

Fourth International

IMPERIALISM IN THE FAR EAST

1. War Guilt in the Pacific *By Li Fu-Jen*
2. The Far Eastern Situation *By E. R. Frank*

Economic Prospects in Postwar America

By WILLIAM F. WARDE

***Editorials On Soviet Expansionism—
American Rule of Japan***

October, 1945

25 Cents

Manager's Column

We now have an agent in Portland, Oregon, C. M. Hesser. Already he has doubled Portland's bundle order and writes that he hopes some day we have as many thousands of subscriptions for the F. I. as for *The Militant*. "Every issue seems to me to be better than the last one. I believe that the sales for the F. I. are bound to pick up from now on. *The Militant* is bringing the workers to the ideas of Trotskyism and from there they will come to the F. I. Everything in its own good time. However, I hope that we will be giving the F. I. a little push once in a while—it's a very good magazine.

"The new masthead is good—however I am a little spoiled—I remember the New International of many years ago when each issue had a different color masthead. They sure were all right. I of course know that that set-up costs money. However, the day will come again."

As we've reported before in this column, newsstand sales have been growing by leaps and bounds since the end of the war. This is especially true in New York, where the bundle order has been increased to 350 copies.

A follow-up report on sales in our new location in Pittsburgh: "The *Fourth Internationals* that we placed in Kauffman's Department Store book section sold out within two weeks. The clerk informs me that there were additional requests for copies after the original bundle had been sold."

* * *

Requests are still being received for the June issue containing the "Interview with a Soviet Citizen." The letters which contain these orders are very interesting. They express doubts about Stalinism accompanied by curiosity about Trotskyism.

The latest of these letters comes from Indiana. D. W. writes: "Please send me at earliest convenience two copies of the F. I. for June 1944. After searching and searching for an 'answer' and having rejected Stalinism long ago when I lived in New York—I am eager to know more.

"My son has returned a much decorated veteran (Infantry). My husband is in the Army here. I have just quit an Army Hospital where I have seen 'our own' mishandle 'our own'. Some of the P. W.'s were more helpful with stretcher cases than 'our own'. Please speed the papers to me."

A veteran of this war, who is just

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catching up on the F. I.'s he missed while away, says: "I especially want to comment on Trotsky's article on United States and Britain in the August F. I. The inevitable conflict between American and British imperialisms did not break into the open in this war, but all the elements of a future clash exist."

From Edinburgh, Scotland, comes the following letter: "Requests for your magazine come from some unexpected quarters. A friend of mine

employed in the Edinburgh University Students' Union has been asked on several occasions for copies. As Edinburgh University is not exactly renowned as a center of radical politics these requests are quite significant.

"If you could possibly forward one or two I would feel greatly obliged. Your funds are not limitless, I know, but one or two copies of the F. I. can do a great deal of good."

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County of New York } ss.

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Reba Aubrey, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that she is the Business Manager of the Fourth International and that the following is, to the best of her knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the twelve months preceding the date shown above is—(This information is required from daily publications only.)

REBA AUBREY, Business Mgr.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 26th day of September, 1945.

(Seal) CARNIG AJAMIAN, N. Y. County Clks. No. 152; Reg. No. 219-A-6.

(My commission expires March 30, 1946.)

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME 6

OCTOBER 1945

NUMBER 10

REVIEW OF THE MONTH

Stalinist Expansionism and Kremlin Policy in Asia— American Rule of Japan—Congress and Unemployment Compensation Bills

Stalin and the Far East

KREMLIN POLICY IN ASIA

As the political picture clarifies in the Far East, it is seen that the policy of the Kremlin oligarchy in Asia is symmetrical with its policy in Europe.

Stalin is a firm ally of American imperialism in stamping out all revolutionary manifestations of the colonial masses; he uses the insurgent mass movements as pawns of his arch-reactionary diplomacy; and as in Europe he has embarked on an unabashed policy of conquest and plunder. The Stalinist ruling caste is proceeding to carve for itself a new vast domain in the limitless expanses of the Far East.

Ever since the fortunes of war turned in their favor, the Kremlin rulers began casting covetous glances on Manchuria and Korea. They knew that once Japanese imperialism collapsed, new masters would come forth to claim its booty. The Kremlin was determined to get its "rightful" share of the loot, and formulated its military and diplomatic plans accordingly.

Churchill informed us in his recent speech to the British Parliament that Stalin definitely promised at Teheran that his Far Eastern armies would attack the Japanese positions in Manchuria three months after the conclusion of hostilities in Europe. And, Churchill added, Stalin is always prompt in keeping his military commitments (to the imperialists.)

As a matter of fact, Stalin was more than prompt in this instance. As Japan was reeling from the devastating blows dealt her by the United States military machine and was on the point of capitulating, Stalin hastily ordered his troops into action, several days ahead of time, for fear that Japan might "prematurely" collapse and the Soviet Union could claim no credit for her defeat. Stalin was not going to be cheated out of his seat at the Far Eastern "Peace Table."

Despite the Soviet Union's negligible military outlay in the Far East, Stalin occupies an important seat at the conquerors' banquet table. In accordance with previous secret agreements concluded with his Anglo-American allies, the Red Armies have taken over southern Sakhalin, northern Korea and the Kuriles. By an additional treaty with China the Soviet Union's position in Manchuria is reestablished to the point occupied by Czarist Russia before the Russo-Japanese war in 1905. The USSR receives joint ownership and management with China of Port Arthur as a naval base and an area around the port is provided in which the Soviet Union has the right to maintain an army, navy and air force. The other important Manchurian port, Dairen, is declared a free port. But even here it is agreed that the harbor master shall be a Russian and the USSR is to

receive leases free of charge of half of all port installations and equipment. All this adds up to a Soviet "sphere of influence" in Manchuria. The USSR furthermore continues to exercise control over Outer Mongolia. Thus Stalin seems to have realized the century-old dreams of the former Czarist diplomats.

STALIN BETRAYS YENAN MOVEMENT

And what is the price that Stalin has had to pay for these Soviet "spheres of influence" in Asia? Undoubtedly from Stalin's point of view a very reasonable price. He merely had to pledge his full support to Anglo-American counter-revolutionary aims and plans. And in token of good faith, he had to sell out the Yen-an movement in China as a starter. Stalin carried out this "commitment" as punctiliously as he carried out the military commitments.

At the very moment that the Yen-an and Kuomintang armies were racing for the major cities of China, at the very moment that each side was striving to effect the surrender of the Japanese troops, at the very moment that American imperialism brazenly intervened in Chinese affairs and openly threw its weight behind the Kuomintang, Stalin demonstratively published his treaty with Chiang Kai-shek. This bombshell left his Chinese followers high and dry. Stalin specifically pledged to give moral support and military supplies solely to the National Government of China, the Kuomintang. It was further announced that Molotov, Soviet Foreign Commissar, told T. V. Soong, Chinese Prime Minister, during the latter's visit in Moscow, that the struggle between Chungking and Yen-an was an "internal question" and the Soviet Union would not interfere in any way. This declaration had likewise been made previously to Maj. Gen. Patrick J. Hurley, U.S. Ambassador to China, during his visit to the Kremlin. The insurgent mass movement of China represents for the Kremlin but a pawn to be cynically used and, where necessary, sold out to further the aims of Stalin's despicable diplomacy.

What driving forces impel the Soviet oligarchy on its present policy of furious expansion? Why is this caste so eager to plunge into one adventure after another? Some people have a ready answer: "Imperialism! The Soviet Union has become imperialist." But such an explanation befuddles rather than clarifies the problem at hand. History knows of the expansionism of various monarchies, oligarchies, feudal ruling classes, slave-owning classes, etc. In the broadest sense of the word, all of them could be called "imperialist". The conscientious materialist historian, however, would still have to study and

analyze each "imperialism" with the greatest of care in order to determine the precise laws that governed its expansionism and the precise historical causes that impelled its ruling classes or castes to pursue this course. Kautsky, for example, performed precisely such a labor in his monumental work "The Origins of Christianity" by painstakingly tracing the material causes and dynamics of the expansionism of the slave-holding ruling classes of the ancient world. Only superficial journalists could be content with indiscriminately labelling all these variegated manifestations of expansionism as "imperialist" and believe that they have thus solved the problem or even approached it.

MARXIST DEFINITION OF IMPERIALISM

In Marxist literature modern imperialism has a sharply defined meaning: it is the expansionist policy of *finance capital* and emerges out of the development of capitalism in its monopoly stage. Obviously the Soviet Union does not represent the expansionism of *finance capital*. And yet Soviet expansionism is a fact. What then are the laws that govern the specific Soviet expansionism? What are the prime material motivations of the Stalin regime that impel it to move out beyond its borders? We would, of course, be wasting our time in attempting to find the explanation to this problem by turning to the capitalist "theoreticians"—or their pseudo-Marxist imitators—who have provided us with the formula of "Soviet imperialism". None of them, literally none of them, have attempted to define concretely what this new "imperialism" signifies, what the laws are that govern its development, in what respects it resembles the old types of expansionism and wherein it differs from them. (This is a small illustration of the utter bankruptcy of bourgeois thought in the period of capitalism's death agony.)

Without attempting to deal exhaustively with this problem we can set down some of the main reasons that push the Stalin bureaucracy into its present expansionist course:

First, let us establish the fact that the Soviet Union, even in its healthy days, in the days of Lenin and Trotsky, followed, insofar as it was able, a policy of expansionism. Trotsky informed us: "The proletarian revolution, which occurred on the territory of the Czarist empire, attempted from the very beginning to conquer and for a time conquered the Baltic countries, attempted to penetrate Rumania and Persia and at one time led its armies up to Warsaw (1920)." Why? In order to augment the forces of the international Socialist revolution; in order to attain a larger arena for its economic development; in order to strengthen its strategic position as against the capitalist world. The degenerated workers' state *is still bound by the last two motivations*. But of course, Lenin and Trotsky solved their problems (the problems of the Soviet Union, and in the last analysis of world socialism) by depending on the class consciousness and independence of the workers; Trotsky's Red Armies marched everywhere as the banner-bearers of the Socialist Revolution. Stalin attempts to solve his problems (the problems of the Soviet ruling caste) exclusively by bureaucratic and military means and his administrators oppress and plunder conquered populations in the manner of the old Czarist officials.

KREMLIN CASTE SEES NEW VISTAS

Secondly, as the ruling caste grows more rigid, it pushes its pretensions forward more brazenly. The war has suddenly opened up gigantic, unbelievable vistas before it. Why should it not grab while the grabbing is good? Its ambition and greed seem to know no bounds.

Unquestionably, like ruling dynasties of old, it is governed by an irresistible urge to increase its power, its revenue, its prestige. Feeling the weakness of world capitalism, it probes everywhere for openings and pushes on everywhere further and further until it confronts strong opposition. Soviet expansionism is made possible less by the strength of the Soviet Union than by the weakness of imperialism and the present war-weariness of the peoples.

The third and possibly most decisive factor is the Kremlin's fear of Anglo-American imperialism and its desire to strengthen the position of the Soviet Union against any future eventualities. In this sense the present occupations and conquests of the Soviet Union can be likened to the occupations and conquests of 1939, except that the 1939 occupations were designed as protection primarily against Germany. The present occupations are aimed against the United States and its junior partner, Britain. The foreign policy of every big power consists in part of maneuvering against its rivals and grabbing up strategic points of support to strength its position in the event of future conflict. Undoubtedly that is a big element in the present maneuvering and sparring that is taking place between the two most important world states, the United States and the USSR.

But an even more important element in this friction is the fact that the United States and the USSR face each other not merely as potential state rivals but clash as antagonistic *social* systems. Despite the frightful degeneration of the Soviet Union (and it is frightful), and despite the present bloc between Anglo-American imperialism and the Soviet Union which may well continue for a whole period of time—that fundamental social antagonism will continue and persist, so long as the USSR remains on the foundation of nationalized property.

PERNICIOUSNESS OF NEW THEORY

And it is precisely here that we can discern the perniciousness of the theory of "Soviet imperialism"—if such a poverty-stricken phrase can be graced with so imposing a title. This "theory" blurs the fundamental social antagonism between two divergent systems. Instead of clarifying the dynamics of the conflict it muddles it by *identifying* the totally divergent types of expansionism of the USSR and the Anglo-American powers.

Making use of this piece of theoretical obfuscation, the Max Eastmans, Liston Oaks, and other paid and unpaid literary hacks of American imperialism had no difficulty in throwing their support (such as it was) to the counter-revolution in Greece. The problem was simple for them: What was involved, they informed us, was a conflict between British and Russian imperialism. And since Britain is more democratic (despite India!) therefore they support the lesser evil, British imperialism. Involved here is not merely a case of the devil quoting scriptures for his own nefarious purposes. The "theoretical" *identification* of the expansionism of the USSR with imperialism lends itself to reactionary proposals in the field of practical politics.

Our rejection of the "theory" of "soviet imperialism" naturally does not mean that we give the slightest support to the Kremlin's conquests and occupations. On the contrary! We condemned the Kremlin occupations of Poland and the Baltics in 1939 even though these were accompanied by the nationalization of property. We took this position because the strategic advantages obtained were negligible compared to the mass revolution and hatred which Stalin engendered against the Soviet Union by his policy of brutal conquest. All the more do we condemn and fight against the present Stalinist conquests which

serve no progressive purposes whatsoever and aim in the first place—let us not forget—to crush the revolutionary movements in Asia and Europe.

Why Congress Has Knifed Unemployment Compensation Bills

THE ACTIONS OF CONGRESS

By shelving all unemployment compensation legislation Congress has displayed its utter callousness toward the plight of the fast-growing army of jobless workers and ex-servicemen. On September 19, after a cursory debate, the Senate thrust a dagger into the heart of the Kilgore Unemployment Compensation Bill by voting down the key section providing a maximum of \$25 weekly to the unemployed. The mutilated measure it passed on to the House extended a maximum of 26 weeks compensation at the starvation-level state rates which are as low as \$2 weekly in Alabama and \$5 in Indiana. It also provided compensation for federal and maritime workers, and travel allowances limited to \$200 for displaced war-workers and turned the United States Employment Service over to the state governments.

The following week the House Ways and Means Committee gave the *coup de grace* to this miserly bill by voting that its consideration "be indefinitely postponed so that the committee can receive more concrete information as to what the unemployment situation is to be during the reconversion period." Estimates of present unemployment range from 2½ million to 4 million. Government agencies have published estimates that within a year there will be at least 8 to 10 million out of work. And in the face of these figures the so-called "representatives of the people", Democrats and Republicans combined, reject all responsibility for aiding the unemployed on the unbelievable pretext that they need "more concrete information!"

In more candid conversations with the press the members of the House Ways and Means Committee disclosed the anti-labor venom behind their action. Representative Knutson of Minnesota openly expressed the committee's strike-breaking intentions by telling reporters: "With hundreds of thousands out on strike, who have also forced tens of thousands of others into idleness, we're in no position to survey the unemployment situation in this country at the present time. We'll have to wait until the strikers get back to work. To extend the time for paying unemployment benefits would be to encourage idleness."

WHAT CONGRESS GAVE TO BIG BUSINESS

This is the Congress which permitted Big Business to roll up \$47 billion in acknowledged profits during the war and has donated tax-refunds totalling many more billions to manufacturers with cancelled war-contracts, enabling them to recoup any losses during the next two years! But this same Congress which votes billions for Big Business will not give another penny to the millions of war-workers and veterans who need immediate assistance to ward off hunger and even outright starvation.

To heap insult upon injury the very Ways and Means Committee that killed the Unemployment Compensation Bill at once began consideration of new tax-reducing and tax-rebate proposals to present more billions from the public treasury to the profit-bloated industrialists and bankers.

And this bit of skulduggery is put over with the furtive connivance of the Truman administration. According to the *New York Times*, the president informed his Senate leaders

on September 17 that "he would accept the best compromise he could get." But he himself had already compromised the Kilgore Bill by sending a private memorandum to the Senate Committee saying that the crucial \$25 weekly maximum was not "indispensable." Following up this cue from the White House, the Congressional agents of Wall Street ruthlessly disposed of the measure.

Business Week in its September 8 issue revealed the real reasons behind these actions of the administration and Congress. "In the present national debate over raising unemployment compensation benefits to \$25 a week for a 26-week period, labor finds it hard to believe that any except members of what it characterizes as a die-hard, reactionary group in the business community are against such liberalizing of unemployment provisions. But here labor is wrong."

THE POSTWAR PLANS OF WALL STREET

The *Business Week* editors proceeded to explain why. "In the sometimes-considered-normal year, 1939, the average weekly wage of all workers covered by unemployment insurance was \$26.15. Today, in order to net \$25 a week after taxes, a single man must earn \$29 and a man with one dependent must earn \$26. Unemployment benefits are not taxable. Therefore, at 1939 income levels, more than half of the single and married workers in covered employment would be at least as well off financially if they qualify as unemployed. What business, with few exceptions indeed, wants to know is: How 'available' will an adequate work force be under these circumstances?"

What this means is plain enough. Any approach to adequate unemployment relief would interfere with Wall Street's plans to drive down wages and slash living standards. The industrialists want a desperate army of starving unemployed to use as a club over the heads of the workers in the plants and as a spur to the speedup system.

This knifing of unemployment compensation legislation by Congress serves notice of the kind of conditions labor can expect in the period ahead. The capitalists well know there will not be full employment at decent wages even during boom-times. Instead they are anticipating millions of unemployed coupled with deteriorating living standards for those at work. Even a beggarly \$25 a week for a limited time would seriously undermine the hunger regime they intend to impose upon the working class.

Could there be a graver warning that prosperity for the capitalists won't provide a living wage to the employed workers, not to speak of sufficient relief to the jobless? Could labor receive a more forceful reminder to intensify its independent class action on both the economic and political fields against the postwar plans of Big Business?

American Rule of Japan

CONTRAST BETWEEN GERMANY AND JAPAN

There has developed a marked contrast, which at first sight seems inexplicable, between the treatment accorded defeated Germany by the victorious Allied Powers and the corresponding treatment accorded to defeated Japan. So pronounced has the contrast become that the liberal press, which supported the imperialist war from the beginning to the end, has accused the policy makers in Washington of "betraying" their own announced war aims.

Severe punishment of all the "aggressor" nations was promised. Why, then, is Japan being given what appears, by con-

trast with Germany, a "soft peace?" It was also one of the proclaimed purposes of the United States to abolish the dictatorial and totalitarian governments of the "enemy" countries. Yet in Japan, the government (with a little refurbishing, it is true) has been permitted to remain in office and the Emperor to retain his throne. In Germany, on the other hand, the *Nazi government* has been totally eliminated and the country is under the direct military rule of the Allied Powers.

The Allied Powers are directing their efforts to the virtual destruction of what remains of German industrial economy. It is their purpose, not merely to prevent a possible rearming of Germany, but to insure that Germany never again becomes a commercial competitor. In Japan, on the other hand, the conquerors are contenting themselves with the destruction of the country's military and heavy industry. They have deprived Japan of her colonies, but they promise to restore her place in world trade, even though on a greatly reduced scale.

GENERAL PLAN OF OCCUPATION

Whereas Germany has been occupied by the armed forces of all the leading Allied Powers, the U. S. imperialists have reserved to themselves, almost exclusively, the occupation of Japan. The general plan of occupation was laid down in a statement of policy prepared jointly by the State, War and Navy Departments and endorsed by President Truman. This statement was sent to MacArthur on August 29 and released for publication on September 22. A perusal of this document is sufficient to reveal the immediate aims of U.S. imperialism with regard to Japan.

Part II of the document contains the following directive:

In view of the present character of Japanese society and the desire of the United States to attain its objectives with a minimum commitment of its forces and resources, the supreme commander will exercise his authority through Japanese government machinery and agencies, including the Emperor, to the extent that this satisfactorily furthers United States objectives.

The significant words here are contained in the reference to "the present character of Japanese society." This society was analyzed in great detail in earlier issues of *Fourth International*. (See Li Fu-jen's study, *Japan Faces the Abyss*, in the February, March and April, 1944 issues of this magazine). Without saying so, the authors of the directive to MacArthur are referring to the extremely complicated social structure of Japan, and the highly explosive quality of class relationships due to the weighty remains of Japanese feudalism. Japan has never had a democratic (capitalist) revolution and a thorough revolutionary housecleaning is long overdue. The social system is a strange admixture of feudalism and capitalism, with all the contradictions and antagonisms which such a state implies.

The war has sharpened all these contradictions and antagonisms by its disruption of the delicate balance of the semi-feudal, semi-capitalist economy. A large part of Japan's industry has been destroyed. Millions of homes have been blasted or burned. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed. Where previously the Japanese masses suffered from want, today they are literally starving. Popular hatred of the ruling class has increased.

Into this explosive situation MacArthur poured his occupation troops. When MacArthur spoke of the U.S. occupation of Japan as the most risky military enterprise ever undertaken, he was thinking not so much of possible armed resistance from the still intact Japanese home army, as of the danger of a mighty revolutionary upheaval which would engulf both the Japanese ruling class and the U.S. occupation forces. There were many signs pointing to the imminence of such an explosion.

MACARTHUR PRESERVES JAPAN'S MONARCHY

Under these circumstances it would have been foolhardy to tamper with the political and social structure of Japan. That is why the U.S. imperialists found it necessary to preserve, almost intact, the entire system, above all the monarchy, which helps to cement its disparate parts.

The pent-up forces of revolution are still there. That is why the directive to MacArthur states that "the policy (of the U.S.) is to use the existing form of government in Japan, not to support it." It may be necessary, however, to sponsor, as a political safety valve, a limited and "controlled" revolution which would effect certain superficial changes while leaving intact the social structure as a whole. This possibility is, indeed, explicit in the very next passage of the directive, which reads:

Changes in the form of government, initiated by the Japanese people or government in the direction of modifying its feudal and authoritarian tendencies, are to be permitted and favored. In the event that the effectuation of such changes involves the use of force by the Japanese people or government against persons opposed thereto, the supreme commander should intervene only where necessary to insure the security of his forces and the attainment of all other objectives of the occupation.

The policy-makers in Washington conceive of such a phony half-way revolution as a means of forestalling a thorough and fundamental renovation of Japanese society. A genuine, popular revolution of the masses, in order to sweep away the remnants of feudalism, will be compelled to liquidate the system of capitalism, with which the feudal remains are inextricably intertwined. The tasks of the democratic and socialist revolutions are thus combined. Needless to say, the American imperialists don't want a socialist revolution in Japan, any more than they do in Europe. Such a revolution could set the whole Far East aflame and bring to nought their far-reaching plans. This is one of the key reasons for their present "Peace" policy in Japan.

FASCISM

- WHAT IT IS
- HOW TO FIGHT IT

A Compilation

By LEON TROTSKY

With An Introduction

By E. R. Frank

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The Situation in the Far East

By E. R. FRANK

The imperialist war in the Far East has ended amidst the thunderous roar and the blinding glare of atomic bombs, the screams of agonized humanity, the armed occupation of all major cities, and the rising fires of civil war.

Japan lies utterly crushed. She arrived too late on the scene as an imperial power. Her economic base proved far too weak for the grandiose ambitions of her ruling class.

After many years of maneuvering, scheming and marauding, including the snatching and exploitation of new vast territories, backward semi-feudal Japan, beset by inner contradictions and hemmed in by its lack of raw materials and resources, decided to strike out and stake everything on establishing herself as the supreme imperial ruler of the Far East. Seizing the favorable moment when the western powers were locked in combat with Germany, Japan struck out with determination and audacity.

Her initial military successes were enormous. With surprising ease and rapidity she dealt the Allies one catastrophic blow after another until the whole Far East lay at her feet. At Pearl Harbor a major part of the United States Pacific fleet was destroyed, thus breaking at the time, American offensive power in the Pacific. In rapid fire order the Americans were hurled out of the Philippines, the British out of Burma, the French out of Indo-China. Singapore, the Gibraltar of the East, fell like a rotten apple; its millions of dollars of armament investment proved even more useless than France's Maginot Line in holding back the foe. With the elimination of the Anglo-American Far Eastern military establishment, Japan pushed out the Dutch, seized the fabulously rich South Sea Islands, and was even menacing Australia. In less than six months, Japan had carved out an empire vaster and potentially far wealthier than all of Hitler's conquests.

Dazzled by these stupendous military achievements the bourgeois penny-a-line scribblers—and in their wake a number of pseudo-Marxists—began beating the drums about Western underestimation of Japan's strength. The journalists who write for the *New Internationalist*, edited by Max Shachtman, and who mistake impressionism for Marxist sociology, even proposed that we throw overboard our whole previous estimate of Japan, based upon a thorough-going scientific analysis of the fundamental sociological and economic factors involved.*

But again Marxian prognosis proved a better and more reliable guide to political action than journalistic impressionism.

In general, of course, it is impossible to predict with certainty the outcome of a military struggle. Too many imponderables exist; there are too many unknown and unknowable factors. Indeed, if the outcome of war could be definitively predicted ahead of time, the loser would never take up arms in the first place, except under very special circumstances. But Marxists base themselves on the fact that modern wars are total wars;

the whole strength of the nations, technological, economic and human, is thrown into the balance. Thus war becomes a bloody contest of a more or less drawn-out character affecting the life of every single individual, whose outcome seals the very fate of the nation. Under these conditions, incidental and secondary factors, such as the initial advantage, surprise, the skill of this or that general, etc., tend to play a subordinate role in the inter-imperialist conflict, where the morale of both sides is roughly equivalent. More and more, as the conflict wears on, and all the resources and revenues of the nation are thrown into the fray the country with the strongest economic base emerges triumphant.

Japan Was Crushed

And so it was in the war between the United States and Japan. Japan was cruelly and decisively crushed, despite its initial successes, despite its strong geographical advantage, despite the catastrophic blow it dealt the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor, despite the fact that the United States with England was concentrating its main strength in Europe. In the end the all-around superiority of the United States in wealth, technique, scientific advancement, productivity of labor, natural resources, and manpower, asserted themselves with pulverizing force. America, after initial defeats, quickly rebuilt its forces, and in one swift blow after another, at Saipan, at Guam, at Midway and finally at Okinawa, wiped out the Japanese navy and air fleet and stood poised for the final invasion of the Japanese mainland. America's military achievement is all the more sensational as it was carried through in the period when the greater part of the U.S. military establishment was concentrated in Europe. If it can be stated that Germany was crushed by a coalition of powers, first and foremost the USSR, plus the United States and England, then it must be admitted that Japan was overwhelmed single-handedly by the military might of the United States.

The United States emerges out of the second world war as the strongest military power on earth. Its fleet and air force are incomparably superior in quality as well as numbers to that of both Britain and the USSR. Its armaments and wealth are also beyond compare. And to this already terrifying arsenal has now been added the dread atomic bomb. It is not for nothing that the American plutocracy is girding its loins for what it pleases to designate as "The American Century."

And who are the architects of this projected American Century? Who are the people that possess this fearsome might, who hold this vast array of power in the palm of their hands? And what are their purposes and plans? This incalculable power is in the grip of a small clique of bankers and monopoly industrialists who have amassed and control wealth and productive capacity before which the wealth of all previous ruling classes in history pales into insignificance. These Wall Street masters have been conditioned by their whole past to be a ruthless, pugnacious, arrogant gang of freebooters and pirates. The Bourbon rulers of Europe will appear as yielding and modest people compared with this Wall Street crew. The perfidious and snobbish conquerors who carved out the British Empire will loom as representatives of civilization and culture beside the bloodthirsty ignoramuses, the Pattons and Halseys, which the Wall Street money-changers are letting loose on a tortured world.

*The resolution of the 1938 Founding Conference of the Fourth International, "The War in the Far East and the Revolutionary Perspectives" states: "Insular Japan, in the era of the twilight of capitalism, proceeding from a weak economic base, is debarred historically from achieving the imperial destiny of which her ruling classes dream. . . . Weakened by what will turn out to be pyrrhic victories in China, Japanese imperialism will go down to defeat in the coming world war if its career is not brought to a speedier end by the proletarian revolution."

This fraternity of robber barons is now completely drunk with power and vision of world empire. It already sees in its mind's eye argosies plying the seven seas, bringing their tribute to the Wall Street princes. It aims to bend ruined and prostrate Europe to its needs. It aims to convert the vast expanses of Eastern Asia with its teeming millions of humanity into colonial fiefs. It plans to unlock the gates of the British Empire and penetrate into its innermost recesses, not excluding the imperial crown jewel, India. Its engineers are already tapping the undreamt-of oil riches of the Near East and preparing to displace Britain as the master of its affairs. No spot on this globe is escaping its eager and ardent attention. American imperialism is embarking on the biggest architectural job ever undertaken by man—the building of a *world* empire, an undertaking so gargantuan, so ambitious, so fraught with danger and uncertainty that even the aging, thoroughly cynical British imperialists are staring at Wall Street with disbelief and dismay. Humanity now stands face to face with the unleashed power of American imperialism. We can say that we are now officially in Year I of *Pax Americana*.

* * *

Crowning Prize of Imperialist Greed

The fabulous riches and cheap labor of the Far East have long made it the crowning prize of imperialist greed. China, with its huge population of over 400 million, its enormous natural resources, and its virtually unlimited supply of cheap labor, has long been the sought-after green pasture of imperial adventurers and speculators. Hegemony over China provides the key to control of the whole Far East and the Pacific. From the early days of the Nineteenth Century, when it was "opened up" by the Western powers, China became the victim of imperialist rapacity, the happy hunting ground for the western plunderers.

All the imperialist powers, England, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, swooped down on backward, feudalistic, helpless China and began voraciously gobbling up everything in sight. In a series of wars launched against the decadent Manchu dynasty, they wrested concession after concession and reduced China to the status of a semi-colonial country. The United States joined this imperialists' cabal only toward the end of the nineteenth century. It began its struggle for imperial power and pelf under the slogans of fair play: the "Open Door" policy. This meant: "Shove over. Give me some elbow room, too. I want a share of the plunder."

The United States, as we see, began its imperialist career in China on a very modest basis. It simply wanted a place at the feeding trough, on equal terms with the other pigs. But the latecomer who started his imperialist career with such modesty and reasonableness soon adopted a more menacing and peremptory tone. His ambitions grew; his demands became more stringent, his manner more threatening. Hardly had Uncle Sam emerged from the first world war as the world's creditor nation than he summoned together all the leading pirates in solemn conclave at Washington, D. C. Now he no longer pleaded. He laid down conditions. Japan was to get out of Shantung and the maritime provinces of Siberia. England was to limit its fleet on a par with the United States; and Japan to three-fifths of that size. Uncle Sam had become the arbiter of the destinies of the Far East.

But today Wall Street is no longer merely the arbiter. Today it enters the Far East as the supreme ruler, the imperialist overlord, the world conqueror. Holland, France and even England crawl back into their old imperial domains by the grace of Wall Street and behind its coattails, or more correctly, its sea and air

armadas. Holland and France, imperialist powers though they were and remain, are now reduced to the status of clerks and underlings of the Wall Street bosses. All roads, the ancient world used to say, lead to Rome. All roads now lead to Washington. Nothing decisive can be done until Washington has spoken its word. And even Britain, who so long ruled the seven seas; even Britain, with its \$2 billion of investments in China, possessor of Hong Kong and Singapore, with its huge concessions at Shanghai, overlord of India and Burma, Ceylon and Siam, even Britain returns now to the Far East only by the grace and with the assent of Wall Street. From the foremost power in the Far East, it is now reduced to the position of the very junior partner, the beggared partner of the firm of Anglo-American imperialism.

* * *

The Imperialists Ravage China

The western imperialists in the nineteenth century invaded China like an army of locusts and ravaged the land. They exploited, they lorded it over and humiliated the native population. But that is not all they did. They also brought into backward China the methods, the advanced technique of western industry and commerce. They erected modern factories, docks and warehouses. Thus we see superimposed on the backwardness, the ignorance and the squalor of feudal China, factories and business establishments more modern and efficient than could be found even in Paris or London. China provides a classic example of the law of combined development.

The introduction of capitalist relations in China led to the creation of a native Chinese capitalist class. But this belated capitalist class, nurtured and brought forth by foreign imperialism, never attained sufficient strength to stand on its own feet. The first Chinese capitalists were the direct agents of the imperialists and were recruited by the latter from among the landlords and the old Manchu officialdom. It was from the ranks of these imperialist agents that the native capitalist class emerged.

Together with the imperialists they exploited the working class and peasantry. Their interests were closely interlocked with the landlords with whom they were connected by a country-wide banking system. Its weakness, its very origin, its belated appearance and its dependence on western capital linked the Chinese capitalist class by thousands of threads to the imperialists. Another decisive factor made the Chinese capitalists, as a class, the dependable allies of one or another group of imperialists and robbed them of the progressive role played by the European capitalists at the dawn of capitalist development. Capitalism did not arise in China as in Western Europe, but was forcibly introduced from the outside. Concomitantly, with the development of a feeble Chinese capitalist class arose the Chinese working class, employed almost from the first in large scale modern industries.

This proletariat, horribly exploited and oppressed, immediately displayed the most revolutionary tendencies, the greatest will to struggle. Fabianism and gradualism could find no soil to take root in poverty-stricken, semi-colonial China. After the war, inspired by the Russian Revolution of 1917, the Chinese workers in the principal cities quickly turned to communism and began leading vast masses of peasants in their struggles for emancipation. The Chinese proletariat cut through all intermediary paths and strove to emulate the Russian workers and peasants, to take the road of Lenin and Trotsky. It is significant that the Social-Democracy never struck any roots in China.

The stormy growth and revolutionary character of the Chi-

nese working class explains why the Chinese capitalist class turned so savagely reactionary. It could not lead a struggle to drive out *all* the imperialists and fight for complete national independence, because such a struggle presupposed the unleashing of the mass movement of workers and peasants. And the workers and peasants would not stop half-way. They would combine the fight for national liberation with their struggles for social liberation. While engaged in driving out the foreign imperialist bloodsuckers, they would proceed to crush the native exploiters. They would take over the factories in the cities and seize the land in the villages. That is why the Chinese capitalist class rushed so precipitately into the arms of the imperialists for protection against their own insurgent population. That is why the Chinese capitalists gave up and sold out the struggle for national liberation and became an "anti-national" class. That is why the struggle for genuine, full national freedom can be led only by the working class in alliance with the lower middle class, and the peasantry. That is why the Chinese struggle for national freedom is linked inseparably with the struggle for socialist emancipation.

The 1925 Anti-Imperialist Struggle

In 1925 the anti-imperialist mass movement took on stormy proportions. The workers in the principal cities were ready for a seizure of power and the agrarian revolution in the countryside was growing apace. The masses began pouring into the young Communist party, which became the indisputable leader of the mass movement, both in the cities and rural areas. Everything appeared propitious for the success of the Chinese revolution, the destruction of the power of the imperialists and their Chinese allies, and the inauguration of the Chinese Soviet Republic. Why then did this revolution go down in bloody defeat? Because of the criminal policy of Stalin and Bukharin, the two men who led the Comintern in the years 1925-27.

It was in China that Stalin in the name of "the bloc of the four-classes" first practiced on a grand scale the infamous policy of the People's Front, that is, the subordination of the working masses to the capitalists and their aims. It was Stalin who forced the young, inexperienced Chinese Communist party into a bloc with the Kuomintang, the party of the Chinese capitalists and landlords. It was Stalin who ordered the Communists to stop the seizure of land in order not to antagonize the landlords, and to halt strike activities and the seizure of factories in the cities in order not to frighten the capitalists. Thus did Stalin cement the "unity" between capital and labor by disarming the masses.

At the decisive moment, the Chinese capitalists and landlords, who feared the Chinese masses more than they did the foreign imperialists, turned on their working-class allies and abandoned the struggle for genuine independence. Chiang Kai-Shek, the leader of the Kuomintang military forces, launched the white terror against the masses who had been disarmed both morally and physically by Stalin's People's Front treacheries. Forty thousand of the flower of the proletariat were slaughtered in Shanghai alone. The Chinese revolution which started with such tremendous promise, whose red glare, for a brief moment, gave renewed hope and inspiration to the down-trodden masses of the whole colonial world, was snuffed out. Chiang Kai-Shek became the Gallifet or, to cite his modern counterpart, the Franco of the Chinese revolution.

On the ruins of the Chinese revolution arose the counter-revolutionary Kuomintang regime. The workers returned to a slavery intensified by the new military dictatorship of Chiang Kai-Shek. Militarist wars, evidence of the complete disunity of

the country, revived on an unprecedented scale as Chiang Kai-Shek sought to extend his sway over all of China. The peasantry scourged by landlordism, usury and military requisitioning, fell into deeper ruin. Imperialism, against which Stalin's People's Front bloc had been specifically directed, was able to strengthen all its commanding positions. The road was prepared for the subsequent invasion by Japan. Such were the real fruits of the Stalin-Bukharin policies in China.

But the Kuomintang's betrayal of the national struggle and the crushing of the insurgent proletarian and peasant movements made the Chinese capitalist and landlord rulers ever more dependent on foreign imperialism, and the continued prey of one imperialist power after another. In 1931, as we know, Japan embarked on an active policy of despoliation in China with its invasion of Manchuria. Chiang Kai-Shek at this time, however, was taken up with his own affairs. He was busy waging a war of extermination against the revolting peasants. The helpless Kuomintang government proclaimed therefore a policy of "non-resistance" to Japanese imperialism. The cowardly Chinese capitalists and landlords were more interested in crushing the peasants and keeping the labor movement prostrate than in fighting the Japanese invader. They preferred exercising their arbitrary rule in at least part of China rather than risking war with Japan.

But Japan continued its encroachments until in 1937 it proceeded to seize North China and launched its attack on the Yangtze Valley. The Chinese capitalist rulers could procrastinate and maneuver no longer. They were face to face with the decision to resist or perish. They decided to strictly limit themselves to a defensive military campaign, a sort of large-scale guerrilla struggle. At the same time they proceeded to embrace Great Britain and the United States from whom they received financial aid. Thus again the Chinese capitalists demonstrated their incapacity of fighting against *all* imperialism and of truly leading the struggle for national independence.

In 1937-38 Chiang Kai-Shek's armies were expelled from China's coastal provinces and driven into the interior by the Japanese invader. The authority of the Kuomintang regime was banished from all the great cities, ports and industrial areas. During the ensuing seven years, Chiang proved totally incapable of driving out the Japanese invaders from any of the occupied territory. Corrupted to the core, fearful of mobilizing the masses for a war to the death against the imperialist violators, the Kuomintang clique watched helplessly while the dismembered country plunged ever deeper into ruin.

All this time, despite the Japanese menace, Chiang continued to employ his forces to suppress the Chinese masses, the genuine opponents of Japanese imperialism. He silenced every voice of criticism and stamped ruthlessly on every opposition movement to his totalitarian regime. The prisons of Kuomintang China are filled to overflowing with genuine fighters against imperialism, with true champions of China's freedom.

Under the combined blows of the Japanese military and the peasant insurgents, however, Chiang's regime grew moribund. Devastating economic crisis brought on by the ravages of war loosened the tie-rods of landlord-capitalist rule. In the course of the war years the movement of peasant insurgency finally crystallized into the Yen-an Government, a dual government to that of the Kuomintang. Arising originally out of the agrarian revolutionary movement of 1927, peasant revolts continued to sweep the countryside even after the revolution had been annihilated in the cities. The Stalinist leaders, after the workers' organizations had been extirpated, transferred their activities to the countryside and took the leadership of the peasant movement.

This movement of agrarian reform, misnamed by the Stalinists in the early days as the Chinese Soviets, gained widespread support among the peasantry because it mitigated to some extent landlord parasitism, reduced the burden of taxation, inaugurated farm cooperatives and generally raised the standard of the peasants compared to farm conditions under Kuomintang control. The Stalinist-led peasant movement which fought numerous guerrilla wars against the Kuomintang was forced in 1934 to execute a mass migration into the deep interior of China. The Stalinists consolidated their position in the course of the Sino-Japanese war and today the Yen-an regime rules over a vast territory containing a population estimated at 80,000,000 people. It disposes of at least half a million men under arms and in addition controls large guerrilla forces in other parts of the country. This movement in the northwest province of Shensi represented from the first a possible rallying point for the popular revolt against the Kuomintang. That is why ever since the formation of the dual Yen-an government, Chiang Kai-Shek has tried to strangle it by military action and blockade. But while he succeeded in keeping it bottled up in the deep interior, he was unable to erase it.

For the whole past year it has been quite clear that the class struggle would violently flare again with the collapse of Japanese imperialism—the major “stabilizing” force in the Far East for the past 8 years. Chiang Kai-Shek was in mortal fear that the great mass movement of 1927 would again revive and sweep his rotted and corrupt regime into the discard. While it is true that Yen-an represents only a peasant movement, it nevertheless commands a large army with a heroic tradition. And even more decisive, the mass movement in the cities is likely to pass again under Stalinist leadership in the initial phases. The workers’ organizations in turn will unquestionably seek to establish links with Yen-an.

Kuomintang Prepares to Settle Accounts

The Kuomintang, constantly haunted by the specter of Communism, was busy preparing day and night in every possible way and with every resource at its command to settle accounts with Yen-an once the Japanese menace was removed. The antagonism between Yen-an and the Kuomintang is the political reflection of the irreconcilability of the needs and aspirations of the Chinese masses, on the one hand, with the Chiang Kai-Shek regime of capitalist-landlord exploitation on the other.

The Chinese capitalists soon enlisted the support of their Anglo-American patrons in their plans designed to ward off the Red menace. (And with the precipitous decline of British power, they turned more and more to the United States.) They must be bolstered, the Chinese capitalists argued, against the coming danger. They must have plenty of help. American imperialism was more than sympathetic. The preservation of the rotted Kuomintang clique is indispensable for its plans of super-exploitation of China. With the dispatch of Hurley as ambassador to Chungking, all ambiguity was eliminated from United States policy. American imperialism threw its full weight behind Chiang Kai-Shek.

It is clear that both the Kuomintang and American imperialism adjudged the situation correctly. No sooner did Japan collapse than the fires of civil war began to burn once again in agonized China. Reports trickled through of peasant uprisings in the countryside and for the first time since the terrible debacle of 1927, the industrial proletariat was again on the move. A Yen-an communique asserted that 50,000 Chinese workers had occupied Japanese-operated factories in Shanghai and had placarded the streets with slogans welcoming the Yen-an armies.

Immediately a race began between the armies of Chiang Kai-Shek and those of Yen-an to seize the key industrial cities and effect the surrender of the Japanese armies. Both the Kuomintang and Yen-an armies are poorly armed. Whoever captured the war booty from the Japanese would thus gain incalculable benefit. But Chiang Kai-Shek had all the advantages in this race and appears to have easily outdistanced his Yen-an rivals. First, American imperialism stepped into the breach. It supplied Chiang Kai-Shek with transport planes and other vehicles to rapidly move his troops into the major industrial centers. American troops likewise moved into Shanghai and other centers, prepared to bolster his control. Then, the puppet troops numbering some 800,000, under the command of former Kuomintang generals who had gone over to the Japanese, cooperated with Chiang Kai-Shek in blockading the Yen-an troops and preserving “law and order” for the Kuomintang. Furthermore even the Japanese general staff, in its hour of supreme humiliation, never for one moment forgot its class instinct. General Okamura, Japanese commanding officer in China, announced that he would only surrender to Chiang Kai-Shek’s officers.

Kuomintang and Yen-an

In view of the array of forces on the opposing side, it might appear that the initial setback to Yen-an and therefore to the worker-peasant mass movement was inevitable. The Kuomintang had the unstinted aid of American imperialism, the support of the Chinese Quisling armies and even the backing of the defeated Japanese general staff. In contrast Yen-an’s “patron,” the Kremlin bureaucracy, left it “holding the bag” at the crucial moment by its pact with Chiang. What could Yen-an do? But the revolutionary movement of the masses fighting for their emancipation can never count on rich patrons from outside to help it in its struggles. The rich patrons always have a habit of going over to the side of reaction and counter-revolution. Is the battle therefore hopeless? But we know the masses of Russia in 1917, without any powerful patrons on the outside, conquered power and succeeded in holding the imperialists of the whole world at bay. In general, the strong point of the revolution does not lie in its technical or material superiority over the counter-revolution. On the contrary, such superiority generally lies with the other side. The invincibility of the revolution consists in its ideas, its program, its ability to arouse out of their lethargy the downtrodden millions of humanity and to inspire them with the greatest idea of all, the greatest crusade of history, the overthrow of the slaveholders, the exploiters, the tyrants and the emancipation of mankind. That was the “secret weapon” and the only “secret weapon” of Lenin and Trotsky in 1917. This same weapon can again sweep the slate clean in China today.

Unfortunately, the Yen-an armies are not under the leadership of genuine working class militants but Stalinist scoundrels; not mistaken or misled revolutionists, but conscious deceivers. In 1927 the young Chinese Communist leaders were merely duped and misled by Stalin into the blind alley of People’s Frontism. But today the Yen-an leaders are battle-scarred veterans of the Stalinist school of betrayal, treachery, sell-outs and crimes. They aim to head the coming mass movement only to behead it. Despite the fact that Chiang Kai-Shek revealed himself in 1927 to be the butcher of the Chinese Revolution, despite the fact that he heads an arch-reactionary, bloodthirsty regime, the Stalinists again proposed to him in 1937 the formation of a governmental bloc in order to fight against Japan. They even went so far as to call off all criticism of his infamous government and gave up their program of mild agrarian reform. But the Kuomintang is so rotted, is so hated by the people, is so dependent on

terror to preserve its rule that Chiang Kai-Shek could not preserve an alliance with the Stalinists even on those terms. Civil war broke out again as the war with Japan progressed.

And today, on the eve of new unfolding struggles in the Far East, the Stalinists are attempting to repeat their crimes of 18 years ago; their treachery of Spain in 1936-37. But this time their cynicism exceeds all bounds. They are proposing to fight for bourgeois democracy in China in 1945 arm in arm with the Chinese Franco! The Stalinists, at the present juncture, are continuing to demand a "democratization" of the totalitarian Kuomintang regime through the formation of a coalition government with Chiang Kai-Shek. But this represents the sheerest utopia, the worst deception. Bourgeois democracy is least of all possible in war-ravaged, poverty-stricken China. The Chinese capitalists and landlords allied with the American imperialists can continue their monstrous enslavement of the masses only by the exercise of the most brutal means, only by the use of terror and violence against the people. Bourgeois democracy represents a chimera, an empty dream for the thrice-exploited colonial world. Only a thoroughgoing radical program similar to Lenin's program of 1917 can inspire the masses to struggle to the very death and remove the dead hand of reaction which condemns the country to ruin, decay, chaos and famine. Only the program of the Socialist revolution can wipe out the parasitism of the capitalists, landlords and imperialists and provide the necessary economic groundwork for the growth of a genuine democracy.

A Transition Stage

Even if Chiang Kai-Shek, because of his present weakness, is compelled to agree to legalize the Communist Party and include a number of Yen-an functionaries in the Kuomintang Government it would by no means signalize the dawn of bourgeois democracy in China. Such a coalition would simply represent an interlude, a transition stage which Chiang Kai-Shek would utilize to strengthen the forces of the counter-revolution and at the propitious moment move to effect a new bloody settlement with the rebellious masses.

But probably the Yen-an Stalinists are not concerned with democracy at all. Probably they are concerned solely with the legalization of *their* organizations and the securing of influential posts in a coalition government. If so, they are merely attempting to utilize the resurgent mass movement for bargaining purposes with Chiang Kai-Shek and in order to counter the fast-growing influence of American imperialism. Even on this plane of power politics Stalin is due for cruel disappointment. Even if a coalition People's Front government is temporarily set up in China, it settles nothing fundamental in the irrepressible conflict between the Chinese workers and peasants on the one hand and the Chinese capitalists and landlords allied with the imperialists, on the other. It merely postpones the decisive conflict while weakening, confusing, disorienting, disarming and lulling the proletariat to sleep. The Stalinists will no more succeed in weaning the Chinese capitalists and landlords away from the influence of the imperialists and pressuring them into adopting a friendly orientation toward the USSR in 1945 than they did in 1927. We said that the resurgent Chinese workers' movement in the cities will most likely unfold in the initial period under the influence of the Stalinists. The experience of the resurgence of the Social Democracy in Germany after the last world war is now being repeated in the case of the Stalinists on a world scale. The workers are everywhere surging forward. Revolutionary moods are world-wide. And in this first period, the Stalinists, despite all their betrayals, are lifted up on the shoul-

ders of the masses and everywhere stand at the head of millions.

How is this to be explained? Because only a small section of the workers' vanguard follows political events closely and has fully gauged the treachery of the Stalinists. The masses first entering the political arena follow that movement which in their minds still represents the 1917 Russian Revolution, the struggle for Communism.

Of course it is idle to expect that the Chinese Stalinist leaders will act any differently than the Greek Stalinists, the French Stalinists or any other Stalinists. These utterly corrupt bureaucrats are beyond redemption. They will betray once again as they have betrayed so many times before. The mass movement will never reach its goal until it succeeds in burning out all Stalinist influence from its ranks.

The resurgence of the workers' movements in the cities holds great promise for the Chinese class struggle. As we explained many times, this is the only class which is capable of providing the necessary leadership to the millions of poverty-stricken peasants, and bringing the struggle against the capitalists and landlords to a decisive conclusion. The workers will unquestionably assume their proper place as leader of all the downtrodden and oppressed. It well may be that the Chinese workers, who have skipped over the stage of Social Democracy, who have displayed such incalculable sacrifice, bravery, self-abnegation and will to struggle, will also be in the van of the movement of the Fourth International, will before others free themselves from the infection of Stalinism and under the banner of Trotsky resume the march again which was halted in so terrible a manner in 1927. The source of the unheard-of super-profits for the imperialists may also become for them the source of new calamities and catastrophies.

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The Trotskyist Position

Despite our fundamental analysis of the "anti-national" character of the colonial bourgeoisie, we Trotskyists, as is known, support every actual struggle of this same bourgeoisie when it is forced into action against the imperialists. We support such struggles despite the bourgeoisie's half-measures, despite its half-heartedness and treachery, and despite our knowledge that they cannot carry the struggle through to the end. First, because every blow struck by the colonies against imperialism weakens the latter and thus aids the working class in the metropolitan centers in their struggle for socialism, thus improves their chances of success. Secondly, only by supporting such progressive struggles, despite their inadequacy; only by fighting side by side with the masses and sharing common experiences can we, step by step, expose the true character and role of the bourgeois leaders, explain the necessity for a revolutionary program and win the leadership of the mass movement. That is why we supported completely and unconditionally the Chinese war against the Japanese invaders from its very beginning in 1937, even though it was under the leadership of the hangman, Chiang Kai-Shek. Following the same logic, we supported the struggle of the Indian bourgeoisie under the Indian Congress in 1942 against British imperialism despite the cowardly and treacherous policies of Ghandi.

And we insisted on unambiguously demarcating ourselves from all varieties of literary radicalism, some of whom decided to abandon the Leninist policy on colonial struggles, of all times—in the very midst of the Second World War; and of all places—in China and India! Such literary tendencies invariably compensate for their political impotence in life by "super-revolutionary" phrasemongering on paper, always designed to justify in the end a policy of abstentionism from the struggle.

What did we achieve in practice by following the Leninist colonial policy? How did this policy prove its correctness against the "policies" of defeatist phrasemongering? Naturally in the period of gigantic working class defeats and unparalleled reaction not even the most flawless policy can produce immediate large scale results. But still we are not without proof. In the very midst of the Second World War, a new section of the Fourth International was created in India. The leadership of this party, it is clear, has fully grasped the fundamentals of our program and has applied them to its country. In the 1942 upheaval it correctly supported the mass struggle which took place under formal Congress leadership, while mercilessly exposing the treacherous policies of this same leadership. Today we learn it is beginning to grow and register gains. And significantly enough its greatest gains come from the forces in the Congress *left wing!*

In our opinion this example is of enormous symptomatic significance and provides an illustration of the correctness of our policy. We are sure that the Trotskyists of China will have similar experiences to record. Only by not separating ourselves from the masses, only by supporting and joining with them in their struggles, will we earn the opportunity of teaching them the great truths of Marxism. A policy of abstentionism

and defeatism will only result in isolation and disintegration of the revolutionary vanguard.

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Today the situation has sharply changed. Japanese imperialism, the marauder of China, now lies prostrate. And the new and far more powerful overlord, U.S. imperialism, has entered and is preparing to subjugate China. And the native bourgeoisie, already trembling before the rebellious masses, has flung itself into the arms of this new imperialist overlord. The main enemy today of the Chinese masses is U.S. imperialism and its Kuomintang ally. That is why in the unfolding class struggle in China we take our stand on the side of the workers and peasants, even though they are now under the false leadership and program of the Stalinists, and against U.S. imperialism and the Kuomintang.

Our whole record—from the very first—on the Chinese question, is clean. Our banner is spotless. Let us hope that in the great class struggles which will rock the Far East on the morrow, Trotskyism will succeed in exposing the perfidy of the Stalinist misleaders and will step forth as the acknowledged leader of masses in action.

War Guilt in the Pacific

A Political Analysis of the Pearl Harbor Reports

By LI FU-JEN

After this article was written, striking confirmation of the author's thesis was given by John Chamberlain, in an article which appeared in the September 21 issue of *Life* magazine. Chamberlain declared that "long before" the 1944 election Republican Presidential Candidate Thomas E. Dewey learned "that we had cracked the Japanese 'ultra' code some time prior to Pearl Harbor and that Roosevelt and his advisers knew what the Japanese were going to do well in advance of the overt rupture of relations."

But Dewey joined Roosevelt in the conspiracy of silence and deception which made it possible to brand Japan as the "aggressor" and fasten "war guilt" on the Japanese nation. Had the American people known the full truth, even as late as the 1944 election campaign, the "political impact," as Chamberlain says, "would have been terrific and might well have landed Dewey in the White House." But Dewey, concerned like Roosevelt for the interests of U.S. imperialism, kept silent, and by keeping silent sacrificed the chance to deliver a telling and perhaps fatal blow to his opponent's candidacy.

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On August 29, 1945 President Truman released for publication lengthy reports by the Army and Navy giving the facts and circumstances of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor which precipitated the extension of the Second World War to the Pacific area. The lengthier of the two reports, that of the Army Pearl Harbor Board, is dated October 20, 1944, and is accompanied by a statement of Secretary of War Stimson. The other is a fact-finding report of a Navy Court of Inquiry with a statement by the Secretary of the Navy and is dated October 19, 1944.

Why were these reports withheld from the public for almost a year? An attempt has been made to represent the suppression as having been necessitated by considerations of military security, since the war was still in progress. It is true that the reports deal largely with matters of a purely military character.

Yet the principal event to which they relate, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, had occurred almost three years prior to the completion of the reports. What they contain in the way of military information was already stale and musty and had no bearing whatever on the further course of the Pacific war. It is impossible to escape the conclusion that the reports were suppressed for political and not for military reasons. The reports, which disclose the policy of the Roosevelt Administration in the chain of events which led to the outbreak of war between the United States and Japan make this absolutely clear.

The Army Board and the Navy Court were charged with the task of ascertaining the facts of the Pearl Harbor disaster and establishing the responsibility therefor. The Army investigation centered on the acts and policies of General Short, who was in charge of the Hawaii Command of the Army. The Navy investigation centered on the acts and policies of Admiral Kimmel, who was commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet. These high-ranking officers were removed from their posts after Pearl Harbor and were called upon to defend themselves against charges of incompetence and dereliction of duty. In order to exculpate themselves from blame for the disaster, they were obliged to make reference to the general policies of the Administration by which they were bound, for much more was involved than simply matters of military precaution and preparation. The investigators, too, had to delve into Administration policies, for without doing so there clearly existed no possibility of establishing the full truth or apportioning the blame for what had occurred.

It is precisely here that the reports are highly revealing, for they establish incontestably the following conclusions, even though these conclusions are not drawn in the reports:

1. That President Roosevelt, while proclaiming his love of peace and hatred of war, was embarked on a deliberate course of war with Japan (and Germany) long before Pearl Harbor and that this was the conscious policy of his Administration.

2. That Roosevelt's policy toward Japan was one of systematic pressure to force the Japanese imperialists to commit the overt act which would touch off a war explosion. Roosevelt was obliged to pursue this strategy in order to be able to brand Japan as the "aggressor" and stampede the people of the United States into a war to which a majority of the nation had been steadfastly opposed. The "peace-loving" President had assured the American people that their sons would not be sent to fight in "foreign wars." This made it necessary that the United States should be "attacked" so that the drive of American imperialism for mastery of the Pacific could be presented in the guise of a war of national defense and survival.

When Roosevelt read the reports, he must have realized their explosive political quality. Here, out of the mouths of his own generals and admirals, he was convicted as a war conspirator who under cover of unctuous protestations of his love of peace plotted to plunge the American people into the most terrible of all wars so that the "manifest destiny" of American imperialism might be achieved. It was, remember—election year! Roosevelt was running for his fourth term. Publication of the Pearl Harbor reports shortly before the election would have furnished the Republican opposition some telling political ammunition. The Republicans could have portrayed Roosevelt (much more effectively than they were in the circumstances able to do) as an arch-hypocrite and betrayer of the peaceful desires of the people. Without doubt, it was by Roosevelt's command that the Pearl Harbor reports were kept under cover.

War-Making Powers of Congress

The war-making power supposedly resides in Congress. A constitutional provision prohibits the United States from engaging in any hostile *military* act against another Power unless and until the Congress has declared a state of war. There is, however, no legal bar to prevent the executive arm of government from pursuing policies and taking hostile steps of a *non-military* character against a Power with which the United States is formally at peace. This was just what Roosevelt did in relation to both Germany and Japan between the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, and the formal American entry into the war with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. First, he had Congress repeal the arms embargo clauses of the Neutrality Act, enabling the United States to supply implements of war to the future military allies of American imperialism. Then he instituted the system of Lend-Lease. Next he authorized the arming of American merchant ships and ordered them and their naval escorts to attack German submarines whether or not they were themselves attacked. He had Congress enact military conscription (Selective Service Act). Finally, in the Pacific, by a succession of acts, he drew a noose of economic strangulation around the neck of Japan.

It was impossible for Roosevelt to gear the country fully to war so long as formal peace prevailed. Military preparations could go so far and no further. Moreover, and more importantly, the imperialist aims of the United States could be realized only through war. Since the imperialist government in Washington did not, as a matter of tactics, intend to take the initiative in formally breaching the "peace," the opponent had to be forced into making the first hostile move. This was Roosevelt's problem. It was necessary for him, however, to surround the steps

taken with a typical aura of idealistic and pacifist declarations. Thus in one breath Roosevelt would sonorously proclaim: "I hate war!" In the next he would invoke economic sanctions against Japan, knowing that these would lead ultimately to war.

The situation that prevailed prior to the formal entry of the United States into the war, and the nature of Roosevelt's problem, are well described in the second chapter of the report of the Army Pearl Harbor Board, which it is worth quoting at length:

There existed during this critical period much confusion of thinking and of organization, of conflict of opinion and diversity of views. The nation was not geared to war, either mentally or as an organization. It was a period of conflicting plans and purposes. The winds of public opinion were blowing in all directions; isolationists and nationalists were struggling for predominance; public opinion was both against war and clamoring for reprisal against Japan; we were negotiating for peace with Japan, and simultaneously applying economic sanctions that led only to war; we were arming our forces for war and at the same time giving away much of such armament. The Administration, State, War and Navy departments in their policies, plans and operations were likewise being pushed here and there by the ebb and flow of war events, public reactions, diplomatic negotiations and newspaper attacks.

The War Department by its actions and its organization was still on a peacetime basis; neither its management nor its general staff had perfected its organization for war or for the conduct of a large enterprise. The whole machinery of Government was geared to a different purpose and tempo than war. Valiant and brilliant men were struggling to bring order out of chaos, rather as individuals or as small groups attempting simultaneously both to establish policies and to accomplish practical things. As a result a few men, without organization in the true sense, were attempting to conduct large enterprises, take multiple actions, and give directions that should have been the result of carefully directed commands, instead of action taken by conference. We were preparing for a war by the conference method. We were directing such preparations by the conference method; we were even writing vital messages by the conference method, and arriving at their contents by compromise instead of by command; that was the product of the time and conditions due to the transition from peace to war in a democracy.

Such was the confusion of men and events, largely unorganized for appropriate action and helpless before a strong course of events, that ran away with the situation and prematurely plunged us into war.

A Revealing Passage

Everything in this passage is revealing, including the evident impatience and frustration of the brass hats with a "democracy" that interfered with their preparations for war. The "conflicting plans and purposes" were in essence the conflict between Roosevelt's set course toward war and the restrictions which a state of formal peace necessarily imposed on the war preparations. It was precisely this conflict which created difficulties for General Short and Admiral Kimmel and contributed to the magnitude of the Pearl Harbor catastrophe. Roosevelt was striving to resolve this conflict by "negotiating for peace with Japan, and simultaneously applying economic sanctions that led only to war." When Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, he had achieved his purpose. Only from the very limited point of view of military preparedness *at the time* was the United States "prematurely plunged into war." From the larger point of view of the imperialist destiny of the United States, of which Roosevelt was the most keenly conscious, entry came none too soon. Moreover, as we have already pointed out, further military preparation was possible only on a wartime basis. It is, of course, not true that public opinion was "clamoring for reprisal against

Japan." Poll after poll of public opinion showed a tremendous popular opposition to any act that might plunge America into war. The capitalist press—and that is what the brass hats mean by "public opinion"—was indeed clamoring for action against Japan, but this press spoke only for a tiny minority, the imperialist brigands of Wall Street who feared that the rich Far East would come under the permanent domination of their Japanese rivals.

The formula under which military preparations went forward at Pearl Harbor is stated in the Army's report: ". . . to take defensive measures but in so doing he (General Short) was told not to alarm the population (of Hawaii) nor to disclose intent." The effect of this directive was felt in the thoroughness with which the Japanese accomplished their purpose at Pearl Harbor. The evidence shows that General Short followed the directive. Moreover, he was not kept sufficiently informed as to the critical state of relations with Japan and the imminence of war. Therefore he did not give an all-out war alert as the critical hour approached, but contented himself with an anti-sabotage alert. He was bound by general orders "not to alarm the population nor to disclose intent."

Secretary of State Hull was asked by the Army Board for an expression of the State Department's views touching on the influence of foreign policy upon military directives. Hull replied that "it was not the policy of this Government to take provocative action against any country or to cause Japan to commit an act of war against the United States." But the record is clear: economic sanctions of a most stringent character were imposed against Japan in systematic order, and these, as the Army Board attests, "led only to war." If we were to believe Hull's statement (and we should not forget that he was an imperialist diplomat) we would also have to believe that Hull's chief and mentor, Roosevelt himself, was so stupid as not to understand the provocative nature of economic sanctions and the consequences to which they lead. According to Hull, he must have thought that the Japanese imperialists would tamely submit to economic strangulation and abandon their plans of empire without a fight. But there is nothing to support any assumption that Roosevelt was so stupid. On the contrary, he proved himself a master strategist of imperialist politics. He knew what he was doing and why. He knew the consequences to which his acts would lead. This is not a matter of unsupported assumption. Hull's contention that it was not Washington's policy "to cause Japan to commit an act of war against the United States" is decisively refuted by other testimony written into the report of the Army Board.

The Roosevelt Strategy

The Roosevelt strategy of forcing Japan to become the "aggressor" is revealed unmistakably in that section of the report which relates to messages between the War Department and the Hawaiian Command in the last days before Japan struck. On November 27, 1941, 10 days before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Chief of Staff radioed General Short as follows:

Negotiations with Japanese appear to be terminated to all practical purposes with only the barest possibilities that the Japanese Government might come back and offer to continue. Japanese future action unpredictable but hostile action possible at any moment. If hostilities cannot, repeat cannot, be avoided, the U.S. desires that Japan commit the first overt act.

That Roosevelt himself was the author of this policy was stated by General Gerow of the War Department who testified that "the President had definitely stated that he wanted Japan to commit the first overt act." From *desiring* the commission of an

overt act by Japan it was but a short step to *provoking* one. This is just what Roosevelt sought to do. The vast economic power of the United States, and the economic frailty of Japan, guaranteed the success of Roosevelt's strategy of provoking war by tightening an economic noose around Japan. The sanctions imposed on Japan in 1940-41 are referred to in the Army Board's report. The Army's investigators understood their drastic character and had no doubt that the Roosevelt policy "led only to war." The pertinent section of the report reads, in part, as follows:

It was in the fall of 1940 that we cast the die and adopted economic sanctions. And we find it significant that about June, 1940 General Herron as Commanding General of the Hawaiian Department upon Washington orders went into an all-out alert into battle positions with live ammunition for six weeks.

In September the export of iron and steel scrap was prohibited. The effect of the United States policy was to cut off from Japan by the winter of 1940-41 the shipment of many strategic commodities, including arms, ammunition, and implements of war, aviation gasoline and many other petroleum products, machine tools, scrap iron, pig iron and steel manufactures, copper, lead, zinc, aluminum, and a variety of other commodities. . . .

Nor was this all. These disastrous embargoes were supplemented by Washington's abrogation of the U.S.-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation which deprived Japan of "most favored nation" treatment in her remaining trade with the United States, and by the freezing of Japanese credits in this country. Among the most important consequences of these moves was the destruction of Japan's lucrative and vital silk trade with this country, upon the proceeds of which Japan largely depended for the financing of her imports. Finally in August, 1941, after Japan had moved troops into southern French Indo-China, thereby flanking the Philippines on the West, Washington and London joined in delivering a warning to Tokyo against "new moves of aggression." Roosevelt dispatched a military mission to China. Zero hour was approaching. The imperialist conspirators sat back to await the development of the inevitable, and they were under no misapprehension as to what that development would be.

The effect of their pressure against Japan was reported to Washington by the American ambassador in Tokyo, Joseph C. Grew, who on October 9, 1941, two months before the Pearl Harbor attack, said that "the frozen-credit policy of the United States was driving Japan into national bankruptcy and she would be forced to act." Earlier, Grew had stated that:

Considering the temper of the people of Japan (read Japanese imperialists, for that was the circle Grew moved in) it was dangerously uncertain to base United States policy on a view that the imposition of progressive and rigorous economic measures would probably avert war; that it was the view of the Embassy that war would not be averted by such a course. . . . Finally he warned of the possibility of Japan's adopting measures with dramatic and dangerous suddenness which might make inevitable a war with the United States.

Grew may or may not have harbored the illusion that Washington's policy was intended to "avert war." What he thought is of little importance, since he was an executor and not a maker of policy. The important thing is that the high policy makers in Washington, Roosevelt and Hull, working in the closest consultation with the Wall Street barons, had already determined on war and were concerned only to force Japan to commit the first overt act of hostility, while gaining whatever time they could to prepare for war. They knew Japan was choking in the noose of their sanctions. They knew the Japanese imperialists would try to fight their way out of the noose. They had Grew's warning that Japan would attack with "dramatic and dangerous suddenness." In the light of this last fact, especially,

it can be said that Roosevelt transcended all bounds of nauseating hypocrisy when he pretended surprise and shock at the Japanese "sneak" attack on Pearl Harbor.

The 10-Point Ultimatum

The final negotiations "for peace" before Pearl Harbor put the finishing touch to the plans of the imperialist conspirators in Washington. On November 26, 1941, Secretary of State Hull presented to the Japanese representatives in Washington a 10-point proposal as the basis for an agreement. This proposal required Japan to withdraw her armed forces from China (including Manchuria) and from French Indo-China. In return, the United States would unfreeze Japanese credits, end all other economic sanctions, and conclude a new commercial treaty with Japan. The Japanese imperialists were asked, in effect, to abandon entirely their plan of empire and surrender their position as a Pacific power.

Although the 10-point proposal was not couched in the form or language of an ultimatum, but took the form of a proposed draft agreement, it was understood by Tokyo as an ultimatum and was intended as such by the Washington conspirators. Hull and Roosevelt certainly regarded the proposal as an ultimatum. They knew it meant war. For on the morning of November 27, as the Army Board report states, Secretary of War Stimson called Hull on the phone and Hull "told me now he had broken the whole matter off. As he put it, 'I have washed my hands of it, and it is now in the hands of you and Knox (Navy Secretary), the Army and Navy.'"

The Army Board also reports that on the same day (November 26) that the 10-point proposal was delivered to the Japanese representatives, the Chief of Staff (General Marshall) and the Chief of Naval Operations (Admiral Stark) wrote a joint memorandum to Roosevelt, "requesting that no ultimatum be delivered to the Japanese as the Army and Navy were not ready to precipitate an issue with Japan." They were apprehensive as they saw the quickening drift toward war. They wanted more time to prepare. But their attempt to check the drift came too late in any event. Hull had already delivered the American ultimatum. He was instructed and guided by Roosevelt who understood better than the generals and admirals that the limits of military preparedness under peacetime conditions had been reached and that further delay in plunging into war could have only adverse effects on the grandiose plans of American imperialism. It was now necessary to effect the sharp transition from "armed neutrality" to active belligerency and to pursue the imperialist destiny of the United States on the decisive plane of military operations. Roosevelt had decided to cut the Gordian knot which tied the country to a peaceful status. While, naturally, he was aware of the military deficiencies of the United States, he knew, too, that the American productive capacity, once fully geared to war, would quickly make good any losses sustained in the initial encounters with Japan. That is why, in asking Congress for a declaration of war on December 8, 1941, he could confidently predict "inevitable victory" for the United States.

The 10-point ultimatum to Japan reflected the irreconcilable antagonism between American and Japanese imperialism, an antagonism with deep economic roots, an antagonism that could be resolved only by recourse to war. The question of who fired the first shot in the Pacific war has only an episodic interest. The rivalry of the two imperialist Powers was lodged in the contest for trade, for raw materials, for colonies, for spheres of influence, for investment opportunities, for the right to dominate and exploit the teeming millions of the Orient. War be-

tween them did not develop suddenly, but over long years. From the beginning, the interests, and therefore the policies, of the two Powers developed in diametrical opposition. The logic of this development made ultimate war between them inevitable.

A consideration of the nature of America's first contact with Japan illumines the whole future course of U.S.-Japanese relations. In the year 1853, under orders from President Fillmore, Commodore Perry sailed an American naval squadron into Tokyo Bay to demand of Japan the opening of her ports to American shipping and commerce. The use of naval power to conduct a seemingly peaceful diplomatic mission is in itself significant. The frightened feudal rulers of Japan acceded to the American demands. Japan's two centuries of isolation from the rest of the world (the Tokugawa seclusion, 1641-1853) was at an end. Perry's mission inaugurated the period of Japan's modernization which was marked by the Meiji Restoration (1868) and set its ruling class on the road of capitalist growth and imperialist expansion.

Historical Background

The circumstances dictating the forcible opening of Japan were a signpost pointing to the future imperialist policies of both the United States and Japan and the clashing of their interests in the broad basin of the Pacific. As a result of China's defeat by Great Britain in the Opium Wars of 1839-42 and the forcing open of China's ports, a profitable Oriental trade began in which American merchants quickly seized their share. Those were the days of sailing ships. Steam-powered vessels had scarcely begun to make their appearance. Trim clippers sailed out of the ports of New York and San Francisco carrying trade goods to Shanghai and Canton and bringing back the tea, silks, porcelains and spices of the Orient. It was a long voyage. Under favorable weather conditions the trip from New York to Canton around Cape Horn occupied a full five months. The small sailing ships could scarcely carry enough food and fresh water to last that long. It was hard to get crews for this Oriental run because of the fearful hardships often endured on such long and hazardous voyages. Sailors often had to be "Shanghai'd" on board the sailing ships.

In order to maintain and develop the Pacific trade route to China an intermediate port of call was required, so that ships could replenish their food and water supplies. Japan lay directly on the sailing route, but Japan was closed and forbidden territory. Seamen unfortunate enough to be shipwrecked off the Japanese coast were frequently put to death by Japan's feudal rulers who had decreed the total isolation of the country. It was Perry's mission to break this isolation and obtain, by force if necessary, the right of American ships to call at such ports as Yokohama and Nagasaki. In subsequent treaties the United States secured extraterritorial rights for its nationals in Japan, as it had already done in China. To Japan's rulers, gazing out for the first time on the outside world, it seemed as if their country was to suffer the fate of nearby China which had been humiliated and subjugated by the Western Powers and reduced in all but name to a colony. They escaped this fate by feverish modernization and the creation of armed forces to withstand external pressure. The stage was thus set for the progressive development of a rivalry with the Western Powers which reached its denouement at Pearl Harbor.

. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century the last vestiges of what has become known as the "American frontier" were rapidly vanishing. The growth of American capitalism was coming to depend more and more upon foreign trade. The great lands of the Orient, above all China, were the logical scene of American expansion, together with South America. Seizure of

the Philippines in the Spanish-American war of 1898 and the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands started American imperialism on its career in the Pacific.

Revivified Japan, meanwhile, had fought a war with and inflicted total defeat upon China (1894-5). Japan annexed the rich island of Formosa off the coast of China and established a protectorate over Korea, formally annexing the latter in 1910. Manchuria had become a sphere of interest of Czarist Russia. Britain and France had established similar spheres in China proper. Washington, highly conscious of America's own destiny as an imperialist power, was alarmed by the piratical freebooting of its rivals. In 1899 John Hay, Secretary of State in the McKinley administration, enunciated the famous doctrine of the "Open Door" with regard to China. By this doctrine the American imperialists served notice on their rivals that they would not countenance any treaties or agreements which would have the effect of creating closed preserves and denying equal trade opportunities to American capitalists doing business in China.

The "Open Door" policy was vigorously reiterated during the Boxer Rebellion in China (1900-01) which the rivals of the United States, including Japan, tried to use as a pretext for dismembering China. Again and again in the years that followed, the State Department delivered to Czarist Russia, to Britain and Japan and other powers, reminders that it demanded respect for the "Open Door" in China. In 1904-05 Japan warred on Czarist Russia and seized the latter's "rights and interests" in Manchuria. At the Portsmouth Conference, where the peace treaty was signed, the United States played the role of mediator and succeeded in limiting Japan's demands.

In 1915, while the Western Powers were preoccupied with the war in Europe, Japan presented her "Twenty-One demands" to China, threatening to take charge of the whole country. She took over the German "sphere of influence" in Shantung province. At the Washington Conference of 1921-22, the American imperialists compelled Japan to withdraw from Shantung and from the Soviet maritime provinces. They negotiated the Nine-Power Treaty under which the policy of the "Open Door" was reaffirmed. All the imperialist powers having "interests" in China undertook to "respect the sovereignty, the independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China."

This agreement between the imperialist bandits broke down

before the subsequent reality of sharpening antagonism between the Powers. Britain sought merely to maintain the status quo in the Orient, being satisfied with the loot she had already obtained. But Japan, the new and hungry guest at the imperialist table, cast a greedy eye on the trade and possessions of both her British and American rivals and revived her plans for subjugating China. In 1931, Japan's armies moved into Manchuria. Secretary of State Stimson reminded Japan of the "Open Door" once again and proclaimed the new implementing doctrine of "Non-recognition" under which the United States refused to recognize any "situation, treaty or agreement" which Japan might bring about by force of arms.

Six years later, Japanese imperialism moved into China proper. On October 6, 1938 Ambassador Grew in Tokyo delivered a note to the Japanese Government charging Japan with violation of her promises to maintain the "Open Door" and demanding that these promises be implemented. Japan's answer was to proclaim her "immutable purpose" to establish a "New Order in East Asia." There were other diplomatic exchanges. It is noteworthy that in all of them the expression of American concern for American "rights and interests" is the *motif*. The hypocritical pretense that the American imperialists were concerned solely or even mainly with "liberating" the Orient from "Japanese banditry" so that the Chinese and other Asiatic peoples might be free, was to come later, after Pearl Harbor, in order to furnish a cover of disinterested idealism for the predatory aims of the Wall Street brigands.

As we have seen, war between Japan and the United States was prepared step by step over a period of half a century. It was not the result of sudden, unexpected aggression by Japan. Pearl Harbor was merely the conflagration point of a long-smoldering antagonism lodged in the development of the two imperialist powers and caused by their greedy appetite for profits. For the right to dominate the Orient and exploit China with its millions of inhabitants, the imperialists on both sides of the Pacific sent their nations' youth to the shambles. They have caused unimaginable destruction, killed millions of people, and brought untold grief and privation to the survivors.

War guilt? Yes! But it rests as heavily on the Wall Street brigands and their government in Washington as it does on the defeated imperialists of Japan.

Economic Prospects in Postwar America

By WILLIAM F. WARDE

Standing supreme in the midst of an otherwise impoverished world, bursting with wealth and productive strength, the plutocrats of the United States look forward to "The American Century." They are energetically and ruthlessly proceeding to reorganize bankrupt world economy in line with their appetites and interests. While moving ahead with far-flung plans to subjugate and exploit the planet, they sing joyous carols about prospective prosperity at home.

The capitalist press nowadays is full of rosy predictions of the boom to come. The September 17 issue of *Time* summarizes them: "Government and private business analysts agreed, in the main, on the immediate trend: business would slide downward for about six months, then climb. The optimistic gues-

timators were almost unanimous: 1947 and 1948 will see national income on a high level—perhaps about \$135 billion (wartime peak: \$165 billion). Beyond that, some prognosticators foresaw a deep depression, perhaps beginning in 1949."

Shares have hit eight-year highs and trade is booming in the New York stock market. This indicates that Wall Street is not simply talking for public consumption but is staking its money on an anticipated period of lush profits.

These predictions of postwar prosperity have been paralleled by promises from such liberal capitalist politicians as Secretary of Commerce Wallace and their choirboys in the labor movement of 60 million jobs based upon a \$200 billion annual national income. In carrying out their social functions of de-

luding and misleading the workers, these charlatans are obliged to exaggerate beyond belief the estimates of the official big business organs.

As for the capitalists, they have plenty of reasons for complacency. First, they have piled up unprecedented profits during the war. Net profits *after taxes* of U.S. corporations from 1939 to 1945 totalled \$42.7 billions. Their net working capital increased from \$24.6 billion in 1939 to \$45.5 billion in 1945 . . . a jump of 85 percent. Current assets rose from \$54.6 billion to \$98 billion in the same period. A prodigious accumulation of wealth!

Second, these profiteer-parasites do not have to worry about shutdown plants because the government has guaranteed their profits during reconversion. Tax-rebates of \$5.7 billion will pour into the treasuries of the corporations next year. The tax laws virtually insure most companies against loss. The CIO Department of Research states: "Should the entire steel industry, for example, drop down in operations to a point below 40 per cent of capacity, and lose as much money as it did in 1938, it would receive a check from the federal government for more than \$167,000,000. This is 32 percent more than it was able to average in net profits after taxes in the four peacetime years, 1936-1939."

Third, the industrialists are getting ready for a big boom. Their mouths are watering at the feast of profits they hope to enjoy. According to estimates given by the September 28 *United States News*, gross income of all U.S. corporations in 1946 will be \$190 billion. In 1947 gross income, they say, can be expected to reach \$205 billion. They would receive a larger gross income in either year than was ever before attained in peacetime.

What will this mean in profits? If the excess-profits tax is repealed in 1946, corporate profits, after taxes, will amount to \$5.5 billion. In 1947 net after taxes will be \$9.3 billion. These will be record peacetime rake-offs.

This is the golden shower to which Wall Street is looking forward. But capitalist prosperity *will not bring the same things to the workers as to the employers*. What can the workers expect from a boom? What are the chances for full employment and improved standards of living? How long can such a period of prosperity last? In order to chart their course and plan their strategy in the next period the working class needs answers to these questions based upon a realistic appraisal of the main trends and prospects of American economy.

Factors Favoring a Boom

Let us begin our inquiry with an examination of the chief favorable economic factors which fill the American capitalists with such optimism. They see a huge domestic market crowded with consumers eager for the goods denied them in wartime and possessing unprecedented purchasing power. The June 15 *United States News* appraises this aspect of the situation in the following terms: "Current income payments to individuals in 1945 will be about \$159 billion, or somewhat higher than in 1944 . . . It now is considered doubtful if current income of individuals after this war will drop much below \$119 billion, compared with \$76 billion in 1940 . . . Savings of individuals accumulated since 1940 had reached a total of more than \$121 billion at the start of this year." This reservoir of purchasing power is expected to give rise to a spending spree by the public.

The capitalist propaganda that the workers have a colossal backlog of savings must, of course, be heavily discounted. The bulk of the billions in war bonds and savings are held by the corporations, financial institutions and families in the upper income brackets. Nevertheless many better-paid workers retain

part of their wartime earnings and others are ready to mortgage their incomes through installment payments to buy goods they want.

The more prosperous farmers are also waiting to turn their cash and government bonds into cars, tractors, household improvements, etc. The farmers have enjoyed a record net income, after expenses, of about \$11 billion for the past two years. At the same time government guarantee of the prices of corn, wheat, cotton, etc. is scheduled to extend through 1948. Since the agricultural population is one of the main supports of the domestic market, this second great stream of purchasing power is counted upon to swell the boom.

The pent-up "effective demand" for such consumer's goods as autos, radios, household appliances, etc., is expected to keep industry humming for several years. The duration of the boom can be gauged in no small measure by the number of autos that can be sold. The auto industry sets the pace for the rest of U.S. production. It is the connecting link between light and heavy industry. Rubber, steel, glass, aluminum, etc., are closely meshed into its operations.

How many cars can the market absorb and how soon will it become saturated? The War Production Board predicts that about 500,000 cars will be made in 1945; 3.7 million in 1946; and almost 5 million in 1947. This would outstrip the record production of 4.7 million in 1929. The *United States News* estimates: "It may require two or three years to dull the edge of the boom in demand for automobiles."

Along with the boom in consumer's goods the capitalists anticipate a boom in construction. WPB Chairman Krug recently estimated that construction in 1946 would total \$6.5 billion, 44 percent more than this year and slightly above 1939. Privately financed construction is estimated at \$4,350,000,000, including \$1 billion for new factories, the highest annual rate in history, and \$1.5 billion in residential building.

Capitalism in Decay

However close these estimates are to the mark, the United States unquestionably has all the facilities needed to take care of these demands—and much more. The finest industrial apparatus known to man is concentrated within this country. It stands at the height of modern technique and organization. The war which bombed out and wore out the industry of all other major powers served to renovate and expand American industry.

Moreover the United States holds the lion's share of the world's wealth. The dollar is king in international finance and commerce. The entire world chases after the American dollar, the only strong and comparatively stable currency left in this poverty-stricken and bankrupt capitalist society. The United States not only has more and better machines but more and better ships and planes than any other nation. In the American working class it possesses the most efficient laboring force.

These circumstances give American capitalism control over world trade and enables it to shoulder aside competitors, conquer foreign markets, and become the chief supplier of goods and machinery. The degradation of the rest of the planet helps to enhance the profit-making powers of the U.S. magnates.

This is one side of the picture, the side of American economy and its prospects which so tickles the palates of the profiteers and provides the material premises for Wall Street's calculations. These are the aspects of the future emphasized by Big Business and so outrageously inflated by their apologists in labor and liberal circles.

But there is another and seamier side to this same situation which the capitalists are anxious to conceal from them-

selves as well as others and which their agents in labor's ranks shrink from revealing. This is the hideous visage of capitalism in decay which lies beneath the surface of capitalist prosperity. Let us take a look at these grim features.

The United States has inherited from the war a national debt of over \$300 billion. The war cost \$341 billion. This is 11 times the cost of the First World War and nearly twice as much as the total expenditures of the federal government in the 151 years between 1789 and 1940! This colossal financial burden must have extremely serious consequences for American economy, and especially for the toiling masses.

The big monied interests, banks, insurance companies, corporations and wealthy individuals, own the greater portion of the bonds and other government obligations which constitute this national debt. They will have to be paid about \$6 billion a year in interest. Where is this money coming from? The capitalists do not intend to shoulder any of these interest charges; they are already moving to eliminate the excess-profits and other taxes on the plea that they act as a brake upon industry. The representatives of the rich propose to squeeze the upkeep of this national debt out of the working people through extortionate taxes. The present national debt amounts to \$2,100 for every man, woman and child in the United States, more than the yearly income of the average working class family. This is the burden the war has piled on the backs of the workers.

And this load of debt will become heavier in the future. The August 24 *United States News* reminds us that: "Past experience indicates that the postwar expenditures growing out of the war gradually equal the cost of the war itself, as veteran benefits and interest costs accumulate." This is borne out by the projected budget for next year. For a decade preceding the war the federal government failed to balance its budget. A normal prewar budget approximated \$5 billion. The proposed budget for the next fiscal year may run as high as \$50 billion! Even a penny-pincher like Senator Robert Taft of Ohio cannot see how it can be cut below \$20 billion. This means that in one way or another the masses must be forced to deduct from their income the \$6 billion annual interest charges on the debt plus \$6 billion for the cost of the military establishment to guard the world for Wall Street. They must also pay for a swollen bureaucracy, foreign loans of many hundreds of millions, subsidies for farm commodities, and all the other overhead costs of a government dominated by the plutocrats. This cannot help but exercise ruinous effects upon their living standards.

While taxes slash into the workers' income from one side, constantly rising prices will take bigger and bigger bites from another. The inflationary processes have been gaining momentum during the war. In the past five years there has been at least a fifty percent rise in the cost of living.

Under pressure from the profiteers the administration is hastening to scrap all price controls. As every worker and his wife knows, wartime controls did not prevent prices from mounting. Nevertheless they did act as a curb on runaway inflation. The removal of these restraints will give the green light to the speculators and profiteers.

The Scourge of Inflation

With the acceleration of the inflationary forces we can expect an even greater increase in living costs during the next five years. As the CIO-PAC pointed out in its pamphlet, *The People's Plan For Reconversion*: "After World War I, from Armistice Day to June 1920, the cost of living went up 46 per cent. What happened to payrolls in the same period! (Watch it—watch it carefully!) Payrolls went down 44 per cent." Al-

though they keep quiet about it, the U.S. capitalists are preparing to repeat the same performance after this war on a grander scale and with far more catastrophic consequences for the working class.

Unrestrained prices will become the main means in the hands of the capitalists not only for gouging the consumers but for slashing the real wages of the workers. Even where workers succeed in their struggles for wage increases, they will find that these gains are swiftly nullified by the unchecked ascent in the cost of living. Without a rising scale of wages to cope with the soaring cost of living labor will suffer falling living standards.

On top of heavier taxes and higher prices the workers will feel the effects of the advances in labor productivity during the recent years. While the monopolists have tightened their grip on American economy during the war, there has been a tremendous increase in productivity through the rationalization of industry and improvements in machinery and "knowhow." The November 1944 *CIO Economic Outlook* reports that "in war industries the rise in output per wage earner since 1941 has been estimated at almost 30 percent (in terms of value). Output per man hour in manufacturing as reconversion is completed will be at least 25 percent above the 1939 level." The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that postwar productivity in manufacturing industries will increase at the rate of 10 percent a year for three years after the first full year of reconversion. This means that 30 percent or so fewer workers can produce the same amount of goods as in the prewar years.

These developments will certainly serve to reduce the opportunities for employment in the postwar boom. There were 9 million unemployed in this country as late as 1940. What then are the real prospects for employment on the assumption of a full-blown boom?

Prospective National Income

When we consult the capitalists themselves we find that not one of their authoritative spokesmen admits the probability or even takes seriously the propaganda about 60 million jobs at 40 hours a week based on a \$200 billion annual national income. This kind of eyewash is exclusively reserved for those workers who retain some confidence in capitalism and its would-be liberal and labor saviors. At a "War and Reconversion Congress" held late in 1944 by the National Association of Manufacturers, its president Robert Gaylord scoffed at such predictions. "Let's look at the facts," he said. "In 1929, 48 million people worked a little more than forty-eight hours a week and there was virtually no unemployment. That was 2,304 million hours a week and it produced a national income of \$83 billions. Now, it is said, that 2,400 million hours a week, or only 4 percent more than we worked in 1929, can produce 240 percent more national income. Let's think straight. Are we talking \$200 billion real dollars or 50-cent dollars?"

As we see, the representative of Wall Street contemptuously brushes aside the whole proposition.

From the spokesman for Wall Street, let us turn to England for an appraisal of "U.S. Employment Prospects." The August 11 issue of *The Economist*, that influential organ of British capitalism, undertakes a "clinical examination" of American economy. The author frankly avows the motive for this inquiry: "Since Bretton Woods proposes the establishment of a direct link, however elastic, between the different national economies, it is imperative to know to what sort of prime mover the British economy is to be linked."

The starting point of his examination is the fact that "The

American economy is dominated by the enormous, almost miraculous increase in its total output that has occurred during the war." The U.S. produced nearly twice as much in 1944 as in peacetime. Here are the official estimates of the Gross National Product given by the Department of Commerce:

1929	\$99.4 billion
1933	\$54.8 "
1939	\$88.6 "
1944	\$198.7 "

These statistics make it clear that "if America is to avoid mass unemployment a far larger total of goods and services will have to be produced and consumed than ever before in peacetime." In a pamphlet entitled "National Budgets for Full Employment," the National Planning Association has estimated that, to secure full employment, the Gross National Product at 1941 prices would have to be about \$170 billion, which is equivalent to about \$200 billion at inflated 1944 prices. Can American economy "generate effective demand to the tune of \$170 billion by 1950?" asks the author.

He proceeds to analyze the three main components of the national income: consumption by individuals, government expenditures, and capital goods investment.

	1929	1937	1944	Postwar Estimates Of National Planning Ass.
Consumption	59.9	63.5	76.0	114.1
Government	10.0	13.6	93.2	25.4
Capital Goods	17.9	12.9	2.0	22.0
Gross National Product	87.7	90.0	171.2	161.5

The first observation made on these figures is that the most optimistic calculations of the National Planning Association fall short of the required amount of \$170 billion by \$8.5 billion. Then the writer proceeds to demonstrate how greatly overinflated the estimated items of the \$161.5 total are.

The projected \$114.1 billion civilian consumption would have to be 50 percent larger than in 1944 and 80 percent more than in the record peacetime year! Despite "an infinity of unsatisfied wants," the author doubts that the American public can "make such a jump in its consumption habits."

The capital expenditures which are put at \$22 billion "seem to be even more optimistically estimated." "Residential construction was only \$3.5 billion in the boom days of 1929 at the high costs then prevailing, and never exceeded \$2.5 billion (at current prices) in any year in the decade before the war. Yet the estimate is for \$6 billion. Similarly, the estimated \$13 billion investment in producers' plant and equipment has never yet been attained in peace or war. The entire investment by the Federal Government in war plants over the whole period from July 1, 1940 has only been about \$16 billion. As for the estimate of \$2 billion for net export balance, it is only necessary at this stage to note the fact that every plan published in the United States for achieving full employment provides for a large export surplus."

The writer concludes "that, in the absence of any special stimuli, the flow of effective demand may fall short of the volume necessary to achieve full employment, not by \$8.5 billion as the NPA estimates, but by something like \$15 or \$20 billion." At best *The Economist* doesn't give American capitalism more than a fifty-fifty chance of avoiding "another large-scale depression."

Thus we learn from the testimony of the capitalists themselves that the prosperity which is supposed to create full em-

ployment will do nothing of the kind. It will be accompanied by mass unemployment running into the millions. This does not trouble the monopolists because they can still make plenty of profits without capacity production and maximum employment. UAW-CIO vice-president Walter Reuther presented some informative figures in the September 16 *New York Times* demonstrating the big corporations' ability to get along on considerably less than capacity output. "Sixty-five industries reporting to the War Production Board have revealed the volume of production at which they feel confident of breaking even in peacetime operations. Of the sixty-five, fifty-one stated that they could operate without loss at less than 70 percent of capacity output. The break-even rate for the automotive industry is 55 percent."

Monopolist Policy

The industrialists can be prosperous at an 80 percent rate of operations although 20 percent of their working force is compelled to remain idle. The restriction of production is an essential policy of the capitalist magnates who own and control American industry. To maintain their monopolist positions and profits they keep prices up, beat wages down, and curtail production. That is why they seek to scrap or close down all the government-owned plants they can't use profitably, however easily these facilities can be converted to civilian production.

Reuther complains that the monopolist pattern of "low wages, high prices, high profits per unit, few units" brings about "deficient purchasing power, shrinking markets, rising unemployment, a growing conviction on the part of those whom industry has thrust aside that the game of free enterprise, played at their expense, isn't worth the candle." All this is certainly true. But Reuther, the "labor statesman," will not get very far in his attempt to persuade the plutocrats to change their ways. They are hell-bent upon preserving their profits and privileges, regardless of the productive potentialities of our economy and no matter how great the suffering of the masses.

The workers know only too well how sharply the radiant forecasts and extravagant promises of full employment clash with the present reality. The *Associated Press* reported on September 21 that 2,500,000 had been laid off since Japan's surrender—and the lines of unemployed lengthen every day. Industrial production fell from 212 percent of the 1935-1939 average in July to below 195 percent in August. It is expected to drop below 175 percent in September. Department store sales, electric power output and steel ingot production have declined proportionately.

This recession has already inflicted severe wage-cuts, mass unemployment, starvation level unemployment insurance and their attendant evils upon the workers. But these conditions are only "temporary," the capitalists tell the workers. Just grin and bear them, and in a year or so, when the transition from war to peacetime economy is completed there will ensue a wonderful era of prosperity. Such is the solace they offer the workers.

But the drastic slowdown of the industrial apparatus which the capitalists so blithely dismiss as an insignificant and fleeting episode is only in its first stages. All the commentators expect the downward trend to continue for a number of months. None can be sure how deep it will go or how long it will drag out. In any event its effects upon the national economy in declining wages and fast-rising unemployment have hardly begun to manifest themselves.

How big will the army of unemployed become in the coming period when vast numbers are thrown out of war jobs and 8 million veterans are slated to be demobilized? Estimates of

peak unemployment before "reconversion" runs its course have ranged from 12 to 18 millions.

Meanwhile the income of the *employed* workers has already been drastically reduced. Statistics cited in the September 28 *United States News* show how deeply the worker's income is being slashed by the shortening of the work week alone. The average weekly earnings of factory workers in 1944, before withholding taxes of 20 percent, were \$46.08, representing straight-time and overtime pay for 45.2 hours. If we adjust this \$46.08 according to the official cost of living increase of 26.6 percent after 1939 (in reality the increase was easily double), this left the worker with a real wage of \$36.51 in 1944.

With the loss of overtime pay, however, on the basis of a forty hour week and a 29.8 percent increase in living costs since 1939, the real earnings of the average worker have shrunk so far this year to \$28.66. Thus the workers have been walloped by a thirty percent cut in their pay envelopes simply through the return of industry to a forty hour week. And even if the unions should win their demands for a thirty percent wage increase, it would merely bring the total take-home pay up to the wartime level.

In the second place, the capitalists themselves know, despite the hokum they feed the workers, that even when production whirls again, millions of people will remain on the breadlines. A secret OPA report predicted no less than 10,400,000 unemployed by December 1946 when industry will have completed its reconversion. OPA head Bowles told 1,000 business magnates meeting at the Waldorf-Astoria on September 20 that several groups of government economists "agreed that there will be 'superficial' prosperity in 1946, with big profits and dividends, but that under the surface there will be a drop of \$25 billion in gross national income and 8,000,000 or 9,000,000 unemployed, half of them war veterans, by midwinter, with 6,000,000 still jobless by a year from Christmas."

Thus even on the basis of a boom many millions of workers will be unable to find places in industry. Of the 8 to 10 million jobless and returning veterans who will be pounding the pavements in 1946 no more than a fraction can expect to find steady employment. The promise of "60 million jobs and a \$200 billion national income" under the existing economic system is a patent fraud.

Even assuming that the postwar boom measures up to the expectations of Wall Street, it will not shower any bounties

upon the masses. The plutocrats will certainly rake in huge profits and wallow in luxuries. But the toilers will still be afflicted with burdensome taxes, skyrocketing prices for the necessities of life and cuts in real wages. **The working class will receive a smaller proportionate share of a considerably reduced national income.**

The Socialist Solution

In view of these tendencies the militants in the unions must understand and teach their fellow workers that unemployment, growing insecurity, lowered living standards and all the other afflictions of labor are not passing phenomena. Not even a boom will eliminate these evils which flow like pus out of capitalism in its decay.

And what lies beyond any such period of feverish capitalist prosperity? A new and more catastrophic depression! The colossal productive forces pressing against shrinking markets along with insurmountable tariff walls, accelerated inflation and monstrous national debt will inevitably assert themselves in an explosive manner. The bigger the boom, the deeper, more widespread and devastating will be the consequent crisis.

In peace or in war, in boomtime or in depression, the wealthiest capitalist nation cannot satisfy the basic needs of its working people for jobs at living wages, decent housing, adequate food and clothing. So long as the rich continue to coin profits out of the sweat and blood of the toilers, they do not care how many are out of work, go hungry and homeless, and lack all hope for the future.

The war has disclosed the prodigious productive capacities of our economy and proved that it can easily create enough for everybody. The capitalist peace will serve to impress more and more upon the minds of the masses the truth that they can find no solution to their social problems under rotting monopoly capitalism. Only a clique of capitalist magnates stands in the way of abundance. To expand production and achieve full employment the workers have to wrest control of the factories, banks, and other major means of production from the hands of the monopolists and establish their own rule over industry and society. Production for profit must be supplanted by production according to a unified plan determined by the needs of the entire people and directed by the associated producers themselves. This is the socialist remedy for capitalist anarchy, insecurity and misery.

Class Struggles in Nigeria

By ROBERT L. BIRCHMAN

Amidst wild rejoicing half a million African workers celebrated their own V-Day the first week in September. The general strike of more than 150,000 Nigerian workers on the government-owned railroads, harbor, communications systems and public works had achieved a sweeping and complete victory. For ten weeks the strikers had withstood all forms of official pressure, intimidation and terrorism. Thanks to the unbreakable unity of their ranks, the British Colonial Office was compelled finally to grant their demands.

On instructions from George Hall, the new Labor Party colonial secretary, Governor Richards of Nigeria broadcast a statement agreeing to comply with the strikers' demand for a minimum wage of 2 shillings, sixpence a day and promising to pay them full wages for the ten weeks. He also agreed to

release all the arrested strike leaders; to reemploy all government civil servants; to lift the ban on the suppressed newspapers, the *Daily Comet* and *African Pilot*, assuring the editor, Nnamdi Azikiwe, security of life and property.

To mark the historic occasion of this victory of colored labor over white imperialism, the Nigerian trade union and nationalist leaders issued a special manifesto congratulating the workers on their loyalty and appealing for still greater unity in the struggles ahead. The declaration concluded in the spirit of *The Communist Manifesto*: "We can send workers no better message than this which Karl Marx, the Jesus Christ of the working class, would have undoubtedly sent them if he were in this country today: namely, workers of Nigeria, unite!"

The general strike, which began on June 21, had been preceded by a month of negotiations with the government which is the largest employer of labor in Nigeria. On May 21 the African Civil Servants Technical Workers Union sent a letter to the Governor pointing out that, according to their computations, the cost of living had risen 200 percent since 1939, and that the government had partially recognized this by giving increases to its European employees and supplementary allowances to their families.

In view of these facts, the Nigerian Trade Union Congress asked for a minimum wage of 2 shillings, sixpence a day, retroactive to April 1, 1944 and a 50 percent increase in cost of living allowance for all workers earning less than 48 pounds (about \$200) per year, and a sliding scale above that. The Congress also gave a one-month strike notice in support of these demands, declaring that "the workers of Nigeria shall proceed to seek their own remedy, with due regard for law and order on the one hand and starvation on the other."

The letter of the African Civil Servants Technical Workers Union to the Governor described their intolerable living conditions. Prior to the war three or four workers and their families lived in rooms measuring as little as 10 by 10 feet. Today their position has been considerably worsened. Rents have increased abnormally, prices of food and imported goods have soared, supplies are scarce. As a result the health of the people has become severely impaired and tuberculosis victims are multiplying. "Have we fought this war in order to be exterminated by starvation?" the letter asked.

The Governor of Nigeria is the Sir Arthur Richards who attained notoriety for suppression of strikes and demonstrations while he was Governor of Jamaica. This colonial despot replied that he would not meet with representatives of the workers since no purpose could be served by discussion. An increase in wages, he said, would not offset the increased cost of living but would simply cause inflation! A second appeal made on June 11 was again turned down.

Government Prepares for Struggle

In preparation for the coming struggle the government re-enacted its recently repealed Defense Regulations under which a number of Nigerian trade union leaders had been imprisoned for four years during the war. The regulations on press censorship empower the Governor to suppress any newspaper that publishes uncensored news or criticizes the Governor or his officials. The penalty for violation is a 500 pound fine or two years in prison, or both.

Meanwhile many other trade unions, unaffiliated and affiliated with the Trade Union Congress, came out in support of the African Civil Servants Technical Workers Union and put forward wage demands of their own. On June 16, for example, the Printers' Technical Union at Lagos passed a resolution stating that "we shall not hesitate to fall in line of action with them except our humble demands are favorably considered."

The time for action arrived on June 21 when the strike ultimatum of the Trade Union Congress expired. At one minute past midnight over 150,000 workers went out on strike.

The entire transport, power and communications systems throughout Nigeria were immediately paralysed. Unions participating in the strike included the African Civil Service Technical Workers and its constituent unions, the African Railway and Engineering Workshops Workers, African Land and Survey Technical Workers, African Post and Telegraph Workers, Nigeria Electrical Workers, Nigeria Marine African Workers, Public Works Union, Lagos Town Council Workers, African

Locomotive Drivers, Government Sawmill Workers, Nigeria Union of Nurses, African Inspectors Union, African Railway Topographical Workers, African Railway Station Masters, Government Press Technical Workers Union and Medical Department Workers Union. Workers on the privately-owned Elder Lines joined the strike at its beginning. The Elder Lines are a subsidiary of Elder Dempster and Co., Ltd., which has a virtual monopoly on all shipping to and from the West African colonies.

Two days after the strike began the *Daily Comet* reported that "armed soldiers with rifles were yesterday reported to be guarding the railway locomotive yard at Ebute Metta. But all was quiet and there were no disturbances, as no workers appeared on the scene." On June 26 the *Comet* reported that the miners in the government-owned coal mines at Enugu had joined the strike and a government communique admitted that the general strike was spreading throughout the provinces. As a matter of fact, military personnel were forced to dig graves in the cemeteries as even the grave diggers were on strike.

Workers employed by numerous private enterprises later joined in sympathy strikes and in other cases gave support by refusing to serve as strike-breakers. Over 200,000 workers were on strike before it ended.

First, the Government threatened to withhold the wages of all strikers for the month of June and to cancel all their pensions, gratuities and contractual rights. When this intimidation failed, four railroad union leaders were arrested on trumped-up charges of participating in an illegal strike. They were later released. Next, to lure the strikers back to work, the Government issued a promise that there would be no victimization of workers if they returned immediately. But the workers held steady.

The Governor then publicly accused the strikers of sabotaging the transport and communications systems, derailing a train at Oshodi, and cutting telephone lines connecting Lagos with the interior of the country. Ten strike leaders were arrested on these frame-up charges.

The reply to these provocations was given at a huge mass rally in Lagos where thousands of workers swore on their tribal oath "by our mother Africa and the departed spirits of our ancestors" not to return to work until their demands were granted. Their five demands were: pay the strikers for the period during which they have been on strike; guarantee their pensions and other rights; no victimization of strikers; immediate release of the arrested strike leaders; grant the original demand for a 2/6 minimum wage.

The militancy of the workers was further demonstrated when Bankole, president of the N.T.U.C., advised the strikers to return to work. This false leader was immediately repudiated and expelled from office. He was replaced by A. O. Imoude, former president of the Railway Workers Union, who had been released from four years detention and exile on June 2. Imoude had been imprisoned on grounds that his labor activities interfered with the progress of the war. On his release he returned to Lagos riding on a white horse where he was received like a conquering hero and publicly acclaimed by thousands of workers.

The anti-imperialist movement pressed the battle on still another front. In protest against the reenactment of the rigid press censorship and suppression of free opinion, the *African Pilot* and the *Daily Comet*, the two leading Nigerian daily papers, appeared with their editorial pages blank. These two papers were later suppressed because they criticized those union leaders who advocated that the strikers return to work. The European community threatened to lynch the editor, Azikiwe.

Azikiwe cabled to labor, Negro and progressive organizations in the United States and Great Britain for aid on his behalf. In response to his appeal cablegrams of protest were sent to the British Colonial Office and the Governor of Nigeria by James P. Cannon, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, Walter White for the N.A.A.C.P., and R. J. Thomas president of the C.I.O. United Automobile Workers.

In defense of the actions of Governor Richards, the Colonial Office in London issued a statement that the Secretary of State for Colonies "is satisfied that the measures taken by the Nigerian government to combat the rise in the cost of living are the best possible under the circumstances. Any increase in the cost of living allowance would not only be operated to the detriment of the wage earners themselves, but would result in the deterioration of the general economic situation."

While the British Government was trying to break the strike, significant demonstrations of solidarity were held in England. In London over 2,000 Africans and other colonial seamen, war plant workers and students held a mass rally in support of Nigerian labor and collected about \$2,000 to aid in feeding the wives and children of the strikers. Sixty telegrams were sent to world trade union organizations and unions in America, India and the West Indies by the Pan-African Federation seeking support for the Nigerian workers. A similar mass meeting held in Manchester collected over \$500 for the strike relief fund.

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The Nigerian Trade Union Congress which led this tremendous strike struggle to victory is only two years old. It was organized in August 1943 when 200 delegates from 56 unions, representing over 100,000 workers, met in Lagos, the capital of Nigeria. The Congress issued a manifesto declaring that the workers of Nigeria were entitled to the full rights of democratic government, including free speech, collective bargaining, adequate wages, equality of opportunity and protection against ignorance, want, disease and exploitation. The Congress adopted a program calling for the nationalization of mining, timber and other important industries, labor representation on the Legislative Council and the Municipal Councils, social insurance, education and housing for workers and protection of workers' health.

At its second annual conference in August 1944 there were delegates from 64 unions and the membership had increased to over 400,000. The Nigerian Trade Union Congress now has 86 affiliated unions with a membership of over 500,000.

The vigorous proletariat of Nigeria is new and young. The number of wage and salaried workers in Nigeria in 1939 was only 183,000. 37.5 percent were employed by the government, 37.5 percent in mining and 25 percent by commercial firms, agriculture and other private interests. Today it is estimated that there are about one million wage and salaried workers, more than half of them organized in unions.

Rapid Shift to Capitalism

The war led directly to this rapid growth of the working class. By the beginning of 1942 the harbors of West Africa became busy ports of call for convoys bound for the Middle and Far Eastern theaters of war. Simultaneously a great chain of airports grew up near the main towns for handling the stream of aircraft carrying men and supplies to North Africa and the Far East. A huge construction program ranged from the building of mud huts in military camps to the building of up-to-date airdromes, new roads, railroads and harbor facilities. These activities were accompanied by the intensified exploitation of vital raw materials, such as ores, foodstuffs, lumber and rubber.

To supply the necessary manpower thousands of natives were literally hurled from their primitive agrarian and tribal mode of living into the modern world of machinery and capitalism. These developments produced far-reaching dislocations in the social structure of Nigeria. Processes that in peacetime would have taken generations are today being completed in weeks or months.

Simultaneous with the rapid rise of the trade-union movement there has developed a large and powerful Nigerian nationalist movement in which the trade unions play a leading part. This political movement has cut across tribal traditions, religious ties, Mohammedan, Christian, Pagan, and the barrier of diverse native languages. Nigeria, with its numerous native states and tribes, has hitherto been bound together only by geographical proximity and the bureaucratic apparatus of the British imperialist overlords. Now its people are developing a national consciousness.

The nationalist movement took on definite shape in August 1943 when a delegation of editors of West African newspapers in Great Britain issued a memorandum on "The Atlantic Charter and West Africa." Basing their claim on Clause 3 of the Atlantic Charter which affirms "the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they may live," they asked for the immediate abrogation of the Crown Colony system of government and the substitution of representative government. The authors of the memorandum declared "that factors of capitalism and imperialism have stifled the normal growth of these territories." The memorandum set forth a series of proposals for reforms in education, health, social welfare, agriculture, mining, finance, trade and commerce.

Upon the return of the press delegation to Africa, a campaign to popularize these demands was started under the leadership of Nnamdi Azikiwe, editor of the *West African Pilot*, largest Nigerian daily newspaper, and secretary of the delegation. On January 20 of this year a constitutional convention was held in Lagos, capital of Nigeria, which formulated and adopted a draft constitution and a program of economic and social reforms. The convention set up the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons for the purpose of uniting in federation all progressive organizations in the country.

The June 26 *Daily Comet* reports that 126 organizations have affiliated with the Council. Among them are sixty tribal unions, the two leading political parties—the Nigerian National Democratic Party and the Union of Young Democrats—eleven social clubs, eight professional associations. The most significant are the two leading trade union organizations—the West African Union of Seamen and the Trade Union Congress of Nigeria with its 86 affiliated unions and membership of over 500,000. An editorial in the May 17 *West African Pilot* says that the Council has a following of over 6 million people.

Alarmed by these developments the British Colonial Government set about to counter the popular insistence on a new constitution. Shortly after this convention a White Paper containing proposals for the reform of the Constitution of Nigeria was issued with the approval of the British Colonial Secretary, in the name of Sir Arthur Richards, Governor of Nigeria. By this proposed constitutional revision the British imperialists sought to prevent the emanation of a draft constitution from the people themselves through the Constitutional Convention.

Calling a special meeting of the Legislative Council in March, Richards presented a constitutional draft demanding immediate acceptance before the people had an opportunity to study it. The Council, made up of a majority of white officials and a minority of hand-picked chiefs, voted acceptance.

At the same session of the Legislative Council Richards se-

cured approval for two bills. One granted the British Government the right to confiscate all African lands wherever minerals were discovered. The other gave the Governor power to dispose of any chief who supported the Nationalist movement against the British.

Taking up the challenge of the Governor, Azikiwe called upon the natives to rally around the National Council, and fight to defend their ancestral lands. Without these the Nigerians will surely sink into further economic enslavement like the natives of South Africa and Kenya. Mass meetings throughout Nigeria passed resolutions denouncing the "Uncle Toms" who voted support for Richards and demanded that the Colonial Office rescind the undemocratic constitution and take its hands off the African lands. In the face of this nation-wide insurgency the Governor flew to London to consult with the Colonial Office. Meanwhile the natives collected over \$50,000 for the expenses of a delegation to London. Head of the delegation was Herbert Macaulay, Nigeria's "elder statesman," who successfully fought the British thirty years ago when the Government attempted to confiscate tribal lands belonging to Chief Elako, active ruler of Lagos. The delegation of twelve included representatives from the most important tribes, Christian, Moslem and Pagan. Azikiwe was appointed secretary.

Nigerian Trade Unions Protest

The Nigerian Trade Union Congress sent the following cable to Oliver Stanley, British Colonial Secretary: "Nigerian Trades Unions disfavor the constitution in its present unsatisfactory form. Approval by the Legislative Council is unauthorized. Workers' claims have been flagrantly ignored. Memorandum follows." One of the main points in the memorandum of the T.U.C. was that "the proposed constitution should provide for adult suffrage irrespective of income." At the huge May Day 1945 celebration of the T.U.C. in Lagos a resolution demanded full adult suffrage for the people of Nigeria.

There are no essential differences between the new constitution and the old. The projected "reforms" do not in any respect constitute progress toward Nigeria's independence. The real power still rests in the hands of the Governor and his Executive Council. The new "reforms" simply serve to reinforce the alliance between the British and autocratic native rulers in opposition to the will and desires of the people. The primary functions of the chiefs under this system of indirect rule are to maintain imperialist "law and order," secure forced labor, recruit troops in time of war, and, above all else, collect the extortionate taxes imposed by the British authorities.

Before the conquest of the country by the Europeans the authority of the chiefs derived from the people and from elected councils of elders. They were subject to the will of the people. If he became autocratic and tyrannical, the chief could be removed by the people. Today under the system of indirect rule, the chiefs are servants of the British overlords.

The people are recognizing the true role of the chiefs as agents of British rule and asserting themselves in opposition. The Colonial authorities, aware of the dangers of this rising tide of popular discontent, are attempting to arrest the growing democratic aspirations of the people by tying the chiefs more closely to themselves under the new constitution.

The *West African Pilot*, reviewing these proposals, said: "Any system of government which nourishes feudalism or advances a baronial class who must thrive at the expense of the lower classes is undesirable . . . The powerful indirect rulers of the north enjoy good salaries (5,000 pounds per annum) and Oriental palaces, they have nothing to complain about. But the

classes under them have no justice, no education and their health is not enviable. The building up of a ruling class, vested with power, supplied with money and set up to live in pomp and luxury side by side with a poor and underfed peasant class, will have exactly the same result as such a system has had in other countries—namely, the people seek the destruction of such institutions."

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The economic and political events of the past five years in Nigeria culminating in the triumphant general strike of the organized workers against the government confirm anew the Trotskyist theory of the permanent revolution applied to the struggles of the colonial peoples. In his report to the Third Congress of the Communist International in 1921 Trotsky predicted: "The combination of the military nationalistic oppression of foreign imperialism, of the capitalist exploitation by the foreign and native bourgeoisie, and the survivals of feudal disabilities are creating the conditions in which the immature proletariat of the colonial countries must develop rapidly and take the lead in the revolutionary movement of the peasant masses."

Impact of Imperialism

This is what is happening in Nigeria. There the impact of imperialism is breaking up the ancient conditions of life and labor. Agricultural production has been carried on by small independent peasant producers working upon land which is not privately owned but held in trust from the tribe. But these peasants have been unable to escape the far-reaching tentacles of finance capital. They are intensely exploited by monopoly trading corporations such as the United Africa Company. This subsidiary of Unilever and Lever Brothers, one of the world's biggest monopolies, exercises virtually complete control over the purchase of agricultural products and the sale of imported goods.

The colonial government offers every facility to these companies and has built railroads, roads, harbors and docks for their ships to transport products from the hinterland to the sea. Thus, although the natives still have the land and produce the crops, the foreign capitalists, possessing strategic economic powers, fix the prices to be paid for their agricultural products as well as the prices the peasants must pay for imported foodstuffs and manufactured goods. Since the peasants are forced to grow a small number of specialized cash crops, they do not produce enough food for themselves and must purchase their food supplies. While prices for their products have been kept down, the prices for all they must buy have soared almost two-hundred percent during the war years.

Now the colonial government is reaching out to rob them of their ancestral lands. These events have stirred up the natives, united them, awakened their national consciousness. The Nigerian peasants have engaged in heroic struggles against the imperialists. At Aba in December 1929, 30,000 peasant women participated in a demonstration against the imposition of a head tax in which 83 unarmed women were shot down and 87 wounded by the colonial butchers. At Oro in 1933, 12,000 peasants demonstrated against the excessive taxation, which takes more than 25 percent of their income.

The insistent demands of the peasant masses for agricultural reforms, democratic liberties, self-government, relief from taxation, economic security and national unification can only be achieved through an agrarian revolution, the overthrow of imperialist rule and the elimination of monopolist control over their economic life. Who will lead this inescapable revolutionary struggle? Neither the peasantry, nor the colonial bour-

geoisie or petty-bourgeoisie. "The peasantry, the largest numerically and the most atomized, backward and oppressed class, is capable of local uprisings and partisan warfare, but requires the leadership of a more advanced and centralized class in order for this struggle to be elevated to an all-national scale. The task of such leadership falls in the nature of things upon the colonial proletariat, which from its very first steps stands opposed not only to the foreign but also to its own national bourgeoisie" [Trotsky].

Proletariat Stepped Forth

From its emergence as an organized force, the Nigerian proletariat has stepped forth as the leader of the masses in their fight for national freedom and social liberation. The labor unions appear to have been the dominant factor in the develop-

ment of the nationalist movement and in the struggle against the British exploiters and oppressors.

By comparing Nigeria to India, we can see what a colossal leap forward this formerly backward country of Africa has taken under the spur of necessity. In India the nationalist movement has been dominated by representatives of the big bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie (Gandhi and Nehru), while the labor movement has up to now played a subordinate role. In Nigeria, however, from the first organized labor has played a decisive role in the nationalist movement and given a model example of militant and intransigent struggle.

This is the best surety of success in the future struggles of the African people. The revolutionary alliance of the workers and peasants is the only power that can smash the stranglehold of British imperialism.

From the Arsenal of Marxism

The Chinese Revolution

By LEON TROTSKY

The text reprinted below was the introduction which Leon Trotsky wrote in 1938 to Harold R. Isaacs' book, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*. The book was published in England and is not available in this country. Trotsky's Introduction was among the last of his many writings on the all-important subject of the colonial revolution. It possesses a special timeliness today, now that the aftermath of the imperialist war has opened a new and vigorous chapter in the liberating struggles of the colonial peoples.

* * *

First of all, the mere fact that the author of this book belongs to the school of historical materialism would be entirely insufficient in our eyes to win approval for his work. In present-day conditions the Marxist label would predispose us to mistrust rather than to acceptance. In close connection with the degeneration of the Soviet State, Marxism has in the past fifteen years passed through an unprecedented period of decline and debasement. From an instrument of analysis and criticism, it has been turned into an instrument of cheap apologetics. Instead of analyzing facts, it occupies itself with selecting sophisms in the interests of exalted clients.

In the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 the Communist International played a very great role, depicted in this book quite comprehensively. We would, however, seek in vain in the library of the Communist International for a single book which attempts in any way to give a rounded picture of the Chinese Revolution. Instead, we find scores of "conjunctural" works which docilely reflect each zigzag in the politics of the Communist International, or, more correctly, of Soviet diplomacy in China, and subordinating to each zigzag facts as well as general treatment. In contrast to this literature, which cannot arouse anything but mental revulsion, Isaacs' book represents a scientific work from beginning to end. It is based on a conscientious study of a vast number of original sources and supplementary material. Isaacs spent more than three years on this work. It

should be added that he had previously passed about five years in China as a journalist and observer of Chinese life.

The author of this book approaches the revolution as a revolutionist, and he sees no reason for concealing it. In the eyes of a philistine a revolutionary point of view is virtually equivalent to an absence of scientific objectivity. We think just the opposite: only a revolutionist—provided, of course, that he is equipped with the scientific method—is capable of laying bare the objective dynamics of the revolution. Apprehending thought in general is not contemplative, but active. The element of will is indispensable for penetrating the secrets of nature and society. Just as a surgeon, on whose scalpel a human life depends, distinguishes with extreme care between the various tissues of an organism, so a revolutionist, if he has a serious attitude toward his task, is obliged with strict conscientiousness to analyse the structure of society, its functions and reflexes.

To understand the present war between Japan and China one must take the Second Chinese Revolution as a point of departure. In both cases we meet not only identical social forces, but frequently the same personalities. Suffice it to say that the person of Chiang Kai-Shek occupies the central place in this book. As these lines are being written it is still difficult to forecast when and in what manner the Sino-Japanese war will end. But the outcome of the present conflict in the Far East will in any case have a provisional character. The world war which is approaching with irresistible force will review the Chinese problem together with all other problems of colonial domination. For it is in this that the real task of the second world war will consist: to divide the planet anew in accord with the new relationship of imperialist forces. The principal arena of struggle will, of course, not be that Lilliputian bath-tub, the Mediterranean, nor even the Atlantic Ocean, but the basin of the Pacific. The most important object of struggle will be China, embracing about one-fourth of the human race. The fate of the

Soviet Union—the other big stake in the coming war—will also to a certain degree be decided in the Far East. Preparing for this clash of Titans, Tokyo is attempting today to assure itself of the broadest possible drill-ground on the continent of Asia. Great Britain and the United States are likewise losing no time. It can, however, be predicted with certainty—and this is in essence acknowledged by the present makers of destiny—that the world war will not produce the final decision: it will be followed by a new series of revolutions which will review not only the decisions of the war but all those property conditions which give rise to war.

History Is No Pacifist

This prospect, it must be confessed, is very far from being an idyll, but Clio, the muse of history, was never a member of a Ladies' Peace Society. The older generation which passed through the war of 1914-18 did not discharge a single one of its tasks. It leaves to the new generation as heritage the burden of wars and revolutions. These most important and tragic events in human history have often marched side by side. They will definitely form the background of the coming decades. It remains only to hope that the new generation, which cannot arbitrarily cut loose from the conditions it has inherited, has learned at least to understand better the laws of its epoch. For acquainting itself with the Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 it will not find today a better guide than this book.

Despite the unquestionable greatness of the Anglo-Saxon genius, it is impossible not to see that the laws of revolutions are least understood precisely in the Anglo-Saxon countries. The explanation for this lies, on the one hand, in the fact that the very appearance of revolution in these countries relates to a long-distant past, and evokes in official "sociologists" a condescending smile, as would childish pranks. On the other hand, pragmatism, so characteristic of Anglo-Saxon thinking, is least of all useful for understanding revolutionary crises.

The English Revolution of the seventeenth century, like the French Revolution of the eighteenth, had the task of "rationalizing" the structure of society, i.e., cleansing it of feudal stalactites and stalagmites, and subjecting it to the laws of free competition, which in that epoch seemed to be the laws of "common sense." In doing this, the Puritan revolution draped itself in Biblical dress, thereby revealing a purely infantile incapacity to understand its own significance. The French Revolution, which had considerable influence on progressive thought in the United States, was guided by formulas of pure rationalism. Common sense, which is still afraid of itself and resorts to the mask of Biblical prophets, or secularized common sense, which looks upon society as the product of a rational "contract," remain to this day the fundamental forms of Anglo-Saxon thinking in the domains of philosophy and sociology.

Yet the real society of history has not been constructed, following Rousseau, upon a rational "contract," nor, as according to Bentham, upon the principle of the "greatest good," but has unfolded "irrationally," on the basis of contradictions and antagonisms. For revolution to become inevitable class contradictions have to be strained to the breaking point. It is precisely this historically inescapable necessity for conflict, which depends neither on good nor ill will but on the objective interrelationship of classes, that makes revolution, together with war, the most dramatic expression of the "irrational" foundation of the historic process.

"Irrational" does not, however, mean arbitrary. On the contrary, in the molecular preparation of revolution, in its explosion, in its ascent and decline, there is lodged a profound

inner lawfulness which can be apprehended and, in the main, foreseen. Revolutions, as has been said more than once, have a logic of their own. But this is not the logic of Aristotle, and even less the pragmatic demi-logic of "common sense." It is the higher function of thought: the logic of development and its contradictions, i.e., the dialectic.

The obstinacy of Anglo-Saxon pragmatism and its hostility to dialectical thinking thus have their material causes. Just as a poet cannot attain to the dialectic through books without his own personal experiences, so a well-to-do society, unused to convulsions and habituated to uninterrupted "progress," is incapable of understanding the dialectic of its own development. However, it is only too obvious that this privilege of the Anglo-Saxon world has receded into the past. History is preparing to give Great Britain as well as the United States serious lessons in the dialectic.

Character of Chinese Revolution

The author of this book tries to deduce the character of the Chinese Revolution not from *a priori* definitions and not from historical analogies, but from the living structure of Chinese society and from the dynamics of its inner forces. In this lies the chief methodological value of the book. The reader will carry away not only a better-knit picture of the march of events but—what is more important—will learn to understand their social mainsprings. Only on this basis is it possible correctly to appraise political programs and the slogans of struggling parties—which, even if neither independent nor in the final analysis the decisive factors in the process, are nevertheless its most manifest signs.

In its immediate aims the incompleting Chinese Revolution is "bourgeois." This term, however, which is used as a mere echo of the bourgeois revolutions of the past, actually helps us very little. Lest the historical analogy turn into a trap for the mind, it is necessary to check it in the light of a concrete sociological analysis. What are the classes which are struggling in China? What are the interrelationships of these classes? How, and in what direction, are these relations being transformed? What are the objective tasks of the Chinese Revolution, i.e., those tasks dictated by the course of development? On the shoulders of which classes rests the solution of these tasks? With what methods can they be solved? Isaacs' book gives the answers to precisely these questions.

Colonial and semi-colonial—and therefore backward—countries, which embrace by far the greater part of mankind, differ extraordinarily from one another in their degree of backwardness, representing an historical ladder reaching from nomadry, and even cannibalism, up to the most modern industrial culture. The combination of extremes in one degree or another characterizes all of the backward countries. However, the hierarchy of backwardness, if one may employ such an expression, is determined by the specific weight of the elements of barbarism and culture in the life of each colonial country. Equatorial Africa lags far behind Algeria, Paraguay behind Mexico, Abyssinia behind India or China. With their common economic dependence upon the imperialist metropoli, their political dependence bears in some instances the character of open colonial slavery (India, Equatorial Africa), while in others it is concealed by the fiction of State independence (China, Latin America).

In agrarian relations backwardness finds its most organic and cruel expression. Not one of these countries has carried its democratic revolution through to any real extent. Half-way agrarian reforms are absorbed by semi-serf relations, and these are inescapably reproduced in the soil of poverty and oppres-

sion. Agrarian barbarism always goes hand in hand with the absence of roads, with the isolation of provinces, with "medieval" particularism, and absence of national consciousness. The purging of social relations of the remnants of ancient and the encrustations of modern feudalism is the most important task in all these countries.

The achievement of the agrarian revolution is unthinkable, however, with the preservation of dependence upon foreign imperialism, which with one hand implants capitalist relations while supporting and re-creating with the other all the forms of slavery and serfdom. The struggle for the democratization of social relations and the creation of a national State thus uninterruptedly passes into an open uprising against foreign domination.

Historical backwardness does not imply a simple reproduction of the development of advanced countries, England or France, with a delay of one, two, or three centuries. It engenders an entirely new "combined" social formation in which the latest conquests of capitalist technique and structure root themselves into relations of feudal or pre-feudal barbarism, transforming and subjecting them and creating peculiar relations of classes.

Bourgeoisie Hostile to People

Not a single one of the tasks of the "bourgeois" revolution can be solved in these backward countries under the leadership of the "national" bourgeoisie, because the latter emerges at once with foreign support as a class alien or hostile to the people. Every stage in its development binds it only the more closely to the foreign finance capital of which it is essentially the agency. The petty bourgeoisie of the colonies, that of handicrafts and trade, is the first to fall victim in the unequal struggle with foreign capital, declining into economic insignificance, becoming declassed and pauperized. It cannot even conceive of playing an independent political role. The peasantry, the largest numerically and the most atomized, backward, and oppressed class, is capable of local uprisings and partisan warfare, but requires the leadership of a more advanced and centralized class in order for this struggle to be elevated to an all-national level. The task of such leadership falls in the nature of things upon the colonial proletariat, which, from its very first steps, stands opposed not only to the foreign but also to its own national bourgeoisie.

Out of the conglomeration of provinces and tribes, bound together by geographical proximity and the bureaucratic apparatus, capitalist development has transformed China into the semblance of an economic entity. The revolutionary movement of the masses translated this growing unity for the first time into the language of national consciousness. In the strikes, agrarian uprisings, and military expeditions of 1925-1927 a new China was born. While the generals, tied to their own and the foreign bourgeoisie, could only tear the country to pieces, the Chinese workers became the standard-bearers of an irresistible urge to national unity. This movement provides an incontestable analogy with the struggle of the French Third Estate against particularism, or with the later struggle of the Germans and Italians for national unification. But in contrast to the first-born countries of capitalism, where the problem of achieving national unity fell to the petty bourgeoisie, in part under the leadership of the bourgeoisie and even of the landlords (Prussia!), in China it was the proletariat that emerged as the primary motive force and potential leader of this movement. But precisely thereby, the proletariat confronted the bourgeoisie with the danger that the leadership of the unified fatherland would not remain

in the latter's hands. Patriotism has been throughout all history inseparably bound up with power and property. In the face of danger the ruling classes have never stopped short of dismembering their own country so long as they were able in this way to preserve power over one part of it. It is not at all surprising, therefore, if the Chinese bourgeoisie, represented by Chiang Kai-Shek, turned its weapons in 1927 against the proletariat, the standard-bearer of national unity. The exposition and explanation of this turn, which occupies the central place in Isaacs' book, provides the key to the understanding of the fundamental problems of the Chinese Revolution as well as of the present Sino-Japanese war.

The so-called "national" bourgeoisie tolerates all forms of national degradation so long as it can hope to maintain its own privileged existence. But at the moment when foreign capital sets out to assume undivided domination of the entire wealth of the country, the colonial bourgeoisie is forced to remind itself of its "national" obligations. Under pressure of the masses it may even find itself plunged into a war. But this will be a war waged against one of the imperialist powers, the one least amenable to negotiations, with the hope of passing into the service of some other, more magnanimous power. Chiang Kai-Shek struggles against the Japanese violators only within the limits indicated to him by his British or American patrons. Only that class which has nothing to lose but its chains can conduct to the very end the war against imperialism for national emancipation.

Grandiose Historical Test

The above developed views regarding the special character of the "bourgeois" revolutions in historically belated countries are by no means the product of theoretical analysis alone. Before the second Chinese Revolution (1925-1927) they had already been submitted to a grandiose historical test. The experience of the three Russian Revolutions (1905, February and October 1917) bears no less significance for the twentieth century than the French Revolution bore for the nineteenth. To understand the destinies of modern China the reader must have before his eyes the struggle of conceptions in the Russian revolutionary movement, because these conceptions exerted, and still exert, a direct and, moreover, powerful influence upon the politics of the Chinese proletariat and an indirect influence upon the politics of the Chinese bourgeoisie.

It was precisely because of its historical backwardness that Czarist Russia turned out to be the only European country where Marxism as a doctrine and the Social Democracy as a party attained powerful development before the bourgeois revolution. It was in Russia, quite naturally, that the problem of the correlation between the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism, or between the bourgeois revolution and the socialist, was submitted to theoretical analysis. The first to pose this problem in the early 'eighties of the last century was the founder of the Russian Social Democracy, Plekhanov. In the struggle against so-called Populism (Narodnikism), a variety of socialist Utopianism, Plekhanov established that Russia had no reason whatever to expect a privileged path of development, that like the "profane" nations, it would have to pass through the stage of capitalism and that along this path it would acquire the regime of bourgeois democracy indispensable for the further struggle of the proletariat for socialism. Plekhanov not only separated the bourgeois revolution as a task distinct from the socialist revolution—which he postponed to the indefinite future—but he depicted entirely different combinations of forces. The bourgeois revolution was to be achieved by the proletariat in

alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie, and thus clear the path for capitalist progress; after a number of decades and on a higher level of capitalist development, the proletariat would carry out the socialist revolution in direct struggle against the bourgeoisie.

Lenin—not immediately, to be sure—reviewed this doctrine. At the beginning of the present century, with much greater force and consistency than Plekhanov, he posed the agrarian problem as the central problem of the bourgeois revolution in Russia. With this he came to the conclusion that the liberal bourgeoisie was hostile to the expropriation of the landlords' estates, and precisely for this reason would seek a compromise with the monarchy on the basis of a constitution on the Prussian pattern. To Plekhanov's idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the liberal bourgeoisie, Lenin opposed the idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry. The aim of the revolutionary collaboration of these two classes he proclaimed to be the establishment of the "bourgeois-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" as the only means of cleansing the Czarist empire of its feudal-police refuse, of creating a free farmers' system, and of clearing the road for the development of capitalism along American lines. Lenin's formula represented a gigantic step forward in that, in contrast to Plekhanov's it correctly indicated the central task of the revolution, namely, the democratic overturn of agrarian relations, and equally correctly sketched out the only realistic combination of class forces capable of solving this task. But up to 1917 the thought of Lenin himself remained bound to the traditional concept of the "bourgeois" revolution. Like Plekhanov, Lenin proceeded from the premise that only after the "completion of the bourgeois democratic revolution" would the tasks of the socialist revolution come on the order of the day. Lenin, however, contrary to the legend later manufactured by the epigones, considered that after the completion of the democratic overturn, the peasantry, as peasantry, could not remain the ally of the proletariat. Lenin based his socialist hopes on the agricultural laborers and the semi-proletarianized peasants who sell their labor power.

An Internal Contradiction

The weak point in Lenin's conception was the internally contradictory idea of the "bourgeois-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry." A political bloc of two classes whose interests only partially coincide excludes a dictatorship. Lenin himself emphasized the fundamental limitation of the "dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" when he openly called it *bourgeois*. By this he meant to say that for the sake of maintaining the alliance with the peasantry the proletariat would, in the coming revolution, have to forego the direct posing of the socialist tasks. But this would signify, to be precise, that the proletariat would have to give up the dictatorship. In that event, in whose hands would the revolutionary power be concentrated? In the hands of the peasantry? But it is least capable of such a role.

Lenin left these questions unanswered up to his famous *Theses* of April 4, 1917. Only here did he break for the first time with the traditional understanding of the "bourgeois" revolution and with the formula of the "bourgeois-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry." He declared the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat to be the sole means of carrying out the agrarian revolution to the end and of securing the freedom of the oppressed nationalities. The regime of the proletarian dictatorship, by its very nature, however, could not limit itself to the framework of bourgeois property. The rule of the proletariat automatically placed on the agenda

the socialist revolution, which in this case was not separated from the democratic revolution by any historical period, but was uninterruptedly connected with it, or, to put it more accurately, was an organic outgrowth of it. At what tempo the socialist transformation of society would occur and what limits it would attain in the nearest future would depend not only upon internal but upon external conditions as well. The Russian revolution was only a link in the international revolution. Such was, in broad outline, the essence of the conception of the permanent (uninterrupted) revolution. It was precisely this conception that guaranteed the victory of the proletariat in October.

But such is the bitter irony of history: the experience of the Russian Revolution not only did not help the Chinese proletariat but, on the contrary, it became in its reactionary, distorted form, one of the chief obstacles in its path. The Comintern of the epigones began by canonizing for all countries of the Orient the formula of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" which Lenin, influenced by historical experience, had acknowledged to be without value. As always in history, a formula that had outlived itself served to cover a political content which was the direct opposite of that which the formula had served in its day. The mass plebeian, revolutionary alliance of the workers and peasants, sealed through the freely elected Soviets as the direct organs of action, the Comintern replaced by a bureaucratic bloc of party centres. The right to represent the peasantry in this bloc was unexpectedly given to the Kuomintang, i.e., a thoroughly bourgeois party vitally interested in the preservation of capitalist property, not only in the means of production but in land. The alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry was broadened into a "bloc of four classes"; workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie, and the so-called "national" bourgeoisie. In other words, the Comintern picked up a formula discarded by Lenin only in order to open the road to the politics of Plekhanov and, moreover, in a masked and therefore more harmful form.

To justify the political subordination of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie, the theoreticians of the Comintern (Stalin, Bukharin) adduced the fact of imperialist oppression which supposedly impelled "all the progressive forces in the country" to an alliance. But this was precisely in its day the argument of the Russian Mensheviks, with the difference that in their case the place of imperialism was occupied by Czarism. In reality, the subjection of the Chinese Communist Party to the Kuomintang signified its break with the mass movement and a direct betrayal of its historical interests. In this way the catastrophe of the second Chinese revolution was prepared under the direct leadership of Moscow.

Significance of Russian Marxism

To many political philistines who in politics are inclined to substitute "common sense" guesses for scientific analysis, the controversy among the Russian Marxists over the nature of the revolution and the dynamics of its class forces seemed to be sheer scholasticism. Historical experience revealed, however, the profoundly vital significance of the "doctrinaire formulas" of Russian Marxism. Those who have not understood this up to today can learn a great deal from Isaacs' book. The politics of the Communist International in China showed convincingly what the Russian Revolution would have been converted into if the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries had not been thrust aside in time by the Bolsheviks. In China the conception of the permanent revolution was confirmed once more, this time not in the form of a victory, but of a catastrophe.

It would, of course, be impermissible to identify Russia and China. With all their important common traits, the differences are all too obvious. But it is not hard to convince oneself that these differences do not weaken but, on the contrary, strengthen the fundamental conclusions of Bolshevism. In one sense Czarist Russia was also a colonial country, and this found its expression in the predominant role of foreign capital. But the Russian bourgeoisie enjoyed the benefits of an immeasurably greater independence from foreign imperialism than the Chinese bourgeoisie. Russia itself was an imperialist country. With all its meagreness, Russian liberalism had far more serious traditions and more of a basis of support than the Chinese. To the left of the liberals stood powerful petty bourgeois parties, revolutionary or semi-revolutionary in relation to Czarism. The party of the Social Revolutionaries managed to find considerable support among the peasantry, chiefly from its upper layers. The Social Democratic (Menshevik) Party led behind it broad circles of the urban petty bourgeoisie and labour aristocracy. It was precisely these three parties—the Liberals, the Social Revolutionaries, and the Mensheviks—who for a long time prepared, and in 1917 definitely formed, a coalition which was not yet then called the People's Front but which had all of its traits. In contrast to this the Bolsheviks, from the eve of the revolution in 1905, took up an irreconcilable position in relation to the liberal bourgeoisie. Only this policy, which achieved its highest expression in the "defeatism" of 1914-1917, enabled the Bolshevik Party to conquer power.

The differences between China and Russia—the incomparably greater dependence of the Chinese bourgeoisie on foreign capital, the absence of independent revolutionary traditions among the petty bourgeoisie, the mass gravitation of the workers and peasants to the banner of the Comintern—demanded a still more irreconcilable policy—if such were possible—than that pursued in Russia. Yet the Chinese section of the Comintern, at Moscow's command, renounced Marxism, accepted the reactionary scholastic "principles of Sun Yat-Sen," and entered the ranks of the Kuomintang, submitting to its discipline. In other words, it went much further along the road of submission to the bourgeoisie than the Russian Mensheviks or Social Revolutionaries ever did. The same fatal policy is now being repeated in the conditions of the war with Japan.

New Methods of Bureaucracy

How could the bureaucracy emerging from the Bolshevik Revolution apply in China, as throughout the world, methods fundamentally opposed to those of Bolshevism? It would be far too superficial to answer this question with a reference to the incapacity or ignorance of this or that individual. The gist of the matter lies in this: together with the new conditions of existence the bureaucracy acquired new methods of thinking. The Bolshevik Party led the masses. The bureaucracy began to order them about. The Bolsheviks won the possibility of leadership by correctly expressing the interests of the masses. The bureaucracy was compelled to resort to command in order to secure its own interests against those of the masses. The method of command was naturally extended to the Communist International as well. The Moscow leaders began quite seriously to imagine that they could compel the Chinese bourgeoisie to move to the left of its interests and the Chinese workers and peasants to the right of theirs, along the diagonals drawn in the Kremlin. Yet it is the very essence of revolution that the exploited as well as the exploiters invest their interests with the most extreme expression. If hostile classes would move along diagonals, there would be no need for a civil war. Armed by the authority of the October Revolution and the Communist International, not

to mention inexhaustible financial resources, the bureaucracy transformed the young Chinese Communist Party from a motive force into a brake at the most important moment of the revolution. In contrast to Germany and Austria, where the bureaucracy could shift part of the responsibility for defeat to the Social Democracy, there was no Social Democracy in China. The Comintern had the monopoly in ruining the Chinese Revolution.

The present domination of the Kuomintang over a considerable section of Chinese territory would have been impossible without the powerful national revolutionary movement of the masses in 1925-1927. The massacre of this movement on the one hand concentrated power in the hands of Chiang Kai-shek, and on the other doomed Chiang Kai-shek to half-measures in the struggle against imperialism. The understanding of the course of the Chinese Revolution has in this way the most direct significance for an understanding of the course of the Sino-Japanese war. This historical work acquires thereby the most *actuel* political significance.

War and revolution will be interlaced in the nearest future history of China. Japan's aim, to enslave forever, or at least for a long time to come, a gigantic country by dominating its strategic centres, is characterized not only by greediness but by wooden-headedness. Japan has arrived much too late. Torn by internal contradictions, the empire of the Mikado cannot reproduce the history of Britain's ascent. On the other hand, China has advanced far beyond the India of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Old colonial countries are nowadays waging with ever greater success a struggle for their national independence. In these historic conditions, even if the present war in the Far East were to end with Japan's victory, and even if the victor himself could escape an internal catastrophe during the next few years—and neither the former nor the latter is in the least assured—Japan's domination over China would be measured by a very brief period, perhaps only the few years required to give a new impulse to the economic life of China and to mobilize its laboring masses once more.

The big Japanese trusts and concerns are already following in the wake of the army to divide the still unsecured booty. The Tokyo Government is seeking to regulate the appetites of the financial cliques that would tear North China to pieces. If Japan were to succeed in maintaining its conquered positions for an interval of some ten years, this would mean, above all, the intensive industrialization of North China in the military interests of Japanese imperialism. New railways, mines, power stations, mining and metallurgical enterprises, and cotton plantations would rapidly spring up. The polarization of the Chinese nation would receive a feverish impulse. New hundreds of thousands and millions of Chinese proletarians would be mobilized in the briefest possible space of time. On the other hand, the Chinese bourgeoisie would fall into an ever greater dependence on Japanese capital. Even less than in the past would it be capable of standing at the head of a national war, no less a national revolution. Face to face with the foreign violator would stand the numerically larger, socially strengthened, politically matured Chinese proletariat, called to lead the Chinese village. Hatred of the foreign enslaver is a mighty revolutionary cement. The new national revolution will, one must think, be placed on the agenda still in the lifetime of the present generation. To solve the tasks imposed upon it, the vanguard of the Chinese proletariat must thoroughly assimilate the lessons of the Chinese Revolution. Isaacs' book can serve it in this sense as an irreplaceable aid. It remains to be hoped that the book will be translated into Chinese as well as other foreign languages.

Coyoacan, D. F., 1938.

Inside the Fourth International

The Trotskyists at Buchenwald

La Verite in France and *La Lutte Ouvriere* in Belgium are currently carrying accounts of the experiences of our comrades who have returned from the concentration camps in Germany which attest to lively political activity on the part of the European Trotskyists even in these hell holes; to the real state of mind of the German masses, and to the true aspirations of the proletarian revolutionists in Germany. Below we confine ourselves for the present to excerpts from an interview with comrade Marcel Beaufrere, published in *La Verite* of May 11:

Is it true what they say about Nazi tortures? Were you tortured yourself? What do you think of these methods?

Ans.—I was beaten and tortured continually for ten days after my arrest by the Gestapo. Only complete exhaustion halted their curiosity about *La Verite* and the Fourth International. If I had dropped a single unwarranted word, it meant death. Tortures of all kinds were common in the camp, from marches in the snow to typhus injections. . . . It's the return to barbarism, the inevitable consequence of the morbid will to survive of a class condemned to oblivion. As long as capitalism remains, such barbarism is bound to grow. In all cases—the Poulou Condor camp, where thousands of Indo-Chinese revolutionists perished, the Gurs camp, where the Spanish revolutionists starved to death, and this most monstrous one of all at Buchenwald, first created for German Communists—the responsibility lies with the same decadent bourgeoisie. I often thought at Buchenwald of these words of Trotsky's: "If the proletariat doesn't take power, we shall witness such a degree of barbarism that it will seem preferable to invent one big cage of millions of cubic yards, put all of humanity within it, and plunge it to the bottom of the seas."

How did the German population behave towards you?

Ans.—The German population almost entirely lived in ignorance of the conditions in which we existed. If you doubt that, it is only necessary to ask the foreign workers deported to Germany who lived in the neighborhood of such camps. They were stupefied at our appearance when we were at last liberated. . . . Then there was of course the Nazi propaganda which presented us as the most dangerous type of common criminals. Nevertheless, little by little, some contact with the civil population was secretly established by the inmates which permitted us to discern attempts at solidarity with us. No Buchenwald inmate will be able to deny the numerous acts of kindness shown us by the population of Weimar after the bombardment of August 24, 1944, which resulted in 500 victims at the camp. It must be remembered that fraternization of any kind whatsoever was an heroic act under conditions of terror which penetrated right into the midst of families. . . . Hatred of the S.S. detachments was general. Even officers of the regular army

confided to us that they considered them bandits. On July 20, the S.S. abandoned the camp to ransack the barracks of the regular army nearby. . . . One private guarding us said to me that everyone was fed up with the war, that we were all really prisoners—in the same prison—the guards as well as the inmates. . . . After the liberation, the population seemed to be in utter confusion. Nothing seemed to really have changed for them: the Allies had kept the Nazi mayor of Weimar, the Nazi police and the Nazi functionaries, for the most part. . . . Towards us, after our liberation, there were many signs of sympathy. Many small shopkeepers plied us with bread, milk and sausages. The American propagandists who depict them as fawning before the conquerors are spreading lies which all the comrades from Buchenwald can easily expose. It was a matter of genuine sympathy which they had long felt and only then had a chance to show.

What about the German political prisoners?

Ans.—At Buchenwald there were about three to four thousand German politicals who had been interned for 12 years! Buchenwald, like Dachau, had originally been built for them and tens of thousands passed through them. . . .

At the time of my departure the German Communist Party had not yet appeared publicly. . . . Old German communist militants sought out our Trotskyist comrades and told them: "The time has come for you to make a public appearance." They asked for political discussions with our leaders at the camp. We accepted on condition that those who failed to maintain their dignity as political prisoners be excluded. A declaration of our German comrades which called for a German Soviet republic found a profound echo among the mass of the German Communists in the camp and a great many among them made arrangements to keep in touch with the Trotskyists upon their return home.

A final question: What about the French deportees?

Ans.—There were two camps within the camp so to speak: the bourgeois, to which the reformist socialists clung also, and the other made up of C.P.F. and trade union militants in the main. The latter, due to their disciplined coherence, had a remarkable underground organization. . . . In collaboration with German communist comrades, they saved thousands of workers' lives.

We Trotskyists organized ourselves into cells of several different nationalities and spearheaded the struggle for internationalism at the camp. As a whole, the French showed an increasingly disheartening chauvinist trend. But an important section of C.P.F. militants reacted vigorously against this trend and fought for an internationalist policy. . . . I am sure that many of these militants will break with treacherous Stalinism soon and will aid us in building a powerful revolutionary proletarian party.

Comrade Beaufrere concludes with the hope that, in returning, the many admirable C.P.

militants will not forget their experiences and allow themselves to be swayed by the jingoism of Thorez and Duclos. He recalls to them how they worked day and night to produce a remarkable mimeographed issue of *L'Humanite* in protest against the chauvinist outpouring of a certain Simonin, a bourgeois journalist who had previously returned to France. The *L'Humanite* of Buchenwald, he recalls, said:

"There are two Germanies: the Germany of Hitler which must be exterminated. The anti-Fascist Germany which must be helped."

General Foch, comrade Beaufrere concludes, once said that he was much closer to the Prussian Junkers than to the French communists. We, comrades, must make our choice too, at the side of the German communist, against the French bourgeois, even if he calls himself a "resistant."

The above were the first statements made by comrade Beaufere after two years spent in Hitler's jails, upon his return to take up his tasks as a Trotskyist militant in France.

Holland

Comrade M. Perthus, in an article printed in several publications of the European Trotskyists, reports on the reconstitution of the Dutch section of the Fourth International, the Committee of Revolutionary Marxists, of which he is one of the outstanding leaders. Here is the gist of his article:

After the German invasion, a wave of nationalism swept over the labor movements of the Netherlands. The Social Democrats and the Stalinists after June 1941, virtually gave up every semblance of an independent existence, merging in the bourgeois "National Front." All revolutionary forces opposed to the "National Front" worked through the Revolutionary Socialist Workers Party (RSAP) of Sneevliet who had broken with the Fourth International and later cooperated in the international field with the Spanish P.O.U.M. and similar centrist organizations. The RSAP carried out a courageous and militant policy line under the Nazi occupation and its leaders conducted themselves with great courage in the face of arrest and persecution. Sneevliet and several other leaders finally were seized and fell heroically before Nazi firing squads.

Politically, the RSAP was not homogeneous. Different political tendencies developed within it, the most important of which were the Spartacus group and the Committee of Revolutionary Marxists. The former developed in the direction of the historic tendency of Dutch ultra-leftism made famous by its founder, H.orter, in his polemics with Lenin. The Committee of Revolutionary Marxists, on the other hand, developed to the full position of the Fourth International. In 1942, the RSAP split. The C.R.M. as an independent organization declared for affiliation with the Fourth International. It published 46 illegal numbers of its central organ *De Rode October*.

Since the "liberation," comrade Perthus writes, a wave of class struggles has swept Holland, following quickly in the wake of the retreat of

the Nazi forces. Strikes of miners and metal workers took place in Brabant and Limbourg provinces even before the rest of the country was "liberated." Recently mass strikes have taken place in Amsterdam and Rotterdam as well. The labor movement is being revived on a local scale, as broken-down communications prevent its immediate integration on a national scale. But everywhere the evidence of a sweeping left swing of the masses is clear. The C.R.M. is in the process of reorganizing itself on a national scale and has high hopes of winning new forces soon for the establishment of a revolutionary party. In June of this year contact was established finally with the European Executive Committee and the C.R.M. formally affiliated through it to the Fourth International.

Belgium

Our comrades of the Revolutionary Communist Party (Parti Communiste Revolutionnaire), Belgian Section of the Fourth International, are in the forefront of the struggle for solidarity with the German workers, and against the attempts to utilize them for slave labor. In the mining regions, where the Trotskyists are particularly influential, this struggle has been taken up by the rank and file miners in a very practical fashion.

Recently the Belgian government announced that 30,000 German prisoners would be sent to work in the pits of the *Borinage* and other coal regions. A wave of protest gripped the pits. Typical of the reaction of the coal diggers is this resolution adopted at the *Anderlues* pits:

"The miners of pit no. 6 at Anderlues, assembled before going down to work, protest against the introduction into the mines of German prisoners;

"declare that that their place is in the mines, factories and shops of Germany and that the aim of the capitalist leaders, in sending the prisoners into the mines, is above all else to sabotage working class resistance;

"declare that they will accept work alongside them (the Germans) only on condition that they be given the same conditions of work as the Belgian miners and, above all, the same right to organize;

"demand that the trade union organizations utilize every means of organizing the resistance of the workers, including the general strike and occupation of the mines; demand the immediate calling of a conference of delegates with the following as its agenda: 1) Foreign workers; 2) Conscription of Labor and adjustment of wages to the real cost of living; 3) reconversion premium; 4) refund of taxes for the war years;

"decide to send this resolution to the labor press."

As against the chauvinistic campaign of the capitalists and their lackeys, the Belgian miners counterpose class solidarity with the German workers.

For their internationalism and for their clear-cut class struggle position, the Trotskyist leaders

are subjected to a campaign of persecution by the Stalinist top officialdom of the miners' union. Thus, they ordered the expulsion of comrade Davister, leader of the Charleroi district of the union, on charges of singing the "Internationale" at a union meeting, and broke up the locals that were supporting him. Now they are attempting to employ similar tactics against comrade Malengreau, one of the leaders of the United Miners Union of the Borinage district. The charge against him is that he spoke for the proclamation of the Republic in the recent crisis, which the Stalinist officials declared to be out of line with the "no politics" policy under cover of which they attempt to foist their own reactionary position on the union. The same kind of a campaign is also under way against comrade Victor Bougard, chief delegate of the Anderlues mines. Needless to say, our comrades, however, are receiving ample backing from the rank and file in their struggle for trade union unity based on the full exercise of the democratic rights of the membership.

The activity of the P.C.R., on the industrial front, on the political front and among the youth is reflected in every issue of their excellent paper, *La Lutte Ouvriere*. Of special interest is a column entitled "Au Travail pour le Parti" (Working for the Party) by comrade Danielle, who records for each issue some of her outstanding experiences in the day to day activities which we here call Jimmie Higgins work. In one of her recent columns, Danielle tells of an experience with an American soldier in a street-car who watched her distributing party leaflets (calling for a workers' government in reply to the Fascist attempts to reinstall King Leopold).

"He undoubtedly was aware of what was going on," she writes, "clapped his hands on seeing me and shouted O.K. repeatedly. At the next stop he got off with me and offered to give me a hand with the leaflets. I was glad to accept the offer and we were very successful. In his country they also have to fight Fascism, he told me, and it was a real pleasure to give a foreign sister anti-Fascist a hand. For me it was the first living example of proletarian fraternization that I ever experienced."

The Belgian comrades also report successful mass meetings exposing the Stalinist slander campaigns against them. One such meeting at Gilly, at which more than 500 workers heard comrades Jules Davister and Bougard present the Trotskyist case, was particularly interesting. The Stalinists had announced meetings to be held at the same time in three different parts of the city. Nobody showed up at their meetings. Finally, about 40 of them came to the P.C.R. meeting and attempted to harangue the crowd from the rear of the hall. The Trotskyist chairman asked them to wait their turn in the discussion. They refused and attempted to disrupt the meeting. Thereupon the workers in the hall took things into their own hands, booted all the forty Stalinists into the street and came back to conclude the meeting with lively applause for the Trotskyist orators, who presented the program of the Fourth International. Comrade Florent Galloy, recently returned from Buchenwald concentration camp, chaired the meeting.

France

Continuing their aggressive campaign for complete legalization, our comrades of the Parti Communiste Internationaliste (Internationalist Communist Party), French Section of the Fourth International, have issued an excellent pamphlet entitled "La Lutte des Trotskyistes Sous La Terreur Nazie" (The Struggle of the Trotskyists Under the Nazi Terror). The pamphlet simply gives the record of the Trotskyists in that struggle, with a long list of its heroic martyrs, accompanied by photographs and facsimiles of the many publications distributed by the P.C.I. in the underground. The presentation of this record is the most eloquent testimony possible against the vile and frenzied campaign of slander and calumny by means of which the Stalinists are attempting to obtain the suppression of the Trotskyist movement in France by the de Gaulle government.

The pamphlet further points out that the Stalinists are organizing physical terror, including assassination, against our French comrades and charges the G.P.U. with inspiring it. Explaining the deep-rooted social causes of the persecution they face, our comrades call upon the workers of France to rally to the Defense Committees which are being set up in order to combat the terror and to obtain complete legalization of the Trotskyist movement.

Egypt

After a considerable amount of spade work which began in 1943, the Trotskyist movement in Egypt is moving ahead steadily toward the establishment of a full-fledged section of the Fourth International.

The movement took root when a group of intellectuals who became convinced of the correctness of the Trotskyist program came into control of the magazine "Magalla el Gedida" in 1943. The "Magalla" had long been published as a cultural review presenting Stalinist policy and had a wide circulation not only in Egypt but also in Palestine and in Irak. Under its new editors the magazine fought Vansittartism (anti-Germanism) throughout the war under the slogan "No New Versailles, No New Munich." It took a firm stand in solidarity with the 18 arrested Socialist Workers Party leaders in the Minneapolis case and publicized their revolutionary testimony in several of its issues. Also outstanding was its support of the strikes of the British miners. For taking these positions, the "Magalla" was suppressed by order of the Military Governor on May 6, 1944.

Deprived of their publication, but with new recruits, our comrades decided to participate in the elections of December-January last winter. They organized support for the candidacy of Dr. Fathy el Ramly in the Mahkamet el Saveda constituency along the lines of a "Socialist Front." The Stalinists at first joined this front but later withdrew because of its program: "Sliding Scale of Wages"; "Trade Union control of social legislation"; "Equal rights for women", etc. The police inaugurated a regime of terror, in which they disbanded meetings of the front and carried through mass arrests. The candidate failed in

the elections, but the parliamentary campaign brought new layers of youth and workers in contact with the Trotskyist program.

In February, Trotskyist groups were organized on a functioning basis in Alexandria and in Cairo. The Egyptian Fourth Internationalists are at present preparing for their first national conference.

The progress of the comrades is particularly remarkable because it was made in the face of constant terror and the loss of two outstanding militants: Comrade Azmy el Douery, who died last summer after a long illness, and comrade Bokhor Manasse, who was arrested for his revolutionary activities last December and is still languishing in jail.

Switzerland

La Lutte Ouvriere, which devotes many columns in every issue to a round-up of news from our sections, gives us the first detailed news of the arrests and convictions meted out to the courageous Swiss Trotskyists for their anti-war struggle. In Switzerland too, the cadre of the Fourth International gave proof of its devotion and its tenacity. The arrested comrades have recently been freed and, we have heard, are in the process of reorganizing their forces for the tasks ahead. Here is the gist of *La Lutte Ouvriere's* story about them in its issue of July 14:

Between October 1939 and May 1940 our Swiss comrades published several numbers of *Informationsbriefe fuer Revolutionaere Politik* (Revolutionary Policy News-Letter). In one of these, our comrades condemned the class character of the Army, in line with the Marxist analysis of the capitalist state, and put forward a program of soldiers' demands which have long been part of the Leninist policy of struggle against imperialist war and the workers' struggle within the bourgeois army. Among other things, our comrades denounced the particularly odious record of a reactionary officer who since then deserted the army, absconding with funds belonging to it, and who was later court martialed.

On the basis of this letter, 50 homes were raided and 20 arrests were made. For more than 11 months our comrades were held incommunicado. Finally, 13 Trotskyists appeared as the accused at a trial in Lucerne. They were charged with "forming an organization to undermine discipline in the army," with "calling for mutiny," with "communist propaganda endangering the security of the state" and finally, because of their affiliation to the Fourth International, with "foreign propaganda."

The leader of the group, comrade *Walter Nelz*, was condemned to two-and-a-half years imprisonment and five other comrades to lesser terms, seven being acquitted. The sentence was appealed to a higher court, where one more comrade gained acquittal, comrade Nelz had his sentence reduced to two years, two other comrades receiving one year each, one comrade nine months and one comrade four months.

The Swiss review "Der Aufbau", from which our Belgian comrades quote these facts, contrasts the sharp treatment accorded the Swiss Trotskyists with the leniency shown Hitler's agents by the Swiss authorities. As everywhere else, class

justice operates characteristically in the bourgeois "democracy" of Switzerland. As in America, England and elsewhere, its sharpest fangs are directed against the best working class representatives, the vanguard fighters of the Fourth International.

Greece

Excerpts from an eyewitness account:

A few general impressions of life in Greece today. The economic situation is very tense. The shops in the big towns, Athens, Salonika, etc., are crammed with foodstuffs, brought in by UNRRA, but at prices that only the wealthy can afford. It's just one huge black market, with no attempt at price control or rationing.

Prevailing wage rates at the moment vary from 200 Drachmas (for the lower paid laborers) to 500 Drachmas for the higher paid workers, etc. The present exchange rate is about 500 Drachmas to the dollar. Contrast these wage levels with prevailing prices of essentials: The Greek standard of measurement is the "Oka"—approximately 2½ lbs.

Bread	140 D. per Oka
Sugar	1200 D. per Oka
Meat	350 D. per Oka
Potatoes	100 D. per Oka
Milk	120 D. per Oka
Soap	360/400 D. per bar
Various fruits	70/200 D. per Oka
Coffee	800 D. per Oka

Chocolate and cigarettes are unheard of luxuries for the mass of the workers, costing 200 D. per bar or packet of twenty—a full day's pay for many. A good suit of clothes costs 70,000 D.—or the equivalent of *seven months' pay*. A shirt will cost 2500 to 7500 D., and a pair of shoes 12,000 to 25,000 D.

This disparity between prices and wage levels has created a great wave of unofficial strikes. During the last few weeks there have been strikes of street car men, ice factory workers, shoemakers and electricity and power workers. This is all the more remarkable because, following in the Metaxas and German-occupation tradition, the workers are organized in a single Government controlled "trade-union"—a Greek version of the Labor Front of Dr. Ley. The street car men's strike was very solid. The Greek police ran a skeleton scab service very inefficiently for a few days, but completely failed to break the strike, and the strikers obtained their demands. An interesting sidelight on this strike was that most street cars driven by these police had pictures of the Greek king plastered on them.—Such is the "impartiality" of this notoriously reactionary force.

Democracy, freedom of speech, etc., just don't exist. The newspapers of the E.A.M. (National Liberation Front) and the K.K.E. (Stalinists) are just tolerated by the Government, but only because the Government is well aware of the treacherous role played by these Stalinist flunkies. Papers of the International Communist Party (Fourth International), the only revolutionary party in Greece, are illegal. Members of that party are persecuted, hounded and quite fre-

quently killed by both the Government and the Stalinists.

During the latter part of June, the main newspaper offices of both E.A.M. and the K.K.E. were wrecked, the issues all burned and the staff beaten up by gangs of hoodlums that organize their terror under the benevolent eyes of the Greek Government. On that same evening the K.K.E. held a demonstration 30,000 strong! To the open provocation against the working class, their only reply was a mild protest to the Government. In contrast to this cowardly position, the ICP issued a call to the workers to form Workers Defense Guards for resistance to the fascist gangs.

A trip through the interior of Greece was very revealing. It is a country of mountains and valleys, some of the latter very fertile but in great need of development. Agriculture is carried on by very primitive methods. I saw quite a few villages—composed entirely of small round huts made of thatch, similar to those popularly associated with tropical colored peoples. Communications are in a very bad way. Good roads hardly exist, and the few railway lines have been so thoroughly wrecked that it will take years to restore them to working order.

Spain

A national conference of Spanish Trotskyists, working within France in close contact with workers across the border, took place this Spring. Fifteen delegates from all parts of the country participated in the sessions which adopted a fundamental thesis on the tasks in Spain and a program of action. The conference was highly successful organizationally as well as politically and laid the basis for big steps forward among the Spanish workers. The conference adopted as the name for the organization "Comunistas Internacionistas (Sección Espanola de la IV International)". It decided on regularization of its popular newspaper "Lucha de Clases" and on the publication of a theoretical organ "Comunismo", several issues of which have since appeared. Finally, it addressed an "Open Letter to the Revolutionary Workers inside the P.O.U.M." which calls upon the proletarian militants in this centrist organization to join our comrades in re-evaluating their party and the events in Spain and to consider the program of the Fourth International as a basis for discussions oriented towards a joining of forces.

Germany

A German section of the Fourth International is in the process of formation after the many years in which Trotskyist groups within Germany and in exile were forced to exist almost in complete isolation from one another. Many new forces participating in this process represent the old cadres of the former Communist Party of Germany (KPD). A leader of the latter says in *Quatriene Internationale*, "The International lives in spite of everything, despite Hitler, despite the war, despite imperialism, despite the degeneration of the party, despite Stalin. The International lives and wants to help you, German proletarians, in your fight to finally achieve your October."

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