he succeeds in establishing contact with Trotsky and afterward, is one of falseness and artifice. [His actions] are clear proof that he did not come to carry out the mission of secretary or of aide to Trotsky nor of any other commission near him [Trotsky]; rather he came for a different and unconfessable mission that became known when he perpetrated the homicide."

And again on the same subject the verdict states:

"From the trial record and from all the confessions of Mornard, we know that his trip to Mexico had no other object than to establish contact with the one who was later to be his victim. The court must . . . declare that the trip of Frank Jacson or Jacques Mornard to Mexico was undertaken with the sole object of killing Trotsky."

3. Jacson's attempt to retract his earlier statements describing the cowardly manner in which he struck down Trotsky from behind; and his "new version" that Trotsky provoked him with threats and tried to draw his gun before Jacson struck.

The verdict, in great detail, shows how Jacson made no attempt for 13 months to change his original story, and then the court refutes point by point the "new version."

4. The slanderous attacks made by Jacson's attorney against Trotsky and his guards in an attempt to discredit their statements.

The court, by implication, rejected these attacks, citing the very statements involved as part of its proof against Jacson.

The Limitations of the Verdict

If any honest analyst takes these four major points together, he has a clear picture of the GPU's responsibility for the crime. This could have been demonstrated even more definitively had the judges and the prosecutor not avoided two important fields of investigation.

One of these is Jacson's source of funds. Jacson has enjoyed

all the comforts and services that money could buy. Stories of celebrations held in his cell in which officials of the prison participated have already been reported in our press. He has been interviewed by various newspaper reporters, who all return with similar stories of exceptional comforts in his cell, a library, special foods, etc. Then there are the heavy costs of the case, already three years old, and which will continue probably for another eighteen months. Jacson pretends he is paying for all this from a bank account in which he deposited five thousand dollars received from his "mother." There is no doubt that Jacson's lawyer could clear up the question of who pays him, since the original five thousand has obviously long been exhausted. Natalia Trotsky denounced the lawyer in the press as the intermediary between the GPU and his client. He magnanimously took a "benevolent" attitude toward her, saying he would not accuse her of libel in court. Had he done so, of course, he would be forced to submit to some embarrassing questions. Jacson's generous "mother" is supposed to be in occupied Belgium from which no funds could have been sent since war began in September 1939; during the first year and more of the trial-investigation Mexico was still at peace with Germany and the authorities could have checked up on the "mother" and her funds. But neither the prosecutor nor the investigating judge sought to examine this important question.

The prosecutor and judge did trace Jacson's false passport, and found it to be a Canadian one originally issued to Tony Babich, who died in Spain as a member of the Stalinist-controlled International Brigade. At this point, however, the inquiry into the passport ceased, and the verdict evades commenting on the significance of such a passport. Yet it is a notorious fact that the GPU collected passports of members of the International Brigade and used them for GPU agents.

By giving no consideration to Jacson's source of funds and his passport, the verdict evaded drawing the clear conclusion that Jacson is a GPU agent. It was erroneously reported in the *New Leader* by Victor Serge that the court described Jacson as a "Communist agent." The fact is, however, that the verdict, while mentioning the accusation of Trotsky's widow and friends, evades the issue. It justifies this evasion primarily on the basis that the prosecuting attorney had failed to make the accusation:

"This court does not intend to evaluate those statements which are not included in the accusation [of the prosecuting attorney] and, desiring that this sentence be the result only of the most implacable logic and absolutely founded in legal precepts, thus avoiding all prejudice, without making any statement on the question, limits itself to declaring that, until today, there do not exist proofs that carry legal conviction of the situation or facts described many times by these persons."

As we have seen, however, the court was able to limit itself thus only by failing to investigate Jacson's funds and passport. Thus it evaded not only questions of interpretation but also definite fields of investigation. This constitutes the weak point in the verdict and it is foolish to pretend otherwise. One must add that it was too much to expect that a court of Mexico, member of the "United Nations" and ally of Stalin, would have dotted the i's and crossed the t's to prove that the assassin of Trotsky was Stalin's hireling.

How Some of Our Opponents Behave

Even though diplomatic considerations prevented the court from drawing the clear conclusion, it provided sufficient materials for the conclusion. The most important victory was the court's rejection of the GPU's claim that Jacson was a close friend or secretary of Trotsky. Thereby it destroyed in the eyes of all honest people the attempt of the GPU to divert attention away from its apparatus of assassination. All those who are

seriously interested in fighting against the gangsterism of the GPU must give full publicity to this essential point of the verdict.

Unfortunately, however, the Stalinists are not the only ones who have spoken of the close relations existing between Trotsky and his murderer and of the easy access to Trotsky's house which Jacson and other Stalinist agents enjoyed. J. R. Johnson, in his scurrilous article in the September 1940 *New Internationalist*, attributed the assassin's success to Trotsky's failure to understand men and his willingness to accept as genuine a profession of political agreement from anyone. Natalia refuted Johnson's allegations, proving that, far from "talking politics" with the assassin for six months—so Johnson had asserted—Trotsky had seen him only as the husband of Sylvia Ageloff, for a few visits lasting a few minutes each time. "You have been so carried away by your factionalism that you have lost your moral equilibrium," Natalia warned Johnson. But this warning was lost on him and his kind, including Julian Gorkin and Victor Serge here in Mexico, who made similar statements at a public meeting.

Gorkin made statements tending to identify the martyred Bob Harte as a Stalinist agent. Gorkin stated that Bob Harte's father had declared to the Mexican police that Bob had a picture of Stalin in his room in New York just before he went to serve Trotsky as a secretary-guard. Gorkin added that he had a copy of the elder Harte's statement. When challenged to produce it, he could not. Bob's father had made no such statement to the Mexican police. On the contrary, this rumor first appeared in the Mexican press as a dispatch from New York, after Mr. Harte, who had been in Mexico, had returned to the United States. Trotsky wired him and inquired as to its authenticity. Harte wired back immediately that it was false. All this was explained in the *Fourth International* three years ago, but Gorkin, like Johnson before him, is blinded by his factional hostility to Trotskyism.

During the same speech, Gorkin said that Jacson enjoyed "great facility" in seeing Trotsky whenever he wished, while Trotsky would not receive honorable and known figures of the revolutionary movement (read Gorkin) because they were political adversaries. Besides showing that this was false, Trotskyists present at the meeting indicated that these statements, made in the moments when the summaries were being drawn up for the final hearing of Jacson's trial, could only help the Stalinists, for it was precisely this false conception that formed the basis of Jacson's defense. Gorkin, Serge and company were very much shocked by the suggestion that they were repeating Stalinist lies and assumed a morally indignant attitude. They still pretend that it is merely a question of their right to have different opinion from the Trotskyists, but it is clear that such opinions expressed in public, together with an irresponsible use of false rumors as proof, in reality play into the hand of the GPU. Men with their experience and knowledge of Stalinist methods ought to know how to be more responsible. We can only conclude that their desire to show that Trotsky, the "sectarian," would receive anyone who pretended to side with him politically, and no one who refused to submit to his position, lead them into very dubious moral channels.

The GPU's Problem

As long as he is alive, in jail, Jacson necessarily constitutes a problem for the GPU. There is always the danger that he may reveal his identity if he becomes desperate after long imprisonment, particularly when the international situation changes and a Mexican government unfriendly to Stalin may,

for its own purposes, seek to probe further into the crime. Moreover, for a GPU agent to remain hopelessly in jail is dangerous for the morale of its other agents. It is obvious that the GPU must attempt to get him out or to silence him forever. Mexico has just renewed its relations with the USSR and Konstantin Oumansky is the first ambassador. This sinister figure is well known as an organizer of the GPU.

Recently there have been several cases of "suicides" com-

mitted by murderers in their cells. It is said that the officials are reviving in this form the "ley fuga," the custom of former times of announcing that a prisoner had been shot while trying to escape. Will the GPU liquidate its problem by arranging for a "suicide" by Jason in his cell? Or does it depend, for the present, on some new legal maneuvers, with the help of Siqueiros' "documents," when the appeal is heard October 5?
Mexico, D. F.

The CIO Answer to the Anti-Labor Drive

By FELIX MORROW

The CIO executive board met July 7-9, in what it termed "extraordinary session," to take action against the rising cost of living, wage-freezing, unfair taxation of workers, and anti-labor legislation. In a formula which attributed these evils to Congress alone, the board adopted a program "to convert the present anti-labor Congress into a pro-labor win-the-war-Congress." The program is to be popularized in the unions during the July 9-September 14 recess of Congress, so that when it reconvenes Congress will behave differently than in the session just closed.

This CIO program includes no new legislation or economic demands. In fact, as we shall see, all of it was insisted upon in the early days of the last session of Congress. In analyzing its effectiveness, therefore, the obvious question is posed: why did Congress ride roughshod over the desires of the CIO, and why should the mere repetition of the same desires get any further in the next session of the same Congress?

The answer to this question might conceivably be that the CIO leadership was caught unawares by the anti-labor drive in Congress and did not campaign for its program. But such an answer is refuted by the facts. The Boston convention of the CIO, held in November after the Congressional elections, resounded with warnings that an anti-labor drive would be launched in the new Congress. Then, early in the Congressional session, the CIO executive board's meeting of February 4-6 launched a legislative campaign.

Nor was that merely a CIO campaign. At the end of the first day of that executive board meeting, President Philip Murray called in the press and announced an agreement on joint legislative activity by the CIO, AFL, Railroad Brotherhoods and the National Farmers Union. "This is the first time in the history of the labor movement that such a coalition has been formed," Murray said, pointing out that it would bring the program "of 13 million organized people to Congress." A headline in the February 8 *CIO News* called it a "Labor-Farmer People's Lobby." Presumably that lobby functioned throughout the session of Congress.

The February Program of the CIO

Among the demands launched by that February meeting of the CIO executive board were:

1. "Higher wages to meet rising costs." "Allowance must be made for wage adjustments due to the increased cost of living which has resulted since May, 1942," the date used by the Little Steel formula.

2. *Real price control and rationing*: "the immediate application of an over-all democratic system of rationing of all foods and other necessities. Black markets must be eliminated through an effective enforcement of price ceilings."

3. *Tax on ability to pay*: "The 16 billion dollars asked by

the President . . . must cut sharply into those income brackets in which cuts can be made without endangering the health and productivity of the civilian population. . . . Tax exemption of \$1,500 for married couples, \$800 for single persons and \$400 for dependents." Pay-as-you-go-taxes, but not the Ruml "tax grab for the rich."

The CIO executive board also launched the slogan: "Keep your eye on Congress." Each week under this slogan the *CIO News* listed pending bills, their effect on labor, and what the unions should do about it—usually "wire your Representative."

That campaign was defeated on all three main issues. Instead of higher wages, came wage-freezing. Instead of real price control and rationing, came accelerated price rises and food shortages uncontrolled by rationing—the largest cattle herds in history but workers unable to get meat for their ration coupons. Instead of taxes on ability to pay, the 20 per cent tax on the masses and the Ruml 75 per cent tax grab for the rich.

For, while the CIO leadership urged the workers to "keep your eye on Congress," the unwatched Roosevelt administration dealt the blows. Wages were frozen by the Roosevelt-controlled War Labor Board. Prices were permitted to rise and food shortages developed by the Roosevelt-controlled OPA and War Food Administration. And whatever differences there were between Congress and the Roosevelt administration concerning taxes, they saw eye to eye on the 20 per cent tax on all wages over \$12 a week for single workers and \$24 a week for married couples. There were sharp differences between Roosevelt and Congress, but they were united in their joint assault on the workers' standard of living.

Roosevelt would have dealt these blows against the workers in any event, for a capitalist regime can conduct war only by throwing the burden of the cost upon the workers. But Roosevelt's reactionary task was made quite easy by the servile support he received from the AFL and CIO top leaders. They gave him their no-strike pledge which, so far as the workers observed it, left them without their principal weapon of resistance; and whenever the workers did resort to strikes, the top union leaders joined in treating them as outlaws and hounding them back to work. Likewise the union officialdom surrendered double-time pay for Sundays and holidays. By accepting membership in the War Labor Board, the AFL and CIO leaders gave it an authority and prestige which no law could give it; and then, as accomplices within the board, they did all in their power to cover up the fact that the fundamental policy assigned to the board by Roosevelt was wage-freezing. They likewise pretended to find a non-existent distinction between Roosevelt's policies for the OPA and the War Food Administration and the way in which those policies were carried out by Roosevelt's appointees. In short, the principal reason for the complete failure of the program enunciated by the CIO executive board

meeting of February 4-6 was that in actuality the CIO leadership supported the contrary program of Roosevelt.

The "New" CIO Legislative Program

In the light of these facts, let us now analyze the "new" program laid down by the CIO executive board at its July 7-9 meeting. It consists of three main resolutions published in the *CIO News*. Let us examine them.

I. The first resolution deals with the Smith-Connally Act. It expresses "our deep gratitude" at Roosevelt's veto and makes no attempt to explain how the bill was passed over the veto by a House vote of 244-108 and a Senate vote of 56-25, i.e., by majorities of Roosevelt's own party. It says nothing about Roosevelt's "failure" to notify some thirty New Deal Congressmen who were absent from Washington (nine of them would have been enough to sustain the veto) that he was sending his message to the House. It says nothing about the fact that Roosevelt's veto message specifically endorsed the first seven of the nine provisions of the Smith-Connally Act—the seven outlawing strikes, like that of the miners, in any plant or mine in government custodianship. Instead, the resolution condemns the miners' strikes as the reason why Congress "enacted this vicious anti-labor measure to wreak vengeance for the acts of one individual [Lewis] who flouted the needs of the nation for continuous production of vital war materials, ignored the machinery established for the adjustment of all labor disputes, and recklessly caused a national strike in the coal fields." Thus, to cover up Roosevelt and the Democratic party, the CIO leadership deliberately falsifies the facts and blames John L. Lewis for the anti-labor law.

The resolution then goes on to reiterate the "no strike pledge" to Roosevelt and to call for a campaign to repeal the Smith-Connally Act.

To fight against that law requires a fight against all its supporters—including Roosevelt who supports its first seven provisions. But by covering up Roosevelt's complicity the CIO leadership dooms in advance any action by it against the law.

II. The resolution on prices and wages does not even go as far as the February resolution. At that time the executive board came out for higher wages beyond the Little Steel formula, for it called for wage raises to cover price rises since May 1942, the period to which the Little Steel formula is limited. Now it merely says that it will ask Roosevelt to revise the Little Steel formula "in the event Congress prevents the use of subsidies and thereby prevents the rolling back of prices." This resolution was adopted before Congress adjourned. Since then the CIO national office has announced that it "understands" that President Roosevelt has sufficient authority to use subsidies and roll back prices, hence it will not now call upon him to revise the Little Steel formula.

Why did the CIO executive board formally demand wages beyond the Little Steel formula in February, while now, after five more months of price rises, it drops this demand? The fact is that the February demand did not explicitly demand revision of the Little Steel formula, but such revision would have been required in order to grant the demand for wage raises to cover price rises since May 1942. In February the CIO leadership permitted itself the demagogic gesture of formally making this demand because the average worker then did not understand that realization of this demand meant a finish fight against the Little Steel formula. In the intervening months, however, thanks to the miners' fight, millions of workers have come to understand the wage-freezing role of the Little Steel formula which Roosevelt insists on maintaining. In the face of this widespread understanding, repetition of the February demand would be

taken by the CIO workers as a signal to fight against the Little Steel formula. So the CIO leadership drops the demand!

Instead of wage raises, it offers the workers the illusion that Roosevelt may still roll back prices. He is to do so by two methods:

(1) Stricter enforcement of price controls by the OPA. But the Roosevelt-controlled OPA has had all the necessary powers at least since the price control law of October 2, 1942, and yet price rises have accelerated since then.

It has become clear that capitalist bureaucrats neither can nor will curb capitalist profiteering price rises. This fact is implicitly admitted by the CIO resolution when it calls upon the OPA to utilize "the assistance of labor organizations and other local groups of consumers and housewives" to help impose "severe penalties upon price violators and operators of black markets." There is the core of an important truth here: only mass control of prices by a broad network of committees of labor organizations and housewives could hold back price rises. But this correct idea is completely perverted by the resolution when it leaves to the OPA the initiative of summoning such mass control into existence. We will wait until Doomsday before President Roosevelt and his OPA appointees will summon the masses to organize such a broad network of price-policing. Such a network would give a tremendous impetus to the class struggle, arousing the masses against the whole system of capitalist profits. Roosevelt would no more do that than he would call for the overthrow of capitalism.

(2) Prices are to be rolled back by subsidies. This idea is false for many reasons, first of all because the capitalists who are flouting price-controls anyway would scarcely be bought off by subsidies; they would pocket the subsidies and prices would rise anyway, if not at the point of manufacture, then at that of the wholesaler or jobber, the chain store, etc. Moreover, the method of subsidies cannot work now, if we take the figures cited in the CIO resolution which declares: "At least two billion dollars is necessary for this program to be effective. Any smaller appropriation is but a token gesture." Afterward, the CIO national office announced it "understands" Roosevelt has the authority and funds. But OPA Administrator Prentiss M. Brown, at a press conference July 15, gave the figure of \$455,000,000—less than one-fourth the figure cited as necessary by the CIO resolution—as the amount he has "authority to spend" on subsidies. As to the effectiveness of this method, there is a "rollback program" of subsidies now operating on meats and butter—every housewife who now pays fantastic prices for these items, when she does not come home empty-handed altogether, can testify what a fraud this program is.

III. Finally, there is the resolution for "joint action" with the AFL and the Railroad Brotherhoods

"on all issues directed toward an intensified prosecution of the war, the protection of organized labor against its enemies, a fuller participation of labor in the war effort, and for a complete mobilization of the people in support of the war program of our Commander-in-Chief, Franklin D. Roosevelt."

This support of Roosevelt will take the concrete form, concludes the resolution, of

"local mobilization of the people in order that they may on an organized basis create the means for communicating to the Congressmen, as they return home during the coming recess and thereafter when they return to Congress, the determination of all true Americans to preserve our democratic institutions such as labor unions and to support our Commander-in-Chief in his challenge to the Nation for a more vigorous and affirmative prosecution of the war."

Since the CIO board meeting, this proposition has been the main point of CIO publicity, which incessantly repeats the

formula "convert the present anti-labor Congress into a pro-labor win-the-war Congress." This is to be done by inviting Congressmen to address local union meetings, sending delegations to see Congressmen, etc. in order to get them to . . . support Roosevelt.

Compare the July program of the CIO leadership with its February program, and one sees that nothing has been added, while the demand for immediate wage raises beyond the Little Steel formula has been dropped. Both programs absolve Roosevelt of any responsibility for the attack on the workers' living standards and attribute them entirely to Congress. One can only characterize them as programs deliberately designed to deceive the workers about Roosevelt's role.

Above all, both programs conceal the fact that Roosevelt's "win-the-war" program is the classical capitalist method of waging war: profiteering for the big corporations, while wage-freezing, price-rises and taxation places the burden of the war on the workers. If the February "demands" of the CIO brought labor to its present plight, the July program will lead to an even more terrible fiasco.

The Real Aim of Hillman's Conferences

To line up Congress for Roosevelt, the CIO executive board set up a Political Action Committee, headed by Sidney Hillman.

This committee got to work with a speed unusual for top trade union bodies. Already the first of a series of regional conferences has been held, in Philadelphia July 17, with delegates announced as present from CIO unions in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and the New England states. A similar meeting is announced for July 22 at Chicago.

Hillman's keynote speech in Philadelphia called for supporting candidates in the 1944 election, "regardless of their political affiliation," who "have demonstrated their consistent and unequivocal support of President Roosevelt on all major issues, domestic and foreign."

"Regardless of their political affiliation" in reality means candidates of the capitalist parties and opposition to the formation of an independent labor party on a national scale or even the nomination of their own candidates by the already-existing American Labor Party of New York, the American Labor League of New Jersey and the Progressive Labor League of Michigan. The statement adopted by the regional conference in Philadelphia opposed "a third party in 1944" because "such a party would today only serve to divide and divert the labor and progressive forces from our main task—unity for the election of progressive win-the-war candidates who fully support our Commander-in-Chief, regardless of party affiliations."

These regional conferences, so-called, are in reality gatherings of hand-picked officials, who come without prior consultation of their members on the questions at issue. Philadelphia was picked for the first conference because the Pennsylvania CIO leadership is close to Murray and Hillman's views, and these were buttressed by delegations from the politically-backward CIO unions in the New England states, Delaware and Maryland, making it possible to smother the pro-labor party elements from New York and New Jersey. Likewise the second regional conference was scheduled for Chicago, so that the Murray-Hillman elements in Illinois and neighboring states, together with Stalinist-controlled unions can smother the pro-labor party elements from Michigan.

Thus these artificially-constructed conferences are designed to create a counter-atmosphere to that of the May convention of the American Labor League, representing about 300,000 CIO

and AFL workers, which voted to take steps toward a labor party; and the even more important action of the June 30- July 2 Michigan state convention of the CIO, representing 700,000 workers, which called for formation of an independent labor party in that state. With the ALP in New York and these actions in New Jersey and Michigan, a considerable section of the labor movement is already moving toward a labor party. Hillman is leading a desperate drive to head this off and turn the CIO back into the channels of the Democratic party.

Everything that the Hillman conferences are now saying was said by the AFL and CIO leadership in the November 1942 election campaign. With what result? As the Gallup poll recorded, "Labor unions turned out fewer [voters] in proportion to their numbers than any of the other major groups." As the June labor party resolution of Michigan's Labor's Non-Partisan League (now the Progressive League) pointed out, "Union members are becoming more and more reluctant to participate in election campaigns for the support of old-line politicians or the candidates of the two major political parties."

The Coming Program of the CIO

Already, then, one can say that the answer to labor's plight given by the July meeting of the CIO executive board does not correspond to the desires of the CIO membership. The board is constituted by one from each International union and his vote, in many cases, violated the plain wishes of his union or of a large part of its membership. R. J. Thomas of the UAW and John Green of the shipyard workers voted for the retention of the Little Steel formula. Yet the UAW has been officially on record, since the Cleveland meeting of its executive board in April, for scrapping the Little Steel formula; while the shipyard workers are now in the midst of negotiations in which they are officially demanding wage raises beyond the Little Steel formula. The same is true of many other CIO unions. By what authority did the UAW officials support the clause in the resolution condemning the miners' strike, when the overwhelming majority of the membership—in the Michigan UAW conference of May 1-2 and the Eastern conference of 1,000 delegates on May 6 in New York—specifically endorsed the miners' fight? The unconditional reiteration of the no-strike pledge was made in flagrant opposition to the will of the Michigan CIO convention which recommended "to all of the affiliated unions and to the CIO that unless assurances that were made to labor are immediately and effectively put into operation, we consider our no-strike pledge no longer binding." By what moral right did United Rubber Workers President Dalrymple, vote for the no-strike pledge reiteration, when the majority of his union, the Akron workers, had just shown their hostility to it on the picket line?

By the device of recognizing as "official" labor opinion only the line of the CIO executive board and its AFL counterpart, the government can pretend to have labor's support for its policies. This governmental insistence that only these top boards speak for the workers in turn serves to discourage the workers in the local unions from expressing their real sentiments. But this process has its limits, as is indicated by the examples we have just cited in which CIO executive board members had to openly violate the will of their members. The sporadic indications of the will of the membership tend to become more systematic. On various levels—in progressive groups within local unions, in the official position of local unions, in minorities and majorities in state bodies, etc.—there is crystallizing a very different answer to labor's plight than that just given by the CIO executive board.

The Roosevelt Regime in Crisis

By WILLIAM F. WARDE

The Roosevelt regime which has successfully sailed through ten years of stormy weather is now undergoing its most serious crisis. This many-sided crisis has already involved Roosevelt's relations to his own party, to Congress, to the capitalist class, to organized labor and to the Negro people.

One infallible symptom of the inroads made by the crisis is the dissension in the topmost ranks of the administration which has exploded in public rows and resignations. Most important of these is the brawl between Vice-President Wallace and RFC Administrator Jones. While the President appeals for "national unity," his Vice-President accuses one of the most influential members of his cabinet with obstructing the prosecution of the war by refusing to buy essential materials.

The dispute involves issues of greater consequence than Wallace's charges against Jones. It must be viewed as an episode in the struggle being waged within Democratic ruling circles to decide who shall control the Democratic Party and what shall its policies be?

The heterogeneous Democratic Party mirrors the social structure of the country within its sprawling framework. Through the Southern poll-tax politicians and representatives of Wall Street it is directly connected on its right with the big capitalist interests. Roosevelt's faction is propped up on one side by the Boss Hague, Kelly-Nash and similiar machines and on the other side by the New Deal liberals. Its popular support has been derived from the leftward-inclined middle class elements and especially from organized labor which constitutes the left wing of the Democratic Party.

There are no fundamental differences between these three main groupings on foreign policy. All are united behind Roosevelt's war program. Their oppositions arise and their conflicts have developed over domestic affairs. The big-capitalist Democrats want to remove all restraints upon profiteering and to speed the administration's anti-labor drive. While bound to the same program, Roosevelt and his entourage want to proceed more gradually and cautiously in order to keep their labor following in line.

Wallace is a spokesman of the New Dealers and the union officialdom, their favorite candidate as Roosevelt's successor. His attack upon the Texas banker Jones is a defensive blow struck on behalf of these forces in their life-and-death fight against the Bourbon bloc. It was an act of futility and despair. Squeezed between the reactionary right wing and the restless laborites on their left, the New Dealers have been suffering continual setbacks. They no longer exercise decisive influence in formulating government policies.

Now, in the midst of battle, they have been deserted by their chief. Roosevelt has capitulated to the Bourbon bloc which is virtually dictating national policy through him and his Assistant-President Byrnes and plans to regain complete control over the Democratic organization by 1944. This was demonstrated by Roosevelt's settlement of the Wallace-Jones controversy. While ostensibly rebuking both, in reality Wallace was stripped of all authority and a conservative banker-friend of Jones was given charge of the foreign purchase of strategic materials.

Interlinked with this struggle for supremacy between the factions within the Democratic Party is the conflict between the President and Congress. In nine months there has been a sharp and sudden reversal in the relations between the execu-

tive and legislative branches of the capitalist government. For the past decade Roosevelt has ruled Washington like an absolute monarch. His waning authority was bolstered and heightened by the declaration of war. Last September Roosevelt was ordering Congress to pass wage-freezing legislation within thirty days or else he would institute the necessary edicts by decree. This is the language of Bonapartism.

"The Victory Congress"

Since January, however, the tables have been turned. Congress has been laying down the law to the President, ignoring or violating his recommendations, overriding his vetoes. The Senate, for example, rejected his nominations of Democratic National Chairman Flynn as Minister to Australia and of ex-Governor of Texas Allred as Circuit Court Judge. Congress cut the appropriations of the OWI; held up the salaries of New Deal appointees suspected of "communism" that is, liberalism and Stalinism; abolished the National Resources Planning Board, the National Youth Administration and other pet projects of the New Deal reformers. The general aim of these actions was to strike at Roosevelt and to cut down the influence of his liberal supporters. Many right-wing Democrats joined with the Republicans in this effort.

This reassertion of Congressional reaction is directly attributable to the November elections. The sweeping victories of the anti-New Deal Democrats and Republicans in these elections were taken by Big Business and its political agents as the signal for launching a broad offensive against the working masses. They were further emboldened by the passivity and servility of the AFL-CIO leaders and their treacherous policies of economic surrender to the employers and political subservience to Roosevelt.

The Murray-Green-Hillman gang, together with the Social-Democratic snivellers and the Stalinist strike-breakers, exhort the workers to back up Roosevelt's war program in order to ward off reaction, to maintain their economic and social gains, and to protect their democratic rights. In view of their totally false and fatal arguments, it is essential to note that the present Congress is a 100 per cent "Win-the-War" outfit. When it assembled on January 6th, it was hailed by the capitalist press as "The Victory Congress." In the next six months this super-patriotic body appropriated 110 billions of dollars, giving everything demanded by the Army, Navy and Maritime Commissions. "On questions touching on the war and foreign policy," remarked the *New York Times* on July 8th, "Mr. Roosevelt met with little opposition."

Moreover, this Congress was controlled by Roosevelt's own Democratic Party. All this did not prevent it from being the most savagely reactionary Congress in recent years.

These capitalist politicians know, what the trade union bureaucrats try to conceal from the workers, that profits make the war go. So, in addition to appropriating all that the armed forces requested, Congress voted for the rest of the capitalist program. After a fierce fight, Congress pushed through the Roosevelt-Ruml tax bill which wiped out 75 per cent of the 1942 tax obligations of the upper-income bracketeers and set the stage for harsher taxes on low incomes. It blocked any limitations upon corporation executive salaries and refused to touch tax-exempt securities. In the interests of the food profiteers,

it further crippled the already feeble OPA; passed price-raising bills; forbade grade-labeling.

The anti-poll tax and anti-lynch bills were pocketed. Opposing any new social-security reforms, the Democratic-Republican coalition applied the axe to the pro-labor legislation and progressive measures enacted in pre-war days. The Smith-Connally Act outlawed strikes; deprived the unions of mutual aid; nullified their political rights. Congress introduced provisions for protecting company unions into the National Labor Relations Act as a step towards wiping the latter entirely off the statute books.

This "Victory Congress" gave one victory after another to the plutocrats and profiteers. It inflicted devastating defeats upon the workers and the mass of American people. This was the joint work of Roosevelt, his Democratic Party and its Republican collaborators. This is where grovelling acquiescence in Roosevelt's "Win-the-War" program by the union bureaucrats has led the labor movement.

The Developing Social Crisis

While Roosevelt's power was being challenged in his own party and curtailed by Congress, his administration has been still further shaken by two great events which broke out in the arena of the class struggle: the mine strikes and the lynch attacks upon the Negroes. These outbreaks revealed, like lightning-flashes, the real nature of the forces which are upsetting Roosevelt's regime. The political crisis of the administration can be seen in its true light as one expression of the nascent social crisis of American capitalism. The so-called "Battle of Washington" likewise takes its place as a political refraction of the class conflicts seething throughout the country.

The essence of this crisis consists in the fact that the war into which the capitalist class has plunged the American people is accelerating the decomposition of the capitalist system in its strongest sector. The ruling monopolists, here as elsewhere, are literally leading the nation into bankruptcy and propelling it into outright reaction. Roosevelt's promises and phrases can no longer hide the realities of this situation. Instead of "The People's Revolution" and "The Century of the Common Man" heralded by Wallace, since 1940 the American masses have experienced a bacchanal of war profiteering and the onrush of political reaction. They face increasing impoverishment, insecurity, bloody sacrifices, and ruin.

These economic and political consequences of the war are responsible for the fierce manifestations of class feeling which are beginning to break out with irrepressible force. As class antagonisms mount and sharpen, record quantities of explosives are being accumulated, not only in "the arsenals of democracy," but also in the sphere of the class struggle. A grave social crisis is issuing out of the profound changes wrought by the war in the material circumstances, the mentalities, and the relationships of the contending class forces. This in turn is generating the various conflicts, crises, and realignments which are going on in Washington and transforming American political life.

The initiative in this situation has been taken by the agents of the capitalist class who have all the levers of power in their hands. After wrecking the living standards of the masses, the monopolists are obliged to place heavier chains upon them and rob them of all democratic rights in order to protect privileges, and profits from the indignant revulsion of the people. Above all, Big Business seeks to take advantage of the war and its mastery over the government to settle accounts with its main enemy at home: the organized labor movement.

Through the Roosevelt administration the capitalist rulers are conducting two simultaneous struggles. While engaged in

crushing their imperialist rivals abroad and reaching out to conquer the world, they aim to cripple and, if possible, to destroy the power of American labor. The monopolists are heading for a showdown with organized labor not after the war but right now in the midst of the war. They have most compelling economic and political reasons for an immediate offensive against the unions.

The costs of the war are so enormous that, in order to safeguard their superprofits and finance their international undertakings and commitments, the capitalists cannot give further material concessions, reforms or even promises to the masses. They certainly cannot grant bonuses or inducements to the top layers of the industrial workers. As the revolt of the formen in Ford and other plants indicate, they cannot even afford to take care of their superintending personnel.

The big industrialists realize, far better than the workers, that wartime inflation has only begun. As the war is prolonged the conditions of the workers will be progressively worsened; the consequent suffering and privations will drive them to demand higher wages; these demands will lead to severe clashes on an ever-extended scale. The present offensive that Big Business has launched against the unions through Roosevelt, Congress, the state legislatures and the press is only the first big push in its war to the knife against the workers.

These are the fundamental motives and calculations behind the anti-labor drive and the intransigence of the coal barons in their dealings with the miners. This is why Roosevelt is bent upon making his Little Steel starvation formula prevail; why he issued his "hold-the-line" order; why he has erected the WLB as a barricade against any economic advance of the workers.

Revolt of the Workers

While the plutocrats conspire, the workers are being hard hit. They entered the war without over-much enthusiasm, believing there was no other way open to them to fight fascism and to defend their gains. The majority trusted in Roosevelt and his policies. The war boom provided a substantial material basis for confidence in his regime and its security. These general conditions and the illusions bred by them enabled the union bureaucracy to hitch the entire labor movement behind Roosevelt's war-machinery and to subordinate the workers to the program of the capitalists.

As their material circumstances have deteriorated and they have been battered about during the first eighteen months of the war, these illusions of the workers have been wearing thin. Sky-rocketing prices, scarcity of goods and food, intolerable taxes aggravated by the ever-increasing harshness of Roosevelt's labor policies (the no-strike pledge, the burial of grievances and denial of demands by the WLB, wage-and-job freezing, and, finally, the Smith-Connally Act) have aroused vast masses of workers into indignant protest.

The strikes of the miners, rubber and auto workers must be regarded as the first mass economic actions against Roosevelt's pro-capitalist labor policies. It was at the same time the first big open test of strength between capital and labor since the war started. The coal operators headed by U. S. Steel and the House of Morgan utilized the negotiations with the miners to probe the labor movement's powers of resistance; to determine how far they could push the President and Congress against the workers; and how far they could proceed at this time in slashing living standards and undermining the unions.

Despite the magnificent fight against overpowering odds waged by the miners, who had the employers, the whole government apparatus, the President, official public opinion, most

of the CIO-AFL bureaucrats and the Stalinist scabs arrayed against them, the bosses and their government agents made advances in their campaign against the workers. The miners failed to win their demands while the furor whipped up against organized labor helped Roosevelt and Congress to put over the Smith-Connally Act.

But this is only the first encounter in a series of class combats which will take on wider and wider dimensions as the social crisis deepens and develops.

Significance of the Anti-Negro Attacks

The consequences of the war and the calamities of the social crisis weigh most heavily upon the thirteen million Negroes who are doubly oppressed by the capitalist exploiters and the Jim Crow system. This has intensified their determination to utilize the war crisis to fight for full social, political and economic equality.

The capitalists for their part are equally adamant in denying equality to the Negroes in everyday life, in industry, or in the armed forces. They have received aid from Roosevelt, Congress and all the constituted authorities in keeping the Negroes in their place at the bottom of American society. But these agencies no longer suffice. They have accordingly decided to call forth their illegal lynch-mobs to terrorize and put down the colored people. This is the class aim promoted by the epidemic of assaults against the Negroes.

It was not accidental that the labor-baiting campaign of the bosses, the insults against the miners and the attacks upon the Negroes occurred simultaneously. All arise from the same basic social conditions and economic causes and serve the political purposes of the ruling class. Since the capitalists cannot prevent the ravaging discontent which flows from the social crisis like pus from a running sore, they strive to deflect the wrath of the people away from themselves and their system. They seek to involve the masses and exhaust their energies in bitter recriminations and reprisals against each other. Thus the conscious and unconscious tools of the American plutocracy are now zealously at work inflaming the middle classes against organized labor and inciting backward workers against such minority groups as the Negroes and Mexicans.

Every progressive and potentially anti-capitalist force is made the target of venomous and brutal attacks by the mouthpieces and agents of capitalist reaction. The miners are blasted with slander by the whole artillery of the capitalist press and radio because they dare fight for their rights. The Negroes are assaulted because they are trying to break through the iron ring of the Jim Crow system. The labor movement is assailed and blackened day in and day out. Anti-fascist revolutionary socialist papers like *The Militant* are denied second-class mailing rights.

Every worker ought to understand the underlying meaning and the inner connection of these official and unofficial attacks. They are concerted moves in the drive of the capitalist class to bludgeon the labor movement and impose their dictatorial rule upon the American people. The terrorist assaults upon the Negroes serve the same political ends as the Nazi pogroms against the Jews. The incitement of the middle-classes against the unions and the mobilization of sentiment against the miners likewise prepare the atmosphere for more direct and violent attacks upon organized labor. These are signs of the growth of those ultra-reactionary moods and movements which precede the rise and formation of fascism.

Broad layers of the middle classes are being expropriated, impoverished, ruined by the war. Many think or feel: things are going very bad for us and getting worse. And they are looking around for scapegoats to blame for their mastery.

Part of their resentment has been directed against Roosevelt as the author of their ills. Disillusioned with the administration and offered no progressive alternative by the labor leadership, they have returned in flocks toward the Republican Party. This was demonstrated by the November election returns. The anti-union agitators of the bosses find a receptive audience for their propaganda amongst the upper layers of the middle classes. The Peglers and Rickenbackers appeal to their prejudices against the unions, arouse them against the bungling bureaucrats in Washington, etc.

In their present reactionary moods the most desperate among them are becoming disposed to embrace even worse forms of reaction than Republicanism. The Fascist demagogues find their human material in such sections of the petty bourgeoisie. From the most frenzied strata of the middle classes incensed against the Roosevelt regime and incited against the workers, from the most backward workers, from slum, gangster and hoodlum elements, the servants of the monopolist masters of America are beginning to recruit their first fascist legions and storm-troop squads. Detachments of these incipient fascist forces and formations are being propagandized and trained in these trial campaigns against the Negroes, against the miners, against the unions. These tendencies represent the gravest danger to the labor movement. It is necessary to warn the workers against them the moment they raise their heads.

Roosevelt and the Crisis

These are the underlying social processes which have bred the discords in Roosevelt's regime and threaten its eventual collapse. How is Roosevelt behaving in this crisis and where is his administration going??

The Roosevelt regime is essentially a political instrument of monopoly capitalist rule. But it is a special kind of political agency of the big bourgeoisie. It has been a liberal-reformist government in the richest of bourgeois democracies with the strongest labor movement in the capitalist world. Hitherto Roosevelt has ruled by catering to the petty-bourgeois and proletarian masses, giving them promises and hand-outs. By such methods he was able to preserve their hopes in an improvement of the situation and to maintain himself in power.

Now the changed conditions and policies of American capitalism arising out of the war are compelling Roosevelt to change his course and his methods of rule. He can no longer dispense alms and favors to the middle-classes or make concessions to the unions. Nor can he continue to play the role of impartial referee in the conflicts between capital and organized labor and expect his decisions to go unchallenged.

Those pre-war days are gone forever. The Roosevelt of today and tomorrow must come forth as the undisguised exponent and pitiless executor of the war-policies of America's Sixty Families, which require patronage of the profiteers, regimentation of labor, impoverishment of the masses. Since the war began Roosevelt has been steadily shifting from his pre-war policies of appeasing the masses to his present policy of appeasing the capitalists.

His greatest difficulties come from his connections with organized labor and coalition with the trade union leadership. Roosevelt finds himself caught in this contradiction. As the commander-in-chief of the ruling capitalist class, he must retain enough popular support to keep control of his organization and be reelected in 1944. Moreover, Roosevelt senses the mighty force contained even in the present subdued state of the labor movement. These factors restrain Roosevelt from proceeding too rapidly and ruthlessly against the labor movement.

This hesitancy was reflected in Roosevelt's behind-the-scene maneuvers and waverings during the four-month coal crisis and by his refusal to take personal responsibility for the Smith-Connally Act. At the showdown he took a strong and sharp stand against the workers — but he tried to drag out matters, postpone decisions, becloud the issues. Roosevelt's duplicity and vacillations inexorably flow from his efforts to administer an anti-labor policy with the aid of his labor lieutenants and without alienating the mass of workers.

The Roosevelt regime is now approaching the critical point in its transition from collaboration and compromise with organized labor to outright opposition and open combat against the unions. Roosevelt preserved supremacy and stability in the Democratic Party and in the government by checking his right wing against the left and balancing himself between the contending forces of capital and labor. Now the widening gulf between Big Business and the labor movement exhibited in the rifts between the factions in his own party and the pressure of a reactionary Congress leaves him less and less room for maneuvers and compromises.

Roosevelt must choose between incompatible alternatives: either retain firm and friendly ties with the unions or wholeheartedly and unreservedly embrace the ultra-reactionary capitalist program. Here, too, Roosevelt tries to evade and postpone a definitive decision. But all the reactionary forces in the country, in his own party, and in Washington are bearing down upon his administration and forcing him to show his true colors. Roosevelt's grip upon his own party and its apparatus is weakening. After his defeat by the Farley group in the key state of New York and then in the 1942 elections, he has had to yield more and more to his right wing and to the Big Business-Bourbon bloc in Congress.

Despite its zigzags, the main trend of the Roosevelt administration is unmistakably to the right, toward a break with the entire labor movement, or at least its progressive sections.

At the end of the road of reaction it is travelling lies the naked military dictatorship of monopoly capitalism over the American people. This has been foreshadowed by Roosevelt's threat of military conscription against the striking miners and his conniving with Congress to rush through the Smith-Connally Act.

The previous social supports of Roosevelt's regime are crumbling on all sides. Representatives of the monopolists inside and outside his party are seizing upon all the mistakes and weaknesses of his administration to drive it ever faster along the path of repression. They are plotting to dislodge and destroy the influence of Roosevelt's New Deal supporters, and eventually to replace Roosevelt, if necessary, with an even more repressive agent. Discontented middle class elements are turning away from his regime. His northern Negro followers more and more resent his patronage and protection of Jim Crowism.

On the left the most progressive, class-conscious and militant workers, taking alarm at Roosevelt's anti-labor actions, are also beginning to break with him. This revolt of a significant section of advanced workers against Roosevelt's dictatorship over the labor movement marks a turning point in American political history. The introductory pages of this new chapter in the political development of the American working class are now being written in the growing trend toward independent political action.

As this development matures, it will generate deeper and more irreconcilable cleavages in the Democratic Party. That party and its leader cannot long maintain the predominance they have held since 1932. Along with the decomposition of American capitalism, the destructive consequences of its war, the decline in Roosevelt's prestige, the Democratic Party must disintegrate and go down in disgrace, dragging along with it into bankruptcy all those associated with its deceitful and discredited policies.

From the Arsenal of Marxism

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following speech by Trotsky was delivered in Moscow on December 28, 1922, to a session of the Communist fraction of the Tenth All-Union Congress of the Soviets, with non-party delegates participating. The Fourth World Congress of the Communist International had just taken place from November 5 to December 3—the last of the congresses led by Lenin and Trotsky.

As Trotsky obliquely indicates in his opening remarks, there was already to be noticed in the Soviet press a turning away from the international scene—one of the first signs of the reaction on which Stalin rode to power. This reaction, in turn, was primarily the result of the failure of the revolution in Western Europe, the causes of which Trotsky deals with in this speech. During the next year—1923—came a new

revolutionary opportunity in Germany; but it was missed precisely because of the immaturity of the Communist Party of Germany with which Trotsky deals here. This failure, in turn, deepened the reaction in the Soviet Union, enabling Stalin to seize control of the Comintern and pervert it into an agency of Kremlin foreign policy.

This is the first publication of this speech in English. Translation by John G. Wright.

Report on the Communist International

By LEON TROTSKY

Comrades:

You have invited me to make a report on the recent Congress of the Communist International. I take this to mean that what you want is not a factual review of the work of the last Congress, since if that were the case it would be much more expedient to turn to the minutes of the proceedings, already available in printed bulletins, rather than listen to a report. My

task, as I understand it, is to try to give you an evaluation of the general situation of the revolutionary movement and its perspectives in the light of those facts and questions that faced us at the Fourth World Congress.

Naturally this presupposes a greater or lesser degree of acquaintance with the condition of the international revolutionary movement. Let me remark parenthetically that our press,

unfortunately, does far from everything it should in order to acquaint us as intimately with facts of the world labor movement, especially the Communist movement, as it does, say, with facts relating to our economic life, to our Soviet construction. But to us these are manifestations of equal importance. For my part, I have resorted more than once (contrary to my custom) to partisan actions in order to get our press to utilize the exceptional opportunities at our disposal and to provide our party with a complete, concrete and precise picture of what is taking place in the sphere of revolutionary struggle, doing this from day to day without commentaries, directives or generalizations (for we need generalizations only from time to time), but simply supplying facts and material from the internal life of the communist parties.

I think that on this point the pressure of the party public opinion ought to be brought to bear on the press, whose editorial boards read the foreign press, proferring on the basis of this press generalizations from time to time, but almost no factual material. But inasmuch as gathered here is the fraction of the Soviet Congress and, consequently, highly qualified party elements, I shall assume for the purpose of my report a general acquaintance with the actual condition of the communist parties and the other parties which still wield influence in the workers' movement. My task is to submit to verification our general criteria, our views on the conditions for and the tempos of the development of the proletarian revolution from the standpoint of new facts, and in particular those facts which were supplied us by the Fourth Congress of the Comintern.

Comrades, I wish to say at the very outset that if we aim not to become confused and not to lose our perspective, then in evaluating the labor movement and its revolutionary possibilities we ought to bear in mind that there are three major spheres which, although inter-connected, differ profoundly from one another. First, there is Europe; second—America; and third—the colonial countries, that is, primarily Asia and Africa. The need of analyzing the world labor movement in terms of these three spheres flows from the essence of our revolutionary criteria.

The Pre-requisites for Revolution

Marxism teaches us that in order for the proletarian revolution to become possible there must be given, schematically speaking, three premises or conditions. In the first place the conditions of production. The technology of production must have attained such heights as to provide economic gains from the replacement of capitalism by socialism. Secondly, there must be a class interested in effecting this change and sufficiently strong to achieve it, that is, a class numerically large enough and playing a sufficiently important role in economy to introduce this change. The reference here, is of course, to the working class. And thirdly, this class must be prepared to carry through the revolution. It must have the will to carry it out, and must be sufficiently organized and conscious to be capable of carrying it out. We pass here into the field of the so-called subjective conditions and pre-requisites for the proletarian revolution. If with these three criteria—productive-technological, social-class and subjective-political—we approach the three spheres indicated by me, then the difference between them becomes strikingly apparent. True enough, we used to view the question of mankind's readiness for socialism from the productive-technological standpoint much more abstractly than we do now. If you consult our old books, even those not yet outdated, you will find in them an absolutely correct estimate that capitalism had already outlived itself 15, 20, 25 and 30 years ago.

In what sense was this intended? In the sense that 25 years ago, and more, the replacement of the capitalist method of production by socialist methods would have already represented objective economic gains, that is, mankind would have produced more under socialism than under capitalism. But 25-30 years ago this still did not signify that productive forces were no longer capable of development under capitalism. We know that throughout the whole world, including Europe and especially in Europe which has until comparatively recent times played the leading economic and financial role in the world, the productive forces still continued to develop. And we are now able to point out the year up to which they continued to develop in Europe: the year 1913. This means that up to that year capitalism represented not an absolute but a relative obstacle to the development of the productive forces. In the technological sense, Europe developed with unprecedented speed and power from 1894 to 1913, that is to say, Europe became economically enriched during the 20 years which preceded the imperialist war. Beginning with 1913—and we can say this with complete certainty—the development of capitalism, of its productive forces, came to a halt one year before the outbreak of the war because the productive forces ran up against the limits fixed for them by capitalist property and the capitalist form of appropriation. The market was divided, competition was brought to its intensest pitch, and henceforth capitalist countries could seek to remove one another from the market only by mechanical means.

It is not the war that put a stop to the development of productive forces in Europe, but rather the war itself arose from the impossibility of the productive forces to develop further in Europe under the conditions of capitalist economy. The year 1913 marks the great turning point in the evolution of European economy. The war acted only to deepen and sharpen this crisis which flowed from the fact that further economic development within the conditions of capitalism was absolutely impossible. This applies to Europe as a whole. Consequently, if before 1913 we were conditionally correct in saying that socialism is more advantageous than capitalism, then since 1913 capitalism already signifies a condition of absolute stagnation and disintegration for Europe, while socialism provides the only economic salvation. This renders more precise our views with respect to the first pre-requisite for the proletarian revolution.

The second pre-requisite: the working class. It must become sufficiently powerful in the economic sense in order to gain power and rebuild society. Does this fact obtain today? After the experience of our Russian revolution it is no longer possible to raise this issue, inasmuch as the October revolution became possible in our backward country. But we have learned in recent years to evaluate the social power of the proletariat on the world scale in a somewhat new way and much more precisely and concretely. Those naive, pseudo-Marxist views which demanded that the proletariat comprise 75 or 90 per cent of the population before taking power—these views now appear as absolutely infantile. Even in countries where the peasantry comprises the majority of the population the proletariat can and must find a road to the peasantry in order to achieve the conquest of power. Absolutely alien to us is any sort of reformist opportunism in relation to the peasantry. But at the same time, no less alien to us is dogmatism. The working class in all countries plays a sufficiently great social and economic role in order to be able to find a road to the peasant masses and to the oppressed nationalities and the colonial peoples, and in this way assures itself of the majority. After the experience of the Russian revolution this is not a presumption, nor a hypo-

thesis, nor a conclusion, but an incontestable fact.

And, finally, the third pre-requisite: the working class must be ready for the overturn and capable of achieving it. The working class not only must be sufficiently powerful for it, but must be conscious of its power and must be able to apply this power. Today we can and must analyze and render more precise this subjective factor: We have witnessed in the political life of Europe, during the post war years, that the working class is ready for the overturn, ready in the sense of subjectively striving for it, ready in terms of will, mood, self-sacrifice but still lacking the necessary organizational leadership. Consequently, the mood of the class and its organizational consciousness do not always coincide. Our revolution, thanks to an exceptional combination of historical factors, gave our backward country the possibility of bringing about the transfer of power into the hands of the working class, in a direct alliance with the peasant masses. The role of the party is only too clear to us and, fortunately, it is today already clear to the Western-European communist parties. Not to take the role of the party into account is to fall into pseudo-Marxist objectivism which presupposes some sort of purely objective and automatic preparation of the revolution, and thereby postpones the latter to an indefinite future. This automatism is alien to us. This is a Menshevik, a social-democratic world outlook. We know, we have learned in practice, and we are teaching others to understand the enormous role of the subjective, conscious factor that the revolutionary party of the working class represents.

Without our part the 1917 overturn would not, of course, have taken place and the entire fate of the country would have been different. It would have been thrown back to vegetate as a colonial country; it would have been plundered by and divided among the imperialist countries of the world. That this did not happen was guaranteed historically by the arming of the working class with the incomparable sword, our communist party. This did not obtain in post-war Europe.

Two of the three necessary pre-requisites were given: long before the war the relative advantages of socialism, and since 1913 and all the more so after the war, the absolute necessity of socialism. Europe is decaying and disintegrating economically without it. This is a fact. The working class in Europe no longer continues to grow. Its destiny, its class destiny, corresponds and runs parallel to the development of economy. To the extent that European economy, with inevitable fluctuations, suffers stagnation and even disintegration, to that extent the working class, as a class, fails to grow socially, ceases to increase numerically but suffers from unemployment, the terrible oscillations of the reserve army of labor, etc., etc. The war roused the working class to its feet in the revolutionary sense. Was it capable of carrying out the revolution before the war? What did it lack? It lacked the consciousness of its own power. Its power grew in Europe automatically, almost imperceptibly, with the growth of industry. The war shook up the working class. Because of this terrible bloody upheaval, the entire working class in Europe was imbued with the revolutionary mood on the very next day after the war. Consequently, one of the subjective factors—the striving to change this world—was on hand. What was lacking? The party was lacking, the party capable of leading the working class to victory.

The Revolutionary Wave, 1927-1921

This is how the events of the revolution unfolded within our country and abroad. In 1917, the February-March revolution; within nine months—October: the revolutionary party guarantees victory to the working class and peasant poor. In 1918 revolution in Germany, accompanied by changes at the

top; the working class tries to forge ahead but is smashed time and again. The proletarian revolution in Germany does not lead to victory. In 1919, the eruption of the Hungarian proletarian revolution: the base is too narrow and the party too weak. The revolution is crushed in a few months in 1919. By 1920, the situation has already changed and it continues to change more and more sharply.

There is a historical date in France—May 1, 1920—when a sharp turn took place in the relation of forces between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The mood of the French proletariat was on the whole revolutionary but it took too light a view of victory: it was lulled by that party and those organizations which had grown up in the preceding period of peaceful and organic development of capitalism. On May 1, 1920 the French proletariat declared a general strike. This should have been the first major clash with the French bourgeoisie.

The entire bourgeois France trembled. The proletariat which had just emerged from the trenches struck terror into its heart. But the old Socialist Party, the old Social-democrats who dared not oppose the revolutionary working class and who declared the general strike simultaneously did everything in their power to blow it up; while the revolutionary elements, the Communists, were too weak, too dispersed and too lacking in experience. The May 1st strike failed. And if you consult the French newspapers for 1920 you will see in the editorials and news stories already a swift and decisive growth of the strength of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie at once sensed its own stability, gathered the state apparatus into its hands and began to take less and less into account the demands of the proletariat and the threats of revolution.

In that same year, in August 1920, we experienced an event closer to home which likewise brought about a change in the relation of forces, not in favor of the revolution. This was our defeat below Warsaw, a defeat which from the international standpoint is most intimately bound up with the fact that in Germany and in Poland at that moment the revolutionary movement was unable to gain victory because there was lacking a strong revolutionary party having the confidence of the majority of the working class.

A month later, in September 1920, we live through the great movement in Italy. Precisely at that moment in the autumn of 1920 the Italian proletariat reaches its highest point of ferment after the war. Mills, plants, railways, mines are seized. The state is disorganized, the bourgeoisie is almost prostrate with its spine broken. It seems that only another step forward is needed and the Italian working class will conquer power. But at this moment, its party, that same Socialist party which had emerged from the previous epoch, although formally adhering to the Third International but with its spirit and roots still in the previous epoch, i.e., in the Second International—this party springs back in terror from the seizure of power, from the civil war, leaving the proletariat exposed. An attack is launched upon the proletariat by the most resolute wing of the bourgeoisie in the shape of Fascism, in the shape of whatever still remains strong in the police and the army. The proletariat was smashed.

After the defeat of the proletariat in September, we observe in Italy a still more radical shift in the relationship of forces. The bourgeoisie said to itself: "So that's the kind of people you are. You urge the proletariat forward but you lack the spirit to take power." And it pushed the fascist detachments to the fore.

Within a few months, by March 1921, we witness the most important recent event in the life of Germany, the famous March events. Here we have the lack of correspondence between the class and the party developing from an opposite direction.

In Italy, in September, the working class was driving battle. The party shied back in terror. In Germany the working class was driving to battle: it fought in 1918, in the course of 1919 and in the course of 1920, but its efforts and sacrifices were not crowned by victory because it did not have at its head a sufficiently strong, experienced and cohesive party; instead there was another party at the head which saved the bourgeoisie for the second time, after saving it during the war. And now in 1921 the Communist Party of Germany, seeing how the bourgeoisie was strengthening its positions, wanted to make a heroic attempt to cut off the bourgeoisie's road by an offensive, by a blow, and it rushed ahead. But the working class did not support it. Why? Because it had not yet learned to have confidence in the party. It did not yet fully know this party while its own experience in the civil war had brought it only defeats in the course of 1919-1920.

The Immaturity of Our Parties

And so in March 1921 the fact occurred which impelled the Communist International to say: The relations between the parties and the classes, between the communist parties and the working classes in all countries of Europe are still not mature for an immediate offensive, for an immediate battle for the conquest of power. It is necessary to proceed with a painstaking preparation of the communist ranks in a two-fold sense: First, in the sense of fusing them together and tempering them; and second, in the sense of their conquering the confidence of the overwhelming majority of the working class. Such was the slogan advanced by the Third International when the March events in Germany were still fresh.

And then, Comrades, after the month of March, throughout the year 1921 and during 1922 we observed the process, at any rate externally, of the strengthening of the bourgeois governments in Europe; we observed the strengthening of the extreme right wing. In France the national bloc headed by Poincaré still remains in power. But Poincaré is considered in France, that is within the national bloc, as a leftist and looming on the horizon is a new and more reactionary, more imperialist ministry of Tardieu. In England, the government of Lloyd George, this imperialist with pacifist preachments and labels, has been supplanted by the purely conservative, openly imperialist ministry of Bonar Law. In Germany, the coalition ministry, i.e., one with an admixture of social democrats, has been replaced by an openly bourgeois ministry of Kuno; and finally in Italy we see the coming to power of Mussolini, the open rule of the counter-revolutionary fist. In the economic field, capitalism is on the offensive against the proletariat. In all the countries of Europe the workers have to defend, and not always successfully, the scale of wages they had yesterday and the eight-hour working day in those countries where it had been gained legally during the last period of the war or after the war. Such is the general situation. It is clear that the revolutionary development, that is, the struggle of the proletariat for power beginning with the year 1917, does not represent a uniform and steadily rising curve.

There has been a break in the curve. Comrades, in order to picture more clearly the situation which the working class is now living through it might not be unuseful to resort to an analogy. Analogy—historical comparison and juxtaposition—is a dangerous method because time and again people try to extract more from an analogy than it can give. But within certain limits, when used for the purpose of illustration, an analogy is useful. We began our revolution in 1905, after the Russo-Japanese War. Already at that time we were drawn toward power by the logic of things. 1905 and 1906 brought

stagnation, and the two Dumas; 1907 brought the 3rd of June and the government coup, the first victories of reaction which met almost no resistance—and then the revolution rolled back. 1908 and 1909 were already the black years of reaction; and then only gradually beginning with 1910-1911 was there an upswing, intersected by the war. In March, 1917, came the victory of bourgeois democracy; in October—the victory of workers and peasants. We have therefore two main points: 1905 and 1917, separated by an interval of 12 years. These twelve years represent in a revolutionary sense a broken curve, first dropping and then rising.

In an international sense, first and foremost in relation to Europe we now have something similar. Victory was possible in 1917 and in 1918 but we did not gain it—the last condition was lacking, the powerful communist parties. The bourgeoisie succeeded in re-establishing many of its political and military-police positions but not the economic ones, while the proletariat began building the communist parties brick by brick. In the initial stages this communist party tried to make up for the lost opportunity by a single audacious leap forward, in March 1921 in Germany. It burned its fingers. The International issued a warning: "You must conquer the confidence of the majority of the working class before you dare summon the latter to an open revolutionary attack." This was the lesson of the Third Congress. A year and a half later the Fourth World Congress convened.

In making the most general appraisal it is necessary to say that at the time the Fourth Congress convened, a turning point had not yet been reached in the sense that the International could say: "The hour of open attack has already been sounded." The Fourth Congress developed, deepened, verified and rendered more precise the work of the Third Congress, and was convinced that this was basically correct.

An Analogy with 1905-1917

I have said that in 1908-09 we lived through in Russia, on a much narrower basis at the time, the moment of the lowest decline of the revolutionary wave in the sense of the prevailing moods among the working class as well as in the sense of the then triumphant Stolypinism and Rasputinism, as well as in the sense of the disintegration of the advanced ranks of the working class. What remained as illegal nuclei were frightfully small in comparison to the working class as a whole. The best elements were in jails, in hard-labor penitentiaries, in exile. 1908-09—this was the lowest point of the revolutionary movement. Then came a gradual upswing. For the past two years and, in part, right now we have been living through a period undoubtedly analogous to 1908 and 1909, i.e., the lowest point in the direct and open revolutionary struggle.

There is still another point of similarity. On June 3, 1907 the counter-revolution gained a victory (Stolypin's coup) on the parliamentary arena almost without meeting any resistance in the country. And toward the end of 1907 another terrible blow descended—the industrial crisis. What influence did this have on the working class? Did it impel it to struggle? No. In 1905, in 1906 and the first half of 1907 the working class had already given its energy and its best elements to the open struggle. It suffered defeat, and on the heels of defeat came the commercial-industrial crisis which weakened the productive and economic role of the proletariat, rendering its position even less stable. This crisis weakened it both in the revolutionary and political sense. Only the commercial and industrial upswing which began in 1909-1910 and which re-assembled the workers in factories and plants again imbued the workers with assurance, provided a major basis of support for our party and gave the revolution an impulsion forward

Here too, I say, we have a certain analogy. In the Spring of 1921 a terrible commercial crisis broke out in America and in Japan after the proletariat had suffered a defeat: in France on May 1, 1920; in Italy, in September, 1920; in Germany, throughout 1919 and 1920 and especially in the March days of 1921. But precisely at this moment in the Spring of 1921 there ensues the crisis in Japan and in America and in the latter part of 1921 it passes over to Europe. Unemployment grows to unprecedented proportions, especially, as you know, in England. The stability of the proletariat's position drops still lower, after the losses and disillusionments already suffered. And this does not strengthen, but on the contrary in the given conditions of crisis weakens it. During the current year and since the end of last year there have been signs of a certain industrial awakening. In America it reaches the proportions of a real upswing while in Europe it remains a small, uneven ripple. Thus here, too, the first impulse for the revival of an open mass movement came, especially in France, from a certain improvement in the economic conjuncture.

The New Situation in Europe

But here, Comrades, the analogy ceases. The industrial upswing of 1909 and 1910 in our country and in the entire pre-war world was a full-blooded, powerful upswing which lasted until 1913 and came at a time when the productive forces had not yet run up against the limits of capitalism, giving rise to the greatest imperialist slaughter.

The industrial improvement which began at the end of last year denotes only a change in the temperature of the tubercular organism of European economy. European economy is not growing but disintegrating; it remains on the same levels only in a few countries. The richest of European countries, insular England, has a national income at least one-third or one-quarter smaller than before the war. They engaged in war, as you know, in order to conquer markets. They ended by becoming poorer at least by one-fourth or one-third. The improvements this year have been minimal. The decline in the influence of the social democracy and the growth of the communist parties at the expense of the former is a sure symptom of this. As is well known, social reformism grew thanks to the fact that the bourgeoisie had the possibility of improving the position of the most highly skilled layers of the working class. In the nature of things, Scheidemann and everything else connected with him would have been impossible without this, for after all it is not simply an ideological tendency but one growing out of economic and social premises. This is a labor aristocracy which profits from the fact that capitalism is full-blooded and powerful and has the possibility of improving the condition at least of the upper layers of the working class. That is precisely why we witness in the years preceding the war, from 1909 to 1913, the most powerful growth of the bureaucracy in the trade unions and in the social democracy, and the strongest intrenchment of reformism and nationalism among the summits of the working class which resulted in the terrible catastrophe of the Second International at the outbreak of the war.

And now, Comrades, the gist of the situation in Europe is characterized by the fact that the bourgeoisie has no longer the possibility of fattening up the summits of the working class because it hasn't the possibility of feeding the entire working class normally, in the capitalist sense of "normal." The lowering of the living standards of the working class is today the same kind of law as the decline of the European economy. This process began in 1913, the war introduced superficial changes into it; after the war it has become revealed with especial cruelty. The superficial fluctuations of the conjuncture

do not alter this fact. This is the first and basic difference between our epoch and the pre-war one.

But there is a second difference and this is: the existence of Soviet Russia as a revolutionary factor. There is a third difference and this is: the existence of a centralized international communist party.

And we observe, Comrades, that at the very time when the bourgeoisie is scoring one superficial victory after another over the proletariat, the growth, strengthening and planful development of the communist party is not being checked but advances forward. And in this is the most important and fundamental difference between our epoch and the one from 1905 to 1917.

A Different Tempo in the U. S.

What I have said touches, as you see, primarily Europe. It would be incorrect to apply this wholly to America. In America, too, socialism is more advantageous than capitalism and it would be even more correct to say that especially in America socialism would be more advantageous than capitalism. In other words, were the present American productive forces organized along the principles of collectivism a fabulous flowering of economy would ensue.

But in relation to America it would be incorrect to say, as we say in relation to Europe, that capitalism represents already today the cessation of economic development. Europe is rotting, America is thriving. In the initial years or more correctly in the initial months, in the first twenty months after the war it might have seemed that America would be immediately undermined by the economic collapse of Europe inasmuch as America made use of and exploited the European market in general and the war market in particular. This market has shrivelled and dried up, and having been deprived of one of its props, the monstrous Babylonian tower of American industry threatened to lean over and to fall down altogether. But America, while having lost the European market of the previous scope (in addition to exploiting its own rich internal market with a population of 100 million), is seizing and has seized all the more surely the markets of certain European countries—Germany and to a considerable measure, England. And we see, in 1921-1922, American economy passing through a genuine commercial and industrial upswing at a time when Europe is experiencing only a distant and feeble reflection of this upswing.

Consequently, the productive forces in America are still developing under capitalism, much more slowly, of course, than they would develop under socialism but developing nevertheless. How long they will continue to do so is another question. The American working class in its economic and social power has, of course, fully matured for the conquest of state power, but in its political and organizational traditions it is incomparably further removed from the conquest of power than the European working class. Our power—the power of the Communist International—is still very weak in America. And if one were to ask (naturally this is only a hypothetical posing of the question) which will take place first: the victorious proletarian revolution in Europe or the creation of a powerful communist party in America, then on the basis of all the facts now available (naturally all sorts of new facts are possible such as, say, a war between America and Japan; and war, Comrades, is a great locomotive of history)—if one were to take the present situation in its further logical development, then I would venture to say that there are infinitely more chances that the proletariat will conquer in Europe before a powerful communist party rises and develops in America. In other words, just as the victory of the revolutionary working

class in October 1917 was the pre-condition for the creation of the Communist International and for the growth of the communist parties in Europe, so, in all probability, the victory of the proletariat in the most important countries of Europe will be the pre-condition for the swift revolutionary development in America. The difference between these two spheres lies in this, that in Europe the economy decays and declines with the proletariat no longer growing productively (because there is no room for growth) but awaiting the development of the communist party; while in America the economic advancement is still proceeding.

The Colonial Revolution

The third sphere is constituted by the colonies. It is self-understood that the colonies—Asia, Africa (I speak of them as a whole), despite the fact that they, like Europe, contain the greatest gradations—the colonies, if taken independently and isolatedly, are absolutely not ready for the proletarian revolution. If they are taken isolatedly, then capitalism still has a long possibility of economic development in them. But the colonies belong to the metropolitan centers and their fate is intimately bound up with the fate of their European metropolitan centers.

In the colonies we observe the growing national revolutionary movement. Communists represent there only small nuclei

imbedded in the peasantry. So that in the colonies we have primarily petty-bourgeois and bourgeois national movements. If you were to ask concerning the prospects of the socialist and communist development of the colonies then I would say that this question cannot be posed in an isolated manner. Of course, after the victory of the proletariat in Europe, these colonies will become the arena for the cultural, economic and every other kind of influence exercised by Europe, but for this they must first of all play their revolutionary role parallel with the role of the European proletariat. In this connection the European proletariat and in particular that of France and especially that of England are doing far too little. The growth of the influence of the ideas of socialism and communism, the emancipation of the toiling masses of the colonies, the weakening of the influence of the nationalist parties can be assured not only by and not so much by the role of the native communist nuclei as by the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of the metropolitan centers for the emancipation of the colonies. Only by this will the proletariat of the metropolitan centers demonstrate to the colonies that there are two European nations, one the oppressor, the other the friend; only by this will it provide a further impulse to the colonies which will topple down the structure of imperialism and thereby perform a revolutionary service for the cause of the proletariat.

(The second and concluding section of this speech will be published next month.)

A Manual of Party Organization

By E. R. FRANK

THE STRUGGLE FOR A PROLETARIAN PARTY by James P. Cannon. Pioneer Publishers, 116 University Place, New York. xiii plus 302 pages, including Index. Paper covers \$1.50. Cloth bound \$2.

Lenin is considered by all Marxists as the great master of the organization of the revolutionary party. For Lenin, the organization question embraced all the problems involved in the building of the revolutionary workers' party. What was the secret of Lenin's success? What formulas did he employ to build the Russian Bolshevik party, a party that proved capable at the decisive moment of rallying the masses of the people behind its leadership and seizing power?

The formula which is most often used to express the most complete synthesis of Lenin's organizational conception is Democratic Centralism. And yet in one form or another, references to the idea of Democratic Centralism can be found in the writings of Marx, Engels as indeed in the writings of all the leading Marxist publicists. Lenin's genius, therefore, is not to be found in the invention of any single organizational formula. Lenin is the foremost revolutionary architect because he pioneered the creation of a new type of revolutionary Marxist party, never before seen in history. Lenin's party was completely unlike the loose, sprawling, easy-going parties of the pre-war Social-Democracy, with their accommodating attitude toward every perversion of the Marxist program; parties that were built primarily for the winning of electoral successes and conducting of loyal oppositions in the various parliaments and legislative assemblies.

Lenin's party was built along different lines. It was tight-knit, compact, bound by an iron discipline, based upon unyielding adherence to the program of Marxism—the science of the proletarian revolution. Lenin's party was a combat organization

poised for action, a party whose purpose was to win power and clear the road for the socialist society.

"Bolshevism, as a trend of political thought," wrote Lenin in 1920, "and as a political party, has existed since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the *whole* period of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it was able to build up and maintain, under most difficult conditions, the iron discipline necessary for the victory of the proletariat.

"On the one hand, Bolshevism arose in 1903 on the very firm foundation of Marxian theory. On the other hand, having arisen on this granite theoretical foundation, Bolshevism passed through fifteen years of practical history which, in wealth of experience, has had no equal anywhere else in the world. For no other country during these fifteen years had anything even approximating this revolutionary experience, this rapid and varied succession of different forms of the movement—legal and illegal, peaceful and stormy, open and underground, small circles and mass movements, parliamentary and terrorist."

Lenin demonstrated the correctness of his ideas by the most effective and eloquent argument of all. He built a party in life that took power and established the workers' state. He established for all time that the Marxist idea of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat was no utopia but the next necessary step in the present evolution of society. Lenin's party stood the test of experience. (A discussion of the Stalinist degeneration of the workers' state and the present corrupted and reactionary Stalinist parties throughout the world would take us too far afield.)

The true stature of Lenin and his work can be more fully appreciated, the tremendous difficulties involved in the building of a revolutionary party can be more thoroughly grasped, when we review the failure of all other Marxist groups in Europe to build a party comparable to the Russian Bolshevik organization, despite the favorable objective conditions that prevailed

in Germany and numerous other countries in the years after the first world war and despite the fact that all these parties had the advantage of Lenin's example and could draw upon the experiences of the great Russian revolution.

What was lacking? The cadres were insufficiently experienced, insufficiently firm. The leadership had not yet mastered the science and the art of revolutionary politics. They were not able to take the general formulas of Marxism, the organizational ideas of Leninism and apply them correctly to the concrete situation.

Obviously it is no easy task to build a Bolshevik party. As a matter of fact, the experience of the twenty years that have elapsed since Lenin's death proves that it is one of the most difficult of all tasks.

A Record of Struggle

James P. Cannon writes in his book, "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party," that you can't learn how to lead the revolutionary party or a workers' organization by reading a book. Of course, that is true. But from a good book it is possible to learn much, to absorb many of the experiences of other revolutionary fighters and thus by analysis and study to deepen one's own experience and knowledge. Besides, "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party" is more than just a good book on the organization question. It is the record of a historic fight. And it is more than that. It is a summation of over twenty years' effort and experience in building the Marxist revolutionary party in the United States. The fight that it deals with—between the Marxist wing of the Socialist Workers Party and the petty-bourgeois opposition—will undoubtedly be recorded as one of the classic struggles in the annals of Marxist faction fights.

The American Trotskyist movement had gone through 11½ years of struggle at the time that this faction fight took place. Cannon had the additional experience of participating in the founding and building of the Communist Party in this country as well as the struggles of the pre-war socialist and IWW movements. Leon Trotsky, who personally participated in this faction battle in the closest possible fashion and was the author of most of the major political documents, contributed to the fight his great political wisdom, his well-nigh inexhaustible knowledge, his unequalled revolutionary experience.

The struggle was classical, therefore, not only because it involved a fight over all the basic tenets of Marxism, its doctrine, its philosophy, its tradition, its methods, but also because it was conducted in so educational a fashion. The lessons of the fight were clearly brought out, the methods of Marxism fully explained, the ideas of Marxism concretely illumined as they relate to the current problems and tasks that face the revolutionary Marxist party and the working class. For a long time to come, all who aspire to become revolutionary Marxist fighters will return to a study of this struggle and the way in which it was conducted.

The Building of Our Party

The American Trotskyist movement was founded in 1928 when Cannon and a small group of adherents were expelled from the Communist Party for their support of Trotsky's program. For a number of years the Trotskyist movement in America developed in a restricted circle. Cannon describes these early days in his pamphlet, "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party," which makes up the first section of the book:

"In the first period of the Trotskyist movement of America, when we were an isolated handful against the world, we deliberately restricted ourselves to propaganda work and avoided any kind of pretentious maneuvers or activities beyond our capacity.

Our first task, as we saw it, and correctly, was to build a cadre; only then could we go to the masses. The old-timers can well recall how we were pestered in those early days by the bustling windbags of the Weisbord type, who promised us a short cut to the mass movement if we would only abandon our 'conservative' propagandistic routine. . . . By sticking to our modest propagandistic tasks we recruited a cadre on the basis of fundamental principles. In the next period, when new opportunities opened up, we were prepared for a decisive turn toward more expansive activity in the mass movement. As for Weisbord, who had worn himself out with his own agitation in the meantime, he fell by the wayside. . . . The moment the Muste movement began to take shape as a political organization, we approached it for fusion and successfully carried it out. In one operation we cleared a centrist obstacle from the path and enlarged our own forces. When the ferment in the Socialist Party offered favorable opportunities for our intervention, we steered a course directly toward it, smashed the resistance of the sectarians in our own ranks, entered the Socialist Party and effected a fusion with the left wing."

With the signing of the Stalin-Hitler Pact and the outbreak of the Second World War, a petty-bourgeois faction was organized in the Socialist Workers' Party under the leadership of Burnham and Shachtman. Obviously unnerved by the capitalist campaign against the Soviet Union, this faction began demanding a revision of the party program on the Russian question, especially in relation to the traditional Trotskyist position of "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack." Before many weeks had elapsed, however, this faction developed an assault against Marxism all along the line.

The principal debates on the programmatic points at issue are discussed at length in Leon Trotsky's "In Defense of Marxism." James P. Cannon's "The Struggle For A Proletarian Party" is a companion volume to Trotsky's book.

The Cannon book rounds out the picture of the whole struggle. It makes it more concrete. It fills in and develops more fully the important organizational features of this classic fight.

The book provides a brilliant sketch of the history of the American Trotskyist movement, how the party overcame the many obstacles with which it was confronted, how the party broke out of its initial isolation, how the sectarians were defeated, how new strata of workers were won to the party, how a cadre was built which is hard, experienced, united, disciplined and thoroughly imbued with the program, the methods and the tradition of Bolshevism.

The Petty-Bourgeois Opposition

The substance of the book relates, of course, to the fight with the petty-bourgeois opposition. This faction really consisted of an unprincipled bloc of three component groups. Burnham, leader of one group, was breaking with Marxism all along the line and was advocating a substitute petty-bourgeois program. Abern and his group had no program, but were interested in achieving organizational victory. Shachtman, confused, bewildered and disoriented by the shock of the Second World War and the pressure of bourgeois public opinion, took it upon himself to become the defense attorney for Burnham and his anti-Marxian program for lack of any views of his own to defend.

How this anti-Marxian combination was fought and crushed, the meaning of principled politics, the idea of Bolshevik discipline and organization, the Bolshevik method of fighting unprincipled political blocs are described concisely and authoritatively in the pages of Cannon's book.

"Organization questions and organizational methods," Cannon writes, "are not independent of political lines, but subor-

dinate to them. As a rule, the organizational methods flow from the political line. Indeed the whole significance of organization is to realize a political program. In the final analysis there are no exceptions to this rule."

Cannon took up the discussion of the organization question only at the latter part of the faction fight. "Now that the fundamental political issues are fully clarified, now that the two camps have taken their position along fundamental lines, it is possible and perhaps feasible to take up the organization question for discussion in its proper setting and in its proper place—as an important but subordinate issue; as an expression in organizational terms of the political differences, but not as a substitute for them."

Cannon defends the Leninist conception of the party:

"For us the party must be a combat organization which leads a determined struggle for power. The Bolshevik party which leads the struggle for power needs not only internal democracy. It also requires an imperious centralism and an iron discipline in action. It requires a proletarian composition conforming to its proletarian program. The Bolshevik party cannot be led by dilettantes whose real interests and real lives are in another and alien world. It requires an active professional leadership, composed of individuals democratically selected and democratically controlled, who devote their entire lives to the party. . . ."

This is Cannon's credo of a proletarian revolutionist:

"For a proletarian revolutionist the party is the concentrated expression of his life purpose, and he is bound to it for life and death. He preaches and practices party patriotism, because he knows that his socialist ideal cannot be realized without the party. In his eyes, the crime of crimes is disloyalty or irresponsibility toward the party. The proletarian revolutionist is proud of his party. He defends it before the world on all occasions. The proletarian revolutionist is a disciplined man, since the party cannot exist as a combat organization without discipline. When he finds himself in a minority, he loyally submits to the decision of the party and carries out its decisions, while he awaits new events to verify the disputes or new opportunities to discuss them again."

Returning to this same theme, at the latter part of the faction fight, when the petty-bourgeois opposition, reduced to a minority and facing obvious defeat in the coming party convention, was threatening to split from the party, Cannon wrote to Trotsky in a long letter on February 20, 1940:

"It is impossible to build a combat party with a tolerant attitude toward splits. In the discussion every democratic right must be assured and has been assured. Every reasonable organization concession must be made in the interests of preserving unity and educating the party in a normal atmosphere. But we must not sanctify permanent demoralization. We must not permit anybody to make an endless discussion club out of the party. Those who go beyond these bounds and take the road of split are no longer to be considered as comrades discussing a difference of opinion, but as enemies and traitors. They must be fought without mercy and without compromise on every front. We will never instill a real party patriotism into the ranks unless we establish the conception that violation of the party unity is not only a crime but a crime which brings the most ruthless punishment in the form of a war of political extermination against those who commit it."

Cannon and the American Trotskyists drew the following conclusions from this fight:

1) It is not sufficient for the party to have a proletarian program; it also requires a proletarian composition. Otherwise the program can be turned into a scrap of paper overnight.

2) This crisis cannot be resolved simply by taking a vote at the convention and reaffirming the program by majority vote. The party must proceed from there to a real proletarianization of its ranks.

"We stand at a decisive stage in the evolution of American

Trotskyism from a loosely organized propaganda circle and discussion club to a centralized and disciplined proletarian party rooted in the workers' mass movement. This transformation is being forced rapidly under pressure of the approaching war. This is the real meaning of the present party struggle."

These tasks have since been carried out—at any rate, in part. In this sense, the fight against the petty-bourgeois opposition has been won, not only negatively, by repulsing their pretensions and defeating their proposals, but also positively. The fight clarified the organization in its purposes and tasks and succeeded in making the party proletarian in composition as well as outlook.

Johnson, one of the leaders of the petty-bourgeois opposition wrote that the movement of American Trotskyism, the Socialist Workers Party, "is the second party in history which has been built on Bolshevik lines."

Cannon's answer to Johnson's statement is that "Our party has not been a homogeneous Bolshevik party, as the superficial Johnson implies, but an organization struggling to attain to the standard of Bolshevism, and beset all the time by internal contradictions. The present internal crisis is simply the climactic paroxysm of this long internal struggle of antipathetic tendencies."

"I believe," nevertheless writes Cannon, "that our party, modeled on the Russian Bolshevik party, has been built more firmly and stands nearer than any other to the pattern of its great prototype. . . ."

Comrade Trotsky wrote on April 16, 1940 in a letter to Dobbs, after reading the pamphlet "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party," which forms the first section of the present book: "Jim's pamphlet is excellent. It is the writing of a genuine workers' leader. If the discussion had not produced more than this document, it would be justified."

There is no simple formula on how to build a revolutionary party. At one point in the book Cannon states that the "essence of politics" is to "know what to do next—and to do it." This art and science of revolutionary politics cannot, of course, be learned from books alone. Experience is necessary. Knowledge is necessary. Talent is necessary. Every proletarian revolutionist, every Marxist student will learn a great deal, however, on this subject from a study of this book. Reading this book will not be an overly difficult or a wearisome task. It will be one of pleasure. The book is written in a clear and lucid style.

The book is well edited. It is so put together that the full course of the struggle can be easily followed, understood and relived. The book is divided into several sections. First comes Cannon's pamphlet "The Struggle For a Proletarian Party." The second consists of various letters, which provide a day by day, week by week chronology of the struggle. The third section consists of "Documents of the Struggle." The book has an Appendix which contains the principal organizational document of the opposition. It is also provided with an excellent index and an introduction by the editor, John G. Wright.

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INTERNATIONAL NOTES

England

C. P. Workers in Glasgow Turning to Trotskyism

The following is from a letter of July 5 to us from a leader of the Workers International League of England, which supports the Fourth International:

Dear Friends:

We are in the process of drawing into the organization 12 to 14 leading Clydeside Shop Stewards (nine have joined to date). They are all experienced militants, the cream of the working class, all former members of the Communist Party. That means we are ripping the guts out of the Stalinists in Glasgow. The tide is really flowing in our direction. Every one of these comrades is a workers' leader with a genuine base and following in the area.

This event, one of the biggest things that has ever happened in the history of the British movement, is the result of some really fine work on the part of our leading industrial comrades. On the basis of our program and activities these Shop Stewards have been won from Stalinism after years in the Communist Party.

They have been traveling away from Stalinism ever since the change of Party line after the entry of the Soviet Union into the war. The dissolution of the Comintern has clinched our arguments and these comrades, proletarian revolutionists to the core and long experienced in the class struggle, have drawn the correct conclusions.

The Clydeside events are taking up a great deal of our time. In addition, we have our National Conference coming August holiday week-end. On top of all this we have the difficulties of our comrades getting called up. At the Centre, Andrew Scott and "Ben" our cartoonist are the latest to go. We have been able to draw one or two others into the Centre full time and are just about holding our own in that direction but it isn't easy.

Events in the C. P.

There are indications that the Stalinists are not in a happy position here and that the events outlined above are only a foretaste of what is to come. For one thing the purse strings appear to be tightening. The National Unemployed Workers Movement, which they have kept going formally despite the fact that there has been nothing for it to do for four years, has been quietly dissolved. We also learn that Hutchinsons, bourgeois publishers, have bought out Lawrence and Wishart, the Stalinist publishing house (equivalent here to the International Publishers in the U. S.).

The Communist Party held its Congress this week-end and adopted a "Socialist Britain" policy. (This is to operate presumably at the end of the Stalin-Churchill 20-years pact.) Afterwards they held a demonstra-

tion in Trafalgar Square. This was fairly well attended but was characterized by a clearly manifest lack of enthusiasm. In that sense it was about on a par with one recently held by the Labour Party—a striking contrast to the previous Stalinist demonstrations which have usually been the personification of enthusiasm.

In contrast, we are buoyed up with the developments in our favor. Each issue of *Socialist Appeal* sells out in a few days. And the general militancy in the industrial arena affords us plenty of scope and bodes well for the future.

The newly-formed "Clyde Workers Committee," which will soon develop into a national movement, is an indication of the potentialities. It is the most important development of the war so far as British labor is concerned. We are gaining a very great influence in it, thanks to the Glasgow ex-Stalinists previously referred to. Thus did these militants demonstrate their determination and ability to carry a struggle against Stalinism in the field in which the Stalinists hitherto yielded the most influence. This is a healthy sign; for in the past few years most of the best elements who have broken with the Communist Party have become demoralized and dropped out of political life.

H. A.

* * *

The Shop Stewards' Movement

Further news about the "Clyde Workers Committee" is in the latest issue of *Socialist Appeal* to arrive here—its mid-June issue. Like the movement of the same name during the last war, which became famous as the leader of the entire national left-wing movement, the present committee has risen to defend the interests of the workers because the top trade union leaders have become completely absorbed into the governmental apparatus of suppression. As a matter of fact, the Clyde committee was revived—the great industrial Clydeside area in the Glasgow neighborhood was again the natural place for the movement to begin—at the beginning of this war. But after June 22, 1941 the Stalinists scuttled it.

Launched on far firmer ground May 15, the Clyde committee immediately got in touch with shop stewards' groups which have been similarly arising in other places, and as a result some 30 delegates met with the Glasgow militants on June 5-6 and took the preliminary steps for establishing a National Confederation of Workers' Committees.

A provisional Central Committee was set up to convene the first National Conference. At the conclusion of the meeting in Glasgow the following resolution was adopted:

"Realizing the necessity of a National Organization in defense of the workers interests, this conference of delegates representing organized workers from London, Newcastle-on Tyne, Barrow, the Midlands, Yorkshire and Glasgow, declare that we basically agree with the understated seven

points of the 'Clyde Workers Committee':

- "1. Coordination of all militant Trade Union activity.
- "2. Annulment of all anti-working class legislation.
- "3. Every shop a closed shop.
- "4. Workers' control of transfers.
- "5. (a) A higher standard of life for all workers;
- (b) A better standard of wages and allowances for workers in the armed forces.
- "6. Confederation (nationally) of all Workers' Committees.
- "7. Workers' Control of Industry."

Political Life in the Army

Characteristic of the leftward developing political atmosphere in Britain are the number of letters from soldiers published in the *Socialist Appeal*. Included among them in the latest issue is one from Andrew Scott, a leader of the Workers International League, who, as the letter from A.H. above reported, was recently drafted. Scott's letter deals with his participation in several political meetings in the army. Of one he says:

"I have been making the most of the dissolution of the Comintern down here. There was a lecture on 'The Russian Revolution' given by Sapper Goss, brother of John Goss [a leader] of the Communist Party. My own contribution was about as long as Goss'. There were about 21 to 30 people present, and most of them were more sympathetic to me than to the speaker. Several spoke before me, and the whole question of Stalinism and Trotskyism had been brought up before I had said a word! When the meeting ended the Chairman said it was the liveliest they had had, and invited me to give the lecture in three weeks time. He left me to choose my own subject, but suggested 'The Fourth International and the War,' and the arrangement stands."

Scott concludes: "I have never realized so clearly before what an influence could be wielded by one revolutionary socialist among hundreds of soldiers. And 95 per cent of the audiences is proletarian. This only further confirms our opinions of the socialist conscientious objectors who succeed only in isolating themselves from the masses. It doesn't matter if they disagree with what you say, or don't understand it thoroughly; the fact that you are putting a class position wins their support."

* * *

German Ex-Stalinists

Turn to the 4th International

A group of German workers in England have submitted to the Fourth International press the following statement for publication:

DECLARATION

The undersigned, ex-members of the Communist Party of Germany, following the dissolution of the Comintern make this statement:

1. The Comintern has led a shadow-existence since the last Congress in 1935.

2. The Comintern acted, since the expulsion of Trotsky in November 1927, as an agency of Soviet Russian foreign policy. One of its main tasks appeared to be the spying out and denunciation of internationally minded communists.

3. The liquidation by trial and murder of nearly all the leading members of the Comintern was essential to clear the way for the decease of the Comintern.

4. The Comintern with its unprincipled, opportunist, nationalist and unscrupulous policy (Ruhr policy, Canton-putsch, Popular Front, League of Nations policy, Mussolini-pact, Spain, Hitler-pact) now defunct, has disappeared ignominiously.

5. Nevertheless the Comintern has stood in the eyes of the oppressed as a portent of revolution. For this reason it has been respected even in the days of its decay and feared by the enemy.

6. It is to the credit of Leon Trotsky that he first perceived the cancer growing in the body of the Comintern and therefore inspired and organized the IV International. We ask the comrades in exile to reconsider their views and tactics, to take once more their place in the class struggle. They should not allow considerations of out-moded allegiances now formally revoked, to stand in their way.

7. The Third International is dead. Long live the Fourth International.

Signatures:

(These cannot be published at present.)

Mexico

Recent increase in strength of the Mexican Section of the Fourth International is indicated by the arrival in New York of the June 15th issue of its organ *Lucha Obrera*, no longer mimeographed but printed as a four-page paper.

Well-balanced between national and international subjects, the issue features the Mexican Section's powerful manifesto on the dissolution of the Third International and a long and well-documented editorial full of new and previously unrevealed information on the extent to which the Mexican bourgeoisie is stripping its country at bargain prices for the benefit of Yankee imperialism.

We salute this strong new voice joining the crescendo of the Fourth Internationalist chorus.

Cuba

There has just reached New York after long delay an extremely interesting pamphlet, *La Voz Revolucionaria del Trotskismo en el III Congreso Nacional Obrero*, published by Ediciones Cuba Obrera, reporting in detail the policies and activities in the National Labor Congress of those delegates who put forth the program of the Partido Obrero Revolucionario, Cuban section of the Fourth International.

The CTC (Confederación de Trabajadores de Cuba), the island's only labor federation, has long been stifled in the grip of a cynical gang of Stalinist bureaucrats headed by the notorious Lazaro Pena. It is, outside the Mexican CTM, the main base of the Stalinist, Vicente Lombardo Toledano, and his CTAL (Confederación de Trabajadores de America Latina), whose rule-or-ruin policy has not hesitated to split the powerful Argentine CGT in order to obtain a group unconditionally controlled by Stalinism.

Relations between the CTC and the dictatorship of Cuban President Fulgencio Batista have been mysterious and disquieting. Within a month after Stalinist leader Juan Marinello entered Batista's cabinet as Minister without Portfolio, the CTC was given "official status" by a presidential decree; and, on May Day, Batista promised a special government lottery to pay for the CTC's elaborate new \$200,000 headquarters. In return for these favors, the Stalinist CTC leaders bend every energy to heading off and if necessary smashing any strikes. The tendency is thus for the Stalinized CTC to become integrated into the Batista dictatorship.

The Workers Resist

Needless to say, this Stalinist attempt has met with stubborn resistance among Cuban workers—a resistance which the Stalinists met with their usual tactics of defamation and murder.

The wave of terror which they initiated with the assassination of Sandalio Junco, trade union leader of the Partido Autentico, reached a new pitch just before the Labor Congress in December, when they similarly assassinated three other "Autenticos" who had been elected delegates to the congress from the Central Lugareno.

Despite this systematic terrorization campaign, however, nearly five hundred delegates, democratically elected by their unions, formed a strong opposition to the delegates of the Stalinized "paper-and-rubber-stamp" unions and their professional hatchet men.

Among this militant though confused opposition, outstanding both for their union militancy and for the fact that they had prepared a detailed and positive program of independent trade-union action around which the anti-Stalinist opposition could rally, were a group of Trotskyist delegates from the railwaymen, laundry-workers, retail clerks, and cattlemen unions.

The Task of the Trotskyists

Their first task was to overcome a defeatist current among the opposition which wished to abandon the Stalinist-run Congress as hopeless, without making a clear strong presentation of the position and program of independent class unionism against the Stalinist policy of class-collaborationist betrayal. Successful in this struggle, they presented to the Congress a carefully thought-out program of immediate action in the form of five draft resolutions:

1) On the rising cost of living, for the

sliding scale of wages, and for popular committees for the control of prices;

2) On the maintenance, reconquest, and defense of the democratic rights of the workers;

3) On the struggle for the industrialization of Cuba, utilizing the war conjuncture, as a way out of the permanent crisis of the sugar industry;

4) For the maintenance of class trade-union unity on the basis of genuine union democracy;

5) A Proletarian Military Policy (similar to that of the Socialist Workers Party of the U.S.A.) to train the workers of Cuba.

The Split

Terrified by the rapidly growing influence of our comrades, the Stalinist gang burst into interminable speeches repeating every stale Stalinist slander of the Trotskyists as "fifth columnists," "enemy agents," "splitters," etc., which were crushingly answered in brief but brilliant speeches by Comrades Pablo Diaz Gonzalez and Juan Medina.

The Stalinists followed up their mud-slinging by the usual bureaucratic maneuvers in the credentials committee they controlled, refusing to seat over 150 democratically elected delegates whose political independence they feared. More than four hundred delegates, disgusted and angered by these steam-roller tactics, rose and—despite the locking of the doors and barring them by Stalinist goon squads—forced their way out, leaving the congress to continue as a mere assembly of Stalinist bureaucrats and stooges.

With the support of the Trotskyist delegates, the opposition constituted itself into the Frente Democratico Sindical, and listened to a formal statement by the POR delegates, which said, in part:

"... We cannot think ... of the formation of a new trade-union center so long as there has not been demonstrated in a clear and definitive way the impossibility of salvaging the CTC from the hands of the Stalinist-reformist gang, through constant and effective work among the rank and file. We shall oppose any group or tendency which tries to drag the Cuban proletariat along the road of adventurism.

"... It is necessary to win the toiling masses for the struggle against Stalinism-reformism. It is necessary, union by union, city by city, and province by province, by means of a tenacious revolutionary position, to draw over the deceived masses who are now in the claws of the Stalinist pirates. ...

"... We proclaim the necessity of forming a Trade-Union Labor Front of Revolutionary Opposition, which, corresponding to the genuine interests of the working class, and with the participation of all honest militants of the union movement, fights with a *Minimum Program* for the liquidation of the totalitarian practices of degrading Stalinist-reformism, and restores the labor movement to its revolutionary position in the struggle for definitive emancipation from the capitalist yoke."

Five slogans complete the declaration:

"For a new National Labor Congress which corresponds to the interests of our class!

"For a Trade-Union Labor Front of Revolutionary Opposition!

"For the conquest of the CTC by the proletariat of Cuba!

"For the triumph of revolutionary socialism!

"For the national and social liberation of Cuba!

The Frente Democratico Sindical adopted the essential points of the Trotskyist program, and voted, not to set up a permanent organization parallel to the CTC, but to prepare a serious fight for the convocation of a new CTC Labor Congress, on the basis of full and genuine internal democracy.

In the Broad Arena

Some Latin American revolutionary socialist movements have suffered from an isolation self-imposed by sectarian policies.

In view of this widespread tendency, the Partido Obrero Revolucionario is particularly to be congratulated on having found the way to break out of that isolation and carry its transitional program to the broad Cuban masses.

A few days after the arrival of this pamphlet, further indication of the mass activity of our Cuban comrades reached New York in the form of a manifesto issued by the Guantanamo branch of the POR denouncing the betrayal of the railwaymen's strike there by the Stalinists. More than 600 railway workers came out in the Guantanamo district on May 17th with demands for a 50 per cent salary increase (the cost of

living in Cuba has risen 300 per cent) on which the Ministry of Labor had been stalling; and called on the railwaymen nationally to support them.

The Batista government rushed troops to man the trains, and the Stalinist trade-union bureaucrats rushed with equal speed to try to choke off a nation-wide rail strike. For a while it was touch-and-go; but after 16 days of ruthless repressive measures, the Batista-Stalinist efforts succeeded in first limiting and finally in stifling the strike; six workers' leaders, among them the Trotskyists Juan Medina and Luciano Garcia, were signaled out for punitive discharge. But the strike, though crushed, gained part of its ends: the Batista dictatorship had been so frightened by the railwaymen's militancy that it hastened to "grant" increases ranging between 10 and 15 per cent.

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