

"Peace Plans" and Historical Realities

by Douglas Ellis

The New
INTERNATIONAL

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Editor's Notes of the Month:

THE ALLIES VERSUS EUROPE

**The Bourgeois Theory of the Offensive:
Military Strategy in the Current War**

by J. R. Johnson

Karl Marx: "Introduction to Herr Vogt"

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

THE ALLIES VERSUS EUROPE

The most recent developments in the war combine with the fourth anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky to call to mind again some of the rich and lasting contributions he made to revolutionary thought and action. It cannot be expected of any man who comments continuously about our turbulent and complex times that his every word will have equal weight, last forever and forever keep its luster. The stature of the public man is measured by how many of his words (and of his deeds!) retain, or even gain in validity as time passes, are legitimated, so to speak, by history. Measured in these terms, the stature of Trotsky continues to grow.

Read what the bourgeois statesmen said a year ago, let alone their utterances of earlier date, and it is like dipping into a stale and stagnant pool. Read back some of the writings of this great Marxian thinker, to whom words were at once the product and the guide to action, and it is like a draught from a sparkling, refreshing, stimulating stream. Remarkably appropriate for our time is the first of two brilliant speeches he delivered as far back as twenty years ago (July 28, 1924) on "Europe and America." Critical thought of any kind was already drying up—and rapidly—in the leadership of the Communist International. Against this drab background, Trotsky's audacious and profound analysis of the world situation shone all the more brightly. It continues to throw light on the situation and the problem of our day.

Europe on Rations

Europe, ten years after the outbreak of the First World War, had landed in a blind alley. The failure of communism in Western Europe to measure up to its task had opened a new period of European evolution, a period of government power for the "democratic-pacifist elements of bourgeois society." Upon what did they rest? Decrepit European capitalism could no longer grant the working class those pre-war reforms which were the basis for the strength of labor reformism. But across the Atlantic, in the United States, capitalism was still powerful. European reformism was being compelled to shift its basis by entering the service of American capitalism, to "fall politically into dependence upon the boss of its bosses"! The American bourgeoisie as the boss of the European bourgeoisie? This was precisely the relationship that American imperialism was relentlessly working to establish.

What does American capital want? What is it trying to do? It seeks, it is said, stability. It wants to reestablish the European market in its interest it wants to restore to Europe its purchasing power. In what way? Within what limits? In actuality, American capital

cannot want to make Europe a competitor. It cannot allow England, let alone Germany and France, to recover their world markets, because it is itself caught tight, because it exports products and exports itself. It aims at the mastery of the world, it seeks to install the supremacy of America over our planet. What must it do with regard to Europe? It must, it is said, pacify it. How? Under its hegemony. What does this mean? That it must permit Europe to rise again, but within well-defined limits, vouchsafing it definite, restricted sectors of the world market. American capital now gives orders to the diplomats. It is preparing to give orders likewise, to the European banks and trusts, to the whole European bourgeoisie. That is what it is aiming at. It will assign definite sectors of the market to the European financiers and industrialists. In a word, it wants to reduce capitalist Europe to rations, to put it differently, to tell them now many tons, liters or kilograms of this or that material it has the right to buy or to sell.

As far back as the theses for the Third Congress of the Communist International we wrote that Europe is Balkanized. This Balkanization is now being continued. The Balkan states always had protectors in the person of Czarist Russia or Austro-Hungary, who imposed upon them changes in their policy, of their governments, or even of their dynasties (Serbia). Now Europe finds itself in an analogous situation with regard to the United States and, in part, Great Britain.

To the extent that their antagonisms will develop, the European government will go to seek aid and protection in Washington and in London; the changes in parties and governments will be determined in the last analysis by the will of American capital, which will tell Europe how much it must drink and eat... Rationing, we know from experience, is not always very pleasant. The strictly limited rationing that the Americans will establish for the peoples of Europe will apply likewise to the ruling classes not only of Germany and of France but also, in the end, of Great Britain. (Trotsky, *Europe et Amérique*, pp. 26f.)

This was said twenty years ago. It reads as if it were written yesterday!

What is the question at present in Europe? (continued Trotsky). Alsace-Lorraine, the Ruhr, the Saar Basin, Silesia; that is, a few miserable scraps, a few strips of territory. Meanwhile, America is building up its plan and is preparing to put everybody on rations. Contrary to England, it does not propose to establish an army, an administration for its colonies,* Europe included; no, it will "permit" the latter to maintain at home a reformist, pacifistic, anodyne order, with the aid of the social democracy, the radicals and other petty bourgeois parties and show them they ought to be grateful to it for not having violated their "independence." There you have the

*An English comrade, writing in the London *Socialist Appeal* (his letter is reprinted elsewhere in this issue), says with high disdain: "About Shachtman's theory of the colonization of Europe, I need not say much. I don't think this preposterous theory can find much support among us." So much the worse for the "us," who call themselves students and followers of Trotsky. The Englishman's words, and the spirit that animates them (i.e., blind factionalism and ignorance), are almost identical with those used by the late Jay Lovestone, who, in November, 1925, spoke just as contemptuously about "the old theory of Trotsky on Europe being put on rations and transformed into a dominion of America." What Trotsky thereupon said to the American, Lovestone, applies word for word to the Englishman, Peck: "If you want to write on any subject whatsoever—be it in English or in French, in Europe or in America—it is necessary to know what you are writing and where you are leading the reader... We will conclude by the advice that Engels gave a certain Stiebeling, also an American: 'When one wishes to concern himself with scientific questions, it is first necessary to learn to read writings as the author wrote them, and above all not to read out of them what is not written in them.' These words of Engels are excellent and are valid not only for America but for all five parts of the world." We add only: Valid not only for Lovestonites but also for Trotskyists.

plan of American capital, there is the program on which the Second International is reconstituting itself. (*Ibid.*, pp. 42f.)

The American plan to put Europe on rations was interrupted by the supreme effort made by German imperialism under the Nazis to play essentially the same rôle on the continent that American imperialism had worked out for itself. Essentially the same rôle—but for reasons cited in these pages on previous occasions, in an outwardly more violent and brutal form. Germany's supreme effort to become and remain master of Europe did not correspond either to her own resources and power or to the place it occupies with regard to her most powerful rival, the United States. Had Germany really been able to organize Europe in a planned, cordinated, peaceful manner, the continent would have found no difficulty in withstanding the encroachments of American imperialism.

This is, however, precisely what German *fascism* was utterly incapable of doing. By its very nature, and consequently by the very way in which it "united" Europe, there was a multiplication and aggravation of economic, political and cultural antagonisms, a sharpening of all the contradictions that left the Old World exhausted and helpless, and an inevitable plunge into the most devastating war in history. The job of uniting Europe remains to be done by the working class; a *socialist* Germany would be the firmest and surest pillar of such a unification.

Now it is quite clear that a German military victory in the war is out of the question. Her defeat is a matter of time. What will happen to Germany and Europe (more accurately, to Germany and *therefore* to Europe) after the fall of the Nazi régime? That is the decisive question in world politics today and tomorrow. Consequently, it is also the decisive question in American politics. Let us approach the question from the angle of the latest events in Germany.

The Crisis in Germany

The "attempt" upon Hitler's life, the executions of the officers, the trial of the other officers by the "people's" court, the confessions, the agitational campaign throughout the country by the Nazi machine—all these are distinctly familiar. The actors are different, the stage manager is different, the theater is different; the rôles are almost the same, the staging is almost the same, the technique is quite the same. It is the enacting of the Moscow Trials, the Moscow frame-up, all over again!

The poison is mixed, but Stalin escapes miraculously; the wrecking of the automobile is all arranged, but Molotov escapes miraculously; the bomb is thrown, but Hitler escapes miraculously. Were the miracles performed on paper by the GPU also performed on paper by that other Providential Power that preserves the lives of National Saviors, the Gestapo?

In Moscow, the accused were (they always are!) "agents of a foreign power" and "enemies of the socialist fatherland." In Berlin, word for word the same thing, "socialist fatherland" included. In Moscow, they were "fascist dogs." In Berlin, they are "blue-blooded swine." In the Moscow Trials, the "guilty" freely and drearily "confessed" anything and everything asked of them. In Berlin, too.

In Moscow, the prosecutor-judge, Andrey Vyshinsky, was a Menshevik renegade turned Stalinist. In Berlin, the judge-prosecutor, Roland Freisler, was a Stalinist renegade turned fascist! (Surely there could not be two men of that name, and the one who presided over the trial of the officers in the Berlin "people's" court is the same Roland Freisler, must be

the same gentleman, who once staffed the Communist Party of Germany.) Here indeed is the last touch needed to complete the parallel!

Does it follow that there was not really an attempt to kill Hitler? There may well have been. But genuine or staged, it makes very little difference. Hitler needed such a situation, whether staged by enemies or friends. This is shown by the uses to which the affair was put by the régime.

By implication, if not explicitly, the responsibility for the German retreats and defeats was shifted to the Junker aristocrats. They are convenient scapegoats, perhaps the only scapegoats the régime has left. They never had any ties with the masses, they never enjoyed popular support or even the support of the Nazi rank and file.

The régime sought to enhance its reputation as indispensable leader of the nation, as national savior, by depicting the real and alleged defeatists as foreign tools. Here too, as well as in what follows, the plagiarism from the Kremlin is patent.

It sought to intimidate any opposition, especially any potential opposition, by the violence of the measures taken against it, to show that—if it may be put that way—the head of any opposition would be chopped off before it got a chance to grow. Were the Nazis also trying to convey the idea to the Allies that no Badoglio would be allowed to live in Germany, and that if any future negotiations were contemplated, the Nazis would be the only ones left in the country with whom such negotiations could be undertaken? That seems impossible, yet it is conceivable that such a thought flitted through the Hitlerite mind. In any case, it would seem perfectly clear that the Nazis understand that no terms will be presented to them by the Allies except such as would extinguish them.

Above all else, the "plot" was used by the régime to rush through a super-mobilization plan for the last-ditch defense. Under the new arch-dictatorship of Hitler, Himmler, Goering and Goebbels, the last drop of sweat is to be squeezed out of the German people, the last drop of blood poured onto the battlefields, in defense of the bestial régime. Hitler's whole problem resolves itself into how much more sweat and blood the masses will allow him to extract from their shrinking bodies.

From this standpoint, appearances seem to belie a deep crisis of the régime. Under the Kaiser, in the First World War, the symptoms of the crisis were first manifested among the masses. The last year of the war was marked by a growing number of strikes, a revolt of the sailors, widespread discontentment and clamor for peace. It might almost be said that the revolt which finally overthrew the régime was openly organized among the people. So far as can be seen, there is no evidence that the masses in Germany today are on the move.*

Looked at superficially, this would lead to gloomy but unwarranted conclusions, based in reality on a lack of understanding of the "mechanics" of the revolutionary uprising under despotic régimes. Under such régimes, the first cracks usually occur at the top, produced by the impact of severe economic crises or of military setbacks. The dictatorship gives the masses no means, no institutions, no instruments, through which to express themselves. It gives the masses no organizations in which they can unite their forces, no matter

*Unless, of course, you want to make a public laughing-stock of yourself by crediting and, as *The Militant* did recently, publishing solemnly the report of the "national conference" that was held "illegally in Germany" by the "Trotskyist" (!) trade unions.

how great their discontentment. It keeps the closest police watch over every person, and answers the first protest with a bullet. How can the masses appear on the scene as a serious force? Through the rifts inevitably created in the social and political summits!

The Logic of Revolution

There is a logic in such situations that has been revealed in a dozen revolutions occurring under the most tyrannical police régimes: In the crisis, be it induced by economic or military difficulties, every régime, be it ever so despotic, ever so monolithic at the top, ever so powerful, is confronted at one stage or another with this question: Shall we drive ahead, or retreat? Shall we make a concession to the people, or tighten the vise? Shall we launch another offensive, or sue for peace? Shall we risk the wrath of the masses, or try to appease them? Shall we stake all, or try to save part?

Invariably—assuming a really critical situation—the régime divides on these questions, between the tendency that gives one answer (let us say the “hard”) and the tendency that gives the other (let us say the “soft”). Again assuming that the situation is really critical, the minority finds itself compelled to solicit the support of the lower ranks of the police régime to which, up to yesterday, it gave only orders. The majority, in self-defense, is forced to act likewise. The dispute spreads to the remotest ends of the state machine. It is at these ends that it is in direct contact with the masses.

From the masses the lowest ranks of the régime absorb, if not the popular discontent, then at least apprehensions over the discontent. Toward these masses they are no longer able to act with the same confident arrogance and brutality they were able to show when the régime itself was confident and united. The masses, in turn, begin to feel, and then to see, that their rulers are not only united in their attitude toward the people, but are divided among themselves. If the crisis endures, the rift at the top becomes a breach which widens down to the bottom. The masses, yesterday silent, docile, passive, depressed, impotent—at least apparently—change overnight, and pour through this breach with irresistible force. The régime crumbles. The people are masters of the streets and the palace.

With one change or another, this is the way the history of the coming German revolution will write itself.

Has the rift at the top begun in the Nazi régime? Indubitably. Hitler painted the picture of the “plot” in these words: “It is a very small clique of criminal elements which now will be exterminated quite mercilessly.” Goering repeated that “only a miserable clique of former generals” was involved. But four days after these speeches, sixteen of Moscow’s German generals, who led Hitler’s armies only yesterday, radioed an appeal to the German people to “resist Hitler, refuse to carry out orders, break with the Hitler régime.” And ever since the débâcle at Stalingrad, there has been the unprecedented formation and growth in Russia of the Union of German Officers, lately joined by Marshal von Paulus himself, which has repeated the line of the July 25 appeal of the sixteen generals.

The reiteration of this theme by the captured German generals may not endear the Junkers or Junkerdom to the German masses, but it cannot but make a profound impression upon them; if not upon all, then upon many; if not today, then tomorrow. “Even our generals believe the war is lost.”

The conviction that their cause is hopeless has not prevented men from fighting and dying to the last soldier before this. But it is especially when the war seems hopeless that the troops—and the civilians behind them—ask themselves more persistently and profoundly: What are we fighting for? Whom are we fighting for? They will fight to the last, under such circumstances, only when the answer is satisfactory. In the case of fascist Germany, the answer is less and less satisfactory to more and more people. The Nazi régime is doomed. The masses will not fight for it to the end.

Yet Hitler may very well enjoy one last burst of energetic support from the people. For this he will have the Allies, and only the Allies, to thank. Everything they have done, except in the purely military field, was a gift to the Nazis, prolonging their tenure of power and prolonging the war. When the people of a country are told that in the event they are defeated their land will be cut into at least three artificially-separated pieces; that they will be held formally and for a long time to account for a war into which they were themselves dragged; that they will be taken from their homes by the millions and transported like cattle for slave labor in foreign lands; that the conqueror-“liberator” will keep from them the very democratic rights of which they were deprived by their own despots; that they will have to bear a crushing burden of tribute to the victors and bear it unto the seventh generation, in accordance with the most barbarous scriptural injunctions translated into the language of modern imperialism; that their industries will be taken from them or demolished entirely; that part of their land will even be annexed like an outright colonial possession; that their country as a whole will be militarily occupied for a long time to come; that every phase of their economic, political, cultural and spiritual life will be more rigorously controlled and supervised than the English control and supervise India—it is anything but surprising that such a people will continue to fight the enemy abroad even under the rule of a hated enemy at home. It will be most astonishing if they do not continue to fight in a new and different way against the foreign enemy after the enemy at home has been crushed.

Wilson and Roosevelt

There cannot be any doubt that *if* the Allies had (more accurately, if they *could* have) announced their war aims to the German people in the terms of Wilson’s famous Fourteen Points, the war would long ago have been over, and the Nazi régime would have passed into limbo with it. But that is like talking about sailing a boat with last year’s wind. In the quarter century between Wilson and Roosevelt too much has happened for a Wilson policy to be possible. The international crisis of capitalism has reached an unprecedented stage of acuteness and virulence, manifested among other things in the war of unprecedented violence and hopelessness. Capitalism is a social order that must expand or die. That is a general phrase. Concretely it acquires real and terrible meaning: Each national sector of capitalism must expand in a contracting world, or strangle within its narrowing walls like an epileptic in agony. The cry for “Lebensraum” was only the desperately anguished appeal of a restricted German capitalism for a breath of life. But it is not only Germany that has been jammed into this Black Hole of Calcutta. The others are there as well. The breath of life for one capitalist power means trampling underfoot the other capitalist powers so as to get closer to the little window. The less air there is, the more violent the fight to monopolize it, the more complete is

the abandonment of civilized relations in favor of the snarl and grunt of jungle warfare, the law of fang and claw.

The decay of capitalism throughout the world combines the highest technique in the means of destruction with the most abominable political barbarism. Only modern capitalist barbarians could try to turn a noble people like the Poles into a colonial cadaver. Only somewhat less crude modern capitalist barbarians can contemplate carving the living flesh of a civilized land like Germany into half a dozen parts, like our brutish forebears carved up a felled bison in a cave.

If there is no longer any possibility for Wilsonism in Rooseveltian America, it is fundamentally for the same reason that there was no longer any possibility for the comparatively democratic Hohenzollern régime in Germany. Along with capitalism as a whole, both of its big sectors have been driven by the world crisis to lower levels. It is like a mathematical equation: The Roosevelt plan (and Churchill's, and Stalin's) for Balkanizing and colonizing Germany is to Wilson's Fourteen Points, as Hitler's ruthless crushing of Europe is to Kaiser Wilhelm's comparatively gentle treatment of the continent. In both cases the difference is determined by the continued decay of imperialist society.

Dismemberment of Germany

The dismemberment of Germany by the Allies is not more "justified" or less "justified" than the crushing of Europe by Germany; but it is more absurd. As our readers know, the "liberators" of Washington, Moscow and London have already agreed to cut Germany into three main and separate parts, each to be occupied and ruled by one of the "Big Three," the East by Russia, the West by England, the South by the United States. This is not all. The fantastic de Gaulle has already laid claim in London and Washington to the whole of Baden and the Palatinate on the left bank of the Rhine, that is, he aims to repeat the French adventure of 1923 on which Poincaré broke his fool neck. The governments-in-exile of Belgium and Holland, which have yet to regain their own independence, are already talking about depriving sections of West and Northwest Germany of their independence by annexation as victor's booty.

The most transplanetary insanity is that of the Polish government-in-exile. It rightly suspects the Moscow Greeks bearing gifts in the form of East Prussian land grants. At the same time, this "government," which has as much prospect of presiding over the restored independence of Poland as it has of seeing the back of its head without a mirror, issues solemn statements about its "historical right" to the same East Prussia! What right? According to a pamphlet issued by the London Poles, East Prussia and Danzig "have belonged to Poland during long periods of their history," East Prussia having been a fief of the Polish crown until 1657, and that while admittedly East Prussia's inhabitants are German in their majority, "the Germans in reality were colonists who exterminated the native Prussians." Moreover, "Warsaw is only sixty miles from East Prussia, while Berlin is 240 miles away" and—master stroke!—"Economically East Prussia is a drain on the German treasury"—a heartbreaking situation which wrings the withers on Pan Mikolajczyk! (Out of understandable prudence, the official Polish pamphlet does not note that all of the Ukraine down to the Black Sea and all of the Baltic countries were also at one time fiefs of the Polish crown. . . .)

On the basis of the Polish arguments: Southwestern United States, Texas included, go back to Mexico; Romania goes back to Rome, along with Marseille and Nice; Alaska goes

back to Russia; all of Australia is annexed to Dartmoor Prison; and if the Poles remain shy about claiming the region of Kiev, it should be returned to its true founders, the Vikings.

Madness crowds madness. Millions of German workers are to be sent away as slave-labor "reconstructors" of other countries. Then German industry is to be crippled in a dozen different ways. Whereupon? Whereupon Germany, paralyzed and maintained in forced poverty, is to pay a heavy tribute! How? Out of what? Out of its vast industrial production? No, it is not to be vast! Out of its export surplus? No, unless hunger and unemployment can be profitably exported.

A Germany enslaved and impoverished means a Europe prostrate, unable to rise, and devoid of peace. Anyone who does not understand this should be forbidden to meddle in politics. There was some glimmer of an excuse for not understanding it before the criminal Versailles Treaty; today, after the Versailles experiment, after the collapse of Weimar, after the experience of Hitlerism, after the Second World War, there is no excuse whatsoever.

Prospects in Post-War Germany

The victorious proletarian revolutionary power will not, it is clear, directly replace the fallen Nazi régime. The German proletariat will need a period in which to regain its strength and a correct orientation. Everything depends on it. In the first period following the inevitable overturn of Hitlerism, the Stalinist and Social Democratic bureaucracies will endeavor to rebuild a movement under their own domination. Fortunately, their hopes exceed their prospects.

The Stalinist gang will appear everywhere as the defender of GPU and Russian army rule over that part of Germany which is given the Kremlin as its share of the booty, as the defender, in general, of the oppression, disfranchisement and exploitation of the German masses. The Noskes and Scheidemanns of 1918-19 will look like friends of the people in comparison. The correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor* (August 7) asked the principal official newspaper spokesman of the Kremlin, a venomous animal by the name of Ilya Ehrenburg, what the Russians would do about a revolt of the Germans which will "overthrow Hitler and welcome the advancing Red Army with appropriate banners." "Those," replied this tender flower of Stalinist humanism, "would be the first people we should shoot." In the *Daily Worker* of February 18, the German Stalinist boss, Hans Berger, writes: "Hitler has enough Ehrlichs and Alters. Their names are Schulz and Kunz and Mueller [i.e., Smith, Jones and Robinson, or Tom, Dick and Harry]. The problem of a future Germany is to get rid of national socialism and of its professional instigators against the Soviet Union. We don't think that the world and a new Germany need so-called democratic socialists who want to carry Ehrlichs and Alters in their luggage when and if they return to Germany." A vote of thanks is due candor, even if the candor of the assassin. The pistol of the GPU executioner is to reach, if not to the Rhine, at least to the Spree.

The social democrats will appear in Germany as the mildly remonstrative servants of Anglo-American imperialism, the power they helped impose as an iron heel on defeated Germany. As Trotsky said so perspicaciously in 1924, they will oppose their own (the German) bourgeoisie "not from the point of view of the proletarian revolution, not even to obtain reforms, but to show that this bourgeoisie is intolerant, egotistical, chauvinistic and incapable of coming to an agreement with pacifistic, humanitarian, democratic American capital. . . . To colonize Europe, to make it its dominion, Ameri-

can capital has no need of sending missionaries there. On the spot there is already a party whose task is to preach to the peoples the gospel of Wilson, the gospel of Coolidge, the Holy Scripture of the Stock Exchanges of New York and Chicago. That is the present mission of European Menshevism!" To which may be added, in 1944, that the social democrats—those of them not bought up or murdered by the Stalinists "when and if they return to Germany"—will preach servitude to American capitalism as the only barrier to the encroachments of Moscow! Thus the rôles are divided in advance.

But the German people, above all, the German working class—this is a force with which the oppressors and the traducers have not fully counted. To be sure, the imperialists know there will be resistance to their rule. That is undoubtedly one of the reasons, if not the main reason, why there has been started the big propaganda campaign in the Allied countries about the "preparations being made by the Nazis to go underground after the Allied victory." That such preparations are being made need not be doubted. That the "underground" Nazis will seek to exploit the crimes and stupidities of the imperialists and their agents in Germany also need not be doubted. What is sinister in the propaganda campaign on this point however, is the fact that it attempts in advance to label every German worker who, after the war, fights against imperialist oppression and exploitation, against national humiliation—to label him a Nazi tool, if not a Nazi outright!

Yet it is precisely upon this worker, and those like him, that the future of Europe depends. It is such workers who will constitute the ranks of the reconstructed revolutionary movement of Germany. This movement will be proud and

powerful, and victorious in the end, because it will be a revolutionary, internationalist, socialist movement which fights not only for a free Germany but for a free, prosperous, peaceful and united Europe against all those who seek to crush Europe. It will be proud also because it will take up, on a higher plane, the struggle for national freedom and democracy which constitutes the only heroic tradition of the young bourgeoisie of a century or two ago. It will be, it will have to be, the champion (the only consistent and militant champion) of national unity, national freedom and democracy—against the Balkanizers, colonizers and oppressors, of Germany and Europe. The crusaders of socialism become ever more clearly the soldiers of democracy, as the imperialist bourgeoisie and its Stalinist associates seek to hurl the world back to a new and hideous barbarism.

We will yet see how prophetic was Trotsky's warning in 1924:

Driven by the logic of rapacious imperialism, America is making a gigantic experiment of rationing upon many peoples. This plan will collide in its realization with fierce class struggles and national struggles. The more the power of American capital is transformed into political power, the more American capital develops internationally, the more the American bankers take command of the governments of Europe—the stronger, the more centralized, the more decisive will be the resistance of the proletarian, petty bourgeois and peasant masses of Europe. For, to make a colony out of Europe is not as simple as you think, Messrs. Americans!

Messrs. Russians-in-the-Kremlin, too. It was they who stilled Trotsky's voice with a pickaxe. Like their American and British colleagues, they will yet hear this voice echoing the revolutionary forward march of the European people.

The Course of the War

The Bourgeois Theory of the Offensive

Today military conflict embraces the entire structure and superstructure of society. Its arena is the whole of the globe. We propose here to examine certain aspects of its development to date and more particularly in regard to the impending defeat of Germany.

No attempt will be made to deal with the technical military content of the war. Nor is this necessary. If Hitler lost four or five million men to get a thousand square miles outside the eastern borders of Germany in eighteen months and in another eighteen months is back again where he started, one does not have to be a master of logistics to be able to draw certain extremely important conclusions. We propose rather, as an indispensable part of our analysis, to treat the question historically, to place this war in relation to other great wars in the past and the prospect of the future. In particular, we wish to draw attention to the *method* of judgment of Marx and Engels, the founders of historical materialism. By this means we shall be in a position to learn much that is valuable. The actual proletarian revolution can assume the form of a full-scale military conflict, as did the Civil War in Spain in 1936-38.

But there are today more topical reasons for the study of war. Marx wrote to Engels that "the history of the *army* brings out more clearly than anything else the correctness of our conceptions of the connection between the productive

forces and the social relations" (September 25, 1857). Today when the whole social organism becomes one vast armed camp the movement of bourgeois society in its various stages of progress toward disintegration, ruin and barbarism appear starkly. Abstract theories take on a vivid actuality. The proletariat is faced with fundamentals and can learn rapidly.

Every general staff in Europe begins with Clausewitz, who drew his principles from the wars of revolutionary France and of Napoleon. Hitler's special translation of the numerous volumes of Napoleon's correspondence is deeply scored and underscored. The European generals know their roots. To attempt to understand them we must have some idea of what the teacher of them all stood for.

It is a commonplace in our movement that the drive of the French revolutionary armies sprang from the consciousness of the revolutionary nation in arms and the sense of individual personality in the soldier. Perhaps this was most concretely expressed in the speed of the French infantry which at times could do one hundred and twenty paces per minute, in comparison with seventy-five paces characteristic of feudal armies. Napoleon perfected the strategy and tactics which the earlier revolutionary generals began. Thus was born the modern theory of the offensive.

There is, however, a decisive break in Napoleon's military career. After the victory of Austerlitz in 1805 the revolution

was over. Napoleon's wars were now unmistakably wars of conquest and the tremendous vitality of the army, the speed and recklessness with which large masses of men fought and sacrificed themselves between 1793 and 1805 began to disappear. Beginning with 1807 *he was compelled to lean more and more heavily on artillery*. By 1812 the very marshals and the higher officer caste were sick of war. Today contemporaneous evidence has piled up to prove the moral and organizational disintegration of the army before one foot had been set on Russian soil. *Thus the great army and the great soldier rose and fell with the rise and fall of the revolution.*

But, stated so baldly, the generalization is misleading. In 1814 Napoleon was decisively defeated and abdicated. When he returned from Elba he faced a coalition of all Europe. The masses were with him. The bourgeoisie was undecided. The rank and file of the army and the lower officers were fanatically on his side. But the old general staff was broken up. Ney took up his command at Quatre Bras with one officer in attendance for staff. Napoleon, it is said, didn't know whether to trust him or not. Those who again joined Napoleon were distrusted by the soldiers. Thus the army was an exact reflection of the state of affairs in the country. Napoleon, with the help of Carnot, hastily organized an army, and in a few weeks had over 100,000 men with whom to take the field. Nobody knew more about war than Carnot, who had organized the armies of the revolution. Yet Carnot wanted Napoleon to wait six weeks. He would give him an army twice the size and fortify Paris so as to make it impregnable. *Napoleon refused to wait. His reply was that he must have a brilliant victory at once. The class relations in the country, the political combinations against him, governed every move of the campaign from the initial organization of the army down to the last fatal hesitation at six o'clock whether to throw in the Old Guard or not.*

Thus the theory of the offensive passed from the supreme military expression of the revolutionary masses of France to its final stage, where the bourgeois Emperor was using it only in form but with its genuine content gone. Engels has expressed his admiration for the Waterloo campaign, and it was a most brilliant display. But every theory, and military strategy, too, is rooted in class relations.

The "Classic Lines" of War

Marx and Engels used this basic method in the imperative political business of analyzing a concrete war and no more brilliant and instructive example can be given than their analysis of the Civil War in America.

When the war broke out, one graduate of West Point from Ohio wrote to another graduate from Georgia: "Your whole population is about eight millions, while the North has twenty millions. Of your eight millions, three millions are slaves who may become an element of danger. You have . . . none of the manufactures and machine shops necessary for the support of armies, and for war on a large scale. . . . Your cause is foredoomed to failure." (R. S. Henry, *Story of the Confederacy*, page 18.)

To think that Engels, a student of military affairs all his life, did not know this is ridiculous. Yet, after the early successes of the South, Engels wrote his doubts to Marx. Marx replied: "The way the North is conducting war is only what might have been expected from a *bourgeois* republic, where fraud has been enthroned as king so long. The South, an *oligarchy*, is better adapted to it, especially an oligarchy where the whole productive work falls on the niggers and the four

millions of 'white trash' are professional flibusterers. All the same, I would bet my head that these fellows will get the worst of it, in spite of 'Stonewall' Jackson. It is possible, of course, that before this things may come to a sort of revolution in the North itself."

The summation is concise but complete. Engels, however, was still unconvinced and on October 28 Marx wrote again: "In my opinion, therefore, for the South it will only be a matter now of the defensive. But their sole possibility of success lay in an offensive. . . . There is no doubt at all that morally the collapse of the Maryland campaign was of the most tremendous importance."

Engels agreed in general but in his reply used the phrase: "I am by no means certain that the affair is going to proceed along such classic lines as you appear to believe." What are these "classic lines" which Engels referred to so familiarly? Clausewitz has stated them when he says that ". . . when an object at the very beginning is beyond our strength, it will always remain so."

Clausewitz was a student of Kant and a follower of Hegel. His book is a logic of war, of the subject conceived, like Marx's *Capital*, in the "absolute" form. The laws are therefore subject to all the qualifications of a concrete situation. And on this there is always room for disagreement. On the basic analysis of the contending forces in the Civil War and the "classic lines" of the military development, there was no difference between Marx and Engels. They differed amicably only on the immediate estimate. *Both agreed that if the North did not change politically, then there would be a compromise peace — temporarily.* Marx's judgment might have seemed rash. Today we can read in authoritative studies of the Civil War that, despite the brilliant victories of the South up to that time, the turning point of the war was the Maryland campaign of the fall of 1862, and not Vicksburg or Gettysburg in 1863. (R. S. Henry, *The Story of the Confederacy*, page 101. The volume is introduced by Douglas Southall Freeman.)

In his review of Engels' military writings, Leon Trotsky notes that Engels makes the same basic point in his analysis of the Franco-German war, and Trotsky agrees with him. (*The New Internationalist*, May, 1944.)

Strategy and Class Struggle

Now that the bourgeoisie is washing its dirty linen in public, most of the military theories of 1918-39, like so much bourgeois theory in this age, are being exposed for what they are—a lot of knowledge, a lot of nonsense, and a lot of lies. The layman need not be afraid of this question at all. Clausewitz, the greatest theoretician of war, and a soldier and staff officer in many campaigns, has laid it down that "the events in each age must, therefore, be judged with due regard to the peculiarities of the time and only he who, less by an anxious study of minute details than by a shrewd glance at the main features, can place himself in each particular age is able to understand and appreciate its generals." To judge the generals, you need to understand society. And the "main feature" of the military debates of society after World War I was the theory of the defensive. This was no accident, no stupidity of generals. The theory of the defensive came straight from the hostility of the organized proletariat and the great masses of the people to the very thought of war. In France, over the length and conditions of service and military appropriations, the "right" and the "left" fought a series of continuous battles that lasted practically up to the outbreak of war. In Britain it was the same, and the foremost military theoretician of the day, a man wide-

ly read by the general public, was Liddell Hart, the great protagonist of a special theory of defensive war. Ignoring the tank and condoning the miserable strategy of 1914-18, most of the authors used the 1914-18 war of attrition as a basis for their defensive theory. Major General J. F. C. Fuller, chief of staff of the Royal Tank Corps in 1918 (he now writes for *News Week*, argued bitterly and in vain in favor of the mechanized offensive. As late as 1937 one of his books was published in Britain in an edition of only five hundred copies. *But thirty thousand copies of the same book were published for Hitler's army and it was widely circulated throughout the military forces of the USSR.* The proletariat in those countries being chained, the ruling class could think a little more freely. That Russia's geographical and economic position precluded more or less a Napoleonic offensive at the beginning of a war against Germany, for example, did not alter the question. It was the very concept of the Maginot Line which was so absurd and to which Britain and France stuck so woodenly.

In an article written four years ago, the present writer said as follows: "Today the bourgeois theorists wake up to the fact that the strategy of the defensive was a criminal blunder and in fact always has been. . . . But which country, torn as the democracies were torn, could even attempt to consider any other strategy but the defensive? . . . Perhaps the most ironic commentary on the French defeat is that the method of breaking the center by a heavy concentration of mechanized forces was insistently urged on the French government by the French general, de Gaulle, as far back as 1934. . . . It was open to the French if they had wanted it. **THEY COULDN'T USE IT.**" (THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, July, 1940, page 126.) There is little to add to that today.*

To the German ruling class, the defensive meant economic strangulation at the hands of Britain, France and the United States. But Germany up to 1933 was a democratic republic. We do not pretend to know what plans the general staff was secretly elaborating, but the theory which attracted widespread notice before 1933 was Von Seeckt's theory of the small, highly mechanized army of the offensive. This was merely the German adaptation of the theory of the offensive to the limitations of the Versailles Treaty and the hostility of the organized German workers to war.

When Hitler gained power, however, he proceeded to organize Germany for total war based on the most extreme application of the theory of the offensive. His whole strategy rests on a modern application of Clausewitz, and it was Clausewitz who first gave full theoretical emphasis to the importance of the moral and psychological factors in war. The early revolutionary generals and General Bonaparte had developed their devastating offensives from the revolutionary consciousness of France. But the German people, and the proletariat in particular, with its enormous rôle in contemporary society, had no revolutionary or any other dominating consciousness for which to fight. Furthermore the class struggle had now reached a pitch, undreamed of and impossible in Napoleon's time. Hitler needed a "*revolutionary ideology.*" He posed as the revolutionary creator of a "new order." Napoleon to the end had retained the glamor of his name and achievements. Hitler sought to create artificially what Napoleon had done

*In an article on "Attack" in the *New American Encyclopedia* (1858-63), which is almost certainly written by Engels, he, governed by the limitations of his time, makes the best possible case for a general theory of the defensive. But in the end he decides for the general belief in the offensive though with "considerable modifications." With the application of the Diesel engine to the battlefield itself, however, even the defensive had to lose every trace of a static mentality.

practically. Dr. Goebbels became his Marshal Ney. He sought to recreate in himself the legend of the divinely-inspired, all-conquering national hero who was Napoleon. Thus the general social policy of fascism reached its intensest expression in the military sphere. The World War experience of Germany, certainty of America's ultimate entry, were the basic military conditions of the policy. But the causes go beyond that. It is impossible not to recognize in this macabre economic, political and psychological mobilization of a great nation and the whole fantastic plan the diseased imagination of a ruling class conscious that it was at the end of its tether and that only a miracle could save it. Those whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad. Some high-ranking generals, conscious of the innumerable chances of war, condemned the whole business. That Hitler was allowed to get so far with it testifies to the complete moral disintegration of bourgeois society as a whole, and not only of the German bourgeoisie.

To take the military strategy as it developed: first Hitler overwhelmed France. He followed this with an attempt to overwhelm Britain by air. He failed. He thereupon undertook the destruction of the military power of Russia.

The Russian Campaign

When the German army marched in June, 1941, it proposed to be in Moscow before the winter and to overwhelm the Russians on two thousand miles of front. Like Napoleon, Hitler couldn't wait.

In his sketch of "The Army of the Soviet Union," Professor Minz of the USSR as early as 1942 wrote that the "phantom that always haunted the fascist generals—i.e., the danger that the blitzkrieg would be converted into a long-drawn-out war, with all the fatal consequences for Germany—became real. In their savage fury the fascists hurled more and more divisions into the holocaust in a desperate effort to bring the war to a speedy conclusion. They could not do otherwise." (Page 35.) That is brilliantly true and is the key to Hitler's course. The great offensive drew from weakness in relation to the enemy as a whole and therefore carried within itself the seeds of its own catastrophic collapse at any miscarriage. The more thorough the preparation, the more necessary was unbroken success.

The defeat in front of Moscow was the turning point of the war for Hitler's armies. It is easy to see that today and some saw it then. The course of the war has since placed in proper perspective the strategic significance of the Russian winter offensives of 1941-42. We must go back to Clausewitz again. After the passage quoted above, he went on to make a final application of this theory—the use of the offensive in defense. In his usual categorical manner when stating a general proposition, he wrote: "But we must maintain throughout that a defensive without any positive principle is to be regarded as a self-contradiction in strategy as well as in tactics, and therefore we always come back to the fact that every defensive, according to its strength, will seek to change to attack as soon as it has exhausted the advantages of the defensive."

That the Russians could launch an offensive after the battle of Moscow was an indication of great power. In 1941 they refused deliberately to fight a major battle on the frontier. They drew Hitler's lines out almost to the very gates of Moscow, stood confidently on the defensive, repulsed the attack and then *launched a powerful counter-offensive on every front.* In front of Moscow the German army was on the defensive for five months. In the South the Russians recaptured Rostov, in the North their offensive saved Leningrad. Hitler's whole

strategic campaign on an international scale was based on the taking of Moscow in 1941. Not only in theory but in practice the German army threw everything that it could into that assault. Where it had failed once, it was useless to try again. *It never even tried.* Where Hitler had attacked on two thousand miles of front in 1941, he could attack only on five hundred miles in 1942. The German army wasted itself before Sevastopol and after a superhuman effort which put the Moscow drive in the shade, it experienced the disaster of Stalingrad.

Stalingrad, in the present writer's opinion, is a battle without any parallel whatever in military history. To deal with it at all satisfactorily would involve a comprehensive treatment of the Russian army and state, which is beyond our scope. Sufficient to say here that the tremendous offensive which accounted for Von Paulus and his 300,000 men foreshadowed the whole story of the almost uninterrupted series of retreats and defeats which have since befallen the German army. To see beneath the surface and follow the inner dialectic of this campaign we cannot do better than try to grasp what is perhaps the main strategic thesis of Clausewitz's great book. Near the end of his work he states it clearly enough:

"Our opinion is, therefore, that no pause, no resting point, no intermediate stations, are in accordance with the nature of offensive war, and that when they are unavoidable, they are to be regarded as an evil which makes the result not more certain, but, on the contrary, more uncertain; and further, that, keeping strictly to the general truth, if from weakness or any cause we have been obliged to stop, a second attempt at the object we have in view is, as a rule, impossible; but if such a second attempt is possible, then the stoppage was unnecessary, and that when an object at the very beginning is beyond our strength, it will always remain so." (*On War*, Modern Library edition, page 590.)

But that is only half the story. The other half is most pertinent. Clausewitz mistrusted these all-out offensives profoundly because he had seen in life what happened to the army which attempted them *as they ought to be attempted*, and failed.

"There are strategic attacks which have led to an immediate peace, but such instances are very rare; the majority, on the contrary, lead only to a point at which the forces remaining are just sufficient to maintain a defensive and to wait for peace. Beyond this point comes the turn of the tide, the counter-stroke. The violence of such a counter-stroke is usually much greater than the force of the original blow" (page 513).

That is what we are seeing today on both the fronts where Hitler's great offensives failed. The tremendous effort he made mobilized greater efforts in his enemies. The mobility of contemporary war insured not only the violence but the speed of the counter-stroke.

The vast trumpeting about the impenetrability of Festung Europa were myths. The German army could not muster the strength to make the last serious offensive open to them, to push the United Nations into the sea somewhere. Today, 1944, Hitler and Goebbels actually try to make believe that they are going to use men from civilian life, barbers' assistants and movie operators, men who must have been rejected for military service a dozen times over, to help fill the gaps in the army and oppose the battle-tested Russian army and the millions of highly trained men whom Britain and America have not even yet put into the field. But for the vast tragedy involved, the gesture is not even comic opera, but *opéra bouffe*, burlesque. Dorothy Thompson writes that the Allied esti-

mate of German casualties all told is *nine million men!* It cannot be far from that. The present writer has not the slightest belief in any great defensive actions by the German army on the line of East Prussia or the West Wall or any other line or wall. Hard and bloody fighting there may very well be. But the theory of the defensive is even more rotten today for Germany than it was for France in 1940. *If the German army could carry out any protracted defense of Germany it could do so in only one way—by taking not a mere tactical but a strategic offensive as the sole means of an effective defensive.* Not only that. It would have done so long ago. Except in the retaking of Rostov in 1943 and for a brief moment at Salerno, it has shown, since Stalingrad, not the slightest capacity for doing this. Historical logic rolls with remorseless speed to a climax predestined at Stalingrad. And as it does so, it shapes the outlines of the future conflicts. We must look at those.

The War of the Future

It is a fundamental postulate of Marx that the increase of accumulation, i.e., the development of technology and science, is accompanied by the increased misery of the proletariat, not only in production but in society in general as well. Absolute as war seems to have become, the end is not yet. Napoleon aimed at the destruction and if possible the annihilation of the opposing armies. The limitations of this destruction were the economic limitations of his time—the horse was still the fastest means of transport. The Civil War in America showed that the steam engine, the railway, could bring large masses of men to the battlefield. But there it left them to fight on foot or on horseback. Despite the vast advances in artillery, the battlefields of 1914-17 were not as qualitatively different from the wars of the previous century as might have been expected. The decisive change came with the tank, the application of the Diesel engine *to the battlefield itself.* This the Germans developed and by means of the Diesel engine overwhelmed France and tried to overwhelm Britain. For Hitler, the failure over Britain proved another example of the catastrophic reprisals which await him who has tried an all-out offensive and failed. Britain and the United States began the preparation of an offensive in the air which aimed not only at the destruction of the existing Luftwaffe. This offensive aimed at preventing any future Luftwaffe from being built. Thus it sought to destroy the very sources of life of the enemy nation. Today one Anglo-American expedition can drop a weight of fire-power over Germany equal to all that Germany dropped over Britain in the entire air offensive of 1940. And as the tank appeared at the end of World War I, so the robot bomb has appeared in the last stages of World War II. This means that the strategic preparation of World War III must be based on the principle of an offensive aimed at the destruction or annihilation, no longer of armies, but of the whole economic and social life of the enemy country. It is difficult to see what place remains for any theory of the defensive.

One aspect of the defensive still remains, to destroy completely the defeated enemy and keep him destroyed. That is the fate reserved for Germany, even apart from the more basic question of economic rivalry. But Europe still remains the arena of competing imperialisms. De Seversky is confident that in a few years the powerful long distance plane, capable of going 25,000 miles will be perfectly feasible. Bourgeois nations, therefore, must become a congeries of armed camps, each of which, at the approach of war, concentrates on the

business of wrecking the opposing nation completely. For this, fantastic as it may seem, the military men will prepare. Hitler's whole career proves that. But the international proletariat will have its word before this consummation is

achieved. The theory of the offensive, which safeguarded the birth, is now herald of the death of contemporary society. In war as elsewhere the inevitability of socialism is written across the skies.

J. R. JOHNSON.

The Post-War Planners

"Peace Plans" and Historical Realities

As one surveys the voluminous and constantly developing literature dealing with post-war planning for "international security," durable peace, etc., one can not help but be impressed by certain qualities characterizing a great deal of what passes for economic, social, and political thinking. No one can doubt the honest desire on the part of many of these contributors toward the attainment of a peaceful world (what sane person, after all, ever prefers chaos to order?), but noble intentions or pious wishes have never been adequate substitutes for accurate information and reasoned judgment. Much of the literature is distinguished by the following characteristics: spurious "realism," distortions and rationalizations of history, fallacious argumentation, and vague utopianisms.

These intellectual derelictions are not limited to the plans of any particular political party, social class, or economic group; they are also present in the specific programs of social and political reorganization as developed, for example, by such individuals as Winston Churchill, Clarence Streit and the *Fortune* editors (Anglo-American hegemony); Walter Lippman (American-English-Russian "nuclear" alliance); Wendell Wilkie and Henry Wallace ("One-World" organization of senior and junior partners); Otto Mallery (Economic Union); Ely Culbertson (Regional Federation and International Police-Force); Norman Angell (Protective Internationalism); Cannally-Fullbright-Ball (collective security declarations and commitments); George Jaffin (Western Hemisphere Security); or Nicholas Spykman (The American "Manifest Destiny" idea).

This literature dealing with post-war planning is written by and addressed to those politically-minded Americans who are either "isolationists" or "internationalists."

Types of Isolationists

There are five types of isolationists at the present time. First, those who feel that we ought to exploit the potentialities of the home market before engaging again in imperialistic ventures abroad and to fulfill the "American Dream" by making this country an example to the rest of the world of economic, social and political democracy. The rationale behind such ideas is developed, among others, by LaFollette and the Wisconsin Progressives. The second group may be called "Hemisphere isolationists"; they see limitless economic and cultural possibilities in an organized and self-contained economy among the peoples of the Western hemisphere. Some of their plans envisage the inclusion of Canada within this orbit; others would limit the plans only to the Americas. The economic ideas of this group (Glenn Clark, Louis Corey, George Jaffin, William H. Chamberlin) are similar to those developed before the war by Peter Drucker, Neil Jacoby, and Stuart

Chase. The third group are the partial isolationists who, while agreeing in some respects with the first two groups, would engage in economic and political relations with the rest of the world, but would determine our international policies on the basis of specific conditions only, and would not, therefore, hazard our interests in blanket commitments. The most prominent representatives of this group are Charles Beard and his followers. The "American Century" group constitutes the fourth type of isolationists. At times it speaks in vague terms of Anglo-American cultural ties, but its actual programs, as advocated by the various Luce editors of *Fortune* and *Time*, are excellent examples of "benevolent" imperialism under the guise of "national interest." Their real policy of making America the dominant economic and political power after the war naturally attracts those commercial and financial interests eager to supplant British capital as a world power. The recent revelations of Anglo-American conflict in the rubber, oil, and tin markets, in the fields of aviation and merchant marine are indications of present and future economic struggles and apparent confirmation of this group's desire to make America the dominant power of the world. For theory of rampant, unabashed American imperialism the reader can best refer to the writing of Nicholas Spykman. The fifth is a conglomerate group, possessed of no reasoned economic or political philosophy. It includes the pre-Pearl Harbor isolationist congressmen generally associated with the America First Committee who are once more employing clichés like "national sovereignty," "no entangling alliances," and "inviolability of our Monroe Doctrine"; the chronic Anglo-and-Russophobes still disseminating old prejudices and suspicions; and the "Undercover" ideological saboteurs, trying desperately to effect an Allied rift so as to save their totalitarian associates abroad.

In the interventionist camp we have at least seven types. First, the economic and financial groups who speak in terms of the 19th century concepts of "free enterprise," "free markets," etc., and who recognize the necessity of making "certain" concessions to smaller nations and colonials so as to facilitate our business interests both at home and abroad. The ideological formulations of this group are summarized in the slogans, "the common man," "one world," the "people's war." Its spokesmen are Willkie, Lippman, Welles, and Wallace. The next group of self-appointed educators and moralists, book reviewers, columnists, and psychiatrists turned historians whose messianic "plans" for post-war Germany and Japan run the gamut from vindictive dismemberment and physical destruction to "corrective education" according to our standards. A third group of interventionists is found in the Communist Party with its ubiquitous committees, leagues, and "fellow-travelers" acting as perennial apologists for Russian internal and foreign policies. The four remaining groups

consist of propagandists for the different Allied nations, large and small; of public relations experts of former Axis partners who are making strenuous efforts to ingratiate themselves into American public opinion; of political refugees of lost portfolios and of various tendencies discredited by historical developments of the past twenty years who offer *their* plans of revived French and Weimar Republics, Baltic blocs, and Danubian federations in order to regain their own lost prestige; and finally of the great masses of people, sick and tired of economic insecurity and war, and whose deep desires are reflected in their support of what to them seem like panaceas; regional or federal associations, neo-leagues of nations, world federations, and forces of an international police.

The "Realists"

In the first place, the literature, speeches, and statements of all these groups of isolationists and interventionists are replete with warnings about the necessity of "realism," "hard-headedness," justifiable "force" and "practicality." The underlying assumption seems to be that having already tried idealism or reason, and having found these inadequate if not disastrous, we are now to attempt power-politics, tempered, of course, by democratic imperatives. This "realistic" mood which pervades the world today can be explained as a great wave of counter-reaction to the crisis history of the past twenty-five years: the disillusionment and cynicism since the last war as a result of the disappointing Versailles Treaty, the failure of the old balance-of-power politics, the European defaulting on American loans, the historical and literary works revealing the imperialistic background of the war, and the alleged culpability of our Allies in inveigling us into their struggles, the misinterpreted psychological schools of "instinctivism" and psychoanalysis with their emphasis on the irrational impulses of man, the failures of the League of Nations in stopping war, the debacles of the 2nd and 3rd Internationals, the Great Depression, the political developments within Russia, the totalitarian aggressions, the appeasements and capitulations of the democracies, the political ineffectualness of the Marxian tendencies, and the Second World War. These are the various forces which have generated a mood among all people today, expressing itself in such terms as, "We're not going to be played for suckers any more," or "This time it is going to be different." It is this reaction of "realism" which explains to a great extent the interest among many people in the Neo-Machiavellians, Mosca, Pareto, and Michels or in their popularizers, Burnham, Hook, and Nomad.

However, while no one can question the integrity of these grim determinations, there seems to be an accompanying stridency which only succeeds in revealing an underlying uncertainty and insecurity. If one examines the writings of the isolationists and interventionists carefully, one will find so many "if's," "should's," and "perhaps's" as to negate almost completely the projected social, political, and economic blueprints. This almost sub-conscious doubt and skepticism which haunts the contemporary mind in spite of (or which helps to explain) its preoccupation with global peace and security has been described with great power in the recent confessions of Arthur Koestler.

For further examples of this intellectual and moral confusion one has only to turn to some of our leading molders of public opinion, the newspaper and radio commentators, especially such liberal interventionists as Dorothy Thompson, Raymond Clapper, William Shirer, Samuel Grafton, and Edgar Mowrer. It is among them that one finds the anxious

but futile attempts to reconcile their democratic sentiments with the harsh realities of military exigencies, of inter-allied economic and political conflicts, and of governmental policies in connection with liberated territories. Edgar Mowrer, for example, (one could use the editorial comments of *The Nation* or the *New Republic* or *PM* as illustrative material) will write trenchant articles, one day critical of the ruthless power-politics of our Senate or State Department, of Churchill, Stalin, or Chiang Kai-shek, and of our opportunistic maneuvers with totalitarian groups in France or Italy; and on the following day he will demonstrate by some curious logic that if only the major powers could effect a global police force, we would be on the road to peace. Apparently, in politics unlike mathematics, the whole is not the sum of its parts.

To take one more example: the liberal publications mentioned above were obviously unaware of their ludicrous position when they continued to inform the President about the "Vichy-minded" members of the State Department or to advise him against sending Secretary Hull to Moscow, implying that President Roosevelt is either a political illiterate or that the State Department functions as some autonomous body unrelated to American class interests, to economic or political commitments, or to national security. As a matter of fact, there was so little evidence of the realism which these writers boast of, they actually believed before the Moscow Conference that the future of the whole world depended upon the mere presence or absence in Russia of one individual, Cordell Hull. We were only recently informed by Arthur Krock that the program of the Moscow Conference, which the liberals are still hailing, was not only drafted in Washington but that it was supervised by the Secretary himself.

The Democratic Community

In the second place, the position taken by many isolationists is weakened considerably by their misconception of the term "sovereignty" and by their rationalizations of history in order to substantiate their present political programs. Many isolationists subscribe to a monistic theory of sovereignty which justifies the absoluteness of the state in subordinating the will of all other organized groups within it (social, economic, religious, *etc.*). What they seem to be unaware of is that with the demise of feudalism, there occurred not only a shift of sovereign rights from divine monarchy to secular governments, *i. e.*, "legal" sovereignty, but that this legal sovereignty, in turn, was supposed to symbolize the administrative expression of actual or "political" sovereignty, the democratic community. It was this transference of political power which provided the "pluralistic" theorists of sovereignty (in contradistinction to the "monists") with historical justification for their attacks upon the absolute supremacy of the state. What is involved here is more than a discussion of juridical niceties, for once the political and moral validity of community sovereignty is accepted, it may be argued within the confines of bourgeois, academic theory that the community and its laws are precedent to the state itself which is subject to those laws as is any other institution of society.

With regard to the problem of international law and security, the community theory would mean that if the popular will should decide upon the inability of the state (for various reasons, military, geographic, *etc.*) to protect its citizens against foreign aggression, it has the democratic right to seek for international instrumentalities which can guarantee its

security. Under such theory, geographic sovereignty, constitutional limitations, Senatorial prerogatives, Executive powers, etc., (the subject-matter usually debated when this whole issue is under discussion) become purely secondary matters, since what has to be argued is the will of the community. It is not the virtues of either the monistic or the pluralistic theories which are being presented here for consideration (neither one, of course, ever comes to grips with the class nature of the State), but the apparent inability of the isolationists either to discuss the underlying principles of their doctrine or to draw the logical conclusions from it.

As for the isolationist's rationalizations or pure distortions of history, these concern themselves generally with "our traditional policies," the "sacred advice of the Founding Fathers" (Washington's Farewell Address), Jefferson's opinion on "alliances," and the "accurate" interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine. What is conveniently overlooked are the following: (1) the "Farewell Address" is historically and geographically limited by the conditions of "our detached and *distant* situation," but Washington could visualize such situations which might necessitate making "temporary alliances for *extraordinary occasions*" (italics mine). (2) Jefferson favored alliances that would strengthen the U. S., e. g. (a) his opinion on Anglo-American joint action against the threat to the Americas of the Holy Alliance; (b) his proposal to the European Powers with regard to action against the Barbary States; and (c) his deep concern lest Napoleon conquer England, an act which could not "be to our interest." (3) When the isolationists quote the Monroe Doctrine in their defense, no reference is ever made to President's first draft which shows a much deeper concern over European history than is revealed in the final document (Secretary of State John Quincy Adams being responsible for the alterations). But even here there is an interest in wars abroad which can "invade" and "menace" American rights. Moreover, Monroe places the developments of the Western Hemisphere in their proper perspective by showing how these are America's primary concern only because this country was "more immediately connected" with them. Surely no one can deny that today the United States is more immediately connected with an interdependent world than it was in 1823. (4) The whole defense of "our traditional policies" of isolationism breaks down further, in the face of such events as our War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Spanish-American, Phillipine and World Wars, not to mention our action in China and in the Pacific islands. Finally, it neglects to take into account not only the opinions concerning our relations with Europe of the leading political figures like Clay, Webster and others, but the intense interest taken by the American people during the 19th century in the European revolutionary and progressive movements and in the assistance rendered even by our government to political refugees.

The interventionists are also contributing their share of historical distortions in order to defend their present proposals. What is especially annoying, even though understandable, about such actions, is not only motivating factors like sheer ignorance, illogical thinking, or wilful deception in order to further specific interests but the implied priggishness and arrogance, the feeling of Allied moral and nationalistic superiority over the German and Japanese people (yesterday it included the Italians). There is a very definite attempt to rewrite both the histories of the Allied and Axis nations so as to create first an impression of our traditional nobility, our freedom from complicity in the rise of European and

Asiatic totalitarianism, and second, a feeling of their unregenerate wickedness.

Historical Distortions

Let us look more closely at the nature of these distortions: first, there is a complete disregard for factual material; second, there is the promulgation of partial truths; and third, there is the confusing of historiography with animistic thinking. Space permits only a few examples.

As to the first method of distorting: (1) Both Walter Lippmann and Norman Angell have given interpretations of Anglo-American relations during the 19th century, especially in connection with the Monroe Doctrine, which are not substantiated by history. These writers attempt to defend the position that American security and the inviolability of the Monroe Doctrine have been guaranteed by British sea power. We are given the impression that the U. S. and England have enjoyed the benefits of what some commentators are referring to as our "unwritten alliance for over a hundred years." Actually there were during this period Anglo-American conflicts over Oregon and California in Polk's administration, over Venezuela in Cleveland's administration, over British support of the Confederacy, and over their seizures of American cargoes during Wilson's term in office. As for the Monroe Doctrine, it was England which violated it by her occupation of Vera Cruz while we were engaged in the Civil War. (2) Norman Angell dismisses as mere "scapegoat" psychology the idea that it was the "armament makers, international bankers, and Wall Street," who are responsible for war. At no point does he present any historical data to refute the voluminous material at our disposal which substantiates the real existence of the above-mentioned "scape-goats." His statements, therefore, must be considered as mere assertions. What are his specific answers to such information regarding the role of the armament interests as one finds, for instance, in Seldes' *Iron, Blood and Profits*, Engelbrecht and Hanighen's *Merchants of Death*, the Nye Committee Reports, or Beard's *The Devil Theory of War*? As for the questions of the economic causes, American Loans, and British propaganda in this country during the last war (the last of which Angell denies), what of the writings by the "war guilt" historians, Fay, Barnes, Tansill; by Burtz on British propaganda, and what of the roles of Colonel House, McAdoo, and Lansing in connection with the "Wall Street" interests or of Woodrow Wilson's own statements concerning the background of the last war?

As an example of the second type of historical distortion, namely, the promulgation of partial truths: (1) Norman Angell says: "wars arise from conflicts of nationalism rather than of rival economic interests" (referring to the conditions preceding the present war). He omits to mention, of course, statements to the contrary contained in the debates on foreign policy in Parliament since 1936 and in articles by such British figures as Sir Herbert Samuel, Sir Samuel Hoare, Sir George Paish, George Lansbury, and others. Angell belongs to "the new school" of historians who attempt to stress the "complexity" of causal factors in the maladjustments of society, war in particular. These writers employ these two contradictory methods. On the one hand, in order to correct the oversimplified approach of attributing the cause of war to mere economic factors, they show the inadequacy of such analysis and at the same time create the impression of "complexity" by mechanically itemizing a number of causes such as nationalism, insecurity, imperialism, high tariffs, frustra-

tion, etc. It is impossible to take such "factors" pot-pourri seriously, since at no point is there an attempt made to determine primary and secondary factors, to establish correlations, or to analyze casual relationships. On the other hand, these historians will abstract out of context some single factor like "high tariffs" or "nationalism" and invest it with "primary" or "basic" importance in contributing to war.

Instead of recognizing that they are dealing with multiple interacting conditions all constituting the culture pattern of our capitalist society, the historians present us with isolated factors. It is not the whole organically integrated pattern which is challenged, but *this* monopoly, *that* cartel or *those* tariff regulations.

(2) Angell maintains that England fought Germany during the last war, as well as the present one, merely to prevent German domination and not because of any "inner compulsion" of her capitalist economy; furthermore, England does not "own" her empire, but she only "governs" (*Let the People Know* and "Shall We Writers Fail Again?," *Saturday Review of Literature*, March 20, 1943). And Dorothy Thompson informs us that "the British Empire was expanded more by the attraction of its generally benevolent power to protect than created by brute force. Her balance-of-power gave most of the world the highest measure of peace since Roman days" ("The Only Road to Peace," *American Mercury*, Dec. 1943.)

Partial Truths About Imperialism

Such examples of partial truths as these omit to tell us that (a) "outer compulsions" or British defenses against German aggressions were only the end products of historical developments beginning in the 16th century. British defense of her empire in 1939 was a struggle to hold on to what had been accumulated by conquest, ruthless exploitation, and monopolistic imperialism (i. e., "inner compulsions" of capitalism); (b) the British Empire did "protect," of course, but only that which it owned and controlled. Whenever it did not use its own "force," it paid large subsidies to other powers to do the fighting. It was her tremendous wealth which enabled her subsidized governments and mercenaries to bring "peace." But one should always ask, "peace for whom and on what basis?" or "protection" of whose interests and directed against what offenders? (c) the British Empire cannot be viewed from a purely legalistic angle of "owning" or "governing" but it must be looked at from the standpoint of a global business enterprise with all that this entails, senior and junior partners (the British Isles and the Dominions), exploited laborers (the colonies, etc.). Angell, furthermore, does not take into consideration one of the most significant developments of our times, the relationship between ownership and control, which has been dealt with so fully by many economists and sociologists.

(3) As to our own history: The interventionists have been presenting us lately with rather slick versions of our refusal to enter the League of Nations. Woodrow Wilson has emerged as the purest of idealists who was frustrated in his plans for a peaceful world by his political opponents, the villains being the U. S. Senators, especially Mr. Lodge. That the Senate, as well as Mr. Lodge, fought our entry into the League is a fact. That many of the reasons adduced at the time in behalf of isolation were foolish and even fantastic, no one can deny. But a complete picture of the struggle between President Wilson and his opponents would have to include these additional facts: (a) his tactless statements a few weeks before the Armistice about the Republican leaders in Con-

gress, his concessions to Lloyd George and Clemenceau, and his ignoring of Republican leaders in appointing the American commissioners to Europe in spite of his own friends' advice to the contrary; (b) the Republican victories in the congressional elections of November, 1918, and the public repudiation of the League despite Wilson's personal appeal throughout the country, all of which ought to correct the present impression that he was defeated by a few vindictive or short-sighted senators alone; (c) the general post-war apathy of the American people who were eager to resume their peace-time existence; (d) the experiences of our soldiers whose disillusioning contacts with the English and French made them realize that we were not wanted in Europe after the war and that we were constantly being accused of wanting to dominate the affairs of the old world; (e) the opinions of many Americans that the provisions of the Versailles Treaty were unjust and that not only had we no moral right to underwrite them but that in making ourselves permanent partners in a League which guaranteed the hegemony of England and France, we were paving the way for future wars and (f) the feeling of many influential groups that the interests of American capitalism in Europe could be best served by economic and not "legal" intervention.

In their eagerness to convince American public opinion of the virtues of "intervention," many writers and speakers (Willkie, Welles, and others) are creating the impression that had the U. S. not followed its policy of "isolation," it could have helped avert the present war. Such complete oversimplification of American foreign policy does not begin to tell the whole story. (The American people have taken the deepest interest in the plight of the European and Asiatic masses, sending them at various times during the past twenty years or so, great quantities of food, clothing, and medical supplies. Nothing is ever mentioned of democratic American opinion and activity in behalf of the Axis victims, Ethiopia, China, and Spain.) Moreover the oversimplified picture of the interventionists ignores the tremendous American investments and interests all over the world, not to mention such government-supported ventures as the Dawes and the Young Plans; and from a purely political-military angle it fails to take into account the Washington Treaties of 1922 concerning the Far East the Washington and London Conferences, the Kellogg Pact, etc., in connection with armament reductions, and our active participations at the various conferences of the League of Nations. It should also be noted that it was not merely our absence from the League which gave the Axis powers a free hand in aggression. They could have been stopped very easily in the early Thirties by England, France and Russia, had these powers "chosen" to do so.

Rewriting Russian History

The most fully-developed attempt on the part of writers, columnists and commentators to rewrite history is seen in connection with Russia. People like Harry E. Barnes, Raymond Swing, Dorothy Thompson, Bernard Pares, Harold Laski, Max Lerner, Barton Parry, and others have contributed to a type of historical distortion which in its own modest way can be compared almost to the brash "Stalin School of Falsification." Some of the more glaring examples concern themselves with proving that (a) Russia has always honored its treaties, (b) the Russian and American Revolutions are comparable phenomena, in that each developed into "strong nationalisms" and that the re-christened Ivan the Fourth has become a folk hero similar to our own George Washington

or Abraham Lincoln, (c) the GPU is merely a police force like the FBI. (d) the Russian masses enjoy absolute religious freedom and economic democracy, (e) Russia has always championed the rights of oppressed peoples, especially the victims of fascism, (f) Russia's territorial claims upon Poland have both an ethnic and historical justification, and (g) the present Allied coalition is a vindication of Russia's earlier proposal for collective security which could have prevented war, *etc., etc.*

The third kind of historical falsification that is practiced by isolationist and interventionist alike is the substitution of animistic thinking for historiography, the kind of primitive pre-logical thinking which is rooted in awe, in panic, in general ignorance before an incomprehensible problem. The despotism of the Nazis and the paralyzing assault of the Axis took their toll not only of their immediate victims but of otherwise sane "thinkers" thousands of miles away. It was a comparatively easy matter during peace to observe that modern wars are the result of a decadent society; economic injustices, social insecurity, political strife; and that such conditions in turn give rise to scapegoat psychologies and rampant nationalisms feeding upon mass frustrations and humiliations, *etc.*

But when war and its attendant hysteria breaks upon us, our "historians" forget their previous analyses and revert to primitivism. Whole nations and races are accused of being afflicted with evil spirits; wars are now caused by "bad men," by demoniac forces plotting, as in the case of Germany, conspiracies which go back a "thousand years." The Germans suffer from a "superman" complex, from masochistic compulsions, from "paranoic" and "schizoid" tendencies. All the Japanese (or "Sneakanese") are "savages," "subhuman," and "monkeymen." Before the Italians became "co-belligerents" they were "cowards," *etc.*

Sometimes this animism manifests itself in the more dignified or "scholarly" form of single-factor causation. If only the Japanese, for instance, had not been subjected for centuries to periodic earthquakes which have created such emotional instability among them; if only Western rationalism had penetrated Germany; if only Hegel, Treitschke or Nietzsche had never lived, if only Prussia had never been part of the German Empire, *etc.* Even Dorothy Thompson recently deplored (and with some justification) that whenever she presents some elementary facts about German history she feels like a "minority of one." Drs. Brickner, Alexander, and others can have no such complaints. It is field day for such German, Italian and Japanese "experts" as Reynolds, Weller, Stout, Eliot, Matthews, Brown, and Vansittart, but not for the more sober judgments of those whose analyses, superficial as they are from a Marxian viewpoint, succeed in showing at least that there is "another" Germany, Japan or Italy besides that of the pathological stereotype. I am referring to such people as Chamberlain, Howard, J. Braunthal, Salvemini, Ambassador Grew, and others.

These animistic attempts to explain the behavior of whole nations or races in terms of isolated psychological tendencies are a variation of that pseudo-science which "analyzes" individual behavior in the same manner. The method is not new; only the terms are different. During the 18th and 19th centuries such concepts as the "rational," the "economic" man were accepted as valid psychology. These in turn were replaced by "instinctive" man, and at the present time we have the "irrational" man of which the paranoia and masochism referred to above are specific types. The new school of "pow-

er" psychology (the Neo-Machiavellians) mentioned in connection with the prevalent attempt on the part of the "peace-planners" to be "realistic," is part of the pre-logical thinking which we are discussing.

False Analogies

In the third place, illogical argumentation, another characteristic of the general political literature under consideration, is clearly indicated in the many discussions centering around the panacea of an international police force to prevent war. False analogies and superficial generalizations can be found in the following examples, (1) the complex culture of modern society is compared with that of an early frontier town where vigilantes were organized to deal with marauders, assuming that nations are comparable with victimized individuals, (2) the gradual unification of the original colonies into a united nation is used as an historical precedent for the present proposals of nations to unite into an international body for global protection. This analogy is predicated on the erroneous idea that all present international economic, political, social, and racial conditions are similar to those which existed nationally within our borders during the 18th and 19th centuries. It also overlooks the fact that our complete unification was effected only after four years of civil war, and it fails to indicate the type of economy which is to accompany present political unification, since not only our own unification but all movements of European unification and centralization during the 19th century were the political expressions of capitalistic superseding feudalism or agrarian economies, (3) the function of an international police is compared to that of our local police in dealing with municipal outbreaks. Aside from the fact that the actions of local police do not involve the active participation of all able-bodied people in the community, or that police do not rampantly destroy property or bring death to masses of innocent people in order to catch some culprit, or that a police force implies a completely disarmed populace, there is a still greater flaw in the argument. Police power derives from law which, (according to the political theories of the interventionists themselves) the majority of the community have directly or indirectly formulated and subscribed to. Similarly, therefore, an international police could have justifiable validity only if it were no more than a military expression of international law which the majority of mankind had democratically formulated and agreed upon to support, an international law which, moreover, could not be precedent to the conditions underlying the peace but which would have to be the logical consequence of those specific conditions. Furthermore, to be consistent in their political theory, the interventionists would have to accept another principle of their democratic procedure, *i.e.*, the equality before the law of all offenders regardless of their economic, social or political power. First things must come first. Do present relationships among nations exist which make the above principles sound feasible within the immediate future? The advocates of international police have only to ask these questions in order to have them answered.

In the fourth place, let us consider the general utopianism which characterizes contemporary political thought. Let us assume that the combined military power of the major nations has already effected an international police force. What kind of peace reigns globally now? Have the more subtle forms of aggression and control, such as economic penetration, subsidized governments and political movements, mandates, colonies, protectorates, *etc.*, ceased to exist? Is there a genuine

movement toward demobilization and disarmament in order to vest supreme military power in the international police? What will the police do in case of national civil wars, democratic revolutions, colonial movements for independence, racial and religious persecution? What of economic peace? Have national and colonial exploitation, monopoly, and cartels been abolished?

Are the conditions, in other words, under which we live a sounder basis for a peaceful world just because they have been frozen into a militarized status quo? If the world has learned anything at all from the experience with totalitarianism, it is that peace can be bought very dearly; there is also the peace of stagnation and death. People will not continue to obey laws which are unjust; neither will they be coerced by international police into accepting them. No status quo can endure; it can only generate hostility, rebellion and war, since the powerful nations will not permit its alteration in terms of modified territories, relinquished markets, spheres of influence, etc., and the less powerful will not be content to submit to this superimposed injustice.

The "international planners" seem to overlook one factor: disturbing events do not occur "globally"; they arise nationally out of internal economic, social and political conflicts, and unless such conflicts are dealt with first, any discussion of "global peace" is sheer nonsense. It is not to be wondered at that some historically-minded people are disturbed, not only by what to them are many startling similarities between contemporary triple and quadruple alliances or Allied conference-agreements on the one hand, and the Holy Alliance at the Congress of Vienna on the other, but by the possibility of similar subsequent wars and revolutions.

Economic Utopianisms

Contemporary utopianism is never seen to better advantage than when one looks at some of its economic proposals. While the international police planners reveal an over-zealous preoccupation with form (military and structural technicalities) to the neglect of social and political content, the economic planners are rich in slogans and blueprints but meager in the instrumentalities which are to bring the "brave new world" into being. It is important to take especial note of the economic as distinct from the political theorists because many of the former recognize the untenability of mere political or military techniques to ensure peace without first providing sound economic foundations.

When one examines these economic blueprints, however, one realizes that their authors are not living in the twentieth century at all; they have escaped not only to the realities of the eighteenth or nineteenth century but to a world which they imagine existed at that time. A detailed examination of some of the economic plans would take us beyond the limits of this article, but their fundamental utopianism can be seen, for instance, in some of their key slogans or topical headings: restoration of "free markets," "free access" to raw materials, abolition of tariff restrictions, revival of "free enterprise," etc. Aside from the fact that such terminology indicates a sincere but ill-informed desire to return to a world that was never really "free" in the sense visualized (since eighteenth and nineteenth century development and world expansion implied "freedom" for imperialistic conquests, colonial exploitation, wars of empire, etc., and not the free exchange among equals), it also indicates an attempt to reverse the processes of history.

Moreover, these utopian schemes reveal a complete indifference to class and political forces at work in the world today,

as well as a misunderstanding of the economic system under which we are living. Instead of viewing capitalism as a complex interrelated system of which monopoly, competition, foreign markets, protective tariffs, etc., are integral parts, one planner will concentrate upon "stable price levels," another upon "international banking and credits," or still another upon the reforms of "economic centralization." If only there were some new monetary mechanism or revised import restrictions to rectify the disastrous results of "recurrent economic crises" or of wartime "dislocations," they say. If only, in other words, we could have stable capitalist economics without capitalism.

To use but one instance, take the plan that we do away with the evils of economic nationalism (protective tariffs, quota restrictions, etc.). In their concentration upon only one disturbing aspect of the economic nexus and assuming that the major difficulty lies there, such plans fail to realize all the other revolutionary reforms which would be necessary in order to effect a change in the desired direction. Not only would there arise the necessity for tremendous reshifts and displacements, both of national and international capital, of industrial populations, of productive centers, but along with them the necessity for the absolute curbing of monopoly and international cartels, and for great reshuffling of political power, assuming, of course, that there would be some body or group which could enforce all these changes.

Think of the powerful economic and financial interests involved in these shiftings who would fight to the limit any attempts made to affect their present status. The militancy and rapacity of these groups in the past have been graphically described by such writers as Woolf (*Empire and Commerce in Africa*), Brailsford (*War of Steel and Gold*), L. Barnes (*Skeleton of Empire*), Howard (*America's Role in Asia*), and others. If after reading this material, the planners still think that the psychology of those groups has changed today, they can study further the realities of global economic conflicts contained not only in the radical press but even in such English publications as *The Economist*, *Nineteenth Century and After*, *The Tribune*, *New Statesman*, *Contemporary Review*, etc., as well as in the speeches of Winston Churchill, Jan Smuts, Rear Admiral Vickery, Senator Brewster, and in the "indignant" columnists, F. C. Hanighen, D. Bell and H. L. Barnes. One must surely be living in an imaginary world to speak of abolishing trade barriers when the Senate rejects by a vote of seventy-one to sixteen the Danaher amendment (to the Connally resolution) which would place the Senate on record as favoring the granting of all nations access on equal terms to the trade and raw materials of the world. (Incidentally, while only six senators voted against the Connally resolution, those isolationists who voted for it explained that its language was so vague as to mean nothing at all.)

Self-Condemned Planners

To conclude: throughout this discussion the approach has not been that of pure Marxian counter-critique and program, essential as these are. Before that is attempted, it was thought necessary to do some ground-clearing. That is why we have chosen as our primary purpose here to permit the "planners" to condemn themselves by merely presenting their dubious factual data, by raising for consideration certain unclarified issues implied in their proposals, and by drawing important conclusions from their ill-defined premises. In the first place, the distortions concerning definite phases of allied history are deliberate attempts to provide a rationale for continued mili-

tary collaboration and for varying patterns of post-war "isolationism" and "interventionism." As far as the vindictive and self-righteous interpretations of Axis history are concerned, they not only stem from a profound ignorance of social, economic and political causation, but in many cases from a desire to conceal past Allied complicity in contributing to European and Asiatic totalitarianism. In the second place,

the political and economic proposals for international security are so illogically argued and so inadequately implemented with factual material as to be devoid of any historical validity. Politically they represent mere rationalizations for a perpetuated status quo. Economically they offer only nebulous slogans and a nostalgic escapism.

DOUGLAS ELLIS.

Karl Marx on Herr Vogt

Timely Excerpts from a Classic

Marx's *Herr Vogt*, almost entirely unknown in the English-speaking world, is nevertheless one of the most brilliant of his writings. Engels considered it better than the *Eighteenth Brumaire*; Lassalle spoke of it as "a masterpiece in every respect"; Ryazanov thought that "in all literature there is no equal to this book"; Mehring rightly wrote of its "being highly instructive even today." Karl Vogt was a renowned revolutionary democrat who fled from Germany to Switzerland in 1849. He was also a famous scholar, "known as one of the chief exponents of naturo-historical materialism." In Geneva he was the center of the German democrats, among whom he enjoyed great esteem. Napoleon the Little won him to his side and the scholar began devoting himself actively to literary support of the French Emperor and his European adventures, ostensibly in the cause of German democracy and unification. Encouraged by a Prussian court victory against Wilhelm Liebknecht, who accused him in an Augsburg paper of receiving money from Napoleon, Vogt published a special pamphlet filled with the most venomous attacks on Marx as "the head of a gang of expropriators and counterfeiters who stopped at nothing." Marx finally decided to reply. The result was

not only annihilating for Vogt, who was politically destroyed, but constituted the most illuminating and erudite criticism of European politics of the time, particularly of the politics of Napoleon and his Czarist ally. One of the most remarkable features of the polemic was Marx's relentless deduction, purely from Vogt's writings, that he was a Napoleonic agent. After the Emperor's fall in 1870, the republican government of Thiers published documents from the archives of the imperial government which included a receipt signed by Vogt for 40,000 francs from the secret fund of Napoleon! In spite of some of the obscure historical and personal references, the reader will find the chapter we reprint here of absorbing interest for its revelation of Marx's treatment of the Little Bonaparte's foreign policy and the foreign policy of the Russian autocracy. Points of comparison with contemporary politics will not escape the attentive reader. The section printed here appears for the first time in English, to our knowledge, and is translated from the edition published in Leipzig in 1927 by the Rudolf Liebig house as a photographic reprint of the almost completely unavailable original which appeared in London in 1860.—Ed.

VIII. "Da Da" Vogt and His Studies

"SINE STUDIO"

About one month before the outbreak of the Italian war there appeared Vogt's so-called *Studien zur gegenwartigen Lage Europas* [Studies of the Present situation in Europe], Geneva, 1859. *Cui bono?*

Vogt knew that "England will remain neutral in the impending war." (*Studien*, page 5.) He knew that Russia, "in agreement with France, will make every effort, short of open hostilities, to injure Austria." (*Studien*, page 133.) He knew that Prussia—but let us have him say himself what he knows about Prussia: "It must now have become clear even to the most short-sighted that there exists an understanding between Prussia's government and the imperial government of France; that Prussia will not draw the sword in defense of the non-German provinces of Austria, that it will give its approval to all measures relating to the defense of the domain of the Bund, but will otherwise prevent any participation of the Bund or of any of the Bund's members on Austria's side, in order to receive, at the subsequent peace negotiations, its compensation for THESE efforts in the North German lowlands." (*L.c.*, page 19.)

Why Does Vogt Write for Bonaparte?

So that, *Facit*: In Bonaparte's impending crusade against Austria, England will remain neutral, Russia will be hostile to Austria, Prussia will keep the somewhat pugnacious Bund members in check, and the war will be localized in Europe.

As was formerly the case in the Russian war, Louis Bonaparte will now conduct the Italian war with high magisterial permission, so to speak, as the General-in-Secret of a European coalition. Why then Vogt's pamphlet? Since Vogt knows that England, Russia and Prussia are acting against Austria, what compels him to write for Bonaparte? But it appears that besides the old Francophobia with "the now senile Father Arndt and the phantom of the Stinkpot Jahn at its head" (page 121, *l.c.*), a sort of national movement shook up "the German people," and found its echo in "chambers and newspapers" of all kinds, "while the governments enter the prevailing stream only hesitantly and with reluctance" (page 121, *l.c.*). It appears that the "belief in a threatening danger" caused a "cry for joint measures" (*l.c.*) to ring out from the German "people." The French *Moniteur* (see, among others, its issue of March 15, 1859) looked upon this German movement with "distress and astonishment."

"A sort of crusade against France," it exclaims, "is being preached in the chambers and the press of some of the states of the German Bund. It is charged with entertaining inordinately ambitious plans which it has disavowed, preparing conquests which it does not require," and so forth. As against these "calumnies," the *Moniteur* shows that "the Emperor's" intervention in the Italian question must "contrariwise inspire the German spirit with the greatest assurance," that German unity and nationality are, so to speak, the hobby-horse of Decembrist France, and so forth. The *Moniteur* acknowledges, however (see April 10, 1859), that certain German apprehensions may have been "provoked" by certain Parisian

pamphlets—pamphlets in which Louis Bonaparte urgently entreats himself to give his people the “long yearned-for opportunity” “*pour s'étendre majestueusement des Alpes au Rhin*” (to extend majestically from the Alps to the Rhine). “But,” says the *Moniteur*, “Germany forgets that France stands under the shield of a body of legislation that permits no preventive control on the part of the government.” These and similar declarations of the *Moniteur* evoked, as was reported to the Earl of Malmesbury (see the *Blue Book: On the Affairs of Italy*. January to March, 1859) exactly the opposite effects from those intended. What the *Moniteur* could not accomplish could perhaps be accomplished by Karl Vogt. His *Studien* are nothing but a Germanized *compilation* from *Moniteur* articles, Dentu pamphlets and Decembrist maps of the future.

* * *

Vogt's tub-thumping about England has only one purpose—to make the manner of his *Studien* obvious. Following his original French sources, he transforms the English admiral, Sir Charles Napier, into a “Lord” Napier (*Studien*, page 4). The literary Zouaves attached to Decembrisdom know from the Porte St. Martin Theater that every eminent Englishman is a Lord at the very least.

“With Austria,” relates Vogt, “England has never been able to remain in harmony for long. If *momentary* community of interests brought them together *for a short time*, they were always parted again *immediately* by political necessity. With Prussia, on the other hand, England entered ever and again into closer contact” (page 2, *l.c.*)

England, Austria and France

Indeed! The joint struggle of England and Austria against Louis XIV lasted with slight interruptions from 1689 to 1713, that is, almost a quarter of a century. In the Austrian Wars of the Succession England fought for about six years with Austria against Prussia and France. It is only in the Seven Years' War that England allied herself with Prussia against Austria and France, but as early as 1760 Lord Bute left Friedrich the Great in the lurch in order alternately to make proposals for the “partition of Prussia” to the Russian Minister Gallitzin and the Austrian Minister Kaunitz. In 1790, England concluded a pact with Prussia against Russia and Austria which, however, melted away again the same year. During the anti-Jacobin war, Prussia, despite Pitt's subsidies, withdrew from the European coalition through the pact of Basle. Austria, on the contrary, egged on by England, continued to fight with France (February 9, 1815, against Russia and Prussia. In 1821, Metternich and Castlereagh arranged a new agreement against Russia at Hanover. While, therefore, the British themselves, slight interruptions from 1793 to 1809. Hardly was Napoleon eliminated, in the very midst of the Congress of Vienna, than England promptly concluded a secret pact with Austria and history writers and parliamentary speakers, speak of Austria preëminently as the “ancient ally” of England, Vogt discovers, in his original French pamphlet appearing at Dentu's, that apart from “momentary community,” Austria and England always parted, whereas England and Prussia always banded together, which is presumably why Lord Lyndhurst, during the Russian war, called out in the House of Lords, with reference to Prussia: “*Quem tu, Romane, caveto!*” Protestant England has antipathies against Catholic Austria, liberal England antipathies against protective-tariff Austria, solvent England antipathies against bankrupt Austria. But the pathetic element has always remained alien to English history. Lord Pal-

merston, during the thirty years of his government of England, did indeed occasionally gloss over his vassalage to Russia with his antipathy against Austria. Out of “antipathy” against Austria, he refused, for example, England's mediation in Italy, offered by Austria and approved by Piedmont and France, according to which Austria withdrew to the Adige line and Verona, Lombardy would, if she wished, annex herself to Piedmont, Parma and Modena would fall to Lombardy, Venice, however, constituting herself an independent Italian state under an Austrian Archduke and adopting a constitution of her own. (See, *Blue Book on the Affairs of Italy*. Part II, July, 1849, No. 377,478.) These conditions were, in any case, more favorable than those of the Peace of Villafranca. After Radetzky had beaten the Italians at all points, Palmerston proposed the very conditions he had rejected. As soon as Russia's interests required a reversed procedure, during the *Hungarian War of Independence*, he refused, on the contrary, despite his “antipathy” against Austria, the assistance to which Hungary, relying upon the Treaty of 1711, invited him, and even rejected any protest against Russian intervention, because “the political independence and liberties of Europe are bound up with the maintenance and integrity of Austria as a European Great Power.” (Session of the House of Commons, July 21, 1849.)

The “Interests of the United Kingdom”

Vogt relates further:

“The interests of the United Kingdom . . . are *everywhere hostile to them*” [the interests of Austria]. (Page 2, *l.c.*)

This “everywhere” is immediately transformed into the Mediterranean.

“England wishes to maintain at any cost her influence in the Mediterranean and its coastal lands. Naples and Sicily, Malta and the Ionian Islands, Syria and Egypt, are fulcrums of her policy directed toward *East India*; *all along* these points Austria has placed the *most vigorous* obstacles against her.” (*L.c.*)

What doesn't Vogt believe in that Decembrist original pamphlet published by Dentu in Paris! The English imagined up to now that they fought alternately with Russians and Frenchmen for Malta and the Ionian Islands, but never with Austria. France, not Austria, once sent an expedition to Egypt and is establishing herself at this moment on the Isthmus of Suez; France, not Austria, made conquests on the north coast of Africa and, united with Spain, sought to tear Gibraltar from the British; England concluded the July, 1840, treaty with reference to Egypt and Syria, against France, but with Austria; in “*the policy directed toward East India*” England collides everywhere with “the most vigorous obstacles” from the side of Russia, not Austria; in the only serious question of dispute between England and Naples—the sulphur question of 1840—it was a *French* and not an Austrian company whose monopoly of the Sicilian sulphur trade served as the excuse for friction; finally, there is indeed talk occasionally on the other side of the Channel about the transforming of the Mediterranean into a “*lac francais*,” but never about its transformation into a “*lac autrichien*.” However, an important circumstance should be examined here.

During the year 1858, there appeared in London a map of Europe entitled: “L'Europe en 1860.” This map, which was published by the French Embassy and contains many predictions that were prophetic for 1858, Lombardy-Venice, for example, annexed to Piedmont, and Morocco to Spain—redraws the political geography of all of Europe with the single excep-

tion of France, which apparently sticks within her old borders. The territories intended for her are given away with sly irony to impossible possessors. Thus, *Egypt* falls to *Austria*, and the marginal note imprinted on the map reads: "*François Joseph I, l'Empereur d'Autriche et d'Égypte.*"

Vogt had the map of "L'Europe en 1860" lying before him as a Decembrist compass. Hence his conflict of England with *Austria* over *Egypt* and *Syria*. Vogt prophesies that this conflict would "find its end in the destruction of one of the contending Powers," if, as he remembers just in time, "if *Austria possessed a naval power*" (page 2, *l.c.*) The pinnacle of the historical erudition peculiar to them is reached by the *Studien*, however, in the following passage:

"When Napoleon I once sought to blow up the *English Bank*, it saved itself, for the period of one day, by counting out the sums and not weighing them, as was the custom up to then; the Austrian State Treasury finds itself in the same, aye, in a far worse position, 365 days in the year." (*L.c.*, page 43.)

The cash payments of the Bank of England ("the *English Bank*" is another of Vogt's phantoms) remained suspended, as is commonly known, from February, 1797, to the year 1821, during which twenty-four years the English banknotes were not exchangeable in metal at all, weighed or counted. When the suspension began, there did not yet exist a Napoleon I in France (although there was a General Bonaparte who was conducting his first Italian campaign) and when the cash payments were resumed in Threadneedle Street, Napoleon I had ceased to exist in Europe. Such "studies" beat even *La Guerrière's* conquest of Tyrol through the "Kaiser" of Austria.

Frau von Krudener, the mother of the Holy Alliance, distinguished between the principle of good, the "white angel of the North" (Alexander I), and the principle of evil, the "black angel of the South" (Napoleon I). Vogt, the adoptive father of the new Holy Alliance, transforms both, Czar and Ceasar, Alexander II and Napoleon III, into "white angels." Both are the predestined emancipators of Europe.

Piedmont, says Vogt, "has even won the respect of Russia" (page 11, *l.c.*)

What more can be said of a state than that it has even won the respect of Russia? Particularly after Piedmont ceded the war port of Villafranca to Russia, and as the same Vogt recalls with regard to the purchase of the Bay of Jahde by Prussia: "a war port on foreign territory without organic links with the country to which it belongs, is such ridiculous nonsense that its existence can acquire significance only if it is regarded, so to speak, as the goal of future aspirations, as the hoisted pennant toward which the line of direction is aimed" (*Studien*, page 15). Catherine II, as is known, already sought to acquire war ports for Russia in the Mediterranean.

Tender deference toward the "white angel" of the North induces Vogt to offend with extravagant clumsiness the "modesty of nature," in so far as it is still to be noticed in his original sources from Dentu. In *La Vraie Question, France-Italie-Autriche*, Paris, 1859 (at Dentu's), he read, page 20:

"What right, moreover, would the Austrian government have to invoke the inviolability of the Treaties of 1815, a government which violated these Treaties through the confiscation of Cracow, whose independence the Treaties guaranteed?"*

*"De quel droit d'ailleurs, le gouvernement autrichien viendrait-il invoquer l'inviolabilité de ceux (traités) de 1815, lui qui les a violés en confisquant Cracovie, donc ces traités garantirèrent l'indépendance?"

This French original of his he Germanizes as follows:

"It is strange to hear such a language from the mouth of the only government that has up to now impudently broken the Treaties, by extending its wanton hand, in the midst of the peace, without cause, against the Republic of Cracow guaranteed by the Treaties, and incorporating it without further ado into the imperial state" (page 58, *l.c.*).

Nicholas of course destroyed the Constitution and the independence of the Kingdom of Poland, guaranteed by the Treaties of 1815, out of "respect" for the Treaties of 1815. Russia was no less respectful of the integrity of Cracow when it occupied the free city in 1831 with Muscovite troops. In 1836, Cracow was once again occupied by Russians, Austrians and Prussians, was treated entirely as a conquered land, and as late as 1840 appealed in vain to England and France by invoking the Treaties of 1815. Finally, on February 22, 1846, Russians, Austrians and Prussians occupied Cracow all over again in order to annex it to Austria. The breach of the Treaty was made by the three northern powers and the Austrian confiscation of 1846 was only the final word of the Russian invasion of 1831. Out of delicacy toward the "white angel of the North," Vogt forgets the confiscation of Poland and falsifies the history of the confiscation of Cracow.*

The fact that Russia "is thoroughly hostile to Austria and sympathetic to France," leaves no doubt in Vogt's mind as to the people-emancipating tendencies of Louis Bonaparte, any more than the fact that "his [Louis Bonaparte's] policy today goes hand-in-glove with that of Russia" (page 30), allows him the slightest doubt about the people-emancipating tendencies of Alexander II.

"Friends of Emancipation"

Holy Russia must therefore be regarded just as much the "friend of the emancipatory aspirations" and the "popular and national development" in the East as Decembrist France in the West. This slogan was distributed among all the agents of the Second of December. "Russia," read Vogt in *La Foi des Traités, les Puissances Signataires et l'Empereur Napoléon III*. Paris, 1859, published by Dentu—"Russia belongs to the Slavic family, an élite race. . . Surprise has been occasioned by the chivalrous accord suddenly arrived at between France and Russia. Nothing is more natural: concordance of principles, uniformity of goal. . . submission to the law of the holy alliance of governments and of peoples, not to trap and to constrain, but to guide and assist the divine machine of nations. From the most perfect cordiality [between Louis Philippe and England only an entente cordiale prevailed, but between Louis Bonaparte and Russia prevails la cordialité la plus parfaite] have risen the happiest results: railroads, emancipation of the serfs, trading stations in the Mediterranean, etc."**

Vogt promptly snaps up the "emancipation of the serfs" and suggests that "the impulsion now given . . . ought to make

*Palmerston, who kidded Europe through his ludicrous protest, collaborated tirelessly in the intrigue against Cracow since 1831. (See my pamphlet: *Palmerston and Poland*, London, 1853.)

**"La Russie est de la famille des Slaves, race d'élite. . . On s'est étonné de l'accord chevaleresque survenue soudainement entre la France et la Russie. Rien de plus naturel: accord des principes, unanimité du but. . . soumission à la loi d'alliance sainte des gouvernements et des peuples, non pour leurrer et contraindre, mais pour guider et aider la machine divine des nations. De la cordialité la plus parfaite sont sorties les plus heureux effets: chemins de fer, affranchissement des serfs, stations commerciales dans la Méditerranée, etc." Page 33, *La Foi des Traités*, etc., Paris, 1859.

Russia a comrade of the aspirations of freedom rather than a foe." (L.c., page 10.)

Like his Dentuan original, he traces the impulsion to the so-called Russian emancipation of the serfs back to Louis Bonaparte and toward this end he transforms the English-Turkish-French-Russian War which gave the impulsion into a "French War" (page 10, l.c.)

As is known, the cry for the emancipation of the serfs first rang out loud and perseveringly under Alexander I. Czar Nicholas occupied himself throughout his life with the emancipation of the serfs, created a Ministry of Domains for this purpose in 1838, had the Ministry take preparatory steps in 1843, and in 1847 even enacted laws friendly to the peasants on the alienation of lands of the nobility, which he was driven to withdraw in 1848 only by the fear of the revolution. If therefore the question of the emancipation of the serfs assumed vaster dimensions under the "benevolent Czar," as Vogt good-naturedly calls Alexander II, this seems to be due to a development of economic conditions which even a Czar cannot repress. What is more, the emancipation of the serfs would increase a hundred-fold the aggressive power of Russia in the sense of the Russian government. It aimed simply at the perfection of the autocracy by tearing down the barriers which the great autocrat encountered up to then in the person of the many little autocrats of the Russian nobility who were based upon serfdom, as well as in the self-governing peasant communes, whose material foundation, communal ownership, is to be destroyed by the so-called emancipation.

Czarism and Serfdom

It so happens that the Russian serfs understand the emancipation is a different sense than the government, and the Russian nobility understands it in still another sense. The "benevolent Czar" therefore discovered that a genuine emancipation of the serfs is incompatible with his autocracy, just as the benevolent Pope Pius IX once discovered that the Italian emancipation is incompatible with the conditions of existence of the Papacy. The "benevolent Czar" therefore perceived in the war of conquest and in the carrying out of the traditional foreign policy of Russia which, as the Russian historian Karamzin notes, is "immutable," the only means of postponing the revolution at home. Prince Dolgorukov, in his work, *La Vérité sur la Russie*, 1860, critically annihilated the fabrications about the millenium inaugurated under Alexander II, fabrications assiduously disseminated all over Europe since 1856 by paid Russian pens, loudly proclaimed by the Decembrists of 1859, and parroted by Vogt in his *Studien*.

Already before the outbreak of the Italian War, the Alliance between the "white Czar" and the "Man of December," founded exclusively for the purpose of liberating the nationalities, stood the test, according to Vogt, in the Danubian Principalities, where the unity and independence of the Rumanian nationality was sealed by the selection of Colonel Couza as Prince of Moldavia and Wallachia. "Austria protested with hands and feet, *France and Russia applauded*" (page 65, l.c.)

In a memorandum (reprinted in *Preussisches Wochenblatt*, 1855) drawn up for the present Czar by the Russian cabinet in 1837, we read: "Russia does not like to incorporate immediately states with foreign elements. . . . At any rate it seems more fitting to allow countries whose acquisition has been decided, to exist for a certain time under separate, but entirely dependent sovereigns, as we did in the case of Moldavia and Wallachia, etc." Before Russia annexed the Crimea,

she proclaimed its independence.

In a Russian proclamation of December 11, 1814, it says among other things, "the Emperor Alexander, your Lord Protector, appeals to you, Poland. Arm yourselves for the defense of your fatherland and for the maintenance of your political independence."

And now these very Danubian Principalities! Since Peter the Great's march into the Danubian Principalities, Russia has worked for their "independence." At the Congress of Nymirov (1737) the Empress Anna demanded of the Sultan the independence of the Danubian Principalities under a Russian protectorate. Catherine II, at the Congress of Fokshani (1772), insisted on the independence of the Principalities under a *Auropean protectorate*. Alexander I continued these efforts and sealed them by transforming Bessarabia into a Russian province (Peace of Bucharest, 1812). Nicholas blessed the Rumanians, through Kisseleff himself, with the still operative *Règlement Organize*, which organized the most infamous serfdom to the acclamation of all Europe over this code of liberty. Alexander II only brought the century-and-a-half policy of his forbears a step further through the quasi-unification of the Danubian Principalities under Couza. Vogt discovers that as a result of this unification under a single Russian vassal, the "Principalities will be a dam against Russia's penetration to the South" (page 64, l.c.)

Inasmuch as Russia applauded the selection of Couza (page 65, l.c.), it becomes as clear as day that the benevolent Czar is himself blocking "the road to the South" with might and main, although "Constantinople remains a permanent aim of Russian policy." (L.c., page 91.)

KARL MARX.

(To be concluded)

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THE WORKERS PARTY

114 West 14th Street, New York, N. Y.

Tasks of the Present Period

The Decisive Role of the Party

What invests the present stage of bourgeois society with revolutionary class perspectives? The extreme nature of the world capitalist crisis. In a direct way, rather than a solely historical one, the present imperialist war is a continuation of the last war. It marked the second attempt within twenty-five years on the part of German imperialism, with a fascist political régime, to overthrow the imperialist relationship on the world market, to bring about a new redivision of the earth (this relates not merely to the colonial world, but to large areas economically and politically contiguous to and integrated with western capitalist civilization). Naturally, this effort on the part of German imperialism led to a collision with those imperialist nations which had already brought about an early division of the world and had only increased their holdings following the defeat of Germany in 1918.

The resort to war by one power to achieve, in the realm of economics, a "more equitable" or predominating share of the world's riches in the form of land, labor power, markets and raw materials, is not only a reflection of uneven and unequal capitalist development but, in the present case, even more than in the First World War, demonstrates the inability of world capitalism to survive on the basis of equality of nations. On the contrary, the most compelling fact in this war is that contraction of the market makes it impossible for any group of nations to share "equitably" the riches of the earth based on capitalist exploitation.

In the absence of a decisive social change from capitalism to socialism there remains only one major perspective for modern imperialist-capitalism: the triumph of one power over the rest of the world and the consequent exploitation of the rest of the world by that single power. The exploitation of the rest of the world by such a single power can, in turn, take place only on the basis of a tremendous lowering of the shares of opponent nations, accompanied by a declining standard of living in the whole world with the possible exception of the single victorious capitalist power.

With the war drawing to a close in Europe and all the dreams of a new German world empire shattered by the colossal arms of the Allies, there is also revealed that the struggle between the Allies and the Axis was merely one manifestation of the inter-imperialist conflicts which exist between all the powers, between England and the United States as the most important example. Even before the war has reached a conclusion on the European front there is expressed, in many ways, the extremely sharp economic and political contest taking place between the latter countries.

It will not be possible for the United States to share its new world power "equally"; it must dominate the world alone, distributing minor shares to its allies. For America itself faces a doubtful post-war future unless it achieves complete world hegemony. Expansion of industry in the midst of a declining world market merely emphasizes the need for American finance capital to gather within its embrace the important economic areas of the world and to share others with competing powers, the latter on ever-diminishing rations. A victory for the United States, it has become quite clear, means a

reduction of the "riches" of the overwhelming majority of her allies; it means economic devastation of Germany and Japan.

Prospects of Intense Class Struggles

The consequences of such a situation, given the continued existence of capitalism, will be reflected in heightened class activity in Europe, the most important laboratory of the class struggle. Europe never recovered from the First World War. Stagnation was apparent in all countries. Deep crisis was followed by relative stabilization (the result of the absence of a victorious revolution in the West), but even this partial stabilization took place on a lower economic plane. The overwhelming majority of the European people lived on a lowered standard of living. Mass unemployment became a permanent feature of economic life; poverty was widespread.

As a result of the present war, the Continent will be an even more devastated area: millions of dead, more millions crippled, a starved population, a new generation growing up on a starvation diet. But above all, the war will find the Continent without a single important all-embracing economic problem, of acute importance to the continued life of the masses, capable of radical solution on the basis of capitalist class relations, private property and production for profit. Mass unemployment on an even larger scale than in the last post-war is more than likely, with any prospect of its solution made a hundred times more difficult precisely because of the narrowing character of bourgeois economy, the impossibility for each of the industrial countries on the Continent to experience a period of industrial expansion, the destruction of the industrial might of Germany, a key to European industrial prosperity, and the chaotic condition, in general, of European economy.

The needs of the masses will be all the greater, just because the capitalist order will find it more than ever before difficult to solve even small problems. For example, the early months of a post-war period in Europe may find the masses acutely concerned with the problems of national independence and simple democratic rights. But even the achievement of quasi-independence and bourgeois democracy, which is necessary and important for the masses, for their class development, will not satisfy a hungry and unemployed Continent. The masses will know how to equate the two and the objective conditions of a declining capitalism. A European capitalism exploited by Washington will drive the masses to seek a radical solution of its impossible economic and political existence.

Whatever the nature of the military victory in Europe, it is easy to see that the post-war period in Europe will *approximate* the 1918-19-20 post-war period of the First World War. We can say with certainty then that the post-war period will see no end of revolutionary situations and revolutionary upheavals in which the masses will seek in their own way and by their own methods to resolve the capitalist crisis. We will undoubtedly witness many efforts on the part of the European proletariat to take power, on a national or provincial basis. There will undoubtedly be many examples of a dual power: the reestablishment of the bourgeois democratic régimes in

some occupied countries and the concomitant rise of workers' committees, factory committees, on a broad scale, embracing large areas of given countries and millions of workers and peasants. All of this merely attests to the revolutionary character of the epoch in which we live. For the revolutionary Marxist, however, the acceptance of this objective development in Europe is not enough, for the objective developments in bourgeois society is only half the question, and not, under the circumstances, the most important half.

More important than the specific conjecture is the state of the proletarian movement, its organization, its program, its *strategy* and *tactics*. In the last analysis, this is the decisive factor. The objective situation may be ever so revolutionary, but so long as the subjective factor, the organization of the proletariat as a class, and not merely economically organized, but the organization of the socialist vanguard and a mass revolutionary socialist movement which has the support of the majority of the proletariat and the whole population, is absent, it is not possible to talk about an impending struggle for socialism, let alone its victory. In my article, "Europe and the Revolutionary Party" (The NEW INTERNATIONAL, July, 1944), I tried to indicate what the problem was in general. I propose now to specify what the Leninist position on this question is and why there is no other solution to the problem than the one previously indicated.

Previous Post-War Period

The post-war period of the Second World War, while it will objectively approximate that of the First World War, presents an entirely different picture from the point of view of the class organization of the European proletariat. During the last war and in the post-war period, the grave problem of the Marxist movement was *primarily* the crisis of leadership in the Second International and in the left-wing groups. The task of winning the majority of the people to socialism was always present, but this task existed coincident with an enormous world socialist movement and mass national parties in the important European countries.

The degeneration of the Second International resulted in the development and growth of revolutionary Marxist groups, splits and parties throughout Europe. *This meant that there was a continuity in the theory and practice of genuine Marxism.* These groups, under the leadership of Lenin, in maintaining the great traditions of the movement, and most important of all, maintaining in every conceivable way the struggle, made possible the instantaneous mobilization of the revolutionary cadres and the revolutionary proletariat into the ranks of the Third International. Moreover, the Russian Revolution was an immense factor for the reorganization of the revolutionary movement. Consequently, the post-war period of 1919-20, irrespective of the fact that the proletariat in many important countries experienced defeat in their efforts to take power, witnessed a genuinely organized and purposeful struggle. The aforementioned defeats resulted, not from the existence of revolutionary parties and organizations, but from their weaknesses, from inexperience, from a lack of sufficient forces and from a failure to win the support of the majority of the people, an essential factor for victory.

Once the immediate post-war offensive of the working class ended, the tasks of the vanguard forces changed. The revolutionary international recognized after the defeats the need for a new policy, succinctly described as "winning the masses." *Here again the change was conscious, adopted by an organized movement to serve a certain end.* The whole revo-

lutionary history of the Communist International is concentrated in those years and we shall refer to them elsewhere in this discussion.

How the Present Differs

The post-war period of the Second World War in Europe will unfold against the background of a destroyed workers' movement. Almost twenty years of Stalinism and more than ten years of Hitler have decapitated European labor. The existence of social democracy and Stalinism as organized factors is not something to be cheered. On the contrary, they are militating factors in the struggle to reconstitute the revolutionary movement in Europe. Both are linked to the bourgeoisie; both are active forces in defense of capitalism against the proletariat. There is yet no counteracting force on the Continent of sufficient strength, power or with the necessary foresight to understand what is now the main task in Europe.

There is no revolutionary party in any country in Europe, no substantial Marxist vanguard. This means that there is no force present which can educate the new layers of revolutionists which will undoubtedly arise. This means, too, that the task of clarification and reorganization is made more difficult, especially when it is understood what a welter of lies and miseducation has to be overcome. Even in the ranks of the Fourth Internationalist movement there is great confusion. The Cannonite Socialist Workers Party, for example, gives no consideration whatever to this, the most important question for Europe. It regards the revolutionary process and the struggle for power as something automatic and that is why its analysis of the European situation is so meaningless. It can apply to any period, twenty years ago, today, or twenty years hence. There is no sign whatever in its resolution on the European situation that it understands in the slightest what has happened to the European labor and revolutionary movement. Where there is a glimmer of the problem, it is stated in an offhand manner, as if it were of no importance. And this is of little wonder, for any organization which can regard Stalin's Red Army as an army of liberation, of socialist liberation at that, can hardly be expected to understand what the tasks in Europe are.

This attitude fortifies the new support given to concepts of spontaneity. The degeneration of the Second and Third Internationals, the weakness of the revolutionary groups, the crying need for a class solution to the capitalist crisis, all tend to strengthen the adherents of the theory of spontaneity in all its variety. Does this mean that the adherents of spontaneity are fully conscious that they espouse such a concept? Not necessarily. They may not even use the word. But the thought is there. They look upon Europe and say: capitalism is bankrupt; there is no solution to the capitalist crisis. Ergo, socialism will replace capitalism. The socialist revolution is the next stage of development in Europe. This is purely syllogistic reasoning. The basis for this attitude lies in an almost mystical certainty of the conscious *socialist* struggle for power on the part of an unorganized and leaderless working class.

Others understand that the post-war period in Europe will be accompanied by widespread class struggle, accompanied even by attempts to take power, and discuss the difficulties and prospects of that struggle. They speak of the "gestation of the European Revolution." In a general sense acknowledgment is made of the fact that *the party* will be necessary for a successful conclusion of that struggle. But even here, where recognition of the problem is present, it is not with a full conviction of what implications are involved.

Back to Lenin

I quote again from Lenin's attack on the Economists. If the quotation does not wholly apply to the present-day believers in spontaneity, it does in part. Moreover, it poses the whole question, in its proper light, of the relationship of the party to the struggle as a whole:

Others, far removed from "gradualness," began to say: it is possible and necessary to "bring about a political revolution," but this is no reason whatever for building a strong organization of revolutionaries to train the proletariat in the steadfast and stubborn struggle. All we need do is to snatch up our old friend, the "handy" wooden club. Speaking without metaphor it means—we must organize a general strike, or we must stimulate the "spiritless" progress of the labor movement by means of "excitatory terror." Both these tendencies, the opportunist and the "revolutionary," bow to the prevailing primitiveness; neither believes that it can be eliminated; neither understands our primary and most imperative practical task, namely, to establish an organization of revolutionaries capable of maintaining the energy, the stability and continuity of the political struggle.

This is for the old days! Let us agree that the struggles of the European working class today will not be merely economic struggles, but also political. Here again the political struggles that are inevitable in Europe are not automatically socialist struggles.

The state of decay of bourgeois society is so deep today, that the slightest economic struggle immediately becomes a political struggle; sharp economic struggles become political struggles of the greatest magnitude. But that is not enough. Again, it is necessary to give these intense political struggles a socialist character. This is what Lenin tried to teach the movement when he wrote:

The demand "to give the economic struggle itself a political character" most strikingly expresses subservience to spontaneity in the sphere of political activity. Very often the economic struggle spontaneously assumes a political character, that is to say, without the injection of the "revolutionary bacilli of the intelligentsia," without the intervention of the class-conscious Social-Democrats. For example, the economic struggle of the British workers assumed a political character without the intervention of the Socialists. The tasks of the Social-Democrats, however, are not exhausted by political agitation in the economic field; their task is to convert trade union politics into the Social-Democratic political struggle, to utilize the flashes of political consciousness which gleam in the minds of the workers during their economic struggles for the purpose of raising them to the level of Social-Democratic political consciousness.

I said in my first article that bourgeois production relations organize the proletariat. This tendency, however, is contradicted first by the anarchy of production and the general anarchy of bourgeois society, and secondly by the severe dislocation of present-day declining capitalism. The only way the proletariat can offset such disintegrating tendencies is by organization. In his *One Step Forward, Two Back*, Lenin wrote:

The proletariat has no other weapon in the fight for power except organization. Disorganized by the domination of anarchic competition in the capitalist world, oppressed by forced labor for the capitalists, constantly forced "to the depths" of utter poverty, ignorance and degeneracy, the proletariat can become and inevitably will become an indomitable force only because its intellectual unity created by the principles of Marxism is fortified by the material unity of organization which welds millions of toilers into an army of the working class.

In all this discussion I have tried to show that spontaneity of the masses is a fact, to one degree or another. But it is the kind of fact which produces certain demands of the revolutionary party. Lenin did not deny the existence of spontaneity. What he tried to teach the movement was that spon-

taneity of itself could accomplish little; certainly it could not be the means of taking power. He pointed out, however, that "the spontaneity of the masses demands a mass consciousness from us Social-Democrats. The greater the spontaneous uprising of the masses, the more widespread the movement becomes, so much more rapidly grows the demand for greater consciousness in the theoretical, political and organizational work of the social democracy."

There is the whole relationship of spontaneity to the existing revolutionary party. The big danger in Europe today is that there will be many spontaneous movements of the workers, rebellions and putschist attempts. But they will all be vanquished in the absence of strong revolutionary parties with correct theory, practice, strategy and tactics. Does this mean that the existence of a revolutionary party is a guarantee against defeat? No, but absence of the revolutionary party is a guarantee of certain defeat. With a party it is possible to win. What has to be overcome in Europe is the enormous gap between the inevitably rising revolutionary spirit of the masses and the absence of revolutionary Marxist organization.

The Meaning of "Democratic Interlude"

Let us approach the question from a somewhat different angle. The resolution of the Workers Party on the National Question in Europe described the probable situation after a defeat of Germany in the following way:

This first period after the overthrow of German rule will undoubtedly be the period of "democratic illusions" to one extent or another, in one form or another. This is the clear lesson of the first 1917 revolution in Russia, the revolution in Germany of 1918, the Spanish Revolution of 1931. The power will, so to speak, lie in the streets. The masses will instinctively incline to take hold of it in its own name. Its difficulties will lie in the fact that it is just emerging from a period of non-organization, or only the most fragmentary organization. Organization is precisely what it needs for seizure and holding of power. The reformist and Stalinist organizations will of course not lead the proletariat to class power. In other words, some interval will undoubtedly elapse before a revolutionary party is properly organized and reaches the leadership of the organized proletariat.

What, exactly, does this mean? If it is true that the coming post-war period will witness enormous class battles, if the working class cannot hope to achieve a victory over the bourgeoisie without its organized party, and if it is impossible to build a party under the conditions of bourgeois dictatorship, as has been so abundantly demonstrated in the past twenty-five years, then the prospect of a "democratic interlude" in Europe should not only be recognized on the basis of the specific bourgeois relationship of forces, but ought to be planned for by the revolutionary Marxists, as favorable ground for the reestablishment of the revolutionary party and the revolutionary international.

There is another aspect of this question of democracy which is equally as important as the fact that a "democratic interlude" will offer the opportunity for rebuilding the revolutionary movement. The chaos of bourgeois society has reached such a depth that democracy has become a luxury for it. The deep economic crisis, the political instability of the ruling classes, the permanence of the world social crisis secures the dictatorial and totalitarian tendencies of capitalism and makes the struggle for democracy an integral struggle for socialism. It is a vehicle by which the present small vanguard forces can build a mass movement. While the struggle for democracy in no way violates socialist principles and the struggle for socialism, it does clash with the most important interests of the bourgeoisie. The lesson in Italy is already clear. The Amer-

ican, British and Italian ruling classes and, of course, the Stalinists are doing everything in their power to prevent the establishment of genuinely democratic conditions in the country for fear of the consequent reestablishment of the workers' organizations for the free workers' struggle. Conversely, the main force in the struggle for democracy in Italy is the working class, but this struggle cannot take place without the sharpest collisions with the bourgeoisie.

The Need for a "Class Superstructure"

The problem there is how to link this struggle for democracy with the struggle for socialism. The link is the revolutionary organization and, consequently, the great weakness in Italy is the absence of proletarian organization. The weakness stands out because:

... the class struggle of the proletariat demands a concentrated propaganda, throwing light on the various stages of the fight, giving a single point of view, and directing the attention of the proletariat at each given moment to the definite tasks to be accomplished by the whole class. (Second Congress resolution of the CI on "The Role of the Party.")

Often in referring to the principles and experiences of the old Comintern we lose sight of the fact that its decisions and practices were based upon a given evaluation of bourgeois society and the prior or coincident existence of an organization in Europe, Asia and America, with a definite body of experiences. The old generation of Marxists knew that without a party there was no prospect of a victory of the working class; without a party there was no possibility of winning the masses. To win the masses meant the opportunity for a party to function in the day-to-day activities of the class, to provide leadership, to maintain closest relations with the masses, in order to prove by experience that it deserves the support of the working class. There is no other way to achieve the emancipation of humanity from capitalism.

It is, therefore, the height of sectarianism to discuss the prospects of a victorious struggle for power anywhere and everywhere in the absence of a single Marxist party in the world. It is just as if one would say: the smaller the revolutionary organization, the better the prospects for socialism; or, the total absence of revolutionary parties and class organizations guarantees the victory of socialism. To cite the fact that soviets, or workers' councils, arise spontaneously, is beside the point, because history has shown that soviets may be reactionary, i.e., under the influence and control of the bourgeoisie or their representatives. This was the lesson of the Russian Revolution and explains why the Bolshevik Party did not raise the slogan "All power to the soviets" until it was certain of a revolutionary majority. Thus soviets may and have existed without a party, but without a party their potential revolutionary and democratic force is limited or completely blocked. When the German Communist Labor Party (ultra leftists) proposed that, since the soviets were the historical form of proletarian rule, the party should dissolve itself into them, the Comintern rejected the proposal as "reactionary." It was reactionary because it sought the liquidation of the only force in bourgeois society that can bring about the preconditions for the development of the social order of socialism.

Bridging a Gap

In *The Third International After Lenin*, Trotsky concerned himself with this very question, because before the complete degeneration of Stalinism had taken place, he had

already observed impending the chaos in the developing crisis of leadership. Thus, he wrote:

If contradiction, in general, is the most important mainspring of progress, then the clear understanding of the contradiction between a general revolutionary maturity of the objective situation (despite ebbs and flows) and the immaturity of the international party of the proletariat ought now to constitute the mainspring for the forward movement of the Comintern, at least of its European section. (Page 86.)

There are several points of interest here. First, the main essential question is posed. Secondly, it reveals that even with the existence of a world organization, the problem still existed of winning the conditions necessary for victory, i.e., the mere existence of the international parties did not automatically solve anything. What, in the main, was that problem? Trotsky continues:

When we looked forward at that time [the first post-war period—A. G.] to an immediate seizure of power by the proletariat, we reckoned that a revolutionary party would mature rapidly in the fire of civil war. But the two terms did not coincide. The revolutionary wave of the post-war period ebbed before the communist parties grew up and reached maturity in the struggle with the social democracy [then having the majority support of the masses—A. G.] so as to assume the leadership of the insurrection. . . .

But it turned out that the determination of the leadership and the dissatisfaction of the masses do not suffice for victory. There must obtain a number of other conditions, above all, a close bond between the leadership and the masses and the confidence of the latter in the leadership. This condition was lacking at that time. (Pages 87f. Emphasis mine.—A. G.)

It becomes clear then why the Third Congress of the Comintern concerned itself, not with theory and principles, which had already been determined at the Second Congress, but with the questions of strategy and tactics. Had there been no Comintern, no revolutionary parties, it would have been impossible for such discussions to take place and yet have any concrete significance. The Third Congress therefore was really a gathering which dealt with the problems of building the International, working out the strategical and tactical line of the parties and preparing for the march "to power through a previous conquest of the masses." Lenin said at the congress that "the struggle for the masses is the struggle for power." There you have succinctly stated the correct relationship of the whole question which is so neglected, or completely forgotten, today.

Winning the Majority of the Class

To grasp even more thoroughly the meaning of the Third Congress, there is the dispute between Lenin and the ultra-leftists over the whole character of the struggle. In order to strengthen bolshevik concepts, the resolution of the Third Congress emphasized the need to win "the majority." It stated:

The Third Congress of the Communist International is proceeding to re-examine the questions of tactics under the circumstances that in a number of countries the situation has become acute in a revolutionary sense and that a number of Communist mass parties have been organized, none of which, however, have actually acquired the leadership of the majority of the working class in its genuinely revolutionary struggle.

Lenin led a most vigorous struggle against ultra-leftist and putschist concepts of the struggle for power, especially against the Italian representatives of this tendency! He said then, in 1921, not 1944:

And they want to delete the words "of the majority." If we cannot agree about such simple things I fail to understand how we can work together and lead the proletariat to victory. That being so, it is not surprising that we cannot come to an agreement on the question of principles. Show me a party which is already leading the masses of the working class. It did not even occur to Terracini to quote an example. . . . He who fails to understand that in Europe . . .

where nearly all the proletarians are organized—we must win over the majority of the working class—is lost to the Communist movement. If such a person has not yet learned this in the course of three years of a great revolution, he will never learn anything.

In the above is revealed the true Lenin, the revolutionist who could not think without having the masses in mind, who could not begin to conceive of a revolution without a party, and such a party without winning the majority of the masses. The whole early Comintern was of the same mind.

The Comintern, under the slogan, "To the Masses," and toward the "conquest of the majority," devised the tactic of the *united front* and adopted a series of *transitional demands* which could bridge the gap between the revolutionary party and the broad masses of the proletariat, peasantry and the middle class poor. It rejected Bucharin's mechanical concepts of the permanent revolution, his "mechanical understanding of the permanence of the revolutionary process."

Without the Party There Is Nothing

In recapitulation we see the following situation in the capitalist world, i.e., the subjective situation. No revolutionary International, no revolutionary parties. At best there are revolutionary groupings. There are a body of principles and theories which guide these groupings. But there is as yet no adopted strategy or tactics applicable to concrete circumstances of the class struggle in the many countries of Europe, where the situation is most acute and where the prospects of a revo-

lutionary resurgence may first occur. The absence of organization precludes the conditions which prevailed in the early years of the Comintern, the kind of decisions adopted by them. The main principles remain: build the revolutionary parties, win the majority of the working class and its allies. Without these there can be no serious discussion of a revolutionary victory.

Under the specific conditions of bourgeois society in the present period, the struggle for democracy is indispensable to the struggle for socialism, especially since the struggle for democracy is a struggle against present-day capitalist society and the decay which engenders indigenous tendencies of totalitarianism, becoming stronger the longer the social order exists. The working class needs a "democratic interlude" in order to recreate the socialist vanguard, to develop the struggle, and to guarantee a measure of success.

A whole new layer of revolutionaries is growing up. This new layer needs to be educated in the fundamentals of Marxism and in the principles of Lenin's and Trotsky's Comintern. And this requires a persistent and consistent struggle against any attempt to reintroduce into the movement those concepts which can only doom the working class to continued defeats and sterility. If such concepts gain credence and strength, the immediate future of the working class will indeed be black and dismal.

ALBERT GATES.

An Epigone of Trotsky

Ignorance as a Substitute for Marxism

Leon Trotsky's name will be forever linked with the Russian Revolution, not of course as a *Russian* revolution but as the beginning of the international socialist revolution *in* Russia. He fought for this revolution with pen and sword, from his study and from his armored train in the Red Army. Between the start of his fight, under Czarism, and its end, under Stalinism, there is a continuous line, the line flowing from Trotsky's great contribution to Marxism, the theory of the permanent revolution.

Except for the first period of the Bolshevik revolution, when the theory was not—and could not be!—attacked, it might be said that all of Trotsky's literary-political activity revolved around the elaboration of his theory, and its defense from critics. Which critics? The guide in choosing the objects of his polemics was not always their prominence or importance, the extent of the front along which they attacked Trotsky's views, the weightiness of their criticism. Wherever Trotsky was given an opportunity to elucidate his views, to expand upon them from a new angle, to fortify them in a new way, he seized upon it. The critic did not need to be Stalin or Radek. Even if he was so obscure, and his criticism so trivial or absurd, that the mere mention of his name by Trotsky sufficed to save him from oblivion, Trotsky did not for that reason disdain to deal with him. Ample evidence of this is to be found throughout Trotsky's writings. The evidence relates not only to polemics about his theory of the permanent revolution but more generally to any of the important views he held.

Similarly with those who were his students and his followers in every country. One example is The NEW INTERNATIONAL, which, month in and month out, from its first issue onward, emulated Trotsky by its systematic defense of the principles and program of Marxism against all critics, honest or mendacious, big or small, partial or total. It is, after all, only by this method that the Marxian movement can maintain theoretical alertness, preserve its preëminence over all other currents in the working class, and imbue its followers with informed confidence, in contrast to the blind faith, nurtured ignorance or confusion, and slick demagoguery that hold together other movements.

What is said above applies not only to debate of Marxists with non- or anti-Marxists, but to discussions within the Marxian movement itself. There we have too often heard that a discussion is a "luxury." It is as much a luxury to the movement as the circulation of the blood is a luxury to the human body.

Trotsky's Challenge to the Opposition

In the 1939-40 discussion in the Socialist Workers Party, Trotsky repeatedly challenged the then opposition (now the Workers Party) to debate first and foremost the question of the class character of the Soviet Union, he taking, as is well known, the standpoint that Russia is a degenerated workers' state. It goes without saying that he did not for a moment consider it a "closed question" precluding all discussion, although it is no less true that on this question his own position

was firm and aggressive. For reasons that were then, and often since, advanced, the opposition did not wish to debate on this ground.

If the writer may speak personally for a moment: I not only did not wish to debate the view that Russia was still a workers' state, but I could not if I would. Like so many other members of the opposition (and not a few of the majority!), I had developed some doubts (as an otherwise dull commentator correctly observed) on the correctness of our traditional position, without being able to say to myself, and therefore to others, that this position was fundamentally false and that an alternative position had to replace it. Inasmuch as only a dilettante, but not a serious politician, can be "skeptical toward all theories," or engage in a dispute on the basis of "doubts," let alone make them a polemical platform, it was manifestly impossible for me, and not me alone, to take up Trotsky's challenge.

Doubts are a bridge you cannot stand on for long. Either you go back to the old views or move on to new ones. Along with several other comrades who sought to probe the question seriously, thoroughly and in an unclouded atmosphere, I helped work out, in 1940-41, a critique of Trotsky's theory of Russia as a degenerated workers' state. We arrived at an analysis and conclusions of our own, summed up in the phrase "bureaucratic collectivism," a new class, exploitive state in Russia which is neither bourgeois nor proletarian but is basically different from any other class régime preceding or contemporary with it.

We proceeded to set forth our views in dozens of articles in our press. Stalin's assassin deprived Trotsky of the opportunity, which he would undoubtedly have taken, to subject these views to criticism. But the "official" Trotskyist press, *The Militant* and the *Fourth International*? For three years it maintained complete silence. It did not, you see, deign to reply, unless a reply means repeating that we are "petty bourgeois," "counter-revolutionists," "enemies of the Soviet Union," "renegades from Marxism," "common thieves" and the like—"arguments" which had failed to convince us when they originally appeared in the *Daily Worker*.

Yet not only we, but all those interested in Trotsky's views, especially those who supported them, had a right to expect an objective reply to our point of view from the SWP spokesmen. Our theory is the first serious attempt to present a rounded analysis of the Stalinist state from the Marxian standpoint, which, while basing itself in many respects on the invaluable contributions of Trotsky, is at the same time a criticism of Trotsky's conclusion. Our theory, furthermore, is a unique contribution to the question and not a rehash of old, refuted and discredited doctrines. We do not contend that it cannot be successfully disputed, only that it has not been. The SWP did not even make an attempt to do so.

"The New Course" Appears

When we finally published the first English edition of Trotsky's classic, written in 1923, *The New Course*, and added to it, as is our custom, an essay by the editor, it explained to the new reader the historical circumstances of the work, its significance in the light of subsequent events, plus a critical reexamination of Trotsky's later theory of the "workers' state." We felt that the SWP would now have to reply. Some of us thought it would assign a responsible, theoretically and politically equipped spokesman, to review the book as it deserves to be reviewed. Others thought that at most it would assign the job to some unschooled lad equipped with an advanced

case of psittacosis and a penchant for abuse. Obviously, some of us were wrong. Under the characteristically restrained title, "A Defamer of Marxism," a review of the book appeared at last in the May, 1944, issue of the *Fourth International*, over the signature of Harry Frankel. This is, as we shall see, the literal equivalent of saying: Since the soup is too hot to handle, we might as well spit in it.

Frankel wastes only a few indifferent words on the section of the book written by Trotsky. He concedes, it is true, that *The New Course* is "beef," whereas "Shachtman's essay is the antipode: it is tripe." But he leaves the impression in the few sentences he devotes to *The New Course* that it is merely an initial, immature and dated effort by Trotsky. This is in the order of things.

Trotsky's *The New Course* is even more timely today than when it was first written. It is one of his most durable works. It is a classic socialist statement on workers' democracy. It is perhaps the clearest exposition ever written of what democracy means in a centralized, revolutionary proletarian party. It is, of course, a specific analysis of the problem of a specific party, after it has taken power, in a specific country and under specific conditions. This does not detract from its general applicability. That Trotsky says there about party democracy, about a free and vibrant internal life, about the rôle of tradition and the need of constantly enriching it, about critical and independent party thought, about Leninism, about discussions and how they should be conducted, about loyalty in discussion and in leadership, about the relations between leaders and ranks, between "young" and "old," about bureaucratism and conservatism, about factions and groupings, and a dozen other vital problems of any revolutionary party—amounts to an annihilating criticism of the inner-party régime of the SWP today, of its leaders and their methods. Frankel's silence on all this, his generally deprecatory remarks, are in the order of things. Had he spoken commendatorily and at length about the ideas Trotsky puts forward in *The New Course*, he could only have brought a wry smile to the lips of every thinking member of the SWP.

Perhaps we do him an injustice. Perhaps he is so eager to work on the tripe that he has no time for the beef. The tripe he divides into five important parts. He deals with the parentage of our theory; the question of its significance in the "whole of Trotskyism"; the question of the roots of class rule; the question of the historical place of the Stalin bureaucracy; the question of the analogy between Russia and a trade union. If we pursue him through his often dreary and never bright abuse, it is because the task, though thankless, is not without profit.

The Question of "Parentage"

Frankel writes:

Today, Burnham writes from the standpoint of an avowed enemy of Marxism, while Shachtman espouses the former position of Burnham, who in turn borrowed it from Bruno. Today, Shachtman even adduces as his main "proof" of the existence of a new class the argument adduced originally by Bruno, namely, Stalin's purges and frame-up trials of 1936-38. A modest disciple never falls gratefully to acknowledge his teacher. Shachtman ungraciously ignores his true preceptors: Burnham and Bruno.

And elsewhere:

Burnham's theory of "bureaucratic collectivism" (borrowed from Bruno) is now coolly offered as an "indispensable correction" to Trotskyism.

About Burnham, our readers know something, and so, presumably, does Frankel. But who is this sinister Bruno? All

we know of him is that just before the war he wrote a big book in France on the "bureaucratization of the world." This book we never read. Neither did Frankel. The *only* thing he knows about Bruno, about whose views he speaks with such impressive familiarity, is the reference to it made by Trotsky in 1939 in a few sentences. It takes a high grade of impertinence or transoceanic vision, one of which Frankel certainly possesses, to speak with such assuredness about views elaborated in a book you have neither seen nor read, and about which all you know is a dozen paraphrasing sentences written by a critic.

But can't it be assumed that the sentences in which Trotsky sums up the views of one of the "parents" of our theory are adequate? We are ready to do so. According to Trotsky's summary, Bruno seems to hold the theory that "bureaucratic collectivism" or the bureaucratic state is a new, unprecedented exploitive social order, with a new ruling class, which exists not only in Russia but also in Germany and in a less developed form in "New Deal" America, and is, in a word, sweeping the world. According to this theory, there is no class difference between the German-U. S. type of state and the Russian type. As is known, Burnham's latest theory is similar, apparently, to Bruno's.

What, however, has such a theory to do with ours? In every article we have written on the subject, in the official resolution of our party, we have repeatedly emphasized the *unique* class character of the Russian state, its fundamental difference not only from a workers' state, but from all the bourgeois states, be they fascist or democratic. Time and again we have polemized against the theory that Russia and Germany, for example, have the same class state or social system or ruling class—against those who, like Burnham and MacDonald, held that both countries were "bureaucratic-collectivist," as well as against those who held that both were capitalist. Our party has formally rejected both these standpoints. If our cavalier is aware of these facts, he is practising a fraud on his readers by concealing them. If he is unaware of them, he is practising a fraud on his readers by dealing with matters he is ignorant of. Take your choice.

In *The New Course*, Trotsky lays the greatest stress on *loyalty in discussion*, on the importance of *an honest presentation of your opponent's views*, on the reprehensibility of *amalgamating* one view with views that are essentially alien to it. No wonder Frankel thinks so little of the book!

Where does our theory have its roots? Primarily in the writings of Trotsky! More accurately, in the resolving of the two basic, irreconcilable *theories* about Russia as a "degenerated workers' state" which are to be found in Trotsky's writings. For a long time Trotsky rightly based his theory that Russia is a degenerated *workers' state* on the view that, to one degree or another, in one form or another, the Soviet proletariat still retained *political power*, that it could yet submit *its* bureaucracy to its control, that it could regenerate the state by means of a profound *reform*. Indeed, Trotsky repeated that the *proof* of the working class character of the Soviet states lies in the fact that the régime could still be changed by reform. This theory he later abandoned, substituting the point of view that, although the proletariat had lost *all* semblance of political power and control, and an uncontrolled, counter-revolutionary bureaucracy had complete possession of the state power, and that it could not be removed save by means of a violent revolution, the state was nevertheless proletarian by virtue of the existence of state property. Only Trotsky's immense authority in the movement made possible

the acceptance by it of a theory which, up to that time, had never been held by any Marxist.

In numerous articles we have pointed out the contradiction between the two theories. We have pointed out how Trotsky abandoned the one for the other without so much as a link between them. We have showed how Trotsky was compelled to abandon his original theory because events refuted the essential predictions about Russia's evolution which he based on it. The voluminous quotations we have adduced from Trotsky's writings are simply irrefutable. Enough of them are again cited in our essay on *The New Course*. Frankel does not even hint at their existence (we are making the audacious assumption that he actually read the book). With consummate native skill, he plays dumb on this point. And not on this point alone.

This is not all. Frankel knows—and if he does not know, why does he venture to blacken so much innocent white paper?—that our press, the present writer in particular, has called attention to the fact that the first man (so far as we know) in the Trotskyist movement who put forward the theory that the Stalinist bureaucracy is a new ruling class, based on a new "property form," was neither Shachtman, Burnham, nor, God help us, the mysterious Bruno, but Christian Rakovsky. More than a decade ago, Rakovsky, next to Trotsky the outstanding leader of the Opposition, presented this view in a theoretical document of his own, which was circulated throughout the Russian Opposition. Trotsky, although he obviously did not share this view, printed it in the organ of the Russian Opposition without comment and certainly without denunciation—he was not made of the same stern and intransigent stuff as his eminent theoretical successor, Frankel. There is enough evidence, moreover, in letters of Oppositionist exiles and in the testimony of A. Ciliga, that Rakovsky's theory was shared by a considerable number of Russian Trotskyists. Poor devils! They had no Frankel to explain to them that they were "defamers of Marxism," purveyors of tripe, and belonged, as he so delicately puts it, to the "legion of emasculators, vulgarizers and falsifiers" of Trotskyism.

We do not hesitate for a moment to say that this or that element of our theory as a whole is taken from numerous other sources, including, if you please, Burnham (the Burnham of 1937-38, of course, and not the Burnham of 1940 or today). If our critics derive satisfaction from this readily-made acknowledgment, it is either because they do not know anything about the "alien" origins and components of the entire theoretical system of Marxism, or because they do not care. For the construction of our theory, for its synthesis, for the ideas of others and of our own incorporated into it, for the manner in which they are incorporated and interlinked, we and we alone are responsible.

The "Heart" of Trotskyism

"With typical impudence," says Frankel, to whom impudence of any kind is as foreign as a bad odor to a sty, "Shachtman pretends that Trotsky's class analysis of the Soviet Union as a degenerated workers' state 'is not even a decisively important part' of Trotskyism. This is like saying that a man could function without a heart."

We thus learn for the first time, but from an authority, that the "heart" of Trotskyism is the theory of the "degenerated workers' state." Which of the two theories Trotsky held on this subject is the "heart" of Trotskyism, the authority does not say. After all, what does it matter?

In our own confused way, we have always thought that the

"heart" of Trotskyism is the theory of the permanent revolution and the struggle for it. Frankel, we regretfully record, has not changed our opinion. For if the theory that Stalinist Russia is still a degenerated workers' state is the "heart" of Trotskyism, then obviously Trotskyism was without a heart, and consequently non-existent, before the Russian Revolution and during the early years of the revolution. It seems equally obvious that if Russia should tomorrow cease to be a "degenerated workers' state," either by virtue of its regeneration or its transformation into a capitalist state, the "heart" of Trotskyism would thereby be removed, leaving only a lifeless carcass which Frankel would not consider worthy of decent burial. To put it differently, the restoration of the Russian revolution to full life would produce the instantaneous death of Trotskyism. Or, to strain fairness toward our inimitable dialectician to the groaning point, if the "degenerated workers' state" were replaced by a revolutionary workers' state, Trotskyism would have a new "heart" grafted into it, its old one being removed to a bottle of formaldehyde labelled: "This was the heart of Trotskyism when Russia was a degenerated workers' state. Remove only in case of similar contingency.—Dr. Frankel, H.S."

Only one other thing need be said about this nightmarish idiocy.

We consider ourselves Trotskyists because we are partisans of the theory of the permanent revolution, because Trotsky incarnated the tradition and principles of revolutionary Marxism, of socialist internationalism, above all in a period when these principles were being trampled under every foot. We are not idolators, precisely because we are Trotskyists. We know how easy it is, as Lenin used to say sardonically to "swear by God," and we have only pitying contempt for those who substitute the quotation for the living idea, worshipful parrotry for critical thought. We are Trotskyists, but we do not "swear by God." *But* if it can truly be demonstrated that the very "heart" of Trotskyism is the belief that Russia today is a "degenerated workers' state" and that all the other organs and limbs of Trotskyism live from the bloom pumped to them by this heart, then the present writer, at least, would promptly cease calling himself a Trotskyist. At the same time, however, he would have to conclude that Trotskyism and Marxism are not reconcilable. Fortunately, no such conclusion is indicated, or necessary, or possible.

The Analogy of Russia with the Trade Unions

We come now to the third of Frankel's five points. Here we must admonish the reader. He must resolve in advance not to laugh himself sick. On this he must be firm, for Frankel offers more temptations than the unforwarned reader can possibly resist.

The reader is surely acquainted with the point: An analogy is made between the bureaucratized trade unions, with their bourgeois-minded leaders, and bureaucratized Russia. "Just as trade unions have become corrupted and degenerated, losing their internal democracy and giving up militant struggle in defense of the interests of the membership, just so, the Soviet Union, subject to far more enormous pressures, has been altered," writes Frankel. But the degenerated workers' state and the degenerated trade union remain class organizations and a struggle must be conducted to reform [!] them and to defend them against the capitalists."

(According to Trotsky, the "degenerated workers' state" cannot be reformed; according to the heart specialist, it *can* and *must* be reformed. Frankel does not know the difference

between revolution and reform, but in every other respect he is an authority on Trotskyism and above all on what lies at its heart.)

The "trade union analogy" has long been a favored argument of the defenders of the theory that Russia is a degenerated workers' state. Following Trotsky, the present writer used the "analogy" more than once. Along with others, he accepted it uncritically from Trotsky. This acceptance was eased, so to speak, by the fact that the analogy has a long and worthy standing dating back to the earliest days of the Russian Revolution. But if it is traced back clearly to those days, it will be seen that the analogy was entirely legitimate in its time. It was not employed to prove that Russia was a workers' state, however. It was employed to show why the workers' state did not always operate as the ideal program indicated. Between the two uses of the analogy, there is a world of difference.

Whatever may have been our errors on this point in the past, they look like downright virtues in comparison with what Frankel does with it. We beg the reader to follow very closely. It would be a pity to miss any part of it.

"Shachtman discusses the trade union analogy only to abandon this time the Marxist position on trade unions," says our relentless Spartan. Shachtman, it is clear, has left very little of Marxism, and Frankel has left very little of Shachtman. But even if there were less, it would still suffice for what follows.

Wherein lies this new "abandonment"? Read carefully the quotation from Shachtman which Frankel cites:

The trade unions remain trade unions, no matter how bureaucratized they become, as long as they fight (ineptly or skillfully, reformistically or militantly) in the defense of the workers' share of the national income, or at least against its diminution. Once they give up that fight, they may call themselves what they will, they may have ever so many workers in their ranks (as many company unions have), but they are no longer class organizations. John L. Lewis' organization is still a trade union; Robert Ley's is not.

Now read just as carefully Frankel's comment on this definition, part of which we ourselves emphasize:

This point of view is clear, it is consistent, it is harmonious with the Shachtmanite point of view on the Soviet Union. It likewise happens to be the traditional position of the ultra-leftists. Lenin polemicized against it in **The Infantile Disease of Left-Wing Communism**. It is precisely on this theory that the Stalinists constructed their thesis of "social fascism," and their designation of the AFL as a "fascist" organization.

What's right is right; our view on the trade unions is clear, consistent and harmonious with our views on Russia. *Everything* else in this quotation, except for the spelling and punctuation, is—if we may be forgiven the abusiveness provoked by snarling, stubborn ignorance—wrong and stupid.

Frankel thinks I cited the Lewis union because it is "the one union which has conducted four general coal strikes in the midst of the war! . . . This generous fellow would give ice away at the North Pole." A heart specialist, a trade union expert, and a wit to boot. The fact is the United Mine Workers was cited by me not because it "conducted four general coal strikes in the midst of the war," but because it is one of the most bureaucratically constructed, managed and controlled unions in the country, and yet is a proletarian organization. Our wit is persistent: "But the question remains: what is the Hod Carriers Union, which holds conventions every ninety-nine years? Or the Stalinist-run UE, which fights for incentive pay, not against it? Or anyone of a dozen others."

The answer to these questions must be given, we fear. Frankel is old enough to be told the truth, at least in a whisper. The members of the Hod Carriers Union are among the

highest-paid workers in the United States! The union leaders are despots, some are even said to be gangsters, grafters and corruptionists, some have made a mighty good thing for themselves out of unionism. But, by terroristic methods, if you will, by bureaucratic and reactionary methods, and with the aim of feathering their own nests, they work and *must work* "in the defense of the workers' share of the national income, or at least against its diminution." If they did not, the union would disappear and so would the very basis on which their autocratic power and privileges are built up. The Stalinist-led unions are, of course, somewhat different, but fundamentally the same. Take even incentive pay. The Stalinists put it forward, and are compelled to put it forward, as a means of *increasing* the workers' income. *We* say that the incentive-pay system, while it would increase the income of some workers, or of all of them temporarily, would do so at the expense of the muscles and nerves of the workers, at the expense of their long-range interests, at the expense of the solidarity and fighting power of the union, etc., etc. How mortifying the thought that the ABC's have to be explained to a Marxian theoretician of such height, breadth and weight!

Four times we read Frankel's comment on our definition. But nowhere did we find a word to indicate how *he* defines a trade union, how *he* would distinguish even the most reactionary trade union from a company union or from Ley's "Labor Front." What standard would be employed? That it was originally formed by workers? That it is composed of workers? That it claims to speak for workers? What? What?

If instead of comparing Russia with a union, we would compare a union with Russia, then by Frankel's standards, a union would still deserve the name: if the "union" bureaucracy had all the power, if it had an army and police at its disposal to oppress the members, if it could be removed from office only by violent insurrection, if it ran prisons for recalcitrant members, if it made an alliance with U. S. Steel for joint picket lines against Republic Steel, if we opposed the organization of the unorganized ("against the seizures of new territories by the Kremlin"—Trotsky), if we favored the withdrawal, say, of its Negro members to form a separate union ("independence of the Ukraine"—Trotsky), and so forth. Ley's "union" could easily fit into such a definition.

Disappointed by Frankel's failure to define a union, we seek elsewhere. Perhaps the following definition will prove acceptable:

The character of such a workers' organization as that of a trade union is determined by its relation to the distribution of the national income. The fact that Green & Co. defend private property in the means of production characterizes them as bourgeois. Should these gentlemen in addition defend the income of the bourgeoisie from the attacks on the part of the workers, should they conduct a struggle against strikes, against the raising of wages, against help to the unemployed, then we would have an organization of scabs and not a trade union. However, Green & Co., in order not to lose their base, must lead within certain limits the struggle of the workers for an increase—or at least against diminution—of their share in the national income. This objective symptom is sufficient in all important cases to permit us to draw a line of demarcation between the most reactionary trade union and an organization of scabs. Thus we are duty-bound not only to carry on work in the AFL, but to defend it from scabs, the Ku Klux Klan, and the like.

Is this the "traditional position of the ultra-leftists"? Is this what Lenin polemized against? Is this "precisely" the theory on which "the Stalinists constructed their thesis on 'social-fascism' "? Is this clear? Is it consistent? Is it, too, "harmonious with Shachtman point of view on the Soviet Union?"

Doesn't every one of Frankel's strictures against Shachtman's definition apply equally to this definition? Absolutely! No more, no less! Who is the author of this second definition? Shachtman? No! Shachtman is guilty only of having copied it, in some places word for word, in all places meaning for meaning. It is Trotsky who is guilty of writing it! Our "authority" will find it in the December, 1937, *Internal Bulletin* of the Socialist Workers Party, No. 3, page 4.

Trotsky says you recognize the difference between a scab outfit and a union by the fact that the latter, even under Green & Co., "must lead within certain limits the struggle of the workers for an increase—or at least against diminution—of their share in the national income."

Shachtman, frankly "plagiarizing" from Trotsky, says you recognize the difference between a fascist "front" and a union by the fact that the latter, even under Lewis & Co., "fight (ineptly or skillfully, reformistically or militantly) in the defense of the workers' share of the national income, or at least against its diminution."

The thought and even the language are identical, and not by accident, for both are dealing, Mr. Authority, with the ABC's of Marxism; both are dealing, Mr. Trade Union Expert, with the ABC's of trade unionism. And what does the Expert-Authority say about these definitions—not the stupid things about Lenin and social-fascism, but the unwittingly intelligent things? He says, let us remember, that "this point of view . . . is harmonious with the Shachtmanite point of view on the Soviet Union." Agreed! No complaint!

We could complain, however, if we were given to indignation over such things. If we were, then we might say: Have we really committed such unforgivable crimes that in a discussion of this importance you send against us a zero who does not know what the "heart" of Trotskyism is, where the roots of our theory lie, what the difference is between revolution and reform in Russia, or even what a common, ordinary trade union is—not even what Trotsky said it is—and who argues that *Trotsky's* definition of a union is harmonious with *Shachtman's* definition of Russia?

Inasmuch as indignation is really not called for here—pity is the more appropriate emotion—we do not make this complaint. It seems to us, however, that the membership of the SWP does have grounds for energetic complaint: Does our party have to discredit itself so ridiculously? Is this the only way we have of replying to the views of the Workers Party?

These questions will gain greater poignancy when we examine next month the last two points dealt with by the Authority. We fear he will not fare too well under the examination. We invited honest, sober and informed criticism of our position. Instead, we got Frankel. The fault is clearly not ours.

MAX SHACHTMAN.

The article, "Bolshevism and Self-Determination—Two Speeches by Lenin," in the July, 1944, issue of this magazine was meant to include *only* the two pieces by Lenin which appeared under the title, "On the Program of the Party." Lenin's polemic against Bukharin (written in 1915), which appears directly under the head, "Bolshevism and Self-Determination," is an entirely separate piece, and should not have appeared under this head.

Misunderstanding or Folly?

Two Letters on the "National Question"

The following letter appeared in the Mid-July, 1944, issue of the *Socialist Appeal*, official newspaper of the Revolutionary Communist Party, the Trotskyist organization of Great Britain.

The reply to this amazing distortion of the position of the Workers Party of this country on the national question in Europe was written by Max Shachtman, national secretary of the WP.

June, 1944.

Dear Comrade:

I have just heard the Shachtmanite position on the national question. His position, as I understand it, is based on a complete misunderstanding of what is actually happening in the occupied countries. At basis, it is defeatist in the worst sense of the term, of course, and leads straight into the camp of class collaboration and social chauvinism.

Just in case there are some doubting elements in the ranks of the Fourth International, I think a few words might be useful. You are, of course, at liberty to use them as you choose.

First of all it is necessary to get a very clear idea of just what the *Committees of National Liberation* are. What I have to say applies particularly to the one in Italy which I have been able to observe at first hand. Undoubtedly there will be differences in the various countries, reflecting the intensity of the struggle and the class consciousness of the masses. But in general, I feel confident, we will find the same conditions basic.

The Committee of National Liberation is not a mass organization. This is the first thing to get clear in our heads. It is an organization of political parties. The masses do not in any way attempt to express themselves through the committee, but turn, invariably, to their own organizations—the Communist Party, the Socialist Party and the trade unions.

In Italy, the Christian Democrats (Catholics), whose paper carries across its front page the slogan, "*Workers of the World, Unite in Christ*" (without acknowledgments), carry considerable weight among the poor peasantry and the more backward elements of the proletariat. But in general it can be said that the workers have remained loyal to their traditional organizations. Cut off for twenty years from active participation in politics, the workers are easily confused, but their instincts are very sound and, even while the flock into the Socialist Party and Communist Party, they manifest their distrust of the National Committee, which they see, unmistakably, as the instrument of collaboration with the national bourgeoisie and with Anglo-American imperialism.

Both these parties are rife with discontent, which is coming daily more and more into the open. Almost every issue of *L'Unita*, the Communist Party paper, records another expulsion from the party for "factionalism." These expelled elements, together with like-minded people still in the party and the Socialist Party, have formed themselves into the "Fraction of the Left of the CP and SP" and they publish a weekly paper, *Il Proletario*. Right now they have a Trotskyist tendency but this will undoubtedly take on a more positive aspect in time. Among them are some of the most important trade

unionists in the country, who command a great deal of popular support.

The fact that it has not been possible to transform the *Committee of National Liberation* into the nucleus of a mass movement is unmistakable proof that the Italian workers are not vitally interested in "national liberation" as such. In any case, they see in the committee just a tool of one set of imperialists and its aim, the substitution of one army of occupation by another. *More than anything else, the Italian proletariat today is inspired by October.* That is why they are entering the Communist Party in great numbers—and leaving it almost just as quickly *precisely because they discover that this is not the party of October after all but simply a competitor with the Socialist Party in the gentle and despicable business of collaboration.*

"Opportunism" is a word which is today on the lips of almost every Italian worker. Of course, this situation is only hopeful of something is done about it. Failing the necessary steps it will lead to complete disillusionment and to a setback for years, maybe decades. But the atmosphere is very good on the whole and the weather stimulating.

About Shachtman's theory of the colonization of Europe, I need not say much. I don't think this preposterous theory can find much support among us. The Germans conquered and occupied Europe out of military necessity. Their goal was the richer loot of the British Empire and the sparsely developed areas of the Ukraine; not to turn countries like France and Italy into colonies. Rather she wished to convert them into junior partners in exploiting the world—the same fate that Yankee imperialism holds out for us.

The whole discussion on the national question should not take up much of our time. But where does Shachtman stand with regard to Russia now? If the workers must be for national liberation in France, Italy, etc., then what about the Soviet proletariat? Has he come through the back door to take up the position of defensism he so decisively rejected?

All the best,

PECK.

August 12, 1944.

National Committee,
Revolutionary Communist Party,
London, England.

Dear Comrades:

The letter by Comrade Peck in the *Socialist Appeal* of mid-July, 1944, dealing with "the Shachtmanite position on the national question" represents such a gross misstatement of our point of view that we are compelled to address this correction to you.

We do not know exactly where, or from whom, Comrade Peck "just heard" our position. As you are surely aware, our views on the "national question in Europe," or, more accurately, on the struggle for the socialist revolution in Europe today have been stated at great length in detailed resolutions adopted by our party and in numerous expository and polemical articles that have appeared in our press. Comrade Peck

suggests, without saying so in so many words, that our position calls for support of the Committee of National Liberation in Italy. There is not a single line written by us on the "national question in Europe" or on the revolution in Italy that in any way warrants such a suggestion—I repeat, not one single line. Exactly the opposite is the case. As can be easily and amply demonstrated, we have repeatedly said that the principle prerequisite for an effective struggle against the imperialist coalitions now dominating Italy, and against the Italian bourgeoisie and its social order, is an uncompromising struggle against the Committee of National Liberation.

What Our Position Really Is

In *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL* of April, 1944, we pointed out, and not for the first time, that the Committees of National Liberation "are mostly bureaucratic committees without any real organizational strength or following." With regard to the new government set up by the Committee of National Liberation, we said:

What the masses want NOW, these "democrats" will probably continue to promise them . . . in the future. Will it give them democratic rights, the genuine right of free press, free speech, free assembly, the right to vote for a government of their own, a national constituent assembly, which will decide the government of Italy? Yes. . . . When? Tomorrow, always tomorrow, and never today. "After the war," they say. But the people want these rights now, and promises made by those who have already condemned themselves by their cynical violation of solemn promises are not a substitute.

The events leading up to the second stage of the Italian revolution that has just opened emphasize what we and, we are glad to note, our Italian comrades, whose first proclamation we printed recently, have said from the beginning. The people of Italy cannot expect to get their liberation from foreign imperialism, and they cannot expect it from the Stalinists, the Sforza-Croce "democrats" or the right-wing socialists. The winning of their freedom is their own job, and it can be achieved only in the course of an independent struggle.

Real freedom, peace, security, abundance—these are not to be won short of the victory of socialism throughout Europe.

In this call, our Italian comrades once more show that the revolutionary socialists do not merely talk about democracy and democratic rights, but are the most consistent and fearless fighters for it. They show that the fight for democracy for the masses of the people lies along the road of the fight for socialism and is best conducted under the leadership of revolutionary socialists.

Our comrades are not deceiving themselves, however, or the workers to whom they speak. They do not ask the workers to look to AMG for the realization of their legitimate demands. They do not tell them to expect it of the King, the bankers, the industrialists, the "ex-fascists" like Badoglio, or even from Sforza and his ilk. To the contrary, in their very first pronouncement, our Italian comrades warned the workers against such illusions. Their warning has already been more than amply justified, and the recent decision of the "Six Parties" serves to underscore it.

Our Italian comrades tell the workers that they must organize and fight for these rights, that they themselves must acquire these rights, including the calling of a Na-

tional Constituent Assembly. To organize themselves most democratically and most effectively, the workers, soldiers and peasants of Italy, say our comrades, must organize their own councils. It is in such organization that the future of the Italian revolution is assured.

From our standpoint, the course recommended by our Italian comrades is not only thoroughly wise and correct, but corresponds perfectly to the needs and interests of the people of Italy.

A dozen more articles and documents could be cited along the same lines. But this quotation should suffice to prove that Comrade Peck is guilty either of crude disloyalty in political discussion, or of allowing his imagination to outstrip the facts.

This letter permits only two comments on Peck's supercilious remarks "about Shachtman's theory of the colonization of Europe."

What Is This "Colonization"?

First: He says that the Germans occupied Europe out of military necessity and that their goal was the loot of the British Empire and the Ukraine—"not to turn countries like France and Italy into colonies. Rather she wished to convert them into junior partners in exploiting the world—the same thing that Yankee imperialism holds out for us." Anyone capable of making this statement is obviously capable of not allowing his study of Lenin's *Imperialism* to make the slightest impression on his mind. Anyone capable of believing that American imperialism holds out for its British partner the same fate that German imperialism accorded the bourgeoisie of Poland, Yugoslavia, Greece, Norway, and even Holland and France, is also capable of dividing his body and his mind between the earth and the planet Mars.

Second: Comrade Peck must surely be acquainted with the memorandum drawn up by leading comrades of the Italian Fourth Internationalists which gives their views on the situation in Italy. The memorandum states that the "main enemy" in the South of Italy is Anglo-American imperialism, and the "main enemy" in the North is German imperialism. He must be, I repeat, very well acquainted with these characterizations. It is equally evident to us, however, that he is not at all acquainted with their political implications. The revolutionary struggle for democratic rights which both we and our Italian comrades advocate, is directed *mainly* (although, of course, not exclusively) at these "main enemies," and directed at them not in agreement with and not in support of the Committee of National Liberation, which serves one of these enemies, but against it as well.

"Where," asks Peck finally, "does Shachtman stand with regard to Russia now? If the workers must be for national liberation in France, Italy, Poland, etc., then what about the Soviet proletariat?" It would be more to the point to ask Peck where *he* stands with regard to the subjugation or impending subjugation by Stalin of the Ukraine, the three Baltic countries, Poland, and the other nations oppressed by the Moscow autocracy. We, along with Trotsky, "were and remain against the seizure of new territories by the Kremlin." We, along with Trotsky, are for the independence of the Ukraine and of all other nations under the Stalinist yoke. We are for the Russian proletariat performing the elementary duty of raising these demands to the top of its program of struggle against the Stalinist counter-revolution. If Comrade Peck would not confine himself to "just hearing the Shachtmanite position" but devote himself to reading the easily available material on the subject, his questions would be superfluous.

A final point: It would be interesting to record the reaction of Comrade Peck if he "just heard" of the position on the "national question" of the French and German sections of the Fourth International. We have certain differences with the position of the French and German comrades on this question, as is known. But what separates us is a few cracks. What separates all three of us from Peck, however, is a gulf.

We hope that you will find it possible to make this clarification of our position available to those whom Comrade Peck's letter can only mislead.

Fraternally yours,

MAX SHACHTMAN,

National Secretary, Workers Party.

BOOKS IN REVIEW

A Work of Major Significance

WAR DIARY, by Jean Malaquais. Doubleday-Doran. 246 pages, \$2.50.

This diary of a young Polish-French novelist was written during the months immediately before the fall of France. It contains his personal record in an army labor battalion, random literary reflections, personal reactions to army life and occasional statements of a political attitude toward the war. Its author has already written a novel of considerable power, *Men from Nowhere*, and is of general leftist, anti-Stalinist political persuasion. After recording the above data, there is only one more important thing to say: *War Diary* is the first work to come out of this war which is of major significance, which is true to the very core and which should under no conditions be neglected by any intelligent person who is sensitive to the atomizing, concrete effects of the war. It goes without saying that for a socialist it is indispensable.

The reception which *War Diary* met in the "leftist" and "liberal" press could be considered scandalous were it not expected. The pious heroes of the liberal book sections have pretended to be shocked at the fact that when Malaquais met up with French peasants he found them filthy, vulgar and debased by the barracks routine. They accused Malaquais of not "loving humanity," of being a snob. Even Victor Serge, who, as with so many other matters, should know better but apparently doesn't, dished out the same spoonfuls of twaddle in his review in *Politics*.

The liberals, of course, see no political or moral discrepancy between their overflowing love for humanity and their support of British, American and Stalinist imperialism in the war. But they point righteous fingers, sticky with the goo of complacent humanitarianism, at Malaquais and innocently ask: How can he reconcile his revolutionary socialist opinions with his revulsion against the peasants with whom he had to live in the army? It is only with a feeling of impatience—and a bit of shame, too, that our "leading critics" should smear this true, fine and beautiful book with such preposterous shysterism—that one points out that most elementary fact: only those who understand how contemporary civilization debases

humanity, only those who see that capitalism drags people down into the gutters of vulgarity and baseness, of filth and the stupor of routine, fruitless existence; only *those* can truly understand and passionately struggle for a new and better society.

On the other hand, it is the liberals who, despite the rubbery protestations about their belief in the "ultimate" need for a new society, always manage to find a *modus vivendi* within the present one; it is these liberals who find it convenient to cloak their political supineness with Populist chatter about the glories of man and his spiritual beauty. But if man as he is today—we do not speak of those occasional flashes of potentiality which are the promise of the morrow but are ground down by the pestle of today—this man who is molded by the mores and conventions of capitalist society, is truly such a glorious creature, then why is there any need for a new society? Yes, yes, the issue is as simple as all that: either capitalist society debases mankind, and that is the *main* reason for desiring socialism; or it does not, and in that case socialists would be better off listening to chamber music, or playing handball . . . or something.

Malaquais is a talented observer, but that really isn't so important, because there are other talented observers. But Malaquais is an honest and courageous man, and that is something for which to be profoundly grateful. When I mention, in addition, that he has—one glimpses from his few occasional remarks on politics; especially from a wonderful sentence in which he remarks that "*Only a few creators, a few artists, a few revolutionaries, will discover within themselves enough reserve strength to survive the avalanche*"—a deep, passionate hatred for all that is rotten in our society; that he is a true, complete, unregenerate rebel and that he sees the war for the lie it is, you can understand why the book provokes somersaults.

Malaquais has exposed the consuming boredom, the irretrievable waste of time, of barracks existence to the point where those who have, or are now, undergoing similar experiences will be tempted to shout out loud: "Yes, yes, here is a man who gives the truth, whole, simple, unvarnished truth." And if anybody thinks I may be a little naive in returning again and again to this simple little fact that an honest book has been written, let him list some other honest books about *this* war.

There are many jejune passages in the book, immature "reflections" which, were they the product of deliberate, considered composition, might make the author blush. But it is to be remembered that *War Diary* is . . . *war diary* and was not polished over by loving hands in a peaceful summer home. Anyone who has had to exist in a barracks in the Second World War will know that even these passages are true, as true as the fine and the beautiful passages; no sensitive or intelligent man subjected to military routine is immune from occasional spasms of self-pity, of pretentious philosophizing. So when you read the book, take that as it comes also.

This review could be much longer if some of the wonderful passages from *War Diary* were quoted—and they are very quotable. But I feel that the book is a total experience, and any attempt to break it into bits would be unjust. Well, there we are. If you want to discover how a man feels in an army (which in some ways is more important than and certainly distinct from how a man feels in battle), read this first honest and intelligent book to come out of this war.

R. F.