

The Communist

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EVERYTHING FOR VICTORY!

NATIONAL COMMITTEE, COMMUNIST PARTY

Articles by

ROBERT MINOR

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER



CIVILIAN DEFENSE AND MORALE

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THE COMMUNIST

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EDITOR: EARL BROWDER



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EVERYTHING FOR VICTORY OVER WORLD-WIDE FASCIST SLAVERY!

*(Statement of the National Committee, Communist Party, U.S.A.,
unanimously adopted at its plenary meeting held in New York
City, December 7, 1941.)*

JAPANESE guns have fired upon the United States flag.

This is an unprovoked act of war, not of Japan alone, but of the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis war alliance. It is directed against the United States in the first place, but also against the whole Western Hemisphere, Great Britain, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and against the Japanese people themselves. It is an act of war aimed at consolidating the enslavement of all the occupied countries and territories of Europe, Africa and China—and to extend that slavery of conquest to the East Indies, the Philippine Islands, Latin America and the whole of the Western Hemisphere.

It is the culminating outrage of Axis aggression aimed at the domination of the entire world. The fate of every nation and people has been thrown into the arena for determination by military means.

This is a single indivisible world struggle to preserve human liberty from the most brutal form of slavery. It is a challenge to human civilization and all of the achievements of centuries of democratic development.

Through the mouths of Japanese cannon, the Axis and its vassal states, from Vichy to Helsinki, have declared war against the United States and all powers that stand against enslavement. The reply of Emperor Hirohito to President Roosevelt is this unprovoked attack upon the American people and territory.

All actions of the United States Government in quickly, boldly answering this act of war with the full military and naval force of this mighty nation will receive the united support of all classes and all sections of the American people, north, south, east and west, of whatever national origin, black, white, native or foreign-born—Americans all.

Never in the history of our country has the need for unity of the nation been so great as now. The Communist Party pledges its loyalty, its devoted labor and last drop of its blood in support of our country in this greatest of all the crises that ever threatened its existence. In the tradition of the Communist leaders who in 1861 joined the United States Army under com-

missions issued by President Lincoln, 100,000 American Communists today step forward to support the bigger war against slavery, a war in defense of the whole world's freedom.

In all factories and workshops of America the voice of freedom must be heard in the quickened pace of machines producing implements of war to save our nation and to increase our aid to the Soviet Union, Great Britain, China and all nations who are resisting the Hitler-Japanese aggression. All disputes in industry must now even more urgently than before be solved without interruptions of production.

The mighty trade union movement of America—11,000,000 strong, together with all other organizations of the people, white and Negro, must be activized to win this war with the utmost concentration of force against the enemies of our nation.

The enormous farming population and all organizations of farmers will respond with one mighty voice to the call of the nation in its peril.

The American Federation of Labor, the C.I.O. and the Railroad Brotherhoods face the imperative necessity to coordinate their activities so that labor can speak and act as one. The American trade unions will support with all their strength the all-out struggle against the insolent imperialist aggression of

the Berlin - Rome - Tokyo Axis.

The people will demand that profiteering be ended and that all vicious anti-labor legislation such as the Smith Bill be rejected.

In order to attain the greatest possible strength and effectiveness of its armed forces the United States requires a full military alliance with Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China, who are now at death grips with the bloody forces of the Dark Ages.

All honest Americans who have been misled by the Lindbergs, the Coughlins, the Norman Thomases, Wheelers and Nyes, by the America First Committee, must now see the treachery, the threat to the national existence of our country that lies in the intrigues of such organizations and must break with their influence.

All Americans must join in one mighty stream of national unity to assure that "government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Everything for national unity!

Everything for victory over world-wide fascist slavery!

NATIONAL COMMITTEE,
COMMUNIST PARTY, U.S.A.
WM. Z. FOSTER,
National Chairman
ROBERT MINOR
Acting Secretary

AS WE FIGHT

BY ROBERT MINOR

(Summary speech made by the Acting Secretary of the Communist Party at the close of the Plenary Meeting of the National Committee, in New York City, December 7, 1941.)

AS THIS memorable Plenum comes to its end I am reminded of Marx' classic saying, made use of by Lenin, to the effect that the weapon of criticism is replaced by the criticism of weapons.

By which they meant that the political struggle of the time passed over from mere polemics of words into its higher stage, at which that struggle is conducted with the weapons of war—military struggle.

The open and most violent stage of war has begun for the United States. For the first time in 127 years armed forces of a foreign power have successfully touched the territory of the United States. It is war of the most extreme and unlimited violence and on an unprecedented scale.

As a result of a conjuncture of historic currents, the Communist Party has become a participant along with other political groupings and parties—and the working class of our country has become an ally of other classes—in this most violent form of struggle which is war. The full meaning of national unity to win the war, and all its consequences, must be faced in the full light of clarity.

* * *

Today and from now on continu-

ously, for a length of time that no man can fix, but probably for a very long time, we are and will be engaged at political struggle which takes a form of military combat. The political struggle in which we are engaged, in unity with the nation, is the business of applying organized physical violence through our American army and navy with the objective of the destruction of all opponent forces.

Our political work in the sense of criticism, of the polemics of arguments, explanations, for the mobilization of the masses, the art of convincing the people, has not declined in importance. Rather it has become far more important; but it is all, every word and every phase of it, without exception or hesitation, determined by the one great all-decisive character of the struggle of today—the successful mobilization of the total strength of our nation organized for the production, training with, and application of, the instruments of war.

This big, powerful nation has now become engaged, in the overt form that can be understood by everyone, in a war in which we have long been engaged in a concealed form—that is, a form of war in which our country, enduring the brunt of a

certain amount of military violence, maintained the fiction that we were not at war. That time has passed, in the main, and it is urgently necessary that all fictions to the effect that we are not entirely in the war, or that we are only in the war against one part of the Axis and not the total of the Axis, be removed.

The decisive turn came while we were assembled in this National Committee meeting. There was not the slightest element of surprise for us in what happened. When at 4 o'clock this afternoon the Japanese Government declared war against the United States and Great Britain, our words in complete anticipation of this event had already been written and spoken and published before the event occurred.

The United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China are all at war. We know that the alignment of forces is a world-wide alignment on two sides of a single world war. We know that on the side of the powers fighting against the Axis the character of the war is that of a war of national liberation—a just war.

The question might arise, nevertheless, just how do we find our orientation so quickly—even before the newspapers have printed the news of developments of events of war, how is it possible that we so quickly orientated ourselves, unanimously, resolutely, without the slightest instant of hesitation? The answer is to be found in our Marxist-Leninist method. We might have been thrown into doubt; we might have hesitated and asked: "Well, how do we know that such and such a relationship will exist between one

power and another power, since we have not yet heard?" Well, we recognize the complexity of events, and we do not guess about events; our business is not "smart" guessing in competition with newspaper headlines; and we know there are sudden changes and reversals of currents of events. But we are not in doubt as to the decisive forces that are determining the *main* current. That is because we work by the Marxian method. We made the central note of our last full meeting of this committee five and a half months ago, in our analysis of the war situation, the note that is valid today. That note is that the war, which had at that time suddenly spread and taken the form of an attack on the Soviet Union, was a single world war. The attack on the Soviet Union by Germany transformed the character of the great war—vitaly and fundamentally changed its character. But we saw that it was one world-wide war, and we were completely correct in seeing it as one war. We were correct because our method, our Communist method—the priceless instrument which guides us in this greatest of crises—teaches us to see the phenomenon of history, never in isolated form, never separate and apart from the other phenomena that are related to it, always seeing each phenomenon in its relationship to the surrounding world of reality. Considering all of the phenomena of war, and their interconnection, seeing the war in the Soviet Union in connection with the surrounding reality and the forces interplaying with it, we were enabled to reach a correct judgment and a correct

course of action to be followed.

Then when this newest change in the war came—when the Japanese attack came bursting upon us with the roar of guns and the falling of bombs from the skies—we had already been able to foresee the general trend of development that was leading in this direction. You will recall that, on the day before the Japanese attack, we had already said, and our remarks were already in print this morning, as follows:

“. . . the inevitable logic of this war—seen as one conflict—is bringing about a rapid development in the Far East, looking to the attempted seizures that were predicted by Secretary of War Stimson last August of the tin and oil and other supplies of the Malay and Dutch East Indies countries. We do not describe the situation as some of the newspapers do this morning, as creating a ‘risk of war. . . . If a goon batters you up and knocks your head off, you don’t say that you can’t defend yourself for fear of getting into a fight.

“The fight has begun, the fight exists, the war is already in full effect in every real sense. And the danger is that the United States will be too slow, that its self-defense in coalition with all other nations that can contribute to our collective strength will be too far behind. . . .

“And so we must admit that with all the successes that our country has undoubtedly attained in the way of national unity, nevertheless the tremendous danger exists that the consolidation of national unity around the American Government, around America’s foreign policy,

will be too slow. . . . The danger is that we have allowed our country relatively to lag behind into a relationship of forces that is even more dangerous than it was five months ago, when we only dared to dream and hope for the collective defense of the world from Nazi conquest, and dared to hope that it might take the form of the defense of our country’s national interest collectively with Great Britain and the Soviet Union in the form of a coalition.” (*Sunday Worker*, Dec. 7.)

We already knew, and could not but know, that the series of events that had unfolded in the Far East could not be an isolated phenomenon of friction between Japan and the United States. We did not fall into the illusion of chatterbox columnists and Social-Democratic hairsplitters who hesitate, like Hamlet, and speculate: “Can the United States do this or that to avoid the ‘risk of war?’” “Can some arrangement be made by which Japanese imperialist aims can be substituted by humanitarian and pacific considerations?” “Cannot Japan be induced in plain reason to do this, and somebody else to do that?” Such speculations but serve to segregate the Far Eastern conflict from the conflict in the world at large. We understood the rapidly developing Far Eastern situation as one of the phenomena of a world full of developing war. We understood it in its relationship to the phenomenon of England’s relationship with Germany, and that of Germany with Japan in the famous “anti-Comintern” pact, which we knew from the very beginning was the war alliance between these na-

tions directed precisely against the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union. When the guns of the Japanese opened up upon the Hawaiian Islands this afternoon, it was not an isolated event, but an event necessarily related precisely to the terrific events in Europe and the world over.

Particularly we know that the German Nazi forces have run into a serious predicament on their Eastern Front with the great Red Army. We understood that Germany had called her ally, the Japanese armed forces, into play; that this attack of the Japanese was a response to Hitler's call for help; that it was an attack ordered by Hitler and timed at this moment in the effort to restore the momentum of the Axis armies as a result of their setback suffered through the brilliant victory of the Red Army at Rostov, followed by further military victories in the vicinity of Moscow. The military events in Soviet Russia cannot be dissociated from the events in the Far East. In our last Plenum we correctly saw this interconnection and its inevitable unfolding in a violent military clash, even though the situation was relatively unripe at that time in the Far East. We saw even as far back as five and a half months ago, when Germany's attack on the Soviet Union was only six days old, that there would be launched a great "peace" offensive just such as Germany has since turned loose. We could see even then that such a "peace" offensive would be no more than an effort to demoralize and break up the fast-forming united front of peoples to resist Nazi enslavement; that it

would be an effort to introduce illusions of peace among the suffering peoples of the occupied countries of Europe; that it would be an effort to check the determination of all the free peoples of the world that there could be no "negotiated" settlement, no peace without the military annihilation of Nazism.

We are glad today that we dropped the peace slogan as our very first act at our last Plenum, knowing that such a slogan would be a weapon in the hands of such a "peace" offensive as Germany has now turned loose, prior to this further extension of the war, designed only to act as a paralyzing medium for preventing the quick crystallization of the opposition of the democratic powers to the Nazis' act of aggression against the world.

* * *

In our Plenum which opened yesterday and which comes to its end now, several monumental speeches were made, and they were of such great importance that I think every one of us will go back carrying memories of these speeches as an inspiration to our work.

The splendid remarks of Comrade Foster were part of the Political Committee's report, of course. What I refer to is, for instance, the speech of Comrade Roy Hudson, which I shall keep in mind for these coming months, remembering the values and the realization of values in that field of our work which is decisive for our struggle—the field of the organized workers' movement, which, now as never before to the same degree, has become the center of the development of the national

life of our country. I think all of us will go from this Plenum with a vivid memory of the speech of Comrade Gil Green, which was a part of a comprehensive statement of that phase of our work—municipal elections—which is going to be so closely related to the trade union movement. In regard to the manner of conducting electoral united front work in connection with the national unity in support of the war, the memorable New York election has given us great experiences. The remarks that were made by our New York Councilman, Pete Cacchione of Brooklyn, will prove of great help to all of us all over the country.

Instructive indeed was his recital of the incident of the Italian worker who raised one of the slogans pumped into him by the propaganda machine of the Nazis and the appeasers, to the effect that if Germany and Italy are defeated in this war, there will be another Versailles Treaty. Pete Cacchione gave an answer that has to be given to every single one of the national groups that are in any way affected by Axis propaganda—namely, that with the Soviet Union in this gigantic line-up there can be no Versailles Treaty as a result of the collaboration in which the Soviet Power is a member. The opportunity that we face now and the responsibility that we face now is that of uniting the nation. Never have we had an opportunity to play a dynamic part in uniting, not thousands, not tens of thousands but millions. We have the opportunity to isolate the appeasers, to isolate effectively with mass effect and in a mass sense the Amer-

ica First Committee. The America First Committee is not less dangerous, but the nature of its activities, I think, is somewhat different. I have been noticing an interesting thing in the press: as the Red Army began to achieve victories in the last few days, certain of the rottenest appeaser newspapers have begun to strike the note, "Well, now you see the Red Army is beginning to win, maybe the Red Army won't stop until it gets to Berlin, and think what a danger that would be for the United States." We are very likely to witness a great deal of that insidious type of development of the work of this same appeasement group, the America First outfit, the Lindberghites, etc. They will be coming forth now in the guise of patriots in the attempt to undermine the relationship with all the most powerful military forces of the anti-Hitler coalition. It has been said here that now there may be a dangerous development of the propaganda of these people, in the wire-pulling in Congress and in the bureaus and political circles of government, to the effect that since the United States must now concentrate against Japan, it must slacken up in its sending of supplies to the Soviet Union and perhaps also to Great Britain. In that connection, let me give a word of warning against anything on our part that could give an excuse for any tendencies to yield to that argument. We must be dead sure that we understand that the danger on the Soviet front is still a terrific danger. The victories that have been won are victories won at very, very severe sacrifice against odds

where a single Soviet tank has had to face three German tanks and advance against them. Let us be very sure that the very victories of the Soviet Red Army do not give us that disease which Comrade Stalin described as "*golovokruzheniye*"—"swimming head," getting dizzy with success. Let us bear in mind the necessity, greater now than ever before, for American industry to overcome along with Soviet industry the disparity in which Germany has an overwhelming numerical superiority in tanks and a numerical superiority as well in airplanes.

Now a few remarks on the campaign for the release of Comrade Browder. It is imperative that we place the center of gravity of the work for Comrade Browder. My opinion is that we have made a political error in allowing the center of gravity to slip over into winning a sort of shapeless support of a general public. Not that we do not wish such support, but it is incorrect to allow the center of gravity to swing that way instead of keeping it among the organized workers, the trade unions. It was once said by Lenin that in its struggle for power the working class has no weapon but organization. In its release of its champions from imprisonment the working class has never successfully applied any other weapon than that—the weapon of organization, the pressure of organized labor. In no sense do we disparage the general collection of signatures: on the contrary, we should have done much better. We should have gotten a million or two million signatures. But let us realize that time is fleeting. We must now

concentrate upon achieving every possible trade union pressure within this coming week, the week that begins today. We must get trade union officials and trade union bodies that can be brought to act in that quick time, to act, to send by airmail or telegram to the President of the United States requests for the freedom of Browder.

We are now entering a period of action on a higher plane than ever before. We go better equipped with experience than ever before. Our Communist Party organizations in the districts now are expected, and we confidently believe they will live up to the expectation, to become living, dynamic centers of working class activity to help stimulate the whole population in the war effort as patriots, sincere patriots, without reservation, as supporters of the government of the United States, which is the structure around which national unity takes place; supporting the army, fighting against the remnants and all particles of pacifist illusions, bearing in mind that there is much to do against these pacifist illusions, remembering that there has been for decades a false identification in some minds between our struggle for peace and the position of pacifism.

We will go ahead into the biggest moment that our Party has yet known, and it is the confident belief of the entire Political Bureau and the whole National Committee that we will do our part successfully. We will give a tremendous share of help, and an indispensable part of the help needed to bring victory and the extermination of fascism.

THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE WAR

BY WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

(Concluding remarks of William Z. Foster, National Chairman, at the National Committee Meeting of the Communist Party, U.S.A., held in New York City on December 7, 1941.)

AS WE, members of the National Committee and guests, are about to depart to our respective homes from this historic plenum, it is necessary that a few words be said about the effects upon the line of our Party by Japan's unprovoked war attack upon the United States this afternoon. At the outset let me say that we are not taken by surprise by this brutal aggression. Our long insistence that the United States was in urgent danger of fascist assault has been dramatically verified. For months past we have been forecasting Japan's attack, and in the report of Comrade Minor and others to this plenum its imminence was clearly foreseen. Our analysis of the war situation has been completely borne out. Our policy was correct and it remains so.

What has happened is that the American people, yesterday standing upon the brink of overt war with Japan, have today been plunged fully into war by Japan's wanton attack upon American citizens and territory. This tremendous event throws before us a host of new

problems. But it does not change the basic line of our Party. It merely swiftly matures our analysis and makes necessary a tremendous intensification of our work in all directions, according to the main policy we have already developed.

The National Committee statement which we have just adopted is the authoritative document of this plenum. It applies the main policy of our Party to this new phase of the world war. Although brief, this statement of policy is clear. It will be followed shortly by editorials and articles further concretizing our work. After I finish speaking Comrade Hudson will outline some of the tasks immediately confronting us.

Now let me touch briefly upon the effects of the new situation upon several aspects of our Party policy, as we have been developing it during the past several months and as we were further concretizing it in this plenum when Japan attacked. First, in respect to our attitude regarding the Government's foreign policy. As you know, we had been

supporting the Government's resistance to the aggressor powers, Nazi Germany and Japan. Now our task is to enormously increase this support. This is a just war. Our Party statement pledges our full support to it. We have offered to give up our lives if necessary to defeat the fascist enemy. Our Party must do all in its power to see that American arms, jointly with those of Great Britain, the U.S.S.R. and China, emerge victorious from the present conflict.

Now as to national unity—do we have to change our main line upon that? Not at all. Our job is to press forward ten times more determinedly than before, along the path we were already traveling. More than ever must we seek to develop the strongest possible collaboration among all classes and organizations in American life that are ready to fight the Axis enemy. If it was necessary yesterday, when the country was not yet fully in the war, to participate in all the organizations and activities that were developing towards a solid front of the American people against Hitler and his puppets, now the need for such activities on our part is incomparably greater. Swiftly the country will be covered with a whole network of civilian war activities. Demands will be made for strengthening the armed forces and to finance the war. As American citizens determined to help crush the enemies of our country, we must play our full part by supporting all these movements and tasks. The Communists must show that there are no better fighters for America and freedom than we are.

Full steam ahead for national unity and the winning of the war.

And how does the question of the fight against the appeasers, against the America First Committee, stand in this new situation? In no sense do we have to reorientate our policy in this matter. Instead, we have to redouble our battle against these fascist-minded traitors. But, the conditions of our struggle against them will be greatly changed. This is because, in the face of national indignation of the American people at Japan's attack, the treacherous America First Committee will lose much, if not most, of its mass following, who have been misled by its demagoguery about peace. Many also of its opportunistic leaders will be compelled to endorse the war. Already the radio has told us that the appeaser Senators Taft, Vandenberg and Wheeler, as well as that American-brand fascist, Representative Fish, have spoken out for war against Japan. Doubtless more will follow.

But such development must not mislead us into believing that the appeaser danger is over. Far from it. While the followers of the America First Committee will genuinely change their minds and support the war, the copperhead traitors will only alter their tactics to fit the new situation. They will lose no opportunity to stab the United States in the back. One of their many devices to help their friend Hitler will be to try to get the United States to direct its entire force against Japan and to abandon giving aid to Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. This insidious maneuver we must be par-

ticularly alert to fight against. With renewed vigor we must propagate our established correct line that this is one war, a world war between the forces of fascist tyranny and those of democracy and civilization. It is one indivisible war between the fascist Axis powers and the world coalition of the United States, Britain and the U.S.S.R. We must therefore insist that instead of aid being diminished, more munitions than ever be sent to the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and China. We must also advocate the opening of a second front in Europe. We must never let the American people forget that the center of the present world fascist aggression is in Berlin and that, above all, Nazi Germany has to be smashed. A full-scale military alliance between the United States, Great Britain, the U.S.S.R. and China has now become a fundamental necessity for American national defense.

Regarding the battle for production, which has played such a central part in our Plenum discussions—what about that? Well, everything we have been saying all along, as well as in this plenum, is now more true than ever. In this situation the trade unions, in closest cooperation with employers, and the Government must push for maximum production. We may be sure that the American people, in their determination to defeat the insolent Japanese aggressors and their boss in Berlin, will develop a munitions output that will amaze the world. The labor movement, and not the least our Party, must play its full part in developing this huge flood of war ma-

terials. The establishment of the Murray Plan, or a workable variation of it, has now become a national imperative. In all shops, industries and localities, as we have discussed in our plenum, the workers must take the initiative in working out plans to help win the battle for production.

And now how about labor unity, which, in the form of united labor action upon war issues, has been playing such a large role in our Party's life? Here, too, we have no need for reorientation. Except that we must press all the more energetically for united labor action than ever before. The war situation makes it vitally necessary for the C.I.O., A. F. of L. and Railroad Brotherhoods to work together harmoniously to help solve the life and death questions that are being thrust upon our nation by the war. Strengthen the trade unions, organize the unorganized, tighten labor's ranks. In every city and state there should be get-together movements between the rival groups of unions, such as we have seen developing lately in so many communities. Nationally the time is now ripe for organized cooperation between the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. The two big federations of labor have demanded, in somewhat different forms, that labor, capital and Government should come together in a national conference to work out joint war policies. Such a conference has now become indispensable, and the workers everywhere should speak out for it.

In the matter of protecting the living standards of the workers—

against profiteering employers and against reactionary forces who are trying to load all the economic burdens of the war upon the social classes and groups least able to stand them—our basic line of policy was already worked out before this plenum. Healthy, well-fed and well-cared-for workers are vitally essential for national defense and our aim must be to see that these conditions obtain. Arbitration and mediation of labor disputes are now indispensable. To protect their interests the workers must be fully represented in the Cabinet and in all Government boards. Organized labor should unitedly demand this representation. United political action is the key to all of labor's activities in this national crisis.

By the same token, the trade unions should insist upon the defeat of such reactionary measures as the Smith Bill. Labor must not allow itself to be shackled by open-shop elements in the war emergency. Democracy must be preserved at home while we are fighting abroad to defend it. Labor should demand that such ultra-reactionary organizations as the America First Committee and the Dies Committee be dissolved, and that the Hoover F.B.I. be reorganized.

Now let me conclude these remarks on Party policy in this war by saying that we are going to witness in the period now opening a unity of spirit and action by our nation that will amaze us. The American people, despite all attempts of appeasers and fascists to confuse them and to make it appear that we were a disunited nation, have all along been strongly anti-Hitler. The attack by Japan upon will touch off a tremendous demonstration of the anti-Hitler spirit of the American people. Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito will be astounded to observe the solidarity with which our people will take up arms against them.

The great test of our Party from now on will be to step up its work to fit in with the intensified war struggle of the American people in defense of their national existence. We must realize the necessity for vastly increased activity on our part in all directions in support of the war effort. Our policy is correct, our Party is united. Our line expresses the patriotic interests of the whole American people. Let us resolve to apply it with a militant spirit as never before. I am sure that our Party will prove worthy of the great task which history has now placed upon it.

THE NEW YORK CITY ELECTIONS AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST HITLERISM

BY BILL LAWRENCE AND ISIDORE BEGUN

THE local election in New York City aroused keen interest nationally and even internationally. The entire country eagerly awaited its outcome. As far west as the Pacific Coast, radio broadcasts were interrupted for the announcement of election returns. The La Guardia victory was received joyously in London and gloomily in Berlin and Rome. The enthusiastic message from the Common Council of London, greeting La Guardia's victory, was symbolic of the significance of the New York election. As the *New York Sun* admitted, the election was a poll of opinion, in the largest city of the country, on Roosevelt's foreign policy, on national and international questions.

The election came four months after Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union, which brought about a sharp change in both the character of the war and the relationship of forces. President Roosevelt, having recognized this attack as the Nazi bid for world conquest, and a threat to American security, strengthened American military collaboration with Great Britain and promised

aid "to the limit" to the Soviet Union. National unity against Hitlerism was the most vital need of the nation.

This situation was bound to color the elections in the largest American city under all conditions. But when sharp-tongued Fiorello La Guardia—two-term Mayor of New York, friend of the President and with a consistent record of active struggle against Hitlerism, and in the recent period United States Civil Defense Director—announced his bid for an unprecedented third term, the issue of anti-Hitlerism inevitably became the main issue.

The Primary Election

La Guardia accepted the Republican nomination in face of the open opposition to him by the Republican organization leaders of the Bronx and Queens. He was opposed in the Republican primaries by an appeaser, John R. Davies, banker and former president of the National Republican Club. Mr. Davies openly declared his opposition to President Roosevelt's foreign policy and attacked both Roosevelt and La Guar-

dia as "warmongers." "My job is to save the Eagle from being made the tail of the Hammer and Sickle," he declared.

The City Democratic Party chieftains (the county bosses led by Tammany and correctly characterized by the progressives as the Kelly-Flynn-Sullivan machine) displayed unusual astuteness in the selection of William O'Dwyer as their candidate. O'Dwyer, an ex-policeman, entered the law profession and later became judge and more recently District Attorney in Kings County (Brooklyn). His labor record on the bench was of the conventional kind that is classified in election parlance as "good." His much-vaunted "crusade" as District Attorney against Murder, Inc., was counted upon to neutralize the Tom Dewey lure and have a pull of its own among the "clean government" forces. Brooklyn was decisive; technically not a part of Manhattan's Tammany Hall—and O'Dwyer was a "Brooklyn boy."

O'Dwyer is a member of the party of Roosevelt, Lehman, U.S. Senator Robert F. Wagner—Tammany insisted. Yet his position on foreign policy as well as on the broad domestic issues was unknown; An almost ideal candidate from the Tammany point of view.

Up to Primary Day O'Dwyer and Davies led the attack; Davies attacking the Mayor on foreign policy and O'Dwyer sniping on municipal issues. Mayor La Guardia held aloof, refusing to campaign. Thus, prior to the primaries, the campaign was apathetic and failed to arouse the electorate.

In answer to Davies' attack on La Guardia as a supporter of President Roosevelt, La Guardia's Republican backers declared that city rule and not the war was the issue in the campaign. The night before the primary contest Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, William M. Chadburne, La Guardia's Republican campaign manager; George Z. Medalie, and Charles H. Tuttle went on the air and issued press statements. The gist of their view was expressed by Dr. Butler:

"We must not let Federal issues or state issues or matters of international policy influence our judgment in any way. For the moment we are concerned and only concerned with the good government of the great City of New York."

La Guardia won the Republican nomination, but under circumstances that alarmed the Mayor's camp. Only 106,672 out of the 758,385 enrolled Republicans, or 14 per cent, participated in the primary—a figure far below pre-election estimates.

The Mayor's majority in the primaries was 19,820 out of the 106,672. He lost the Bronx and Queens, the two boroughs in which the Republican leaders had opposed his nomination. His city-wide majority was almost entirely accounted for by Manhattan.

La Guardia was also the candidate of the American Labor Party, with the united support of its Right and Left Wings. The City Fusion Party, a non-partisan, anti-Tammany grouping, collected signatures to get itself on the ballot with La

Guardia heading the ticket. A new party, the United City Party, led by certain New Deal Democrats, did the same.

The Mayoralty Campaign

After the primaries the Mayor's supporters insisted upon an active campaign. The enrolled Democrats greatly exceeded the enrolled Republicans in the city. It was evident that the Mayor would have to go to the people to win. There would have to be a real campaign for registration so that the independent voters would have their say.

The O'Dwyer managers learned the lesson from the Davies defeat in the Republican primaries. An open appeaser would have no chance at all in the general election. In recognition of this lesson, the clever—too clever—acceptance speech of O'Dwyer followed a few days after the primaries.

In this speech O'Dwyer indicated the framework of his strategy. He declared himself to be a labor man of many years' standing, who would follow the progressive labor tradition set by ex-Governors Smith and Roosevelt and the present Governor Lehman. He appealed to the good government forces upon the basis of his record as District Attorney and the "solving of eighty-seven murders." He declared himself independent of Tammany Hall or of any "political machine . . . or political boss."

As an ex-policeman he claimed to know and sympathize with the needs of the civil service employees. A shrewd appeal was made to the Jews by a denunciation of "these

racial and religious fanatics . . . who have been permitted at their street meetings to insult and vilify the Jew." He took good care, however, not to mention the Coughlinites and Christian Fronters by name.

The "extravagance" of the La Guardia Administration was emphasized. A reduced city budget, lower taxes and economy were promised. (This was a disguised attack on the social welfare advances and civic improvements of the La Guardia Administration.)

La Guardia was viciously attacked for his toleration of such "Communists" and "fellow travelers" in municipal office as Borough President Isaacs and Civil Service Commissioner Paul Kern, who had supported the Spanish Loyalists, but never have been either Communists or near-Communists. Congressman Marcantonio was called the "Communist Congressman."

Finally, while declaring "that a municipal campaign is no place for the discussion of national or international questions," O'Dwyer paid formal homage to the Roosevelt Administration and gave the impression of agreement with its policy. He declared:

"Yes, I am a Democrat. So is President Roosevelt, so is former Governor Smith, and so is Governor Lehman. . . . I believe with President Roosevelt that the most effective answer to Hitler's method of total attack is total defense. I endorse the policy of the President in defending our sovereignty and democracy and the policy of the President and Congress in giving aid to

those countries which are resisting Nazi aggression." (*The New York Times*, Sept. 19, 1941.)

Thus we see the attempt of the candidate of the appeaser camp to capitalize on the anti-fascist sentiments of the masses, to confuse the voters.

The wave of red-baiting started by O'Dwyer in his acceptance speech helped to open the eyes of many progressives who had been somewhat fooled by O'Dwyer and alienated by La Guardia's errors.

La Guardia, on the other hand, despite an emphatic public disassociation from Communist support, refused to yield or retreat before the red-baiting provocations of Tammany. He refused to condemn Isaacs, Kern, or Congressman Marcantonio, all of whom were singled out as principal targets by O'Dwyer. He increased his own activity on all fronts in the campaign, and helped to unite and mobilize the anti-Hitler and progressive forces.

However, La Guardia did not emphasize the fundamental issue of the campaign—namely, the struggle against Hitlerism, thus falling short of the full strength he could have given to the anti-Hitler character of the campaign.

The truth of the Communist Party analysis of issues and forces of the election made in the early part of the campaign was sustained. What was our Party's analysis?

Already in August, the Communist Party Election Committee declared:

"The defeat of Hitler, the independence of nations and the welfare

of their peoples . . . these are the issues now. These are the issues of this election campaign. . . . Those who would destroy labor's rights, discriminate against Negroes, Jews and the foreign-born, wreck health, educational and recreational facilities, are playing Hitler's game. . . . Labor, therefore, must take the initiative in the fight against Nazism and bring about the broadest unity of the people on foreign and domestic issues. . . . We Communists stand in this election for a municipal program that will solidify the broadest unity of the people in a national front against Hitlerism."

As the campaign progressed, after the primaries, the two camps in the election became more clearly differentiated along lines that had been foreseen in the analysis by the Communist Party earlier in the campaign.

Very important was the lining up of organized labor in support of La Guardia. Both the Central Trades and Labor Council (A. F. of L.) and the Industrial Union Council (C.I.O.) took action endorsing the anti-Hitler candidate.

Thomas Lyons, President of the State Federation of Labor, Thomas Murtha and James C. Quinn, leaders of the Central Trades and Labor Council, led in the fight for La Guardia's endorsement by that body. Some leaders of the Council who had close relations with the Tammany machine brought forward O'Dwyer's "good" labor record and his promises, in order to influence the decision of this important labor body. *The anti-Hitler issue was not made the dom-*

inant issue. After a hot battle, the Central Trades and Labor Council endorsed La Guardia.

The Industrial Union Council, in endorsing La Guardia, rose above the difficulties and acrimonious disputes that had for some time past developed between it and the City Administration, difficulties due to the labor policy of the City Administration regarding the city's recently acquired transit lines and the rights of organization generally of city employees. The main issue—anti-Hitler unity—was seen and stressed by the C.I.O.—and they acted accordingly. At a meeting of 600 officers, section heads and stewards, the Transport Workers Union and its national president, Michael J. Quill, called for support of La Guardia. The American Labor Party was unanimous in its support.

The good government forces, hailing the social welfare achievements of the La Guardia Administration, stood solidly in the anti-Tammany camp.

As the campaign entered the decisive stage the Communist Party withdrew its city-wide ticket. In a statement explaining this action, the Communist Party declared that unity in the war against Hitler was the all-important issue before the city and nation; greeting the unity thus far achieved by the organized labor movement and the anti-Hitler, anti-Tammany forces. The statement said:

“City and national defense demands more public housing, more schools and more health centers. Tammany's O'Dwyer proposed to do away with it all. Tammany must

never again be allowed to corrupt our city. The Tammany candidate, supported by the appeasers, must be defeated. . . . The organized labor movement shares in this opinion; so do the progressive and independent voters. The Communists welcome this unity of the labor and progressive forces of our city. We wish to do all we can to help this united city front against Hitler and Tammany.”

This was our message on the air and in millions of leaflets.

Only one Communist Councilmanic candidate in each borough was left in the race. Under Proportional Representation, one could vote for the Communist candidate as well as for the other labor, anti-Hitler, and anti-Tammany candidates.

The Communist Party had characterized O'Dwyer as the Tammany candidate supported by reactionaries and appeasers. O'Dwyer was first sponsored by Hearst in his *Journal-American*. He was the carefully groomed candidate of the Kelly, Sullivan and Flynn machines. The *Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter*, official organ of the German-American Bund, had as early as July 17 announced:

“La Guardia is pulling all strings to have himself elected to a third term as Mayor of Greater New York. La Guardia never has been the Mayor of all the component elements that make up the population of the metropolis. His whole concern has been for factions, the internationalists and German-baiters, hostile to large sections of the electorate. A large number of new

voters will be eligible to vote for Mayor this fall and all must register. Many of them are opposed to La Guardia and a third term."

Later in the campaign the local Nazis became much more careful but just as zealous in their work to defeat La Guardia. Quietly but effectively the Christian Fronters, the Coughlinites and the America Firsters did all they could to rally support for O'Dwyer. After Davies, the open appeaser, had been defeated in the primaries and decided that it was wiser not to run as an independent, he threw his support openly to O'Dwyer. The *Daily News* of October 8 reported that Davies' decision not to run as an independent "was greeted with glee in the headquarters of the Kings County D. A. O'Dwyer."

On the O'Dwyer ticket was Paul P. Rao, a fascist whose law firm had drawn up the original incorporation papers for the A.V. Publishing Company, the corporate title of the *Beobachter*, as well as representing arrested Bund hooligans. Congressman Martin J. Kennedy, a notorious appeaser, was a conspicuous worker for O'Dwyer.

The Communists exposed O'Dwyer's lip-service endorsement of President Roosevelt as calculated to create minimum damage for him among the appeasers and maximum confusion among the anti-Nazis and progressives. In answer to O'Dwyer's red-baiting, the Communists declared: "Communism is not the issue in the campaign, but unity against Nazism and Tammany is the issue."

The Communists were the ones who raised most clearly and sharply the real issue in the campaign—unity in the struggle against Hitler and against the appeaser-supported Tammany candidate; what the defeat of La Guardia would mean to the city and nation as well as to the international struggle against Nazism. The Communists showed that foreign policy is inseparable from domestic policy in total defense against Hitler. The withdrawal statement and the anti-O'Dwyer campaign of the Communist Party had effect. The Tammany candidate was heckled with embarrassing questions at his public meetings. Tammany speakers were forced into the position of meeting the issues as presented by the Communist Party.

Tammany drew heavily on party loyalty. Its big guns were called into action. Unable to submerge narrow partisan interest, Governor Lehman, Lieutenant Governor Poletti, and Senator Wagner joined Farley and Flynn to defeat La Guardia. Attorney General Bennett and Solicitor General Epstein also gave their services.

The labor movement and other anti-Nazi forces swung into action for La Guardia. George Meany, Secretary-Treasurer of the A. F. of L., and Thomas Lyons, State President of the A. F. of L., as well as Thomas Murtha and James C. Quinn of the City Central Trades and Labor Council, went on the air. C.I.O. unions rallied their membership through special union committees, meetings and literature. Wendell Willkie, Judge Seabury, Manhattan

District Attorney Dewey, and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise actively participated in the campaign for La Guardia.

Numerous committees representing all phases of civic life, professionals (actors, doctors, lawyers), business men, representative groups of citizens of foreign descent all pitched into this campaign which promised to end in a very close vote. La Guardia himself actively entered the campaign, but emphasized good government, mainly limiting his reference to the struggle against Hitler as a "post-war problem."

On October 24 came the endorsement of La Guardia by President Roosevelt on the basis that: "Mayor La Guardia and his administration have given to the city the most honest and, I believe, the most efficient municipal government."

And the President was careful to indicate that the city's election: "Has no relationship to national politics but is confined to civic policies."

By this time the following had entered the New York City elections: President Roosevelt, Willkie, Farley, Flynn, Lehman, Senator Wagner, Secretary of War Stimson, Assistant Secretary Berle, U.S. Housing Administrator Straus, Federal Works Administrator Carmody, not to mention the state officers. Yet all of these, including La Guardia (with the possible exception of Willkie), denied that anything but local city government was involved!

This almost disastrous attempt to

deny the main issue had its effect in reducing the registration 34,000 below 1937 (Mayorality election year) and 940,000 below the 1940 figure. It made possible the low level of political "discussion" in the last days before election.

La Guardia, in a hasty statement to the press regarding an election decision by the N. Y. Court of Appeals, used the term "goniffs." Governor Lehman unhesitatingly assumed that this was meant to apply to himself and to his brother, the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals—the highest court in the state. The incident was seized upon by Farley, Lehman and O'Dwyer and became the notorious "Goniff" issue—they tried to make it *the* issue in the last lap of the campaign. It was cleverly utilized by Tammany in order to imply that La Guardia had insulted, not only the Governor and his brother, but the Jewish people as a whole.

The election campaign ended in a swamp of name-calling and abuse. The air waves were full of "liar," "cabbage head," "stooge," "double-crosser." But the people who went to the polls were not swept into the O'Dwyer camp by this final effort to confuse and deceive. The majority voted in a discriminating and heartening manner for La Guardia, for unity against Hitlerism abroad and against the corrupt Tammany machine in the city; they rejected the ticket which was supported by the Christian Fronters, the Coughlinites, and pro-Hitler forces generally. There is no doubt, however, that this false issue with which Tammany "went to town," over the

air and in thousands of unsigned mimeographed leaflets, had its effect upon many Jewish voters.

Mayor La Guardia was elected with a plurality of 133,841. The vote was: La Guardia, 1,186,394; O'Dwyer, 1,052,553.

The election of McGoldrick (Comptroller), Morris (President of

the City Council), and the Borough Presidents of Manhattan and Richmond, give the Mayor a majority on the Board of Estimate.

The following New York Mayor-alty voting chart shows the relationship of political parties in 1937 and 1941. (There was a 34,000 drop in registration in 1941).

Tammany Vote

Party	1937	1941	Comparison
Democratic	877,215 (Mahoney)	1,052,553 (O'Dwyer)	+ 175,338

La Guardia Vote

Republican	674,611	668,763	— 5,848
A.L.P.	482,790	434,279	— 48,511
Fusion	159,556	63,109	— 96,447
Progressive	27,673	Not on ballot	
United City.....	Not on ballot	20,225	

The Democrats increased their vote by 175,338 over 1937, gaining in all boroughs except Manhattan, with the largest increase in Queens, where O'Dwyer's exceeded Mahoney's vote by 87,937, or 51 per cent. Half of the total city Democratic gain is accounted for by Queens. The O'Dwyer forces concentrated on Queens. The appeasers and Coughlinites had been very active there and they intensified their activity during the campaign. Queens has increased greatly in population and has many large German-speaking sections. It has a large middle-class population of civil service employees and small home owners. Certain large real estate and banking interests gained

support for O'Dwyer by a clever appeal to the small home owners, blaming the city administration for "extravagance" and increased tax rates, and taking full advantage of certain misguided foreclosure policies of the Federal housing authorities.

Queens, as the county of concentrated new defense industry, has received insufficient attention from the labor-progressive-La Guardia forces. Efforts to organize these new and in many instances young workers have only just begun. Queens is the weakest county from the point of view of Communist organization and influence.

It is worth noting that La Guardia received almost as many votes

in the Republican column as in 1937, in spite of the fact that in the Bronx the regular Republican organization openly worked for O'Dwyer, and in Queens the situation was almost the same as in the Bronx with regard to the Republican machine.

The A.L.P. vote was decisive, reaching almost its peak strength of 1937, and contributing more than a third (36 per cent) to La Guardia's total vote. La Guardia's strength was greatest in the working class sections of the city. The increased activity of the labor movement, and even the beginning of political unity in the labor movement, made possible this victory of La Guardia in a confused and bitter struggle between the La Guardia-Roosevelt and the Tammany (appeaser-supported) camps. The A.L.P. vote is a real gain for labor, a gain in spite of two years of bitter strife and factionalism among the top leadership. The A.L.P. vote in New York City from its inception is:

1936 — 238,765 (For President)
1937 — 482,790 (For Mayor)
1938 — 340,749 (For Governor)
1940 — 315,777 (For President)
1941 — 434,297 (For Mayor)

The City Fusion lost 60 per cent of its vote, demonstrating thereby that good government, though a very important issue, was not the decisive one in this campaign.

In addition to electing a progressive anti-Hitler city administration, the voters defeated the two worst red-baiters and open appeasers, "Rubber-hose" Harvey (Republican Borough President) of Queens, and

the fascist Rao (Democrat), candidate for the State Supreme Court on the O'Dwyer ticket. (The defeat of Harvey, on the Republican ticket, while welcome to all progressives, was partly due to the O'Dwyer sweep in Queens on the Democratic ticket.) Tammany lost its county and judicial candidates in Manhattan. Boss Kelly of Brooklyn and Flynn, national chairman of the Democratic Party and boss of the Bronx, were unable to hold these two largest boroughs of Greater New York against the La Guardia ticket.

In passing, let us take due notice of the role of the Socialist Party, which was on the scene with its appeaser, anti-La Guardia candidate, Dr. Hartman. He did what he could to help O'Dwyer, while himself making a bid for the votes of muddled pacifists. He even openly expressed approval of the anti-Semitic content in Lindbergh's Des Moines speech. In spite of considerable press and radio publicity, he received a total of 24,145 votes.

To sum up:

With anti-Hitlerism the real issue of the election, and New Yorkers overwhelmingly anti-Hitler, why then the small plurality for La Guardia? The answer is that the lines were not clearly drawn, that the main issue was beclouded, with the result that the anti-Hitler vote was divided.

The Mayor did not help a great deal to clear the issues. In a number of speeches he concentrated on the post-war period as though Hitlerism was a closed chapter. Overlooking the urgent need of bending

all efforts for national defense, he spoke as though the questions of war mobilization and national unity were already achieved. Thus, in an address before City College students on September 30 he said:

"We are ready for any war emergency. The war will end through our help to the Allies, or we might be attacked—and we are ready for that. Our real problem comes after the war ends."

And further:

"We have solved our problems of defense production, training, protection of our shore-line, and international rights, and we have financed this emergency, but we have not solved the social and economic post-war problems."

The New York City electorate has been and remains predominantly Democratic. President Roosevelt is the leader of the anti-Hitler front and his leadership is associated in the minds of the people with the Democratic Party. Moreover, the Democratic Party in New York City placed over itself the protective cloak of professed support of Roosevelt's policies. The contribution of Governor Lehman and U.S. Senator Robert F. Wagner—prominent figures in the anti-Hitler camp and, especially the latter, with a fine record in progressive social legislation—who were prevailed upon to act "regular" and to lend active support to the Democratic ticket, counted heavily—on the wrong side of the fence. In short, everything possible was done by the anti-La Guardia strategists to confuse the electorate and to corral the anti-

Hitler vote for the Democratic Party ticket.

In the face of these facts, the Democratic Mayoralty candidate was nevertheless defeated. The majority of the New York City electorate proved able to see through the Tammany demagoguery and to recognize La Guardia as the real anti-Hitler candidate.

Unfortunately, the La Guardia forces did not bring forward boldly enough the main issue—the need for anti-Hitler unity to defeat the appeaser-supported Tammany candidate, O'Dwyer. This facilitated the shameless demagoguery of the O'Dwyer campaign, and at times the side-tracking of the main issue, with much discussion and acrimony over trivial or red-herring issues—La Guardia's "travels," "part-time Mayor"—and the vituperations over the "goniff" issue in the last days of the campaign. It was the labor movement and the Communist Party that emphasized the main issue and kept it before the voters throughout the campaign.

It is to the credit of labor and progressives generally that as the campaign progressed the candidates—including La Guardia—gave increased attention to the central issue facing the American people. Thus in a number of meetings, particularly under the auspices of labor, in the last weeks of the campaign, La Guardia came forward, raising the issue of anti-Hitlerism.

The anti-Hitler record of La Guardia, his close personal and political relationship with Roosevelt, as well as the electorate's increasing awareness as to the nature of the

two opposing camps in the elections, drew support, regardless of political alignment. Very effective in deciding the election was the growing stress laid by La Guardia in the latter stages of the campaign, on the real issue in the election as brought forward by labor and the Communists. The vote cut across party lines.

However, the demagoguery of O'Dwyer and the political weaknesses of La Guardia's campaign made it possible for O'Dwyer to get the large vote he obtained. It accounts for La Guardia's small plurality in our overwhelmingly anti-Hitler city. The O'Dwyer vote is not an appeaser vote. The open appeaser forces are relatively weak. They dared not fly their own flag, to attempt to rally mass support for an avowed appeaser candidate. They rallied around O'Dwyer. They were out to defeat La Guardia, realizing fully that this would be a victory for the pro-Hitler forces throughout the world.

This strategy of the appeasers proved to be very dangerous. The lesson for the 1942 Gubernatorial and Congressional elections is clear. Demagogy and deceit are an essential part of the appeasers' strategy; their alignments will not bear labels clearly differentiating who is who. The anti-Hitler forces will have to be on the alert, smoking out the appeasers, getting things "on the record," bolstering up and stiffening the backbone of many anti-Hitler progressives who may be misled or may place party regularity above the historic needs of the day and the safety of the nation. Labor's

duties and responsibilities in the national front are heavy. It will be decisive in the 1942 elections as it was this year. The analysis and study of the 1941 campaign holds many lessons for, and must be the beginning of, the very important election campaign of 1942.

The Council Elections

While Tammany retains a majority in the City Council, the results in various ways indicate the anti-Hitler, anti-Tammany sentiments of the electors, and their deep desire for national unity. Borough President Isaacs, denied the Republican nomination for the same office, was elected to the City Council. Meyer Goldberg, leader of a Smash Hitler Conference in his community (the lower East Side of Manhattan), won a seat in the Council. The Reverend Adam Clayton Powell, the labor-progressive unity candidate of the Negro people, is the first Negro elected to the City Council since that body replaced the old Board of Aldermen. The A.L.P. doubled its representation in the City Council. Three women were elected, two of whom are progressives. Harry Laidler, a Norman Thomas Socialist, refused renomination by the A.L.P. and running as an independent, was defeated. For the first time in the history of our city the voters elected a Communist to a city office, and Peter V. Cacchione is the Communist Councilman-elect from Brooklyn.

The Party Vote

The total Communist first choice vote (under P.R.) in 1941 was

71,399. In 1937 it was 74,148. The figures by boroughs are:

	1937	1941
Manhattan	18,354	14,130
Bronx	20,946	18,573
Brooklyn	30,237	34,748
Queens	4,611	3,948
TOTAL	74,148	71,399

The final count after pick-up of other choices was:

	1937	1941
Manhattan	19,783	14,380
Bronx	24,108	19,030
Brooklyn	41,564	48,536
Queens	4,951	4,034
TOTAL	90,406	85,980

In 1937 there was a total of 2,013,101 valid votes cast in the Councilmanic election (in the four boroughs above), in 1941 only 1,869,883. The difference is accounted for by the greater number of invalid votes. The valid votes cast declined by slightly more than 4 per cent compared to 1937. The party vote declined by 3 per cent compared to the 1937 vote. In Brooklyn the party gained both absolutely and relatively as compared to 1937.

Thus, the party vote—the total of first choice votes in the whole city—shows an absolute decline of over 3 per cent. Considered relatively, taking the total valid votes as a base of reference, it would seem to be very slightly better than stationary as against 1937. But if we study the vote by boroughs we find a very significant discrepancy: while in Brooklyn our vote shows an increase of 15 per cent, the other three

boroughs registered a decline ranging from 11 per cent in the Bronx to over 20 per cent in Manhattan. This divergence, and the reasons behind it, deserve the most careful study by the local comrades.

Cacchione picked up votes as the count progressed from candidates of all political parties and of various national groups, reflecting the effectiveness of the Communist campaign for unity in the struggle against Hitlerism and the appeaser-supported Tammany ticket.

Results of the Campaign

What do the results indicate?

1. The people of New York are anti-fascist, anti-Hitler. The vote cast for La Guardia, predicated on his own anti-fascist record and two endorsements by President Roosevelt, clearly is a vote for the foreign policies of the Roosevelt Administration. At the same time, the bulk of the vote for O'Dwyer (a little over a million) was not a vote for appeasement but indicated to a considerable extent a successful bid for the anti-Nazi vote.

That the O'Dwyer vote is not an appeasement vote is indicated, among other things, by the defeat of "Rubber-hose" Harvey in Queens, the same borough where O'Dwyer had a plurality of 92,000 over La Guardia. Harvey has never missed an opportunity to attack the President and his policies, and was clearly identified with the open fascists.

Thus the La Guardia plurality vote is only a partial reflection of the overwhelming anti-fascist sentiment of the people of New York.

Yet it would be erroneous and dangerous to minimize the strength of the appeasers.

This opens the perspective and poses the task of the people, namely: (a) to proceed in the direction of a speedy crystallization of a national anti-Hitler front movement; and (b) to intensify activity, raising sharply the issue of the danger to America, the menace of Hitlerism to the security and independence of our nation.

2. The vote in New York City reflects a shifting and cutting across party lines on the part of the voters. This phenomenon is predicated on two political trends: (a) the trend in the direction of war against Hitlerism, and (b) that of the forces who are for surrender to Hitlerism. These fundamental trends are particularly important in the light of the coming 1942 Congressional-Gubernatorial elections. In this light it becomes imperative to expose appeaser elements—no matter around whom they center and crystallize their forces—as well as to unite all anti-Hitler forces regardless of party affiliation.

3. One of the most positive features of the campaign was the decisive role of labor. The endorsement of the Mayor by both central bodies of organized labor, A. F. of L. and C.I.O., the solid backing of the A.L.P. was significant. This support indicated labor's growing appreciation of the main issues involved and a correct evaluation of the forces at play.

However, while labor was united on top, it did not succeed in rallying solidly the rank and file be-

hind the candidacy of La Guardia. It is a fact that a considerable section of the organized workers, members of the C.I.O. as well as of the A. F. of L., voted for the O'Dwyer ticket.

This can be ascribed to the fact that vital problems of the foreign policy were not sufficiently and clearly presented to the labor movement, which was reflected in an underestimation of the danger to America and its stake in the war. This is partly responsible for the slow initiative of labor to the "Battle for Production." It is further due to the failure of organized labor to lead the fight for the Neutrality Repeal Bill in Congress. It was shown in this election by the slowness of the C.I.O. in overcoming differences with the City Administration and rallying its maximum strength for the election of La Guardia.

The lessons are clear. Had there been complete progressive unity throughout the city, the composition of the City Council would have been different. In Bronx County, where unity existed around the labor candidates, two labor Councilmen were elected, with a total A.L.P. vote of 135,000. In Brooklyn, however, because of the lack of unity, despite 174,000 votes received by the A.L.P., only one A.L.P. Councilman came through.

4. Despite the absence of complete unity, La Guardia received 434,000 votes on the A.L.P. line—a substantial gain over that party's 1940 vote. What does this show? The A.L.P. is an important factor in the politics of New York and may

well prove to be the decisive factor in the Gubernatorial and Congressional elections of 1942. This fact places a great responsibility upon the leaders of that party, both borough and state—upon the leaders of the organized labor movement.

If labor is to play its part, as it must, in these crucial times, if labor is to guarantee in 1942 the election of an anti-Hitler Governor, if New York is to elect representatives to Congress next year who will support the foreign policies aimed at the destruction of Hitlerism, if New York labor is to play its part in achieving the military annihilation of Nazism, then, among other things, unity within the A.L.P. must prevail, unity at all costs. The question of control or leadership pales into insignificance compared to the main issue. All other issues and differences must be submerged. Any other policy, placing factional politics above unity, will play into the hands of the appeasers.

5. The correct application of the policy of unity resulted in a historic victory, the election of the first Negro Councilman, A. Clayton Powell, Jr. It is a fitting election climax to the long struggle for Negro rights, for proper representation in government of Negro constituencies. This victory was possible only because of the unity of the anti-Hitler forces, Negro and white, behind the Roosevelt-La Guardia camp, which Powell represented. It shows that the struggle for Negro rights and gains can be waged only by fighting against and defeating the pro-Hitler forces. The election of Dr. Powell not only gives

representation to the Negro people in this legislative body, which in itself is of tremendous political significance, it also is a warning to the politicians of both old parties that the Negro people will not remain satisfied with election promises that are forgotten after election day.

In the election of Dr. Powell, the Negro people rejected the practice of the old parties—nominating Negroes but making no serious effort to elect them for the purpose of simply attracting the Negro vote.

The election of Powell is a repudiation of the ugly and unscientific "theory" of race superiority, as it is a refutation of the argument that Negroes vote and think only along nationalist lines, ignoring the main problem facing the people as a whole.

On the contrary, it indicates that Negroes can unite both within their own ranks for the election of a Negro and at the same time join with other sections of the population in the struggle against the main enemy. Powell, the Negro candidate of the A.L.P., endorsed by labor, progressive, and good government forces, as well as by the Mayor, was elected, while the Negro Tammany candidate, Stout, was defeated. The election of Powell was a victory for the whole anti-fascist camp.

6. The importance of national groups in New York City is more evident than ever before. The overwhelming anti-Hitler sentiment of the Jewish people which was not fully reflected in the vote must now be given full expression. The entire Jewish people can be united and made an integral part of the

national front against Hitler. The large La Guardia vote in the Italian Assembly Districts shows that a proper approach to the national aspirations of the Italian people, a correct and patient explanation of the effects in Italy of Nazi domination, and the danger to all Americans of a Nazi victory, will bring the vast majority of Americans of Italian descent into the national front.

Among the Irish-American masses there is no love for Hitler. It is the old hatred for Great Britain which is the obstacle to their full participation in the anti-Hitler camp. A free and independent Ireland is possible only in a world free of the Nazi menace. To bring this message to the Irish-Americans is the task of the anti-Hitler forces. The vote in the German sections shows that increased activity there can crystallize and unify the existing anti-Nazi sentiment in the German section of our city's population.

The Negro people registered the largest plurality for La Guardia. Increased struggle against discrimination and for equal rights for the Negro people is an essential part of the struggle for national unity in our city and nation. The Powell victory is only the beginning of complete unity of the Negro people and for their full inclusion as equal partners in the national all-out effort to defeat Hitlerism.

7. The New York municipal elections confirm once more that red-baiting has grown too stale for public consumption—and from a practical point of view it doesn't pay. Mahoney red-baited in 1937 and

was licked. O'Dwyer used the same method with the same result. The people and the working class are too mature to believe that La Guardia is a Communist, or that Communism was the issue in the New York election. The workers have learned much about the Communist Party, its workings, its principles, its sincerity. They have seen the Communists unselfishly and tirelessly working for the destruction of Hitlerism. The workers remember the call of the Communist Party and its leader, Earl Browder, to defend Loyalist Spain when that country and its people were in a life-and-death struggle with the same forces which today threaten American security and independence.

8. The election of Peter V. Cacchione to the City Council is not solely a victory of the Communist Party. This victory belongs to the people, to the anti-fascist camp as well as to the Communist Party. It confirms the correctness of the Communists' main plank in the election campaign—the unity of all the people to defeat Hitlerism. At the same time, it is a tribute to the effectiveness of the party's local election campaign in Brooklyn and of the mass appeal of the candidate. Peter V. Cacchione is a Communist community leader. He represented the aspirations and desires of the common people. His long record of struggle for the unemployed, for local civic improvements and against discrimination, not only of Italians but of Jews and Negroes as well, had earned for him the love of progressives regardless of political

opinion. Many veterans remembered his role in the bonus march, his struggle against Hoover "prosperity." His neighbors knew him, his wife and his son. The women of Brooklyn remembered his leadership in the struggle for schools, nurseries and health centers. Thousands of homes were canvassed, the radio and millions of leaflets told the story of the anti-Hitler Brooklyn candidate of the Communist Party—the railroad worker, Peter V. Cacchione.

Councilman-elect Cacchione is living proof of the voters' repudiation of red-baiting, of the maturity of the electorate.

The election of Peter V. Cacchione to the Council reflects the great desire of the people for national unity, since the Communists placed as the central issue in the campaign the defense of our country, the great need for national unity and the urgent necessity to war on Hitler *now*. The people responded and elected Cacchione as part of that great people's effort to win the war against Hitler, to preserve our country's national existence and independence.

9. While the O'Dwyer vote in Queens, as in the city generally, is not an appeaser vote, the appeasers are, however, strongest in that borough. The task of the anti-Hitler forces is to offset and eliminate the activity and influence of the Coughlinite and America First forces. Our Party must take careful note of the weakness of our campaign in Queens, our failure to understand fully the recent changes that have taken place there. These weaknesses

must be corrected. The Communist Party must make Queens a concentration point with emphasis on strengthening the anti-Hitler movement, building the party and increasing the circulation of the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker*.

The Role of the Party

The Communist Party made its chief contribution to the people's victory through its correct political analysis of the main issue and the forces in the campaign. While full clarity on the nature of the main election issue was not achieved, O'Dwyer was forced to meet this issue, and La Guardia's emphasis on the need for anti-Hitler unity increased as the campaign progressed.

The withdrawal of the Communist city-wide ticket was an example of how everything can and must be subordinated to the main issue. All obstacles must be overcome to carry into life the policy of our party—national unity in the struggle against Hitlerism. The historic national task of the period demands unity of all Americans—we did all in our power to meet this demand.

The inseparable bond between domestic and foreign policy—the full significance of appeaser support for the reactionary and corrupt Tammany machine—was brought to the electorate primarily by the Communists. The Communist influence and strength was used to help unify the ranks of labor and the progressive movement generally.

Much remains to be done. The political unity of labor, both in the

trade union movement and in the A.L.P., must be extended and deepened to include the entire rank-and-file membership. Closer bonds can be established between the labor movement and the other anti-Hitler forces. The Powell victory opens up the possibility of further developing the unity of the Negro people in collaboration with the whole anti-Hitler camp. Our work among the national groups must be intensified to correspond more closely to the needs and the possibilities.

The entire nation is benefited by the strengthening of any section of it which sincerely and honestly participates in the struggle for full war mobilization, military and civil, for the destruction of Hitlerism. The entire effort of the Communists is bent upon building the anti-Hitler front. With this consideration, clearly the release of Earl Browder, the building of the Communist Party, and the circulation of the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker* are not only of the utmost importance to the Communists, but are important to the advance of the common national effort.

The elections are over. The people have scored a victory in the election of La Guardia, the increase of progressive representation in the City Council (Isaacs, Powell, etc.), the increased strength of the A.L.P., the election of Cacchione. The party worked harder than ever before—campaigning with more canvassing, more radio broadcasts, more literature. Yet, the entire con-

duct of the party campaign, the tempo, the standards of achievement and objectives set were too much in line with previous years and former campaigns. The full significance of the new situation in the country and the needs and possibilities thereof were not fully seen.

The incoming City Council can play its part in forging the unity of the people of New York as part of that great American National Front. The new Council, opening in January, 1942, must witness a group of men and women conscious of the grave danger to their country, alert to the responsibilities placed upon them by the electorate.

Over our people still hang clouds of insecurity and danger as long as the march of the fascist hordes in Europe continues. The fight on the Eastern Front continues in all its ferocity. The people of Europe, subjugated or menaced by Hitlerism, call to us for aid. Hence the job of America, to help destroy fascism, has just begun. The process of unification of labor must be completed. Election campaign wounds must be healed and differences forgotten among the patriots of America. All sincere anti-fascists, all liberty-loving people must unite in one great force to assure the safety of our homes, the security of our people.

Labor and all true anti-fascists must take the initiative in rallying the people, regardless of party affiliation, of religion, race or color, in a true national front for the annihilation of Hitlerism.

CIVILIAN DEFENSE AND MORALE—A VITAL FACTOR IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST HITLERISM

BY HERBERT BENJAMIN

CIVILIAN morale has always played an important role in determining the outcome of wars throughout the ages in every part of the world. Such was the case also in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars in our own land. History records numerous instances when military victories failed to be decisive because the people, the civilian population, could not be subdued.

Today the role of civilians and civilian morale is more decisive than ever. Modern warfare, involving far larger armed forces and vast, costly equipment, not only places more onerous burdens on the civilian population but makes much heavier demands upon civilian effort and civilian morale. Moreover, modern warfare is to a large extent carried directly to the civilian population in their homes, fields and workshops. Some of the most extensive and violent military operations of present-day wars are directed against the people rather than against their armies. The homes of industrial workers and

farmers are the objects of far more furious and destructive assaults than those directed against the strongest fortresses in earlier wars.

Shanghai, Chungking, Addis Ababa, Madrid, Guernica, Barcelona, Warsaw, Oslo, Amsterdam, Brussels, London, Coventry, and the many other cities subjected to cruel bombardment, in some cases reduced to ruins by aircraft and tanks, are grim and tragic reminders that modern warfare does not differentiate between uniformed men engaged in active military service and civilian non-combatants of whatever age or sex. The feats of courage and fortitude performed by the people of Britain and, most recently, by the defenders of Kiev, Odessa, Leningrad and Moscow, are indicative of the kind of trials for which liberty-loving people must be prepared in these, our times. They are at the same time an admonition to responsible leadership as to the kind and degree of preparation that must be made to assure the best results from the courage and fortitude of the people.

It has been well said: "The man when at his best is worth many times the ramparts behind which he fights." But this well-deserved tribute to the bravery and resourcefulness of the people does not justify failure by their responsible leaders to assure maximum preparation, organization and fortification.

In Madrid and later in the various British cities, civilian defense was organized only after the war had begun and in the midst of attack. In the Soviet Union, preparations for civilian defense were begun many years ago, in 1926, when the leaders of the Soviet people, with their characteristic foresight, transformed the V.N.O. (Military Scientific Society), which had been formed in 1920, into the O.S.O. (Society for Assistance to Defense). One year later, Voroshilov proposed the unification of O.S.O. with Aviakhim, which represented a previous merger of the Society of Friends of Chemical Defense with the Society of Friends of the Air Force. Thus, as early as 1927, the Soviet people, realizing the nature of modern warfare, began, through the Osoaviakhim, to prepare civilian defense and civilian participation in the development of the armed might of the U.S.S.R. When Hitler launched his dastardly attack upon the Soviet Union this civilian defense organization had an active, trained membership of 15,000,000 men and women.

Members of the British and American missions who visited Moscow and were present during Nazi bombing raids over the city have expressed their amazement and ad-

miration at the orderliness and efficiency of the civilian as well as military defense organization. Some of these observers mistakenly assert that this effectiveness is, in part at least, peculiar to "dictatorship" and is impossible of emulation where the people are unaccustomed to obeying "orders" from a "dictator." The real reason for these and other "amazing" feats of the Soviet people and their army is far more instructive. Soviet citizens, who love their country as people everywhere love their native land, are united, know why they are fighting, and in addition have been trained by a clearheaded leadership which foresaw long ago that millions of civilians would have to know how to defend themselves. Millions of women, as well as men of all ages, were encouraged to learn how to shoulder a gun, don a gas mask, extinguish fires, clear away wreckage, serve as air-raid wardens and watchers, use air-raid shelters, give first aid to victims of poison gas or bombs, and perform the many other emergency duties required of civilians under conditions of modern total warfare. The reason is not dictatorial command but appreciation by the Soviet citizens of what needs to be done to defend themselves, their neighbors, their cities and their socialist fatherland. They know how to defend themselves and their country, and they possess the organization that makes performance of their duties possible.

Civilian Defense in the U.S.

As part of the national defense program, our own government has

launched and is gradually developing organization and training for civilian defense. By an Executive Order of President Roosevelt, on May 27, 1941, the United States Office of Civilian Defense (O.C.D.) was established with Mayor La Guardia as Director. This agency is charged with the important task of coordinating and directing the efforts of the many voluntary organizations and agencies, and of initiating and directing the great variety of activities essential to civilian defense under conditions of modern warfare.

The program offered by the Office of Civilian Defense shows a real grasp of what must be done to develop and maintain civilian morale, as well as the technical forms of civilian defense. Contrary to popular misconception, civilian defense is not limited to the considerable number of special technical functions required when a civilian population is under attack. As outlined in a manual of the Office of Civilian Defense,* these specialized functions for which volunteers are urged to train represent only a very small fraction of the long list of essential civilian defense services. They are enumerated in the first section, entitled "Volunteer Opportunities in Civilian Protection Programs."

As against this list of fifteen services to be performed by those who volunteer and are trained as air-raid wardens, messengers, nurses' aides, fire-watchers, rescue squads, decontamination corps, demolition

and clearance crews, etc., there is a list of hundreds of services and functions with which active members of all organizations concerned with the social welfare of the people are already familiar. In fact, many hundreds of thousands, even millions of members of trade unions, fraternal and other civic and community organizations have been conducting and promoting such activities for years, often in the face of official hostility and opposition. Now they are officially urged to increase and improve such activities in the interest of national defense.

For example, Section Two of the Civilian Defense program deals with "Volunteer Opportunities in Programs for Unity." This section suggests the development of "forums or town hall meetings, discussing local, national and international topics, etc.," and nine other activities, including such as "will bring people of different nationalities together," "work on committees concerned with promoting and safeguarding civil liberties," and "work for improved intergroup relations."

Others of the thirteen sections into which the program is divided deal with volunteer opportunities in relation to "special service for men in uniform and defense industry workers," consumer problems, housing, health, education, nutrition, child care, war relief organizations, etc.

Even a brief glance at this long list of social and community services cannot but create a favorable impression for any one concerned with the social welfare of the people as well as with the defense of

* *A Civilian Defense Volunteer Office; What It Is, How It Is Set Up, What It Does, How to Organize It*, O.C.D., Washington, D. C.

our nation. It is highly significant that the Federal Government considers it necessary to sponsor such a program as an essential part of the national defense effort. For through this program the Government frankly declares, not only that civilian defense is an important part of national defense, but also that the social and economic conditions of the people are decisive in determining our ability to meet and defeat the attack by the forces of the fascist Axis. This program, in principle and in its major details, is deserving of general approval and support.

A vital part of the civilian defense program involves the promotion of the closest relations between the men in the armed forces and the civilian population. The work of such groups as the United Service Organizations (U.S.O.), Citizens' Army and Navy Welfare Committees, and others, while subject to improvement, is extremely valuable in this connection, and worthy of the support of the trade unions, fraternal organizations, youth groups and other people's organizations. The ways of giving comfort and support to the men in the armed forces, of strengthening morale and of preparing them to deal with the traitorous, pro-fascist counsels emanating from "America First," are limitless. Without undertaking any detailed analysis here, it is possible to note such commonplace but basic activities as arranging leaves for national or religious holidays, raising funds through block parties and other means to pay for transportation, and regular letter-writing to fellow-trade union members.

The serious shortcomings in our civilian defense preparations are not in the program but in its execution. And here, as in all phases of our national defense effort, the chief weaknesses are due to inadequate appreciation in official as well as unofficial quarters of the imminence of the dangers that face our country.

While the Federal Directors appear to understand the urgency as well as the general importance of the civilian defense program, many of the officials designated to head the program in the states and local communities are still suffering from political myopia and chronic inertia. All too many state and city officials still consider Hitlerism to be a remote threat. (Some are not even disposed to look upon Hitlerism as a threat to be repelled, but consider it rather a solution to be welcomed.) Many of the officials who have been entrusted with the preparation of our civilian defense are still much more concerned with their own personal political interests than with the interests of the country, the community and the people. Yet such state and local officials have been placed in charge of this vital program simply because they hold a given political job. Not all of these are entirely lacking patriotism. Few of them are Quislings. But they simply fail to understand the grave peril to America in Hitler's drive for world conquest. They are too preoccupied with "business as usual" to give serious consideration to the lessons of the numerous cities and countries that have experienced the ruthlessness of fascist warfare.

The apathy, lethargy, thoughtlessness and lack of vision in official circles, as well as the deliberate treachery of "America Firsters" and other pro-fascists who occupy key positions in state and municipal governments, are largely responsible for the alarming lag in our civilian defense preparations and activities. Here, as in all cases where the national defense effort is retarded by official incompetence and neglect, the only remedy is to encourage and stimulate the initiative of the people. Just as workers in defense industries must overcome obstructions to all-out production due to negligence, incompetence and sabotage by employers and management, so too must the people of every community and state assume responsibility for organizing and developing the civilian defense program even where responsible officials fail in their duty.

The Battle of Production is vitally affected by the degree of progress in developing civilian defense. The civilian defense program recognizes the importance of creating and maintaining conditions that will help workers in defense industries to reach maximum productivity. This involves, first of all, the economic and social conditions of the workers and their families. It involves also the development of civilian morale within each community which will inspire all who live in it, especially those working in defense industries, with the determination to outproduce Hitler in order to secure the military defeat of Hitlerism.

Local Initiative Is Essential

Fortunately, those directing the Federal Civilian Defense program understand that defense of the community must be organized on the basis of the initiative of the men and women of the community. While too much reliance is still placed on officials who have been designated to head and start the organization of civilian defense, the program once launched is committed to the supervision of a community body, the "Local Civilian Defense Volunteer Office." This office is in fact a bureau which is composed of representatives of all possible organizations and agencies in the community. Or, as it is described in the manual issued by the U.S. Office of Civilian Defense,

"... the Volunteer Office is a coordinating service belonging to the whole community, it is administered by a board composed of men and women, representative, as far as practical, of all interested community groups—women's organizations, labor organizations, men's civic organizations, patriotic organizations, church groups, social agency boards, fraternal orders, etc. The board should be strictly non-political in character. . . ."

This broad and representative council is the basic unit of the nationwide civilian defense movement. It is the organizational form which has always proved most effective as a means of uniting many organizations and people of a diverse character for a common purpose. Members of labor and progressive organizations have had considerable

experience in forming and working through such councils. Workers who have had such experience should not find it difficult to be active in establishing these councils in their own communities. Thus, the basic organization required can be provided wherever there are even a few individuals who are sufficiently mindful of the urgent need for unity in defense of our country to take the initiative.

Considerable stimulus has been given to the development of this unity for civilian and national defense by President Roosevelt's proclamation which designated the period from November 11 (Armistice Day) to November 16,

" . . . as a time for all persons throughout the nation to give thought to their duties and responsibilities in the defense of this country and to become better informed of the many vital phases of the civilian defense program and of opportunities which it offers for the participation of every individual American in the defense of our priceless heritage. . . ."

This proclamation preceded by a few days the President's Navy Day speech, in which he announced that the "shooting has begun." Each day fresh events add to the evidence that the American people dare not continue to live and act as though the war were a remote threat. Every delay in assuming wartime duties and responsibilities aids Hitler and weakens our own country and all nations engaged in the struggle to destroy Nazism.

Labor Must Become Active in Civilian Defense

Enlistment for civilian defense duties has been more extensive than is generally known. Considerable numbers of men and women are being trained for wartime duties in many local communities. But most mass organizations of the labor movement have thus far neglected to interest themselves in this program. As a result the civilian defense movement is not yet sufficiently representative of all sections of the population. This, however, is not altogether the fault of the civilian defense directors. As soon as any considerable number of mass organizations begin to display the interest which they should take in this vital program, its character and leadership can be made as representative of the most decisive elements in the community as it is intended to be.

The trend is already in that direction. Recently a number of national unions have issued appeals to their membership to join and support the civilian defense program. Women's auxiliaries have been among the first to respond. Such fraternal organizations as the B'nai Brith Women's Auxiliary and the International Workers Order have been quick to endorse the call of President Roosevelt. In fact, the latter organization began early last summer to involve its entire membership in one or another phase of civilian defense work. Such organizations are in a position to be especially effective, since they are organized on a community basis and

have always concerned themselves directly with problems of social and community welfare.

It is not difficult for an organization that has been engaged in campaigns to promote improved housing, health protection, unity regardless of race or national origin, etc., to find a place of usefulness in the civilian defense program. Nor is this difficult for organizations concerned with efforts to prevent profiteering in consumer goods, gouging by landlords, and with other activities protecting the standards and rights of the people. Such activities are all an essential part of the civilian defense program. They now take on added significance and can be conducted more effectively with the support of the entire community as represented in the Volunteer Community Council or Office.

Organizations and individuals that have especially concerned themselves with one or another of these problems must, however, be mindful of the relation between each of these problems and the total problem of civilian defense and civilian morale of which each of these is a part. The basis for unity in the defense councils is the common interest in defense of the local community and the nation. Care must be exercised to prevent the introduction of division which might result if each group having a special interest were to attempt to exploit this unity for some particular pet project, however laudable, without regard to the interests of other participating groups. Nor must the specific, emergency or wartime activities connected with civilian pro-

tection be forgotten as a result of preoccupation with the more normal and familiar problems. On the contrary, just because the American people are not yet as keenly aware as they should be that defense of our country against the menace of fascist attack means toil, hardship, sacrifice, and not merely sympathy for those who have been and are experiencing the direct effects of Nazi warfare, it is acutely necessary to lay main stress on wartime duties and responsibilities.

American soil has long been free from the ravages of warfare. Few living Americans have experienced the stress and trials to which civilians are subjected when armies march and fight on their farmlands and their cities. None but a small number of individuals who recently visited Europe have experienced the horrors of aerial bombardment over thickly populated areas and upon masses of people fleeing their homes before the oncoming invaders. That is why isolationists and traitorous America Firsters find it possible to hamper preparations for national and civilian defense.

The sooner we overcome the complacency which proceeds from this false belief that "it can't happen here," the more rapidly will the American people move to take their proper place in the fight to smash Hitlerism. The civilian defense program offers an effective means of stimulating the awareness of the American people as well as of uniting and preparing them to stand up under whatever conditions they may be forced to face in the perilous times immediately ahead.

THE CALIFORNIA FARMER AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

BY HARRISON GEORGE

DESPITE the efforts of the appeasement forces to maintain their influence over the farmers, the shift in outlook in regard to international affairs which has taken place in American opinion since June 22 has very directly affected our rural population. The Hoovers, Lindberghs, Nyes and Norman Thomases, speculating on the existence of isolationist and pacifist illusions, have counted on the farmers of the Midwest as a reservoir of reactionary provincialism. But rural America is giving numerous indications that it is stirring under the impact of the Hitler menace, that it is moving away from the America First appeasers and toward agreement with President Roosevelt's foreign policy—that our own national safety requires “the final destruction of Nazi tyranny.”

One small but significant symptom of the change in rural California is to be seen in the fact that in the past three months the “Letters from the People” published by the McClatchey papers throughout the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys have shown a remarkable change-over from a position of

dominant isolationism to one of support for the policy of all-out aid to the world front against Hitler and the Axis.

Federal Policy in Agriculture Today

The production of farm commodities is a vital sector in the Battle for Production. It is imperative that the farmers and their organizations, in unison with the forces of labor, devote the utmost energy to ensuring the adoption and carrying out in practice of a genuine policy of all-out production. Already in the Administration's farm policies a beginning is being made in the direction of a change from the old policy of crop-restriction to a policy of increased production.

The beginning of this trend was marked by the exchange of letters between the President and Secretary of Agriculture Wickard, made public on August 12, wherein the President, correctly declaring that “food is a weapon against Hitlerism,” called for “abundant production,” promised that “abundance would be rewarded,” and declared that “we need not only abundant

production for ourselves and for other nations resisting aggression, but we need reserves to meet emergencies that can as yet be only dimly foreseen."

Under the slogan of "abundant production" four regional conferences were held under the sponsorship of the Department of Agriculture, at which 1942 quotas were set, the conference for the West Coast taking place at Salt Lake City on September 15.

But, notwithstanding this promising beginning, especially the Roosevelt letter, with its implied basis for the development of a democratic national farm program, the fact must be emphasized that it is up to the farmers themselves to determine how fast and how fully the country will be geared to an all-out agricultural program. The farmers, who have always opposed the plow-under and pro-monopoly features of the A.A.A., and were disappointed in finding out that its slogan of "balanced abundance" included many features of the Hoover policy of crop restriction, have shown new enthusiasm in welcoming the President's call for "increased production" and for "rewarding abundance"—and generally have gladly accepted the idea that they could aid the world front against Hitlerism by furnishing the weapon of food.

Yet it has become evident that to obtain a complete, and not a merely partial fulfillment of such a program as the President indicated, the farmers must abandon passivity and actively develop the program which

the Administration itself has initiated. This becomes all the more necessary when we see what Secretary Wickard has proposed concretely, and observe that both in the Department of Agriculture and in the field, despite the national emergency, there is official obstruction in some quarters of genuinely democratic agricultural policies and strong forces working for a continuation of the old pro-monopoly policy of production.

By Administrative decree, under the Steagall Amendment to the act of July 1, 1941, extending the life of the Commodity Credit Corporation, Secretary Wickard, on September 8, declared the Department would "support" (by commodity loans as in the case of the five "basic" products) hogs, eggs, evaporated milk, dry skim milk, cheese and chickens. Such support by loans at 85 per cent of parity has the effect of "putting a floor" under market prices, and the immediate effect was a rise of prices above the floor. Whether it is the actual farmers or the speculators in farm products who benefit more is a question. Nevertheless, this support to these commodities, limited in number though they may be, does encourage production and is a step in the right direction, marking a break-away from the favoritism hitherto shown to the five so-called "basic" crops (corn, cotton, wheat, tobacco, rice).

It seems clear that this particular step was taken to meet the British requirements, which under the Lend-Lease Act called for providing \$1,000,000,000 worth of foods. Definite commitments to Britain in

1942 include some 5,000,000,000 pounds of milk (dried), 500,000,000 dozen eggs, 18,000,000 pounds of chicken, 1,500,000,000 pounds of pork and lard, 1,250,000,000 tons of fruit, and 2,500,000 cases of canned vegetables. Vast as these quantities may seem, they do not represent much of an increase in production, and surely do not strain America's productive capacity, if, indeed, they reach it.

The same Department press release of September 8 carried the 1942 production goals, which indicate that the Department is proposing something quite different from the "abundant production" called for by the President, in so far as the five so-called "basic crops" are concerned:

a. Corn, about the same acreage as in 1942, which is 6,000,000 acres below the average from 1936 to 1940. In other words, continued restriction of production, despite the increased need for corn as feed.

b. Cotton, about the same acreage as in 1942; but this, also, is 4,000,000 acres below the 1936-40 average. Here, too, continued restriction.

c. Wheat, the most marked reduction of all, is set at 50,000,000 acres for 1942, compared with 63,000,000 in 1941, and 72,000,000 as the 1936-40 average. Aside from this extreme reduction in 1942 wheat, the Department unexpectedly raised the penalty for over-quota production of the 1942 crop from 15 cents to 45 cents per bushel. And it might be added that the continuation of restrictions on wheat will lead to a crisis in even the supply of this

"abundant" crop in view of the great world needs which arise from the war.

d. Tobacco, production for 1942 about the same as for 1941, but below the 1936-40 average.

e. Rice production, only slightly increased.

Thus, within the Administration set-up, there are evidently forces at work which, despite the President's call for "abundant production and reserves to beat down these forces of Hitlerism," continue to pursue the old policy that leads in the opposite direction.

Regarding farm production as a whole, it is clear that the Department program of increased production falls far short of what is needed. In his statement of September 8 Secretary Wickard himself notes that, using the 1924-29 total farm production as the index figure of 100, the present 1941 farm production is estimated at 113, and the magnificent "goal" he is striving to gain for 1942 is—just 115, or only 2 per cent more than the level of the present year.

Where is the "abundant production," let alone the "reserves"? Where, indeed, is any possibility for more food for the peoples fighting Hitlerism as well as for the 45,000,000 "shrunken bellies" among the American people? Yet Secretary Wickard said, in a radio address from San Francisco on September 8, that: "Enough of the right food is the rock-bottom essential to wartime production and morale and fighting ability" and that Americans "need more food, they want it, and they can pay for it."

One must note that Secretary Wickard does not regard his present production program as any reversal of previous farm policy. In his radio address he remarked that the Steagall Amendment "also provides that notice must be given when it is found necessary to decrease the production of any such commodities, in order that farmers may adjust their production downward. I think this is a splendid law." And in the Department press release of September 8 Secretary Wickard stated with all clarity: "The fact that we are asking for greatly increased production of some commodities does not mean that the lid is off on production of all commodities." Continuing, he said:

"For the first time in the history of agriculture in this country, production goals for all essential farm commodities have been established. . . . Every farmer in the United States will be contacted by local farmer committeemen under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture Defense Boards and will assist with individual farm plans to determine the extent to which each farm can contribute to agriculture's task in national defense."

Taken as a whole, this gives us a picture of an initial effort to organize farm production, an aim which requires the democratic participation of the people, in this case of the masses of small and middle farmers. This is necessary in order to offset the pressure of reactionary influences, and to protect the interests of the small producers and the

consumers against such anti-social trends as restrictions on production and on marketing. Above all, it is needed to make possible an all-out program of farm production as a weapon for the world front against Hitlerism.

The need for such democratic participation becomes evident when we see that the Department of Agriculture still countenances efforts to restrict marketing through crop destruction at the very moment when Secretary Wickard was calling for increased production. For how can the Department contend that it is carrying out the President's request for "abundant production," when it is responsible for such measures as the recent destruction of trainloads of lemons? A photograph of such destruction is published in the *California Grange News* of October 5, 1941, showing lemon-dumping at La Habra, California. This destruction of perfectly good fruit, an accompanying article explains, is being committed under Federal Lemon Pro-rate Order No. 53. And the article adds that attempts are being made to do the same with oranges by placing them, too, under Federal pro-rate.

This whole situation demands a complete reorientation of the farm movement, as well as the development of new programs, new slogans and new tactics. So far as legislation is concerned, and the Administration program, the farmers must, while supporting all positive and progressive aspects of Administration policy, move vigorously and speedily to see that a progressive and democratic farm pro-

gram is adopted and put into effect.

Such a really democratic farm program, on a national scale, will have to include measures to meet the following main problems:

1. A genuine all-out national program, of agricultural abundance, which will, in fact, make the most effective use of every acre, as well as the most effective use of the labor and machinery of every farmer in a planned national effort.

2. National appropriations are needed which will make such a comprehensive national farm program effective. It is apparent that the success of such a program will depend upon the rendering of substantial financial aid by the Federal Government to the majority of farmers, the small and middle farmers, those who receive the least from the A.A.A. It is more necessary than ever that the Farm Debt Adjustment Bill be enacted into law, as one of the means to make it possible for the small and middle farmers to maintain, and eventually increase, production.

3. As one way of curbing the anti-social and unpatriotic practices of the processing, farm machinery, and transportation monopolies, to combat inflation and win the necessary support of the mass of farmers, it is imperative to deal with the price question as a whole, while rewarding increased farm production with adequate prices actually paid to the farmers, prices that will cover cost of production. This aim has nothing in common with the maneuver in Congress to prevent any limit on the prices of farm

products being written into the Price Control Bill, a maneuver engineered by speculator and monopolist elements.

4. Any agricultural program to meet the needs can be put fully into effect only if the principles of democracy are maintained in practice. The requirements of the crisis demand that the Administration really democratize its program and invite the closest participation of the farmers' mass organizations in determining policy, making plans and administering all programs in detail. It is quite evident that what is necessary is that the farmers themselves, and their state and county organizations, demand and insist upon representation, with full voice and vote, upon the State and County Defense Boards.

It is the urgent responsibility of every farmer to unite with his fellows, with organized labor and the whole people, to win the enactment and implementation of such a national defense program for agriculture, nationally and locally. Only on such a basis can the farmers really do their part in the defense of America against Hitlerism.

California in the Battle for Farm Production

The part which California farmers can play in production for national defense must be examined in the light of their resources and of the special needs of their present situation. Let us consider the Administration program in relation to each of these factors.

We have already seen what the

Department plans for the so-called "five basic" crops—corn, wheat, cotton, tobacco and rice. In the main it is a continuance of the "ever-normal" policy of reduction. But none of these crops is of dominant importance to the majority of California farmers. California's entire wheat crop in 1940 was valued at only \$8,500,000, compared with a value of \$159,241,000 for fruit and nuts. Cotton planting accounted for only 342,000 acres and a value of \$25,462,000, while vegetables were grown on 500,000 acres and were valued at \$100,000,000 in 1940. Corn is no problem, neither is tobacco; and rice is important only to a few large growers, using only 118,000 acres in 1940.

But what of the new program announced by the Secretary of Agriculture, and the production goals arrived at as announced by the Western Conference at Salt Lake City on September 15 and publicized by Secretary Wickard's radio address from San Francisco on September 8? What do these call for from California farmers?

Secretary Wickard announced "substantial increases in livestock, dairy and poultry production" as well as in production of vegetables. By "livestock," however, we find that Mr. Wickard means only pork, of which California produces practically none.

Dealing with the more definite figures of the Salt Lake Conference, we find that its production goal for milk for California in 1942 calls for an increase of 14 per cent over 1941, with a 6 per cent increase in cows. This is evidently a limitation in the

increase of cows, with the increase of milk to be obtained principally by improved feeding of the existing stock.

Also, we see that the goal appears very modest, indeed. For in milk production there has been no difficulty in meeting increased demand for market milk and dairy products. Between 1938 and 1940 production of sweetened condensed milk increased 209 per cent, that of evaporated whole milk rose 15 per cent, that of dried skim milk increased 19 per cent, and that of skim milk for human consumption rose 33½ per cent.

The one problem of California dairy production is fermented cheese, since, though the state produces 16,000,000 pounds, it imports 27,000,000 pounds of other varieties which may be cut off. But aside from the technical problem of producing these other varieties, it does not seem to be much of a problem to find the necessary milk to do so out of a 1942 estimate of 5,100,000 pounds.

Obviously, the 1942 goal set in California milk production, though an increase, does not represent possible capacity of production, but rather conforms to the interests of the milk monopoly in limiting the possible increase. Evidence of this were two events taking place on November 12. One, in Los Angeles, where consumers demonstrated their protest at a state-sponsored milk hearing against the seventh increase in milk prices in seventeen months, making a total of 62.5 per cent rise in price since July, 1940; while on the same day in San Fran-

cisco the strictly monopolist "Dairy Institute of California" gathered to discuss steps against "the danger of over-expansion." There is clearly no difference between the dairy trust's objection to "plant expansion" in bringing in more cows, and that of the steel and aluminum trusts to plant expansion in metals.

The production goal of 19 per cent more eggs from California in 1942 seems attainable, since egg production rose 9 per cent in 1940 over 1939 without any special encouragement. Increased feeding costs and hence financial difficulties appear to be the only possible obstacles to meeting production goals, while we may safely say that a potential production of poultry products remains almost untapped in spite of the increase asked.

Vegetable truck crop goals, both for fresh use and for processing, are only slightly more in acreage than in 1941. And in fruit no goals were set, it being explained that "production cannot be quickly increased" and that "emphasis will be on better distribution and prevention of waste"—an outlook that seems to call for temporary suspension of the state Pro-rate Law with its wholesale destruction of vast quantities of fruit. But there is no proposal of increased planting, or even of repeal of the Pro-rate Law; though its suspension gives farmers the opportunity to press for such a repeal.

It would seem that, to those California farmers to whom the demands of the Federal Department of Agriculture Farm Program apply, the problem is one of financing

increased production; but it appears that the actual working out of the Department plan may lead more to a restriction of possible production increases than to an encouragement of increases.

In his radio speech of September 8 Secretary Wickard said:

"The State and County Agricultural Defense Boards will be the spearhead of the campaign . . . a great force is organizing the drive for increased production. Triple-A committeemen will visit every farm and work out a complete farm plan with the operator. Can you keep more chickens? Do you have a couple more heifers that will freshen next spring? That's the sort of questions the farmer and the committeemen will answer together during this Food and Freedom mobilization."

But what will be the answer if farm-to-farm visits show an unused capacity for keeping more chickens and bringing in more fresh cows than are needed to attain the goal? Will the influence of the marketing and processing monopolists then determine the issue? Will the Triple-A committeemen, then, make the decision and say: "More chickens from your ranch are not necessary, and your cows are not needed"? At the very least, there will arise among the small producers of the desired products the demand for financial assistance to increase production, for otherwise the rewards for such increase will go entirely to the big grower with available credit. There is, also, the moot question of market outlet for small

quantities, the marketing monopolies generally refusing to handle such products except from large commercial producers.

Farm Impoverishment and Indebtedness

The ability of the mass of small farmers to participate fully in any program of all-out production is sharply limited by problems of debt and financial insecurity. These problems must be faced and met.

Officialdom has "overlooked" the significance of the fact, and even the fact itself, of the increase, between 1930 and 1935, of the number of farms in California from 135,000 to 150,000; and an even more precipitate falling off, from 150,000 in 1935 to 132,000 in 1940.

The high percentage of these rapid changes, and their directions, not only show the flight of industrial workers (usually those with farm ties) from the city to the farm during the early part of the depression from 1930-1935; they show also how not only an equal, but a greater number, were driven off the farms of this state between 1935 and 1940.

On a state scale this represents what the 1940 census established on a national scale, the "years and decades" of growing impoverishment of the rural population as foretold by Lenin, a relative ruination of the small farmer accompanied by a temporary growth in the number of farms and the farm population due to industrial unemployment, finally leading to an absolute ruination accompanied by a

marked decrease in the number of farms and of the farm population.

It is still more significant of the disastrous financial situation of small California farms that a breakdown of these changes shows that "full owners" formed the majority both in the growth in numbers of farmers from 1930 to 1935, and the drop in numbers of farmers from 1935 to 1940. The percentage of semi-proletarian farmers had increased in California to 32.4 per cent in 1940. And it is notable that "full owners" of farms worked off the farm more than they worked on it, spending an average of 203 days of the year working for somebody else for wages.

If the percentage of the state's mortgaged farms has been reduced from 52 per cent in 1930 to 50 per cent in 1940, this is far from indicating an improved situation; for it is apparent that the number of mortgaged farms has been reduced by foreclosures rather than by payment of the mortgage. Indeed, the whole tragic situation of the small and middle farmers of California is summarized in the fact that, while the value of farms has dropped off 35 per cent during the last ten years, the total of mortgage debts as against that value has decreased but very little—and the interest rates on all farm debts remain at a level ruinous to the small growers.

It all works around to the fact that debt is the great burden and crop financing the big problem of California's small and middle farmers. The bulk of them, 74 per cent, are not served by government credit agencies. Only 26 per cent

are members of Farm Loan Associations and eligible for 3½ per cent long-term loans from this agency. There were only 5,521 Production Credit Loans and only 1,880 Emergency Crop and Feed Loans in the entire state in 1940. Private banker, finance company, canner and packer production loans unduly and injuriously influence commodity prices downward for the farmer during the short, perishable crop-selling season.

Farm Security Administration rehabilitation and cooperative loans are also restricted to diversified crops. There are only 5,421 active rehabilitation borrowers in California, though the Farm Security Administration's 1940 report says that an additional 5,165 families were eligible, if funds had been available.

Only ten California counties are eligible for Tenant Purchase Loans, and only 136 such loans have been made in the four years of the life of the Bankhead-Jones Act. Cooperative loans to purchase tractors, pure-bred sires and other such items number only 208 throughout the state.

The most promising possibility of financial relief and assistance is that contained in the Farm Credit Act of 1941 (H.R. 5336—S. 1797), which, if passed, will offer to two important groups of California farmers a chance to refinance farm mortgage debt on the basis of deflated land values. First, it would help some 25,000 members of National Farm Loan Associations. Secondly, it would provide funds for refinancing farmers who have filed under

Section 75 of the Bankruptcy Act. The Farm Credit Bill would also provide a means for reorganizing and liberalizing Farm Loan Associations as true cooperatives. There are several hundreds of these in California, with an average membership of some 200 or 300.

Cheap credit, long term, low interest loans are urgent in California if the small farmers are to resist foreclosures and the loss of the farm family home, and share the "rewards of abundance" in producing for national defense.

Here it is that the development of a national farm program to meet the needs of national defense, and the setting up of state and county defense boards to deal with farm production, open the way for a constructive discussion of all farm problems, price guarantees, credit facilities, protection against foreclosure, the imperative need for passage of the Farm Debt Adjustment Bill and the demand for democratic control of all farm plans.

There is need in agricultural defense production for something approximating what the "Murray Plan" proposes for industry. But the small farmers are in a relatively more difficult position than labor, because their organizations are so largely influenced by big growers, processors and marketing monopolies, and tend to be non-militant both for that reason and because of confused viewpoints regarding the problems and their solution. Hence the importance of energetic work of clarification among the members of the main farmers' organizations.

*Combat the Appeasers in the
Farm Organizations*

It is well known that fascist elements are particularly strong in California agriculture. Through the "boring from within" tactic of the leadership of the Associated Farmers, reaction has pervaded the Farm Bureau, has strangled the Farmers' Union, and is now trying to capture control of the State Grange. Reaction also pervades the cooperative marketing organizations affiliated to the National Cooperative Council. They are dominated by bureaucracies which, though pretending to operate them as "businesses," are, because they permit no membership democracy and are imbued with reactionary ideas, not even good business managers for their members.

Democratic control of all these organizations by the rank and file of dirt farmer members is the need of the hour, to bring them into line with the national defense program. There is also the possibility of uniting considerable members of farmers in such organizations as the Apricot Growers Union, around crop marketing agreements. But the most promising chance for immediate farmer organization is that offered by the campaign for the Farm Credit Act and to organize the debt-ridden farmers around the demand for financial relief.

But attention to the possibility of building such new organization does not imply by any means the slightest neglect by the militant and progressive elements of the older and, as yet, more conservative organizations. On the contrary, the present

urgent issues can easily be used to unite and activize these old organizations.

Every militant and progressive farmer must be prepared to work with anyone and any organizations whose deeds show that they support the struggle to destroy the menace of Hitlerism to the world and to our national independence. No matter if we disagree with them on every other question. No matter if they are Associated Farmer elements, in other respects reactionary in outlook—if they support, in deeds, national unity behind the anti-Nazi foreign policy of the Administration and actively combat the dangerous fifth columnists of all stripes, we must work with them in such activities.

We must support any proposals made by the old-line farm organizations which are of a progressive nature and in line with the requirements of national defense. And always we must oppose, through friendly clarification among the rank and file, all proposals of a contrary character.

Let us take, for example, the State Grange, the most progressive of farm organizations in California. How are Grange members to judge and help correct its policy toward the central issue of the day, the struggle against Hitlerism and all that this entails?

In the *Grange News* of October 5 the story of the Salt Lake City Conference of September 15 reflects the Grange attitude toward the call for increased production for national defense. The story, and, indeed, the whole issue of defense production,

is "played down," not only below routine Grange affairs, but below an insidious, anti-Soviet flavored "analysis" of Administration financial policy. There is no enthusiasm for the national agricultural defense program, but, on the contrary, a sort of sullen and mechanical acquiescence in words, with a strong undercurrent of opposition to any increased production, through emphasizing that the Grange demands "crop control by volume rather than by acreage."

Indeed, this point in the Grange proposal to the conference shows that the State Grange, far from seeking to stimulate increased production, only asks that restriction be made more effective. Certainly, this is no policy of "abundant production for national defense." Indeed, the Grange program as given to the conference, and the story as carried by the *Grange News*, make no mention of the Hitler menace and use the term "national defense" without the slightest hint as to what the nation has to defend itself against. Indeed, the Grange program suggests a hostile political attitude toward the fight against Hitlerism and the Administration foreign policy.

Progressive farmers who are members of the Grange certainly have the task of enlightening the Grange membership as to the meaning of these dangerous policies, and winning it for active support of the all-out production program.

Conclusion

If national defense is to be interpreted, as the President stated

it, in socially broad terms, including the building of the people's health as well as supplying food for the armed forces and all the peoples resisting Hitler aggression, California agriculture can and must play an important role.

Expert opinion claims that all the fruit produced in the nation, of which California produces such a large share, is still far from sufficient to furnish all the people of this country with enough for good health.

Our farmers must fight to keep and protect their orchards, increase their yields, maintain them through low interest production credit; feed the people by providing government funds to purchase and distribute foods not consumed by the purchasing power of the people in normal marketing; demand the establishment of central cooperatively owned and operated packing and marketing plants and quick freezing units.

To accomplish these tasks, farmers must work together with labor and consumer groups; and above all make their own farm organizations responsive to the needs of the masses of small and middle farmers and to the broadest national interest in fighting Hitlerism and its fifth column in America.

Let the militant and progressive farmer, working together with all anti-Hitler farmers, rally his fellows to the struggle for a national front against Hitlerism; for the "abundant production" called for by the President as a necessity for national defense—and which includes food for all the nations and all the

peoples fighting Nazi conquest; for democratic control of farm programs and farm organizations as a guarantee against reduction policies which are injurious to the national interest and to the defense of the country against Hitlerism.

Let the progressive farmer rally his fellow farmers to demand the "assurance of protection" promised by the President: for the burning

needs of the small and middle toiling farmers, such as the Farm Credit Bill; for combating the idea of isolationism and destroying the influence of its fifth-column propagandists; for bringing the full force of the rural masses into the all-out struggle for the military destruction of Hitler and all that Hitler represents as a menace of barbarism and slavery to all mankind.

THE PATRIOTIC WAR OF 1918 AGAINST THE GERMAN INVADERS IN THE UKRAINE

BY E. GORODETSKY

The Plans of the Fascist Invaders

VAINGLORIOUS to the point of delirium and their hands dripping with blood, the fascist barbarians have invaded the sacred soil of the Soviet Union. They are out to restore the power of the landlords and the tsar.

The wild vandal hordes, the destroyers of civilization, are rampant over the field of Europe. Well supplied with tanks and airplanes, that archfiend Hitler is endeavoring to wipe out the culture and civilization it has taken centuries to build up, so that he may organize his "New Order" in Europe.

As a result of the treason committed by the men directing their governments, the peoples of France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Greece and other countries have learnt from bitter experience what the splendors of this "New Order" are: the triumph of the lash and the bayonet, a regime of bloody terror.

Now the Hitler fascists are trying to bring to fruition their long-nurtured plan of enslaving the free peoples of the Soviet Union.

In his book *Mein Kampf* Hitler openly proclaims territorial conquest in the East to be the foundation stone of fascist Germany's foreign policy.

The Ukraine in particular has long been in the eye of the Fuehrer. Degenerates of the type of Rosenberg, Rohrbach and Schmidt have long, orally and in print, harped on the tremendous importance of the Ukraine, from the standpoint of military strategy, for the plans of German fascism. These fascist highwaymen looked upon the Ukraine as a springboard from which to make further conquests in the Levant. His scheme to conquer the Ukraine—a rich granary and coal-and-metal-producing region—has been brewing for many years now in the fantastic mind of Hitler. Hitler dreamed of seizing the Ukraine and making his way to the Caucasus with its Baku oil and to other rich domains of the U.S.S.R. and the countries of the Near East. From these positions fascist Germany would constitute a serious threat to British rule in India. Such were the plans of Hitlerite Germany. It is for

these purposes that the seizure of the Ukraine has been carefully prepared for ever since Hitler's accession to power.

Fascist Germany has established special institutions for the study of the "Soviet border districts" and a network of schools for the study of the Ukrainian language. The "specialists" turned out by these institutions already saw themselves as colonial officials in the Ukraine. The fascist Rosenberg, for instance, had even picked a puppet to head the future government of the "independent" Ukraine. The place of Hetman Skoropadski, who had been such a dismal failure in 1918, was scheduled to be taken by a Mr. Ostranitsa of Poltava. The latter, however, soon thereafter was caught in the toils of the police as a common criminal, and so they had to fall back again on Skoropadski.

The garrulous German journalists were shouting without let-up of the advantages to be derived from seizing the Ukraine. They sought to demonstrate that the Ukraine and Germany supplement each other economically. They dug up from the dusty archives the mad schemes concocted by the Kaiser's Eastern "specialists." As early as April, 1918, Axel Schmidt, a venal ink slinger and a boon companion of General Hoffmann, wrote:

"The agrarian Ukraine makes a splendid economic complement to the developed industry of the Central Powers."

More than two decades have since gone by, and now the fascists, by means of their perfidious attack on

the land of the Soviets, are trying to realize their frenzied plan of destroying the liberty of the Soviet people and seizing their land, their metal and their oil.

The Invasion of Soviet Soil by the German Imperialists in 1918

This is not the first time that the ravenous wolves of German imperialism have made an incursion into Soviet territory. In 1918 they likewise attempted to subjugate the Soviet Ukraine and Byelorussia.

The "New Order" propagated by Hitler is by no means new. Already in 1918 the robber barons of German imperialism tried to establish this "order" in the Soviet Ukraine.

The brutalized fascist rulers have already forgotten how a quarter of a century ago this bloody adventure ended for Germany. The Soviet people well remember the February days of 1918, when the cohorts of German imperialism moved on Petrograd, the Ukraine and Byelorussia, leaving behind a purple trail of incendiarism—whole villages reduced to ashes and entire cities laid waste. The German imperialists tried to take advantage of the fact that the young Soviet republic had not yet had time to create its own army. But the forces of occupation could advance only with great difficulty. At Pskov and Narva they were repulsed with heavy losses by the Red Guard detachments and had to abandon the idea of a further advance on Petrograd. It was in these battles that the Red Army was born. The Red Guard detachments fought for every inch of their native soil.

The struggle of the small heroic Red Guard forces against the German regulars who were armed to the teeth lasted two months.

Kherson was bombarded by the Germans with incendiary shells. German planes bombed the city and dropped proclamations which warned that: "All persons found in possession of arms will be shot and all houses in which arms are found will be burnt." These threats did not frighten the Kherson Red Guards. Poorly armed and outfitted, they put up a stubborn resistance during those cold spring days of 1918 in defense of their city. Singing and shouting "Long live the Soviet Government!" sailors and workers, soldiers and exservicemen charged the Germans, who were fifteen to twenty times their number. The heroic defense of Kherson lasted two weeks.

No less heroic was the defense of Nikolayev by the workers and sailors. When the Germans occupied the town, mass shootings began. After a few days, an uprising broke out in Nikolayev. The insurgent forces consisted of workers, soldiers, women, children and old folk. Each house became a fortress, the Red Guards fought to the last breath; they refused to surrender. Even the wounded continued to fight and only the dead gave up their weapons. These were the first waves of the national-patriotic war against the foreign invaders.

The brigades of the Donetz miners, led by Voroshilov, fought the Germans from Konotop to Kharkov, from Kharkov to Lugansk. Voroshilov's detachments brought all valu-

able property to safety, they despatched to the rear locomotives and cars and destroyed whatever could not be taken along. Fighting continual engagements with the Germans, Voroshilov's detachments grew like a snowball. Parallel with Voroshilov's forces, these battles witnessed the formation of the best units of the nascent Red Army: the detachments of Shors, Kikvidze, Bozhenko and Cherniak. These valorous troops inscribed an illustrious page in the annals of the country.

But they fought an unequal fight in the spring of 1918. Retreating step by step and nearly bled white by the Germans, the Red Guards concentrated their forces along the eastern boundaries of the Ukraine. After this rally the attack on the forces of occupation was renewed.

The Ukrainian people did not give up the fight when the territory of the Ukraine was occupied by the German imperialists.

"The Soviet Ukraine has risen in a *patriotic* war of liberation against the foreign yoke imposed on it from the west," wrote Stalin in March, 1918, "such is the significance of the events taking place in the Ukraine.

"This means that every pood of grain and every piece of metal must be fought for by the Germans, must be won in desperate battle with the Ukrainian people.

"The 'brief campaign' in which the Germans figured to kill two birds with one stone (to get the grain and smash the Soviet Ukraine) has every chance of developing into a protracted war between the foreign enslavers and the Ukraine with its twenty-five million people whom

they want to deprive of bread and freedom." *

German imperialism in 1918 brought to the Ukraine colonial slavery, famine, general distress, iron heel rule and the supremacy of the gallows and the execution squad. Thousands of workers and peasants were put in chains and shipped like slaves to Germany. The Germans conducted themselves in the Ukraine like conquerors and colonizers. They turned the Ukraine into a German domain. The "order" of an African colony was introduced in the Ukraine. The following edict was posted in the streets of Kremenetz: "For every German soldier killed or wounded, the first ten Russian soldiers or civil inhabitants encountered will immediately be shot."

The German Command demanded that the population immediately surrender its arms. But in vain were the executions, arrests, tortures and immense fines imposed by the exasperated invaders: the Ukrainian workers and peasants did not surrender their arms. They hid them, stored them away carefully as one would one's dearest treasure. The people were well aware of the fact that they would still need their arms to drive the invaders from the sacred soil of the Soviet Ukraine.

The Germans reckoned that it would be an easy task to keep the Ukrainian people in hand. "No furious outbreaks of the masses are to be feared, for after the sufferings they have endured the major portion of the population will welcome

tranquillity and normal conditions and will be ready to submit to energetic government," General Eichhorn, who was in command of the German troops, wrote to Berlin in the beginning of May. It took but a few days to convince the invaders of the kind of "submission" they would get from the Ukrainian people.

Beginning with the March uprising in Nikolayev, the popular liberation movement knew no let-up for even a single day.

The Enemies of the People in the Service of the Invaders

The invaders brought in their wake the bitterest enemies of the Ukrainian people: the Vinnichenkos, Petluras, Goluboviches, and other nationalist traitors. They restored to power the Central Rada, which the people referred to as the government of *srada*, i.e., treason.

The invaders thought that with the aid of the venal Ukrainian nationalists they would succeed in organizing the rapid and systematic spoliation of the Ukrainian countryside.

But the calculations of the German militarists went quite awry. The people hated the Ukrainian nationalists as fiercely as they did the invaders.

The Ukrainian people rose in a mighty patriotic war against their foreign taskmasters. Not an ear of grain, not a bit of metal could the invaders scrape together without fighting. The Vinnichenkos and Goluboviches, whose authority rested solely on German bayonets, were

* Stalin, *Articles and Speeches on the Ukraine*, p. 40. In Russian.

unable to assist the forces of occupation.

When the Germans saw that the Ukrainian nationalists in the Rada were unable to cope with the popular uprisings, they began searching for a suitable person to serve as a respectable front behind which their bloody deeds could be concealed.

They found the type they looked for in Pavel Skoropadski, who proclaimed himself a scion of the Ukrainian hetman Petro Skoropadski, whom the great poet Shevchenko dubbed "an arrant knave" for his robbery of the Ukrainian people.

Who was this Skoropadski upon whom the occupation regime looked with so much favor? Who was this shady character, this obedient puppet of the foreign invader?

Skoropadski was a big landlord who owned an estate of 60,000 *desiatins** of land in the Poltava *Gubernia*.** This landlord had zealously played his part of tsarist lackey in the old army and was made an aide-de-camp to Nicholas II. In 1914 Skoropadski, together with another Ukrainian landlord, Rodzianko, submitted an official memorandum to the tsar in which these servile henchmen asserted that there was no such thing as a Ukrainian nation. During the Imperialist War of 1914-18, Skoropadski acted as a German spy at the tsar's court and in the army. He was connected with the nest of spies operating under the direction of Protopopov and Stuermer, both ministers of the tsar. In 1917 the Ukrainian nationalists appointed Skoropadski

commander of the corps of "Free Cossacks." In this new post he filled the role of bloody executioner of the Ukrainian peasantry, mercilessly suppressing every attempt of the peasants to square accounts with the landlords.

The Ukrainian and Polish landlords placed great hopes in Skoropadski. As early as November, 1917, Skoropadski was honored by the Polish landlords at a sumptuous banquet held in the Branicka mansion near Byelaya Tserkov. The landlords appeared in court dress and welcomed Skoropadski as a tsarist general and a Germanophile.

All this drew the attention of the occupation authorities to Skoropadski. The following paragraph is taken from an account written by the German General Gröner:

"One evening they brought Skoropadski to me. We were left alone, without interpreters. The same evening we signed an agreement. This agreement has never been published."

In this fashion this titled prostitute and adventurer sold himself to the German Command.

The forerunners of the German fascists, their godfathers, Generals Gröner and Ludendorff, were not particularly fastidious. Skoropadski was a knave and an adventurer; but since he claimed to be the scion of a hetman and had the military bearing of an officer of the Guards, that was good enough for them.

Having found their man, the German Command began to speed up matters.

At the end of April, 1918, the

* *Desiatin*—2.70 acres.—Ed.

** *Gubernia*—Province.—Ed.

German military authorities organized a meeting in Kiev of several hundred specially coached Ukrainian kulaks, styling them a "Congress of Peasants." It was this assemblage, which held its sessions guarded by German bayonets, that staged the crude farce of proclaiming Skoropadski "Hetman of All the Ukraine."

Skoropadski was to be hetman of an "independent" Ukraine; but the invaders took no great pains to observe the deficiencies in the question of an independent Ukraine. The hetman "government" was formed by second-rate German officials. Thiel, the German consul-general in Kiev, appointed and removed its members at will.

Raised to the throne of Hetman, Skoropadski made every effort to earn the praise of his masters. With the permission of the Germans he established his own Okhrana,* the *Warta*, which vied with the German authorities in torturing the toiling people of the Ukraine. He set up local administrators of his own—district and gubernia elders. The minions of the *Warta* and the elders seized countless workers, peasants, teachers and students, subjected them to medieval tortures and sent thousands of them to serve in labor gangs in Germany.

The regime established by the invaders in the guise of Hetman rule was the blackest page in the history of the Ukrainian people.

Like wild animals the soldiery broke into the peasants' huts. The dandified German officers brutally

outraged the womenfolk of the partisans. In the village of Novaya Sburevka a German officer commanded his orderly to rape the mother of a partisan named Leonenko, which order was carried out in the presence of the assembled kulaks. The old folks and children of the partisans who had taken to the forests were buried up to their necks, and their eyes then made targets for shooting practice.

In August, 1918, the soldiers of the army of occupation set fire to the small town of Yalatushkovo in Podolia and the surrounding villages. All the male inhabitants were herded into the market place. A German officer ordered every tenth man to take one step forward. Before the eyes of the multitude these "tenth men" were hanged on lamp posts and trees. The "civilized" barbarians then forced the local photographer to take a picture of the wholesale hanging.

But the freedom-loving Ukrainian people did not lay down their arms. In answer to the German invasion the cities and villages of the young Soviet Ukraine rose up in arms, in a just, patriotic war.

Partisan Warfare and Popular Uprisings in the Ukraine Against the Forces of Occupation

The uprisings in the Poltava and Chernigov region, in Podolia and in Zvenigorodka, Tarashcha and Elizavetgrad, as well as the strikes and uprisings in the proletarian centers of the Ukraine, such as Kharkov and Ekaterinoslav, tied up entire German divisions. The regime of

* Secret Police Department in tsarist Russia.—Ed.

occupation was unable to cope with the constantly growing resistance of the popular masses, was unable to stamp out the patriotic war of the Ukrainian working people. The German troops found themselves engulfed by a sea of nation-wide hatred. Conditions became unbearable for the invaders. They were tracked and killed at every step. They got neither grain nor raw materials. The peasants and workers joined the partisans in the woods by the thousands.

The first major uprisings against the forces of occupation broke out in May, 1918. The uprisings involved the northern districts of the Poltava Gubernia, the Kupiansk District of the Kharkov Gubernia, the Dubni and Chigirin Districts of the Kiev Gubernia. They were headed by workers or soldiers from the front. Filled with hatred for their oppressors, the peasants, well organized, displayed great stamina and power of resistance. In the Poltava region the peasants of the Lubni and Zolotonosha Districts held out for several days against the forces of occupation. "In the opinion of German officers," wrote the Lubni hetman elder about this time, "the civil war hereabouts is taking on the forms of well organized partisan warfare. This is shown by the rapidity with which the partisan units act, by their intelligence service and its excellent organization, the insurgents' well trained cavalry and the secret communication system between the villages of Denisovskoye and Zolotukha. The insurgents have a remarkable way of spreading out to form a chain for attacks and

reconnoitering expeditions and have been excellently trained to keep under cover. The partisan form of civil war is the most dangerous form for any government," concluded the elder.

The information bulletins of the German military kept on declaring that "order" and "tranquillity" prevailed in the Ukraine.

But the May uprisings in 1918 already evidenced the utter falsity of these statements, and it did not take long for the Germans to convince themselves of the futility of their hopes of receiving grain from the Ukraine to assuage the famine raging in Germany.

The invaders had counted on receiving an enormous quantity of produce from the Ukraine. At the freight stations special facilities were installed for expediting shipments from the Ukraine to Germany. But the people had risen in arms to beat off the attempts of the invaders to take any grain out of the country. As early as March, 1918, articles began to appear in the German press warning against believing "the obviously exaggerated rumors about inexhaustible food stores in the Ukraine." The newspapers appealed to the people to have patience and urged a relentless war on the peasants who were refusing to give up their grain. "German arms will do their job," wrote one of the German journalists. But the blood-dripping German arms were unable to cope with the job assigned to them. On May 17 the bread ration in Germany was cut from 200 to 160 grams a day. Somewhat later it was halved in

Vienna. Up to the first of May, the deficiency in grain deliveries to the Central Powers, as compared with the quantity stipulated in the agreement with the Central Rada, was about six million poods. These were the first signs of the collapse of the invaders' plans and the first results of the patriotic war of the Ukrainian people.

In June, 1918, the armed struggle of the Ukrainian people against the forces of occupation became more intense. "Disturbances accompanied by fighting are a constant occurrence," telegraphed Count Forgach, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador at Kiev, on June 9.

Near Taganrog and in the Kher-son Gubernia big engagements took place between the insurgents and the invaders in the beginning of that month. Detachments of workers and Kuban partisans approached Taganrog on small boats and with the aid of the local peasantry effected a landing. The frightened invaders could not muster enough courage to give battle to the landing party. Only two days later, when a whole German army corps had been concentrated in Taganrog, the invaders attempted to drive that handful of brave insurgents into the sea.

But the insurgents repulsed all attacks. For five days these intrepid sons of the Ukrainian people fought, encircled by enemy troops, and only when their ammunition gave out did the partisans slowly retreat. More than half of them, no longer able to offer armed resistance, were mowed down by machine-guns.

Two thousand of the brave band

made good their escape on the small water craft on which they had come.

Wherever the people resisted the invaders, the latter took to their heels and appealed to the German Command for reinforcements. The Germans fought only when they were sure of their numerical preponderance. According to the admissions of the same Austrian ambassador, the forces of occupation proved inadequate in the insurgent regions and additional troops had to be despatched there. The German patrols in Kiev reported in alarm that signal rockets of various colors were being fired over the city at night, which Headquarters knew served as a means of intercommunication between the various detachments of insurgents. The railroad workers made every possible effort to interfere with the transportation of German troops.

All these events produced a state of panic in the bourgeois circles of Kiev, but the invaders had not yet lost hope of breaking the resistance of the Ukrainian people. During this same month of June the Zvenigorodka uprising began. On June 3 the peasants of the village of Lisyanka offered armed resistance to a punitive expedition. On June 6 armed peasant detachments from five adjacent villages seized the Rossokhovatka station. The railroad tracks were torn up and the railroad employees were forbidden to communicate with other stations.

The report of the *Warta* admitted that the uprising was led by Bolshevik peasants.

The insurgents were joined by a detachment of Free Cossacks. Some

former commissars of the Central Rada who wanted to gain the confidence of the insurgents declared themselves in solidarity with the peasants.

On June 7 the insurgent force was four versts from Zvenigorodka and on June 9 it took the town.

Zvenigorodka was held at that time by a German infantry battalion four hundred strong. The German soldiers refused to play the hangman's role. They held a meeting for themselves and decided to offer no resistance to the insurgent peasants and to hand their arms over to them, which they did on the same day and the next.

A group of peasants caught a Hetman punitive detachment in Zvenigorodka and annihilated it with the aid of the German arms they had received.

The refusal of the German battalion to fight the peasants was kept a strict secret by the German Command, even from their allies, the Austrians. "I learnt confidentially," the Austrian ambassador telegraphed to Vienna, "that the older German troops here did not always live up to their reputation during the heavy fighting going on at that time and were claimed to have expressed dissatisfaction with being made to fight for the Hetman against the people."

The incident of the German battalion in Zvenigorodka augured ill for the invaders. This was the first time that an entire German army unit had gone over to the side of the insurgents. The voluntary surrender of its arms testified to the serious inroads which the process of revo-

lutionization had made among the forces of occupation. Field Marshal Eichhorn, greatly disquieted, was compelled to postpone a contemplated trip to Odessa and the Crimea. Mumm, the German ambassador in Kiev, thought of flight. The formerly complacent German officers could hardly conceal their fear. When the partisans unexpectedly raided the small town of Steblev, the German officers fled in their underwear, in their panic leaving behind their secret plans of operation.

After bringing up new forces, the German Command decided to annihilate the insurgent peasants and their own soldiers who had gone over to their side in Zvenigorodka. The German troops closed in simultaneously from the north and the south in the region of the uprising. All armed inhabitants encountered on the way were killed "to prevent the wholesale flight of the peasants to the woods to join the partisans," as Forgach explained in a secret report.

In Zvenigorodka the tocsin was sounded without let-up. The insurgent peasantry declared a general mobilization of the population from the age of seventeen to fifty-five. Meanwhile the German troops advanced on Zvenigorodka, burning villages and murdering the population. In the night of June 12 the cannonades could already be heard in the town. The sky was red with fires. The insurgents withdrew from the town and dispersed to their villages, burying their arms in the woods. Some of them retreated to the northern part of the Elizavetgrad District.

The forces of occupation were already celebrating their victory. They had taken Zvenigorodka and dispersed the rebels. But on June 25 a new uprising broke out in the district, which was centered in the village of Lisyanka. The insurgents occupied Olkhovets, Ozirna, Popovka, Rizhanovka and other villages. Peasants from the Kherson Gubernia left Kaligorka to aid the Zvenigorodka uprising. At Lisyanka and Gamalovka trenches were dug.

In June and July another uprising was raging in the Tarashcha District of the Kiev Gubernia. The insurgents captured almost the entire district and had free communication with the Usmansk, Zvenigorodka and Lipovetsk Districts. "The insurgents have occupied considerable territory," the Hetman elder in Kiev reported on June 18: "they have entire freedom of action for the organization of the arming and replenishment of their forces; in brief, they possess a base which constitutes a serious threat to public order." The regime of occupation required two months to quell the uprising at least temporarily. Hard pressed by the German troops, the Tarashcha forces crossed the Dnieper, withdrew to the Poltava Gubernia and thence made their way to the Soviet frontier. It was from these fighters largely that the Tarashcha regiment was formed, which, under the command of Vasili Bozhenko, won so much glory in the fighting against the forces of occupation.

Uprisings in the Ekaterinoslav region and in Podolia took place about the same time. Alarmed, the

regime of occupation reported to Berlin and Vienna that "public safety had become considerably impaired in the villages," and expressed their fears "regarding the threshing of the new crop and its delivery to the proper authorities."

The Zvenigorodka and Tarashcha uprisings marked a new stage in the patriotic war of 1918. They gave proof of the invincible might of a people resolved to fight in defense of its native soil, its freedom and the Soviet Power. They furthermore demonstrated the weakness and insecurity of the regime of occupation and lent impetus to the disintegration among the occupation troops.

In July, 1918, the Ukrainian railroad workers took up the fight. In answer to the call of the strike committee, all railroads in the Ukraine stood still. The occupation authorities were unable to move troops to combat the uprisings, nor could they transport the grain of which they had robbed the country. German troops occupied all railroad stations and tried to use force to compel the railroadmen to resume work. In their fury the invaders made constant raids on the railroadmen, evicted their wives and children from their living quarters, and deprived them of food. But they were unable to break the strike. Locomotive engineers were led to their engines under military guard and compelled to work on pain of immediate shooting. But the workers would not give in.

The struggle of the railroad workers in conjunction with that of the Donbas miners deprived the invaders of coal. The Germans had no

means of transportation to haul away their loot. Coal had to be brought to the Ukraine from Germany and Poland. During the six months from March to August 13, 830 carloads of coal were thus imported.

The expanding war of liberation made it necessary for the Germans to send increasing forces to the Ukraine, which weakened their military position on the Western front. On August 8, known as a black letter day for the Germans, the Anglo-French troops inflicted a heavy defeat on the latter on that front.

The invaders had not yet had time to recover from the effects of the railroad strike when a revolt began in the Chernigov and Poltava Gubernias. Despite its limited extent it was a heavy blow to the army of occupation.

"The situation in the district is tragic," telegraphed a Chernigov District Elder on August 1, "the city is on the eve of a general insurrection." The elder added that it was useless to apply for German troops, since these were powerless to cope with the uprisings. The officials complained of the "anarchy" which was becoming more widespread every day. What this anarchy implied appears from a report on the mobilization carried out for the purpose of forming insurgents' detachments. In this report the invaders themselves admitted that the mobilization was meeting with "complete success." On August 8 the Poltava Gubernia Elder reported that the number of armed peasants was now very great, that they were

killing German officers and landlords and that a hundred thousand of the insurgents had crossed the Dnieper near the village of Nilovo. As a matter of fact, the detachment referred to was not more than a thousand strong, but in the eyes of the terrified invaders it had assumed proportions magnified a hundredfold.

In response to the uprisings, the Germans intensified their reign of terror. The German commandant of Smela ordered that a list be made of all male inhabitants above the age of sixteen, and he declared that all those unaccounted for would be considered insurgents and their property confiscated.

But signs of the impotence of the invaders had begun to manifest themselves. The Hetman officials complained that "the Germans are not acting with the requisite energy and the uprising is spreading."

On August 11 a conference of the Revolutionary Committee and insurrectionary staffs of the Kiev Gubernia appealed to the workers and peasants of the Ukraine to support the Chernigov and Poltava insurgents. "The insurgents must immediately cut the wires of the enemy, destroy the enemy detachments, seize the cattle, arms, food and fodder, form a united powerful army and move on Kiev," declared the Kiev Conference of Insurrectionary Revolutionary Committees.

In token of their support of the insurgent peasantry, the Donbas and Krivoi Rog miners downed tools on August 11, and on the 14th the Podolia uprising commenced.

In the middle of August the Ger-

man press denied the report that two hundred thousand peasants had taken to arms, but was constrained to admit that it was no easy matter to cope with the peasantry, since they fled to the woods when tracked down or posed as peaceful inhabitants.

The occupation authorities in Kiev became apprehensive. The Austrian and German ambassadors complained that there was no "personal security" in the Ukraine. "Baron Von Mumm is unusually perturbed," Forgach reported to Vienna on August 13, "as he was compelled against his will to move to a district surrounded by a cordon of troops where the High Command is stationed. The entire civil population has been ordered to leave this district. For reasons of personal safety Baron Von Mumm has had to limit greatly his personal movements and to increase his guard." Thus the boastful conquerors were like animals kept at bay and sensing their impending doom.

The Forces of Occupation Prepare to Flee

The May and June uprising in the Ukraine inflicted heavy losses on the forces of occupation, but did not bring about their defeat. The railroad strike in July went further and seriously undermined the strength of the invaders. The transfer of troops from the Ukraine to the Western front intensified the process of disintegration in the German armies and increased the likelihood of a military catastrophe. On August 8, 1918, the united forces of

England and France, as has already been stated, inflicted serious defeat on the German army. As if by a lightning flash, there stood revealed not only the military weakness of German imperialism on the Western Front, but also the source of this weakness.

On August 10, the German High Command inquired of Eastern Front Headquarters what troops could be transferred from the Eastern to the Western Front. The Command of the armies of occupation at Kiev replied that they could spare nothing for the Western Front, lest the disorders spread to a still larger territory. Only one division could be released, and that only on condition that the Don Region be evacuated.

This was the first instance of an official discussion of evacuation of occupation troops from the Ukraine. But matters did not stop here. On August 17, Count Forgach received an alarming telegram from Vienna. The Minister of Foreign Affairs warned the Count that the German and Austrian High Commands were considering the expediency of evacuating their entire forces from the Ukraine. The Minister solicited the ambassador's opinion of the consequences of such a contingency and of the probable further course of events in the Ukraine.

The Austro-German authorities in Kiev replied to their respective governments with soldierly frankness. They realized that the period of occupation was coming to an end, and that therefore, during the remaining time, the looting of the land should be intensified. "During the next few weeks," wrote Forgach,

"exports must be forced in every way possible, particularly the export of grain, so that at least some substantial quantity of it may be brought across the frontier in time." As to the conditions that would prevail in the Ukraine during the evacuation, Forgach was not particularly optimistic. "The powder keg on which we are sitting here will explode very likely with great force and much bloodshed, inasmuch as the victors will be those elements which our troops have kept in check with great difficulty." In the same reply Forgach blasted the illusions of the German military command that the troops stationed in the Ukraine could be transferred to the Western front. The higher officers of the forces of occupation no longer trusted their own soldiers because of their long stay in this rebellious territory, and feared that the flame of rebellion would spread from the east to the west.

On September 9, Hintze, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, again inquired of the High Command whether it was possible to transfer troops from the Eastern front. But this time too the reply was a categorical "No." The military explained that it was out of the question to weaken the army of occupation in the Ukraine.

However, as defeat followed defeat in the West, the Army Command had to yield. Eleven divisions were moved from the Eastern to the Western front. But this operation could no longer save the deteriorated military situation of German imperialism. Besides, this

measure increased the demoralization of the German forces on the Western front.

Whereas in August the evacuation of the German troops from the Ukraine was discussed in connection with the failure of the regime of occupation and the defeats on the Western front, two months later the position of the occupation forces was worse still. It was now no longer a question of simply saving the armies of occupation, but of the empire itself. The invaders lost their heads. In their minds evacuation spelled certain doom.

On October 9, Ludendorff declared at a session of the German cabinet: "The possibility of evacuating the Ukraine in order to shorten the front depends on our estimation of the Bolshevik danger. . . . If we transfer even a few divisions from the Ukraine, we shall very likely be unable to repel the Bolsheviks."

On October 17, the German Government once more discussed the necessity of evacuating the troops from the Ukraine. Hoffmann, Ludendorff and Gröner spoke openly of the dangers that would attend an evacuation. Gröner warned that the fighting capacity of the German troops in the Ukraine had deteriorated, their morale shaken by Bolshevik influence, and that a shift of the troops would lead to the final disintegration of the German army.

All these facts were incontrovertible proof that the German occupation had collapsed as a result of the patriotic war waged by the Soviet people, who had risen in de-

fense of their country. The perfidious military venture of the Germans in the Ukraine hastened the doom of the entire German Empire.

*The Disintegration of the
German Army*

The blows struck by the Soviet people in their patriotic war marked the beginning of the disintegration of the German army. The most enlightened of the German soldiers, on realizing the criminal policy pursued by the dastardly German militarists, went over to the side of the Ukrainian people. In August, 1918, the 20th Austrian Regiment, stationed in Podolia, joined the insurgent peasants. In September a trainload of German soldiers mutinied at the Rovno station. Shouting "Down with the war! Down with Wilhelm!" the soldiers killed several of their officers. At the Rozhishche station another troop train joined the mutinous soldiers. In Volhynia, at the end of September, the German garrison organized a demonstration at which red flags were flown. In October, part of the Seventh German Cuirassier Division mutinied at Zhmerinka. The soldiers threw their officers out of the train and killed about twenty of them. "Clashes between officers and men are becoming very severe," the German Consul at Odessa reported to the Reich Chancellor. A panic arose in the German army. The soldiers were absolutely set on going home and began to disobey their officers.

"On our trip to Znamenka," a German officer named Fest wrote in

his memoirs, "we learnt that the soldiers were selling their overcoats, blankets and other property, and were drinking and feasting every day. . . . Our conversations with the men stationed at Znamenka convinced us that they were firmly resolved to leave at once. No appeal to their sense of duty was of any avail. The commander of the 53rd Regiment declared that he was powerless in face of the determination of the soldiers."

In November, 1918, the German people rose against their arrogant rulers. The German High Command carefully concealed all news about the revolutionary events in Germany from the soldiers. But the officers were unable to isolate the soldiers from the popular masses of the Ukraine.

On November 9, 1918, Lenin sent a telegram to the Ukraine containing the news of the overthrow of Wilhelm's government. Lenin instructed the party organizations of the Ukraine immediately to communicate these glad tidings to the German soldiers. Carrying out his directions, Shors, Commander of the Bogun Regiment, made contact with the 106th and the 19th Landwehr Regiments of the German army. On November 13, a delegation from these regiments arrived at the headquarters of the Bogun men.

In the village of Lyshchichi a joint meeting of Red Army and German soldiers took place, and a joint telegram of greeting was dispatched to Lenin.

In his reply to this telegram Lenin

thanked the German soldiers for their good wishes and pointed out that it was particularly important to enlist the revolutionary soldiers of the German army in the cause of the liberation of the Ukraine. In order to accomplish this, wrote Lenin, it was necessary to arrest the Ukrainian and German White Guards and to send delegates elected by the revolutionary German soldiers to all the German military units in the Ukraine.

In the middle of November, Soviets of Soldiers' Deputies were formed in all German units. The German soldiers began to hand over their arms, artillery and ammunition to the Red Army. But the officers, including those of higher rank, were still influential in these Soviets. By resorting to acts of provocation and threats, and even direct force, the German Command tried to compel the soldiers to stop the progress of the Red Army. At the same time, the invaders, now at the point of defeat, continued the despoliation of the Ukraine and the export of grain and other produce.

*Invaders Flee from
the Ukraine*

There was no time to be lost. The Council of People's Commissars decided to render immediate assistance to the Ukrainian people.

On November 17, 1918, by decision of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and of the Council of People's Commissars, a Ukrainian Revolutionary Military Council, headed by Stalin, was formed. Voroshilov and

Artem headed the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government.

As Commander of the Tenth Army and member of the Ukrainian Soviet Government, Voroshilov issued an order to his men and commanders, most of them Ukrainians, which read in part:

"Comrades, Red Army men, Ukrainians of the Tenth Army! The Revolutionary Military Council of the Tenth Army appeals to you to fight bravely at the front and to strike fear into the hearts of the enemy by your valor. Our road lies across the Don to our native villages, to those near our hearts, to the homes we love so much, the places where we were born and grew to manhood. Let us strike a powerful blow at the enemy from the East. Let us beat back the enemy and over their dead bodies come to the aid and assistance of our Ukrainian brothers and fellow workers!"

At the end of November, 1918, the Red Army began its offensive to recover the Ukraine.

Soon the excellent fighting qualities of the Red Army and the partisan detachments compelled the invaders to flee in panic. "About 300,000 soldiers," writes Franz, the German historian, "who had cast off all subordination to their superior officers, were streaming back to their native country through a land in the throes of an uprising. Before us lay the prospect of a severe Russian winter, and in every direction nothing but enemies."

The partisan detachments disarmed the Austrian and German army units and drove them out of

the confines of Soviet Ukraine. "The army was disarmed, battered and despoiled," writes the same German historian. "It was an indescribable scene of destitution and suffering in the inclement snowy wastes of Russia."

Thus, the fertile and abundant Ukraine became an "inclement snowy waste" for the army of occupation. The German army in 1918 suffered the fate that had overtaken Napoleon's army in 1812. In disorderly bands the former army of occupation plodded its way out of the Ukraine. Animal fear possessed the soldiers; their only thought was to escape with their lives. They rushed to railroad stations demanding transportation back to Germany and Austria.

The Command of the army of occupation made every effort to carry out the evacuation in an orderly manner, but the insurrectionary movement spoiled their carefully laid plans. The fighting followed the railroad lines. This greatly interfered with the movements of troop trains, and sometimes stopped this movement altogether. The partisans concentrated their activities along the stretch leading from Kazatin to Kovel, which was the connecting link between the forces of occupation and Germany. Not only the railroad lines, but also the entire telephone network was destroyed. Sometimes for weeks and even for months German Army Headquarters could maintain communication with the provinces only by radio-telegraphy, airplanes or special couriers.

At the end of November the par-

tisan detachments were masters of the entire region west of the Dnieper. They had seized the railroads, all the munition dumps, the supply depots and other stores. "The return movement of our troops," wrote Franz, "dependent entirely upon the good will of the insurgents."

The army of occupation went to pieces. The famous Prussian discipline was now a thing of the past. Railroad guard units decamped without official leave. Marauding became rife among the troops.

The partisan detachments disarmed the Germans and stopped them from carrying away with them anything of value. The railroad lines were jammed with overcrowded German troop trains. They were leaving the Ukraine in disorder and panic.

The glorious regiments which constituted the division led by Shors of legendary fame struck blow after blow at the Germans. Unsparring of their lives, the Red Army men, commanded by Shors, Bozhenko, Cherniak, and other national heroes, drove out the foreign invaders, many of whom drowned in the rivers of the Ukraine or were struck down by bullet or sword.

At the beginning of the German occupation, when the invaders were giddy with success, Stalin had written: "The gorged imperialist beast will break its neck in its assault on the Soviet Ukraine—that surely is the logic of events." Calmly and confidently the leader of the people had foretold the doom that was awaiting the gorged beast. This prediction was vindicated in every re-

spect. The German army, whose invincibility is being trumpeted forth so arrogantly by the rulers of fascist Germany, was completely routed in 1918 by the young Red Army.

The Soviet people cherish dearly the great traditions of 1918, 1919 and 1920.

Almost a quarter of a century has passed since the patriotic war of 1918. During this period the Soviet people has built a bright and happy life on the soil that it has soaked with its blood. The will of the peo-

ple to win is irresistible. The fascist fiends will not succeed in destroying its achievements. The Soviet people, two hundred million strong, has risen in all its might to fight the contemptible invaders in a great and sacred patriotic war. Firm and indivisible stand the people, unshakably resolved to annihilate the perfidious foe.

The enemy will go down in defeat as he did in 1918. The fascist barbarians will be destroyed root and branch.

A SIGNIFICANT DEPICTION OF FRENCH-CANADIAN LIFE

BY STANLEY B. RYERSON

TOO little is known by Americans of the life and problems of the French-Canadian people. Yet the three-centuries-old history of this national community is inseparably interwoven with that of the discovery, settlement, economic development and political struggles of the New World. The French-Canadians today number roughly three and a half millions in Canada, out of a total population of eleven million; there are also some two million French-Canadians in the United States. It is mainly in the last half-century that French Canada has entered fully upon the transition from a primitive, feudal-agrarian economy to one dominated by monopoly capital. The experiences attendant upon this complex transition process have a real significance for American rural struggles generally, and for the struggle for unity of farmer and city worker in particular. Equally important is the fact that the problems of national cleavage and inequality, which have loomed so large in Canadian development in the past, today pose problems of immediate urgency in the welding

of democratic solidarity among the American peoples for the battle against Hitlerism.

A serious contribution to the deeper understanding of his people is made by the French-Canadian author of *Thirty Acres*,* a novel of Quebec and New England life. Both as a creative work of real artistic merit and as a penetrating study of social forces acting through and upon the lives of individuals, *Thirty Acres* is a significant addition to the literature of the Americas. The appearance of a first-rate Canadian novel is in itself of significance; when it is at the same time a social study and the work of a member of the French-Canadian minority, it is particularly deserving of attention. Already, the book has won a place in international literature: when first published in Paris, in 1939, under the title *Trente Arpents*, it was awarded the *Grand Prix du Roman* by the Academy of what was then

* *Thirty Acres*, by Ringuet. Translated from the French by Felix and Dorothea Walter. 324 pp. Macmillan. \$2.50.

The writer of this review, author of the historical study 1837: *The Birth of Canadian Democracy*, is the leader of the Communist Party of Canada in the Province of Quebec.

still the French Republic; and it has since been translated into several European languages.

"Ringuet" is the pen-name of Dr. Philippe Panneton, a Montreal physician. He is one of the many French-Canadian intellectuals who in the last post-war period and crisis years took the path of petty-bourgeois nationalism. But whereas many of his colleagues have moved from participation in the broad, anti-trust protest movements of the middle 1930's toward the camp of corporatist clerical-fascism, Panneton has chosen rather to examine with honesty and objectivity the life of the Quebec farm-lands, and recreate in artistic form what he has found there. Certainly, he has not found the real answers to the deep-rooted problems of French Canada, problems which are economic and political. But he has sought with integrity, and depicted (even though within narrow limits) something of the actual forces that have been stirring the French-Canadian *habitant* and factory worker onto the path of political awakening and struggle. A tribute to what he has done is to be seen in the fact that while the book was acclaimed by the critics on its publication abroad, the powerful organ of clerical reaction in Quebec, *L'Action Catholique*, at once denounced it for its "too objective" rendering of the hard realities of French-Canadian life.

* * *

It may be well before turning to

the novel itself to mention very briefly the elements of the French-Canadian question, some knowledge of which is essential for the appreciation both of the significance and the limitations of Ringuet's work.

When the British conquered New France in 1760 they became masters of a feudal-agrarian and fur-trading colony numbering some 60,000 French-speaking settlers. Faced with the growing threat of rebellion in the colonies to the south, London made a pact with the feudal-clerical ruling class of French Canada, granting the preservation of seigneurial rights and of the Church tithe, in exchange for loyal allegiance to the Crown in the days ahead. The tactic worked, and Canada was maintained as a base of operations against the American Revolution, despite the discontent of the feudal *habitants*. The subsequent evolution of French Canada has borne the indelible imprint of these three initial developments: the Conquest; the Quebec Act of 1774 embodying the pact with the feudal Church; and, following on the American Revolutionary War, the Loyalist immigration of English-speaking colonists which gave to Canada the predominantly dual-national character it has ever since preserved.

The joint rebellion in Upper and Lower Canada (Ontario and Quebec) led by William Lyon Mackenzie and Louis-Joseph Papineau in 1837-38, had among its aims, not only responsible democratic government, but the abolition of feudalism, the separation of Church

and State and the safeguarding of the French-Canadians' cultural and linguistic rights. As a result of the defeat of this, Canada's bourgeois-democratic revolution, the popular demands were achieved only belatedly and incompletely, being granted "from above."

Responsible government and the equal rights of the French language were accorded in 1848; abolition of feudal tenure, in 1854. Separation of Church and State, achieved in Upper Canada, was never carried through in Quebec. Indeed, Confederation, which in 1867 established a unified Canadian state, expressly perpetuated the alliance of the English-speaking capitalists and the French-Canadian Catholic hierarchy, by guaranteeing to the latter full control of education and (indirectly) of social services in the Province of Quebec. The collection of the ecclesiastical tithe (tax) is authorized and guaranteed by the civil statute of Quebec; the parish is inseparable from the municipality, over whose taxes the tithe takes priority. It is in this situation that the Church is able to extract an income of over \$50,000,000 yearly from the people of Quebec, an amount equal to the revenues of the provincial government.

The chief result of this arrangement has been that the formal juridical equality of status of the French-Canadians has in practice been consistently encroached upon, through their being held in a state of backwardness and isolation by bourgeois and clerical leaders acting on behalf of Anglo-Canadian big business. The bitter fruits of this

situation are to be seen in the conditions in Quebec industry, the low wage scales, the appalling tuberculosis and infant-mortality rates, and cultural poverty, etc.

In the last forty years Quebec has become one of the two main industrial provinces of Canada. Whereas in 1901 two-thirds of Quebec's population was rural, by 1931 the proportions were almost completely reversed, with two-thirds of the 3,000,000 population in urban centers. Eighty per cent of the Quebec population is French-Canadian; and almost 80 per cent of the French-Canadians in Canada live in Quebec. As opposed to the widespread conception of French Canada as a "peasant nation," we may note that only 28 per cent of French-Canadians are employed in agriculture—roughly the same percentage as among Canadians of British origin. Pulp and paper plants, lumbering, mining, rail and water transport, textiles, boot and shoe, and other manufacturing industries have drawn from the land an industrial army of hundreds of thousands of French-Canadian workers.

American influences in French-Canadian development have been fourfold. The 1837 Rebellion under Papineau's leadership drew inspiration from the American revolutionary-democratic tradition, and actual assistance and solidarity from American progressives: something by no means forgotten when, a generation later, thousands of French-Canadians went to fight with the armies of the North in the Civil War. This tradition, combined with admiration for American technical

and scientific progress, has continued as a component in the democratic-liberalism of the French-Canadians. (Clerical-conservatism is by no means the sole, or even the entirely dominant trend in popular—as opposed to ruling class—politics in Quebec.)

The second link is provided by the mass emigration of French-Canadians to the New England states—the result of the defeat of the 1837 rising and the consequent choking of economic and political advance in Eastern Canada for a couple of generations. In the period 1871-1931 some 400,000 French-Canadians crossed over to the United States.* Between the million and a half French-Canadians in the northeastern U.S.A. and their cousins in the St. Lawrence Valley an intercourse has been maintained, the chief value of which for Quebec has been the resulting knowledge and appreciation of the value of international trade unionism. This—the third influence which has helped shape French-Canadian development—has been a not inconsiderable factor in the building of the international unions in Quebec. (Of some 100,000 organized workers in the province about half are A. F. of L. or C.I.O. unions, the rest being members of the Church-controlled Catholic syndicates.)

Finally, American industrial development has powerfully affected industry in Quebec: one-third of the \$3,000,000,000 of capital invested in

the province is American-owned, particularly in the great electric power and pulp and paper monopolies, and in mining. While 80 per cent of Quebec's population is French-Canadian, industrial ownership in Quebec is divided in the proportions: Anglo-Canadian, 57 per cent; American, 33 per cent; French-Canadian, 10 per cent. This fact has contributed in no small degree to the rise of those nationalist trends which have colored the anti-trust movements of recent years and are an inescapable factor in French-Canadian political life. The development of effective, independent working class action and leadership in Quebec, in unison with the working class and progressive movements of English-speaking Canada and the United States, requires a positive and understanding approach to the special problems and needs of the national community that is French Canada.

* * *

The theme of *Thirty Acres* is at once general and particular. It is man and the land: the interweaving cycles of life and death, encompassing and encompassed by the seasons, spring, summer, autumn, winter. And it is a man, Euchariste Moisan, and his land, the thirty-acre strip of Laurentian farmland, the typical Quebec *habitant* farm. It is the old story of the peasant's servitude on the land—but it is also the story of the new, brutal impact of twentieth-century capitalist industry and crisis on the hitherto self-contained and primitive

* Cf. *Les Canadiens-Français et leurs Voisins du Sud*, G. Lanctot (Carnegie Foundation series on Canadian-American Relations, Toronto, 1941), p. 297.

French-Canadian farming community.

The tempo of the book is slow, in keeping with life on the land. The story is set within the framework of the seasons, from spring to winter: seasons of the earth, and of Euchariste Moisan's life. The key is a minor one, throughout. This might seem a defect, but is not. It accords with the tone of life as Moisan lived it; and is not without its moments of rich fullness, of humor and of tragedy. It is life lived on the outer periphery of the main amphitheatres of struggle—on the agrarian hinterland that is at first only slowly stirred, and later profoundly shaken, by the crises of capitalist industry. The breaking of the storm of economic crisis coincides with the approach of Moisan's death: the full blow will be taken by his children.

The thirty-acre farm, inherited on his uncle's death, is Moisan's world, his whole security. But from the proud acquisition that it was in his springtime years, it becomes in the end the thing on which his life is broken. "For a farm is an entity which, though possessed by men, in reality possesses them still more completely, and ties them down by their hands and feet for life to a given tract of land" (p. 130). This dependence bears the seeds of its own nemesis. The crisis of Moisan's life is part and parcel of the crisis of the French-Canadian family farm in the last two decades.

Laid out in narrow strips running back from the St. Lawrence—the one-time only highway connecting the little settlements of New

France—the *habitant* farms were originally the tenant holdings of the feudal *seigneuries*. Since the abolition of feudal dues in 1854, individual small ownership has prevailed. Worked by the hands of its owner's ever-numerous family, the small *habitant* farm must constantly disperse the growing surplus of family labor power that it cannot support. Expansion to new land is curbed by the physical barriers hemming in the strip of fertile land by the St. Lawrence—the river itself, and the barren rocky mass of the great Laurentian shield sweeping down to meet the river below Quebec; and on the south shore, again mountains, of the Appalachian spur—and the American border. To these obstacles are added those presented by the great holdings of the Church, and the vast domains of timberlands handed over for a song to the pulp and paper monopolies. Hence the mass emigration to the United States, where land was freer and jobs were more plentiful. The growth of industry in Canada absorbed in its turn new thousands from the land. But by the middle 1920's the general crisis of capitalism had begun inexorably to close the doors on these "solutions" of the agrarian problem in Quebec.

The period covered by Ringuet in this novel is roughly that of 1880 to 1930; the life of the Moisan family is typical of developments on the Quebec land in those years. Of the thirteen children of Euchariste and Alphonsine, his wife, four died (two of them from the "white plague" of tuberculosis, scourge of poverty-stricken French Canada);

the others scattered, went to jobs in the States or Quebec City, entered the church or were married off. One girl went to Montreal, became a prostitute. Etienne, the heir, stayed on the farm, and gradually supplanted his father. Dispossessed of his property through a series of disasters and his son's scheming, Euchariste in the end is sent away to live with a younger son at White Falls in industrial New England. No sooner has he thus been exiled, in the winter of his life, than the economic crisis closes in on city and farm alike.

* * *

In a sense, the subject of the book is the land itself, the Thirty Acres. But it is the land dominating the lives of people in a world in which men are not yet the masters of things:

"The unfeeling and imperious land was the lordly suzerain whose serfs they were, paying their dues to the inclement weather in the form of ruined harvests, subjected to the forced labor of digging ditches and clearing away the forests, compelled the whole year round to pay their tithe in sweat. They had come together on, and almost in opposition to, the harsh soil, from which nothing may be wrung except by sheer strength of arm. . . ." (p. 15.)

The feudal oppression against which Moisan's forebears revolted in the Rebellion of 1837 no longer weighs upon the *habitant*; yet still there is servitude. Is it simply the land itself that binds him, "hands and feet"? Ringuet's insight enables

him to see, behind the oppressive weight of material burdens, the oppression of cramped, restricted social relationships. No Marxist, he nevertheless understands that the invisible bond that holds Euchariste, and after him Etienne, attached to the land is no mystical indwelling attraction, such as is proclaimed by the clerical-corporatist advocates of "the return to the land" and the "peasant destiny of the French-Canadian." The bond is a *property relation*. That Ringuet should not merely have understood this truth but stated it with telling effectiveness, is one of the main reasons for the invectives hurled at him by clerical reaction.

"If anyone had asked him if they loved the land, meaning by that the broad fields where men and animals are thinly scattered as if by the wide sweeping gesture of a sower—had asked them if they loved the untrammelled sky above their heads, the winds, the snows and the rains that brought them riches, and that distant flat horizon—there would have been merely a look of surprise. What Euchariste cared for was not *farming* but *his farm*; Etienne wanted it too, and felt it was going to be his—was his by an unquestionable right. They were attracted to their own farm and not to country life in general." (pp. 233-4.)

This property relation of the peasant-farmer is no abstraction. It takes on flesh and sinew, becomes part of his very tissue, the conditioning of his hopes and hates and fears. The character of Euchariste Moisan is formed in and expresses the rude struggle with the earth and

the elements, and the sharpening competition with his neighbors on the land.

Elements of conflict which in the "spring" and "summer" of Moisan's life are only beginning to germinate and take root grow in time to dominate his existence and slowly transform his character. Onto the hard struggle with the soil is grafted the sharpening struggle with men: the ceaseless competition with the neighboring farmer, Phydime; the smoldering enmity that grows between the Moisans, father and son, over control and ownership of the thirty-acre farm; the conflicting contrasts and demands of life on the land and in the industrial towns. . . . All adding up to a life in which men, striving to determine events, are themselves changed; and in which property relations charged with contradiction become a force basically influencing their lives.

* * *

In the life of the French-Canadian parish the priest plays a role that extends to every sphere of activity, every aspect of existence. When the seigneurial system was abolished, the parish remained, as a political and administrative as well as religious unit; this fusion of church and state in the rural community prevails unshaken today. Whereas in the cities the power of the church is expressed primarily through its complete control of the schools and colleges, in the countryside this control is vastly more pervasive and direct. Ringuet's treatment of the parish priest of St.

Jacques l'Ermite, and of the transformation into a priest of Moisan's eldest son, Oguinase, is masterly. Too masterly in the opinion of certain people in Quebec.

The priest is portrayed both directly, and through the medium of the opinions and reactions of the parishioners.

Moisan's ambition to have his son become a priest is simple and worldly in character: it will enhance his own prestige in the village community. The ambition once realized, it "made him feel more important than the other people when somebody asked: 'Well, and how's your son, Father Moisan?'" That was worth all the painful sacrifices it entailed. The attitude of the younger brother toward the elevation of Oguinase to the sacred office is equally mundane: "It's all right for him, he's going to be a priest. Good clothes, good eats. Lord and master of the parish." The process of turning the young farm lad into a priest slowly transforms both his character and the attitudes of the family toward him: it is a progressive alienation from his people and from common humanity. He becomes a part of the great, rich corporate body that holds sway over so much of French-Canadian life.

The parishioners "become thoughtful" at the news that a new parish is to be established in the area of St. Jacques; it will involve a \$150,000 stone church and a \$40,000 presbytery; and they knew "how useless it was to oppose the will of the priest once he had made up his mind to run his parishioners

into debt for the sake of putting up something big and imposing." (p. 206.)

In the cities the political-theocratic monopoly no longer exercises full sway; hence the clerical preoccupation with "back-to-the-land" movements, and the Bishop's adjuration to the parishioners of Saint Jacques that those who desert the land are "practically headed straight for hell." And indeed, Moisan finds in White Falls, to his dismayed astonishment, that the focus of life and interest is no longer to be found at the church, but at the factory and the millionaire's mansion. The world of capitalist industry has supplanted the world of semi-feudal agrarian life.

* * *

A political meeting that takes place on a Sunday afternoon at the farm of Moisan's father-in-law is typical of rural Quebec prior to the last war, before the rising anti-trust and industrial protest movements began to change the traditional aspect of French-Canadian politics. "They and their fathers before them had always been Liberals, for in the country districts of Quebec political opinions are handed on from generation to generation just like farm-lands. They are almost as much a part of an inheritance as property or religion." (p. 67.) Party loyalties, Liberal or Conservative, determine the alignments at electoral periods in the village; their distant origin in the class cleavages between the radical, anti-feudal petty bourgeoisie and the clerical landowners has been all

but forgotten. Class lines will reassert themselves only when the crisis of the '30's disrupts the tranquillity of life in the countryside and spurs *habitant* and factory worker alike to seek paths of independent action, outside of the old parties. Already, however, at the meeting at the Branchauds' farm, the question is raised:

"How about telling us why it is no farmers ever get elected? They have lawyers, doctors, notaries, traveling salesmen, but never any farmers. . . ."

But when the politician retorts, "Suppose the county sends you down to Quebec to tell them all about it. Who's going to look after your farm?"—they all fall silent, at a loss to answer. "They hadn't thought of that. They had forgotten their serfdom for a moment. . . ." (pp. 69-70.)

The sway of the bourgeois and clerical politicians in Quebec derives particular strength from their ability to exploit the national antagonisms and resentments, whose roots are to be found in the economic, social and political inequalities that have not yet been eliminated from the life of the French-Canadians. Daviau, the politician, falls back on the argument: ". . . if we don't have real men with guts down in Quebec it won't be long before the English up in Ottawa tan the hides off us"—reasoning which is used by Liberals and Tories alike, with equal irresponsibility.

Ringuet touches briefly but with understanding sympathy on the causes of the national cleavage that

split the country during the war of 1914-18: the gulf that yawned "between the 'English' and the 'Habitants'; between the Canadians of the greater British Empire and the Canadians of the little nation on the banks of the St. Lawrence, the French-Canadians of Quebec." The tendencies to isolationism and pacifism in Quebec grew from the enforced isolation of its people as a French minority hemmed in by a predominantly English-speaking continent: "Rooted in the Laurentian soil, which is the only one they had ever known, without contact for a century and a half now with the distant world of Europe. . . ." It is this isolation which has been sedulously cultivated and maintained by the ruling industrial and clerical powers—that-be, in order to preserve French Canada as a low-wage area and a base for political reaction—a potential Vendée.

Twentieth-century capitalism has both sharpened the elements of national friction and brought into being the means of overcoming it. Big business monopoly in the hands of English-Canadians and Americans stands over against an impoverished French-Canadian "factory fodder" drawn from the *habitant* farms. But, on the other hand, in the cities and industrial towns French and English-speaking and foreign-born workers mix, face common problems, learn solidarity. In *Thirty Acres* the crisis of the French-Canadian rural community, as unfolded through the lives of the Moisans, leads to the "crisis of adaptation" to life in English-speaking industrial New England:

a transition familiar to tens of thousands of Franco-American families, and one which Ringuet depicts with considerable skill.

These crises are unresolved: as the book ends, the Great Crisis descends with equal force on St. Jacques l'Ermite and White Falls, N. H. The folk on the land, caught in the vise of precarious small-ownership and contracting markets, look to the towns; but in the towns factory after factory closes down, and those who went there from the land turn toward the family farm again, in search of a security that is there no longer.

* * *

Thirty Acres constitutes a courageous and significant break with the traditional literary distortions of French-Canadian reality. As against the mystico-sentimental "interpretations" of Quebec hitherto prevalent in literature dealing with that province, Ringuet has sought to give an honest, objective portrayal of the actual life on the land, the social relationships of the French-Canadian parish community, the impact of technical progress on the outlook of the *habitant*. . . . These realities are depicted, not only with a considerable degree of objectivity, but with lively concreteness—that quality of vivid fusion of the general with the particular which is one of the essentials of artistic truth.

At the same time, however, it is necessary to point out certain major limitations from which the book suffers. These limitations become

obvious when we turn to Ringuet's outlook on life and society, as expressed in the book. This outlook might be described as one of "limited materialism." The treatment of the actual and immediate realities of men's hard struggle with the recalcitrant earth and of their conditioning through the servitudes of individual small ownership, gives the book the greater part of its value and strength. But this treatment does not extend to a grasping of society as an integral, historically evolving system of class relationships—as capitalist society in crisis.

Thus, the story of the Moisans is told against a background of developing market relationships in agriculture and of the descending crisis-blight on the Quebec land; but the crisis of the family and the crisis of the social order as a whole are not seen in their true relationship. The latter appears as a force accentuating and aggravating the former—but the root source of both is not grasped. Ringuet's limited vision allows him to see neither monopoly capital as the source of the contradictions which he observes, nor the industrial working class as the one leading force capable, in alliance with the farming masses, of cutting through and overcoming the contradictions.

It is true that the period dealt with in the book antedates the rise of the anti-trust movements and of the strike wave in the Quebec textile and steel industries in the middle 'thirties, and that its setting is mainly that of the less politically developed rural community. But these restrictions, of the author's

choice, are not sufficient to account for the deeper limitations, which have to do with his philosophy. Ringuet's materialism, which is healthy and authentic as far as it goes, is nonetheless not historical, not dialectical. Not understanding the nature of capitalism, Ringuet can see no visible way out of the servitude imposed by material burdens and oppressive property-relations. Hence the conclusion of the book, on a note of fatalism. Moisan's broken life, his inability to change its course, is summed up in the concluding passage in the phrase: "Circumstances had decided matters for him, that and people ruled by circumstances." (p. 324.)

In this conclusion circumstances appear to be omnipotent. Lacking is all possibility of social transformation through a conscious working together of the Moisans of city and country, to shape the existing world according to their need.

From the same source comes the lack, in *Thirty Acres*, of the militant spirit of struggle against oppression. Certainly, we can discern a definite element of democratic protest, both in the recurrent allusions to French-Canadian social and economic inequality, and in the note of cutting irony which accompanies many of the references to the role of the Church hierarchy; but it is a protest without a program, one which fails to point a forward path of actual struggle. This is true of the author's approach both to the economic and social issues raised in the novel, and to the related political questions of French and English-speaking Canadian unity, elim-

ination of national inequalities, and independent labor-farmer political action. For a program of action on these issues one must go beyond the limits of Ringuet's novel, to the unifying, constructive force of the broad Canadian labor and progressive movement, within which the Communist Party, with its scientific, Marxist-Leninist understanding of social development, is a vital, indispensable factor.

These are indeed major limitations. But it is important to emphasize the fact that Ringuet is one of the very few French-Canadian intellectuals who have dared, in the face of powerful reactionary pressures, to attempt an honest and searching examination of the real rural Quebec. The initial step which his book represents needs to be fol-

lowed through to its logical conclusion, on the path of actual struggle.

Today, the parish of St. Jacques l'Ermite and the life of its people have been transformed anew, through the establishment of war-industrial plant serving the production front against Hitlerism. Against the implacable foe of all independence of nations, of all democracy and freedom, national unity of English and French-speaking Canadians is more than ever an urgent necessity. To the welding of this unity, and to the democratic solidarity of the peoples of the Americas, *Thirty Acres*, through deepening our understanding of the French-Canadian people, can make its modest but nevertheless significant contribution.

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