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The Conquest of Power

:BERALISM, ANARCHISM, SYNDI-
ALISM, SOCIALISM, FASCISM AND
COMMUNISM

BY ALBERT WEISBORD

V e Two

FASCISM

COMMUNISM

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME TWO

BOOK V. FASCISM

I. FOUNDATIONS OF FASCISM

24. CHRONIC CRISIS 485
25. THE AGE OF VIOLENCE 503
26. FASCIST PROTOTYPES 540

II. FASCISM ARRIVES

27. THE END OF REFORM 567
28. ITALY 580
29. GERMAN NATIONAL SOCIALISM 605
30. NATIONAL SOCIALISM (CONTINUED) 627
31. THE SPREAD OF FASCISM 654
32. FASCIST TRENDS IN THE UNITED STATES 683
33. THE FUTURE PHYSIOGNOMY OF AMERICAN FASCISM 718

BOOK VI. COMMUNISM

I. THE ZIG-ZAG CHARACTER OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

34. EARLY COMMUNIST UPRISINGS 733
35. THE PARIS COMMUNE 763
36. BOLSHEVISM 776
37. THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1905 803
38. THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1917 835
39. THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION (CONTINUED) 859

II. THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL UNDER LENIN

40. THE POST-WAR REVOLUTIONARY WAVE 901
41. THE FIRST FOUR CONGRESSES 930

III. STALINISM

42. THE SWING TO THE RIGHT 975
43. THE CHINESE REVOLUTION 986
44. SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY 1017
45. ISOLATION AND COLLAPSE 1047
46. ISOLATION AND COLLAPSE (CONTINUED) 1074
47. COMMUNISM IN THE UNITED STATES 1100

IV. THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

48. THE STRATEGY OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL 1125
49. COMMUNISM AND AMERICA 1154
INDEX 1177

BOOK V: FASCISM

I. FOUNDATIONS OF FASCISM

XXIV. CHRONIC CRISIS

I

FASCISM is an outstanding political demonstration that the capitalist world is no longer strong and healthy. Although capitalism grew with vigor and promise during the nineteenth century, it has already reached its age of decrepitude. In economics capitalism stifles the forces of production. In social life it reduces the standards of the people to an unbelievably low level. In theory it flies to mysticism and necromantic table-rappings of all sorts. Instead of the old basic capitalist rhythms and patterns prevailing in the pre-war period, the framework clatters convulsively, torn by disintegrating tremors.

Prior to the present, all the contradictions which have ripened since into such monstrous proportions were already paining the social consciousness, although the healthy forces of growth were able to conceal the disease while indeed nourishing it. In the nineteenth century, capitalism went through its cycles of prosperity, boom, panic, depression, revival and prosperity, etc., in which prosperity and boom were the relatively long periods, panic and depression the shorter ones. However, as capitalism advanced, the crises, intensified, affected more countries, the intervals between crises shortened, the effects grew more severe. Gradually prosperity and boom were becoming overshadowed by panic and depression.

The United States furnishes a good example of this development. According to a carefully worked-out chart of the Cleveland Trust Company, starting with the panic of 1837, it was found that, generally speaking, and leaving aside the special causes such as existed in the economic readjustment immediately after the Civil War, panics lasted only a short time, a year or two, and, in the main, did not reduce the business activity below 10 per cent of normal. The crises were separated by intervals of fifteen years which became shortened, by the latter part of the century, to intervals of approximately ten years. Only in the panic of 1893, for the first time, did production fall off 20 per cent from normal, and the depression extend for several years (three to five years). This was the greatest damage suffered during the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, however, even before the war, the United States witnessed three periods when industry fell from 10 per cent to 15 per cent. The country was again on the verge of a great depression when the European War broke out.

Following the World War came the crisis of 1920-21, which plunged the country into the deepest depression of its history. Production fell off at times 25 per cent, and millions of workers were thrown on the street. That the United States was able to recover relatively quickly was due to the weakened conditions of capitalist Europe and its great demand upon the United States for economic support in its rehabilitation and reorganization. That is to say, the crisis of 1920-21 in the United States was liquidated by the famine, poverty, and breakdown of Europe. No such causes for recovery exist in the present crisis.

The crisis extant today has embraced the whole capitalist world in its throes and is shaking the entire system to its foundations. Already it has gone through several stages. The first was purely economic, from 1929 to 1932. In the second, economics became concentrated into politics. As economic measures used to stave off bankruptcy failed, political expedients were tried. The third phase has witnessed the impossibility of liquidating the crisis within any country by the utilization of internal forces alone. The critical events now becoming universal must inevitably culminate in world war and revolutionary convulsions

The present crisis is quite distinct from all the others that have preceded it in the sense that it is due to a mutually interacting combination of two distinct sets of forces. On the one hand, it has its roots in the chronic basic crisis in which imperialism was placed ever since the World War; on the other hand, it is the result of the very efforts which allowed capitalism to survive and to stabilize itself after the war. This partial stabilization regenerated all the forces that had existed before the war, but on a higher plane Had capitalism perished under the advance of the first proletarian revolutionary wave, the present crisis would have been impossible. The forces that defeated the proletarian revolution and that revived capitalist contradictions re-created the cyclical features of the present crisis.

Even from the standpoint of the cyclical aspects only, the present crisis is unprecedented, both in weight and fury At the same time, the capitalist world has been unable. as previously, to absorb the shock of these cyclical depressions. The blows are harder, and the body has become weaker.

In the discussion of Socialism we have already taken up the economic contradictions and general social antagonisms which, operating even in "good times," lead in turn to "bad times." Now, as in similar periods in the past, the output per worker has increased more rapidly than the total disposable production, thus leading to the discharge of workers even when production is increasing. This increased output per worker is due especially to increased productivity, that is, to the introduction and wide-spread application of the improvements of machinery, etc. The worker, with the same

amount of labor power expended, now turns out increasingly large quantities of commodities.

If the accumulation of capital leading to relative overproduction is the basic cause of any particular cyclical crisis, this overproduction is still further stimulated by the crisis itself. In order to prevent shut-downs, each manufacturer tries to lower the cost of production, that is, still further to rationalize production and to depress the wages of the laborers. It is precisely in the period of crises that new machinery, sweatshops, and over-work become general, and the output per laborer enormously increased. Thus, to the evils of over-work and over-strain is added the misery of an uncertainty of labor.

Ample evidence is available in official reports of the great increase of productivity per man occurring exactly in periods of crisis. The United States Department of Labor reports, for example, regarding the coal mines: "A further significant fact shown in these statistics is that the year-to-year increase in output per man per day has been more rapid in years of depression, i.e., 1930 and 1931, than in the year of more active coal demand, 1929." [1] The same was stated in regard to the auto-tire industry for 1930-1931: ". . . especially during the last 2 years, there has been an increase in man-hour productivity, much larger than during any preceding year in the history of tire making." [2] In fact, the rate of increase in 1931 was nine times that of 1929. The same tendency has existed in all industries.

The crisis itself is brought about by the law of accumulation of capital leading to the contradiction between the increased productivity of the worker and the slower increase of markets, or even decrease of markets. The ingenuity of man is unlimited. His ability to increase his output has steadily progressed. On the other hand, the world is finite. It has a limited number of people and a restricted area. The number of people who can purchase goods so as to yield a profit does not increase with the rate of growth of production or of productivity. Not only does the rate of consumption decrease relative to the rate of production, but now consumption tends, even in absolute figures, not to increase at all, to remain stagnant, and even to decrease. The growing impoverishment of the masses often renders large markets nugatory. This has been especially true since the World War.

The very tendencies engendering crises are accentuated in turn by the crisis itself. The rate of growth of productivity in periods of prosperity has been ascertained to be 4 per cent per year; in periods of depression it has become 7 per cent per year. Precisely at the moment when falling markets create unemployment, workers are thrown out of work all the

[1] Monthly Labor Review, Vol. 36, No. 3, p. 511. (March, 1933.)
[2] United States Bureau of Labor Statistics: *Bulletin No. 585*, p. 24. (July, 1933.)

more rapidly because of the introduction of new machinery.[1] Periods of crisis are generally periods of complete renovation of machinery and the introduction of even more efficient systems of rationalization than prevailed before. At the same time, the market collapses farther because of unemployment.

In the present crisis, all the harsh contradictory features of the old cyclical crisis have been reproduced on a much higher plane. In 1920-1921, in the United States, during the crisis, production fell off at times to 25 per cent; in the crisis commencing 1929, production at one time went down to 50 per cent, and although by 1936 it has mounted again to almost the same levels as before, in many instances, the number of unemployed in the United States has remained as large as in the deepest period of the crisis, 1932.

The unprecedented violence of the present crisis could be seen from the start, when the cycle was launched with a terrific stock market crash in New York City. In a very short time, industry and trade had fallen to record lows all over the world. The industrial crisis led to a financial crisis, aggravated by the insecure financial positions of the various European governments. Not only large banks began to go bankrupt, but also the governments themselves controlling these banks, especially in those countries which had been defeated in the War. The victorious Versailles powers, enemies of these governments, had to rush in to save them with loans and credits of all sorts in order to bolster up the entire capitalist world. It was too late, however, for Versailles to repair what it had previously impaired. Practically the whole world was forced off the gold standard and a world-wide moratorium for debts declared. This in turn only brought about a further stagnation of business, leading to a political crisis in 1932-1933.

Confining ourselves to the cyclical features of the present crisis, the following new factors can be noted: (1) The crisis has affected the whole world simultaneously, no matter to what degree the various countries may have differed preceding the turn. The crisis has put a definite end to the particular violent vacillations marking the economy of each country, and, with few exceptions, has crashed down upon the production of all of them. This situation is quite different from that before the War, when the cycles, though embracing the whole world, operated in a serial manner affecting one country after the other, rather than all at once. (2) The crisis is of far longer duration, so much so as to become a chronic one. (3) The

[1] Compare here, too, the general trend described by A. F. Burns (*Production Trends in the United States Since 1870*, p. 173): ". . . there are substantial grounds for believing that the life histories of industries are becoming shorter."

"hard times" are far more intense and severe in their effects than those heretofore.

In the late nineteenth century, Friedrich Engels had analyzed the changes occurring in the cyclical crises of capitalism, where depressions were tending to merge one into the other. At that time he wrote: "The acute form of the periodical process, with its former decennial cycle, seems to have given way to a more chronic, long drawn, alternation between a relatively short and slight business improvement and a relatively long, undecided depression, both of them differently distributed over the various industrial countries. . . . is it possible, that we are now in the preparatory stage of a new world crash of unparalleled vehemence?" [1]

The question that Engels posed then can be answered today. The post-war period of imperialism has amply demonstrated that today the period of prosperity is the brief and ephemeral one. We are now in a period of perpetual panic.

Should the law of accumulation of capital fail to operate as hitherto, the world would be placed in an extreme predicament, for, far from ameliorating the contradictions, this failure would remove the last progressive feature from capitalism. It is an ominous fact that this very tendency is coming to the fore during the present depression. As we have seen, the past crises had at least this justification—they swept out the old technique and backward economy in favor of better methods. Society progressed through the ruin of the bankrupt.

But what will happen when there is no backward business man to bankrupt, when, as, for example, in the aluminum industry in the United States, there exists a complete monopoly? In this case, when markets are bad, all that the trust does is to close down one of its branches or subsidiary factories. There is here no substitution of a better technique or improvement in quality, but simply a curtailment of the quantity of production. When "good times" return the old plant may be reopened. Here, then, is an extremely sinister symptom of capitalism that tends to become more universal, especially when, with the ever increasing rise in the organic composition of capital, marked by the preponderance of fixed and constant capital over labor (variable capital), it becomes steadily more difficult to throw away the old and introduce the new in monopolist industries. Under such circumstances, technique tends to sink into a Pontine Marsh.

The present crisis has given birth to another unique circumstance of the greatest danger. Up to now, the expropriated petty owner could find a place in the ranks of the active working class. This was apparently a step downward for him, but, in reality, it attached him to a new class imbued with optimism and vigor, a class which could refresh him. Now, however,

[1] K. Marx: *Capital*, III, footnote, pp. 574-575.

the ranks of the proletariat are closed to him by the enormous standing army of unemployed. Thus, the doors have been locked before and behind and he is left literally to rot. This decaying mass of humanity, isolated from the active classes, can descend only to the degeneracy of the *déclassé*, receptive to any adventure that promises to raise him from his desperate plight. He becomes excellent fodder for the fascists, forming the most important bulk of their forces.[1]

One final phenomenon should be emphasized, namely, the formation of a class of permanently disemployed workers. Some of these disemployed may join with the rotting petty bourgeoisie to enter the ranks of fascism. In the United States, this element will be mostly the native American, skilled worker and employee type unable to adjust itself. To them will be joined the *lumpen* proletariat and diseased criminal elements. The menacing character of this development is especially marked where these disemployed are formed along race lines.[2] Under such conditions, the stage is set for the most savage and violent civil wars, civil wars which are capable of assuming, in the United States, truly cyclonic proportions.

The new features of the cyclical crisis that have been enumerated above can be traced to the changed productive relations that have developed in the era of imperialism. In the first place, we have the process of capitalistic rationalization which, with its scientific and systematic attempts to increase the mass and rate of surplus value, has also scientifically and systematically sharpened the economic and social contradictions of the present order. The nineteenth century was a stranger to rationalization. This factor brought the clash more clearly to a head, and all the faster increased production at a geometric ratio, while, even in the best of times, consumption increased but arithmetically. Sooner or later there would have to come a time when so great would become the productivity of society that one country could produce enough for all, and, in one year, sufficient for ten years' use. This time has now come.

The United States alone can produce enough to satisfy Europe's present demand. There is no longer any need for German or English production. Further, its factories are so productive that no longer can three years of depression consume the surplus of seven years' hard work. Now one or two years of capacity production supplies goods it takes eight years to consume. Here is the reason for the chronic character of the depression today.

[1] "A census made in 1934 of heads of families on urban relief shows that about one-third of all were members of the middle class, including skilled workers as middle class." (S. Chase: *Government in Business*, p. 47.)

[2] In America, for example, the overwhelming mass of Negroes are gradually being placed in this category of permanent disemployed. The destiny of the Negro, however, is to turn not toward Fascism but toward Communism.

The new features of the cyclical crisis are also due to the fact that radical structural changes have taken place in world economy, including such matters as the shift of the economic center of gravity from Europe to the United States, the breaking down of Europe, the rise of Soviet economy, the development of Asia, etc. These shifts have permanently disturbed the former balances and equilibriums.

We must emphasize again that the very causes of the crisis are accentuated by the effects. During the depression, rationalization is intensified, the market is still further diminished, the law of uneven development, leading to radical structural changes and shifts, is still further sharpened. Economics becomes transformed into politics which in turn reacts upon economics mutually anastomosing to plunge the world into still greater political convulsions.

The cyclical crisis has been the gravest in history, and, at the same time, never was the world in a weaker condition. These two circumstances have operated mutually to strengthen each other and to drive the crisis into an international affair of unsolvable proportions.

The World War and its aftermath greatly weakened capitalism's power to withstand the blows of the present crisis, shocks which only the more violently arose. Between 1918 and 1929, England, France, Germany, the large as well as the small countries, careened madly from one side to another, from prosperity to crisis, from reaction to revolution. Periods of prosperity or crisis in England no longer corresponded with similar periods in Germany, or those in Germany with events in France, or general conditions in Europe, with those of Asia or of the United States. Each country seemed to function as an independent fragment, dizzily spinning on its own axis towards its inevitable doom. This has been the basic pattern since the World War, while entirely new economic and political equilibria have governed America, Europe, the Soviet Union, and Asia.

Comparative statistics well illustrate the above conclusions. Conditions in the iron and steel industry are good indices of general business conditions.[1] In 1920, for example, while the United States was falling off in iron and steel production from about thirty-seven million tons to seventeen million, the United Kingdom was falling from nine to four million, Germany was rising from six to almost nine million, and France was advancing as well. In 1923, on the other hand, when the United States had recovered to forty million tons, Germany had fallen to five million, France was still going up, and England had recovered to about seven million. In 1926, the United States remained at forty million, France had gone to ten

[1] See, National Industrial Conference Board: *Chart No. 239*, "Road Maps of Industry," Series October, 1930.

million, England had dropped to four million, and Germany had risen to eleven million. In 1929, the figures for the United States were 42.6 million tons of iron and steel; Germany, 15.5 million; France, 10.4 million; the United Kingdom, 7.6 million.

In the financial sphere, as a result of the redivision of Europe by the Versailles Treaty and the chaos caused by war and revolution, one country after the other experienced drastic currency crises culminating in Germany in 1923 and in France and Italy in 1925, etc. In 1926 wholesale prices stood as follows (counting 1913-14 as 100): Germany 134.4; Belgium 744; France 718; Italy 603; Poland 105; United Kingdom 148.1; Japan 178.9, etc. Thus in the same year the widest differences were to be noticed in countries in close juxtaposition to each other. By 1929, while prices rose 15 per cent in Belgium, they fell 13 per cent in France, 27 per cent in Italy, 7.2 per cent in the United Kingdom.[1]

Considering the fluctuations from the aspect of their effects upon the income of the people, we note that in 1924 the number of bankruptcies in the United States was the lowest of the nine years that followed; in Great Britain, on the other hand, it was the highest, while Germany experienced the most violent fluctuations, ranging from a monthly average of 516 bankruptcies in 1924 to 1,003 in 1926, falling to 475 in 1927, and rising to 821 in 1929; in France the figures showed opposite fluctuations or 659 in 1925, 122 in 1926 and 689 in 1927.

In France, despite temporary suspensions at various levels, the cost of living, having leaped up during 1925, mounted steadily from 1927 to 1930; in Italy, it took a drastic drop from 1925; in Great Britain, it showed a steady decline; in Germany, it maintained itself at the same level. In France, wages rose above the slowly dropping cost of living; in Great Britain, they had been below the cost of living. In both Germany and Italy also the cost of living dropped gradually; after 1930 wages dropped at terrific speed.[2]

Thus, we can safely declare that, as a result of the World War and the revolutions continually shaking the capitalist structure, capitalist world economy was nowhere able to return to the relatively stable equalibria and smooth functionings that had existed prior to 1914. It was as though someone had taken a mighty hammer and smashed the social framework of Europe into fragments.

The crisis has not affected all countries equally. It has fallen upon the backward agrarian countries, such as Spain and the European States in Eastern Europe, even more severely than upon the major industrial countries of Europe. This is even more true of the non-European agrarian

[1] See, National Industrial Conference Board: *Major Forces in World Business Depression.*

[2] See, for example, League of Nations: *World Production and Prices,* Appendix III, Table 2 (1933 Series II A, No. 12.)

countries, colonial and semi-colonial, such as Cuba, Central and South America, India and China, etc.[1] In every possible way, the industrial country has tried to shift the burden upon the weaker agrarian one. The oppressive political régimes and the general bankruptcy existing in these backward countries have fructified economic difficulties into political explosions.

Thus, to sum up the whole situation, we may declare that, upon the shoulders of this new economic and political situation existent from 1918 onward, the present crisis enters the scene. Superimposed upon the chronic breakdown of world order there now arise the heavy contradictions stemming from the temporary stabilization of capitalism with the arresting of the proletarian revolution. We have, then, a double or combined crisis: first, the general critical situation in which capitalism has been placed since the War, and, also, the unprecedented regular cyclical crisis superimposed upon it. This combination concentrates the economic crisis and transforms it into a political one.

In its desperate attempt to extricate itself from the crisis, the capitalist world has been forced to turn to fascism and rampant adventurism of the most violent character, as illustrated by the recent actions of Germany, Italy, and Japan, fraught with the greatest menace of world war. Although there has been a temporary upturn since 1933, it has become clear that through peaceful methods alone there can be no way out for capitalism. The war danger has become enormously heightened; capitalism stands before a worldwide political crisis of the greatest magnitude, involving the decisive question: To be or not to be.

2

Loaded upon the natural weakness of world imperialism have been the great structural changes in world economy that have permanently upset the old equilibria, marked by a shift of the economic center of gravity to the United States, by the breaking up of the British Empire, by the dissolution of the natural cohesiveness of Europe and its breakdown, by the rise of Soviet economy and the markets of Asia. These structural movements have been sharply exacerbated by the present crisis which in turn has greatly intensified the uneven development of capitalism.

The United States is now almost equal to all of capitalist Europe and comprises 40 per cent of the capitalist world economy. Besides its own production, American manufacturers directly control production in many countries, and, through agreements and cartels, dominate many industries which they do not control directly. In its evolution, the United States

[1] For the terrible effects of imperialism even in normal times see the statement on the depopulation of French Equatorial Africa in S. H. Roberts: *History of French Colonial Policy, 1870-1925*, I, 365.

already has reached the stage where, in its exports of commodities, two-thirds are finished and semi-finished, while the imports are moving more and more to raw materials. This is just the opposite to the situation that existed in the nineteenth century. In wealth and income, Europe has slipped behind America, both relatively and absolutely.

The basis for the hegemony of the United States in world affairs rests upon its enormous natural and power resources, its great food supply, the ample raw materials at hand, the exceptional equipment and rationalized technique, the huge home market, the lack of any decisive feudal relationships, the non-exhaustion through war, and finally, the tremendous reservoir of capital in its possession.

As a result of the shifting of the economic center of gravity to the United States, a most severe struggle has taken place between Europe and America generally, and between Great Britain and the United States especially. The European capitalists feel heavily the tremendous impact of the United States. War debts payable to the United States amount to over twelve billion dollars; private loans abroad payable to American capitalists amount to over fifteen and one-half billion more.[1]

Increasingly has the United States become a dominant part of world capitalism. Up to the twentieth century, America had served as the instrument for the rejuvenation of Europe, as an enormous outlet for Europe's surplus capital and relative surplus population. Had it not been for the Open Door of America, class conflicts in Europe would have matured far earlier and would have led to decisive solutions before this time. Thus, America's growth postponed the ultimate day of reckoning for Europe.

In this respect the United States and Russia have functioned as two powerful reservoirs of reaction, each in its own way. Russian Czarism and the huge Russian army stood ready at the beck and call of the financiers of Europe to crush every democratic and socialist movement in the West. Thus, the breakdown of the Russian system became the goal of every democratic movement. On the other hand, the United States, in depriving Europe of its militant characters, in permitting the masses of Europe to believe that salvation was attainable in the "promised land," offered an outlet for the pent-up streams generated by European contradictions and thus prevented eruption. Under the Russian system, socialism was crushed; under the American system it was dissolved into Liberalism. Both co-operated to save Europe from a workers' rule.

Today, however, America's doors are shut. The tide of immigrants has

[1] Spread approximately as follows: Nearly 5 billion dollars to Europe, of which about 4 billion is in Germany; 4 billion to Canada; 5½ billion to Latin America; over 1.2 billion to the Far East. Of these investments approximately two-thirds are in government loans and one-third in loans to individual corporations, railroads and public utilities.

turned the other way indeed. There is no longer any escape either for Europe or for America. America affects Europe today, not as a liberator, releasing her productive forces and taking away the revolutionists, but as a huge competitor smashing Europe to pieces.

After the World War, the United States again was called upon to save Europe. This time America was forced into an entirely different technique. It had to throw into the fray the whole might of its reserves to save Europe from the proletarian revolution, to send its army against the Soviets, to liquidate many of its war debts. It made fresh loans to the capitalists. It practically gave away war supplies and material then in Europe. It brought into Germany alone four billion dollars for the rehabilitation of Europe, for stamping out revolution. These favors, however, were not granted without political payment. The ruling class of the United States used its favorable position and power to make Europe entirely subservient to its ends, to break up all alliances against it. From now on, each country would have to come to America humbly to beg for funds or for support for its continued existence.

In self-defense, European capitalists struggled to resist the impact of American capitalism. Under French and English leadership, an attempt was made to organize a debtors' bloc against "Uncle Shylock." The reactionary French plan of a "United States of Europe" was another such attempt to consolidate the continent. Similarly, many international cartels were formed to meet the growing competition from across the Atlantic; high tariffs were erected to resist American invasion.

That this resistance of reconstructed Europe was successful to some extent is evidenced by the fact that imports from the United States into various European countries fell steadily.[1] In spite of this, Europe continues to lag far below its former pre-War strength, both relatively and absolutely.

Today the resistance of Europe has taken still more drastic trends. Practically none of the European countries is liquidating its debts to the United States. In consequence of the increased competition, the ratio of the United States to the rest of the world in the production of certain key commodities, such as iron, steel, coal, etc., has steadily fallen, as it has in the total of the world's foreign trade.

However, it must be noted here that the comparative loss in position is not due so much to the fact that other countries have seized the markets belonging to the United States as to the fact that the markets no longer exist and that each country is curtailing imports, pulling in its belt, in is

[1] The share of imports from the U. S. into the United Kingdom fell from 18.6% in values in 1925, to 14.7% in 1930, and to about 11% in 1933. Germany in 1923 imported 19.1% of her total imports from the United States. In 1927 this had fallen to 14.7% and in 1933 to 9%.

extreme efforts to obtain self-sufficiency and to avoid complete bankruptcy. Resistance to America has been carried out only at the ruinous cost of the lowering of all the levels of living within the nations of Europe.

The fact of the matter is, Europe cannot pull itself together to give battle to the United States. Torn between the United States on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other, Europe is self-divided, cannot unite itself, must be driven down farther and farther as the tool of this or that historical force. The sole way out for these peoples is through a united states of Europe, precisely what European capitalism congenitally is unable to attain.

As the United States becomes definitely an indissoluble part of world capitalism, world markets and world division of labor, every major disturbance in the Western hemisphere at once rapidly affects the rest of the world, and vice versa. The United States is not a self-contained system. Over thirty articles absolutely necessary in time of war, over one hundred products regularly purchased, are not produced within the United States, but must be imported. Again, of the total wealth of the country, approximately 7 per cent is invested abroad. At the same time, today many countries are practically dependent on the economy of the United States for their very existence, such as Bolivia supplying tin, Peru copper, Brazil coffee, Chile nitrates, Malay Peninsula rubber and tin, Cuba sugar, Japan silk, etc. All these facts show how closely the United States is linked up with the rest of the world. A revolutionary crisis in Europe must rapidly and violently draw in the United States as well.

The structural changes that have occurred in world economy during and since the War have resulted in the growing disintegration of the British Empire. This is partly due also to the terrific pressure that the United States is bringing to bear against Great Britain for world supremacy. It is a struggle for all parts of the world in every conceivable sphere of activity. There can be but one result: In this struggle, the British Empire must continue to give ground and, as it loses its position of world supremacy, it also must begin to disintegrate within.[1]

Emerging from the World War with a tremendous material loss, both in goods and in men, with an antiquated industrial technique, and with increased competition, Great Britain, heavily in debt, has been unable to regain her former position. Revolts of the colonies (India, China), the industrialization of other countries, the technological shift to means of production which Great Britain proper does not own (e.g., the shift from coal to oil), coupled with the breakdown of Europe after the War and the increased tariff rates all around, all these events further combined to

[1] See, L. Denny: *America Conquers Britain.*

reduce the power of Great Britain. Added to this was the resistance labor offered to any drastic decrease in its income, and the costly struggles which followed the attempt to lower wages. The British General Strike in 1926 alone cost Britain nearly a billion dollars, though it lasted but nine days.

In the foreign field, Germany, with the aid of the United States, has rebuilt its economic machine to the extent that it is now superior to what it was before the War. Also, the gigantic competition of the United States is driving Great Britain before it, especially in South America and in the Dominions, notably Canada. On the other side, the victory of the workers of the Soviet Union has considerably weakened the position of British capitalism. Finally, in Asia there is above all the increased competition of the rising Japanese imperialism, particularly in textiles.

On top of all this has come the present world crisis which has profoundly affected and weakened the British capitalist system, although the drop in production in foreign trade has not been so great nor so prolonged in Britain as in the United States, and the number of unemployed has not grown so large. Nevertheless, Great Britain is in a far worse position to bear the strain and has not functioned at full capacity at any time since the war. In the best of times there were about three million out of work; this figure has risen lately to six million.[1] The British public debt is eleven times what it was before the war, and is the highest per capita of any country in the world. At the same time, the government budget has shown a huge internal deficit. Even during prosperity (1924-1929), exports paid for only 69 per cent of its imports; the balance was raised from invisible imports, especially interest from capital invested abroad, which equalled close to a billion dollars a year. However, during the crisis this income, coupled to the moritoria on debts that have to be effected in Australia, South America, etc., has been cut down by half. All of these forces jointly have compelled the government of Britain to take drastic steps for its preservation.

The Bank of England has been forced off the gold standard, thereby making it profitable for other countries to buy from but not to sell to England. A sharper policy of forcing exports has been entered into, leading to dumping. At the same time, debts to the United States have been factually cancelled. A bitter trade war has been started between the United Kingdom and Japan. Finally, in self-preservation, Great Britain has been forced to encircle her Empire with a tariff of 10 per cent on non-Empire wheat and meat; this is but one of the methods utilized in an attempt to hold the British Empire together.

Nevertheless, none of these measures can be more than temporary stop-gaps. In innumerable ways the superior industrializations of the United

[1] We double the amount totaled by the government as "registered."

States can undermine and penetrate the Empire tariff. The pressure on the British Empire gradually increases. But British capitalism is not able to deter its rate of disintegration. While it is true that in the British Dominions, Great Britain has been able to retrieve some of the ground lost to the United States after the war, this has been done at great cost and has been more than compensated by the steady loss of ground to the United States and Asia, while in South America the fight rages fiercer than ever; Great Britain attempts to consolidate itself in Argentina, the United States in Brazil.

Political battles occur coinciding with the growth of economic competition. Faced with the loss of Germany and Japan, and with the present formal hostility of the United States and the Soviet Union,[1] the League of Nations, dominated by Great Britain, has completely broken down as a world instrument of control, and the inevitable military and naval race has begun.

To counter the growth of American influence in Asia, Great Britain has tolerated the partition of China and the hacking away of Manchuria. In reply to the recognition of Russia by the United States, Great Britain has allowed France to bring the Soviets into the League of Nations. As Great Britain loses control over Italy, she finds herself in an increasingly isolated position regarding Europe. The perspective for the British Empire can be only one of further disintegration, adventure, and acute growth of the class struggles. An excellent illustration of the disintegration is the break with Ireland which is steadily assuming major proportions. Another illustration is the abdication of Edward VIII.

The tottering international position of Great Britain has to be accompanied by drastic changes within the country. Taxes on low incomes are increased; the pay of workers and government officials is cut down; social insurance is reduced; heavy consumption taxes are placed on articles needed by the masses, etc. The government itself must move steadily to the Right. Both the national government from above and the Mosley blackshirts from below show definite fascist symptoms in turn, mute evidences of the growing disintegration of the British Empire.

All of these changes bring, at every turn, their own contradictions, such as rioting in Belfast, Glasgow, and London, mutiny in the navy, drifting of labor organizations to the Left, the split with Ireland, adoption of the Statute of Westminster, recognizing the constitutional independence and equality of the Dominions with Great Britain.[2]

[1] Although the Soviet Union has now joined the League of Nations, the Russians have never retracted their opinion of the League as a gang of robbers. However, the hostility between the two is being steadily reduced to a mere formality.

[2] For the present Constitution of the British Empire see, H. J. Schlosberg: *The King's Republics* (1929).

The World War left Europe exhausted, divided between victorious and conquering powers, bound in the straight-jacket of the Versailles Treaty, torn with internal dissensions and civil war, unable to regain its world position relative to Soviet Russia and the United States. For Europe, the world economic crisis has rapidly become transformed into a gigantic political one. The fascization of *Mittel Europa,* the breakdown of stability, the feverish preparations for war undertaken by desperate sections of the bourgeoisie, and finally, the reopening of all the old sores of the last war and the transformation of the new countries created by the Versailles Treaty into veritable explosion points, indicate that the sole way out for Europe is either violent social readjustment or collapse. A false readjustment has already been started brutally by Germany; the collapse will come later. The victory of fascism has broken down the last semblance of order and stability in Europe.

Most extreme is the Austrian situation. Constantly on the verge of bankruptcy, torn between the ambitions of German and Italian fascism, and the pawn of world diplomatic intrigue, Austria has become a vortex of the capitalist whirlpool in Europe. The victory of Austrian fascism and the destruction of socialism and proletarian organizations have moved the bourgeoisie of Austria step by step farther to the Right. Tied very closely to the economy of Germany without which it cannot live, Austria nevertheless is divorced artificially from that system by the victorious powers. Within Austria the position of the ruling clique has become increasingly embarrassed. Social explosions have followed one upon the other, and nothing but perpetual turmoil and strife can be anticipated until the problem is definitely solved. The capitalist solution lies in the restoration of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire or annexation to Germany, in either case no permanent solution.

In any event, the old Versailles system is no more. The Austrian situation has revealed the antipathetic interests between France and some countries of the Little Entente, and between each of these and Italy. The old Little Entente combination has been factually broken up, and even the Franco-Polish Alliance is threatened with a new counter-alliance between Germany and Poland. All is now chaos and confusion. The new alliances are no longer on the basis of order, but on the order of war. A host of potential explosion points exist in Europe, each one ready to blow up the entire social system.

In the Far East, too, the strain of events has reached the breaking point, as demonstrated by the Japanese adventures in Manchuria and Mongolia. Although seemingly the first to emerge from the crisis and now actually experiencing a great boom, Japan has been wasting her strength through an economy based on inflation and war. Her present prosperity hides the

real reduction of national wealth and its loss in unproductive processes. The great increase of exports on an inflationary basis has simply meant that goods have been sold abroad below their real value and at the expense of the masses.

Of all the great powers, Japan least of all has been able to withstand the shock of the world crisis. Her economy was extremely unbalanced and relied mainly upon the export of silk, the production of which occupied 20 per cent of the country's factory operatives and made up about 40 per cent of its exports, a commodity especially hit by the crisis. At the same time, Japan suffered from a great under-production of the means of production. As both exports and imports dropped drastically, especially silk exports to the United States, it became imperative for Japan to end its reliance upon the United States, to find new markets, to develop other commodities, to become self-sufficient in basic materials, in respect to iron and steel and to food. This need was aggravated by the heavy import surplus, the rise in the national debt, and the increased expenses of government. These were some of the reasons compelling Japan to act in China.

There were other reasons, too. Economic pressure had become aggravated by the political situation, both international and national. On the foreign front, Japan had received many defeats. Its alliance with Great Britain had been broken. Its attempts to raise its naval strength above 60 per cent of that of the United States had been frustrated. In China, a huge boycott had been launched against it. In Manchuria, the war lords were marching closer to Nanking. Russia and the United States were winning the markets, and Chinese railways were paralleling the Japanese. Internally, Japanese capitalism was ridden by a militarist *camarilla* with a form of government as out-moded as that of Czarism. In the saddle was an extremely reactionary element supporting the chauvinistic régime of the Mikado. This unbridled military chauvinism could only welcome war.

Just as Japanese economy was unhealthy, so was the relationship of class forces inimical to the capitalists. Two big concerns, literally twelve men, controlled practically everything economic in Japan, e.g., 38 per cent of the commercial bank deposits, 73 per cent of the trust properties, etc. On the other hand, the average income per capita was on the level of the poorest countries in Europe.

By 1931, Japan, immediately upon abandoning the gold standard, was able by ruthlessly driving down the masses to make large advances in winning markets. It greatly extended the rationalization of its industry in textiles, for example, by reducing the number of workers running the same machinery by 43 per cent, speeding up all machines, paying wages one-seventh of those of Great Britain, and cutting wages 52 per cent, while stepping up the cost of living 10 per cent. Japan was able to reach first

place in cotton textiles, surpassing even Great Britain, and rapidly dominating Asia, increasing its share in India and even in South America. By such aggressive measures, Japan shoved up its proportion of world exports by over 25 per cent.

At the same time and for similar reasons, Japan was forced into its Manchurian adventure from which there was no retreat and no outlet save war. The invasion of Manchuria by imperialist Japan marked a critical moment in imperialist post-war history. It proved again that, under the pressure of the crisis, weaker countries become still weaker and further penetrated by leading powers; debtor countries become further indebted, colonies and semi-colonies still more enslaved, the warfare among the leading powers more intense. The greatly increased political instability is a close indication of how transient and ephemeral the much vaunted "stabilization" of capitalism actually is.

The new aggressive acts by Japan have not been due to a sudden change of policy. On the contrary, they have been but the culmination of carefully laid imperialist plans that date from the Russo-Japanese War. The seizure of Sakhaline, Korea, of various Chinese concessions, of Kiao-chow and the Manchurian Southern Railroad, the all-rounded economic penetration of Manchuria, and the support formerly given the Manchurian militarists, all show that Japan has been but waiting for the proper correlation of forces in order to seize Manchuria outright, as one of her possessions, as she had Korea.

The present crisis has presented an extremely ripe opportunity for action to Japanese militarists, owing to the extreme chaos to which China had been reduced by famine, floods, and constant civil war among the military generals, which desolated the countryside and shattered any centralized unified power. Within the Nanking Government goes on a most corrupt and unprincipled intriguing for power by the various factions, egged on by the great imperialist powers of the world. The struggles of these militarists, both within and against the Nanking Government, have been only the forerunners of open attempts of the main imperialist powers physically to dismember and partition China. Such a partition conceivably would allocate the North of China to Japan, the coast and central parts to Great Britain, and sections of the south to France. Preventing these attempts at dismemberment have been the divisions among the imperialists, especially the opposition of the United States, which, having entered China late, having seized no large territory, yet having a great economic superiority, and burdened with democratic, non-imperialist pretensions, has supported the Nanking régime and temporarily fights for the "open door" policy. The second great force preventing the partition of China has been the revolutionary movement still stirring within.

The failure of the Chinese military leaders to resist Japan by means of war has hastened the dismemberment of China. Already Yunan has been seized by the French, Szechwan by the English Tibetans, and a bid made for Chinese Turkestan. However, the temporary victory of Japan has greatly increased all capitalist rivalries; at the same time, it has intensified the internal crisis in China and the revolutionary movement there. Finally, the temporary victory of Japan has sharpened the antagonisms between that country and the Soviet Union. The seizure of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia now offers imperialism a consolidated basis of attack. It is a thrust to split Siberia, a menace to Outer Mongolia under Soviets, a move against Turkestan, and a threat of outflanking the communist forces within China. Victory by Japan imperils the entire life of the Soviet Union.

Within Japan, the tremendous pressure of the world crisis, the Manchurian war and invasion have greatly heightened all social struggles. The Manchurian war alone has taken up the whole national income of the Japanese government. With 32 per cent of the peasant's income going to the State in taxes, loaded as he is, with a debt of six billion yen and an interest rate rarely below 10 per cent, and chained in a semi-feudal condition, with the workers regimented in barracks and increasingly exploited, with the students unable freely to express their thoughts, Japanese society seethes on all sides with discontent and revolution. On the one hand, fascism is growing rapidly. On the other hand, two thousand strikes in 1935, and thirty thousand political arrests within the past five years attest to the revolutionary vitality of the masses.

These structural changes and shifts in economic and political power are remaking the world, overthrowing the old balances, and creating world-wide disturbances. It is these changes that help to aggravate the permanent and chronic character of the present crisis.

Post-war imperialism has thus become an era of permanent crisis, economic and political. As such, it has become an age of violence and an era terminating all social reform. The Marxian theories of polar antagonisms, leading to the breaking down of the system on the top and the impelling of the masses to end the social order from below, seem to be verified completely.

XXV. THE AGE OF VIOLENCE

I

JUST as prosperity has given way to economic depression as the normal phase of post-war imperialism, and has become a mere pause between panics, so does the calm of peace yield to the hysteria of war. Previously, war was considered the exceptional and untoward event, the conflicts since Napoleon being mainly local and episodic. The World War, however, was a catastrophe of such a devastating nature as to change the whole character of world events. It led to the collapse of capitalism in the Soviet Union and to the breakdown of Europe. It produced such convulsions that revolution followed upon revolution in all parts of the world. Try as it will, capitalist Europe to this day has not been able to suppress for any length of time revolutionary manifestations.

In the nineteenth century, war was simply one of the many useful by-products of industrial evolution; its destructive character was quickly remedied by a magnificent growth of the productive processes which the war stimulated and accelerated. War itself was but a hand-maiden of industry, advancing the flag where trade was to follow.[1]

Under imperialism, matters have become reversed. War becomes an industry in and of itself, attaining increasingly menacing proportions. To administer to its war needs, the capitalist class organizes an ever-growing State which enters into every productive process, laying its heavy hand upon individual initiative and upon free trade in accordance with militarist dictates. The rise of militarism is a concomitant part of the State's development. All functions are subsumed to the State and an attempt is made to attain complete economic self-sufficiency which will enable the nation better to struggle in wartime. In order to accomplish this end, and to integrate its forces in preparation for war, the State undertakes the establishment of monopolies and the co-ordination of private industry. It adopts an elaborate system of tariffs to protect its economic might and to regulate its foreign trade according to its war plans. It does not take into account the facts that such tariffs mean the ultimate thwarting of the productive forces within the country, the stagnation of certain branches of industry, and the arti-

[1] "If we look back over the past century we shall find that it is only in the last quarter of it that the burden of armaments in time of peace has begun in many countries to grow much faster than the general wealth." (*The Political Economy of War*, F. W. Hirst, p. 73.)

ficial stimulation of others, that similar methods result in the burial of inventions, which otherwise might have been put into practical operation, either in archives or latent in the minds of potential inventors. The sole test is the immediate advantage given the military.

Whereas in the nineteenth century war had provided a spur for industry, by the twentieth century, so devastating had become the instruments of destruction that, in the short years of the World War, more goods and wealth were destroyed in Europe than could be produced in the score of years following the peace. Europe up to the present has not been able to attain the per capita wealth and income levels that it had achieved prior to the war. In proportion as war became the chief business of the State, it was revealed that the main occupation of capitalism in the twentieth century was no longer to construct, but to destroy.

Moreover, the very acts of destruction laid the foundation for new and more terrible havoc to come, just as in peace the destructive nature of the crisis creates the basis for deeper depressions. The World War itself tremendously accelerated the ability of mankind to destroy itself. Deadly inventions were stimulated by the War and increased enormously during the period of fighting. So it is, too, that the treaties of peace will bring on eventually new and even more devastating wars.

As war becomes transformed into a modern industry, the inventions which were laid at the feet of peace now are carried elsewhere. Inventors turn from private industry to the patronage of the State. The contradictions of imperialism prevent the trusts from utilizing to the maximum their productive capacities or from making the best applications of the ever increasing host of inventions presenting themselves. The State is forced to resort to the organization of laboratories and research bureaus, to stimulate discovery and inventions, and to organize its many universities and higher centers of learning for the express purpose of advancing technological knowledge.

But the primary interest of the State is not peace, but war. "Peace established by the State, or resting in the discretion of the State, is necessarily of the nature of an armistice, in effect terminable at will and on short notice. . . . At the best, the State, or the government, is an instrumentality for making peace, not for perpetuating it." [1]

Thus the inventive ability of mankind, which heretofore had been directed towards constructive processes of peace-time endeavor, now become directed towards destructive activities for war. Peace becomes a feverish preparation for military activities.[2]

[1] T. Veblen: *An Inquiry into the Nature of Peace*, p. 7.

[2] "To some extent the armament race undoubtedly contributed to industrial progress before the war, even though the price paid for it afterwards was a heavy one." (P. Einzig: *The Economics of Rearmament*, p. 26.)

Just as the closing down of any single major industry would threaten the whole structure of the economic system, so the termination of military industry would create chaos in modern life. Production depends upon consumption. As markets relatively dwindle, some disposition must be made of surplus products. Some of the surplus is squandered by the wealthy parasites themselves in all manner of perverted luxuries, but this is but a minute portion of the surplus at hand. Another part of the surplus is wiped out during periods of economic crises, when machines rust and factories are broken up, etc. In such periods, milk is dumped into the rivers so that the fish die, or thrown into the sewers so that the sewers are clogged; bananas are tossed into the ocean by the boatload; fish are scattered on the seashore until their infested remains threaten to wipe out whole communities; coffee is burned by the thousands of tons, and so it goes, *ad nauseam*.

But even this destructiveness is not sufficient to open up the factories. War at this moment plays the sole creative factor in history, because only through war is the destruction of goods so widespread and thorough as to compel all industry to work at maximum capacity and efficiency. It is only in wartime that all inventions are utilized, that the nation can rise to unprecedented heights.

Today, peacetime business has become the servile slave of Mars. War is not only the chief industry of the nation, it is practically the sole obsession dominating all business. Today no invention is realized and put to use or even conceived without its implications to military affairs being brought forth at once and worked out by the chief of staff, whose prime departments at present are indeed the engineering. Is there an investigation into the stratasphere? Then we may be sure the military department is actively calculating the application of its results to the radius of cruising bombers. Is there research in cosmic rays? Then it is certain that the war arm of every government is feverishly at work trying to discover new methods of remote control by which to lay down a murderous barrage against the enemy. Thus, even commercial inventions, which on the surface seem to have nothing whatever to do with warlike activity, are seized upon and developed with an eye mainly on this activity. How different was the situation in the nineteenth century when even such explosives as dynamite had a far greater use in the constructive processes of the building industry than in destructive munition making!

If, prior to the World War, industry could exclaim that peace was stifling it, today, even in peace, industry works practically entirely under military departments. Especially is this true in time of crisis, when industries are closing down and the owners are calling upon the government

for subventions and subsidies to sustain them. Then the government utilizes the opportunity to put these concerns at work on matters pertaining to the building up of the State and of the armed forces of the country.[1] Thus at the present time, under the plea that it is necessary to put the unemployed to work, the United States government has launched the most expensive military armament campaign in its history. If the industries were not furnishing war material today they would be in far more desperate straits than they are. Especially is this true for the basic industry of all, iron and steel.

Any diminution of war industry would be bound to affect most disastrously the iron and steel corporations. For this reason the armament cartels have established agencies to foment, deliberately, hostilities between nations so as to require increased armaments. The armament ring is to be found behind every jingoist expression, military organization, patriotic and nationalist demonstration. Nor can it be said that this armament ring is purely selfish in its propaganda, since the iron and steel trusts could easily demonstrate that, should their plants close down, the whole national economy of the nation would be affected adversely. The fact of the matter is that only war can maintain and build up the productive occupations and activities of the basic industries of the country under imperialism.

Here we have the basic impulse in the drive for war. In the nineteenth century, colonies were seized on the plea that the surplus population of the home countries demanded an outlet; this is still a stereotyped excuse given by imperialists. Sometimes war was justified on the ground that the vast indemnities taken would help business at home.[2] In the twentieth century these reasons obviously are invalid. War today is not for gain, but for loss, not for the acquisition of more wealth, but to dissipate the mountain of surpluses threatening to choke the social order to death![3] War is the only factor today adequate to release the energies of the people, to unfetter the productive forces from the stifling relations that peace has imposed.

Consider the question of colonies. Germany went into the business of seizing colonies at the very moment when German industry was expanding so greatly that emigration from that land, even to the United States, had practically ceased. Thus, population pressure and seizure of colonies by no

[1] "The spectacular reduction in German unemployment during 1933 was due in a high degree to the increase in the Government's armament expenditure." (P. Einzig: *The Economics of Rearmament*, p. 105.)

[2] John Stuart Mill believed that the foundation of colonies was the best work the capital of the old countries could do.

[3] In his *Raw Materials, Population Pressure and War* (1935), Norman Angell points out that conquest of territory is not necessary to ensure adequate supplies of raw materials and that successful war enables a nation neither to collect debts nor to dispose of the surplus that cannot be sold at home.

means coincided.[1] Another example: Great Britain has the largest colonial empire in the world, yet the number of British who have emigrated from Britain to the colonies of Africa or of Asia is an exceedingly negligible portion of the British population. The British in these dependencies are those primarily connected with the military régime of repression or the administration of commercial interests. Again: the colonies of Italy have been far more costly than beneficial and have proven to be a steady drain upon the financial resources of the Italians.

All these considerations, however, do not imply that in every case the seizure of colonies does not pay financially. The British colonies, on the contrary, have enabled Britain to develop its merchant marine to the magnificent might which it now maintains. The amount of loot that Britain has seized from the colonies has more than paid for the military expenses, particularly in India; France, Germany, Italy, and other countries have not been so fortunate.

However, the important point is that whether colonies furnish outlets for immigration or not makes no difference; they are not essential because the industrial country is poor and must have more wealth. This may have been the situation in the days of antiquity or even in the early days of capitalism. But not today. Nor does the acquisition of colonies result in any reduction of the home population, since it is impossible to deport the surplus population from the ruling country. The seizure of colonies now is important primarily as a means of preventing other countries from grabbing them first, of obtaining military vantage points in case of war, and as affording a reasonable excuse for wasting the productive forces of the country.

Furthermore, the development of colonies only increases the contradictions of imperialist. As we have seen, already the home imperialist countries suffer from a surfeit of goods and capital of which they cannot dispose. When the ruling class seize more territory, it means that the conquerors have more workers available for exploitation at a time when they are expelling workers from the factories; it means they will have more goods for disposal in a period of overproduction. If factories are developed in the colonies, then similar factories must close down at home. If, previously, a country represented a buying market, now, as a colony seized by the former seller nation, it represents a mass of goods that must be sold elsewhere. Thus, the very seizure of a colony increases the demand for further markets by the victorious country and raises the contradictions to even a higher point.

It has been said that the obtaining of indemnities helps an industrial

[1] France never believed her colonies would be a relief for overpopulation. (See S. H. Roberts: *History of French Colonial Policy, 1870-1925*, I, 37.)

country. How meager this argument is can be seen in the Franco-Prussian War. Prussia, after the war of 1870, was able to impose an indemnity of five billion francs upon France. To pay this indemnity, France at once greatly increased her productive powers and rapidly strengthened herself thereby. The payment of the indemnity was accomplished relatively easily. On the other hand, Germany did not know what to do with the five billions. They aggravated the overproduction already existing and induced a serious industrial crisis, leading to the great growth of revolutionary forces in Germany.

The World War illustrated the futility of the indemnity principle still further. The great drain that was forced upon Germany compelled her to construct a far more magnificent technical productive machine than she had ever attained in her history, and today she represents a far more serious competitor to Britain than before the war. On the other hand, whatever indemnity Germany suffered, the victorious powers, particularly the United States, were compelled to lend to her, and when Germany financially was destitute, Britain, France, and the United States were forced to rush in to save their deadliest capitalist competitor.

It has been said that additional wealth releases the population of the home country from factory toil. Indeed, such has been the tendency in imperialist life, as exemplified by England and Scotland, which are becoming increasingly luxury countries, countries where servants, butlers, and panderers to luxuries and pleasures are produced, rather than factory operatives. Thus the imperialist country tends to lose its virility, its relations to the real productive processes of life, and generates a huge parasitic class. The sole basis for the existence of these parasites is the military might which they have established to enforce their rule. But as they degenerate in very sense, they lose their military fire as well, and are bound to fall before the countries to which industry has been transferred.

"Generally speaking, it would be true to say that no one believes that war pays and nearly every one believes that policies which lead inevitably to war do pay. Every nation sincerely desires peace; and all nations pursue courses which, if persisted in, must make peace impossible.

"All nations are quite ready to condemn 'in the abstract,' armaments, economic nationalism, international suspicion and mistrust, while each one individually clings to his armament, adds to his tariff, invents new modes of economic nationalism, and insists upon an absolute national sovereignty which must make international order impossible, and the prolongation of anarchy and chaos inevitable." [1]

[1] Norman Angell: *The Great Illusion, 1933*, pp. 4-5.

2

The development of war industry has reached unparalleled proportions at the present moment. A complete revolution in military tactics is now being completed whereby no longer will there be any distinction between the front and the rear. The whole nation will be called to arms and there will be formed practically four armies of the population: first, the army that actually fights at the front, an army conscripted from the most virile elements of the population; second, a vast army of helpers taken from the ranks of the permanently unemployed and trained by military discipline to support the army in its field work; third, the regular industrial labor army created from all the laborers working in factories and industries; and fourth, the remainder of the population, mobilized in reserves. Complete regimentation will be the basic rule of such a society. A capitalist nation sentimental enough not to redress its ranks on such a basis will be doomed to destruction in a common war. Fascism, and fascism alone, attempts to carry forward this principle to its ultimate conclusions; for this reason, the dictatorial tendencies of fascism are absolutely inevitable so long as capitalism continues to endure. Fascism is a legitimate product of the supersession of war.

Front and rear are made into one also by the actions of the enemy. New scientific developments are of such a nature that they can be used efficiently only when employed on a vast scale. Magnificent bombers, traveling at three hundred miles an hour, capable of a radius of three thousand miles, cannot be confined to use merely on a front line. The utility of such great inventions is negated unless they can be employed on cities far in the rear of the actual fighting. This action is made all the more necessary by the intimate correlation of industry to war and the subordination of industry to military affairs. It is now possible to crush the enemy by destroying his sources of production. In the long run, this is the most humane method to terminate conflict.

All circumstances being equal, that country will win the war which has the greatest economic might, which can pour into the struggle the largest amount of steel, gas, deadly microbes, etc. It is vital to the enemy country to destroy the sources of these supplies; thus it will be impossible to spare the towns and points of production. Indeed, it may well be that the safest place in time of war will be in the very front-line trench! Owing to the greatly increased destructiveness of weapons, wars today tend to become ones of mutual exhaustion and annihilation. How different was it a hundred years ago when Napoleon could write: "It was the opinion of Frederick that all wars should be short and rapid; because a long war

insensibly relaxes discipline, depopulates the state, and exhausts its resources." [1]

The consolidation of the front and rear is illustrated in the United States by the National Defense Weeks carried out every year by the military department of the government. National Defense Week is a test to ascertain how quickly industry can be transformed from a peacetime to a wartime basis. Owners of factories are required to report exactly what war goods they can produce, how quickly they can transform their plants, maximum production possible, etc. In this way the country rehearses for the awful conflicts to come.

The correlation of industry to war is illustrated in the complete mechanization of the army. The rate of increase in the number of machines of destruction has accelerated to an enormous degree since the World War. The ordnance department for some time has maintained sixteen-inch mobile cannon which can fire accurately at a range of over thirty miles; during the war the "Big Berthas" of the Germans actually landed shells at a range of over eighty miles. To these developments has been added the possibility of rapid fire.

A marked advance has occurred in the development and use of the machine gun, every regiment now being accompanied not only by an ever-increasing number of heavy machine guns but a relatively large proportion of light machine guns as well.[2] The rifle itself has undergone an important modernization by which, under average conditions, a soldier may fire, without reloading, fifty shots a minute.[3] Thus the quantity of lead that can be hurled by each man in war has considerably increased.[4] Supplemental advances in munitions have been developed; they now are equipped with time fuses and are composed of various elements, shrapnel, chemicals, combustible inflammatory materials, etc., according to the need. Even gas bullets that can diverge from a straight line have been invented. The development of the torpedo has enormously increased the accuracy and destructiveness of this missile, both in submarine and in aviation warfare.

The tank, an innovation during the World War, has evolved into a regular department of the army. Whereas, during the war, the tank generally required repairs every sixty miles, and lumbered along at the rate of four miles an hour, today there are tanks that are veritable fortresses, weighing over seventy tons, containing several pieces of medium sized ordnance.

[1] Napoleon I: *Maxims of War*, p. 42. (1861 edition.)

[2] Whereas the normal complement of arms previously contained but two and a half heavy machine guns to every one thousand men, now this force carries eleven heavy and forty-nine light machine guns.

[3] The rate previously was fifteen shots per minute.

[4] The infantry can now fire ½ lb. of metal per man per minute. The average for the tanks has been estimated at 6.7 lbs. per minute.

Other tanks can move at the rate of seventy miles an hour, and have a cruising radius of nearly a thousand miles without repair.

With the development of the tank has gone the complete motorization of the army. In the United States, for example, the cavalry has been practically abolished, and all soldiers are transported by motor vehicles of one sort or another. The lorry, the cycle, even the cab were used extensively in the World War.

Unparalleled developments have occurred in aviation. Bombers now are capable of three hundred miles an hour with a cruising radius of several thousand miles. They may carry torpedoes of the most explosive materials, each weighing one ton. Research is being carried on to render them completely noiseless; this may well be accomplished before the next common war. A vast number of planes are ready for use, each of the countries being engaged in a frenzied military armament and aviation race.

To prevent the wholesale destruction of Paris by a mass air attack from Germany has been declared impossible. The British General Staff has affirmed the same in regard to London. Such declarations may be merely propaganda of the militarists to insure sufficiently large appropriations from frightened parliaments. There is no doubt, however, that the military staff relies not so much upon the defense of their own cities as upon the ability and readiness to strike first and annihilate the physical resources of the enemy country. Thus the war becomes one of mutual annihilation.

This, of course, has not prevented the general staffs from making defense plans against bombers. Entire civilian populations are being drilled constantly in the use of gas masks and in mutual aid during raids in time of war. Cities are being tunneled for the construction of gas chambers wherein the population may take refuge. New electrical anti-aircraft devices have been created that can detect the sound of an airplane four miles away, and, by trigonomic calculations, enable the mechanic at once to train his gun upon the object approaching. Such have been the improvements made in the efficiency of the anti-aircraft gun that the norm now recorded is one hit for every eight shots fired. Pursuit planes of remarkable speed are being built, the British having developed a plan that can reach the "ceiling" in ten minutes and from high altitudes pour their fire into the approaching bombers.

Immense progress has been made in chemical warfare; new gases have been invented against which no defense is available, and which affect not merely the respiratory tracts but the entire body. The protection provided for the soldier and civilian against these gases is ridiculously inadequate, and does not prevent persons so "protected" from becoming completely unfit for active service of any sort. The gases are heavier than air and penetrate every crevice. Subterranean chambers established by municipal

officials are potential death traps. The heavier-than-air gas, once settled on an object, may remain intact for over two weeks, maintaining its death-dealing properties.[1]

A great advance also has been made in naval warfare. Not only are the ships faster and more dangerous, but new features have been added to submarine and aircraft carriers. Submarine warfare amply proved its tremendous potency during the World War; the aircraft carrier has yet to show its worth.

There must be mentioned now those inventions which at present are kept secret by the various capitalist governments but which no doubt will be let loose with awful results once war is begun. While the exact inventions remain undisclosed, we can predict their character. First of all, biology has been utilized to furnish an important weapon in future world struggles. There is no question but that there will be released in the coming war vast streams of deadly microbes that will infect the food and water supplies of entire populations and from which no escape will have been provided for the ordinary civilian population. This weapon was used but sparingly during the War; doubtless its uses in the coming war will astound humanity.

Most important of all, however, are the inventions pertaining to electrical appliances and remote control. Already there has been created an airplane which can take off, fly in a given direction, can release a torpedo, and return to its base, without a pilot and directed entirely by radio control. More than that, the torpedo itself may be guided by remote control so as to be deflected from its normal course in the air to insure complete and perfect accuracy in reaching a designated objective. The progress of television and X-ray and cosmic ray researches make it possible that higher physics may contribute most potent instruments of death and destruction.

Finally, there is, of course, the careful organization of the entire population for actual military participation. Universal military training, specialized Military Training Camps, Reserve Officers' Training Corps, Boy Scouts, various social organizations pertaining to war, such as rifle clubs, sports groups, etc., and veterans' associations of all sorts will have been added to the regular army and national militias.

It goes without saying that the pursuit of all this activity has instituted an immense increase in the military budgets of each country. The United States, the most pacific of the big countries, now spends approximately a billion dollars a year on its war machine.

[1] When, in 1928, the new gas, cacodyl-isocyanide was invented, Dr. H. I. Jones, its inventor, of Chicago, declared: "It is a deadly poison and would destroy armies as a man would snuff out a candle. It always kills. . . . Now it is much cheaper to destroy life wholesale with this new gas. It may be manufactured at the rate of thousands of tons a day and it costs much less than powder and cannon, yet it will destroy armies more thoroughly."

The World War was frightfully devastating to civilization. The dead alone have been estimated at thirteen million and the severely wounded at twenty million, making a total of thirty-three million. "If all the losses of the hundred years which lie between the Napoleonic Wars and the World War of 1914-1918 are counted, the result will prove a fraction only of the number of deaths during the World War." [1] Of the total British enlistment of 6,211,427, the total casualties amounted to 2,437,964, and the British losses were less, proportionately, than either the French, Austrian, German, or Russian.

In the last war, the ratio of dead to seriously wounded was ten to twenty-two, a much larger proportion than in other wars [2] and far greater than in accidents. In the case of automobile accidents, for example, it has been found that the ratio of fatalities to those seriously injured is four to twenty-one. We have not considered those who suffered temporary disability and minor injuries

The total combatant dead in the World War has been estimated at thirteen million The ratio of dead to wounded was thirteen to twenty; the ratio of seriously wounded to otherwise wounded was six to fourteen. Of all those wounded only 44 5 per cent were restored to normal ability; 52 per cent were partially restored and their ability reduced; over 3 per cent were total loss [3]

Nor does this figure embrace the tremendous losses occasioned by massacres, disease and starvation as a result of the conditions engendered by the War Of the Armenians, Syrians, Jews and Greeks alone, four million were massacred during the course of the War. Especially terrible were the effects on the children; in many places all perished "In conclusion it may fairly be estimated that the loss of civilian life due directly to war or to causes induced by war equals, if indeed it does not exceed, that suffered by the armies in the field" [4] To this total must be added the large number of children who normally would have been born; all countries showed a great fall in the birth rate The actual monetary loss has been stated to have been far above a quarter of a trillion dollars [5]

The complete co-ordination of front and rear becomes realized not only when war breaks out, but in preparation for it, whereby war training penetrates every feature of social life Every activity is now subordinated to the coming conflicts.

[1] F W Hirst *The Consequences of the War to Great Britain*, p 295 See also E L Bogart *Direct and Indirect Costs of the Great World War* pp 270 272

[2] The average ratio in other wars was calculated as ten to thirty five (See, E L Bogart work cited, p 273)

[3] The same, p 273

[4] The same, p 282

[5] The same, p 299 This includes the estimated economic loss due to loss of man-power

The same categorical imperative which drives a country to war has induced statesmen and theoreticians to idealize military measures. "There are certain compensations for war. War and preparation for war develop national consciousness—increase national and individual efficiency; they lead to industrial expansion, to invention, they bring order and discipline to men; they develop unselfishness and charity; they strike down needless distinctions; and through war or a threat of war, the masses have often achieved personal liberty. Military training benefits the individual and the nation; it teaches obedience, respect for authority, punctuality, team play; it promotes physical development and personal hygiene. Military training is a valuable preparation for any civil career." [1]

Here we have some of the efficient social reasons for war. Democratic and liberal apologists for war have gone to great lengths to point out that hand in hand with the duty to fight in war must go the right of political participation in the government; thus the growth of democracy and of war proceed simultaneously. The converse argument might also be stated: if a man will not kill at the behest of the ruling class, he cannot be trusted with a vote. In history, ballots have always been part of ballistics.

In Germany, these arguments blossomed out in their richest hues. The struggle for German unity was one which had been carried on for centuries entirely by the sword, against Sweden, against Poland, against Austria, against Russia, against France, and against England. Accordingly, the entire aristocratic ruling class enthusiastically endorsed the military system. Without the slightest cant or hypocrisy, the Kaiser Junker régime meant to achieve power and position with every means at its disposal. The philosophy of Frederick the Great in this respect is well stated in the following rule which he laid out for himself: "Kindle and prolong war between my neighbors." [2] With Frederick the Great, politics and villainy were synonymous terms.[3]

This philosophy was amply reflected by the mouthpieces of the aristocracy in the universities: "The German university professors have always been the most enthusiastic defenders of the (military) system. You hear nowhere in Germany more belittling of the peace and disarmament movements than among the university professors. . . ." [4] Illustrations of this are innumerable. Nietzsche, Professor of Greek, wrote: "Ye shall love peace as a means to new wars—and the short peace more than the long . . . ye say it is the good cause which halloweth even war? I say unto you: it is the good war which halloweth every cause. War and courage have

[1] G. W. Crile: *A Mechanistic View of War and Peace*, p. 43.
[2] Quoted by M. Smith: *Out of Their Own Mouths*, p. 1.
[3] See *The Confessions of Frederick the Great* (Putnam Son's, 1915), p. 70.
[4] H. Muensterberg: *The War and America*, p. 120.

done more great things than charity. . . ." ". . . be not considerate of thy neighbor!" "Thou shalt not rob! Thou shalt not slay! . . . And for such precepts to be called holy, was not *truth* itself thereby slain?" [1]

The idea of Nietzsche that war makes men heroic and transforms them into supermen found its echo in the writings of Treitschke, who believed that war is sublime and makes men sacrifice their egoism.[2] "That the Germans do not fit into the bustle of peaceful nations is the proudest ornament of the German character. Their manhood does not feminize itself in long peace. War has always been their chief business." [3]

The German, Muensterberg, could write: ". . . war too is not simply a disruption of the international peace, but can become a positive creator of better and higher forms of the life of mankind. . . . First of all, only war can adjust the power of countries to the changing stages of their inner development. . . . The world's progress has depended at all times upon the expansive ascendency of the sound, strong, solid and able nations and the shrinking of those which have lost their healthy qualities and have become unfit or decadent. . . . The laws of the equity courts applied to nations must stifle progress. . . ." [4]

German political scientists hastened to add their reasons for the value of war. They pointed out that the suppression of war would imply the suppression of all States and the remoulding of civilized community into a single political system. The German who worshipped the State as an end in itself conceived such a fruition of civilization as unspeakably horrible. If States were therefore to exist, war was inevitable, since separate States are by nature in a state of war with each other, and conflict must be regarded as the essence of their relations, while real friendship is accidental. In the intercourse of State with State there were no laws and there could be none. Might made right. War was the fundamental institution of the State. Everything had to be calculated on the basis of possibility of war.

"In politics decisions may be postponed, but when the opportunity presents itself, let he who has the power and feels himself prepared cut the knot with the sword. For great historical questions this is the only rational and permanent solution." "Between States there is but one sort of right, the right of the stronger." [5]

German professors justified the existence of a separate German State

[1] F. Nietzsche: *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, pp. 52, 243. (1924, MacMillan edition Vol. XI.)

[2] See, A. L. Gowans: *Selections from Treitschke's Lectures on Politics* (1914 edition).

[3] M. Smith: work cited, p. 84, quoting from Maximilian Harden in *Zukunft*, August 29, Sept. 5, 1914.

[4] H. Muensterberg: *The War and America*, pp. 190-191.

[5] See, M. Smith: *Out of Their Own Mouths*, pp. 35-36, quoting from Lasson: *Das Kulturideal und der Krieg.*

by claiming that this State was the culmination of civilized effort, since it represented the *kultur* of the Teutons, and the Teutons were the aristocrats of the community, while the Latins, on the contrary, belonged to the degenerate mob.[1] To these people, "The Teutonic race is called upon to circle the earth with its rule, to exploit the treasures of nature and of human labor power, and to make the passive races servient elements in its cultural development." [2]

Above these war mongers was the military staff of Germany. General von Moltke wrote: "The army takes the first place among the institutions of every country. It alone makes possible the existence of all the other institutions." "Perpetual peace is a dream, and it is not even a beautiful dream. War is part of the eternal order instituted by God." [3] And General von Clausewitz asserted, quoting from General von der Goltz: "'The statesman who, knowing his instrument to be ready, and seeing War inevitable, hesitates to strike first is guilty of a crime against his country.'" [4] Over all was the Kaiser, who allying himself with God, called on the army to fight in the name of the Lord, whose Spirit had descended upon him by virtue of his being the German Emperor! [5]

The omnipresence of war leads to important realignments of social relationships. Certain powerful trusts, such as the armament ring, the explosive and chemical industries, etc., consolidate their power and become intimately correlated to the State machine. The tremendous rise of the national debt in wartime leads to the subservience of the State to the policies of the bankers to whom the nation is indebted.

Just as war is a method of terminating depressions, it becomes a last effort to stave off revolution. "The issue, then, is clear; for every great state in the world it is ultimately a question of war abroad or war at home, and the feeling of most men, be they English, German, French, or American, will be that it is better to fight against a foreign foe than to fight against one's own countrymen. The idea, then, that under a Capitalistic system of production war can be eliminated by any other means than the triumph of the most militarily . . . efficient nation must be dismissed as a 'gross and dangerous illusion.'" [6]

In the nineteenth century, war could be an instrument for integrating the forces of the nation and reviving national patriotism. In the twentieth century, war becomes an historic instrument in the hands either of the

[1] The same, p. 70, quoting from L. Woltmann: *Die Germanen in Frankreich.*

[2] The same, p. 70, quoting from L. Woltmann: *Politische Anthropologie.*.

[3] The same, pp. 150-151.

[4] C. von Clausewitz: *On War,* I, vii.

[5] See, William II's Proclamation to the Army of the East, 1914, given in M. Smith: work cited, p. 4.

[6] V. W. Germains: *The Struggle for Bread,* pp. 244-245.

revolutionary proletarian or reactionary capitalist forces. By means of war, the social set-up is broken completely, and the classes physically determine their share of the distribution of wealth. War may be started in order to strengthen the power of the reactionaries, or it may be unopposed or even welcomed by revolutionists as giving them the opportunity of advancing their cause.

Apologists appear to defend war according to their interests. War becomes necessary in order to enable the white man to raise the culture of the black, to free the slaves, to help the poor, to teach respect, honor, reverence, duty, uprighteousness, and discipline to the lower orders. War teaches the workers to know their place; which, evidently, is the grave. War is acclaimed as a means of driving out parasitism by making all suffer under an equal strain, by putting all to work or to fight. War, as an act of violence, is justified on the theory of the general beneficence of violence; a blood purge is needed to cleanse the impurities of the old order and to make way for the new. By means of war, too, individualism gives way to collectivism and comradship.

Military chauvinists take added data from biology and preach a myth of racial purity that heaps eulogies upon one race, the race to which they themselves belong, as embodying the quintessence of racial heroism. They prate of the value of eugenics and maintain that a natural selection of the fittest has taken place, bringing their race to the top. A sort of new Malthusianism is born which affirms that there is not sufficient good for equal distribution, wherefore the more degraded nations must be deprived forever of the best in life.

Nor are there lacking apologists who stress the superiority of the culture, religion, morals, and customs of the nation to which they belong, and the necessity to spread this inevitable system of blessings all over the world, by force if need be.

Even philosophers such as the peaceful pragmatists under John Dewey in the United States are brought into the war conflicts. "In the United State, John Dewey unintentionally did great service to those who were drumming up sentiment against Germany by ringing the changes on certain aspects of German philosophy in his book on *German philosophy and Politics* (New York, 1915), which had a new vogue when America went to War." [1] Thorstein Veblen also helped, as did others.

Psychology also produces its quota of militarist defenders. Through war, people rise to new intellectual and emotional heights. Decay and degeneracy are prevented. In the course of vital combat and struggle, the soul of man is reborn, it again becomes unfettered. Egotism gives way to sacrifice for others, for country and for culture. Such psychologists often

[1] H. D. Lasswell: *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, p. 93.

take an anti-intellectualist point of view, announcing that so long as human nature exists, the fighting instincts of man must be realized in war; emotions and passions inevitably flow on to truth, not the pacific lucubrations of the erudite.

On the part of the proletariat, a thoroughly objective position is taken on the question of war. The revolutionist is not opposed to every war. As he favors civil war, so he favors colonial wars against imperialism. The revolutionist, too, understands that the struggle for power can be won only through ruthless physical combat.

War, like economic crises, inevitably leads to social revolution. If the ruling class enter into war to escape revolution, war itself only accelerates it. Thus the statements of the military apologists that only through war can man rise to new heights and become superman is echoed by the revolutionists, who change capitalist war into civil war and, by establishing the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, take the first steps to increase man's stature by a head.

3

During war, the State becomes an all-embracing institution, entering into every phase, even the most intimate, of social and personal life; no aspect of life is overlooked. In the World War, for example, there was established in the United States a Federal Food Administration responsible to the President, which made an attempt to conserve the resources of the country and which established co-operation with various agencies, such as trade and commercial concerns, educational institutions, women's organizations, libraries, religious and fraternal groups, hotels and restaurants, transportation companies, etc., for the elimination of waste in consumption. A direct appeal was made to the consumer to conserve the necessities of life as much as possible, and attempts were made to effect control through licensing, price fixing, limitations on profits, prohibition of certain trade practices, etc.

Of course, such conservation efforts failed completely to curb the avariciousness of Big Business. The wealth of America was great enough to enable the Administration, under Hoover, to declare, "We can not and we do not wish with our free institutions and our large resources of food to imitate Europe and its policed rationing, but we must voluntarily and intelligently assume the responsibility before us as one in which everyone has a direct and inescapable interest." [1]

An attempt was made to harness rampant American individualism by making it profitable for the individual to increase production. On the

[1] U. S. Food Administration: *Bulletin No. 6*, quoted by P. H. Hibbard: *Effects of the Great War Upon Agriculture*, p. 105.

farms, a tremendous expansion of acreage and crops took place, engendering a corresponding increased need for machinery. Here, again, it is seen that only war could develop the latent productivity of America. This development, however, laid the basis for a more serious crisis and a terrific wastefulness of the soil after the war. Industry, too, was harnessed to the State on the "cost plus" basis, private enterprise receiving a certain profit estimated on the cost. This scandalous method of operation induced businessmen to operate in the most wasteful fashion, greatly padding their costs, in order to bloat their profits. The poor, however, were asked to save their peach pits for use in making gas masks. But when the Hoover Commission came to investigate the garbage pail of the poor, to scold them for waste, it found it empty and learned that poverty had compelled a natural economy far more potent than its propaganda.

Immediately after the declaration of war, Wilson set up a Committee on Public Information, consisting of George Creel, Chairman, and the Secretaries of State, War, and the Navy. This Committee issued seventy-five million copies of an assortment of propaganda items to encourage the public morale. It hired seventy-five thousand speakers, assembled one thousand four hundred provocative drawings, issued a daily publication to the Press and similar agencies, and also furnished twice a month a periodical known as the *National School Service* to each of the six hundred thousand public school teachers in the country. It enlisted the aid of three thousand college professors of history to prepare pamphlet material, and, in addition to these worthies, practically every writer and artist of prominence, and every advertising expert was drafted into service. Besides, the Committee regimented every film company and every minister.[1]

In the United States especial attention was paid to the mobilization of the church, which ardently gave its blessing to the war and in the name of God urged the fight to be waged to the finish. The older clergy and the women church helpers were mobilized for parish work at home in order that the younger clergymen might be free to go with the soldiers into the trenches and barracks.

Such ministers did their best to glorify the war area, to point out that life in the trenches inspired a wonderful spiritual revival and became a sort of cleansing of the soul in fire. Particularly effective work was done by chaplains and religious organizations at the front. General Pershing is reported to have said: There is no one factor contributing more to the morale of the army in France than the Y.M.C.A. The value of the organization cannot be overestimated. Give me nine hundred men who have the Y.M.C.A. rather than a thousand men who have none and I will have better fighters every time. Incidentally, the Catholic clergy, too, were unani-

[1] See, G. Creel: *How We Advertised America.*

mous for the war, as was every church denomination that met in convention during 1917.

Of particular value was the country church, since in the agricultural village the church is the real social center and frequently the only meeting place. The government issued a pamphlet containing a war program for country churches with an edition of fifty thousand copies and also maintained a weekly news service to ministers. The church in the village and in the countryside was a potent factor in mobilizing the people completely for war.[1]

The Committee on Public Information assumed the supervision of the films and the stage. Especially important was the cinema as a powerful weapon for the propaganda of the masses. The movies satisfied the demands of the audience in a direct, visual, picturesque, and vital manner, and required nothing from them. Since every person in the audience, literate or illiterate, had paid a fee for admission, he tended to give his attention voluntarily to what was put on the screen. Furthermore, a single picture could be exhibited simultaneously throughout many thousands of theatres in the land. This medium of propaganda had a scope unparalleled. Supplementing the movie was the legitimate theatre. Although the stage served a narrower and smaller audience, it contained live flesh and blood actors who could create a most intense atmosphere, even more so than the screen. Both the theatre and the movie brought together large mass gatherings in which enthusiasm spread by contagion. The development of the talking picture and of television will make these instruments of propaganda even more powerful in the next war.

In the last war, radio was in its infancy. Today this medium is greatly developed; by means of it the government will be able to issue its propaganda to all listeners, even in their homes, thus immensely increasing efficiency in mobilization and arousing patriotism. By means of loud speakers set up in the street, on the roofs of buildings, on trucks, in small villages and large towns, in the countryside, the war message can be delivered immediately throughout the land and even the world.

Needless to say, the staffs and pupils of the schools, colleges, and universities will be mobilized completely during the coming war. This will be especially necessary since the highest centers of learning will be the recruiting grounds for the officers of the army. What took place at Columbia University during the last World War is indicative of the technique employed. On March 13, 1917, five hundred officers of Columbia sent a telegram to the President of the United States approving his stand. On April 6, when war was declared, a mass meeting of students and faculty was

[1] See, E. deS. Brunner: *The Country Church in the New World Order*, especially Chapter IX.

held and immediately thereafter the enrollment of students, faculty, and alumni began. The registrar mailed fifty-three thousand cards. This Columbia University plan for mobilizing was adopted by the Federal Bureau of Education and by the Department of the Interior and sent out as a model to the presidents of colleges and universities all over the United States.[1] Those who did not enlist were mobilized in all sorts of researches and other practical activities for the advancement of the war; professors of engineering advised on personnel, material, and construction. Those teaching chemistry and social sciences, and the economists and statisticians also helped, as did the staff of the College of Physicians and Surgeons. All types of special courses were inaugurated for students to enable them to become efficient in war. A Red Cross ambulance unit was established and men were called into service for it. Members of the Department of Agriculture and students acquainted with rural conditions worked out plans for returning boys to the land, etc. Columbia established a Division of Intelligence and Publicity which prepared a series of pamphlets on problems and duties of citizens in many phases of the war question.

Since the time of this activity, the government has greatly improved its technique of complete mobilization of all departments of social life. Each of these social-educational agencies will have its separate place and importance in the next war.

Since nothing can replace personal contact in wartime, the church is incomparable as an agency of war mobilization, particularly in dealing with backward rural masses, the poorest elements of the adult population, and women. Second in importance to the church, in the more prosperous agrarian communities, is the radio; in the countryside and in the small town, motion pictures and posters are second. To influence the youth of the country, the chief mechanism is primarily the school and then the movies. For the city population, the main agencies for reaching the broadest masses are the movies, the mass demonstration, the parade, posters, etc. For the older city population the press is the best medium; for the aged and the housewife, the radio and the photograph.

Some of these instruments are better for arousing a war spirit at the start of hostilities, while others increase their efficiency as the war progresses. The church, for example, can play its best role only if it constantly repeats its pacifist pretensions before the war. This will enable it to whip up a war spirit better after war is actually declared.

The church is the traditional institution of the dead. When the mass of dead begins to mount, the church truly comes into its own; then the fury of its hysteria reaches its highest intensity. That is why, no doubt, the

[1] See, "Mobilization of a University," *Columbia University Quarterly*, XIX, 285-295, No. 3. (June, 1917.)

chaplain, priest, and semi-religious organizations travel so closely to the soldiers at the front. It means that the regiments are soon to become corps of cadavers. In the rear, the mountain of corpses is turned over to the church, enabling it to invoke all the solemnity vested in it by the superstitions of the ages, and to swear by all the dead, in the name of immortality and of God that the war is a holy one, that it must be waged until the enemy is exterminated. The coming into prominence of the church in time of war is only another illustration of the atavistic and destructive character of war and the breakdown of normal scientific civilized life that it implies.

However, in spite of its omniscience, the State begins to lose its perfect social control as the war progresses. Secret councils and nuclei are organized by revolutionary elements in the army, on the frontier, in the factory and neighborhood, in all existing organizations. Strikes break out, mutinies occur, which gradually flare up into general violent demonstrations, leading toward revolution. The mobilization of these revolutionary masses is accomplished primarily not through the press or the other recognized social agencies, since the work proceeds entirely illegally, but almost solely by personal contact, man-to-man approach, through whispers and secret gatherings, the murmur gradually growing into a roar that deafens everybody. The destructive character of capitalism and the State, so dramatically heightened by war activity, brings in its train the social organizations of those who suffer from the war to end the slaughter.

4

Related to the problem of war is the problem of waste and its connections with the productive systems. We have already remarked that so great is the destructive character of peace during present depressions that only through war can capitalism be revived. So great is the waste in peace-time, for instance, that in spite of the enormous destructiveness of the World War, in some countries actually more was produced by the fraction remaining at home than formerly had been by a full quota of workers. This was due, of course, to the fact that war compelled a maximum utilization of all the activities of the people.

This situation was well illustrated by the economy of the United States. According to the Secretary of War, in 1918, four million five hundred thousand men, or about 14.2 per cent of the working male population, were drafted into the army, and seven million more men, or about 23.8 per cent of the working male population, were employed entirely in war work. Thus a total of eleven million five hundred thousand men or 38 per cent of the working male population were taken away from normal peace-time endeavors. To this must be added the two million of the nine million work-

ing women whose labor was diverted for war work. To sum up, out of a total of forty-two million recorded in the census as gainfully employed, fourteen million were used for war activity; and yet far more was produced during the war than during peace.[1] Here is a graphic illustration of the tremendous waste in time of peace. So large is it that even when the waste of war is subtracted, the mass of goods produced was greater, as a *result* of destructive activity, than it was prior to the war.

It has been estimated that in the United States, on a given day during periods of prosperity, out of approximately forty million gainfully employed, the man-power of at least eight million people is wasted in fruitless and vicious activities; six million more are idle; the man-power of at least four million more is wasted in inefficient productive methods, while that of another two million five hundred thousand is wasted in faulty distribution.[2]

A whole series of studies on capitalist decay and waste in American life has recently been made by various experts. One writer finds the proportion of productive wealth devoted to profit-making constantly shrinking;[3] another estimates the growing proportion of overhead costs of production costs;[4] a third points out the implications of the fact that wealth under modern capitalism is taking an increasingly liquid form, intensifying the financial panics in time of economic crises;[5] a fourth demonstrates that the rate of replacement of machinery lags far behind the cut in costs of production of that machinery.[6]

It is no wonder, therefore, that American engineers have questioned increasingly the efficacy of the capitalist mode of production, that they have denounced the capitalists as saboteurs and criminals who must be displaced

[1] See, S. Chase: *The Tragedy of Waste,* pp. 5-6. We give the figures in round numbers.

[2] The same, p. 270.

[3] R. R. Doane in *The Measurement of American Wealth* finds "In 1914 'productive' wealth devoted to profit making was estimated at 62 percent of all American wealth; in 1921, at 57 percent; in 1932, at 52 percent." This conclusion is given in S. Chase: *Government in Business,* p. 10.

[4] See, W. Rautenstrauch: *Who Gets the Money.* "In other words, in 1917, when producers got one dollar for making goods, overhead people got another dollar for the various services, leading up to the sale of goods to the consumer. But in 1932 when producers got one dollar, overheaders got $2.30. In 1929, they got $1.60. Overhead costs marched rapidly forward during the 1920's and broke into a run with the coming of the depression. Business on the downgrade, overhead on the upgrade—here is abundant evidence of shocking management." Given in S. Chase: *Government in Business,* p. 104.

[5] See, A. A. Berle: *Liquid Claims and National Wealth,* p. 73. According to this book while the ratio of liquid wealth to the total was but 16 percent in 1880, this had mounted to 40 percent in 1930 and rested at 34 percent in 1933.

[6] ". . . if technical invention were four times as fast, the rate of replacement might justifiably be doubled; if the cost of machinery for a given production schedule were cut to one quarter, the rate of replacement ought to be doubled again." S. Chase: work cited, quoting Coyle: "The Capital Goods Fallacy" in *Harpers Magazine,* December, 1934.

by engineers. The pioneer of this group was Thorstein Veblen who, in a series of volumes, railed against the profit and price system. "The expediency of so having the nation's industry managed on a footing of private ownership in the pursuit of private gain, by persons who can show no equitable personal claim to even the most modest livelihood, and whose habitual method of controlling industry is sabotage—refusal to let production go on except it affords them an unearned income—the expediency of all this is coming to be doubted by those who have to pay the cost of it." [1]

The theories of Veblen have been taken up by engineers with socialistic leanings and latterly by the Technocrats. These engineers amply have demonstrated that the normal waste of capitalism in post-war imperialism is as enormous as in war, although war is needed as a supplementary activity, since peace cannot waste enough to keep industry going. They make a full analysis of the enormous increase in productivity that has occurred, especially since the end of the War. For example, it is pointed out that in the incandescent lamp industry one man can produce in one day what nine hundred men produced in 1914. The Buick Motor Company reports an increase in production of 1,400 per cent from 1912 to 1927, with an increase labor force of only 10 per cent. The ocean liner, California, had one hundred and twenty firemen on the vessel; now it has three. "The All American Technological Society, headed by General W. I. Westervelt, recently announced: 'We find that between ten and twelve million men and women, engaged in the various technological activities of our productive and distributive system, produce and distribute all the raw materials and finished commodities required by a population of one hundred twenty-five million.' " [2]

Nor does all this increase of production necessarily result from the application of new machinery. The American Railways System is a good illustration of what changes are possible with the same basic means of production. In 1920 there were employed two million one hundred sixty thousand men on the railroads. Ten years later the number of men was reduced to one million three hundred thousand, although 7 per cent more freight was being carried on the same lines.

Apparently no matter to what extent capitalism may attempt to choke the productive forces, these forces burst their fetters at every possible opportunity. The flood of inventions steadily increases. The patents granted in the United States, for example, have risen from two hundred and eight thousand in 1890 to three hundred and fourteen thousand in 1910, to four hundred and twenty-one thousand in 1930.[3] Is it any wonder that engineers,

[1] T. Veblen: *An Inquiry into the Nature of Peace*, p. 323.
[2] S. Chase: *The Economy of Abundance*, pp. 15-16.
[3] The same, p. 76.

contemplating such a situation, should move for a new social order and declare, "The capitalistic formula has run out. . . . Capitalism might be revived by war, by ruthless inflation, or by a series of great new industries. So revived, however, it can be a matter of only a few years before the demands of the capital goods sector overtake the new expansion, and another, and final, crisis is reached." [1]

Accurate studies of the peace-time wastefulness of capitalism have been made. One author points out how energy is wasted in plants not economically located, in the building up of unnecessarily large cities, in the cultivation of too much land, in the abuse of natural resources, in the processes of competition, in the too early scrapping of materials, in finance changes, in style changes, in overproduction, etc., etc.[2]

Again an American engineering society analyzes the sources of waste in the productive process alone and attributes them to: (1) faulty material control, waiting for material; (2) faulty design control, no standardization of machines or materials; (3) lack of production control, bad scheduling of work; (4) lack of cost control, faulty accounting; (5) lack of research; (6) faulty labor supply control; (7) ineffective workmanship; (8) unemployment; (9) idle material; (10) idle plant; (11) restriction of output; (12) preventable sickness and accidents.[3] The engineers then determined to consider each factory analysis in comparison with a model plant actually in operation, to find out who was to blame for the waste. It discovered that the waste was in every case largely due to the management and not to labor or outside causes, eighty-one per cent of the waste in the metal trades, for example, being placed on the shoulders of the owners and operators.[4] In this way, the American Engineering Society was able to verify the charge of sabotage that has been hurled by the technicians against the capitalists.

Looking at the United States today, we can easily see that the waste of peace is fully comparable to the destruction of war. During the period of the present depression, while twenty million workers have been looking for work, normal waste has been tremendously increased. Production is brushed aside, machinery is abandoned to rust or is doomed to be discarded, antiquated before its time. The product is not consumed but left to rot. The gap between capacity to produce and actual production increases so greatly as to threaten the very ability of industry to grow. Mountains of goods are destroyed, plowed under, or sunk, in a deliberate policy of destruction. The soil is so wastefully mishandled as to produce national

[1] The same, p. 153.
[2] The same, pp. 6-8.
[3] See, "Waste in Industry," *Federated American Engineering Societies.*
[4] See, J. Davis: *Capitalism and Its Culture,* pp. 54-55.

calamities through droughts, erosions, floods, sand storms, that could be prevented by a rational management of the natural resources.[1]

The income of the United States was approximately eighty-five billion dollars in 1929. In 1932 it was estimated at around forty-five billion dollars. We can assume that there was an average decrease of thirty billion dollars each year during the now seven years of crisis, as compared with 1929. Thus the people have lost an income which they could have produced under 1929 conditions amounting already to the staggering total of two hundred and ten billion dollars. Besides, there was a decrease in actual capital values as well. Certainly the World War did not cost the United States or any country as much as the depression.[2]

Peace is literally bankrupting the capitalism of the United States. Soon the federal debt will amount to over forty billion dollars and is increasing approximately at the rate of four billion a year. The total debt, public and private, has advanced to one hundred and fifty billion dollars, or approximately half the entire wealth of the country.[3] Federal and State taxes now amount to fifteen billion dollars a year, or about one-third of the total income.

And yet the United States is in a relatively favorable condition. The situation is drastically worse in such a country as Germany. The question invariably must come up before the ruling group as to how long such a strain can be endured. Prolonged, it can lead only to madness whose political expression is fascism and whose release is war. Here we find the driving urge, the disastrous waste of peace that compels Germany and other countries to re-arm and to plunge into military adventures. War at least strains every nerve and sinew of the nation; depression only rots them. Bursting the straight-jacket of the Versailles Peace, German fascism has become a raving maniac expressing only in the clearest form, however, the insanity of the entire epileptic capitalist world: *"La paix nous tue"*—peace is killing us! This is the agonizing cry of capitalism the world over.

5

Peace is matching war even with reference to violence. The breakdown of capitalist life in the twentieth century discloses a constant trend toward

[1] "Denuded forests, floods, droughts, a disappearing water table, erosion, a less stable and equable climate, a vanishing wild life—these are some of the notable results of unchecked and ruthless exploitation by men who euphemistically refer to themselves as 'rugged individualists.'" (H. L. Ickes: *The New Democracy*, p. 19.)

[2] An Associated Press despatch dated December 21, 1936, declared: "An international labor office study estimates the world depression from 1930 to 1934 cost at least $149,000,000,000. . . . 'A fateful figure, equal to the total cost of the World War,' said Vladimir Woytinsky, author of the study."

[3] Compare, E. Clark: *The Internal Debts of the U. S.*, Table I, p.10.

violence in everyday normal intercourse. This collapse of law and order was particularly noticeable after the war. In Europe, the demobilization of the soldiers, the intense class conflicts, riots, and revolutions created a background for the use of direct physical action on the part of individual members of society as well as of classes to satisfy their needs.

The rise of criminality in the twentieth century is reminiscent of the sixteenth century when the old order was breaking down under the impact of modern capitalism. During the transition period, the old rigid State could not but treat the new modes of life as criminal. The laws of the State and the wishes and customs of the individuals representing the new processes of economic life steadily diverged. "Harrison assures us that Henry VIII executed his laws with such severity that seventy-two thousand great and petty thieves were put to death during his reign," [1] and under Elizabeth not a year went by but three to four hundred persons were hanged for their crimes. So it is in the twentieth century, but on an immensely grander scale.

Is it not clear that, where the State considers the entire population potentially criminal, and where the annual number of offences equals the complete population of the country, a social system has broken down? Yet, in the United States today practically everyone has been, is, or will be in the toils of the law.

The rise of criminality has been especially marked in the United States. In this, as in other matters, America is constantly smashing all records. The rate of crime is far higher in the twentieth century as compared to the nineteenth, in the post-war period as compared to pre-war, and in the period of depression as compared to that of prosperity.[2] The immense amount of crime and its cost annually in the United States would be unbelievable were it not reflected in innumerable reports from governmental authorities.

In a speech delivered by J. E. Hoover, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U. S. Department of Justice, before the annual convention of the Daughters of the American Revolution, April 23, 1936, the speaker, a politician with a weather-eye to the future, pointed out that there were in the United States on that day one hundred and fifty thousand murderers roaming at large. He estimated that during the lifetime of those who form the present population, nearly a quarter of a million persons would commit murder, and more than three hundred thousand persons, a figure equivalent to the population of an entire metropolis, would be murdered. The number of recorded offenses of murders, felonious assault, burglaries, and

[1] John Wade: *History of the Middle and Working Classes*, p. 49.

[2] For example, the homicide rate in twenty-eight cities was 5.1 in 1900, and 10.3 in 1924 per hundred thousand. See, H. C. Brearley: *Homicide in the United States*, p. 16.

larcenies, including automobile thefts, that is, solely serious offenses, amounted annually to close to a million and a half in the United States.[1]

If this is the annual total for recorded serious offenses, what must be the total for all criminal offenses recorded by the police? Adequate statistics are not available, but a fair calculation can be made from the reports of local agents of police. The City of Cleveland, for example, reported that for 1929 while the total number of persons charged with serious offenses was 3,193, the total charged with minor offenses amounted to 101,582.[2] This means that about 3½ per cent of the total crimes for which arrests were made were of a major character In Cincinnati, the figures for the same year were 3,139 arrests for major crimes and 112,915 for minor, or 2 7 per cent of the total being serious offenses Thus, from these figures, we might perhaps assume that 3 per cent is the national average of serious crimes to the total. This, however, is not accurate, since the figures given by cities have to do with arrests made rather than with offenses recorded, and the proportion of arrests in serious offenses known to the police is sometimes three or four times as great as the arrests in minor offenses. Thus, the total number of minor offenses known to the police cannot be gauged accurately merely by the statistics of arrests

However, were we to use these proportions, it would appear, therefore, since there are annually a million and a half recorded serious offenses, that there are at least fifty million minor crimes committed annually in the United States; the total might indeed range to one hundred million. And these, of course, are crimes known to the police. To this vast sum we must add the incalculably larger number of crimes committed which are not recorded or known or which are concealed from the public. Thus, even these inadequate figures show that crime has penetrated to the very fibre of American life and affects almost every citizen Such facts are unprecedented in the history of civilization

The rapid increase of crime can be seen on every side In Iowa, for example, although the population increased 150 per cent from 1870 to 1925, the rate of commitment to the reformatories and penitentiaries of the State grew 500 per cent. In the urban counties of the State, the rate of conviction per hundred thousand population in five-year periods jumped from 3 45 in 1870 to 17.35 in 1925, and "The rate of crime, both of convictions and of sentences, is highest in the urban counties and lowest in the rural counties.

[1] Mr Hoover gives the following annual total 12 000 murders, 47,000 cases of felonious assault, 284,000 burglaries, 780 000 larcenies and 247,000 automobile thefts These figures are substantiated by the U S Department Uniform Crime Reports, December, 1935

[2] *Uniform Crime Reports*, Vol I, No 4 (April, 1930), p 19 These Reports were issued by the International Association of Chiefs of Police Later the Reports were taken over by the U S Bureau of Investigation

The relationship seems to be in almost direct ratio to the extent of urban conditions. . . ." [1]

The crime rate respects no persons and has climbed into the Capital itself. "This investigation has established, on the basis of fact, that Washington has a disgracefully high crime rate and that law enforcement here is neither aggressive nor efficient." [2] Washington, D. C., stands second in murder, first in robbery, second in burglary, first in manslaughter, second in auto-theft per hundred thousand population, of all the cities in the country.

Up to now we have spoken of the number of offenses. We can now turn to the number of persons arrested and convicted. In the same speech cited above, Mr. Hoover declared that in the United States there were three million convicted criminals and that one out of every twenty-five persons in the United States is "inclined" towards criminality. From the number of offenses given above, this would seem to be an underestimation rather than otherwise. In the present year, 1936, there are about two hundred thousand prisoners, or one to approximately every four hundred and forty odd persons over fifteen years of age. The commitments to prison in the United States in 1933 totaled close to seven hundred thousand.[3] In New York State alone in 1934 there were recorded 563,697 convictions. Counting New York State roughly as ten per cent of the national total, this would mean that over five and one-half million people were convicted of crimes in the United States that year. Solely in New York City in 1934, there were approximately five hundred and fifty-seven thousand arrests. When we consider how large a ratio the number of offenses bears to the number of arrests, what a small proportion of those arrested actually are indicted, and what a small proportion of those indicted are tried and convicted, how few of those convicted are committed, we can get an indication of the enormous criminality prevailing in the country. The seven hundred thousand annual commitments in the United States, of course, does not include the large number of those convicted who are fined rather than sent to prison, or whose sentences are suspended, or who are released on probation or for parole. According to Mr. Hoover, the average murderer serves only four years in prison.

In spite of their enormity, the incompleteness of these figures can be seen from the mournful reports of various governmental bodies which have investigated the situation. The Chicago report, for example, gives

[1] C. N. Burrows: *Criminal Statistics in Iowa*, p. 110.

[2] Special Report on Crime Conditions by Committee on the District of Columbia, House of Representatives, House Resolution 94, 74th Congress, First Session, House Report No. 1646, p. 5 (July 25, 1935).

[3] See, U. S. Bureau of Census: *Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons in 1933*, p. 1 (1935).

the following summary of its findings: "Many professional criminals escape the penalties of the law and prey at will upon society. Poor and petty criminals are often punished more heavily than is just. The treatment of those sentenced to penal institutions is pitifully ineffective." "The present machinery catches poor, petty, and occasional criminals, and punishes them severely, but fails signally to suppress the professional criminal." [1] Those arrested tend to become criminals permanently and the criminals are intimately linked up with police, with the bar, with officials, bondsmen, the prosecutor's office, and the intricate nexus existing between these elements and alcoholism, drug peddling, prostitution, gambling and vice.

The same report illustrates its findings as to the heavy pressure on the poor by pointing out that over 80 per cent of those committed to jail were sentenced for non-payment of fines, of which thirty-five per cent were for non-payment of fines less than fifteen dollars and 56 per cent for fines less than twenty dollars.

Sinister, too, is the fact that the average age of the prisoners is constantly becoming lower. Of the total arrested in 1935, for example, 55 per cent were less than thirty years of age, 15 per cent less than twenty, 37 per cent less than twenty-five.[2] The largest number of arrests were in the nineteen-year age group. These figures were compiled from the finger-print cards in the possession of the United States government. As, in many states, youthful prisoners are not finger-printed, the increase in the percentage of youth who have been arrested as criminals is really larger. A great number of these youthful criminals are charged with major crimes. In 1935, the figures showed that more than 36 per cent of the persons whose arrest records were examined during the year had previous finger-print cards on file, while 6 per cent more bore notations that the individual had been arrested before.

To cap the climax of this astounding situation, it must be emphasized that the most important aspect of criminality, racketeering, has not been touched by the authorities. Racketeering is the transition line between legitimate business and so-called criminal operations. The widespread character of racketeering in America is eloquent testimony of the fact that Big Business generally is tainted with criminality and that the criminal is but the business man who has been caught.

A voluminous survey was made in 1929 by the Chicago Crime Commission.[3] The survey included a study of organized crime in Chicago, including the systematic exploitation of prostitution, the rule of the under-

[1] Report of the Chicago City Council Commission on Crime, C. E. Merriam, Chairman, pp. 9-10. (March, 1915.)

[2] See, U. S. Bureau of Investigation: *Uniform Crime Reports*, Vol. VI, No. 4, p. 27.

[3] See, *The Illinois Crime Survey*, Editor John H. Wigmore, published by the Illinois Association for Criminal Justice in Cooperation with the Chicago Crime Commission, 1929.

world, the beer wars, the widespread bomb terrorization, racketeering, and the relationship of the gangster to the politician. It closed on the mournful note: "In fact, during this period the *rule of the underworld,* instead of being checked, has in fact *extended its territory* and consolidated its power." [1] Again. "This entrance of the gunman and gangster into the control of what had heretofore been *normal economic activities* is the most flagrant example of the rule of the gang." [2] The report emphasizes, "It must be recognized that bootlegging and 'racketeering' present an altogether *new problem of law enforcement,* entirely different from the question of punishing old established crimes like murder and robbery." [3] It ends with the statement that "the present study has indicated how, in the past, *crusades against crime have repeatedly failed,* although public opinion had each time been inflamed to white heat." [4] And after reaching this conclusion, the Committee had nothing better to offer than to declare that in the last analysis, control is governed by public opinion and that *"no one agency* can cope with the range of problems presented by organized crime in gambling, commercialized vice, bootlegging, and gang activities." [5]

The Illinois Crime Survey is valuable in reporting, even though in a sketchy manner, the relationship of crime to regular business and to the State. It takes up such matters as election violence, discipline in the stockyards, and the race riot provocations of the corporation managements. It discusses how laundry and other associations are formed through bombing methods. It deals, too, with the strong-arm squads existing in the trade unions of Chicago. Here is heard a faint sounding of the fact that the enormous criminality in the United States is connected intimately with the normal processes of social activity itself.

The matter of criminality can be treated also from the point of view of cost to society. Only a small fraction of the cost has been estimated in statistical form. In a Special Report of the United States Commission on Law Observance, Volume XII, George W. Wickersham, Chairman, dealt with the cost of crime in the United States. In 1929-1930 alone the cost of federal criminal justice was estimated at fifty-three million dollars. Incomplete statistics on state police forces added five million, five hundred thousand dollars more. The cost of state penal and correctional institutions and parole agencies produced another fifty odd million. The cost in 82 per cent of the cities of over twenty-five thousand with a combined population of over forty-six million, amounted to two hundred and forty-four million

[1] *The Illinois Crime Survey,* p. 1093.
[2] The same, p. 1093.
[3] The same, p. 1093.
[4] The same, p. 1096.
[5] The same, p. 1099.

dollars, and if we double this figure to cover all the cities, we have a grand public cost of over six hundred million dollars spent annually on criminal justice. To this must be added the private expenditure for protection against crime, the cost of state industrial police, watchmen, guards, etc., which amounts to another two hundred million dollars annually. There are also private detective agencies throughout the country, the financial operations of which are not estimated in the report.

The report did not attempt to estimate the private losses annually due to crime, although it showed that the losses which were insured amounted to forty-seven million dollars, and that the full cost of insurance against crime was at least one hundred and six million dollars annually. The post-office department estimates of mail frauds per year were sixty-eight million dollars. This omits such items as insurance frauds, fraudulent bankruptcies, secondary frauds, confidence games, forgery, counterfeiting, etc.

Nor does the report attempt to appraise the indirect losses to a community through crime. It does show, however, that if the prisoners and law-enforcement officers alone were put to work, the wages paid them would equal three hundred million dollars annually.

Of the highest significance is the fact that losses to society through racketeering were omitted from the report. Surely this amounts to several billion dollars annually taken from the pockets of the people. When we consider that the total income at the height of prosperity of the United States was eighty-five billion dollars, we are forced to come to the conclusion that perhaps 10 per cent of the national income went into the pockets of racketeers and criminals, or to the officers of the State and their allies in law enforcement!

6

The question arises, what are the causes for this astounding balance sheet of criminality in the United States? Two principal sets of causes can be assigned as contributing to this phenomenon, causes that reflect present-day general conditions throughout the world and which are peculiarly refracted in the prism of American life.

The first basic reason for the phenomenal criminality in America and elsewhere is that the social order is definitely breaking down. The State and law are no longer identical with morals, and must act ever more severely. On the other hand, the masses consider the State only as an incubus, or as a monster to be hated and feared. That these conditions are world-wide can be observed by the fact that in every country during and after the war, and during the post-war depression, large increases of crime have been recorded.

It may be retorted that of all the capitalist states, that of the United

States is the strongest and most stable. According to our theory, the crime rate in that country should be smallest; in fact, the increase of crime in the United States is incomparably higher than that of any other country in the world. In criminology, as in economics, America is equal to all Europe put together.

Our answer is that, precisely because the United States is the strongest capitalist country existing in a world which is breaking down as a whole, here antagonism to the State takes the form of individual criminality. In Europe, hostility to the existing order, the desire of the poor to defend or improve their standards, takes the form not of individual striving to get out of their class, but of mass formations, riots, demonstrations, strikes, insurrections, revolutions. These events are no longer in the field of criminal jurisdiction, but rather in the realm of politics. Crime in Europe is mass crime—that is, political revolutionary activity. If, in conjunction with this mass revolt, there occur individual acts of terror, these are fused with the general situation. The class-consciousness of the groups in Europe prevents them from attempting to ameliorate their conditions by acts of petty crime against property. Solutions are to be found not in the province of economics, but in that of politics; the problem is not whether there should be an individual and temporary redistribution of wealth, but who should rule whom; that is, it is a question of a conquest of power.

The situation is entirely different in America. The political storms abroad whip up a raging ocean of violence which dashes against the shores of the United States, eroding its stability. The political structure of the United States has not been long established nor well tested. On the contrary, the State grew in an extremely belated and haphazard fashion. Scarcely was America out of its infant swaddling clothes than it was forced to become part of a senile and decayed passing order. There is no luxury of time given to America, as was given to England, for example, where there was a long period of well-nurtured maturity. America is destined to dash through its period of maturity, a period marked by Welfare-Liberalism and social reform. It is hurled at once from middle nineteenth century politics to that of the middle twentieth century. It must move from rampant individualism to vigorous fascism. All the middle periods are telescoped, with a speed typical of American tempo.

During this transition period toward collectivism, and while the masses are not yet class conscious, a deep social maladjustment becomes apparent everywhere. Individualist actions which were perfectly tolerable in a libertarian society now become criminal in a complex industrialist order. The people must be disciplined and ordered; these strike back in their old individualist fashion—they become criminals. In America, class formations have not yet become rigidified. Those who suffer under the contradictions

of capitalism, especially the youth, believe it possible by their own individual action to get out of their stratum of the poor and exploited classes. In America, the temptation to do so becomes unbearable in the light of the immense wealth and tremendous capacity to produce that meet one everywhere. The question, why this poverty in the midst of plenty, is a question that a bewildered individual in America cannot answer according to social laws, nor is he willing to justify the excuse which he finds at hand.

Acts of violence in the United States have not been peculiar to the present period. They were part of America from the beginning, in the extirpation of the Indians, in the enslavement of millions of Negroes, in the bondage of further millions of white indentured servants, in the unbridled conditions of the frontier, in the ruthless aggrandizement of the wealthy. What is significant, however, is that, while it was this very violence which in previous centuries helped to build up America and which was not at all considered of a criminal nature, today this behavior destroys the State and must be punished by the forces of repression. In other words, previously individual violence and direct action were the highest fruits of American Liberalism; that such actions today are crimes is an eloquent sign of the disappearance of Liberalism and the preparations for fascism that exist in America.

The second basic cause for the advance of criminality in the United States is the fact that in the era of imperialism it is the ruling class, the imperialists and their agents, which is forced to take illegal and criminal action for which its members are never punished. They plunge the world into repeated wars and into constant crises. Like snarling dogs in the manger, they neither produce nor allow others to produce. It is no longer, then, the revolutionist who takes to sabotage in order to obtain more wages in the factory or to improve his lot. It is the capitalist class that deliberately destroys the processes of production in the present era. Capitalism can exist only through the most fearful waste; when the pace of destruction is not fast enough, it opens the sluices of war.

In an era of permanent depression and war, the ruling group is compelled increasingly to turn to violence against its own people. By means of violence the oligarchs compel the formation of cartels and trusts. By violence they break up the organization of workers. With similar measures they eliminate their business rivals. In a period when masses of people vote, it is only by violence and criminality that the ruling class can control elections.

Nothing better illustrates this fact than the situation in the United States which arose when, partially because of the original weakness of the State, the rapidly rising trusts were forced to arm themselves directly. They

created a vast private industrial police, sometimes as in Pennsylvania, connected with the State apparatus itself and having the standing of regular police officers, which included thousands of people. No large strike occurs without detective agencies and private employment bureaus handing over to these companies hundreds and sometimes thousands of guards to be armed and deputized for acts of violence.

It is not at all uncommon in the United States for a company to employ gangsters to blow up the factories and property of its rivals in order to compel merger and monopoly consolidation. For this purpose some employers even have utilized the entire officialdom of trade unions, whereby the unions became weapons for these employers to strike down the plants of rival concerns that would not enter the combine. Frequently gangsters are hired to bomb and terrorize numbers of small storekeepers and independent producers into entering into agreements to maintain certain price levels.

In short, we witness in the United States two distinct sets of crimes. On the one hand is the old type, aimed against business property and the wealthy. The members of this criminal group were originally rebellious elements of the poor, products of the slums and vicious conditions of city life who take this individualist reaction to emerge from their poverty and to strike back at the forces oppressing them. The second category of crime is entirely different. It is a category generated and developed by Big Business itself, which utilizes the gangster and the racketeer as important instruments to accelerate the centralization of its power. This second section is far more important and deadly to the social order than the first and is rapidly increasing. The Jesse Jameses are insignificant in comparison to the Al Capones. The Jesse Jameses were an expression of Liberalism; the Al Capones are an expression of trustified racketeering capital.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in America, criminality was only the social counterpart of rampant Liberalism. The Liberal wanted to minimize the State; the criminal broke its provisions. Both believed in individual direct action. It was not necessary to fight the State in order to obtain a livelihood, nor was the State strong enough to be called upon in every eventuality. Each man had to look out for himself. The law of the frontier was the law of disorder. Collective action took the form of lynching. What a man wanted he could attain directly, either by stalking off into the wilderness and evading social relations, or by individual actions against his fellow human. Everyone was too busy trying to secure wealth to pay much attention to anything else except when the depredations were so heinous as to threaten to destroy the system itself. The liberal view that "the sky was the limit" made the country a paradise for individual action.

Since practically the entire attention of the nation was given to enhanc-

ing production and the economic factors, those who went into politics were generally business failures or weaklings, or those who, as lawyers retained by business men and real estate speculators, had some particular goal to achieve thereby. The average hard-working individual in the United States looked upon the State official with somewhat amused contempt. The government apparatus, being turned over, therefore, to the relatively unfit, who used their positions to recoup their losses, became easy prey for graft and corruption. Real wealth was not in the hands of the State; it was in the hands of private industry. The treasury of the State was but an insignificant portion of the total wealth, and no one cared how it was administered. Thus systematically it could be looted and plundered. Those who entered politics coolly calculated the opportunities for graft and peculation which it offered. Under such circumstances, respect for the law and for the law officer became conspicuous by its absence in the United States.

The situation has been aggravated by the fact that, in America, the wealthy have none of the prestige and standing which they enjoy in European and other old established countries. Within the memory of each generation, the common people were able to watch the wealthy obtain their riches and to note the methods carefully. As the wealthy themselves were generally not from the genteel classes of Europe, they did not bother to conceal the rough mechanism by which they obtained their property. It was the common knowledge of all, seen by all, the avaricious, the criminal methods by which the capitalists were evolving in this country. Swindling, cheating, murder, criminality of all sorts, were part of the routine by which men became owners of Big Business.[1] No one in America but a moron could believe that the millions secured in a decade by given individuals, who had entered this country penniless, could have been obtained by honest toil alone. That the people did not rebel against this situation was basically due to the fact that enough wealth was on hand throughout the nation to afford them a good livelihood as well. Attacks upon the rich were considered manifestations of meanness and envy.

With a venal and corrupt governmental apparatus, with a ruthless and crude capitalist class absorbing the untold wealth of the country, many of the youth of the poorer classes turned to the methods by which Big Business had obtained power, in an effort to do likewise. These comprised the army of unfortunates who were caught and convicted.

The situation has changed entirely in the twentieth century, especially during the present depression. The army of governmental employees—

[1] For the criminality of the capitalist see, G. Myers: *The History of Great American Fortunes*, 3 Vols.; also see, G. Myers: *History of the Supreme Court.*

eight hundred thousand federal alone—now reaches the astounding total of approximately three million. The number of people who are directly dependent upon the State for their livelihood can be counted as close to sixty million.[1] The amount of money spent annually by the government during the crisis has mounted to about 25 per cent of the total national income. In one stride America, with its backward political State, is overtaking and surpassing Europe.

Along with this change of front towards governmental authoritarianism controlled by Big Business, there has taken place a decided turn in the course of criminality. On the one hand, individual actions formerly legitimate have been made criminal offenses. In the nineteenth century to be penniless was no crime. Today, one of the chief methods of filling the jails is through arrests for vagrancy. Other methods include arrests "on suspicion" and for "disorderly conduct." During the period of prohibition, wholesale seizures were enacted as part of prohibition enforcement. In the last century, the liberty of the individual to wager his money was generally respected. Today an increasing number of arrests are made for betting and gambling. These categories of crime have entrapped chiefly the poorer elements of the population. The great increase in the number of laws has also brought into the net large numbers of the middle class for violation of traffic and vehicle ordinances. Those arrested on such charges are generally not sentenced to jail, however, but merely given fines.

It must not be supposed that these vast numbers of arrests are unwelcome to the governmental authorities. Criminality is the meat and sustenance of the very existence of many of them. Without these arrests, they would have no jobs and could appeal for no funds. For this reason, primarily, the police constantly trail those who have been released from jail and who make efforts to reform their behavior. Moreover, were mass arrests not vital to the life of capitalism they could not have grown to such an extent nor would they have been tolerated.

The fact is that the mass of people in the United States must be disciplined. They must be taught their place. They must learn to respect law and order. It is believed that they will emerge from jail more docile than before, more obedient to the dictates of capital. The jail takes the place of universal military service in other countries for the breaking of the spirit of the masses and for their regimentation behind the officers of the State. Undoubtedly this belief furnishes the most important motive for the periodic wholesale arrests in Negro quarters in the South and among the

[1] This includes, of course, those on relief, but does not include those who receive their income from private sources which are subsidized and supported by the government. Compare, S. Chase: *Government in Business*, p. 49. Mr. Chase gets a total of fifty-one million persons, but underestimates the number supported on the payrolls, and does not include pensioners, veterans, institutional inmates, children fed in schools, etc.

poor whites in the mill towns of that region. There is also always the possibility that, when arrested, these individuals may break under the strain, may become semi-criminal elements attached to the police department and who can be used by it to increase the network of its influence.

Further, the fact that these wholesale arrests allow the State to continue its tradition of slavery and forced labor which is part of American life must be considered. Chain gangs build the roads of the South at practically no cost at all. Prisoners are farmed out to individual owners of lumber camps for the production of turpentine, etc.[1] The threat of arrest can compel masses of Negroes and poor whites to offer their services free to the plantation owner of the South or at such wages as he deigns to pay. These wholesale arrests of the poor have become an enormous weapon for the disciplining of the masses of the people to compel them to realize that the era of Liberalism is no more. It is these arrests which so greatly swell the total of criminal statistics in this country.

At the same time, with the rise of the State and Big Business, an entirely new set of criminals enters the field protected by these elements. Within the political parties, a veritable swarm of gangsters and crooks place their hands upon the public till. Every increase in governmental authority is an increase in their power to blackmail and to swindle. Is there a prohibition amendment? It means that every officer has the power to permit drinking and the violation of the law, at a price. Are there laws against vice and prostitution? They afford the opportunity for officers to stand at the door of houses of prostitution for a consideration, to inform all those who enter that they are legally protected. Should a prostitute attempt to flee from a house of ill fame, the political gang controlling the police will insure that she is brought to jail, and then returned.

The enormous number of gangs existing in the large cities of the country are well known to the police. They are tolerated because these gangs are connected with the political machinery of the city. They are needed in times of election to terrorize the polls, to murder their rivals, to miscount the votes. Without these gangsters, what would maintain the control of the corrupt political officials? Who controls the State is now a matter of vital concern for millions who live from the State. The treasury is no longer a small item in the national wealth. It is constantly increasing in relative importance. Hordes of intellectuals, professional men, members of the bar, real estate agents, bondsmen, insurance companies, and endless others are interested in the *modus operandi* of the government. All these elements must control their election districts and their political party

[1] The A. F. of L. bureaucracy bemoans the fact that between 1923 and 1932 the figures of 12 federal and 114 state prisons show an increase in the number of productive prisoners from 51,800 to 82,300. (See, M. Woll: *Labor, Industry and Government*, p. 269.)

machines. And the gangster, the criminal on whom the law can press its finger, is the best servile element for its purposes. There is no more chance of breaking the hold of gangsters and the underworld than there is of breaking the political machines of capitalism itself. These gangsters are not attackers of the State; they are its protectors and defenders. This is the type of crime representative of the twentieth century.

As the State rises to become the greatest industry of all, it is bound to attract to itself the men of genius who heretofore have entered only the more lucrative private services. The same type that became captains of industry, will try to become captains of the State; they will demand more and more power as their hold increases. Trustified capital in control of the State will have great use for the gangsters and racketeers and gunmen it has created. They will now become unofficial representatives of repression similar to the fascist organizations abroad. The wholesale criminality of the American people will have to be met by still further repressions by the government as the State becomes further centralized at the head of a vigorous executive. More and more the criminality of the people will turn into class political action, as the criminality of the employers will turn to fascism. America will then be well on the way towards the final conflict, entering with the greatest violence into the same cycle of political contradictions which can be seen so markedly in Europe.

XXVI. FASCIST PROTOTYPES

I

THE Fascist régime is a symbol of the hardening of the arteries of a social system which is losing completely its flexibility. Any sudden great effort and rush of rich warm blood can burst its blood vessels. Fascism thus has much in common with the political schemes with which the ruling classes of old tried to prevent the rise of a progressive capitalist system of society. Fascism in Germany and elsewhere turns back to the Middle ages.

In the thirteenth century, the morality of the merchant capitalists was beginning to challenge that of the aristocratic ruling classes. In reply the intellectuals, speaking for the feudalists of the time, did their best to denounce the immorality of these nascent capitalists. To the old landed order, finance, if not immoral, was at best sordid and disreputable. Merchants who tried to organize a ring to raise prices were considered monsters of iniquity and were placed in a pillory in the square with the approval of all Christians. Labor was considered the common lot of all mankind and the ideal was approved that one should eat only that which he produced.

The nobility of labor was one of the theses at the very base of the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas. According to the Schoolmen, "The owner is a trustee, whose rights are derived from the function which he performs and should lapse if he repudiates it. They are limited by his duty to the State; they are limited no less by the rights of his tenants against him. . . . He is, in short, not a *rentier,* but an officer, and it is for the Church to rebuke him when he sacrifices the duties of his charge to the greed of personal gain." [1]

Prior to the time that nascent capitalism had grown sufficiently to challenge the old order, morality and politics had been fused under the leadership of the Church. Later, as the struggle grew fiercely, the State took the lead and the Church became its arm. This, however, did not destroy the conception of a single society of which Church and State were different aspects, and of the necessity to fuse law and morals. In Queen Elizabeth's day, in England, ecclesiastics were public officers; the Bishop was normally also the justice of the peace and relied on secular machinery

[1] R. H. Tawney: *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism,* pp. 149-150.

to enforce not only religious conformity but Christian morality, because both were elements in a society in which secular and spiritual interests had not yet been disentangled completely from each other.

In their first successful struggles, by no means did the capitalists adopt a position of laissez faire individualism. Quite the contrary. They scrupulously maintained the theories of social responsibility and of mutual dependence of groups, each to be of service to the other. They insisted, too, on a complete authoritarianism of the State, just as they had previously supported the rise of an absolute monarchy. The business man tried to prove that only under his guidance would there be the greatest benefit to the whole. Under Calvin, the early capitalists established an iron collectivism, an almost military discipline to whose remorseless and violent rigors Geneva was subjected. As both the teaching of Calvin himself and the practice of some Calvinist communities suggest, the social ethics of Calvinism savored more of collectivist dictatorship than of individualism.

"In the plan for the reorganization of poor relief at Zürich, which was drafted by Zwingli in 1525, all mendicancy was strictly forbidden; travellers were to be relieved on condition that they left the town next day; provision was to be made for the sick and aged in special institutions; no inhabitant was to be entitled to relief who wore ornaments or luxurious clothes, who failed to attend church, or who played cards or was otherwise disreputable. The basis of his whole scheme was the duty of industry and the danger of relaxing the incentive to work." [1]

We might say in passing that the economic justification of these laws was the same as that which had led to the economic theory of mercantilism. The business of middle and northern Europe which had been embraced in the Hanseatic League was steadily deteriorating with the opening up of the New World and the shift of the trade routes to the Atlantic. The pressure of superior economic competition was reducing these towns to secondary positions. To prevent or, at worst, to control this competition, each town was forced to formulate a whole series of rules to the disadvantage of foreign merchants and travelers.[2]

The views of Luther also called for an omnipotent and omnipresent State to which the church was to be entirely subordinate, although church and State were to be united. He furiously denounced the spirit of revolt then prevailing in Germany and demanded complete and absolute obedience to the rulers, or the princes. Against the Anabaptists he wrote: "Therefore strike, throttle, thrust, each man who can, secretly or openly—and bear in mind that there exists nothing more poisonous, more harmful,

[1] The same, p. 114.

[2] See the Monograph by G. Schmoller: *The Mercantile System and Its Historical Signifi-*

more devilish than a rebellious man.—As one must slaughter a mad dog. . . ." [1]

As with Calvin, so with Luther the State was an absolute authority because it was ordained by God and was God's law. To Luther, the Prince was the father of the land; he was never weary of thundering at the masses that to honor was more imperative than to love, that the prime virtues were modesty, humility, reverence. Christian love was subordinate to reverence or the order of society. Luther, like Calvin, confidently believed that "even an individual of the worst character, one most unworthy of all honor, if invested with public authority receives that illustrious divine power which the Lord has, by His Word, devolved on the ministers of His Justice." [2]

In all this we see that early capitalism strove for power with an attitude of extreme conservatism. Neither Luther nor Calvin believed in free inquiry or toleration, and from their writings one may as easily reach fascism as individualism. The Reformation utilized the writings of these men, gradually reinterpreting them to build a philosophy of individualism. The business man no longer required theories of State control and social dependence; he needed just the opposite.

The early views of the Reformation were reflections of the prevailing Catholic opinion that the State was a holy institution and that the monarch ruled by divine law. He who opposed the State sinned against God. As the capitalists grew more powerful, however, they constructed gods violently opposed to the State of the old order; as they overthrew the *ancien régime,* the old aristocratic classes and Catholic apologists had to change their position also, since they were now, in turn, rebels.[3] Theories of divine right and divine law therefore had to be modified; an objective science of political economy was created even among the reactionary elements. The chief exponents were Machiavelli and Hobbes.

In Italy, the feudal order had long since dissolved in the currents of Mediterranean trade, and large city States had been established under the control of the merchant princes. Here the ruling class acquired the greatest contempt for the Pope and the Catholic Church, which they controlled for their own purposes and whose mechanism they thoroughly understood.

[1] See, R. Pascal: *The Social Basis of the German Reformation,* p. 146.

[2] Calvin: *Institute of the Christian Religion,* Bk. IV, Ch. XX, paragraph 25.

[3] Among both the Spanish Catholic theologians and the French Huguenots there was often expressed the view that subjects were not bound to obey a prince who enjoined what was contrary to the law of God, since kings do not rule according to divine right. Tyrannicide was thus justifiable. See, for example: S. T. Brutus: *Grounds of Right Against Tyrants* (1579); George Buchanan: *On the Sovereign Power Among the Scots* (1579), and the writings of Mariana, Suarez and other Spanish theologians, for which also see, W. A. Dunning: *Political Theories from Luther to Montesquieu.*

Machiavelli, for example, wrote, "We Italians then owe to the Church of Rome and to her priests our having become irreligious and bad; but we owe her a still greater debt, and one that will be the cause of our ruin, namely, that the Church has kept and still keeps our country divided." [1] Naturally, then, in Italy was enunciated most clearly the statist policy of making the Church secondary to the State, which was the chief goal of society.

To Machiavelli, the State was an end in itself whose excellence was to be tested solely by its ability to expand. The necessities of the State could brook no scruples in its leaders; he who brought morals into politics could only drag the State to disaster. Machiavelli thus took a completely unmoral point of view and was the first to separate ethics from politics. He observed the State with the eyes of an experienced, practical politician. Man was selfish. Materialist prosperity was the chief conscious basis of political life among men. The struggle for wealth resulted in a clash of interests between the wealthy and the people. The State was a product of this clash. It must be flexible enough to move with the changing relation of forces. To attain this lability the Prince who represented the State must use all means in his power. Everything was to be made subordinate to the stability of the State which should exploit even religious sentiment as an instrument of State policies.

The city-state, however, could remain stable only if it encouraged increased population of the city, established colonies in conquered territory, turned all booty into the treasury, carried on war actively rather than passively, and if the Prince looked to it that the State was rich and the individual poor, and took the utmost care to maintain a well-trained army. The Prince was to be feared, but not hated. He was to keep the people busy with great enterprises, encourage the useful arts, tax as lightly as possible, keep his hands off the property and women of his subjects, engage in a vigorous foreign policy. In this way he would be able to unite the people and to prevent the struggle of classes from destroying the State. These dictates of Machiavelli, Mussolini no doubt has learned by heart.[2]

Particularly interesting was Machiavelli's view that men of real distinction and marked ability are always regarded with suspicion by the masses. In times of peace and quiet they are wholly neglected in politics; the leadership falls into the hands of the rich and well-connected. An escape from the perils of such a tendency was found by Rome, he believed, in the

[1] Machiavelli: *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius,* Book I, Ch. XII, p. 130 in *Historical, Political, and Diplomatic Writings of Machiavelli,* II. (1882, Boston edition.) See also F. P. Sterns: *Napoleon and Machiavelli,* p. 115.

[2] Indeed, the 1928 Paris edition of Machiavelli's *Prince* contains a special introduction by Mussolini.

policy of incessant war through which the best of her citizens were kept always to the front.[1]

Machiavelli's object in strengthening the State was not so much to prevent its overthrow—there was no fear of a capitalist revolution—but in order to secure the unification of Italy and the eradication of all rival powers. It was otherwise with Hobbes, who learned much from Machiavelli and who applied his knowledge to the entirely different situation in England, where the capitalists had beheaded the king, overthrown the old order, and established the hegemony of parliament, in the course of which they were adopting such theories of individual liberalism and utilitarianism as were expressed in Locke's writings. Hobbes looked with dismay upon the gradual unfolding of the British civil wars in which the lower orders were gradually asserting their rights. He feared that these lower orders had been put down but temporarily, and that the Great Rebellion had begun the march towards complete anarchy and chaos.

Hobbes was convinced that the only way liberty could be secured was by the establishment of a complete and all-powerful State to which all individuals were to be entirely subordinate. Typical English product of the seventeenth century, Hobbes reached this conclusion, moreover, from the same basis as the Liberals; like Locke, he started from individualist, sensationalist premises and from the doctrines of natural law and social contract.

Individual man operated according to the pressure on his senses He was completely egotistic and materialistic In the beginning, before society was formed, each man fought against the other "To this war of every man, against every man, this also is consequent; that nothing can be unjust The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, have there no place. Where there is no common power there is no law; where no law, no injustice"[2] The State rises with private property "It is consequent also to the same condition, that there can be no propriety, no dominion, no *mine* and *thine* distinct; but only that to be every man's, that he can get, and for so long, as he can keep it"[3]

Hobbes strictly separated natural *right* from natural *law*. The natural right of a man was the liberty each man possessed to use his own power as he willed for the preservation and advancement of himself Natural law, like all law, meant restriction on right or liberty. When law was established, the liberty and power accruing to each man were transferred to the State The State had arisen to create private property and, once the

[1] See, W A Dunning *A History of Political Theories Ancient and Mediæval* p 321 (1935) See also, Machiavelli *Discourse*, work cited, Book III, Ch XVI

[2] T Hobbes *Leviathan in Collected Works* III 115 (Molesworth edition)

[3] The same, p 115

natural right and liberty of each individual was transferred to the State, all liberty and power belonged to it. This transfer was made by means of an unbreakable social contract of which, however, the sovereign or king was not a part.

In all this argumentative scaffolding, Hobbes carefully rejected theological disputations. The king did not rule by divine right, but only because he represented the State, which was the mechanism of power and liberty for all.[1] The State undertook to guarantee that the original covenant was kept valid and did so by means of force. All law was essentially a command. Since the liberty of the individual was fused with the liberty of the State, fear and liberty or necessity and liberty were not incompatible terms. To insure obedience through fear of punishment was only another way to compel a man to be free. To sum up, Hobbes declared that the civil law was part of the law of nature; it restricted natural rights and transferred all of them to the State, with the exception of those which the State desired the individual to keep. This was the best way to guarantee the greatest good to the greatest number and to advance prosperity and liberty for all.

Civil laws, of course, must never be opposed to reason. The important factor was the reason of the sovereign, who was entrusted to make good laws. And by a "good law" Hobbes meant not a just law, for no law could be unjust, since justice was synonymous with law, but a law which was needful and for the good of the people. While it was true that subjects could not owe to the sovereign obedience in things contrary to the laws of God, only the sovereign was the authority as to what actually constituted the law of God.

Hobbes was not recognized by the deposed pretenders to the throne of England as their theoretician because he specifically denied the theory of rule by divine right, and placed the institution of royalty entirely upon rationalist and scientific grounds. It was only in the nineteenth century in England that Hobbes began to come into his own, when the bourgeoisie had need for theories of absolute control by the State. And indeed we may say, "In fact, Hobbes' Leviathan represents what is called 'the modern State.' "[2] To Hobbes, the chief end in social life was the creation of power. Power was the goal of the search for truth and the purpose of worship

[1] In all this, Hobbes seemed to have followed the materialistic Franciscan Englishman, Duns Scotus, who died in the fourteenth century. To Duns Scotus, "Individual property had its source neither in divine nor natural law, but in Civil Law, and was the consequence of the Fall from Grace. Men were seized with the lust for domination and riches, a war of all against all arose, as each one aimed at taking as much as he could from the common possession. Thus the State and private property were established." (M. Beer: *Social Struggles in the Middle Ages*, p. 110.)

[2] Leslie Stephen: *Hobbes*, p. 204.

among men Power was identical to liberty and was embodied in the State of which the chief feature was organized force for the good of all.

The seventeenth century produced not only Hobbes but also his political companion, Spinoza. Spinoza, too, believed that to be free one had to act in accordance with the laws of nature. Both God and man were controlled by immutable laws which compelled mankind to realize his union with nature.[1] Thus, a study of metaphysics led Spinoza to the study of ethics and politics. In his ethics, Spinoza agreed with Hobbes that the good is that which we know to be beneficial to ourselves Virtue means a development of well being One should love oneself and pursue one's interests Spinoza did not believe in humility, repentance, and pity, but held none the less that such traits properly could be propagandized by statesmen, so as to make the people docile, since "If the mob is not in fear, it threatens in its turn" [2]

In his political views Spinoza was in accord with Hobbes that property came into existence only with law, and he ridiculed the idea of inalienable and natural rights States should recognize treaties only in their interests Patriotism was the highest virtue, the safety of the State was the supreme consideration; might was the wisest criterion of right, not wisdom, but authority, made laws and the secular State in turn decided what was virtue Like Machiavelli, Spinoza believed it proper to use religious rituals in behalf of the State,[3] although he himself was a metaphysical pantheist

During this period, when the bourgeoisie was engaged in revolutionary action to seize political power, a theory of popular sovereignty as against the absolute monarchy had arisen We have already remarked that the anti-monarchical Hugenots and Catholics who wrote in the sixteenth century justified tyrannicide by theories of popular sovereignty But to them, "people" did not mean the "mob," but merely the magistrates controlled by the wealthy oppositionists

Even when popular sovereignty was no longer so narrowly construed, such a concept was not necessarily incompatible with theories stressing action and the omnipotence of the State This combination was particularly marked among the French It is seen in the works of Jean Bodin,[4] later in Rousseau and others The idea of the supremacy of the general will of the people and the erection of a republican form of government was easily linked to the establishment of a dictatorial administration of the State

[1] Freedom is not contrary to necessity but works through it God is free yet operates according to the necessity of his own nature See B de Spinoza *Political Treatise* in *Works*, I, Ch II, Sec 7, p 294 (Bohn edition 1889)

[2] B de Spinoza *Ethics* Book IV, Proposition 54 (Everyman's edition)

[3] B de Spinoza *A Theologico Political Treatise* in *Works* I 245 (Bohn edition, 1889)

[4] His book was written 1566

2

As the evils of laissez faire became evident, new schools of authoritarian statism arose to protest against the havoc of free competition. These schools were often connected with the remnants of the aristocracy still pleading for the restoration of their power and criticising the capitalist régime as compared to the past. Naturally, such authoritarians developed a strong tendency to romanticism which tinged all of their writings, whether literary or political. Their romanticism luxuriated in the early and middle parts of the nineteenth century, especially in England and Germany.

In England, the literary genius of this type was Thomas Carlyle. Carlyle waged a bitter struggle against the Philosophic Radicalism of Bentham, Mill, and others who expressed the intolerance of the self-made capitalists toward aristocratic special privilege and who were the spokesmen of the movement for parliamentary reform.

Carlyle did not hesitate to point out the evils of capitalism. He was extremely fearful of the probable results of the French Revolution and the riots that were spreading in England, especially during the Chartist movement. He noted the great and growing unemployment; he demanded a change from the Midas system and an end to the laissez faire anarchical and chaotic system that was reducing the English people to such misery. This was a line of approach, too, which was well adapted to the policies of the Tories and was used by that arch imperialist, Disraeli. In this period "Disraeli declared boldly that the Queen ruled in reality over 'two nations; between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each others' habits, thoughts, and feelings, as if they were dwellers in different zones, or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed by a different breeding, are ordered by different manners, and are not governed by the same laws . . . the Rich and the Poor.' "[1]

Carlyle indomitably idealized the feudal past. The State must terminate laissez faire and organize industry. Repudiating the cash nexus in which men were but a means to an end, Carlyle urged the restoration of the dignity of man. Only through work could man be ennobled. A new chivalry of labor should be created. The foundation of the new era was to be a fair day's wage and universal compulsory education. Against the ideal of free contract there was to be placed the reality of permanent employment.

Carlyle fought for dictatorship—Cromwell was his great idol—and for

[1] E. Neff: Carlyle and Mill, p. 246.

It should be remarked that an intolerable situation had been created in England at this time by the fact that while the hours of slave labor were limited, those of wage labor were unlimited and, when the workers in England were forced to labor fourteen hours a day, in 1831, an order of council had forbidden the labor of slaves more than nine hours, night work and child labor being abolished. Thus the slave was better off than the "free" laborer.

the rule of heroes who could achieve.[1] Democracy could not bring out the worth of the individual, but could breed only revolution. Not the ballot for all, but an open career for the talented. This was the ideal of the future. In this he seemed to agree with Charles I, whose reported speech on the scaffold was: "for People are free under a Government not by being sharers in it, but by the due administration of the Laws."[2]

Carlyle, however, had no intention of handing over the State to the old landlord class. Quite the contrary. The captains of industry must lead the way. "In the new order the captain will be a kind of servant, ready to do the greatest good to the greatest number, ambitious to be a just master rather than a rich master. . . ."[3] "To reconcile Despotism with Freedom: —well, is that such a mystery? Do you not already know the way? It is to make your Despotism *just*."[4] Governments were to organize industrial regiments of the New Era, and the acknowledged king was to introduce wisely in all his territory a universal system of drill, not military only, but human in all kinds.

Without question the views of Carlyle could well be advocated by Adolph Hitler today, and that, should fascism develop in Great Britain, the ideology expressed by Carlyle will be a most important weapon in its hands.

Typically reactionary was Carlyle's view that the system could be changed only by making men more moral, a condition which, in turn, could be effected only by mystical probing into the soul. "What is to be done? . . . By thee, for the present, almost nothing. . . . Thou shalt descend into thy inner man, and see if there be any traces of a *soul* there; till then there can be nothing done!"[5] And he denounced the British business men for treating the soul as some Slavonic dialects do, as synonymous with the term "stomach." Carlyle did not shrink from advocating the seizure of power by a determined and right-thinking minority whose actions would be thoroughly justified if the New Era were thereby inaugurated.[6] Here, too, Carlyle shows himself a forerunner of the present fascist movement. In his advocacy of the need for a dictatorship of the scientists and the élite, Carlyle was only following Saint-Simon, whose influence he had strongly felt.[7]

[1] To Carlyle, the essence of freedom was the right of the masses to be adequately led. The masses needed a true leader, Laissez faire was an abdication on the part of the governors. Democracy was, by the nature of it a self-cancelling business, and gave, in the long run, the net result of zero (T Carlyle *Chartism*)

[2] See, B. Disraeli *Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles the First*, II, 572. (1851 edition)

[3] F. Rowe: *The Social Philosophy of Carlyle and Ruskin*, p. 111.

[4] Carlyle. *Past and Present*, pp. 329-330. (A L Burt edition, 1890)

[5] Carlyle. *The Socialism and Unsocialism of Thomas Carlyle*, I, 30. (1891 edition.)

[6] E. Neff. *Carlyle and Mill*, p. 327.

[7] See, D. B. Cofer: *Saint-Simonism in the Radicalism of Thomas Carlyle*.

Carlyle's philosophy could be summed up in the following doctrines: an aristocracy of talent and priesthood; the organization of labor and education through the establishment of order, responsibility, and regimentation; a gospel of work that would unite labor and religion; the connection of industrial sovereignty and aristocracy under the rulership of captains of industry; the establishment of a universal brotherhood.[1]

The disciple of Carlyle was John Ruskin, who also announced that all must work under an aristocracy made up of landed proprietors, soldiers, captains of industry and professional classes similar to those of feudal times. The unfit were to be sterilized. A definite reaction was to be launched against the machine age; there must be built up again guilds and crafts and artistic quality in work. Work must be a joy. The State must force all to labor and must fix the incomes of the owners of land and captains of industry.

In literature, romantic Toryism flowered out in great style, as exemplified by such as Sir Walter Scott, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey. Of the last three, each had begun as pretended Jacobin sympathizers, but could not sanction the actions of the masses. From then on they turned their backs on Liberalism and agreed with Coleridge: "Only in a voluntary surrender of himself to a corporate society can man find that mystic repayment of desire that is at once an expansion and a limitation. Only in state and church can the anarchy of nature and the order of civilization be reconciled."[2] Coleridge was to surrender himself not to corporate society but to the mysticism of opium.

Similarly, Southey developed a Tory humanitarianism, advocating a national grant for education, a well-ordered plan of emigration, factory laws, child labor restriction, commutation of tithes, allotment of land to laborers, building up of a co-operative movement, etc.

With such crocodile tears the wealthy aristocratic groups of England wept for the poor while actually striving with might and main to maintain their special privileges. The Tories were anxious to show the evils of capitalism; they were equally concerned with proving the glorious wonders of former days, when they were in power.

These men of letters were seconded by the propaganda of various Christian and Catholic socialists in England. In England the violence of the Chartists, especially the extreme Left atheistic wing, had compelled the wealthy to take a grip on the situation in an effort to control it. Under the initiative of Maurice and Kingsley, a movement of Christian Socialism was organized in the middle of the nineteenth century, whose principal object was to defeat the Reds. In their opinion, the State should be con-

[1] See, T. Carlyle: *Past and Present*, Book IV, Section "Horoscope."
[2] C. Brinton: *The Political Ideas of the English Romanticists*, p. 84.

servative, but the church communistic. The increasing gap between the rich and the poor showed a lack of humanitarianism which must be terminated if England were to escape revolution. They contrasted their Christian Socialism with Left Wing Chartism as follows: the Reds wanted "all thine to be mine," whereas the church declared "all that is mine is thine." The Christian Socialists were to preach this church doctrine both to the rich and to the poor to apply the golden rule of Christ.[1]

The creed of the Christian Socialists could be stated as follows: "On the one hand, association for work under the ideal of brotherliness, and on the other, the re-establishment of the social system—not on a new basis—but on the old. The change to present conditions had destroyed the relation of master and servant, of employer and employed; but the new order was to give the masters a principle of humanity, a true feeling of responsibility, which would make it impossible for them to take advantage of the labourers; while the workmen, under the new conditions of peace and prosperity, were to be filled with the joy of service." [2]

The Christian Socialist movement in England went through various phases Its first phase closed in 1854 with the failure of the producers' co-operative associations which the leaders had fostered The spirit of the Christian Socialist movement was continued in the Working Men's College that was founded through the clergy In 1887 the Guild of St Matthew was formed and in 1889 the Christian Social Union organized.

A reaction to French revolutionary Liberalism nowhere developed more than in Germany. The chief theoretician of the romantic school, hailing the past and insisting on the complete submergence of the individual in the State, was Hegel According to Hegel, freedom consisted not in the absence of restraint but in self-determination to which restraint could be attached. The will of the individual was free only when fused with that of the State. The State is the true self into which the mere individual is absorbed "The State is the Divine Idea as it exists on earth." [3] This is the cornerstone of moral and political obligation In other words, we are morally free when our actions conform to our real will Our real will is the general will and the general will is most fully embedded in the State.

According to Hegel, "The state being the individual writ large, its own independence is the primary condition of its internal life and indeed of its freedom And for this reason it imposes an absolute sacrifice on the

[1] See, E Seligman 'Owen and the Christian Socialists, in *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol I, pp 206 249 (1886)

[2] A V Woodworth *Christian Socialism in England* p 39

[3] G W F Hegel *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* p 41 (J Sibree edition)

individual when it is necessary to maintain it." [1] War was not something the State must fear; war was good when it led to discipline and moral soundness.

The struggle against the Napoleonic invasion and the humiliating Treaty of Tilsit permitted to appear patriots who glorified the State in order to mobilize the people under it to fight the French. This was the position of Fichte, who made it his business to attack the revolutionary anarchy of the laissez faire schools and who proposed instead a social and economic scheme for self-sufficient communities to be regulated by the State and in which every able-bodied person was to be organized according to occupation and would have a modest but assured income.[2] Foreign trade was to be reserved solely to the State. Behind Fichte's plans was the tradition of mercantilism so strongly prevailing in the Hanseatic States of Germany.

In the revolution of 1848, two distinct movements were attacking capitalist liberalism, namely, the agrarian aristocrats dominating the Prussian State and the German system, on the one hand, and the mass of laborers who had begun to organize themselves, on the other. At this stage there appeared intellectuals who tried to unite both these groups against the capitalists in favor of the State. While they were not able to make much headway with the factory workers who went towards the Marxists, these intellectuals were able, under the guidance of Karl Marlo (Professor Winkelblech), to ally themselves to the handicraftsmen.

"Winkelblech would heal the ills of society, and improve the condition of the working classes, by the adoption of a compromise between liberalism and communism. Among his demands are collective property in land, side by side with private ownership, co-operative production, the handing over of means of communication to public bodies, and State participation in mining, forestry, fishing, and even trading and banking. But he would also restrict private undertakership and speculation whenever the interests of society require it, and he would grant to the labourer the right to work and to the incapable, adequate means of subsistence." [3] Marlo believed in the reconstitution of the guilds of old and the placing of obligation upon private property according to the old Christian Germanic law. His system he termed Federal Socialism.

During the 1848 events, the master handicraftsmen who met in their

[1] L. T. Hobhouse: *The Metaphysical Theory of the State*, p. 100.

"In the German view the state is not for the individuals, but the individuals for the state." "The German creed is that not the enjoyment of happiness, but the fulfillment of duties is the real meaning of human existence. Life is worth while only if we serve ideas and if we are ready to sacrifice everything for them." (H. Muensterberg: *The War and America*, p. 135.)

[2] See, M. Beer: *Social Struggles and Thought*, pp. 94-95.

[3] W. H. Dawson: *German Socialism and Ferdinand Lasselle*, pp. 51-52.

Congress at Frankfort formulated Marlo's program. This was also accepted by the journeymen who met separately and who practically agreed with their masters, although adding demands for suffrage, compulsory education, industrial schools, twelve-hour day, legal minimum wage, sickness insurance, progressive property and income tax, protective duty on wholly manufactured imports, partition of Crown lands and division among the land-workers and peasants.[1] It is significant that, while the master handicraftsmen agreed with Marlo in attempting to return to the Middle Ages, the journeymen, accepting the reactionary theory, added wholly modern and progressive demands. The past of the journeymen was indeed with their masters; their future was to be with the proletariat.

3

The revolutions of 1848 brought the Catholic Church actively into the social scene. The clergy viewed with dismay the rise of large bodies of discontented workmen who were moving towards a militant atheism in the course of their struggle. If the church was to retain its hold upon these people it was absolutely necessary for it to enter into the social problem and to espouse the cause of the poor. In this way not only would the Catholic Church maintain its standing, but the cause of social order would be subserved.

The Catholics were all the more ready to join forces in the criticism against business since they had always regarded modern capitalism as coincident with the Reformation which had both deprived the Catholic Church of its property and brought forth poverty and misery in its trend. Thus a Catholic Socialism was born which attempted to link the ideals of socialism with the idylls of the church.

Such people took pains to prove that the early Christians were communists and that there are no dicta of Jesus to the effect that private property is holy. They pointed out, too, that when the church possessed a good part of the land of the Country, as in the ninth century, when half the soil of Italy was in its hands, or in the eleventh century in England and in Germany—the condition of the poor of those times was much better than when the church had lost her estates.[2] They never ceased to expound the need for the termination of irresponsible liberalism and for the re-establishment of mutual duties and responsibilities.

In Germany, special conditions existed to enable the Catholics to attain a socialist position relatively early. In the first place, the Catholics there were a minority whose standing was by no means secure. Later, under the

[1] See, M. Beer: *Social Struggles and Modern Socialism*, pp. 110-111.
[2] See, F. Nitti: *Catholic Socialism*, p. 78.

pressure of Bismarck, a regular *kulturkampf* was to be inaugurated against them to wipe out their influence within the German nation. Secondly, the Catholics were strong in those sections where the discontent of 1848 had been manifest. The Church could not fail to be touched by the demands of its parishioners. Then, too, it believed that by attaching itself to the cause of the workers it would be able eventually to supplant Lutheranism and to regain Germany for itself. Thus it was that Monseignor Kettler of Mayence could agree heartily with the Lassallean movement, and write his book on the *Labor Question and Christianity.*

These actions of the Catholic Church, however, only infuriated the hardboiled Prussian reactionists who saw in the tactics of the Catholics not merely aid to the workers, but an attempt to mobilize the masses of the Catholic regions of Bavaria and the Southwest against Prussia, and to connect them with Catholic Austria. To Bismarck, the struggle against the Catholic Church was a struggle for German unity. After the defeat of Austria in 1866 it became plain to him that a vigorous war must be staged to drive the Catholics out of the country.

In the meantime, to entrench themselves further, a great many Catholic clergymen embraced Lassalle's views, and in 1869, on the eve of their being driven into illegality, they met in convention and adopted a program for Catholic social societies. At Fulda, German bishops drafted a program which declared: "It is, therefore, necessary to come to the assistance of the working-classes:—1 By providing against misery and want. 2 By providing for the rooting out of vice. 3 By providing for the improvement of the moral and intellectual condition of the working-classes. 4 By organizing labour and wages so as to improve the workman's condition (increase of wages in proportion to length of service, profit-sharing, etc.). 5 By encouraging the workman to love his home. 6 By favouring habits of thrift. 7 By promoting harmony among factory people. 8 By endeavoring to maintain cordial relations between workmen and employers. 9 By alternating industrial and agricultural labours. 10 By protecting the morals of working girls. 11 By rendering it possible for mothers of families and married women to attend to their domestic duties. 12 By promoting legislation in favor of the working-classes, hence: (a) prohibition of the labour of young children; (b) limitation of the work-hours of growing youths; (c) separation of men and women in workshops, factories, etc.; (d) forced closing of all unhealthy workshops; (e) limitation of the hours of labour; (f) assurance of the Sunday rest; (g) granting of indemnities to all workmen who, without any fault of their own, become temporarily or permanently unfit for work; (h) granting local guarantees to trades unions; (i) ensuring the observance of the social laws by means of energetic State control." [1]

[1] F. Nitti: *Catholic Socialism*, pp. 133-134.

For its inspiration, the German Catholic Socialist movement went back to the guilds of medieval times. At first it tried to organize mixed guilds of men and masters; when this failed, it organized workers only. During this period, however, its chief base was in the regions where the artisan and handicraftsman still prevailed and where their interests could be linked up nationally with the rich landowners rather than with the mass of workers in the industrial cities. Their ideal was expressed by Pope Leo XII's Encyclical, namely, that "the corporations which would be set up under the aegis of religion would aim at making all their members contented with their lot, patient in toil and disposed to lead a tranquil, happy life."

The answer of the ruling class to the social Catholic action was to attempt to win the workers themselves through their own school of State Socialism. The forerunner of this movement was Rodbertus; the practical maneuverer was Bismarck. The theoretical work was continued by Wagner and Schmoller and the Socialists of the Chair.

Rodbertus, when he became State Minister of Education, was a product of the turmoil of 1848. He intimately consorted with both Lassalle and Bismarck, and succeeded in getting them to work together. His chief idea was that, since labor created all value, the State should participate in improving the system of distribution to enable the laborers to have more. He advocated a gradual nationalization of industries whereby each worker had recourse to a given distribution point where he could use "labor notes" instead of money.[1] This was also his method to prevent revolution.

Rodbertus himself could make little impression among the workers since he enjoined them to retain capital and landownership, not to found trade unions or co-operative societies, nor to demand protective legislation. He was also opposed to the independent politics of the proletarian.[2] What Rodbertus wanted above all was to consolidate the workers with the agrarian Junker elements against the big bourgeoisie; in this, he was able to win Lassalle partially to his side.

Bismarck proceeded from the premise that the State was a Christian institution and that mutual responsibilities existed between the citizens and the State. Social duties were imposed upon the citizens of the State. The function of the State was to insure the faithful discharge of these duties. In his early youth, Bismarck had advocated the formation anew of compulsory guilds as a remedy for overproduction. Later, in the last quarter of the century, he was able to help organize guilds for artisans. It should

[1] See, K. Rodbertus: *Overproduction and Crises*, p. 70 and following (1898 Julia Franklin translation).

[2] See, M. Beer: *Social Struggles and Modern Socialism*, p. 101.

be borne in mind that only under the blows of the French Revolution in 1811 had guild privileges, together with other vestiges of serfdom, been abolished in Germany, and that even in 1848, guild remnants had played a role under the influence of Marlo.

With Bismarck, as with other Germans, what was omnipotent was not the nation nor the government or administration, but the State. This view of the Prussian ruling group can be understood readily when it is recalled into how many principalities Germany was broken up, how great was the pressure of foreign nations upon it, and how vital it was for the country's progress to establish unity. "Upon the sender of a parcel from Koenigsberg to Metz it was incumbent to calculate the freight of this consignment according to the rates of nearly fifteen hundred different tariffs." [1]

It was no wonder that the German Liberals were unpopular with their theories of laissez faire. Bismarck was never in sympathy with them and rested the might of Germany not upon manufacture but upon agriculture and the land. This was the general view of the patricians in charge of Prussia at that time.

The theories of paternalism found their practical exponent in Bismarck, who adopted such an attitude towards the workers. In dealing with the socialists, Bismarck attempted the double policy of trying to terrorize them out of existence and of invalidating their claims by establishing a more or less complete system of social reforms designed to improve the lot of the workers without giving them the possibility of controlling the State while identifying their interests with the State rather than with either the revolutionists or the Catholics.

Soon Bismarck's laws were rationalized by governmental theoreticians. These formed the school of State Socialists of the Chair, so called because it was composed predominantly of professors who held chairs in universities. The policy of these State Socialists was the enactment of a complete system of factory and general industrial laws, the creation of an adequate tariff system to protect the internal economy of Germany, the establishment of sufficient taxes to insure responsibility to social undertakings, the growth of State undertakings, especially railways, the formation of State monopolies, and an adequate colonial system.

"According to the State Socialists, all employers and workmen ought to be grouped into corporations. No one should be allowed to exercise a trade unless belonging to the corresponding guild, nor be admitted to a corporation previous to having undergone an examination to test his capacity; the admissions should never exceed the limits of number fixed by each body. The great industrial establishments should form themselves

[1] W. H. Dawson: *Bismarck and State Socialism*, p. 74.

into district or national corporations, and all the guilds of the same trade . . . ought to unite so as to form national federations.

"And many State Socialists do not stop here. They would have the State to regulate not only production but even population; they maintain that legislation, besides placing a restriction on freedom in choice of residence, prohibiting all emigration from the rural districts and the rapid population of the large cities, should also put a check on marriage among proletarians." [1]

As can be seen, the State Socialism of these worthies was really a supplementation of private capitalism with a highly developed regimen of control blending into a system of state capitalism. These people, therefore, were collectivists rather than socialists. Except for vague expressions of such men as Rodbertus, who put forth utopian schemes of labor-notes, the philosophy of the German professors was merely one of complete expansion of State control to cover all the activities of modern social life. Very often it assumed an anti-Semitic character, as did also the platform of the Catholic Socialists, particularly in Austria and south Germany. In their anti-Semitic agitation, these collectivists warned that the internationalist Jewish Rothschild family possessed one-quarter of Bohemia, or a wealth seven times that of the imperial family. It was sinister that Jews controlled one-third of Hungary and were in charge of all the important banks. Ominous, too, were the holdings of more than a million and a half Jews who resided in Austria and who had a choking control of internal economic life. Such Catholic Socialists called on the State to wrest this control from the capitalist in general and from the Jew first of all.

With the failure of the anti-Catholic laws, Catholic Socialism became accepted in Germany as an extremely important aid to social control. The Prussian-German State was eager to make this alliance with the Catholics because of the extensive growth of the Marxist movement. This was a period of vigorous organization of Catholic trade unions in competition with the Marxists, the Catholics attempting to adopt to their own interests a number of labor theories. They advanced the opinion that their unions could gradually become organs of labor legislation and that the State would entrust them with the discharge of such functions because of their special qualities. They promised that all questions affecting the interests of a trade,—hours of labor, Sunday observance, apprenticeship, sanitary conditions of the workshops, the labor of women and children, and the rate of wages paid,—instead of being regulated as they then were by brutal, inflexible laws seldom adaptable to every individual case, should henceforth be settled by the union, and the rules of the union would be incumbent upon all the members of the trade or profession, both masters and men.

[1] F. Nitti: *Catholic Socialism*, p 173.

In France, the Social Catholic movement developed at the same time. At first the question had to be settled within the Catholic Church whether it should favor democracy or not, the affirmative being taken by De Tocqueville and Lamennais. Since the democratic struggles in the early days of the nineteenth century were associated with acts of revolution, the Pope in 1832 took occasion to write against this view, "denying that freedom of conscience and liberty of the press were unqualified rights, and reproving these who incited peoples to revolt against their princes." [1] This stand against democracy as a political instrument by the church was reinforced after the revolution of 1848 had culminated in the empire of Napoleon III, who strongly favored the Catholic Church. However, the democratic tendency more or less persisted, with the pioneers of the social Catholics maintaining five principles, namely: opposition to the Liberal economists, an appeal to Christian morals of charity, faith in labor organizations adapted to the guild system, minimum wage for all, and social legislation.

The position of French labor in those days can be gauged by the number of arrests that occurred for unionization. Between 1852 and 1860 no less than seven hundred and twenty-eight coalition cases came before the courts in which over three thousand and eight hundred men were punished.[2] In 1864 the law regarding coalitions was modified but, even so, almost a thousand persons were arrested and nine hundred fined or jailed for strikes between 1864 and 1870. There also existed the infamous law of *livret* (passport or certificate), which had been in force during the eighteenth century and re-enforced under the First Consulate. Under this law, which was not abolished until 1890, "Employers were forbidden to engage a worker who did not produce the *livret* stating that he had discharged his debts and obligations toward his former master. It meant that workers who had fallen into debt with their former employers were chained to their jobs and that employers could take advantage of the workers' situation to lower wages." [3]

After the Paris Commune, the Church, so as to become a counterweight to the socialists, was forced to change its position regarding democracy and the necessity of social reform. In 1872, workingmen's clubs were started by Count Albert De Mun, which in 1884 had fifty thousand members and by 1900 had risen to sixty thousand. De Mun openly called himself a soldier of the "counter-revolution," adopting the extremely menacing slogan, "Workers, you must Christians be!" [4] When elected Deputy in parliament, De Mun took a position with the extreme Right.

From the very beginning, the social Catholic movement was linked up

[1] P. T. Moon, *The Labor Problem and the Social Catholic Movement in France*, p. 33.
[2] See, S. Bernstein: *The Beginnings of Marxian Socialism in France*, p. 2.
[3] The same, p. 189.
[4] The same, pp. 85-86.

with monarchical ideals. The Third French Republic, in order to maintain its control over education and its political integrity, was forced in 1877-78 to engage in a sharp struggle against the Catholic clergy. The efforts of the social Catholic movement were therefore an attempt on the part of the church to obtain a mass base for a counter-attack against the republic. De Mun, claiming that the French Revolutionary Law of 1791 forbidding all association and all organization of labor was responsible for social disorder, constantly tried to make it appear as though the bourgeois republicans were breeders of revolution while the monarchy favored social reform. This view was abetted by the legitimist pretender to the throne, the Count de Chambord, who was distinctly aware of the value of a social program as a political asset, and who tried to portray the monarchy as the historic protector of the right to organize.

De Mun was strongly for the limitation of competition, for association of common interests, for imposing upon the emperor the duties of patronage, for the uplift of labor and the conditions of the laborer. Against Marxism, the social Catholics were active in promoting Catholic trade unionism and favorable legislation against child labor.[1] They aimed at the protection of women from injurious industrial exploitation, the establishment of social insurance, and similar matters. In France, the social Catholics helped to enact the Law of 1884, which has been called the Charter of French Trade Unionism. Just as in Germany a Catholic or "Center Party" was organized, so the social Catholics in France were embodied in the *"Action Liberale Populaire."*

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the social Catholic movement was able to claim considerable successes for its efforts, especially in building up affiliated unions. In Germany, the Catholic unions, with the aid of the State, had a membership of over a million, even after the war. In Italy, the Catholic Italian Federation of Workers also was of considerable size.

The principles of the Catholic union were very different than those of the free trade union movement. The latter was Marxist, and preached the need of class struggle. The Christian and Catholic trade unions believed that work was a joy. Classes were to be organized according to their occupations. Each class was to know its limitations and to have mutual responsibilities. The State must help the poor with reforms and must be charitable like the church. The slogan was "Live and let live." The Catholic and Christian unions did not believe in the strike, but were an agency for class collaboration, advocating pacifist persuasion and religious nonresistance. By means of faith and prayer, both employer and worker, the

[1] This has not been the position of the Catholic Church in the United States, however, where it has been a principled opponent to legislation prohibiting child labor.

lion and the lamb, could lie down side by side. Thus would the golden rule of "Peace on earth and good-will to men" be realized.

In Italy especially the Catholic unions were able to demonstrate their value to the employers in the struggle against revolution through the activity of the Italian Confederation of Workers. This organization was part of a general social Catholic network which derived its sanction from the well known encyclical *Rerum Novarum* ("On the Condition of Labor") of Pope Leo XIII, issued in 1891. This encyclical maintained the right of property, and consequently rejected socialism, but prescribed for the various social classes reciprocal duties, with the object of effectively and permanently harmonizing their relations.[1]

The Catholic Church organized the syndicalist movement centered in the Italian Confederation of Workers, to which was affiliated the National Syndicates or Federations, and afterwards the Local Unions of Labor. All of these organizations differed from regular unions in that they rejected the principle of uncompromising struggle and recognized and utilized moral factors derived from Christianity. They advocated the effective sharing by the workers of the profits in the management and in the property of the undertaking.

"Following this principle, it has tended also to promote Parliamentary Reform, with the object of having in the Senate a technical organ elected by the occupational associations. Catholic Syndicalism further aimed at attaining internationalism which from the field of labour should extend to the political field through disarmament, international arbitration, etc." [2] This Catholic group of unions was closely connected with the Popular Party which arose in 1919 to fight the revolution, and was an extremely reactionary organization.

No sooner did the revolutionary movement develop sharply in Italy than there was to be seen an enormous increase in the number of Catholic unions, while the employers mobilized their ranks to struggle against the rule of the workers. The membership of the Italian Confederation of Workers jumped from two hundred thousand in 1919 to a million and a quarter in 1920.

This movement, however, soon receded. The Catholic unions were not capable of prevailing, although it is true that the Catholic unions in Italy well prepared the way for the fascist unions which were to follow.

First of all, the fight was no longer on the economic front, but was a matter of who was to rule the country. Secondly, the ideology of Christian

[1] More recently there has been added another encyclical along the same line, the *Quadregesimo Anno* ("Reconstructing the Social Order"), May, 1931.

[2] F. Pitigliani: *The Italian Corporative State*, p. 10.

Socialism rendered it unfit to meet the violent problems of the hour. Once the fascists took power, they built their own organizations, and the special Catholic unions were forced to disappear, shrinking to one hundred and eighty thousand members in 1925 and further downward until they are practically non-existent today.

Brutal fascist unions and humanitarian guild unions were blood brothers in their undying hatred of Marxism and the class struggle, and in their support of capitalist property and class collaboration. If, then, we ask why the Catholic unions had to be reformed into fascist organizations, we must consider the different character of the epochs which necessitated these two groups. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Marxism was to be fought by means of social reforms; against the theory of revolution by violence there was to be inculcated the doctrine of peaceful persuasion. The Catholic Church was an excellent instrument for this propaganda, since for centuries it had constantly told the poor to "turn the other cheek" and to "render unto Caesar what was Caesar's." Thus Christian Socialism was useful in demoralizing the ranks of the workers and depriving them of militancy. After the World War, however, a different task confronted the employers. Platitudinous discussion had to give way to the methods of castor oil, bayonet, and terror. The Catholic Church gladly turned over its organizations to the fascists for this new purpose, so that a more appropriate program could be worked out in the light of the exigencies of the times.

4

In England, too, about the middle of the nineteenth century, the Catholics developed a social action movement, under the leadership of Bishop Manning. This was, of course, supplementary to the Protestant Christian Socialism of Maurice and Kingsley, and was created from the same milieu.

Bishop Manning pretended to be greatly contemptuous of the "talking mill" at Westminster and declared his politics were social politics. Labor was the cause of wealth and was a state of dignity. As such, labor was entitled not only to the rights of property but also to the rights of liberty and the right to protect itself. Manning recognized the right to strike, "as frequently the only weapon in the hands of the workers strong enough to rebuke the despotism of capital." [1]

The outbursts of Manning were more radical than those of the Catholics in Europe. The Catholic Church in Great Britain was such an insignificant minority that it had to use more radical phrases to win popularity. Thus Manning talked of the right to strike, a factor carefully denounced in the Catholic circles on the Continent. Also, in England the

[1] G. P. McEntee: *The Social Catholic Movement in Great Britain*, p. 25.

strike was far removed from revolution, while on the Continent strikes too often were connected with threats against the State, which itself might be Catholic. Manning had not the identical concern in the protection of the anti-Catholic State in Great Britain that the Catholics had in Europe.

The social Catholic movement did not develop strongly in England, not only because it could not win the sympathy of the ruling groups who were strongly dominated by Liberalism and did not believe revolution was near, but because, on the other hand, the social Catholics could not become popular with the British workers. In recent years, the Catholic Social Guild did its utmost to break the 1926 general strike of British labor.

Connected with the theories of the social Catholic movement was the Guild Socialist grouping that arose in Great Britain. The extreme Right Wing of this hodge-podge group was represented by A. J. Penty, a disciple of the Social Catholics.

To Penty, the Middle ages was one of real enlightenment; he actually believed society could and should revert to and restore those model times.[1] The materialist conception was one-sided, and the theory of class war utterly false. Christianity would restore the sense of brotherhood and bring back the guilds, each with its "just price." The great evil of mankind was capitalism. By a return to the Catholic Church and to the medieval view of reciprocal rights and duties, by renouncing modern intellectualism, by concentrating on the revival of a prosperous peasantry, England would be restored to her former virility.

Industrialism had brought in a standard of quantity. Penty wanted to return to the standard of quality.[2] By no means did the present represent any progress over the past. We must return again to a program based on the law of nature and justice, with its just and fixed price and elimination of usury. We must fuse again spirit and matter, and bring the kingdom of heaven to earth. The great question of the day was ". . . how to make Christians understand what is true in socialism, and socialists to understand the truth of Christianity." [3] This was the task of the Guild Socialists. There could be no doubt that the struggles of the future would be between Marx and the guilds.[4]

According to Penty, "Materialist communism is a contradiction in terms. Communism is a spiritual idea. It is only possible with people who put spiritual things first." [5] And against the theory of bolshevism, which idolizes machinery and transforms a nation into a mechanism of robots, Penty would take us back to the old days of crafts and handicrafts. His program

[1] A. J. Penty: *A Guildsman's Interpretation of History*, p. 298 and following.
[2] A. J. Penty: *Means and Ends*, pp. 82-83.
[3] A. J. Penty: *Towards a Christian Sociology*, p. 18.
[4] A. J. Penty: *Guilds and the Social Crisis*, p. 77.
[5] A. J. Penty: *Communism and the Alternative*, p. 50.

called for protection of industry, national self-sufficiency, a regulated industry, and the revival of agriculture. Especially this last was important, since if England was to produce its own food supply, it would not need such a big navy; the present navy was proof that free trade was not the support of pacifism, but led to war.

The only alternative to Marxism was a return to the principles of Christianity. Human nature must be recognized for what it is, the eternity of private property must be respected, self-interest must be accepted as a fact, but society must limit it. This was the principle of the guilds in the Middle Ages, when prices and wages were fixed and property more evenly distributed.

The reactionary plans of these guild socialists can be seen in Penty's program which called for a restriction of the use of machinery where it conflicted with the needs of personality. The application of machinery which could create economic disorder by unemployment should be prevented as conflicting with the claims of the crafts and arts. No overproduction should be tolerated. England should return to the theory of the small workshop.[1]

In their insistence on the organization of guilds to take in all employees, and in their idea of social responsibility and regulation, the guild socialists showed how closely they stemmed from the romantic feudalist school of Carlyle. At the same time, in their demands for a self-sufficient nation and empire, they easily became the tools of modern imperialist industry. As the Guild Socialist movement died out, its theories were taken over partially by the fascists, with the primary difference that, whereas, as was usual for the reactionists before the war, the guildsmen had appealed for peaceful methods, the fascists envisaged the realization of guilds through violence.

One of the contributions of the guild socialists was to insist upon the abolition of the territorial parliament and the establishment of a State represented by occupations organized in guilds and corporations. By the Right Wing this theory was interpreted similarly to the fascist practice. To the Left Wing, however, it appeared as a policy more revolutionary than that of the other socialists, since it closely resembled "self-government in industry." The Left Wing was particularly active in the trade union movement, but soon became split on the question of the future relationship of the workers' organizations to the State.

Hobson, one of the Left Wing leaders, held to the view that the State was to hold the final authority over industrial affairs and would be the owner of the tools of production, handing them over to the guilds as

[1] See A. J. Penty: *Communism and the Alternative*, p. 121 and following.

trustees, but remaining the final court of appeal. The State would retain the power to tax. This theory was opposed to the guild-commune theory of Cole, who denied sovereignty to the State and would establish local and regional communes under the workers control.

In this respect, Cole posed as a harbinger for the British trade union movement which, immediately following the war, through the Miners Federation of Great Britain, had advanced a demand for the creation of a Miners' Council to be composed half of workers' organizations and half of the capitalist groups which controlled mining, but had said nothing about nationalization of the mines. In 1925 the British Labor Party made a similar proposal to the Samuel Commission, with the difference, however, that the members of the Miners' Council were to be individuals rather than delegates from organizations. Cole interpreted these actions to mean that modern socialists had abandoned their previous advocacy of direct government ownership and were stressing only workers' control, and thus were becoming more in harmony with the basic program of this Wing of the guild socialists.

The Cole group of guild socialists had steadfastly countered the collectivism of those who demanded that industries should be administered by civil service and should be nationalized. Instead, Cole called for self-government in industry and for an industrial government to be based on the direct representation of the workers. The guild socialist advocated "that the State should acquire the ownership of industry, but should hand over its administration, under a charter, to a Guild composed of the whole body of workers engaged in it." [1]

Here, then, was a modern question which had been opened up by the guild socialists: Should the workers of each particular industry be the ones to administer that industry, or should the State as a whole take charge? The decentralized system proposed by Cole was not far from that advocated by the communist anarchists of Italy. On the other hand, the whole socialist movement previously had urged the nationalization of industry, the workers to control it through their control of the State. When revolution broke out in Russia, the 1920 conference of the guild socialists welcomed the soviet system, but would not bind themselves to the Russian formulas. The soviet system, indeed, was a distinct repudiation of the idea that each set of workers should control their own factory and their own industry. The workers controlled all through their State.

In their controversies with the opportunist socialists who called for nationalization of industry, however, it cannot be said that the guild socialists were less correct than the others. It is true that the nationalization of industry is the development of State capitalism, which in turn brings all

[1] G. D. H. Cole: *Modern Theories and Forms of Industrial Organization*, p. 66.

the contradictions of society to a head and paves the way for a new social order. But it is extremely questionable whether it is the function of the socialists to bolster up the authority of the capitalist State by advocating today such measures as nationalization of industry, even though the socialists add the additional demand of "workers' control" or "democratic management." Those very socialists who have so warmly advocated the nationalization of industry invariably have revealed themselves as counter-revolutionists in the period of active labor struggle. Especially opportunist was the joining of the idea of nationalization to the belief in the perpetuation of the parliamentary State as the finest expression of pure democracy.

The Left Wing guild socialists also advocated the reorganization of unions on an industrial basis, and the abolition of craft unionism. While they would not indorse the militancy of the shop-steward movement that arose after the war, they did not disapprove of that form of organization. The workers must found their own unions for the control of industry and the establishment of industrial democracy. However, Cole did not believe in direct action, while Hobson wanted to buy out capitalism.

On the whole, the literary guildsmen of the Left Wing who found it so convenient to unite with the Catholic reactionists of the Penty school, played a very slight part in influencing the labor movement. After the war their views died to a whisper.

II. FASCISM ARRIVES

XXVII. THE END OF REFORM

I

THE spread of fascism is an exquisite demonstration that the era of reform has come to an end, and has given way to an age of punishment. The punishment is complete and all-embracing. The population is thrown into the dungeon of medieval practice. It is compelled by methods of the Inquisition to swear to superstitious creeds, and mystic vagaries, and utopian schema. Like a scorpion which strikes its own head with its tail, humanity is being knocked senseless by the physical tortures meted out to it by the rotting dregs and social scum fascism raises to power. The *déclassés* are taking their revenge on the classes. The narcotic, the homo-sexual, the paranoaic, the sadist, the syphilitic, are enthroned in power. Fascism is not genius become insane but mediocrity become mad.

In the nineteenth century, capitalism had adopted a philosophy of Meliorism, of the world's becoming better and better day by day, and had reinforced this philosophy with a system of social reforms to improve the lot of the masses and to wean them from revolution. The drain of reform upon the State was not proportionately costly in a period of growing markets. Today the situation has completely changed; capitalism is no longer on the rise, but is declining in a precipitous spiral. The costs of social insurance and reform have become infinitely enlarged, so much so that, unless they are reduced or abolished, the entire system is threatened with bankruptcy. For this reason the socialist parties are dismissed with violence by the propertied rulers; not because the socialist parties advocate revolution or will not defend capitalism—the contrary has been amply proven—but because the cost of maintaining the socialists is bringing bankruptcy and revolution in its train.

Paradoxically, the socialists win their point only to lose it. They had declared that gradually, by a series of reforms, the capitalist State could be transformed into socialism. The effect of these series of reforms is indeed as serious as the socialists visioned, but in a way entirely unanticipated by them. Precisely the accumulation of these secondary reforms has so induced the breakdown of the financial structure of the capitalist system as to lead towards socialism, not peacefully and gradually, but through revolution. Far from reform's having staved off revolution, social reform only has weakened the ruling class and strengthened the workers. When the

benefits of the social reforms no longer can be paid out to the masses habituated to them, resentment becomes sharper, revolution nearer.

The mere existence of world wars, revolutions, and perpetual turmoil proves that capitalism has reached the final stage of its existence; its constructive abilities have been superseded by destruction. Today capitalism no longer can support even social reforms. The ruling group no longer can harmonize class interests by means of concessions and bribes, but is forced to resort to crushing the workers by open violence. From Meliorism, the bourgeoisie embraces anti-reform; or, to put it another way, finding itself on the verge of bankruptcy and death, capitalism undertakes its own reforms under the rubric of fascism. Fascism is the re-forming of the capitalist system so as to permit the beneficiaries to profit a bit longer. Frightened by the handwriting on the wall, the rulers now begin to comprehend that reform, instead of preventing revolution, has compelled revolution; that is to say, evolution does not preclude revolution, but rather fosters it.

It would seem that the socialists at least would struggle to maintain their social reforms, but this is to reckon without their servility. Once the intimate connection between reform and revolution clearly is understood, the socialists, in order to prevent revolution, are quite prepared to give up the fight for reforms. Thus the Socialist Party in Germany could tell the workers to vote for Hindenburg in order to check Hitler, although the vote for Hindenburg was not only an abandonment of the demand for social reform, but actually brought in Hitler. Thus the socialists, in giving up the struggle for social reform, become transformed into mere bourgeois Radicals.

In this period, too, there is exposed the utter ridiculousness of those sectarian revolutionists who refused to participate in immediate struggles of the masses for reform on the ground that this would divert them from the path of revolution. Today these day-to-day struggles have become increasingly revolutionary in portent and are so understood both by the capitalists and by the workers. The fascists can not permit even minor struggles to appear in the social system.

Nor is there any further need for the Blanquist philosophy which calls for a conspiratorial coup d'état of the few in the present period when the masses as a whole are ripe for struggle, and the inevitable direction of that struggle must be the seizure of State power.

History has made the views of both the opportunist Right and the sectarian Left a laughing matter. What was tragic has become comic. In this happy way, mankind breaks from the past and shows it is ready for the new problems.

Precisely for the reason that the day for social reform, for social Liberalism and social democracy has passed, revolutionists must participate more than ever in the struggle for reform; not because reform can be granted to block the revolution of the masses, but, on the contrary, because it cannot be granted, because capitalism more and more becomes anti-reform, anti-humanitarian, anti-social.

In the struggle for the reform which capitalism cannot sustain, the revolution is won. In the battle for a Constituent Assembly, the Russian masses give all power to the soviets—and then the Constituent Assembly is no longer needed.

Among the revolutionists in the nineteenth century, the period of reform always was conceived as separate from that of revolution. Democracy was pictured as distinct from the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Today, these two periods intertwine, are the immediate cause and effect, means and end of each other. The United States, for instance, before it has wholly emerged into its period of social reform, must already enter its period of revolution.

As the fascists drive the reformist socialists out of power, some of the latter try to fight back, belatedly believing that they can continue to struggle for reform without going the way of revolution.[1] These socialists form a new school of Centrists comically holding on to old methods, blind to the lessons of the new times.

In the nineteenth century, the struggle for social reforms was placed in the realm of "tactics" by the old socialists, while at the same time, tactics and program were kept entirely divorced each from the other. Today, the tactics must be connected intimately with the program, and the revolutionist must so work in the immediate field of tactical reform as to be able to seize that link in the chain of events which can move the whole forward and realize his program.

As the socialists completely disintegrate even as a reformist body, and become mere liberals, the communists also capitulate in the struggle against fascism and degenerate into mere social reformists. The victory of fascism moves every organized element among the workers backward one degree. Left Wing communists become Right Wing communists; communists become socialists; socialists become laborites; laborites become liberals; liberals turn to fascism.

What eliminates the socialist movement even as a counter-revolutionary force becomes fatal to the reformist trade unions as well. As in the case of the socialists, it is not that the trade union leadership does not wish to remain the saviour of capitalist society; it is rather that the capitalists

[1] This is the position of the Spanish Socialists today.

find these saviours too costly and whip them out of office, to substitute their own dependable management.

In the nineteenth century, trade unions were permitted as a part of the functioning of democracy and social reform. "Competitive and democratic capitalism also had room for a free labor movement. In fact, though developing as a reaction and protest against capitalism, the labor movement was itself part of the capitalistic system. A capitalism which was allied with liberalism and democracy needed a certain degree of opposition for its functioning. For over a hundred years this fact was the basis of a socio-political system which allowed opposition as a legal and constructive factor in its organization. The political party, the trade union, the co-operative movement, the socialist movement, were all part of a dynamic system which predicated itself upon the idea of progress as a continuous movement toward higher political forms and higher standards of living and which allowed a certain degree of questioning of its own foundations and a certain degree of modification in its component institutions.

"The present trends in economics and politics are seemingly in the opposite direction. . . . Politically, the development of social groups with conflicting interests free to carry on their struggles unhindered is likely to result in a continued reaction against representative democracy and in a tendency toward executive forms of government for the purpose of overcoming friction and making speedy action possible." [1]

Today the organization of trade unions cannot remain part of a general gradual scheme of reform. The employers must fight trade unionism every inch of the way. The workers to be effective must organize in industrial unions nationally, must carry on general strikes against the State, must take in the masses of unskilled who have now become matured enough to understand their interests and their revolutionary destiny. A hundred years ago the Liberal elements could organize trade unions; today Liberalism has passed out; it could not organize effective unions if it wanted.

This is true even in the United States. Should the workers try to build national militant industrial unions in the present period, so great would be the resistance of the employers, so severe would be the action of the government that labor would be compelled to take over the power of the State itself. Just as the struggle for unemployment insurance must develop into the struggle for workers' control over production, just as generally the struggle for reform leads them to revolution, so must the struggle for unionism march them to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

In other words, we may say that the United States is bound to skip the whole period of social reform. The mobilization of classes will lead to the violent revolutionary struggle; this is how the law of combined develop

[1] L. L. Lorwin: *The American Federation of Labor*, pp. 461-462.

ment works out in the United States. For this reason, the violent social conflicts that take place in the United States appear, not as open class struggles of a political nature, but as battles to prevent the birth of class formations. Whereas in Europe the fight rages between classes, in America class war has been waged to prevent the open formation of class alignments or of class ideology. Hence the fierce struggle in the United States to prevent the formation of trade unions.

Not that the employers of this country cannot afford to do what the employers in Europe found profitable. The capitalists of America are far more thoroughly organized and far too powerfully entrenched not to be able to yield the few concessions demanded of them by trade unions. If, then, the employers are so determined in their open shop campaigns to prevent the rise of unionism, it is because, interpreting the experiences of their brethren in Europe, they understand full well the connection of reform to revolution, of unions to the class struggle. The class struggle must fight to be born; the fiercest battle is in the prenatal period! The way to prevent the workers from entering into the political sphere, the way to stop them from organizing as a class, is to crush them even when they fight on the economic sphere in the form of trade unions. The way to prevent revolution is not to permit the workers to wrest any reforms whatsoever.

A good illustration of this law of combined development in the United States can be found in the struggle of the coal miners immediately after the War. In West Virginia, the coal operators refused to allow any union organizer to come into Logan County to organize a local of the United Mine Workers. In order to present their demands for this petty reform, namely, the right to organize members into the conservative A. F. of L., the miners were compelled to marshal a veritable army of over five thousand men with arms in their hands. Even then they were unable to win their point.

At the border of Logan County they were met, not only by a legion of private bullies, gunmen, and detectives hired by the companies, not only by the National Guard, the State Militia, and sheriffs' deputies of the county and the State, but by the United States Army as well. This army informed the miners that unless they dispersed immediately they would be considered as engaging in rebellion against the republic. The miners hastily broke ranks and dispersed; they were unable to accomplish even the miserable reform of obtaining the abstract right of free speech and assemblage in one county of the Union.

Under such circumstances, which must become more typical as capitalism grows more desperate, it is impossible to suppose that the Liberal busi-

ness-minded labor bureaucrats of the A. F. of L. could possibly carry out the task of organizing the thirty-six million unorganized workers in the United States today. To imagine their entering the turpentine camps of the South, agitating the agricultural laborers in the cotton fields, winning the Negro toilers, or organizing militant unions without the sharpest possible kind of struggle, is to believe in miracles. The same situation prevails in the trustified industries. To meet the terrific obstacles which the employers place in the way of the organization of labor, there must be at the head of the organized movement not the soft, fat-bellied, highly-paid, specially privileged labor business man, but rather the tried and tested revolutionary fighters, men who are willing daily to risk death or lynching. It would be necessary to have a highly co-ordinated nationally organized staff that could throw the support of all labor behind this task of organizing the workers. There would also be necessary a determination on the part of the labor movement to engage in the most militant general strike movement, even to the point of taking control over the factories, to support this kind of campaign. To accomplish these reforms, it would soon become apparent that the workers themselves would have to take over the government.

American labor will not endure a long process of laborism, as in England. It should be borne in mind that the chief battles between capital and labor have been, not in the political, but in the economic field. Here is the traditional battle-ground for physical struggle. Economic battles in America have been as bloody and brutal as political demonstrations in Europe. The worker has traditionally met his employer openly, face to face.

For this reason, the economic struggle in America can quickly and directly become a struggle for power, the workers not being concerned primarily with parliamentary activity, rule of the Supreme Court, suffrage rights, etc. Hence, too, the employers fear bitterly the economic struggle, and strive desperately to prevent the organization of the masses of workers on the economic field. This is another way of saying that once the American workers are able to comprehend the A B C of the class struggle, they will quickly learn the X Y Z, and realize the necessity of taking over the whole system for themselves.

Added to this is the fact that the employers in this country have neither the standing nor the stability of the ruling classes of Europe. Everyone is thoroughly acquainted with the despicable and unscrupulous methods by which American business tycoons have amassed their wealth and obtained their power. It is no accident that they hold that power only through the violence of their large private armies and that there is scarcely any difference between the ruthless activities of so-called legitimate big business and the criminal operations of the racketeer.

From all of these considerations we must draw the conclusion that the chief struggle in the United States will include the question of trade union organization. From this two further corollaries arise. on the one hand is the law that no one can be considered a revolutionist who does not engage in the struggle of the unorganized, the success of which depends upon him alone, on the other hand lies the comprehension that the A F. of L never can organize large masses of unskilled Either the revolutionary forces will achieve such organization, or the masses will not be organized in labor unions at all—or they will be organized only in company unions or com pulsory fascist organizations

This struggle to prevent the open formation of class alignments in the United States explains in part the numerous lynchings of Negroes The philosophy of America is to tolerate no hard and fast caste lines. Such rigidity would imply that America is as decadent as Europe Yet the American Negro is shut out precisely by such lines Marked by the color of his skin, he cannot escape Nor can it be denied that the Negro represents labor and practically only labor Thus, the caste formations that separate the Negro from the rest of the population are formations that separate labor from others, but this is labor in an unconscious form The fight against labor is here seen as a struggle against the Negro and is put on a chauvinist basis

This obscures the class character of the lynching, since on the surface there is no sign that labor is being lynched when the Negro is burned at the stake or mutilated before hanging On the other hand, the unconscious is the only form that the class struggle can take in America Hatred of the Negro is the hatred that the ruling group feels against any element that maintains a group cohesiveness and that stands as the living refutation of America's credo of individualism and equal opportunity for all The Negro is lynched really because he is the black foreshadower of the awful class formations and struggles that are to come in America. The torture of the Negro is a warning to all labor of what will happen to it in the South or elsewhere should it dare to become organized in rigid class lines, denying the basic tenets of bourgeois Americanism

2

Under the conditions generated by capitalism, such intense contradic tions have developed as to make the whole epoch of imperialism one of wars and revolutions. With the World War and the revolutionary strife that followed in its wake, the era of imperialism entered a new stage qualitatively different from the previous one, 1900-1914. Distinctive of this new phase, manifesting th- imperialism has now entered definitely upon

its period of decline, are the following situations: First, the proletarian revolution becomes victorious in the Soviet Union and snatches away one-sixth of the territory of the globe from the capitalist system. Second, no matter how much capitalism tries, it cannot regain its pre-war stability; its disintegration cannot be halted. All the attempts at stabilization become desperate efforts merely to slacken the tempo of the break-down and of the international revolution. During all this time, revolutionary outbreaks of various degrees constantly occur in all parts of the world, some being temporarily liquidated, others remaining festering sores, symptoms of the all-consuming fever within, with new ones erupting. After the first revolutionary wave subsides, with the defeat in Germany in 1923, revolutionary situations break out in Bulgaria and Estonia in 1924, in China 1925-27, in England 1926, in Austria 1927, in India, China, Indo-China, Spain 1930, in Cuba 1933, in Austria, Germany, France, etc., etc.

For such revolutionary situations to appear there had to be certain objective changes in the internal relations of capitalist countries. First of all, the ranks of the bourgeoisie and ruling groups generally had to be broken and their power lessened. Secondly, the sufferings of the masses had to become unbearably intense, leading to an unusually great activity of the people. For these factors to mature into actual insurrections there had to be added a subjective element, the ability of the revolutionary classes to carry out mass action strong enough to break or to undermine the old government. This ability would have to be crystallized into the organization of communist parties.

The rise of the communist soviets in Russia made international imperialism bend every effort to drown them in blood and to check their extension. This it was not able to do, the battle ending in a draw. The foreign capitalists failed to overthrow the soviets; the communist forces were unable to win in any territory except that which had been dominated formerly by the Czar. As this territory represented only 4 per cent of world economy, its loss to the capitalist markets was not great enough to produce in the entire capitalist world immediate death convulsions.

The basic causes for the failure of capitalism to overthrow the soviets were: First, the enormous and inaccessible territory of the country and its economic self-sufficiency as far as food was concerned. Second, the numerical and moral strength of the population led by an exceedingly toughened Communist Party. Third, the revolution having broken out in the midst of a World War, the international capitalists were unable to unite their forces in time. They had to wait a whole year until the termination of the War, before they could move against the communists. This fact provided the latter with an invaluable breathing space. Further, by the time the World War was ended, the international bourgeoisie had become extremely

weak, not only because of its exhaustion from war, but because of the revolutionary movements of the masses, who, threatening revolution at home and refusing to fight the soviets, manifested considerable international working class solidarity.

As the capitalists thus exposed their inherent weakness and failed to crush the Soviet Union, in turn the communism represented by Russian Bolshevism achieved a rapid growth all over the world, stimulating and organizing revolutionary movements everywhere, and threatening to destroy capitalism in countries other than Russia.

The workers' republic was unable to defeat the capitalists internationally because, first, the United States lent its whole might to strengthen and rehabilitate the European bourgeoisie, and, secondly, the communist movement was still too weak to support Russia by seizing and holding power elsewhere. Russia herself was exhausted. This prevented the Russian communists from routing the Polish army and joining hands with the German revolutionists. The Soviets were thrown back at the gates of Warsaw.

Fascism was the direct reaction to this internationalist communist movement. Historically, fascism appeared as a dominant movement in those countries which, next to the Soviet Union, were the weakest links in the imperialist chain which the masses were breaking. Fascism is thus a post-war movement basically directed against communism and formed by the bourgeoisie to liquidate the proletarian revolution threatening its power.

For fascism to take hold in a country, the internal relation of classes must show the following characteristics: first, a breakdown and instability of capitalist relationships; second, a considerable number of declassed social elements such as ex-soldiers and officers; third, a pauperization of the city middle class and professional elements; fourth, a deep crisis among the peasantry; fifth, and most important, a proletarian movement threatening to seize and to hold State power.

Fascism first arose in countries predominantly agrarian, but also containing a well developed industry and commerce. The highest expression of this type of fascism has occurred in Italy, although foreshadowings of the Italian movement could be seen in semi-fascist Poland under Pilsudski, and in Hungary under Horthy. From the victory of National Socialism in Germany and its great growth in the major industrial countries of the world, however, it is plain that fascism has moved from the secondary to the primary countries, from the limbs and periphery to the heart and center of European capitalism. Seemingly able to suppress the threat to communism, fascism has fashioned only new crises and has sharpened all antagonisms to monstrous proportions paving the way for new revolutions in the future.

Fascism is the open Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie with the aid of the petty bourgeoisie against the workers. It comes at a time when capitalism has no further use for classical parliamentarism and when democracy as a bourgeois class state has become thoroughly exposed to the masses. Fascism boldly replaces the democratic shibboleths of liberty, equality, and fraternity, with slogans of responsibility, hierarchy, discipline. For the peaceful and legal action of the majority as acclaimed by liberalism, fascism substitutes the direct violence of the minority.

In wiping out the proletarian and all other dissident parties, fascism unites all the elements of the bourgeoisie under one flag. The economic possibility of such a fusion is inherent in the domination of all competition by the Big Business monopolist. The supersedure of entrepreneur capital by interest-bearing capital co-ordinated by the monopolist financier is the decisive factor to whip all propertied classes into line. As the trust wipes out competition in economics, their Party of Fascists attempts to do likewise in politics.

The desperate crisis within the ruling class and the prime necessity for taking advantage of the breathing space afforded it by the blunders of the proletariat also play their part in the formation of fascism. Fascism comes to power not only through the desperation of the bourgeoisie, but also because of the inadequate and muddled attempts of the working class. Fascism is the punishment the workers must suffer for their opportunist sins. As the communists sow confusion and the employers determinedly end all their conflicting interests temporarily to unite against the proletarian enemy, the layers of the petty bourgeoisie which support that side which is at the moment the strongest, swing to fascism and decide the issue.

Fascism, unable to return to the bankruptcy of private industry, accelerates that growth of State capitalism which had demonstrated its efficiency especially during the war. Once established, the trend towards the erection of public property and State interests grew extensively in all countries. The war had emphasized the complete inadequacy of private industry. Fascism violently continues the development of corporate and State capitalism, creating its own governmental forms.

The era of competition, with its many oppositions, independent parties, and everlasting debates, could tolerate a democratic system of checks and balances. Parliament was a convenient mechanism by which competitive industry could discover, without redress to civil war and within the framework of law and order, just what were the relations of forces, and which group most fundamentally represented the interests of the nation and therefore should be given a leading role. In America in the period before the Civil War, so nearly matched were the opposing forces, since the slave and

free states had an equal representation in the Senate, that debate and oratory developed to an exceedingly fine point.

With the rise of monopoly capitalism, which had oppressed many petty industrialists and forced them with its heavy hand to abide by the regulations laid down by the trust, parliament no longer was a necessary mechanism. A mutual tolerance of many parties had lost its progressive role. Tolerance is possible only when the State is stable; it is impossible when the breakdown is near, and the old order must fight for its life. Those in control of Big Business, who dominate in the economic field and who surreptitiously control the political machinery of democracy, cannot but mock and deride the "talking shop" parliament with its interminable gab-fest and bombast.

In each country, fascism takes on particular colorations to fit the national needs of the capitalists. The Italians popularize their State as corporative, the Germans as totalitarian; Italy uses the term "Fascism," Germany "National Socialism"; the former stresses "empire," the latter "race"; in the South there is little anti-Semitism; in the North it is extremely marked; Italy praises finance capital, Germany flays the usurer; Italy is Catholic, Germany abhors Catholicism; all these differences are but due to the differing basic needs of each nationalist capitalist group. Similarly with the Austrian fascist movement, torn between the aims of the German and those of the Italian, and with the British fascist movement, which tries to synthesize the features of both Italian and German fascism and to utilize their experiences.

Despite these differences, all of the fascisms now in power are similar in that they have built up a complete theory of the nationalization of capital and of the dictatorial corporate or totalitarian State. They all stress the significant place of religion in State and social life. They have established compulsory class collaboration with the prohibition of strikes, the murder of militant workers, and the annihilation of all workers' organizations.

The sectarian and opportunist socialists of the Second International could not but play into the hands of the fascists who, in many cases, adopted parts of their programs to destroy the labor organizations. As the movements of the skilled workers turned into counter-revolutionary channels, it was seen that fascism, on the one side, and socialism (and syndicalism), on the other side, were but Right and Left arms of the same capitalist trunk.

Reformist social-democracy prepared the ground for and abetted fascism in innumerable ways. The socialists' attacks on Soviet Russia and on communism, their practices of class collaboration, their nationalism, their active support of all sorts of rationalization schemes and methods of compulsory

arbitration, their theories of State socialism with compensation to owners—all such programs and policies prepared the ideological and practical bases for fascism. Depending upon the given needs of the hour, the bourgeoisie could use now social-democracy, now fascism to defeat the revolution.

Between the two, there was a well-recognized subdivision of labor. Each movement had a distinct function making impossible their actual fusion, although later, after the victory of fascism, certain socialists were to go over to the fascist point of view with the specious theory that socialism could come about only through fascism. These people could be called Socialist-Fascists;[1] they tried to prove that their previous programs were well on the road to being realized by the fascists or national socialists. They formed part of the Left Wing of the fascist movement and become important as gears to connect fascism to the motors of the working class.

Both the fascists and the socialists wanted class peace and the end of revolution. The role of social-democracy was to forestall revolution from below, demoralizing the ranks of the workers by organizing them into a movement essentially pacifist and reformist. The fascists supplemented the socialist activity by organizing specially selected minority combat groups outside of the working class for extremely violent measures against the revolutionists.

In the period of the first revolutionary wave, when the capitalist class was forced to turn to the socialists to save the day, fascism also had to borrow its political program and social demagogy from the socialist ranks. The ruling class, through the fascists, in their desperate efforts to secure time at any cost, were willing to promise everything. A good example of this demagogy can be seen in Mussolini's original 1919 platform[2] which stood, among other things, for a republic, for universal suffrage for men and women, proportional representation, reduction of the age of deputies, abolition of the Senate, economic councils with legislative groups, management of industries by workers' organizations which proved capable of it (that is, some form of workers' control over production), eight-hour day by law, nationalization of munition plants, heavy capital levy, confiscation of certain church property and abolition of certain clerical privileges, heavy inheritance tax, seizure of war profits, and revision of military contracts. The sophistical slogan was issued: "Class peace in production, class war in distribution."

In their tactics, too, the fascists demonstrated the same demagogic flexibility. They gave special place to the ex-soldier. They pretended to lead some strikes and to aid the peasantry in confiscating large landed estates.

[1] This must not be confused with the Stalinist theory of social-fascism, for which see below: Book VI, part on "Stalinism."

[2] For the 1919 program see F. Nitti: *Bolshevism, Fascism and Democracy*, pp. 214-215.

In Italy, leading fascists, after the seizure of power, proposed national employment bureaus, denial of the right of employers to discharge workers after a trial, an improved classification of workers, a minimum wage, standard hourly wage rates, and a complete system of social insurance to cover sickness, death, and unemployment, and other matters of a similar nature.

In the same way, fascism borrowed considerably from the syndicalist and trade union movements.[1] The fascists demagogically raised the slogan of "No politics in the union," to prevent the unions from attacking the State. They advocated federalism and local autonomy, and the reduction to zero of the salaries of officials. These ideas were used to break up the workers' organization, separate the bureaucracy from the members, and paralyze the unions from fighting effectively in central formation. Once the fascists had seized power, however, they soon created their own centralized "unions" which really were not unions at all, but strike-breaking agencies similar to "company unions," except that they were national industrial bodies. Under fascism, regimentation of the workers became complete. The "unions" now were connected with the State and their contracts recognized by law.

[1] Compare H. W. Schneider: *Making the Fascist State*, Ch. IV.

XXVIII. ITALY

I

OF all the important powers which emerged victorious from the War, Italy gained the least. As the fascists expressed it, Italy won the war and lost the peace. The Versailles Treaty made France and Great Britain complete arbiters of the Continent, and excluded Italy. The secret treaties by which the other powers had induced Italy to break from Germany and to enter into the War on their side were abandoned. Italy was forced to see her great Mediterranean rival, France, dominate in the Balkans. At the same time she witnessed Serbia growing into a great rival State, seizing the provinces of Dalmatia, Croatia and Montenegro. None of the German colonies was handed over to Italy, but England and France consolidated their respective positions in Africa. Italy's territorial gains were relatively insignificant, far less than what she claimed, so that after the War, she was impelled to take matters into her own hands and, through the vigor of D'Annunzio, to capture the important City of Fiume. No wonder, therefore, the Italian ruling class felt itself cheated and betrayed by its allies, and left weakened and susceptible to attack.

The Italian national State only recently had emerged, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and was not strong. The ruling cliques of Italy, the merchant princes and the grandees, never had been able to overcome the overwhelming influence in Italian affairs of Emperor and Pope whose concern it was to keep Italy divided into little morsels, each part fighting the other to the benefit of these two. As we have already seen, the people, organized by Mazzini and Garibaldi, had swept away the influence of these archaic forces and had brought into existence the unified national State. But, as usual, not these radical elements controlled the situation, but the conservatives who managed to maintain their hold. All this, of course, did not enhance in the least the prestige of the aristocratic royal elements of Sardinia.

No sooner was the Italian State formed than the rulers conceived it necessary to demonstrate the military courage of its classes by engaging in war for colonies. The Italians, however, for centuries had been disused to military fighting except through the *condottieri,* or mercenary soldiers. Their military exploits were, therefore, far from creditable to the ruling class. Lybia and Albania alone cost Italy six billion lire. The sound defeat

Italy had received in the Abyssinian War, the muddled mismanagement of the army in the Turkish War, and finally, to cap it all, the disgraceful actions of the General Staff in the World War, heaping a staggering total of dead and wounded on the battle fields, led the masses to have only the greatest contempt for the martial ability of its so-called rulers

The peaceful pursuits of the Italian population for many centuries had favored a practical anti militarism The Socialist Party in Italy grew rapidly over the issue of imperialism and war, and in 1896 was able successfully to oppose the further continuance of the war in Abyssinia After the defeat at Adowa and following the termination of the war, huge disorders spread throughout the country, especially in Milan, leading to the killing of over four hundred by the soldiery of the government [1] So frightened were the rulers that all Italy was declared in a state of siege Again, in the war with Turkey over Africa in 1911 and 1912, the socialists took a threatening attitude While they could not stop the slaughter, they were able to purge their ranks at the time of a good many of the national and chauvinist reformists within the Party Thus, by 1914, the Italian Socialist Party was in a strong position to fight the entrance of Italy into the World War, and helped to delay Italy's participation When the War broke out, its official stand was "neither to help nor to hinder."

Immediately before the World War, the workers' movements had developed into menacing proportions; in 1914, from June seventh to June fourteenth, a general insurrection raged throughout the city of Bologna and the province of Romagna The World War came just in time to prevent the overthrow of the royalist régime.

The weak position of the ruling class in Italy was due also to the fact that Italy was an exceedingly poor country, unable to stand the expenses of imperialist adventures Italy had no iron and no coal Her chief economy was agriculture Only in the twentieth century was she able to begin to develop her water power into electricity. Thus Italy was a second rate power, unable to meet her industrial rivals in Europe and unable, therefore, to carve out for herself any large colonial domain.

At the same time, although essentially an agricultural country, Italy possessed a well developed proletariat, her land being worked not so much by individual peasants as by agricultural laborers on the estates of the grandees. In 1911, nine million or 54 per cent of the 16 8 million gainfully employed were working in agriculture, but of these six million were agricultural laborers. This accounts for the extraordinary activity of the Socialist Party on the countryside and the powerful agricultural laborers' unions that it was able to build. Besides, there were 2.3 million industrial

[1] See, C M Cresswell *Keystone of Fascism* p 34

workers who, with the transport workers, made up approximately four million. Thus, of the total gainfully employed, ten million were proletarians.

The fatal and congenital defect of this working class was that it was not employed in large-scale heavy industries such as existed in Germany, England, and the United States. The result was a peculiar combination of circumstances. The workers were in the majority; they were militant, discontented, and meant to take over power. At the same time, their socialist movement could be based, not on the most modern technique of capitalism, but on a level of relatively petty production. This caused the Italian workers to retain much of petty bourgeois emotional individualism; on the countryside, they felt themselves closer to the poor, individual peasant rather than to those engaged in large-scale factory farming; in the city, they displayed the artistic spirit of the artisan, rather than the regimented and disciplined approach of heavy industry. Thus, the development of the Italian proletariat was lopsided, and its organizations acted in a completely confused and befuddled manner when they tried to take over industry for themselves. Militancy they had, but not iron batallions.

The terrible results of the World War threw everything into chaos in Italy. The masses moved violently to the Left. Aristocratic rule completely broke down. The Italian Socialist Party grew to seventy thousand members. By November, 1919, it secured 156 seats out of a total of 508, with a program calling for a dictatorship of the proletariat, and its membership rose to three hundred thousand; the membership of the Confederation of Labor jumped to two million.[1] In the municipal elections, the socialists controlled over two thousand communes, or one-third of the total. Vast strikes swept the country, there being registered over a million strikers in agriculture and over a million and a quarter strikers in industry that year.[2] These strikes were not of the ordinary kind, but rather of the type that inevitably spells insurrection. After the employers had instituted a general lock-out, a half million workers marched into the important factories of Italy and took possession of them.

It had been admitted by practically all observers that the revolution was now inevitable.[3] That the revolution did not occur, however, was mainly for the reason that the leadership of the workers either did not want to seize power or did not know what to do with it if they should. Simultaneously, the militant action of the workers had plunged the ranks of the Socialist Party into a crisis. The Right Wing, opposed to revolution, did not secede, but stayed inside the Socialist Party in order to work from

[1] See, R. P. Dutt: *Fascism and Social Revolution*, p. 94. (1934 edition.) See, also, Bonomi: *From Socialism to Fascism*, p. 36.

[2] See, F. Pitigliani: *The Italian Corporative State*, p. 258.

[3] See, G. Salvemini: *The Fascist Dictatorship*, I, 41.

within to kill the movement. The Left Wing, on its side, was stupid enough not to expel the Right Wing, but to allow it to remain to do its demoralizing work. The fact is that the Left Wing was wholly unable to understand a revolutionary policy. At best, the militants were guided by Centrists who held off the revolution long enough to demoralize the workers with incessant strikes that got them nowhere, who threw the country into a chaos that alienated the whole middle class population against the workers, and who permitted the employers to build up with impunity their fascist army. As a reward, these leaders earned the contempt not only of the workers but even of the rulers, who were thus enabled to write that the socialists, while threatening revolution, never really desired it. "The Italian socialists were not dangerous. Almost always they were merely tiresome and annoying. They talked of revolution and they aspired to carry out a policy of reform." [1]

To the treacherous action of the socialist leaders and their centrist policies was added the pressure of the syndicalists who told the workers to pay no attention to politics, to concentrate on economics, and to ignore the State. Thus, at a moment which would have been decisive for the history of all Europe, which would have fused the Russian revolution with the Italian, Hungarian, and German, which would have made almost inevitable the overthrow of capitalism in Europe after the war, the Italian workers were not able to consolidate and act. They could not solve the problems of revolution.

Only in 1921 were the communist elements able to separate themselves from the Right Wing centrists and to form their own organization; but it was entirely too late. Not communism, but fascism won the day.

2

The origin of the Italian fascist movement dates back to the *Fasci d'Azione Revolutionario,* organized in 1914-15 under the leadership of Mussolini to bring Italy into the war. At the outbreak of the war Mussolini became a passionate patriot, upon which he was ousted from his post of editor of the leading Italian Socialist Daily, "Avanti." He then founded the "Popolo d'Italia." It is rather significant that before he became an ardent interventionist in the war, Mussolini was on the Left Wing of the socialists. We have already pointed out that, in the days of the Second International, the Left Wing was by no means necessarily composed of intransigeant Marxists. On the contrary, often it contained a considerable number of declassed intellectual adventurers who took the side of the Left because of their urge for action. These intellectuals, deprived of a decent

[1] F. Nitti: *Bolshevism, Fascism and Democracy,* p. 77.

living by capitalism, felt they had to break and to destroy in revenge. By no means, however, did they accept the theories and practices of dialectical materialism. Further examples of this type were Briand and Viviani, in France, who were active in eulogizing the general strike, but who, once they achieved power, did their best to break it.

These men had curious counterparts among the professorial pundits, people like George Sorel in France and Thorstein Veblen in the United States, who were followers of a philosophy of action of the Bergson or James variety. Incontinent iconoclasts, they were ready to prove the antithesis of everything their smug philosophic brethren were trying to affirm.

Mussolini professed an enthusiasm for Sorel,[1] who defended violence as a source of social progress, and, when il Duce was first elected to the Italian Parliament, he shouted to his former comrades: "I know you with a sincerity which may appear cynical because I was the first to infect you when I introduced into the circulation of Italian Socialism a little of Bergson mixed with much Blanqui."[2]

After the war, new *Fasci* (*Fascio* means union or association) were organized, this time ostensibly for the purpose of reaffirming the advisability of Italy's entrance into the war and of defending the interests of the demobilized soldier. At this time, so unpopular were all memories of the War that Italians did not hesitate to rip off the uniforms of soldiers or of officers whom they met and to stamp the pieces into the ground. "Sometimes an express train waited hours in a country station until a general or a policeman decided to get off, and go on his way by some other means."[3] Highly significant in this anecdote is the cowardice of the socialists in being willing to wait, to hold up a whole train for hours to compel the officer to leave, rather than to throw him off bodily, without such waste of time. On a larger scale, precisely this policy caused the defeat of the entire socialist movement and enabled the fascist forces to grow bolder in their attacks. All the socialists could do was to confuse railway time tables; it was one of Mussolini's greatest boasts that he restored the trains to schedule.

Mussolini has been stimulated in his views by three political theorists who preceded him, Machiavelli, Mazzini, and Sorel. He has attempted to synthesize their views and to round out what Machiavelli and Mazzini had begun. The principles of leadership in political affairs had already been laid down in the classic works of Machiavelli, who had worked out these practical rules as part of his general plan for the unification of Italy.

[1] ". . . in the great river of Fascism one can trace currents which had their source in Sorel, Pegley, Lagardelle. . . ." (B. Mussolini: *Fascism*, p. 16 [Rome, 1935].)

[2] See, I. S. Munro: *Through Fascism to World Power*, p. 120.

[3] E. A. Mowrer: *Immortal Italy*, p. 319.

Mazzini had partly realized this unification; it was up to Mussolini to finish the job, to wipe out all the local provincialisms prevailing in the districts of Italy, to consolidate the country, to strengthen the national State, to centralize the government and to give it greater authority. Mussolini here completes Mazzini in the same manner as Adolph Hitler completes the work of Bismarck, not only creating the independent national State, but making the State all-powerful, compelling the Pope and the Catholic Church to take a secondary position.

Mazzini had worked along lines entirely different from those of Machiavelli, since he had mobilized the people independently of the aristocratic cliques to fight against the Austrian oppressor and the pretensions of the Pope Many of the views of Mazzini were those to which Mussolini could give his most enthusiastic indorsement. We have seen that Mazzini tried to unite Italy under the slogan, "God and the people," and thus to correlate intimately State and Church. Mazzini declared the first atheist must have been a criminal and what we must do was not to deny heaven but to make the earth like heaven In a special address to Italian workingmen Mazzini pointed out "Liberty is not the negation of all authority it is the negation of every authority that fails to represent the Collective Aim of the nation . "[1]

Above all did Mazzini fight against the essentials of communism, since to him property was one of the elements of human life, and the principle of property was eternal[2] The true remedy lay in the consolidation of labor and capital in the same hands. With these principles, Mazzini, although he insisted on free trade, advocated large public works, the eventual confiscation of church property by the State, the turning over of all unclaimed land and the profits of railways and public utilities to the State, the common land to be given to the State for the benefit of the poor in the communes and a national fund to be created for distribution to workingmen's associations (corporations) Mazzini tied up this program with a denunciation of capital as the tyrant of labor, showing that the people had been first slaves, then serfs, and were now hirelings, and calling upon them in the sacred interests of tradition, progress, and association to build a new Italy.

On the question of communism, Mazzini broke sharply with Garibaldi, and denounced vehemently the Paris Commune[3] To Mazzini, the Commune was but the logical continuation of individualism, since both hated the Fatherland, which was holy.[4]

[1] J Mazzini *An Essay on the Duties of Man*, p 91

[2] Mazzini, The same, p 120

[3] See, J Mazzini *The War and the Commune* (1871)

[4] Mazzini had intimate contact with Carlyle who, however, did not agree with Mazzini's violent practical actions

Thus we can see that Mussolini carries forward almost the entire essence of Mazzini's principles. To stress duties not rights, to link up God and the State, to hold the family sacred, to emphasize the duty of labor, to attack capitalism in phrases and communism in fact, to chain together liberty and authority, to stress action, to link up tradition with progress, and to justify this entire program on the ground of benefiting the nation as a whole and particularly the mass of poor,—all these things show that Mussolini has only borrowed heavily from the nineteenth century program to realize it today.

The philosophical method of Mussolini is heavily indebted also to the actionist views of Sorel and James.[1] Sorel preached that humanity could reach truth only by allowing full play to its life force as expressed in impulse and emotion and the intellectual counterpart of which was intuition. All fascist schools adopt a violent anti-intellectualism and strongly favor a passionate intuitionalism. This was the view of Sorel, as it had been that of Carlyle and Nietzsche.

Frenzied by the general smugness of a society that was in reality resting on a mine of explosives, Sorel believed that both the middle classes and the proletariat were degenerating, and that only violence would restore vigor to both. Proletarian violence would force the middle class to attend to its own business; it would strike squarely slum-going welfare workers who tried to meddle in to the life of the workers with Christian phrases of charity and love. For the same reason, too, it was a good thing for the workers occasionally to battle certain representatives of the government. The ensuing bloodstream would purge the illusions in the minds of the workers that the upper classes and the government should control them.

Of course, as social welfare schemes terminated, the violence of the capitalist class would increase, but capitalist violence would inevitably lead to the victory of the proletariat. Sorel believed that such a violent method would bring to fruition the ultimate laws of the class struggle. "If a united and revolutionary proletariat confronts a rich middle class, eager for conquest, capitalist society will have reached its historical perfection." [2]

Sorel's insistence on violence induced him to attach himself to the syndicalist movement wherein he eulogized the policy of constant strikes to inspire the workers for the revolution and affirmed that, while the general strike was but a myth, as was the revolution, it was by means of such myths that the worker could improve his lot. If, indeed, Meliorism was the escape for society, it was better to have Meliorism by blows than by persuasion.[3]

[1] Regarding James, Compare J. S. Barnes: *Universal Aspects of Fascism*, pp. 126-128.
[2] G. Sorel: *Reflections on Violence*, p. 91.
[3] Compare, G. Sorel: The same, p. 47.

The same contempt that Mussolini felt for the principal socialist leaders Sorel felt for those at the head of the French Socialist Party; he delighted in quoting Clemenceau, renegade socialist, who had openly sneered that socialists were moderate radicals and not revolutionists at all.[1] It was his complete disgust with the parliamentary cretins who called themselves socialists that had inspired Sorel to endorse the syndicalists and to denounce those intellectuals who had embraced the profession of thinking *for* the proletariat. By analyzing the views of Sorel, we can see how closely they resemble those of Mussolini.

3

In 1919, the Italian fascist movement was not strong, although even then it claimed twenty *Fasci* and twenty thousand members at its first congress. The movement was originally entirely spontaneous, decentralized and uncoordinated except for its guiding head, the clique around Mussolini. Some of the members were Catholic, some anti-clerical, some Freemason. Such contradictions, however, offered no obstacle to the continuance of a movement based, not upon any great theoretical program, but precisely upon vague feelings of discontent and a consciousness of the necessity to change the existent order. By no means do fascists strive for intellectual clarity. In every case, their programs are larded with vague formulations that can be interpreted in any manner whatever, according to the needs of the moment. This permits the leadership to emphasize demagogically any aspect of events that it desires. At the same time it allows the organization to corral into its fold diverse petty bourgeois elements, each with entirely different grievances. Fascism thus transforms demagogy into a veritable science.

In the beginning, the fascists had to grope their way. The capitalist class rule was so unstable that it had to depend on persuasion and demoralization of the workers' ranks by Fabian tactics rather than on violent suppression. It should be borne in mind that the workers were still heavily armed and only recently had gone through the experiences of the War. They had no fear of the regular army, which was in the process of reorganization. The bourgeoisie, through its spokesmen Nitti and Giolitti, and later through Bonomi and Facta, to gain time had to use the method of reform and concessions as long as it could. At the same time, it tried to counter the revolutionary unions by pushing the Catholic unions, which were growing mightily.

The fascists did not begin to play their important role until the working class resistance had been broken; it was broken not so much by external violence as by internal treachery. In the beginning, fascism had to adopt

[1] Compare, G. Sorel: The same, p. 57.

an extremely radical coloration and swim along with the stream. It offered itself as a sort of substitute for the regular socialist parties. "Its propaganda glorified strikes, food riots, calling for the hanging of speculators, the seizure of land by the peasantry, occupations of factories by the workers Dalmine, and denounced the State as the enemy—'Down with the State in all its forms.' "[1]

As the social concessions only heated the revolutionary ardor of the masses and solved none of the basic social problems of the day, the State gradually began to augment its repressive forces. The gendarmerie in 1920 was increased from twenty-eight thousand to sixty thousand. A special Royal Guard of twenty-five thousand was formed. The fascists began to be armed by the authorities, although they as yet made no serious attacks on the people. Mussolini's paper, "Popolo d'Italia," was distributed by the army authorities freely among the troops. "From the Army the *Fascisti* received sympathy, assistance, and war material. Officers in uniform took part in its punitive expeditions. The *Fascisti* were allowed to turn national barracks into their private arsenals."[2]

The professional officers of the army occupied themselves by training bands of fascists in military tactics. On October 20, 1920, the General Staff even issued a circular instructing divisional commanders to support the fascist organizations. At the same time, the police also helped the *Fascisti* enormously. "Sometimes carbineers and Royal Guards openly made common cause with the *Fascisti*, and paralyzed the resistance of the peasants. Against the *Fascisti* alone, the latter might have held their own."[3]

Thus in every possible way the State, supposedly controlled by Liberals and Catholic humanitarians who were interested in love and peace, was secretly allied with the fascists. We have, therefore, a double process: on the one hand, the development of mass formations below; on the other hand, heliotropic adversion of the State apparatus to the fascist sun. The Liberals and humanitarians directly prepared the way for the black-shirted fascists who rewarded them by deposing them from office as soon as possible.

The revolutionary movement came to a peak in 1920 when the workers, with a tremendous burst of enthusiasm, took over the factories. These workers, however, reckoned without their leaders, who at once did their best to break the revolutionary movement and, to the great dismay of the workers, actually surrendered the factories, shortly thereafter, in September.

[1] R. P. Dutt: *Fascism and Social Revolution*, p. 100, citing as authority *Popolo d'Italia*, April 6, 1930.

[2] E. A. Mowrer: *Immortal Italy*, pp. 361, 362.

[3] The same, p. 362.

This proved to be the turning point of the revolutionary movement. The workers in disgust quit the trade unions and the Socialist Party by the hundreds of thousands. As the movement became demoralized, the employers believed the time advantageous for a political counter-attack, and threw all their forces behind the Fascists. In November, 1920—note the date—the Fascists launched their first terrorist action against the workers, at Bologna. "The Fascist jackal strikes only the already wounded proletarian lion." [1]

With the powerful help of the government, the Fascists vigorously pushed forward their work. Between January and May, 1921, alone, they destroyed 120 labor headquarters, attacked 243 centers, killed 202 workers and wounded 1,144. The method which the State used to help the Black Shirts was to send the Royal Guard to the labor center with the ostensible purpose of "protecting" the center, in reality to search the entire premises and entirely to disarm the workers. Then the center was attacked by the Fascists; the Royal Guards would retire, and the Fascists would be left to wreak their destruction at will. During the first months of 1921, 2,240 workers were arrested by the "impartial" State officers, but only 162 Fascists.

One reason why the workers could be subdued so quickly was that the old government, unlike that in Germany, never had been overthrown but had existed through the whole critical period of the War and since. In Germany, on the contrary, it took a much longer time before the fascists were able to crush the far better organized and disciplined working class.

Believing that the working class was now in full retreat, the government under Giolitti declared a special election in May, 1921. In this election, the fascists formed a bloc with the nationalists to win thirty-four seats, and in this period "Mussolini and his followers took their seats on the extreme Right, and in his speech as leader of the group he declared that he was 'reactionary because he was anti-parliamentarian, anti-democratic, anti-socialist.'" [2]

By this time, however, the communists had split away at the Livorno Congress in April to form their own party and to separate themselves both from Turati, the leader of the Right Wing, and from Serrati, the head of the Centrists. These two worthies soon adjusted their differences. The separating of the communist forces cleared the atmosphere considerably, and, to the surprise of the government, the masses actually voted in larger numbers than ever before for the socialist and communist candidates, both of whom received a total of close to one million nine hundred thousand votes, a record. It was clear that the masses had retreated simply because of their leaders, but that they were capable of a further attack in the

[1] R. P. Dutt: work cited, p. 99.
[2] M. T. Florinsky: *Fascism and National Socialism*, pp. 12-13.

immediate future, especially since they now had different leadership, a Communist Party that took its orders from Lenin and the Communist International. This fact decided the government to go the limit in aiding the Fascists to crush ruthlessly the entire movement.

While the ruling group was negotiating with the Fascists, the latter utilized the period to separate the revolutionary communists from the reformist socialists and trade union leadership. In this Mussolini was eminently successful, and, to the further dismay of the entire working class, he was able to make an agreement with the socialists and trade union bureaucracy that neither was to continue the struggle further. This was a most shameful compact, one that dealt the finishing blow to the aspirations of the workers, because, while it thoroughly disarmed the mass organizations of the proletariat, their leaders declaring that the fight was now over, the Fascists by no means ceased their bloody attacks, especially on the militant labor sections, the communists, who had now their own separate organizations and centers. The Fascists in truly Machiavellian style at the earliest possible moment tore up the agreement so solemnly sworn to.

By this time, the Fascists counted two thousand two hundred *fasci* groups, with three hundred and ten thousand members, and were rapidly expanding their forces. By now they could afford to change their program considerably, so as to become the chief agency of the reactionary ruling groups of Italy. Hitherto they had proclaimed the need of an Italian republic; they now become ardent Royalists, declaring that the King was necessary as the symbol of unity of the nation, that the talents of the aristocracy were essential in administering the government. They wiped out their clause calling for the abolition of all titles of nobility. With this, the King was able to give them his blessings and to make possible the march on Rome.

The Fascists did not "conquer" power; they were inducted into power by the government after the working class groups had collapsed from inner bankruptcy. It is true that "Luigi Facta, who headed the shadow government then in office, decided to oppose the advance of the Fascists. A state of siege was declared but the order had to be countermanded for the King refused to sign the decree." [1] The only effect of Facta's act in declaring martial law was to disarm the civil authorities and thus prevent any real resistance to Mussolini's march, which was handled by the generals of the regular army. Incidentally, the march was facilitated by the wild and unplanned action of the syndicalists who called an ill-advised general strike on the railroad; this did not stop the march, but enabled the Fascists to fill the important railway posts with their own key men and to insure that the march went forward in schedule time.

[1] M. T. Florinski, The same, p. 18.

Having been commissioned by the King to form a government, October 29, 1922, Mussolini's first step was to consent to form a coalition government. By this time, the Nationalists had completely fused with the Fascists, and Mussolini was able to use this period to complete the rout of the workers and to consolidate his forces. He began a vigorous attack both against the subversive elements and against the liberals who had permitted the chaos in Italy to endure so long and who were to be chastised for not knowing how to fight the communists. An effective instrument for such punishment was the Fascist militia, organized in 1923.

Mussolini's next move was to call an election which would give him full power in parliament. Voting was held under Mussolini's complete control and accompanied by a regular reign of terror. Having secured a preponderant number of seats, Mussolini was then able to annihilate the liberal socialist opposition. In this he was aided by the towering blunders of his opponents.

To provoke the socialists into battle, Mussolini actually murdered his troublesome opponent, Matteoti, but instead of heeding the challenge, the socialists deserted parliament entirely, refusing to take their seats, and complaining of the violence attending the election. Instead of preparing to overthrow the State, they whined interminably about the loss of their sinecures in the government. This was all that was needed by Mussolini to place the opposition in the light of an anti-national, disloyal group, interested only in disruption. He not only broke down the "Aventine" opposition, but, when they crawled back on their knees to take their places in parliament, he slammed the door in their faces and declared them out forever.

Thus, by 1925, Mussolini had won the day and could move on to establish his corporative State. He had no qualms whatever in eradicating those points in his radical platform that had called for universal equality and direct suffrage, freedom of thought, conscience, religion, association, press propaganda and individual collective agitation, decentralization of executive authority, administrative autonomy of provinces and communes, abolition of secret diplomacy, and similar measures.

Further, Mussolini was now free also to break completely whatever power the radical middle class had obtained within the Fascist ranks and to change the program of fascism to conform with the dictates of victorious Big Business. He denounced political democracy as a fraud. The State was the absolute to which everything was secondary and relative, and he raised the slogan: "Everything to the State, nothing against the State, nothing outside the State." [1]

Fascism thus repudiated the pass words of nineteenth century liberalism.

[1] See B. Mussolini: *Fascism*, pp. 11, 40.

Mussolini, as early as 1923, asserted, "Now the greatest experiences since the War, those which are in continual movement before our eyes, indicate liberalism's defeat. In Russia and in Italy it has been demonstrated that it is possible to govern irrespective of and contrary to the whole liberal ideology. Communism and fascism are outside liberalism." [1]

Against the individualism of the nineteenth century, fascism set up the idea of a complete subordination to the State on the ground that individual happiness is dependent on the general well being. The twentieth century was to substitute the fascist ideal, "Each for all and all for God." The principle of authority was to prevail in every line of social life. The State was to merge again with religion. The crucifix was put on the walls in every schoolroom and in every court of law.

Of course, this was only Mussolini's Machiavellian method of utilizing religion for his own purposes. When the Church attempted to continue the social activity which it had launched under liberalism, when it strove to maintain its hold over the youth in education, in sports, and in social welfare, and to keep its Catholic unions and its prestige with housewives, the Fascist movement soon put an end to the pretensions of its rival and made it very plain that not even the Catholic Church could supplant the authoritarian State as the people's mentor. The contest between the Catholic Church and fascism continued for a number of years until a compromise was worked out whereby the Fascist Party, while utilizing the Church as an instrument of social control, maintained its complete leadership in every field.

The attack against individualism was also made the pretext for an attack against the old theories of nineteenth century capitalism which had called on the State only to keep order while each one went his own way and each class struggled against the other. The State no longer was to be a police agent for any class, but a synthesis for all classes. The State would not permit class war between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, but it would recognize different groups according to their function in production, not according to their wealth.

4

The legislation enacted by Mussolini was supposed to realize new and revolutionary principles. It was the duty of the individual to act so that his interests coincided with those of the community, the State to decide just when such coincidence occurred. Private property was not only an inalienable right but a public trust. Only those adhering to standards embodying a sense of responsibility to God, country, and family were eligible to political rights. No subversive propaganda nor allegiance to an Inter-

[1] Quoted in H. W. Schneider: *Making the Fascist State*, p. 371.

national of any sort would be tolerated. The highest entity in life was the State which was to be considered not as undertaking a residuum of functions which the individual could not carry out, but as an organic whole embracing all. Competition would be allowed, nay, encouraged, but not class warfare. Arbitration would be compulsory. There would be a dictatorship set up, but one joined to a sort of representative system so as to keep in touch with all parts of the nation.[1]

Mussolini undertook to reorganize social institutions from top to bottom. One of his first acts was greatly to restrict the universities, thereby barring many persons from higher education. A large number of teachers were discharged; the priest returned to his own. This phobia against higher education is a marked characteristic of fascism. The fact is, fascism cannot look science in the face; it can depend only upon pure force and terror for its control. Just as it cannot tolerate questioning and discussion, so can it not suffer a free academic atmosphere.

The reorganization of the government resulted in the dismissal of eighty thousand old employees. The purging of the State apparatus was a thorough one, and extended to the pettiest local administrations, bringing them under the complete control of the central authorities. This did not mean, however, that the bureaucracy of the State had decreased; on the contrary, the number of State pensioners was remarkably augmented as the State assumed enlarged functions. Needless to say, of course, the police, gendarmie, the army and navy were also entirely remodeled.

The fascist theory put an end to the check-and-balance system of liberalism. The Executive arm was made all important; it alone was responsible for the administration of laws. The Prime Minister no longer was responsible to parliament, nor did he require its consent for his acts. Such a change was absolutely vital to the politics of capitalism in an age of crisis and civil war. The State must be free to act rapidly and suddenly, responsible to no other force. Only in this way can the violent and extremely variable political fluctuations be met with safety. The present is not a period of talk but one of action, in which the chief enemy is, above all, within the gates.

Perhaps the most important innovation in politics instituted by fascism in Italy was the direct incorporation of the political party into the State apparatus. On the surface, fascist dictatorship looks like the dictatorship of one man, the leader, *il duce, der fuehrer*. This is far from being the case. The idealization of the one-man hero is simply to centralize and unify all striking forces to the maximum height. In reality, fascism brings out the fact in all its stark nakedness that the true commanding sovereign within the State is the Party, and that the sovereign outside the State is

[1] See, J. S. Barnes: *Fascism*.

the Class. In the case of Italy, it is the Fascist Grand Council, that is, the Executive Committee of the political party, which controls the fascists in parliament and has decisive authority in the making of laws. It also determines what candidates appear before the electors at election time. No other political parties can exist. Thus, the fascists control not only the executive but the legislative arm of the government, and fuse both together.

On the surface, it may appear that the fascist dictatorship is independent of all classes, although it operates for the benefit of one, the capitalist. This independence is a myth. The Fascist Party is made up of elements of the small property holders. Its leaders are in close touch with those of big business and act as its agents. Moreover, the Fascist Party does not rule without the mechanism of democracy. It permits the proper persons, that is, those in harmony with the interests of capital and of private property, to vote, and by the utilization of this electoral paraphernalia, fascism makes it plain that it is not the master over classes but the servant of the general will of capital. Vicariously, through the Party, the Class dictates its will. Fascism is an open dictatorship of the capitalist class that strips aside the masks extant under democracy. From all this it is clear that fascism is not a return to monarchical despotism, but a reformation of capitalist society utilizing most modern means.

In these political changes, Mussolini was deliberately imitating the advances which had been made in political theory by the Bolsheviks in establishing the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. A similar basic mechanism had permitted the Russian communists to survive their difficulties, namely, complete centralization of government, the fusion of the legislative and executive branches without division of powers, the incorporation of the Party itself into the State directly, the Party intimately and closely related to the Class to give the Party nourishment and foundation. The weapons which the proletariat had used so successfully in 1918-1923 were used by fascism for the benefit of the old order.

Fascism early recognized that the paramount factor in society was the class struggle engendered by the relations existing in the production of wealth. The old territorial divisions of government and representation had become inadequate. Materialists had never ceased to point out that those who controlled the economic power controlled the political. The utopian dreams of Saint-Simon had emphasized the possibilities of utilizing these principles in a reactionary direction; his idea was to give complete political power to the captains of industry. The guild socialists, too, had talked of representation by occupation rather than territorially.

The fascists determined to take the first steps in that direction; they began to organize the population on the corporative basis under the control

of a Grand Economic Council connected with the central administration of the State. Thus, in Italy, there have existed two organs of government, the political parliament and the Council of Corporations. Formally, parliament had the general decisive voice, but as Fascism stabilized its hold, gradually the corporations have been given more power and brought closer to the general workings of the State, so that today Italy seems on the verge of abolishing the political parliament entirely and of substituting for it the corporative mechanism.

From its earliest days, fascism had attempted to link itself up with the working class and to organize separate unions affiliated to its policy. After its complete victory in the State, it was able to tackle this task seriously on a national scale Fascist unions were to be recognized as soon as 10 per cent of the workers in the factory signified their willingness to join; they alone then would be entitled to make labor contracts with the employer. This 10 per cent was easy to win, since included in the number were foremen, technicians, and other relatively highly paid elements upon whom the employer could always rely. The Fascist union, therefore, was no better than a company union Despite its compulsory character, the decisions of the union regarding wages and hours were held binding for all, even for the 90 per cent.

With a heavy hand was laid down the principle. "Every man in his place and a place for every man" In Italy, the first part of this policy had to be stressed, in Germany, where fascism would arrive in a period of unemployment, the second part would rise in importance. All strikes and lockouts were now forbidden. All contracts of the workers with the employers had the sanction of the State; the violation of this private agreement became a criminal offense Special labor courts were set up to compel obedience to the State's decisions in all disputes that came before it.

In order to create uniform conditions throughout Italy, the workers were organized into local unions on an industrial basis, which in turn were organized into national federations. The various federations were tied together into six main confederations. The employers, too, formed their industrial confederations, and both sides then came together in a Council of Corporations, each industry having its own separate corporate agreements and problems. The National Council, organized in 1930, controls all corporations. This Council is heavily weighted with numerous State functionaries and is headed by the Ministry of Corporations, one of the main departments of the central authority.

The wisdom of the Fascisti in organizing the workers on an industrial basis might well be questioned, since this action would tend to bring together the workers. But actually, no other choice was available. The fascists

could not organize craft divisions for the simple reason that they needed the higher paid men to spy on the others and thus insure the most perfect control. In the nineteenth century, craft divisions had been encouraged by the employers because the unskilled could not act of their own accord, and it was essential to divide the workers. In the twentieth century, when the unskilled workers had demonstrated their ability to organize themselves in revolutionary mass formations, it was absolutely imperative to dilute their ranks with higher paid elements who would refuse to travel in a revolutionary direction and who would report everything to the controlling agency in sufficient time to help break up the solidarity of the workers from within. These bribed elements functioned as stool pigeons for the capitalist class.

In building up his corporations, Mussolini adopted the theory that labor in all its manifestations, whether technical or manual, was a social duty and the basis of the State. However, the capitalist producer was also a laborer; he, too, had his rights, which were to be preserved. Although the capitalist formed a small minority, he was to be permitted far more influence than the workers.

In line with these views, thirteen confederations were formed, six of employers and six of workers; the thirteenth was made up of the liberal professions and arts. The purpose of the Council of Confederations was to examine and to work out the interests of national economy, and to secure permanent collaboration between workers and employers. In short, it was a mechanism for the increased nationalization of capital and compulsory subjugation of labor. The so-called "Charter of Labor," for example, makes it a duty for the trade association of employers to increase business, to improve the quality of production, and to reduce costs in every way possible. If any particular business man does not conform to these provisions, then his private initiative may be declared insufficient and the State may intervene directly in his business, in the form of supervision, promotion, or direct management. The results are easily foreseen: "In no country was it so easy as in Italy to obtain the consent of employees to a reduction of wages, in accordance with the fall of prices and with the depressed state of industries." [1]

It is interesting to notice the distribution of power between labor and capital as shown in the workings of the Council of Corporations. These corporations have the duty of submitting to parliament the candidates to be elected. Each confederation nominates twice the number of candidates allotted to it and submits the list to the Fascist Grand Council, which reduces it to the proper number and presents the whole list as a unit to the electorate for approval. Each confederation, whether of employers or

[1] P. Einzig: *The Economic Foundations of Fascism*, p. 31.

workers, is given the same number of votes, the relatively small number of employers nominating the same number as the many millions of workers.

In reality, the cards are stacked against the wage-worker in a multitude of ways. For example, 20 per cent of the list is allotted to the thirteenth confederation made up of professional men and artists who are entirely removed from the working class and intimately connected with the employers. Thus, already the wealthy control 60 per cent and labor only 40 per cent. But within the ranks of the workers still further divisions are made: 3 per cent is given to employees in banks and insurance offices; 12 per cent goes to agricultural syndicates; 6 per cent is assigned to commercial employees. Thus, only 10 per cent is left to industry, 5 per cent to seamen and airmen, 4 per cent to land transport and internal navigation workers. The most the industrial proletariat can control, therefore, is a weight representing 19 per cent or 20 per cent of the whole.

But even this percentage is entirely fictitious, first, because the fascist unions are completely dominated by the management of the factories; second, because the electoral list is submitted not by local bodies, wherein the workers could have some influence, but only through the district bodies where the fascists are in complete control; and third, because even this list contains twice the names required, permitting the Fascist Grand Council to eliminate half the number, especially to remove anyone who might be suspected of the slightest deviation from fascist tendencies. So far as representing the will of the workers is concerned, fascist "democracy" is an exceedingly refined mechanism to prevent this from ever appearing.

It must be emphasized, too, at this point, what power is vested in the bureaucracy of the fascist unions to discipline the rank and the file. Though only 10 per cent of the workers may belong to a fascist union, dues are collected automatically from all the workers by the employer and turned over to the leadership. At the same time, only those belonging to unions can obtain certain important privileges, such as assured annual vacation, or the right to be hired, or the prevention of dismissal by an employer at his whim, the right to appear in court, to press claims of wages and working conditions, certain recreational, sport, hospitalization, and other privileges, etc. Finally, anyone found disloyal to the State can be dismissed from the corporations and black-listed everywhere.

5

Should the parliamentary system give way completely to a government wherein only corporations would represent directly the nation as a whole, then the fascist system would be an inverted replica of the soviet form of

government established by the communists, in Italy the entire machinery being in favor of the capitalist.

The difficulties that Mussolini has faced in establishing this program have been considerable and have been due not so much to any opposition on the part of Big Business as to the fact that Big Business in Italy was poorly developed, since the production of Italy was mostly in the hands of petty concerns. For this reason, Italian fascism always has stressed the value of individual private initiative in the field of production as the most useful and efficient instrument for furthering the interests of the nation. The corporations of fascism were not to annihilate individual competition, but were merely to channelize competition in a form that would be safe for the authority of capital as a whole. Thus Italian Fascism could aim only "at putting all individuals, *qua* producers, in the position of choosing freely their own economic policy, and starts from the principle that everyone's property shall enjoy ample guarantees. On the other hand, the right of property has limitations in the Fascist Régime when it conflicts with the interests of the national community, recognized and impersonated by the State. Economic freedom of enterprise also is subordinated to restrictions of various kinds, whenever it interferes with the public interest. . . .

"The State does not assume the place of the organizer of an enterprise, nor take from him the control nor the possibility of directing his own undertaking in the manner he deems best, but proposes to place the individual in the best conditions for organizing that part of production which depends on himself." [1]

Prior at least to 1930, cartels and trusts were not encouraged directly, and the corporative State did not emphasize a planned economic system. True, that such ideas of planned economy gradually have been penetrating Italian fascism, but it should be remembered that, after all, the Italian has been a pioneer in the working out of the fascist program and practice, and he has been forced to work in a country relatively agrarian and backward in technique. The co-operative, the association, the joint stock company, the mutual aid group, these have been stressed in Italy rather than the trust and monopoly of imperialist business.

What has unified economy in Italy has been not so much the huge industrial trust as the interests of international finance capital. Finance capital represented by the United States reduced the war debt of Italy 85 per cent to bolster up the rule of Mussolini and to prevent his downfall. International finance capital permitted the restabilization of the lira in 1925 and helped Mussolini to overcome the political difficulties during the Matteoti affair. Italian Fascism owes its success to its intimate connection with finance capital.

[1] F. Pitigliani: *The Italian Corporative State*, pp. 18-19.

In connection with the amount of lee-way accorded private initiative, it is to be noted, too, that both workers and employers theoretically are organized separately, that the contracts between them are of their own making. The government does not establish directly what the wages and hours of work must be, although it announces its power to do so in theory, and in practice generally interferes in one direction or another. In this form, the class struggle is still recognized in Italy, but it has become a class struggle appearing in the sphere of distribution rather than of production, the fight taking place as to what share of the total wealth should go to each category of "labor." Once the contract is formed, however, the State throws its entire weight to enforce it.

Because of the widespread prevalence of petty industry in city and country, the complete functional mobilization of all sections of the population, so as to permit the corporations to be superior to territorial parliamentary representation, is exceedingly difficult to attain. Even in 1932, while there existed, according to a previous census, 623,640 industrial undertakings in connection with which about three and one-half million workers were employed, only about one hundred and eighteen thousand firms, employing only a little over two million workers, were represented in the corporations. Thus the numbers controlled by the confederations equalled only one-fifth of the active concerns, employing only one-third of the total number of workers. The mobilization of the individual peasants on the countryside has been an even more difficult task. Here, then, is the reason why fascism does not deny the theory of individualism in consumption while it decries such a theory in production. Italian fascism must cater to the individualist propensities of the small owners.

Since its corporative functional control is incomplete, fascism has made it its business to permeate all other forms of social life. It must see to it that the people are controlled not only at the point of production but in their family life, leisure, and recreation. It has, therefore, organized the population from children up. Here, too, it imitates the Russian Bolshevik system. The very young children are organized into the *Balilla,* the older children into the *Piccole Italiane,* the adolescent youth into the *Avanguardia* and the *Giovanni Italiane.* There is also the national militia and the Fascist Party.[1]

In line with this system, the State has organized a national recreational service called *Dopolavoro* wherein fascist propaganda is presented to the population in the form of education, sports, games, etc. The institutions of *Dopolavoro* are practically the only places wherein workers can come

[1] A Turati, in his book, *A Revolution and Its Leader,* pp xviii xix (1930), gives the following figures Balilla 781,000, Piccole Italiane 366,000, Avanguardia 325,000, Giovanni Italiane 66,000, national militia 300,000, Fascists 1,027,000 (88,000 women), total 2,865,000

together after work hours. The workers pay for this service through the dues which are taken from them by the fascist unions. To increase its control, the *Dopolavoro* provides for its members meeting rooms, the use of stadiums, special railroad fares, better steamship rates, cheap theater tickets, tax-free food in *Dopolavoro* restaurants, special libraries, reading rooms, lectures and instruction in athletics, etc. This, too, has induced close to two million members to register under it.[1]

Similarly national institutes have been formed to handle problems of maternity and child welfare. These institutes also serve the purpose of increasing the birthrate through protecting childbearing. To stimulate birth, the State has undertaken a veritable campaign. Bachelors are taxed; the legal age of marriage is reduced; honeymooners are entitled to cheaper railroad fares; mass marriages are encouraged; special food doles are given to those who acknowledge illegitimate children; special prizes are donated to mothers; bonuses and lower tax rates encourage those who raise large families. The birth rate, however, still goes down. In 1923 it was 29.23 per thousand; in 1933 it had shrunk to 23.5 per thousand.

Of course, the chief reason for fascism's interest in maternity and child welfare, as for its interest in sports, is the drive for a maximum military force. The youth are fed the rawest kind of chauvinistic propaganda and are mobilized in military formations from their earliest years. Before the Ethiopian War, the standing army of Italy numbered close to three hundred thousand, with a reserve of about two and one-half million more. Immense improvements have taken place in the navy and in the air force. In 1932-33, Italy spent seven and one-half billion lire on her air force alone, having now eighty-one airports and eighty-six flying fields, all of which are fully equipped. The situation has become much intensified since the Ethiopian War. Gradually the whole population is being put in arms in preparation for the imminent world conflict.

As the birth rate shrinks, the fascists pay increasing attention to existing youth. The fascist seizure of power is hailed as a revolution of youth. The youth are idealized as a force capable of breaking away from the old ideas of class struggle and of instituting the new ideals of fascism. It has been decreed that there shall be no new admissions into the Fascist Party except youth of eighteen. Thus, on the surface, capitalism appears entirely rejuvenated. It is no longer a senile and decrepit order, but one which is supposedly enthusiastically hailed by children and young people. At bottom, however, this is merely a case of *dementia praecox* wherein the senile play perversely with the genitalia of children.

[1] None the less, the Italian illiteracy rate is still very high.

Naturally in such a highly agricultural country as Italy, the fascists have catered to the peasantry and have carried on large public works for their benefit: The Pontine Marshes, in the Province of Campagna, have been drained, a technological achievement which all previous Italian administrations from the time of early Rome on had failed to do.

In order to help the peasants, the import duty on wheat was raised 150 per cent in 1931. In this way, fascism was determined to bar the cheaper grains of Canada, Australia, Argentine, the United States, and Russia, and to maintain at all costs the peasantry, the main bulk of its army, and its dependable military force in war. The most strenuous efforts have been made to enable Italy to feed herself. From 1928 to 1934, although two hundred and seven thousand agricultural workers were shelved permanently, ninety-nine million more bushels of wheat were produced, representing an increase of 50 per cent. What is true of wheat is true of other agricultural commodities, barley, oats, corn, peas, potatoes, and sugar beets. All this has been part of the so-called national planning of fascism.

The essence of Italian national planning has been merely to insure a self-sufficiency in time of war. Hence the great drive to increase both the population and the food supply. As fascism plans not for peace but for war, in its very planning it thereby only brings war nearer. Looking about them to ascertain whether Italy can sustain herself in war, the Fascisti find that they can mine only one ton of coal for every fifteen tons that she requires in peace; that she has no fuel oil at all; that her total iron ore production is only one-hundredth of the Messaba Range of the United States; that her production of sulphur has steadily decreased so that, while she once led the world, she now produces only one-fifth that of the United States and, were it not for the forced labor which works the mines and the large subsidies of the State, she would not be able to maintain even this fractional proportion. Italy, therefore, must search for an empire that will make available the sources of raw materials which she demands for her world struggle. The fight for empire leads her directly into the vortex of a new world war. Thus the circle is completed.

As the war danger comes nearer, the fascists intervene more directly into the intimate workings of every large industrial concern, as, for instance, in the operation of the chemical, the electrical, and the machine industries. These industries have been narrowed into trusts or cartels dominated by the State. Montecanti, for example, Italy's largest chemical concern, employing over twenty-five thousand workers and having assets of seventy-seven million dollars, practically controls chemicals. In the metal industry, Fiat, employing approximately thirty thousand men, has a similar hold in steel. It is important to note that the combined assets of Italy's ten largest corporations, while only seven hundred and fifty million dollars,

none the less represent 9 per cent of all the corporation assets in Italy. The key industries steadily are becoming fused with the State.

6

The pretensions of fascism have been that it would, by wiping out the old laissez faire liberalism, prevent the irresponsibility of capitalism and institute some sort of security and stability for all. None the less, when the economic crisis of 1929 came, it affected the fascist régime as seriously as it did the other profit-making countries. National self-sufficiency found itself overwhelmed by gigantic international forces which it could not control and of which it was indeed a part. It would be a miracle were it possible to except one country alone from the nexus of international relations that have been established through the centuries. Such miracle-dreaming has been the philosophy of all the utopians in the past, as it has been of the fascist theoreticians. What Italy has done has been not to evade the crisis but systematically to misrepresent its effects.

Foreign trade fell in Italy, as elsewhere, to exceedingly low levels during the crisis, declining from 44.5 billion lire [1] in 1925 to 13.5 billion lire in 1933 or a drop of close to 70 per cent. The drastic reduction in exports has compelled Italy still more draconically to curtail imports, thus adversely affecting both the levels of living of the masses and the stability of the merchant marine. In order to bolster up the merchant marine, the government has been forced to pay over three hundred million lire annually for the past six years as subsidies to maintain the ships on the seas. The tourist trade which had been relied upon to redress Italy's unfavorable balance to the extent of forty billion dollars annually has fallen off sharply during the crisis, helping to plunge Italy into an extremely poor financial position.

Italy's long-term debt has risen from 84.4 billion lire in 1928 to 92.7 billion lire at the end of February, 1934, while the foreign debt, which in 1928 amounted to 1.6 billion lire, reached by February, 1934, the staggering figure of close to ten billion lire. Then there is the unprecedented advance in the public debt. At the outset of fascism in 1923, the public debt amounted to ninety-five billion lire; in 1934, with the additions stemming from fascism, the total had leaped to one hundred and seventy billion lire, which is close to nine billion dollars, or about two hundred and ten dollars per capita. Nor is this the complete balance sheet, for there must be added the war debts, the Morgan loan of more than sixteen and one-half billion lire, the subsidies and subventions of the State such as to the government-controlled merchant marine, and to the credit associations, which by now total over ten billion lire, the two or three billion lire indebtedness of the

[1] The lira as stabilized after the war was considered at about the same level as the franc, or about 5 cents.

telegraph, telephone, and postal service and the forty billion lire in State annuities for work already done under contract.

Thus, even before the Ethiopian adventure, Italy was in a hopelessly bankrupt financial condition, having relied upon international finance capital to extricate it and to release it from its debt obligations. The Ethiopian War, of course, has continued the ruinous financial course of fascism. The figures have been carefully concealed from public view, but the country has notoriously been drained of all precious metals, and there is no adequate reserve to cover the currency.

During the depression, the national income of Italy declined from one hundred billion lire in 1929 to less than sixty billion. At the same time, taxes exceeded thirty-four billion lire, or more than one-half of the income on which it could be levied Bankruptcies have steadily climbed upward from a total of one thousand nine hundred in 1921 to over twenty-one thousand for 1933. Ever since 1930, the budget has not been balanced, each year disclosing a wide gap between expenditures and receipts, equalling approximately three to four billion lire annually. Twenty per cent of the budget must be devoted to charges on the public debt. Another 20 per cent goes for military purposes. This is the Garden of Eden which the fascists have promised an eager world

The workers are in a more miserable position than ever, for even allowing for the many services that the State supplies to the people, the level of living has sunk below pre-war, and is probably among the lowest of all Europe. And this has grown worse during the crisis. In 1928 it was estimated that the average industrial wage was about 10.4 cents an hour, the agricultural rate much lower, while women and children averaged from five to nine cents. By 1933 this had fallen to nine cents per hour as the average industrial wage, a little over six cents as the agricultural wage, with three and one-half cents for women in agriculture. These wages prevailed in a country that had raised its tariff on wheat, enormously increasing the cost of living for the workers.[1]

These unbelievably low nominal wages do not reflect the real wages which the Italian worker actually receives, for not only are these wages *average* and conceal the wages of the mass of workers, but they do not take into consideration the numerous indirect taxes which strike the worker at every turn. It has been estimated that almost one-half of the total government revenue of eighteen billion lire comes from these indirect levies upon everything on which the worker can be forced to bear the lion's share of

[1] For the wage scale see 'Fascism Fails Italy' by Hugh Quigley, Chief Statistical Officer of the Central Electricity Board of Great Britain, in *Current History*, June 1934 The figures are from official fascist sources

the burden, such as taxes on sales, salt, tobacco, slaughter of animals, matches, etc. The income tax of the State cuts sharply into the lower brackets, affecting farm incomes as low as 534 lire, or twenty-seven dollars. The highest categories have to pay merely 25 per cent income tax. Besides these taxes, there are the tributes in dues which the workers have to pay to the fascist unions, 82 per cent of this going to the maintenance of the apparatus and only 17 per cent admittedly taking care of educational and vocational training.

As for the great public works which Mussolini has advertised, it has been said that "Its record of public service, particularly in the smaller towns and in the suburbs of the cities—public service, as represented not only by utilities, but by such things as hospitals, sanatoria and schools—is poorer than that of any other European country in the same political category, and is certainly poorer than that of pre-fascist Italy." [1] Thus the entire cost of lethal fascism falls upon the masses who are to work and fight for the honor of Mussolini.

Mussolini has not been able to stop the torrent of unemployment let loose by the world crisis. The fascist figures, notoriously deceptive, admit one million registered unemployed. The truer estimate no doubt would be closer to three million, although a part of this is covered by the fact that the agricultural laborers, thrown out of work, have been driven into attempts to eke out a living on small farms or have returned to their folks on the land.

The Ethiopian adventure of Mussolini has given the fascists a fine opportunity to rid themselves of their surplus population, either by shipping the unemployed to Africa to be killed off by bullets or disease, or to remain there for years to "pacify" the country, or by mobilizing them in concentration camps and calling them to the colors in preparation for the immediate warlike struggles ahead.

Under such circumstances, the boastful statements of fascism are completely empty. None of the basic problems have been solved. The lid has only been clamped down tighter for the moment, making more violent the inevitable explosion of the compressed forces. Italian fascism has endured so long only because it came into existence at the very beginning of the partial stabilization of capital, when the workers were beginning their long retreat and could not aid. It is to be seen how well fascism will be able to stand the strain of the new turbulent epoch that awaits it in the near future.

[1] Quigley, work cited.

XXIX. GERMAN NATIONAL SOCIALISM

I

SINCE the era of imperialism, the keystone of the arch of capitalist Europe has been Germany. The most brilliant example of European prosperity was the period when the Kaiser reigned. So much was Germany the heart of Europe that, indeed, the pan-Germanists conceived their destiny as pre-eminently one of organizing Europe under its control. The desperate plight of Germany after the war amply testifies to the ruin of the political stability of Europe.

After the war, as before, Germany has proven itself the decisive country of Europe and, emerging defeated and despoiled, was one of those weak links in the European capitalist chain that threatened to break and plunge the whole world into communism. Had Germany turned Soviet in 1918 a new World War would have been fought on the issue of world soviets and workers' rule. Bolshevism, however, did not prevail. In Germany, the Workers' Councils could not overthrow at the critical moment the Right Wing and Centrist groups, and the revolutionary elements went down to defeat.

No country was objectively more ripe for socialism than Germany after the war. In no country were State and trust capital so highly integrated. No country was so heavily saddled with foreign debts and reparations. In no industrialist country had the income and standards of living of the masses fallen so far below the pre-war standards, nor had their savings and reserves been so entirely depleted by inflation and other measures as in Germany.

Economically as well as politically, Germany went through three main post-war phases. The first period was one of chaos and inflation, from 1918 to 1925. Politically, this was marked by the overthrow of the old ruling class and the attempt on the part of capital to check the advance of the militant workers by giving power to the Socialist bureaucracy. Economically, it meant a terrific impoverishment of the whole population and the destruction of the savings of the entire middle class. From the point of view of the bourgeoisie, however, it meant a great growth in the trustification and cartel movements which had been spreading in Germany

even before the War, which had been immensely spurred on by the hostilities, and which now reached their culmination point.[1]

The cartels established in Germany had been of many kinds, including those establishing price fixing, uniform trade conditions, quotas of production, apportionments of territories, standardizing of products, etc. Prior to the War, Germany had generally stopped at the cartel and had not advanced to the trust form, the reason being that the manufacturers were still specializing in imitating the goods of other countries, perfecting the inventions produced elsewhere and winning markets through better sales methods rather than through superior production. During the War, a complete centralization of all industry had been established by the State. The post-war chaos and inflation enabled big business to buy up practically anything cheap, and to erect at once a tremendous new trust movement based on speculation. This was best illustrated in the great Stinnes Konzern and other vertical combinations.[2]

The basic cause for this unprecedented rise of vertical trustification was not only the currency inflation but the loss of territory under the Versailles Treaty, by which the Reich lost 26 per cent of its coal and 74 per cent of its iron ore. This meant that German business had to utilize far more efficiently than ever before the greatly decreased resources at its disposal. The result was an immense development of scientific research. "Scientific research has increased in importance with the slowing down of the rate of technical progress, the growing complexity and increase in the scale of manufacturing and distributing processes, and the gradual exhaustion of the better raw material resources. It holds the key to the technical, if not to the entire economic development of the future. In Germany the loss of territory and resources through the Treaty of Versailles, the rapid exhaustion of certain important mineral deposits, population increase, and growth in the national standard of living, have combined to emphasize the importance of science in industry." [3]

In international politics, the victorious Versailles powers did their best to hack the German régime to pieces. The German State itself was threatened with dissolution. Its sovereignty was split up in the hands of a Rhineland Commission, a Reparations Commission, an Ambassadors' Conference in Paris, and a League of Nations. The German government was bound not to violate any of the 428 paragraphs of the Treaty of Peace. The Saar, the Ruhr, Malmy, Eupen, Holstein, parts of Prussia, Silesia, and the Tyrol were torn away from the main body. Prussia was split into two;

[1] A statistical summary of cartelization in Germany is to be found in H. Levy: *Industrial Germany*, Ch. II, pp. 15-23.

[2] See, R. K. Michels: *Cartels, Combines and Trusts in Post-War Germany*, pp. 26-27.

[3] R. A. Brady: *The Rationalization Movement in German Industry*, p. 19.

the Ruhr was made into a field of influence for France; Alsace and Lorraine were taken outright. The rolling stock was seized and taken away. The important coal centers and iron resources were grabbed by the victors. The ally of Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was broken into bits and each fragment utilized as a spear against the side of Germany. The German fleet was sunk, the merchant marine confiscated, the foreign credits cancelled; a severe blockade encircled Germany like a noose.

Immediately upon the termination of the war, the German working class, wtih one mighty heave, shook off the hold of the aristocracy and proclaimed the Republic. According to precedent, the aristocracy should have given way to the rule of liberal big business, but this was not to be the fate of Germany. The industrialists were entirely too unfit and too untested to become the rulers. Under the Kaiser they had been restricted to governmental posts of secondary importance; by no means did they have the standing and prestige that their fellow exploiters had secured in Western Europe.

The tragedy of the German bourgeoisie was that it had never held political power directly in its hands. Before the war, it had refused to fight the Kaiser, fearing the social revolution. When the Kaiser had fled, all that it could do was allow the power to slip through its fingers into the hands of its agents, the socialists, who, however, held it firmly to the end and saved the day for the capitalist cowards.

Wealthy property could not take over the German government after the war, neither could the old petty bourgeoisie which already, in 1848, had proven its bankruptcy, and, in the twentieth century, had followed the parties either of imperialism or of socialism. The elements that did take advantage of the situation were the skilled sections of the working class led by the newer forces of the petty bourgeoisie, the professional employee, white-collar and factory foremen elements. Although a host of workers flocked into the unions—the total number of unionists in Germany at one time rose to almost fourteen million and maintained an average of over eight million—they could not break the hold of this bureaucracy which secretly worked night and day in intimate relations with the Junkers to crush the revolutionary movement.

The German working class was incapable of organizing a powerful communist movement able to establish the rule of the workers. The favored position of German imperialism before the war had weakened the revolutionary spirit of the worker, making him docile and subservient to orders. His very strength was his weakness, that is, his ability to organize and to act in concert resulted in a lack of initiative and an inability to break organizational discipline at the proper time. The slogans *"Ordnung und Diziplin"* had penetrated into the very fibre of the German people.

The German people suffered intensely after the war and were rapidly moving towards a communist position, but the strict blockade around Germany, the threat of intervention by the victorious powers should Germany go Red, the weakness of Russian communism, and the pressure of United States capital, proved, in the long run, heavy enough to swing the scales the other way. When the opportunity came again, in 1923, in the hectic period of inflation, at a time when a newspaper cost eighty billion marks,[1] and the most widespread misery and ruin prevailed, the communists were not able to establish themselves in power and showed that they remained essentially merely Centrists, half-way revolutionists.

The construction of a revolutionary Communist Party in Germany has proved a difficult task which the German workers, overwhelmed by superior forces, had not sufficient time to accomplish immediately after the war. Thus the German working class, the most powerful and important of all Europe, and the most strongly organized, holding the majority of the decisive industrial districts in their hand, having a high political level, disciplined through periods of war and revolution, fourteen million of them supporting the communist and socialist position, were yet unable to take power.

The second period of German post-war history ranged approximately from 1925 to 1930. It was marked politically by the coalition government, the mutual collaboration between the reformist socialists and the Liberals and Centrists under the Weimar Republic, at whose head was Hindenburg. The communist revolutionary wave now definitely had been broken, and Germany had become a vast market for foreign capital, absorbing in this period over sixteen billion reichmarks from the United States alone, completely rehabilitating its factories and industrial machinery, and emerging in more gigantic proportions than ever. At this stage the Versailles Treaty was modified by the Dawes and Young plans, thus reducing the unspeakable total of reparations Germany was to pay under the original Versailles Treaty to the merely staggering sum of over thirty-five billion marks. To secure further concessions, Germany also flirted with Russia and signed a treaty of friendly relations.

With the end of inflation, the vertical combinations represented by Stinnes broke down and collapsed. New cartels and a far stronger trustified movement sprung up, however, this time closely controlled by the government itself. The cartels now entered into a struggle with the co-operatives, who demanded a social regulation of the cartel whereby the co-operative could maintain its existence. In industry as in trade, a tremendous concentration of capital occurred, leading to the direct entrance of the State into

[1] This would be the equivalent of 20 billion dollars at par.

many industries. A large increase of public utilities took place, a trustification of important industries, a consolidation of capital in trade, both through the chain store and department store systems on the one hand, and the large co-operative movement on the other.

The old individualist middle class was being rapidly driven out from economic life on every side. At the same time, it no longer could find a place in the proletariat, owing to the vast number of unemployed. Hence the hysteria and desperation of this class. No wonder Hitler, following the old Austrian Christian socialist Lueger, decided to recruit his party from these elements. "Lueger based his new party first of all on the middle class which was threatened with extinction, and thus secured a class of adherents extremely hard to shake, ready both for great sacrifices and capable of stubborn fighting." [1]

The movement for the concentration and centralization of capital was reinforced in Germany by traditional factors as well as by the pressing problems that the country had to face. First of all was the fact that laissez faire economic habits had never flourished in Germany, the mercantilism of the sixteenth century prevailing until the nineteenth and then being superseded by an imperialism that choked all Liberal development. The State constantly intervened in industry, helping it as much as possible, but making it secondary to the interest of the State.

Germany's general position in Central Europe also induced an apotheosis of the State, since she arose to nationhood surrounded by a steel ring of mighty world powers. Further, the world was already on the road to imperialism when Germany became industrialized, and as imperialism means essentially control by monopoly capital headed by finance, coupled with the seizure of colonies, naturally the industrialization of Germany had to leap immediately from the petty industry of the sixteenth century to the most modern trust formations possible to enable her to meet the world of competition. These modern trusts and cartels were not hampered by the prejudices of nineteenth century technique and management; they were not bothered by laissez faire presuppositions which would prevent them from integrating their concerns behind the leadership of the centralizing general staff of the State. Thus the Germans alone were adequately prepared for the World War.

After 1918, the socialists who took control held the belief that socialism would come through the rise of State capitalism. Far from disturbing big business, they did their best to aid the development of scientific laboratories and research groups already formed by the trusts. They placed no obstacles whatsoever to the great concentration of capital that followed the peace. Under Hindenburg, the socialists idealized America and posed the question

[1] A. Hitler: *My Battle*, p. 43.

of Ford versus Marx, they themselves choosing Ford and trying to adapt their trade union movement to the American Federation of Labor In general social life as well as in economics there was an attempt to Americanize Germany; American jazz, movies, chewing gum, and ice cream became widespread fads

"Added to these trends in Germany are the peculiarities of her problem of national resources Practically without petroleum, with her lignite deposits rapidly vanishing, and with but scanty resources in ferrous and non-ferrous metals, the whole problem of conservation has become a matter of the greatest public concern" [1] Deprived of natural resources by the war, the industries turned to *ersatz* production and synthetic combinations to replace the lack of natural resources. Lacking oil, Germany created synthetic oil from the cracking of coal The coal industry, therefore, was transformed into a chemical one, which in turn became a power industry erected upon the bony structure of steel and based on electrical energy. In all this, there was no intimation of any desire to return to a freely competitive economic system, nor did the possibility of such a return any longer exist

With increased rationalization, the individual sank completely into the group The whole movement, in both its technological and organizational aspects, was based on co-operative effort and pooled labor And to this, the socialists added their great strength Nowhere among the German workers was there talk of sabotage or destruction of property, as there might be in Italy, France, the United States, or elsewhere The worker went hand in hand with the trustification process and the absorption of the individual into the organization The individual became attached to the union, association or combine, and State enterprise, whether he was a capitalist or a worker

Under socialist influence, the middle period of the German post-war republic was also marked by the breaking down of the old traditional family and institutionalized religion Women became more independent, the marriage age was postponed, the church lost its influence, the Passion Plays of Oberammergau deteriorated to mere pageants designed to lure the tourist trade to Germany

The third stage of German post-war history coincided with the ushering in of the world crisis, which hit Germany with frightful force As in the United States, production fell approximately 50 per cent below 1929 levels, and the number of registered unemployed equalled six million, signifying perhaps ten to twelve million actually unemployed The German capitalist

[1] R A Brady, work cited, p 391

system was faced either with complete bankruptcy or with revolution, unless it could re-establish its position as an imperialist power. The sole way out for the German bourgeoisie was the way of fascism.

Above all, the German system had to stem the enormous financial drain on its resources arising from reparations payments, charges on private debts, and social insurance. Under the Dawes and Young plans, Germany had already paid out twelve billion marks. This she could do only so long as she could sell her goods in foreign markets and was able to receive loans from America. But in return for her magnanimous aid, America insisted upon mortgaging German railroads and public utilities, and placing its hands upon the very vitals of the nation.

During the crisis, Germany was unable to sell its goods and could pay nothing. Thus a breach was made in the Versailles Treaty by "act of God," that is, by the havoc of the crisis, rather than by the military might of Germany. This was now the opportune moment for German capitalism to break the entire Versailles Treaty to pieces. Thus, German big business had to turn its face away from pacific means of persuasion to the violent ferocity of the fascist attack to destroy the Versailles Treaty. Once the Versailles Treaty was broken, the question of the payment of private debts could be handled through diplomatic channels and arranged in accordance with the situation.

Hand in hand with this went the necessity of capital to free itself from the enormous cost of the social insurance which had been foisted upon it by the socialists. The German system no longer could tolerate reforms if it were to resume its former position. Payment of unemployment insurance to six million workers and their dependents in Germany was an intolerable act destined to deprive capital of its virility in international competition, and could result only in a stagnation of the sort that could be seen in its sister capital city, Vienna, where the city's chief achievements were co-operative bedrooms, coffee drunk with whipped cream, museums and monuments carefully dusted, soft music played in slow tempo, and the psychopathology of Freud.

The crisis threw into bankruptcy some of the larger concerns of Germany, such as the Wollkammerai in textiles, the great Dresdener Bank, etc. As it rushed to save such concerns, buying heavily of their stocks and taking direct control, the German government itself was threatened with complete bankruptcy. This in turn compelled the most powerful nations of the world, such as England and America, to go off the gold standard and to declare a moratorium of payments of debts from Germany. Such was the world division of labor that, in spite of themselves, the countries that most hated Germany were forced to save it.

On the other hand, with the advent of the crisis, the Socialist Party steadily lost ground to the communists, as the masses moved to the Left. What else could be expected in a country where the statistics demonstrated that the suicide rate was twice that of the United States and higher than that of any other country, and where a study of the yearly income of the people showed that less than 3 per cent, or one million had over five thousand marks annual income (equivalent to about $1,250), and that seventeen and one-half million people earned less than one thousand five hundred marks ($350.00) annually? As the working class movement drifted Leftward, the German capitalists were forced to resort to the violent methods of fascism which at the same time offered them the opportunity of winning the ruined middle classes which the criminal socialist and communist bureaucracies had not been able to influence and which were ready to support the new German imperialism as a way out.

Thus, in the short space of fourteen years, the German Republic burned itself out. With Hindenburg's second election as President, the whole rotten structure gave way. Hindenburg gracefully effaced himself in favor of Hitler.

2

It was after the war, in 1919, that Adolph Hitler determined to enter politics and joined a small organization in Munich called the German Workers Party. This was a group of men united by their refusal to accept the betrayal of the army which they felt had been stabbed in the back. There were only twenty-eight members, of whom six were active, and Hitler received membership card number 7.

The original program of Hitler was exceedingly vague. One of his principal obsessions was the ignominy of the fact that those who had gone into the army and served in the War, who had proved their heroism and nobility, should return home only to see cowards and weaklings counting heads in a democratic fashion, ignoring the strong men who had sacrificed their all at the front. He cursed the Versailles Treaty, the high cost of living, the failure to reward the veteran and the soldier. He was the incarnation of the revengefulness of the embittered soldier. And there were plenty of battered, worn-out people, impoverished and reduced in circumstances, who could listen to Hitler, each one of them yearning to strike out with clenched fist. They could be led by the soldier who was accustomed to commands and leadership.

The vague religious mysticism of Hitler and his method of impassioned appeal found a natural outlet amid the social wreckage of the great war whereby ruin and decay faced the middle class, and to which class there was no future save to rot. "Not all embittered petty bourgeois can become

a Hitler, but a bit of Hitler can be found in each one of them." [1] This was the element, led by former soldiers who could not reconcile themselves to the new situation, that composed the beginnings of National Socialism.

Hitler was prepared for his future role by his adherence to the ideology of the Christian Socialist Party in Vienna. This group was ardently Pan-Germanist It believed that the Austrian monarchy was rotten to the core and that it was bound to collapse, first, because instead of uniting the Germans of Europe into one empire, it had divided them into two opposing monarchies, and second, because, thus divided, the Germans in Austria were not able to control the various subject nationalities that composed that "prison of the peoples," Austro Hungary The Austro-Germans were being reduced to a relatively secondary place as other nationalities steadily won concessions granted to forestall their independence This Austrian party, therefore, worked hand in glove with Berlin and yearned for organic unity between German Austria and the real Fatherland Inspired by this Pan-Germanism, Adolph Hitler volunteered in the War Yet the very reasons for his patriotism demonstrated that German industry could no longer be contained within national boundaries Nationalism was choking modern industry to death, this fact could lead Hitler only to National Socialism

Naturally, such an Austrian party would assume an anti-Semitic position, since the Jews had no special interest in Pan-Germanism, but, on the contrary, supported Franz Josef and held an important place in the financial and economic life of the Empire, and even dominated large sections of the City of Vienna itself The Christian Socialist Party believed it could fight the Jew by attacking Judaism, that is, the religion of the Jew. It also attacked the Jew as a Marxist and as a money lender. But religious toleration had to be practiced in such a conglomerate Empire as the Austro-Hungarian, also, trade and money lending were highly respectable vocations Furthermore, the masses of people manifested a trend towards socialism Thus it was exceedingly difficult to carry on anti-Semitic attacks, and the Party failed.

It remained for Hitler to link up the attack against the Jew with a program of race that could also be utilized to fuse Germany and Austria into one organic whole. Hitler set up the "devil Jew" as the antithesis to the godly Germanic race, and thus created a scape goat for his world philosophy. "Thus did I now believe that I must act in the sense of the

[1] Leon Trotsky A Portrait of National Socialism, *Class Struggle* official organ of the Communist League of Struggle, Vol IV, No 1, Jan 1934

Almighty Creator: by fighting against the Jews I am doing the Lord's work."[1]

Even in those early days, then, Hitler had conceived as an absolute principle the complete unification of the German people. The loose empire of the Hapsburgs was worthless. Parliament was nothing but a pack of rascals. It was necessary to fight to the end against democracy and the Jewish doctrine of Marxism which rejected the aristocratic principle in nature, and, in place of the eternal privilege of force and strength, set up the massed weight of dead numbers, denied the value of individuality among men, combated the importance of nationality and race, and thereby deprived humanity of the whole manner of its existence and culture.[2] Germanic democracy was the opposite of Jewish democracy; it was the free choice of the leader who achieved responsibility and power and who backed up his decision with his life.[3]

According to Hitler, the human race was to be divided into three categories, fighters, maintainers, and destroyers of culture The Aryan stock alone could be considered as representing the first category.[4]

Hitler also borrowed from the Christian Socialists the distinction between speculative capital and industrial capital. Money, stocks, bonds, bourses and exchanges, and speculative investments of all sorts became anathema to him, as they had been originally considered sinful to the Catholic Church whose devout disciple Hitler was. The cynical Mussolini knew how to use the church, the devout Hitler knelt before it; the former knew his Machiavelli, the latter was a victim of Metternich's police mysticism. This mysticism, however, could attract the decayed middle classes of Germany, although it could not win any workers to Hitler's cause

From the very beginning, Hitler understood the necessity of reaching the masses with his propaganda For this reason, the group of which he was a member had called itself a *workers'* party, and later, as the organization grew, had added to this title the term "Socialist" so as to become the National Socialist German Workers Party (N.S.D A P). In this manner he was able to appeal to sections of the lower middle classes which above all desired an end to the interminable horrors prevailing in political life, and yearned for security, stability, and order The petty proprietors had turned first to the socialists for this; when the socialists would not take power and the Communist Party proved incapable of doing so, the failure

[1] A Hitler *My Battle* p 25
[2] See, A Hitler The same, pp 24 25
[3] The same, pp 38, 39
[4] The same p 122
As an example of the value of keeping the blood pure, Hitler cites the United States, which to him presents itself as an excellent example where the Aryan did not mix with other races!

of the workingmen drove the middle class, especially the soldier groupings, to the other side. "The fairy tales that the National Socialists have saved Germany from Communism, which were broadcast for foreign consumption by official German propaganda, were not taken seriously in foreign banking circles, where it was known that, for the past ten years or so, there had no longer existed any Communist danger in Germany"[1] In proportion as the working class lost its strength and proved incapable of establishing a suitable rule, in that proportion did the petty bourgeoisie become anti working class

It was highly significant that the fascist movement of Hitler should have been impelled to recognize the value of using the name "Socialist" So thoroughly had Marx's concepts penetrated into the masses of people and, in actual fact, so classically had the laws of capitalism worked out as the Marxists had predicted, that the only way to raise any mass support was to appear as a socialist offering a special brand Here is an illustration of the excellent flexibility and demagogy that private property can display when necessary Before it rose to power, National Socialism had to stress as much as possible its "socialistic" features

Hitler offered to the middle classes a socialism that would relieve them of the pressure of big business by pressing down most heavily upon those still lower in the social scale The only way of reviving the lost social dignity of the depraved middle class was evidently through the destruction of workers' organizations

By 1920 the National Socialists were able to formulate their official program[2] Like the Italian fascists, they made a fetich of the nobility of labor and launched a demagogic attack against forms of capitalism No longer were there to be any idlers in Germany Incomes not earned by work were to be abolished Especially speculative money capital was to be attacked, an end must be made to the slavery of interest The activities of the individual must not conflict with the welfare of the whole, but must proceed entirely within the frame of the community Demands were made for ruthless treatment of those whose activities were injurious to the common interest, including usurers, profiteers, and such, who were to be punished with death, regardless of race All trusts were to be nationalized The profits from wholesale trade were to be shared

Special appeals were made to particular elements of the middle class For the soldier, the plank was inserted that, in view of the enormous sacrifice of life and property demanded by a nation in every war, personal aggrandizement in war must be regarded as a crime against the nation

[1] P Einzig *Germany's Default* (1934) p 27

[2] For the program, see, P Einzig Work cited, p 125 and following

Fascism demanded, therefore, ruthless confiscation of all war gains. To attract the small business man, there was included the principle that the creation and maintenance of a healthy middle class was of the utmost importance. Special attention, too, was paid to the peasantry, and demands were made for a land reform suitable to national requirements, for the passage of a law confiscating, without compensation, land for communal purposes, for the abolition of interest on land loans, and for the prevention of all speculation in land.

As to foreign policy, the National Socialists demanded the creation of the unity of all Germans to form a new Germany on the principle of self-determination for every nationality, the wiping out of the Treaty clauses that stigmatized the Germans as being responsible for the war, the complete equality of the German people in its dealing with other nations, and the restoration of colonies to Germany. Finally, they insisted that Germany be given whatever land and territories she needed for the nourishment of her people and for the settling of her superfluous population.

For the workers, a system of complete social insurance was advocated and a demand made upon the employers for an end of the latter's right recklessly and criminally to mistreat labor. The standard of health in the nation was to be protected. Child labor was to be abolished.

According to the Nazis, the German State itself was to intervene in all economic affairs. None but members of the nation could be citizens; none except those of German blood, whatever their creed, could be members of the nation. Thus the nation was to consist of three categories: citizens, subjects, and foreigners. The Jew could not be a citizen. Only Germans could be editors of the press. The old Roman law must be overthrown entirely, so that the true German spirit could be manifested in the codes.

While liberty for all religious denominations in the State was to be secured, it would be only on condition that these denominations were no danger to the State and did not militate against the moral feelings of the German race. On the question of religion and philosophy, the Party declared: "The Party as such stands for positive Christianity but does not bind itself in the matter of the creed to any particular confession. It combats the Jewish materialist spirit within and without us and is convinced that our nation can only achieve permanent health from within on the principle, the common interest before self."

The first activity of the Nazis was to join hands with the reactionary nationalists under the leadership of General Ludendorf who, in 1923, attempted to overthrow the Republic and re-establish the old order. In command in Munich was General Rittendorf, under whom Hitler and his

group placed their forces. With the collapse of the *putsch,* Hitler was arrested in November, 1923, and sentenced to five years in jail. While the trial was taking place, the Nazi Party formed a bloc with the German People's Party, and obtained thirty-two seats in 1924. Upon his release from prison in 1925, Hitler immediately reorganized his party and inaugurated its official paper, the *"Voelkische Beobachter."* In the elections of 1928, although the German People's Party was practically wiped out, the Nazis were able to obtain eight hundred thousand votes and twelve seats in the Reichstag. In 1929, they combined with the German Nationalist Party to fight the Young Plan by advocating a referendum of the people. The referendum failed, although the Nazis obtained considerable support by this measure.

The tremendous crisis of German life ushered in with 1930 afforded the National Socialists their chance. As the communist forces degenerated, they proved unable to fight the fascists, but rather played directly into their hands. Hitler had nothing but contempt for the superlative cowardice which the socialist and communist leaders displayed. "One reason why it never got as far as breaking up our meetings was indubitably the extraordinary cowardice displayed by our opponents' leaders. At all critical moments these despicable creatures waited outside the halls for the result of the explosion." [1]

The Nazis, on the other hand, employed the most radical slogans. They never tired of demonstrating the complete collapse of the Republic in freeing the people or in solving the problems of Germany. They denounced the miserable pacifism of the socialists in foreign affairs, a policy which had made Germany a football for all the other powers. They castigated the irresponsible criminality of the capitalist Liberals who threw out so many from work. They raised the slogan, *"Arbeit und Brot,"* work and bread, insisting that every worker had a place in society that must be respected, and denouncing capitalist profiteering greed

From this time, the Nazis adopted violent action, a move made possible, first, because of the frailness of the government and the willingness of the Hindenburg régime to utilize the Nazis (similar to the situation in Italy whereby the police and Royal Guards aided the Black Shirts); and second, because the workers were hopelessly divided by the socialist and communist misleaders in their ranks.

By now the Nazis were enthusiastically supported by the heavy industrial elements such as the immensely wealthy Thynnes trust. This concern subsidized the Nazi movement, enabling it to organize its Brown Shirts

[1] A Hitler *My Battle* p 206 Certainly very few of the so called Marxist leaders could meet the test laid down by Hitler that every leader must be ready to back up his principles with his life

on a wholesale fashion, supplying the money for the clothes, the barracks, the arms, the food, etc At the same time, the government mightily aided Hitler. First it forbade both the workers and the Nazis from wearing uniforms and marching in the street; after the socialists willingly obeyed, it revoked this prohibition regarding the Nazis, but retained it against the Red Front fighters of the communists. As in Italy, the situation was carefully developed to concentrate attack upon the communists, and to dally with the socialists until the proper moment for their dismissal, while the government heavily supported the fascists.

The task before the Nazis was, however, no simple one. In spite of the enormous pressure, the workers' ranks remained absolutely firm, hardly any breaking from either socialists or communists. Up to the very end, these parties received a total of fourteen million votes, coupled with a steady drift to the Left in favor of the communists. Before seizing power the Nazis had to accomplish the assimilation of the royalists and the agrarian elements, organized in the Nationalist Party under Hugenberg and in the veterans' organization, the Stahlhelm Hitler's second objective was to break up the coalition between the Catholic Centrists, the bourgeois liberals, and the socialists. The Nazis' third aim was the consolidation of their own organizations in order to become the largest single force in the Reich. Their fourth task was to penetrate gradually into the government in order to permit them to assume power without too great upheaval.

The Nazis, now the agents of big trustified finance capital connected with the State, easily brought about a deal with the royalists Certain sections of the monarchists held out stubbornly for the return of the Kaiser or the Crown Prince, for the restoration of the old Empire, wherein prosperity and glory had signalized the German rule An especially difficult group to reconcile was the die-hard monarchists composed of those who had benefited by the federalism of the former German Empire, that is, by the existence of a number of petty monarchies such as those in Bavaria, and Saxony.

Most of the royalists were content to make certain temporary concessions. If they could retain their hold of the officerships within the army, and if their large-scale agrarian interests could be preserved, there was no reason why they should not support the Nazis, particularly since the monarchy had been unpopular and since it could not be re-established without a violent revolution, which everyone wanted to avoid True, the industrialists had done nothing to drive out the Kaiser in 1918; also true, they no longer were willing to play a servient role in German political affairs and in the administration of the State.

Federalism German industry could not tolerate for a moment. If the markets of all Germany were not sufficient, even before the war, and had

compelled the industrialist to adopt a policy of Pan-Germanism, the return to the provincial autonomy of Bavaria, Saxony, or Hesse would be the last straw. The Nazis were determined to centralize completely the entire country, thus bringing about in Germany what had been accomplished in France and what Mussolini was achieving in Italy.

On this question, too, the struggle between the two elements continued for some time, often coming to blows. However, the common sense of the ruling class prevailed. Industry was given the leadership, with important concessions made to the wealthy landlords in the State apparatus, and the two finally were fused together. Hugenberg was not a candidate for President when Hitler competed with Hindenburg in the 1932 elections.

The breaking up of the Weimar coalition government also was not a difficult task. Under the blows of the world crisis, the government was patently bankrupt, and was forced into a series of extremely unpopular anti-working class measures. As the Reichstag was bound to resist these measures, the Catholic Centrist Party, supported by Hindenburg, was forced to carry on the government by means of emergency decrees of the Chancellor. Gradually parliament was placed in a secondary position in relation to the *faits accomplis* of the government, issued in the form of administrative orders which constantly increased the burdens of the crisis on the people. Under the Chancellorship of Bruening, the methods of dictatorship and the measures curtailing social reforms and welfare schemes were given a prominent push forward.

The socialists unofficially took responsibility for this action, since they maintained the coalition. Their chief fire was directed not against Hitler but against the communists. The organization of militants which they had formed, called the "Iron Front," composed of republicans, trade unionists and socialists, made no serious resistance to the attacks by either the government or the fascists, and calmly submitted to being disarmed and disuniformed. It should be remembered that the socialists were at the head of the government in Berlin, in Prussia, and in the most important sections of Germany. It was the police under the socialists who helped to beat down the communists and to disarm the Reds, while the fascists executed their raids.

As the governmental crisis increased, particularly as the foreign pressure of the Young Plan became unbearable and bankruptcy was rife, the parliamentary régime gave way to the temporary Bonapartist dictatorships of Von Papen and Von Schleicher, who held power until the second election of Hindenburg in 1932. The socialists refused to enter a candidate against Hindenburg on the ground that Hindenburg was the mainstay of the German Republic and the hero of the people, one who would keep intact

the democracy and social reforms which had been won. No sooner was Hindenburg re-elected, however, than he allowed Hitler to become Chancellor. This was providential, for already the vote had shown that the peak of Nazi popularity had passed; it was either then or never. Once Hitler had become Chancellor, he was able to call new elections under his absolute control and to do in Germany what Mussolini had done at Rome. There was no fascist "march on Berlin," however, for the simple reason that, owing to the action of the government and the failure of the workers, Hitler had already become established in Berlin before becoming Chancellor.

The elections, of course, gave an overwhelming return to the Nazis, all the other parties of property, except the Catholic Centre, merging with them. Only the working class elements under the socialists and communists held firm. To break the power of the workers, the Reichstag fire was staged and a wholesale attack instituted against the communists. Thousands of workers were killed, hundreds of thousands either were forced to flee the country or were placed in concentration camps. The fascist "revolution" was in progress.

Nor were the socialists spared, and, when some of their leaders like Scheidemann begged Hitler to be allowed to retain their State pensions, Hitler mockingly reported this act to a huge gathering of his followers, pointing out how "these socialist swine" were interested only in maintaining their private pensions, so much so that they were willing to beg the hangman of the socialists to give them their money. The Socialist Party was shattered as a counter-revolutionary force, as it had been broken by the war as a revolutionary one.

The victory of Nazism spelled the doom of the Versailles Treaty and the authority of the League of Nations. All reparations were cancelled. A moratorium was placed on the payment of interest on private debts. Instead of the pacific liberal policy of the Second Reich, new Germany began a vigorous policy to recover all the territory it had lost, and to build its own system of alliances. Fascism immediately became strong in Austria and throughout Eastern Europe, from the Baltic to the Balkans; the Saar Basin was reincorporated into Germany; the Rhine became re-militarized. The demand was raised for the return of that part of Silesia seized from Prussia after the War. While tension has increased in the Polish corridor, this has been mitigated partly by the alliance between Poland and Germany for war against the Soviet Union. Simultaneously Germany has borne down on Austria to compel *Anschluss*.

Hand in hand with this has gone a feverish importation of war materials, a complete re-arming of the population, and a thorough reconstruction of the army and navy. Germany has been transformed into an immense war camp, working night and day for the impending conflict. The whole

nation has been mobilized as a monolithic whole in preparation for the struggle, and has become infested with a war-like ideology, borrowing heavily from Nietzsche, Spengler, and the old Pan-Germanists. Just as all individual problems have become subjected to the welfare of the State, so all State problems have become subordinated to the matter of war. In order to prosecute this war, which is the very breath of life of the Nazis, all measures of their program are propagated, whether it be a theory of autarchy, a religion of paganism, a hereditary land system, or a smashing of the trade union organizations. Under the mad guidance of the fascists, the German people are plunging to destruction.

3

The economic principles of the German National Socialists revolve around the theory of autarchy, or self-rule. This autarchy is supposed to put an end to theories of nineteenth century competitive capital. While retaining industrial capital, the Nazis intend to wipe out the fluctuations of the market and of prices and to insure a stable order. As to their methods for accomplishing this magic, the theoreticians are extremely vague, yet enough has been said about autarchy to enable us to analyze the scientific character of these proposals.

In the first place, autarchy means the complete economic self-sufficiency of the country, not in the loose Italian fascist sense which connotes hardly more than an ability of the country to feed itself and proposes some degree of control over industry by the State, but in a far more comprehensive manner. The State is to interfere intimately with the administration of every business. Industries are to be organized not in loose corporations but in mighty trusts, connected with the State. That is, the State not merely is to control industry, but actually is to consider the productive machinery as its own property and to dominate it completely. Capitalism thus becomes State capitalism in a far more completed sense than ever before, and the industrialist must consider himself as a direct officer of the government, working according to plan.

To a certain extent the theory of autarchy makes a virtue of necessity. During the World War and afterwards, an extremely tight blockade was established around the German State. Now, too, a blockade to some extent exists and may become more severe. This is a fact which the Nazis accept and use as a strong point in support of their plans. That the fascists would be reduced to the necessity of some such theory as autarchy was obvious when, under the force of the crisis, the gold coverage for paper money in Germany fell from 24 per cent to less than 2 per cent. Autarchy would prevent this drain of gold; simultaneously it would fit in very well with the denunciation of the international financiers and credit sharks. Then,

too, autarchy could be used to advocate the non-payment of foreign debts, since each nation must stand on its own feet, and the slavery of interest must be broken.

It is hard to believe that the Nazis can take seriously their denunciations of interest and the credit system, or that they can imagine that large-scale industry can flourish today except through the medium of loans and credits. Denounce speculative capital as they will, they cannot deny that it is only through the amassing of such speculative capital that private industrialists can obtain their support in founding new industries in a modern and efficient manner, or in maintaining their old functions on a higher scale. Were each capitalist to wait until he himself had accumulated the money necessary before expanding his business, expansion would be a slow and prolonged process. The centralization of capital in the hands of bankers, brokers, speculators, and such, is the normal method under capitalism by which industrial production can be increased.

The Nazis pretend that finance and money have nothing to do with industrial progress under the present system. What the Nazis really mean is that, with the bankruptcy of German economy, no foreign capital is flowing into Germany. Private industry must beg the State itself for aid; the State now becomes the chief financier and speculator par excellence.

Self-sufficiency is also extremely imperative in time of war, especially since Germany has felt that all around it there exists a steel ring and that she must rely upon her own internal strength. It is this reliance on the internal rather than the external that lends weight to the introspective mysticism of German politics and its violent race theories. The Germans are alone; they are an Ishmael among nations. They must stand alone and glory in their race.

The tenets of autarchy of the Germans are but the logical result of the imperialism of the League of Nations which Balkanized Europe and set up entirely indefeasible independent States each of which, to maintain its existence, was forced to erect large tariff walls. The World War broke up the old world division of labor; the process was continued by the Liberals of Versailles; German Fascism completes it.

Theories of self-sufficiency affirm that the government must make an effort to support those industries which are failing in international competition and which otherwise would be driven out of existence. The State, therefore, must subsidize and support a backward technique which ordinarily would be discarded. Thus, the program of self-sufficiency to a considerable extent must lead to stagnation of the productive processes. The politics of autarchy here interferes with economic progress and in this sense becomes reactionary.

In compensation for this, the autarchic State must make every effort

to find substitutes for the better materials found abroad. This may lead to a great expansion of the chemical and other industries and to the devising of entirely new methods of production, such as the manufacture of rubber from plants, the making of clothes from paper, etc. These substitute products, however, are frequently inferior to products available elsewhere, and the burden falls upon the consumer who must use them. Insofar as the production of these substitutes keeps pace with a development of science, it is a cultural advance; the usual result, however, is a conservation of inferior products rather than a development of science on the basis of the use of the best available material. In this sense, too, autarchic science becomes reactionary.

It must not be supposed, however, that the German economists really believe that they can achieve complete self-sufficiency or complete economic autonomy. The imperative needs of war demand a close watch upon the latest events in every country in the world. The Germans must borrow their inventions from every nation; they must steal their ideas even from the Jews. The waging of war is a ruthless rhythm demanding the highest perfection of technique at the risk of defeat. Self-sufficiency in goods which Germany cannot produce and which she must possess in order to carry on war can imply, then, only an organized and systematic purchase of raw materials from other countries to establish a reserve for time of war.

To believe that fascism means the destruction of large-scale industry is a fatal mistake.[1] Far from it. The chief financial backers as well as the beneficiaries have been precisely the mighty imperialist industries. It is not the petty bourgeoisie that runs the fascist movement; it is the big trusts who use the petty bourgeoisie as their tools to crush the workers; this accomplished, petty property is again reduced to insignificance.

The whole aim of the State is to increase its power in time of war. Fascism could never come into existence were it not for reasons of war. To believe that the German State wants to break down large-scale industry, so much needed by Mars, in favor of petty incomes, is to understand nothing about Germany, about National Socialism, or about the period in which we live.

The theory of self-sufficiency, if carried out elsewhere as well as in Germany, would spell a complete disruption of the world division of labor and a permanent segregation of nationalities. The world would tend to become a crazy-patch quilt of one nation in mechanical juxtaposition to another, rather than a fusing of each into one integrated and co-ordinated whole, every nationality contributing its cultural achievements for the use of the whole world. It would produce, especially in agricultural countries, tre-

[1] This is the view of Dr. Scott Nearing and similar communists.

mendously reduced levels of living, since such countries can improve their lot only by world trade and exchange.

Nor could German autarchy terminate international competition. It could only intensify world rivalry. If Germany is striving for autarchy, it is only so that she can restrict imports as much as possible and expand her industries to the maximum in order to dump the enormous surplus products on the world market. Competition remains there, but it takes on a snarling, vicious form compatible only with efforts of war.

No matter how vehemently the Nazis may denounce competition, their theories of autarchy, with their postulate of a wholly integrated national economy acting as a mighty frictionless machine, presuppose an international competition more intensified than ever. Fascism is but a better equipment for this higher international competition.

A self-sufficient Germany would intensify international competition in other ways. All the smaller countries of Europe depend for their livelihood upon German foreign trade, which in turn dominates a major portion of the foreign economic activity of Eastern Europe. The prohibiting of imports by Germany already has thrown these countries into fierce convulsions. They have been compelled to enter into a sharper competition among themselves for the limited markets left. On the other hand, they have been reduced further to acknowledging their dependence upon the German system. German autarchy, therefore, has immensely consolidated German influence in the smaller countries of Europe. These countries had relied upon the Versailles Treaty for their protection. Now that the Versailles Treaty has broken down, and the unchallenged punishment of the German system has fallen upon them, they can do nothing but capitulate to this mighty machine in the heart of Europe.

Should these smaller countries resist capitulation, the increased economic difficulties which they will bring upon themselves will cause such intense internal antagonisms and class conflicts as to compel the ruling classes to run in fright to the protection of the strongest reactionary force in Europe, namely, German Nazism. Thus, for example, in the Baltic States, the consciousness of these small countries of their complete economic dependence on German economy has brought them into close alliance with Nazism. In short, the very Versailles Treaty which broke up Europe into small countries and was designed to spell the end of German influence, has now played directly into the hands of the German ruling class. Autarchy, therefore, far from being purely a nationalist principle of retreat from world events, has become an enormous weapon in the hands of the fascists to dominate international affairs.

Nor can autarchy stop competition within the nation. Since it must rely for its troops upon the middle class, it must permit competitive action,

markets and prices to exist. What is far more important, big business remains on a capitalist basis. Fundamentally, it is not the State that controls the capitalist, it is the capitalist who uses and controls the State. The capitalist is in business for profit. His profits are inherent in surplus goods of which he must dispose. The capitalist can dispose of his surplus by selling it abroad, which means intensified international competition and maintenance of a world division of labor, or he can utilize the surplus products by storing them in the name of the State for war.

This second alternative is the peculiar contribution of the practice of autarchy. The State enters into all business, taxing the people to subsidize industries and to produce the surplus product which is mainly war material. Hence, the State does its utmost to shift economy from means of consumption to means of production, from light industry to heavy industry and large-scale production. In this way, the State intervenes to increase still further the organic composition of capital, to enhance the productivity of labor, and to add to all the contradictions of capitalism. If the State stores the surplus product merely to render the explosion of war more terrible, it also stores up the surplus labor, regimenting and militarizing the unemployed, placing them in barracks, training them ceaselessly for the coming fighting.

The economics of autarchy is intertwined with the politics of the totalitarian State. In the use of the term "totalitarian," the German here shows a great distinction between his National Socialism and Italian fascism. In Germany, the State is not merely a co-ordinator, organizing private petty industry into corporative associations and then seeing that both sides come together on their own initiative to work out a labor contract which the State will enforce. The mighty German industrial machine permits no such picayune trivialities. National socialism begins where Italian fascism ends, namely, with a Grand Economic Council that is part of its General Staff and that intervenes in the life of every large business corporation. The initiative and free play of the entrepreneur, in which the Italian fascist glories, do not exist in Nazi theory.

The Italians have stressed the egotistic principle of self-interest to bring both worker and capitalist into the corporations. The Germans abhor the doctrine of personal self-interest. They improve the Italian pass-word, "Everything for the State, nothing outside the State," with the Hegelian statement, "The individual is nothing, but is completely fused to the State, which is all." A sign hangs before the concentration camps of Germany: *"Du bist nichts,"*—you are nothing.

Such principles have permitted masses of Germans to believe that the National Socialists are really anti-capitalists. When the Hitler revolution

began, the large body of petty bourgeois adherents who had believed in the socialism of the Nazi program thought that there would take place immediately public control of all industries and compulsory cartelization; the right to fire employees would be curtailed; storm troop commissars would be supreme; competition would come to an end. This was the socialism of the little fellow that was to control the big fellow and smash the proletariat.

There is no question that the phrases of the Nazis lent themselves to such interpretation and, as a matter of fact, storm troopers were placed in control of industries, directors were cursorily dismissed, and owners were dispossessed. But all this was really for the ultimate benefit of the industrialists. The Nazi State soon roughly removed its petty bourgeois agents who had invaded the premises of the industrialists. The Nazi Party was purged of its Left socialists by the wholesale executions of leaders of the storm troops and others.

A situation entirely different from that which existed before the advent of Hitler, however, has remained. Theoretically, all industry is now considered part of public property which the owners, as servants of the State, hold only in trust. What this really means is that the big business that controls the State has determined to control all the other concerns as well and to bring labor in line with their plans. The State aids in every possible way all the industrial works under its guidance; in return, these plants become the secondary arms of the military machine preparing for war.

The practice of the totalitarian State involves a policy of the most rampant and rasping nationalism. The Nazis would have one believe that liberalism never had had anything in common with nationalism, but had turned over the country to international communism. As a matter of fact, of course, nationalism sprang into prominence precisely in the era of the rise of Liberalism. German fascist nationalism is no more solid than is the French variety, although the French fight their national wars with slogans of the French democratic revolution. There is this difference, however, between the two: French nationalism played a tremendously progressive role in world history, wiping out the petty provincial restrictions of industry that had prevailed in Europe, and throwing into the discard the relations of the *ancien régime,* even creating the national unity of Germany itself. The nationalism of Liberalism partially was responsible for an enormous expansion of world trade and the complete interconnection of one nation with the other. Just the opposite is the nationalism of fascism. It is a nationalism that would render permanent a complete blockade of one country against the other. There are no liberating factors in fascism. It displays merely an invidious and unrelieved lust for conquest and mastery.

XXX. NATIONAL SOCIALISM (CONTINUED)

I

THE emergence of the huge German totalitarian State has effectuated a terrific realignment in the international sphere. It has become very plain that there is now no bourgeois force in Eastern Europe capable of stopping the German advance towards the East. The pressure upon Austria, Hungary, and Eastern Europe has immeasurably increased.

Immediately after the World War, the French imperialists attempted to forge from the fragments of Europe some sort of counter-weight east of Germany. The newly created smaller nations were to be at the same time a wall against Russian communism and a steel ring around Germany. As a wall, the smaller nations were able to hold their ground, but as a ring, they have been broken to pieces. France has come to realize that nothing can take the place of the solid mass of Russians as its supporters. The fragments from Finland to Roumania are after all but fragments, and cannot replace Russia.

It was felt, too, that Italy could be a counter-weight to German ambitions in Austria, in Hungary, and in the Balkans, but that counter-weight, too, has been taken away and, there has been substituted the increasing possibility of Germany and Italy's working together. A further point that is becoming increasingly clear is that Central Europe belongs to Germany.

As Germany goes, so must go the rest of Central and Eastern capitalist Europe Already Germany has been able to break up the Polish-French alliance and lay the basis for cracking the Little Entente Following the war, France and Britain were able to lead in continental affairs only because Germany was dismantled and disarmed, but the fateful law that politics must eventually follow economics has manifested itself in Europe as well. Not forever would the economically weaker countries like France and England drain the lifeblood of German capitalism.

At least before 1914, these two countries could rely on Czarist Russia. Now there is no such reliance. The advent of the Russian Revolution ended the old European balance of power. Now that Germany is taking advantage of this lack of equilibrium, France and England must work feverishly and desperately to restore a capitalist régime in Russia to counterbalance Germany. Whether they can succeed in doing so depends upon

whether the workers or the bureaucrats within Russia prevail. Should the workers maintain the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, it is inconceivable that they will fight for French and British imperialism. Thus, not only Germany, but France and England as well, each in her own way, must work for the breakdown of the workers' rule in Russia. If this breakdown cannot be procured peacefully, it must be accomplished through war.

The depreciation of the power of the former victorious countries is rendered more acute by the provisions of the Versailles Treaty which Balkanized Europe and cut it up into little fragments. The newly created countries of East Europe now are forced to beg for peace with the Germans. Torn between Russian communism on the one hand and German fascism on the other, the ruling classes of these countries, whether Polish, Lettish, or Bulgarian, etc., can choose only one course, fascism. Hence, in all the small countries of Eastern Europe, fascistic development is taking place with extraordinary rapidity. In the Baltic, this is aided by the fact that the ruling classes of these provinces are of German extraction, trained by German culture, and holding the deadliest hatred for Russian communism.

The policy of French and British imperialism has been to establish around the Soviet Union a *cordon sanitaire*, linked by a chain of military dictatorships armed to the teeth against Russia. Thus it is precisely these Eastern countries which Germany is winning over to its side, countries, which, ever since the World War, have been thoroughly prepared for battle, mobilized, financed, and armed by the Versailles powers themselves. The irony of fate decrees that these militarist powers join Germany. All that remains for England and France are the relatively peaceful and disarmed countries, such as Scandinavia and Holland, on the one hand; on the other hand, whatever militarist support the former victors may secure consists of such nations as Czecho-Slovakia or Jugo-Slavia, which are isolated from each other and are too weak to fight alone.

The victory of German fascism is of great importance in winning an alliance with Poland. The Polish ruling class knows well that it stands in the line of fire between Russian communism and German fascism, and that it will be forced to take sides in the coming war. Without hesitation it has chosen Germany. The Germans, in return for united action against the Soviet Union, offer the enormously rich territory of the Ukraine to Poland; thus the old Polish Empire is to be reconstituted. Poland may realize also well that, once Germany wins the war against Russia, its own independence would be in an extremely precarious state, but Poland has no choice in the matter, and rather hopes that, with the downfall of Russian communism, a new Polish alliance can spring up that would block German pretensions to swallow Poland. As the Polish population numbers thirty-five million, and as, with the aid of the French, they have built up a respectable

military machine, Poland's alliance with Germany is decisive for future politics.

The increase of pressure that German fascism can place upon Austria has resulted in the complete isolation of Czecho-Slovakia. There is no question that as a military force Czecho-Slovakia's power has become considerably reduced, especially when within that country there are over three million Germans who form a strong force ready to break up the ruling class of that country from within. Added to this is her economic dependence upon German trade. Hence, whether we look at the economic or the political situation, internally or externally, the position of Czecho-Slovakia is extremely weak. Apparently doomed as an independent nation and race, her future under capitalism is a dismal one.

The struggle for a new German Empire coincides with the struggle against international communism as embodied in the Soviet Union. This is the logical continuation of the extermination of the German Communist Party. The Hitler movement carries forward under present day conditions the highest dreams of the Pan-German movement, with its famous directive *"Drang nach Osten."* With one and the same stroke, German imperialism can silence the menace of communism and can carve out a territory for itself.

The idea that this is the historic destination of German fascism is buttressed by the fact that there is no other capitalist force in Europe strong enough to break the Soviet Union. England and France, the victorious powers of Versailles, with the benign support of America, all tried to break that huge mass, the workers and peasants of Russia, but failed. It is the punishment of those who fail to be cast into the discard of history. Having failed to break the power of the Soviet Union, by that fact alone France and England gave up their historic roles in Europe. Their failure was a sign that communism had now become so strong that, to defeat it, an entirely new set-up was necessary. To overwhelm the Soviet Union there must be launched against it, first, not small industrial countries, but the most powerful countries of Europe; second, not a Europe divided into defeated and victorious powers, but a Europe entirely united; third, not countries accustomed to democratic pacifism with its waste and inefficiency, but countries that can be mobilized as a unit under the military; fourth, not a haphazard attack only through the flank, North and South, or by means of a navy, but the most awful direct military avalanche known to history, hurled by an immense army at the heart of Russia—Moscow. This combination alone can accomplish the victory, and only Germany can forge this mighty chain of events. To put it another way, capitalism, sick unto death, must call upon its greatest and most highly developed power in

Europe to take the leadership in the struggle against communism and the Soviet Union.

Here, then, is the basic reason why German Nazism believes with such fervid intensity in the godliness of its destiny, that it alone can form a united front of Europe for the destruction of communism. Thus Hitler appears to his protagonists as a veritable St. George arming himself against the dragon, as a Siegfried going forth to battle for right and truth. Nazi propaganda literally wallows in an orgy of mystic impressionism to this effect.

Only Nazism can organize the countries nearest the Soviet Union and already under military dictatorships into a united front. It leaves to England and to France all the liberal, democratic, socialistic countries which are of little or, at most, secondary value in the struggle. That country which carries on the task of breaking communism and the Soviet Union is bound to receive the support of all those militarist dictatorships which have been formed on the border of the Soviet Union and which have no reason for their present separate existence except the struggle against Russia and the forces generated there.

What is more, Germany, by its decisive actions against international communism, is bound to earn the undying gratitude of every ruling class that is tottering and unstable. In wiping out communism, Germany is a rival to no one, but is rather the armed knight fighting the battles for all capital. Should Germany fail, it means the end of the leadership of capitalist Europe in history, either because of the victory of communism or because of exhaustion, the initiative then passing to America.

Thus "pacific-democratic" capitalism, having failed to destroy the Soviet Union by force, has left the task open to aggressive militarist capitalism and has forfeited its leadership over capitalist Europe today. If Briand cannot form his United States of Europe, Hitler will not fail in creating the necessary united front against the Soviets.

Great Britain cannot stop the mobilization of forces by Germany, even if it so desires. England at present is in no position for warlike adventures; she is heavily laden with pacifism because she has already seized all she can possibly gorge and is now definitely deteriorating industrially in comparison with Germany, Russia, and the United States. Her principal task is to maintain her position and retain her possessions intact.

Great Britain has nothing to gain from an exhausting war. Any war which will tax her strength must weaken her hold upon her colonies and stimulate the colonial peoples to revolt. The British army, too, is primarily a colonial army that can govern subject backward peoples; it is not preeminently an army capable of supporting itself against the great powers

in Europe, Germany, Russia and France, or against Japan. With the development of aviation and the submarine, Great Britain has become increasingly vulnerable to attack. No longer is the English Channel a barrier protecting the tight little Isle.

Finally, the labor movement of Great Britain is a force with which to reckon, since the workers will struggle in one way or another against being used as cannon fodder. The British capitalists are not deluded by patriotic splurges of the labor bureaucracy such as its petitions during the Ethiopian War for England to apply sanctions in a military sense. The question is, can the labor leaders control their rank and file in time of war? Once the war starts, not the labor officials but the plain worker will have his say in stentorian tones that may deafen the genteel.

The British capitalists, too, must desire the end of communism. They understand by now that a navy alone, even though it be the mightiest in the world, is completely unable to batter down large masses of people in huge land formations. The military backbone of every large-scale attack must be an army; in this, Britain must yield above all to Germany. The British realize, too, that the rise of the Russian Revolution has effected a tremendous stirring in Asia, striking at the British Empire's weakest spot. The successive ferments in Persia, India, and the Near East, the revolution in China, all have drawn their strength from the trend of forces let loose by the Russian Revolution.

Finally, and what is generally overlooked, the great land development in Siberia and Eastern Russia is pulling the center of economic gravity more and more away from the normal trade routes controlled by Britain. Naturally, therefore, the British capitalists for a long time took the lead as the implacable enemies of the Soviet Union, and did their utmost to destroy it. Unable to accomplish this, they cannot prevent the Germans from attempting the task which must be done if the present order is to live. Great Britain cannot do other than wish Germany God-speed in the task of destroying the Soviet Union.

Naturally, what Great Britain desires is not only the destruction of the Soviets, but the complete exhaustion of Germany as well. Then capitalism could be re-installed in Russia, and the alliance of Great Britain, France, and Russia to encircle Germany could be recreated. Should Germany, in its coming war, destroy the Soviet Union too quickly, then, with the re-installation of capitalism in Russia, there would be no alternative but for France and England to enter the war against Germany to deprive her of the fruits of victory and to re-establish the old balance of power.

Similar calculations prevail in France. France, too, must profess a pacifism, a pacifism that flows from the fact that the re-armament of Germany was destined to smash the hegemony of French imperialism on the

European continent. A second-rate industrial country as compared with Germany, England, or Russia today, France was able to play a political role after the war entirely out of proportion to its real economic weight This was attributable largely to the fact that Germany had been defeated and disarmed, and Russia had turned soviet So long as France was able to drain hundreds of millions in reparations from Germany and to transmit this gold to the puppet countries of Eastern Europe, rebuilding their armies and filling their treasures with the loot, it was able to maintain the myth that no one could contest French imperialist might on the continent This illusion has been shattered The terrific effect of the crisis on France and the end of reparations have stopped the flow of gold to its mercenary henchmen, while, at the same time, the re armament of Germany, and its professed destiny of attacking the Soviet Union, was bound to collect around Germany the countries left scattered and helpless The situation is such that France, in self-preservation, must end its pacifist theories and at once prepare for military struggle

Thus, the final arbiter in the international European arena today is Germany And yet, with all the boasting of Hitler that the fascist régime will endure a thousand years, the mystical character of its philosophy is proof enough that the German ruling class has come on the scene too late to make progressive history The lust for power poignantly expressed by German theoreticians is made more intense by the fact that with all its power, Germany never has been able to make history for itself For centuries it was the stamping ground of superior powers which used Germany as a scene for its battles, wrecking the country and mutilating the character of its population. Whatever was progressive came from France and the West Whatever was reactionary came from Austria, Russia and the East Germany was a hectograph impressed with the indelible writings of other powers In the realm of emotions and affections, she yielded to the French, in experimental empiricism, to the English, in practical power, to the Americans, in mysticism, to the Russians, in intellect, to the Jews In what realm could Germany prove superior? All that remained for her was wish and imagination, in short, German philosophy With such a head, the German ruling class, with all its organizing ability, could create only a social moron, an immense perfect body with a dwarfed and atrophied psyche

2

Pan-Germanism always was threaded with mystical and medieval theories of race and blood Before the War, these were expressed by such writers as Ludwig Woltmann, Lasson, and also the Englishman, Chamberlain The German dreams for power were put into spicy, racy language

by that other "writer with blood," Nietzsche. The Junker theoretician has always loved to pose as a "writer with blood," spilling his heart's stream on the printed page in most impetuous and poignant fashion. These are the sighs of day-dreamers desiring power, so near and yet so far!

It is interesting to contrast the racial views of the German Junkers which prevailed before the War, and immediately after, with the present day racial theories expressed by the bourgeois industrialists through the Nazis.

The central thesis was well expounded by Chamberlain who wrote: ". . . our whole civilization and culture of to-day is the work of one definite race of men, the Teutonic." [1] According to this writer, the "Aryan" included, also, the Celt and the Slav and other races of Northern Europe; while Pan-Germanism could flirt with Ireland and cast eyes at Asia, it could not glorify France and Russia. Thus it is the "Teuton," not the "Aryan," who is supreme.

The antithesis to the Teuton Junker, "that blond beast" who could rise above good and evil and reach the status of superman, was the Jew. The Jew alone was strong enough to give the German a real battle. The Jews, too, like the Teutons, had understood the basic principles of biology so as to produce a race capable of achieving world power. These principles were, first, original derivation from a strong stock which, second, fuses itself with several others to form a powerful mixture, although, third, the mixture definitely and appropriately must be limited; fourth, this mixed group permits only inbreeding with, fifth, a careful selection of offspring. According to Chamberlain, in order to overcome all other nations, the Jew had determined to make them into mongrels by traveling all over the world, seducing and bastardizing the population. The Jews themselves, however, cleverly refused to adulterate their own stock and laid down religious laws preventing the sons of Jews from marriage with *goyem*, non-Jews.

Strongly affirming the vast superiority of Christianity over Judaism, Chamberlain called upon the Teutonic race to throw off the Jew and bring forth the light of Christ into the world. The intense Christianity of Chamberlain was in definite accord with the religiousity of a *Kaiserthum* that pretended always to be in intimate telepathic communication with The Almighty.

It is to be noted that with Chamberlain "pure" race did not exist; the directions on his medicine box plainly stated that the strong race began with the strong stock intermixed with others, the stock was carried to its point of genius through interbreeding, the highest product of which was the hero, or individual genius (read, Junker). Chamberlain also warned against confusing the Teutonic race with blond hair and fair features, since many rulers of Germany and many eminent militarists, such as von

[1] H. S. Chamberlain: *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, I, lxvii.

Moltke, came from a stock with black hair and aquiline noses, Chamberlain, as well as the other pan-Germanists, however, insisted on the complete fusion of nation and race, the race being the biological basis for the nation. In this he was at one with other sociologists [1] and with the definite political drift of the day.

With Hitler, race theories change. The term "Aryan" to him no longer includes Celt or Slav, but is restricted primarily to the German and Scandinavian peoples. Besides, Hitler's task no longer is to fight "Latin" France but to fight Russia. Thus theories of race become convenient instruments, depending upon diplomatic and military exigencies. With Hitler, racial theory serves the following functions: first, to be used as a mask in order to crush communism, which is denounced as a Jewish theory; second, to weld together the German nation into a monolithic whole, bound together by a belief in blood brotherhood; third, to enable Germany to attempt to bring into her fold the twelve to fifteen million Germans living outside of Germany proper, in Alsace, Lorraine, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, the Baltic Provinces, the Danube, and above all, in Austria. The Nazi racial theories go hand in hand with the pressure for *Anschluss* with Austria, for the formation of a magnificent German Empire of eighty million souls.

In accord with these new purposes, the Jew is made to now occupy a different place. No longer does he represent a typical strong people to be followed as a model for the Teuton in the utilization of biological principles for the maintenance of power in history. Now the Jew is the model mongrel, the very opposite to what the true German must strive to be. He is the outcast, the Ishmael, the devil.

The views of fascism on race are excellent demonstrations of the senile idiocy to which capitalism has been reduced. Unlike Chamberlain, Hitler violently affirms the purity of the Teutonic stock. It is blood purity (in contrast to Chamberlain's inbreeding) which is the chief method of maintaining the nation's virility.[2] It is not convenient for Hitler to remember that the Thirty years' War so exhausted Germany, reducing the population of thirteen million to three million, as to compel the King of Prussia to open his lands to all types of immigrants. If ever there was an "impure" race, the Germans have exemplified it. Patently, fascist science is marked by its colossal impudence as well as its charlatanry and demagogy.

According to Hitlerism, all "races" have been indelibly set into eternal patterns from the beginning of time, and so they will remain. The theories of Hitler, Rosenberg,[3] and similar fascist leaders would mean that for-

[1] Compare L. Gumplowicz: *Outlines of Sociology*, and his theory of *Rassenkampf*, race war.

[2] See, A. Hitler: *My Battle*, p. 121.

[3] It is significant that the basic views were developed by Chamberlain, an Englishman. Hitler an Austrian, and Rosenberg a Balt. This, evidently, is the intellectual "self-sufficiency" of the Germans.

ever races must be at war against each other, one conquering the other. There is no evolution in history, simply action and reaction, a constant re-shifting of the same eternal pieces on God's checkerboard, according to which player at the moment was operating under the star of destiny The normal state is that of war, eternal conquest and subjection There is to be no interconnection between races, no borrowing, no amalgamation, no fusing, no synthesis into a larger whole Forever and eternally the blood wash is to erect complete caste walls between races Were such a situation really to come about, it would mark indeed the end of the civilized world

Nothing illustrates better the ideological bankruptcy of a ruling class than a philosophy that bases political power upon speculations of biology and astral theories of destiny With Hitler, the failure of nations to conquer markets is reduced to congenital defects in the racial bloodstream The same sort of theory leads bankrupts to commit suicide; with Hitler, it has the opposite purpose he relies on the "pure" bloodstream of the Germans to overcome economic bankruptcy

In Germany, doctrines of race and breeding naturally have gone hand in glove with theories of eugenics and prescriptions for breeding super men The fascists have practiced sterilization of the so called unfit on a wide scale In 1934 alone there were two hundred thousand such cases reported in Germany The causes sufficient to justify sterilization included not only those traceable to hereditary defects, such as congenital feeble mindedness, but also chronic alcoholism and melancholomania which may be induced by environmental influences In this way, sterilization has become a weapon in the hands of the State to terrorize the population and wipe out Nazi enemies

The difference between the Nazi movement and the protagonists of the former Prussian State also can be seen by contrasting the views of the Hitlerites with those of Nietzsche Many points, however, are identical, as where Nietzsche emphatically opposes the movement for the extension and democratization of education, calling rather for the limitation of education and concentration upon the few, the best[1] This method would produce the proper leaders or geniuses Nietzsche, being far removed from practical life, insisted that institutions for teaching culture were the very opposite to those teaching how to succeed in life - and that true culture lay above the sphere of necessity and the struggle for existence This point of view, of course, cannot be the position of the Nazi in a period when Germany

[1] See, F W Nietzsche *On the Future of Our Educational Institutions* pp 12, 13 (Complete Works III Macmillan 1911)

[2] This was also the view of Thorstein Veblen See his *The Higher Learning in America* p 224 and following

is struggling precisely for its life and existence. It could only be the theory of the *edel* Junkers, sportsmen

Nietzsche denounced democracy and praised the rule of a strong hero. "Later generations will be greatly disgusted, when they come to treat the movements of the period in which no living man ruled, but shadow-men on the screen of public opinion "[1] But Nietzsche's anti democracy was inseparably part of his antipathy to labor The rule of the people or of labor was impossible from the point of view of this aristocratic artist and man of letters.

Nietzsche agreed with the Greeks who saw no dignity in labor and who despised it[2] Since it was impossible for any man fighting for bare existence to become an artist, labor was a disgrace Slavery was justifiable because art could exist only through slavery recognized by an all powerful State "If the Greeks perished through their slavery, one thing is still more certain we shall perish through the lack of slavery To the essence of Culture slavery is innate "[3] Culture, which is chiefly a real need for art, rests upon a terrible basis the latter however makes itself known in the twilight sensation of shame In order that there may be a broad, deep, and fruitful soil for the development of art, the enormous majority must, in the service of a minority, be slavishly subjected to life's struggle, to a *greater* degree than their own wants necessitate" Accordingly, we must accept this cruel sounding truth, that *Slavery is the essence of Culture"*[4]

Nietzsche viewed with the utmost disgust the fact that so miserable were the slaves that they idealized their very slavery with peans of praise for the "dignity of labor and the "dignity of man" The expressions of Nietzsche, so apropos of the sword rattling militarists of Germany in the days of the Kaiser, sound very hollow to the Nazis of today Although both Nietzsche and the Nazis would support the Prussian State in its maximum development, the State today faces conditions entirely different from those of the Kaiser's time The theories of Nietzsche would cost Hitler his head Hitler is receiving his support not from a group of sporting, dueling landlords who have never labored in their life, but from the heads of factories to whom labor is everything

In his views on religion, Nietzsche even today influences a portion of

[1] F W Nietzsche *Thoughts Out of Season* II 105 (Complete Work V)
Incidentally it was the Jew Oscar Levy who advanced the complete translation into English of Nietzsche's works taking pains to praise the Jew, Disraeli as the best Nietzschean in England The Disraelian novels are in my opinion the best and only preparation for those amongst you who wish gradually to become acquainted with the Nietzschean spirit (The same I xx)

[2] See Nietzsche *Early Greek Philosophy & Other Essays* p vii (Complete Works IV)

[3] The same p viii

[4] The same pp 6 7

the Nazis. Chamberlain was an intense Christian and attacked the Jew as anti-Christ. Nietzsche showed that Christianity was only a development of Judaism, that the heart of the New Testament was in the Old, and that Protestantism was thoroughly logical in going back to Jewish authority. The essence of Christianity was servility, and this was learned from the Jew. If Chamberlain "proved" that Christ was not a Jew but an Aryan, Nietzsche demonstrated that Christ could be only a Jew, and that the Jew, through Christ, had Judafied the world, tearing down the original pagan spirit of the Teuton and rendering him subservient to Rome.[1]

From multitudinous angles, Nietzsche made devastating attacks against the morality of Christianity, with its tenets of an avenging God, general sinfulness, eternal damnation, redemption, etc. He declared: "The imagination of many Christian saints was filthy to an extraordinary degree. . . ." [2] He swept aside the esthetics of Christianity to show its essential vanity, and affirmed, "He that humbleth himself wishes to be exalted," [3] that men are grateful in proportion as they are revengeful.

Thus Nietzsche would take us beyond good and evil, which are products of religion. His superman would soar from the empyrian heights, an eagle alone, untinged by remorse or twinges of conscience. Men who are subject to qualms of conscience are not yet free. Nietzsche called for the development in Germany of a "free spirit" and by free spirit he meant not one free in the idealistic sense of Schopenhauer, in the sense of a will free from material circumstances, but rather a man who had taken possession of himself.[4] Nietzsche broke from Schopenhauer as he broke from the religious sentimentality of Wagner, although at one time he was a disciple of both. It is worth noting wherein Nietzsche and Max Stirner resemble each other in their struggle to "possess" themselves, and to be free from holy prejudices.

The views of Nietzsche were carried forward after the war by Oswald Spengler, but what is roseate optimism with Nietzsche, child of the Franco-Prussian victories of the Kaiser, is deep despair and gloom with Spengler, impressed with the defeat and the flight of the Kaiser. Spengler stems directly from Hegel, Goethe, and Nietzsche. He is proud that his philosophy is a German one,[5] and he believes that only the Germans who gave birth to a Hegel can understand the real meaning of evolution. To him, as to Hegel, the source of the world is in the soul, and evolution is the

[1] See Nietzsche, for example: *Human, All-Too-Human*, I, 122 and following. (Complete Works, VI, London, 1910.)

[2] The same, I, 143.

[3] The same, I, 88.

[4] Nietzsche: *Ecce Homo*, p. 75.

[5] Spengler, too, was an obscure school teacher

unfolding of this soul.[1] The unfolding of each soul took the form of a destiny for each culture. "It follows from the meaning that we have attached to the culture as a prime phenomenon and to destiny as the organic logic of existence, that each culture must necessarily possess its own destiny-idea. Indeed, this conclusion is implicit from the first in the feeling that every great culture is nothing but the actualizing and form of a single, singularly constituted (monolithic?) soul." [2]

In the period that followed the War, the whole embittered German aristocracy was filled with the gall and brimstone of the idea of *révanche*. A peace that spelled a dismembered and defeated Germany was an intolerable conception. They utterly detested the British theories of no more war, no more destruction of law, people, States or religions, no more danger, no conflicts, no more hate, nothing but unending comfort. This was a violation of all the eternal laws of life. Man was a fighter. To deprive him of war was to destroy him. *"The animal of prey is the highest form of mobile life.* It implies a maximum of freedom for self against others, of responsibility to self, of singleness of self, of extra reference to necessity where that self can hold its own by only *fighting* and *winning* and *destroying*. It imparts a high dignity to Man, as a type, that he is a beast of prey." [3]

Spengler was particularly infuriated with those socialists who had adopted pacifist ideas, who refused to organize for revenge, and who ridiculed the Junker type of man as a beast of prey. Against the democracy of the masses, Spengler ventured to repeat the old belief that "there are men whose nature is to command and men whose nature is to obey," [4] and he demanded the rise of the real leadership which everyone must respect. "Men will no longer *see* nor understand, that leader's work is the *harder* work, and that their own life *depends* upon its success." [5]

Spengler, like Nietzsche, made of reason a secondary factor, an inactive quantity. "The emphasis on emotion, experience, and inner feeling, has come to mean a glorification of man's unconscious, intuitive life as against his conscious, rational life. The interest in the dynamic as opposed to the static, now results in a conception of the whole world as a continuous battle of forces, a more and more warlike 'Will to Power.'" [6] Spengler believed, however, that all systems develop in closed cycles, the last one marked by paralysis of the will and the rule of reason. The West had reached its cycle of reason, and, therefore, the state of maturity and

[1] This is also the point of view of Graf von Keyserling. See, for example, H. A. Keyserling: *America Set Free*.

[2] O. Spengler: *Decline of the West*, I, 129.

[3] O. Spengler: *Man and Technics*, p. 22.

[4] The same, p. 63.

[5] The same, p. 89.

[6] W. H. Hale: *Challenge to Defeat*, p. 137.

decay. The World War had defeated Europe. Such defeatism, however, could be no part of the Nazi dream.

Up to a certain point, Hitler easily could go along with the nationalist Spengler, just as he could travel with the Junkers; when Spengler began to declare that the West was declining, that German civilization was ruined and could not recover, but was doomed to destruction, revealing as he did the hopeless cause of Kaiserthum, and his belief that the good days before the War, never would return, here Hitler would have to part company with Spengler. The work of Hitler must be of a Messianic character; by no means could he adopt the diseased pessimism of Spengler.

3

The present situation in Germany demonstrates how bitterly the struggle over philosophy and religion is being waged. The very fact that the class struggle has to assume a religious guise and that workers must express their interests through petty bourgeois church channels shows how far underground the social conflict had been driven The church has been the traditional haven for the refugee. There is no question but that the religious controversies cover up in fact the struggle over deeper material interests, economic and political

The religious question in Germany today is being fought out on four fronts, namely, the Jewish, the Catholic, the Independent Protestant, and the neo Pagan. For the Nazis, it is a question of insuring complete nationalism preparatory to the struggle against the Bolsheviks For centuries, Germany has been the battle ground on which various religious schools have fought. As far back as the sixteenth century, in England, and even prior to that, in France and Italy, politicians knew how to use the church for their own purposes In Germany, however, where material belatedness coincided with a dearth of understanding of the physical forces governing the world, everything has always been stood on its head theoretically, and in the stuffy attic of religious metaphysics the German Philistine worked out eternal truths entirely devoid of practicality. Realistic thinkers too often were found only among the Jews In this struggle to identify nationality with religion and vice versa, Germany has been trying to do only what England and France did centuries ago Even so, its task is more difficult.

The struggle against the Catholic Church is, in the first place, a struggle by industrial capital of North Germany against the landlords, especially in the South It is thus a struggle, on the one hand, of city against country, and, on the other hand, of the industrialist supporters of Hitler against the old-style type, mourning for the petty kingships such as existed in Catholic

Bavaria. In this respect it is only another aspect of the general fight that has been waged between Hitler and Hugenberg, between the storm troops and the Stahlhelm, between the old federal régime and the new centralized one.

The Catholics, with their ultra-montane sympathies and their recollections of the old Holy Roman Empire, have been bound up closely with the politics of other countries, especially Austria and Italy, and have been committed too much to provincial federalism, with its semi-independent Bavaria and other kingdoms, to be of much service today. In smashing the Catholics, German fascism puts an end to the subordination of German policy to any foreign *camarilla* and sets out on its own.[1] Furthermore, the breaking of the professional Catholic apparatus provides many State jobs to good Nazi henchmen. Simultaneously, Bavaria is transformed into a mere administrative and police district, and the whole country is centralized by Berlin. Thus does Hitler complete the scheme of Frederick the Great.

If Austria is to enter this scheme of things, it can be only as a vassal, with no friendly forces within capable of sympathizing with her special aims. The attack on the Catholics also has helped to straighten out the Western Front. In the important Ruhr region, so close to Catholic France, a completely inimical régime has been set up, and any sympathy for French culture and religion is blasted away. The Ruhr is made more safe for Berlin. No longer can the French divert themselves with dreams in which the Ruhr will be carved away from Germany and set up as a buffer State.

The Nazis cannot tolerate any apparatus dual to the forces in control of the State. The Catholics are too numerous in Germany and too well organized not to menace the national unity which has become the Nazi goal. Catholics have not been patriotic enough ever to understand that all German gold is to be kept in Germany for the use of the German State and is not to be shipped to another country via the Pope.

In aiding the drain of gold from Germany, the Catholics, from fascism's point of view, here tended to rival the Jews in their disintegrating tendencies. Under the Concordat of 1933, the Catholics are bound to obey the exchange laws of Germany; very rigid has been their enforcement and drastic the punishment, especially where Catholic priests and nuns have been involved. The Catholic organizations have too much wealth not to be tempting rewards for the marauding bands of Hitler, and now that the wealth of the workers' organizations has been distributed, the rich Catholic institutions are the prizes next in order.

The attack on the Catholic Church in Germany seems also to be in line

[1] "All the popes, who had common sense, have held no principles of religion but what favoured their aggrandizement." (*The Confessions of Frederick the Great*, p. 41.)

with the general separation from the middle class that Hitler has effected ever since he purged the Nazi ranks from Left extremists. The adherents of the Catholic Church were, in the main, middle class elements who had always been resentful of the great industrialists and who had believed to a certain extent that Hitler would take over the trusts and administer them for all the people. Among the Catholic middle class, disillusionment with Hitler has gone farther than in many other sections.

It must not be forgotten also that the Catholic Church had been the sponsor of the Catholic Centrist Party which had remained in power during the Second Reich. This party had coalized with the socialists and trade union forces to run the government. Catholic centrist liberalism had proved too conciliatory to Marxism. Catholic pacifism and turn-the-other-cheek propaganda too often had been invoked to calm the people and to prevent them from bursting forth against the Versailles Treaty and against oppressors at home. In the Catholic unions which the Church had formed among the workers the ideal had been set up of a socialism that should come about through complete harmony and peacefulness of all classes, with charity for all. Today Catholic internationalism, pacifism, and Christian unionism are no longer needed by the bourgeoisie of Germany. The German ruling class is preparing for the most frightful blood bath in history. All elements must be steeled to force, violence, and national hatred for all other groups. The Catholic Church finds itself completely out of step with modern Nazi Germany.

However, the job of uprooting the Catholic influence, now centuries old, from the mass of people is no small task. The totalitarian German State, in attempting to guide the subjects of new Germany in every walk of life, has been compelled to take cognizance of the powerful entrenchment of the Catholic Church in social affairs. Here, as in Italy, the struggle between fascism and Catholism has taken place on questions of education and morality, particularly over such institutions as the Confessional, the control over the youth and special Catholic organizations.

Fascism understands well the power the priest wields through the institution of the Confessional, as well as all the latent treachery to the State which this institution involves, and has decided to annihilate it once and for all. Confessional organizations are no longer allowed to criticize or to oppose government measures or to introduce disunity in the Third Reich. All activities, except those strictly religious, are forbidden absolutely to Confessional societies. The Minister of the Interior has been especially severe with Catholic newspapers, Catholic social service leagues, Catholic youth, apprentice, labor, or educational organizations. Thus has Nazism striven to reach the backward elements most influenced by the Confessional and to bring them closer to the State. The youth have been torn

from the jealous hands of the clergy. Education has become a complete monopoly of the government. Charitable organizations have been restricted and liquidated. The Church is confined to abstract dogma—dogma on which it can only choke to death.

Against the morality of the Catholic Church the Nazis are setting up their own morality; especially sharp is the fight on matters, such as sterilization, which involve questions of the immortality of the soul. The Catholics always have been opposed to all forms of sterilization; now, under the Concordat of 1933, they are bound to obey even these laws. Nazism means to press the fight until it is completely victorious.

The struggle against the Jew is only part of the struggle of the industrialists against the operation of finance capital. By means of an aggressive attack against "Jewish" capital, whether of Downing Street or of Wall Street, the new German rulers can rally into one solid mass the whole people, especially the rural elements of the middle class.

The attack on the Jew was profitable to the Nazis through bribes for protection, through liquidation of Jewish property, etc. Anti-semitism meant a chance for the German storekeepers and other tradesmen to wipe out their cleverer Jewish competitors and to enrich themselves at the Jew's expense. For the mystic German dolt, it meant an opportunity to filch the Jew's professional clientele, to take patients away from doctors, students from teachers, clients from lawyers, and so forth.

Like the Catholic, the Jew has his own form of internationalism. Like the Catholic, the Jew, too, has been a pacifist in his own way. In economics he has often practiced the doctrines of laissez faire. Thus, the attack of the German totalitarian State against all forms of economic and political liberalism brought on the attack not only against the Catholic, but most sharply against the Jew as well. No wonder the Catholics have been considered an aid to the Jews in Germany. The Catholic has been attacked for introducing an alien morality into the German soul; the Jew has been assaulted for his materialist unmorality in which everything, including German honor, was available for cash.

The struggle against the Jew in Germany is symbolic of the desperate efforts by which the Nazis have attempted to unify the entire population around themselves. They wish no longer to be troubled by the ever-present religious complex that has torn Germany for so many centuries. Whatever elements they cannot assimilate they mean either to destroy or expel. With the Jews, such action is easy because they are politically helpless, and the Nazis like no better opponents than those who cannot fight. In eliminating the Jew, the Hitlerites again have raised their spurious cry of purity of race behind which used to be echoed the yells of Pan-Germanism of

yesteryear, with its *Deutschland ueber Alles,* and its policy of denouncing all other races as "pig-dogs."

The real reason for the attack against the Jews is not so much that they are merchants or financiers or belong to a different race or religion, but because in the past they have played a leading role in labor and communist organizations. The pogrom against the Jew is traditionally part of the attack against "Jewish" Marxism and "Jewish" revolutionism. Fascism has as its very *raison d'être* the incessant and ruthless struggle against the new social order of communism that is being born by the explosions within the old. True that without communism there would be no fascism. Also true that without a decaying social order giving birth to a revolutionary proletariat, there would be no need for the resistance of degenerate capitalism to take the form of fascism.

By attacking the Jew as revolutionist and communist, the Nazis lay the base for attacking Marxism as Jewish and thus prepare for a holy crusade against both German labor and communism of the Soviet Union. The fight against the Jew is the opening gun in the battle by Hitler against Russia. Here, however, the brave Nazis will face an enemy far more formidable; here, they will encounter, not a weakened minority group, but the iron front of the Soviet Union.

There is also the so-called Protestant menace which the Nazis fight. The German protestants have been divided into two chief churches, the Lutheran and the Calvinist, both of these in the main standing for individualism and laissez faire in economic and social life. With the rise of the totalitarian State under Hitler, these church organizations with their antiquated ideologies have been subjected to blow upon blow. Many Protestant pastors have been banished and others imprisoned. The Government has set up an official German Church called the German Christians, under the appointee of Hitler, Reichsbishop Mueller.

To resist this new attack both Calvinists and Lutherans have fused to form a United Calvin-Lutheran Church, thus bringing to an end the religious disharmony existing between them for centuries. A Protestant opposition to the decrees of German fascism also was organized. In order to bring all Protestants into line, Hitler decided to appoint a special officer to be the final authority in deciding all local disputes within the church, especially such matters pertaining to funds, property, the livings of the ministers, etc. Thus Nazism interferes intimately with all church matters and constantly threatens the confiscation of all independent church property should the Protestants fail to hew to the line.

Hitler means to wipe out every remnant of the old forces in Germany, to harry them to the end and to redress them behind his own State system. The

Protestant churches have been too close to liberalism to be free from the heavy hand of the State. Too many Protestants were in the trade union ranks. Too many supported liberalism, feminism, and free-thinking. This no longer can be tolerated in modern Germany.

The whole theory of Protestantism has been fought in a typical Nietzschean manner. The Nazis have loudly excoriated the Protestant religious dogma of original sin, to them an un-German doctrine. No weeping, no wailing over the past, but pure unadulterated joy must be the spirit in every German's breast. There must be joy in labor, joy in working for the State. The Nazis order joy as one would order beer. A regular organization for the building up of German joy has been founded. The Independent Protestants are too melancholy and depressed; they seem to be always moping and giving comfort to the enemies of Germany. The original Germans never had any sin, original or otherwise, according to Nazi theories. Today the original sin in the religious world in Germany is to talk about original sin, and the poor Independent Protestants who wanted the joy of being miserable must now be miserable in their joy. They must not only endure Hitlerism, but like it as well.

But if all these religious schemes are to be discarded, what is to take their place?[1] German fascism cannot turn to atheism, although by its attacks on the old religions, Nazism certainly works in that direction. Atheism is the anti-religious doctrine of revolution, of communism. Within the new German State, the Nazis are organizing their own religious vanguard, carrying forward the traditions of Fichte, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. One of the chief present theoreticians is Rosenberg. Rosenberg, while not an ardent Christian like Chamberlain, agrees that Christ was no Jew, but a Nordic who, as a revolutionist, brought not the olive branch but the sword. However, Christianity does resemble Judaism, in Rosenberg's opinion, and in this he agrees with Nietzsche. Matthew was a Jewish fanatic, Paul a materialist rabbi, Tertulian an African jurist, and Augustine a mongrel half-breed.

Fascist theoreticians like Rosenberg have thundered against the Old Testament, against the Sermon on the Mount, against the doctrine of Grace, against the doctrine of original sin, and against the cross, that woeful symbol of torture. Instead of the cross, the swastika is to be substituted, which to Rosenberg stands for the ancient sign of the Sun God. Against the internationalism of Christianity there must be created a religion of race and blood. The miserable moaning of the underdog must be changed into a pean of praise for the superman. Here, then, is a doctrine

[1] According to Frederick the Great, "Religion is absolutely necessary in a state . . . but then it would not be very wise in a king to have any religion himself." (*The Confessions of Frederick the Great*, p. 40.)

of might and of race that would take the Germans back to the Icelandic sagas and eddas and to the *Nıebelungen* myths of the old Germanic Tribes.

This reversion from the present to the past can give no consolation to the German Philistine. In the deep past of the barbarian tribes, primitive communism ruled the day Only then had the Germans made their own history, as barbarians and as communists

But Rosenberg returns not to the primitive communism of the German tribes, a stage of society naturally associated with sagas and eddas, but to the superstitions of the medieval world Abandoning the electric light and even the oil lamp, the fascists revert to the days of torch light and faggot Turning away from "Jewish' intellectualism, Nazism can create only a mumbo jumbo mysticism, reviving the medieval past The fascists dare not face the future This would lead them only to the gibbet and the gallows They dare not go forward with evolution, but only back, back to the hysterical rituals of frightened ignorance Yet it is precisely this substitution of emotion for intellect that will enable the Nazis to mobilize their cohorts into a holy crusade against communism The old dies hard, sometimes blood clots form on the brain, and, in a mad brain storm, the diseased are convulsed in spasms until kind death releases them from their agonies This is the case with German capitalism

4

We turn now to the socialism embodied in National Socialism The further history of Germany shows clearly how the bourgeoisie repudiated its socialistic promises to the middle classes and used them as dupes the moment the workers were crushed For example, the Nazi program had demanded the preservation of a healthy middle class To stave off ruin, the petty bourgeois storekeeper had urged the attack on the Jewish merchant, the department store, the foreign chain store, and the co operative This was his petty bourgeois socialism How did it work out?

While it is true that the Jew was attacked, the wealthy Jew generally was able to escape The Nazi movement was forced to take official cognizance of the fact that very often the Brown Shirt who came into the store and demanded that the owner support the Nazi movement or be put out of business was simply a racketeer who pocketed the extorted money for himself When it became a question of abolishing the department stores, the Nazi régime found this action would lead to too much unemployment They have abandoned this part of the program, as they have also that in regard to various chain stores. There remained only the attack on the co-operatives.

When the Nazis took power, they liquidated the co-operatives as Marxist organizations, as they had similarly dissolved the trade unions and political

parties of the workers, and confiscated their property. It should be borne in mind that the number of co-operative stores in Germany totaled fifty thousand, and that even in the depression year of 1932 they did half a billion dollars' worth of business, or 5 per cent of the total of all retail trade in the country. No wonder the small shopkeeper felt himself driven to the wall, that he hailed with glee the seizure of the co-operatives. However, as soon as the Nazis took over these co-operative stores, they discovered that the co-operative indeed could become a wonderful nest egg for themselves. It seemed ridiculous that thy should break up the co-operatives and turn them over to the little storekeeper, when they could run the stores themselves. Such a procedure would mean jobs for at least two hundred and fifty thousand, immense graft in terms of millions and economic power. So the Brown Shirt troopers took over the co-operatives and the little shopkeepers' paradise crashed to earth again.

In the domain of agriculture, the Nazi program had called for an adequate system of land reform and the passage of a law which would provide expropriation without compensation of land for socially useful purposes, for the abolition of ground rent, and for the prohibition of speculation in land values. To the poor peasant, such a program indeed sounded revolutionary and socialistic. Compared to the phrases "expropriation without compensation," "abolition of ground rent," "prohibition of speculation," how pale the "regular" socialists appeared!

Strangely enough, the points in the national socialist program closely repeated the demands of the French peasants organized by the Jacobins in the French Revolution. Whereas, however, the French peasantry went towards Liberal Radicalism in the nineteenth century, with slogans of "liberty, equality, democracy," in the era of trustification, the same demands were put forth, not by the liberal democrats, but by the fascists with the slogans, "A place must be found for every German citizen," "German blood must be rooted to the soil," etc. The crying hunger for land remained, only the demagogy had changed. And whether under the Jacobins or the Nazis, the peasants' demands remained unrequited.

Of course, no expropriation without compensation has occurred in Germany. The law which actually passed simply permits farmers to purchase at a heavy price a certain portion of the land from the Junkers. In short, the actual accomplishment is the same which the Czar provided in 1861 when he graciously freed the serfs—at a price. The Junkers will part with their worst lands at the highest possible evaluation ascertained by the government under their influence; only those Junkers will sell who are bankrupt and need the ready cash for their political aims, thus profiting doubly by the legislation; the farmers will be sunk into debt from which they

will never recover, while the funds of the State enter into the pockets of their enemies Very charmingly the East Pomeranian Junkers have decided to "sacrifice" 20 per cent of their land holdings to the farmers "Better the concession from above than the seizure from below." By controlling completely the land sales, the Junkers bind the peasants to the yoke of oppression more firmly than before

The theory of the Nazis is that an agricultural middle class is the backbone of the nation and that every effort must be made to remove it from the commercialization of capitalism For centuries the ignorant peasantry has dreamed of a system of private property without the contradictions of private property This idiocy fascism has raised into a system Instead of removing the peasant from the commercialization of capitalism, Hitler has chained him the more securely to the landlords There was passed, for example, in September 1933 the Hereditary Homestead Law which, in addition to defining the racial and social status of the farmer and the size of the farm subject to the new law, provided that the qualified owner cannot be dispossessed for debt, his crops cannot be seized for private debt, the farm must pass undivided to a single heir according to local custom Here, again, is to be noted how socialistic this law sounds, no dispossess for debt, no seizure of crops for private debt, etc It appeared as though a veritable peasant utopia, flavored with all the romance of feudalism, had been achieved Even a law declaring that henceforth the hereditary farmer was to be considered a true nobleman was passed

Drab reality has proved far different from the romantic phrases The hereditary farmer now is not allowed to divide his land, nor to give it to anyone but a single heir This has had a tremendous effect on the country side It has reconstituted in the village the old patriarchal conditions calculated to discipline the peasants, and make them even more docile to the aims of the Junkers All children, from the youngest to the oldest, must now obey the father Agricultural workers cannot migrate without special passes Rebellious youth cannot seek work elsewhere Around the village have been forged immensely heavy chains entrapping the masses of agrarians

The fact that the peasant cannot alienate his land or sell it means, of course, that he cannot mortgage it. This means, in turn, that he cannot borrow money for the inauguration of necessary mechanical improvements Thus the peasant is bound to an old technique of production that prevents scientific advancement If the modern German State tolerates this system, it is because it does not need the production of the peasant so much as it requires his thorough military personal support On the other hand, the very large estates, especially in East Prussia, Pomerania, and the Baltic

regions, are free to develop agricultural technique to the highest degree. Science is for the rulers, not the masses.

All the economic measures trumpeted as being for the benefit of the agrarian masses have really been to the advantage of the Junkers and the large estate owners. Typical and significant has been the scandal of the *Osthilfe* in which it was revealed that hundreds of millions of marks had been swindled from the government by the Junkers headed by Hindenburg himself. The money was supposed to have gone to the Eastern farmers who were hurt by the World War and its results; instead it went almost entirely into the pockets of the former aristocracy. Hindenburg, incidentally, was present to help himself to a grant of land equal to five hundred thousand acres.

Prohibitive tariffs have raised the price of fats and oils, butter, margarine, and other products used by the poor people of Germany. This has entailed a great increase in the cost of living for city workers and others while the profit thereof had gone directly into the pockets of the large estate owners, for they alone could raise enough dairy products to profit from the tariff. The promises that the Nazis made to the poor peasants to reduce the rate of interest and to maintain it at 3 per cent have not been carried out. On the other hand, prices of food stuffs are fixed by government interference and through the compulsory organization of the farmers who are thus imprisoned in the hands of the Junkers.

By these measures, the industrialists won the support of the aristocratic agrarian elements and could fuse them into the National Socialist Party. And while the wealthy, both of city and country, were lining their pockets, the Nazi State was endowing the peasant with the title of political nobility, one of the many ways in which the national socialists hoped to separate the agrarian from the city worker and to pit one against the other.

Certain promises of socialism were made to the city workers also. It had been promised that industry would be controlled in such a manner that the workers would not be thrown out of work, and that they would have something of a voice, therefore, in the production system. Workers' councils would be maintained, standards improved. What has happened in fact has been the smashing of the trade unions, the lowering of wages, and the drastic curtailment of unemployment insurance and other social measures. In some places the right to discharge employees temporarily was curtailed, but the power was simply shifted to the Nazi apparatus which formed its own organizations in the factory, as Mussolini had done in Italy.

Significantly enough, the Italian example of organizing workers into unions separate from employers has not been repeated in Germany. The employer himself and all his agents meet directly in the same room with

the workers, with the idea that the factory hands form a family of which the employer is the father, or *Fuehrer* Although the workers had understood the real situation from the beginning, this was a relatively rude awakening for the professional man or technician who had believed that in supporting the Nazis he was attaining a new social order wherein the factory would be turned over to the scientist for unhindered development Instead, tax exemptions were granted to owners who replaced obsolete machinery, or repaired their buildings, or hired more workers Sometimes the amount of the subsidy allotted to manufacturers for hiring a worker was higher than the wages paid that worker!

Similarly have the illusions of unemployment vanished The official figures, undoubtedly exaggerated, show a marked reduction in the number of unemployed But if unemployment has been reduced, it has been by the following methods First, several hundred thousand workers have been forced to flee the country Others, numbering perhaps many more, have been too terrorized to apply for relief and have been stricken off the lists Tens of thousands have been arrested and placed in concentration camps Simultaneously, the attack was made against the Jews and they, too, were driven out of the jobs and professions which had been theirs It should be borne in mind that while the Jews number only five hundred thousand in Germany, still with the definition of a Jew as a person who has Jewish blood in the third generation, the number affected is closer to one million five hundred thousand

A terrific drive was also started to oust women from all occupations, with the slogan "Woman's place is in the home" Moreover youth, from sixteen to twenty five, including many who, taken from jobs have been sent into labor service camps and registered as employed In parts of the country a special compulsory labor service has been established Public works have been inaugurated on an enormous scale In this way the official unemployed figures have been reduced Finally, the enrollment of two and one half million storm troopers, many of them fed, clothed, and maintained in barracks, has also been used to lower the official figures of the registered unemployed Through such means, Hitler is able to propagandize the world that unemployment in Germany has been curtailed drastically In reality, the condition of the masses has grown worse

No wonder the mass of unemployed youth and lower middle classes that had battered down with its fists all the obstacles blocking Hitler's advent to power should have resented deeply his abandonment of the original program of socialism These elements were strong particularly in the militant storm trooper groups, whose head was Roehm and whose theoretician was Gregory Strasser As their discontent grew more serious and took the form of conspiracies against *der Fuehrer,* the leaders of the national

socialists had to decide whether they meant to go the way of socialism or of nationalism. The issue was no more in doubt with Hitler than with Mussolini. In the case of Mussolini, it had taken him three years, from the seizure of power in 1922 to the Matteoti murder, to consolidate his position well enough so as to break from the petty-bourgeois mass and to reduce them to impotence. In the case of Germany, this was done in a much shorter time. The storm troops' control over the army was reduced, Roehm and many others were shot, the ranks of the Nazi storm troopers were completely purged, and the lower orders were made to realize that, once and for all, the question "Who rules whom?" was definitely solved. The second Hitler revolution in 1934 gave full and complete power to the heavy industrialists.

The Nazi blood purge did not realize the hopes of the socialist and communist leaders that Hitler would be overthrown. These mock heroes who had fled Germany and were spending their leisure in Paris or reporting to the functionaries in Moscow had to realize bitterly that their day of influence was over. Thanks to these bureaucrats, too thoroughly had the workers' movement been destroyed, too conscious was the proletariat of their betrayal for them ever to be able to rebuild their apparatus and revive their influence again. Many of these socialists and communists turned renegades and made their peace with fascism.

In line with its goal of complete State regulation, control of all forms of life within the nation, and the subordination and discipline of the individual, Nazism has enforced a policy for women that has taken them out of the factory and office jobs and put them back in the kitchen. Here again the fascist movement has revealed itself as thoroughly reactionary. The slogan "Back to the home" at one stroke has turned the clock back one hundred years for Germany's womankind.[1] The role of women has been laid out officially for them; they are to be the home-makers, the bearers and rearers of numerous children of pure, unadulterated German stock, to be enrolled in the ranks of *der Fuehrer's* army.

According to Von Papen, women must exhaust themselves in child birth, preferably of sons. As one Nazi authoress, Maria Diers, put it: "Hitler does not need us women now, for the fight in which he stands demands spirit, courage and character. But women are not capable of the fight. We are only in the way." In the declaration of the Women's Order of the Red Swastika there appears the statement: "There is no higher or finer privilege for a woman than that of sending her children to war."[2]

[1] See V. Buch: "Hitlerism Turns the Clock Back for Women," *Class Struggle* (Jan. 1935), Vol. V, No. 1.

[2] The above three statements are cited in J. Strachey: *Menace of Fascism*, p. 65.

German women have been working outside the home for many years; since the crisis it was increasingly common for a woman to be the only breadwinner of the family. Behind the drive to oust women from jobs, therefore, has been the great fact of unemployment and the necessity of the Nazis to appear to be putting more men workers to work. The campaign to remove the women from industry began in the professions in the fall of 1933 and rapidly spread in scope through a series of decrees. Employed wives of men in the civil service had to relinquish their jobs in favor of men. Women in civil service posts were retired wherever possible. A drive against "multiple" earnings began, which meant that women wage workers of all sorts were pressed to give up their jobs to men, either to husband or fiancé, or, if such were already employed, to some other man.

Women have been frowned upon in the professions wherein they were already established and practicing. Enrollment of young women students in the universities has been restricted to an exceedingly small percentage of the applications, thus automatically cutting off most of Germany's present female generation from the possibility of an intellectual life and training for a profession. The situation in which women find themselves in Germany today repeats the position in which Jewish students in Czarist Russia were placed before the war, the conditions against which women have fought continually in all countries.

It should be stressed that sending woman back to the home under modern conditions is sending her to a miniature insane asylum. Formerly, when the home was the center of production, women could develop themselves in artistry and craftsmanship. Their work was then highly skilled and of great importance. But today women can be reduced only to the most menial unskilled work, which wearisome toil grows in proportion to its stultifying monotony. The test of a civilization is its treatment of women. Measured by that test, German fascism represents a dismal decay of civilization.

All the advances which the Feminist Movement made in the past hundred years have been practically erased in Germany. There is left to woman only the function of perpetual breeding of the race.

This had also been the recipe that Nietzsche had given Germany in keeping Greece as a model. "The women had no other mission than to produce beautiful, strong bodies, in which the father's character lived on as unbrokenly as possible . . . This kept the Greek culture young for a relatively long time . . ."[1]

Women have been made to feel that they are of secondary importance, which must always be the militarist point of view. With Nietzsche it went so far as to induce him to praise homosexuality. "The erotic relation of

[1] F. W. Nietzsche, *Human All Too Human*, I, 238.

men to youths was the necessary and sole preparation, to a degree unattainable to our comprehension, of all manly education. . . ." [1]

Accompanying the ousting of women from industry and their exclusion from the professions has been an ideological campaign to train the women to think of themselves as wives and mothers only, as helpers of men and rearers of children, out of place in the factory, office, or schoolroom. As Nietzsche again so aptly put it, "Man must treat woman as a possession, as confinable property, as they do in Asia. Her task is to charm and play for man, the conqueror." [2]

Marriage and child bearing, as in Italy, are given great encouragement in Hitler land. Government loans in the shape of vouchers for the purchase of furniture are made to engaged girls, who, of course, must give up their jobs to their fiancés; 25 per cent of the loan is cancelled upon the birth of each child. All sorts of home-building schemes are offered. Mass marriages take place, wherein scores or hundreds of couples are paired off at once. Prizes for large families are offered. The present adult generation being designed for speedy extinction via the trenches, replacements must be assured. Sports and Nazi sport organizations are encouraged for young women with a view to training them for healthy motherhood. In the meantime, they are regimented by the State and sent to work in the homes of the wealthy as housemaids and servants. Thus, the Nazi labor policy regarding women is to drive the working class women backward into isolation and ignorance.

Note, too, that the women are cut off from the working class at the point of production, where they could organize effectively with the men workers. In this way, the Nazis have divided the class which they fear the most, the proletariat, and have forced the young girls into the position of domestic servants where they can be isolated and broken down easily. Of course, in line with this is the destruction of all the political and social gains women had won, a loss all the greater as the German women were the most advanced in organization and in concessions wrung from the rulers.

The Hitler policy towards women proves the frailty of the achievement of feminism under capitalism and the impossibility for any specially suppressed group in society to free itself except through a fundamental change in the property relations; that is, through the proletarian revolution. Even the worst socialistic State, the Soviet Union, under the régime of Stalinism, is infinitely superior to this latest development of capitalism in its treatment of women.

[1] The same, I, 237.

[2] F. W. Nietzsche: *Beyond Good and Evil*, pp. 182, 187. (Complete Works, XII, Macmillan, 1914.)

However, there is one bit of consolation. This anti-feminist policy is bound to be but a temporary one in Germany. Once war breaks out, and the men are sent to the front to be consumed in wholesale fashion, the women again and in even larger numbers than before will be drawn back into the factories and the professions. Capitalism cannot long turn backward the wheel of evolution. Nor can it deter the development of women. Fascism can do nothing else but continue to grip the backward layers of society with its steel fingers and mould them into the army of producers that will be compelled to end this anti-social order forever.

XXXI. THE SPREAD OF FASCISM

I

THE WORLD WAR shattered the Austro-Hungarian Empire into fragments. Austria was reduced to complete impotence. No sooner was the body dismembered than each severed part demonstrated that, under the circumstances, it could not possibly lead a healthy bourgeois existence. Hungary went towards communism, Austria towards Left socialism. In Austria, also, the ruling group never could rest content with its artificial isolation and general helplessness.

Of all the countries of Europe, Austria was the weakest economically and the least able to weather the storm of new events. In 1919, she had to be fed by the United States Food Administration in Europe. During the period thereafter, she had to be supported by external aid in the form of loans and financial support. No sooner did the present crisis break out when the *Creditanstalt,* the chief bank of Austria, announced its bankruptcy and had to be aided by Germany and other countries, thereby accelerating the financial crash all over the world.

No sooner was the Versailles Treaty smashed by a victorious Nazism than a virulent fascism surged up to overwhelm Austria. This fascism was divided into two sections, one adhering to the Nazi-type, made up of city elements subservient to big industry and favoring organic unity with Germany, the other leaning towards Italian fascism, and supported by large landed estate owners sympathetic to Italy. Connected to this second division were the governmental forces under Dollfuss which were interested in a revival of a greater Austria, and which wanted to maintain Austrian independence.

Against the Right Wing fascist formations were the socialists. These socialists had received 70 per cent of the electoral vote of Vienna. They constituted the government of that City, and held 40 per cent of the power in the country as a whole. The Austrian socialists, too, had been sufficiently affected by the communist revolutions in Bavaria and in Hungary and by the deep degradation of Austria after the War to have mouthed extremely Left socialist phrases. They professed a readiness to recognize at times the necessity of a Dictatorship of the Proletariat, and a friendliness toward Soviet Russia. In view of the extreme language of the socialists and of the miserable failure of the communists in that part of Europe, as well as owing

to the fact that Austria had not much large-scale heavy industry, the communists were practically of no account. The socialists held complete sway of the labor field and were proud of the many social reforms they had inaugurated, such as their model co-operative dwelling houses. Had these socialists really wanted to fight, they could have taken over power long ago, but this would have precipitated that civil war which above all they wanted to avoid.

Following the world crisis, the initiative was taken by the fascist groups and reactionary forces to drive the socialists out of the national government, to increase the army and the *Heimwehr,* and to disarm the socialists outside of Vienna. Increasingly Vienna lost her autonomy, while the Austrian government assumed a Bonapartist character, dispensing with parliament and operating through emergency decrees.

The second stage was marked by a temporary coalition of the fascist groups to storm the Socialist Party's stronghold of Vienna. This Dollfuss could do only by establishing a dictatorship and physically annihilating the socialist administration. The leaders of the socialists did not wish to fight, but they were compelled to make some show of resistance, not only because of their previous revolutionary phrase-mongering which had compromised them, but also because they actually held the power in Vienna, and no bureaucracy will relinquish its sinecures without struggle. The pitiful showing of the Socialist Party proved again that historically the socialists could play only comic opera, no matter how many poor rank and filers were shot down and killed.

Although they were in a position to know thoroughly the plans of the government to attack them, the leaders of the Socialist Party made no adequate preparations for defense When the attack began, these heroes, instead of vigorously defending the center of the city, at once took refuge in their co-operative houses on the outskirts Not the barricade but the bedroom became the scene of fighting.

Had the Socialists really wanted to fight they easily could have held the center of the city, but by taking to their "forts," the co-operative houses, they permitted themselves most efficiently to be massacred This is the first time in history that a revolution was conducted by running to fortresses and taking to the defensive rather than the offensive Of course, the co-operative houses in the suburbs were soon isolated one from the other and blown to pieces by artillery. The masses lost the effectiveness of their numbers by the fact that they were compelled to cower in their kitchens to carry on the fight.

No doubt the socialist leaders believed that Dollfuss would spare them if they behaved in such a foolish manner and that as soon as the co-operative houses were surrounded they could beg their socialist workers to yield

on the ground that they were overwhelmed by superior force. But in such calculations the phrase-mongering bureaucracy reckoned without two factors: first, the militancy of the membership that conceived such action a complete betrayal; and second, and most important of all, the fact that the fascists were in no mood to spare them. It was not necessary to destroy the co-operative houses and to kill so many socialists—it is estimated two thousand socialists were slaughtered. All that the fascists needed to have done was to have surrounded the houses for a day or two and starved the defenders into submission. However, it was the intention of the fascists to teach the socialists a good lesson. Only in this way could the reactionaries show Mussolini and Hitler that the Austrian government meant really to wipe out the socialist and trade union menace. The killings that followed, therefore, were not so much due to the vigorous activity of the socialist bureaucracy as they were to the determination of the fascists to take every advantage of the situation to destroy the workers' organizations, root and branch.

To the Austrian reformists, the destruction of their precious co-operative houses was the loss of their whole world and the end of their entire socialism; so the burning of the Reichstag had seemed to the German opportunists. It was an end of an era. Not fighting for socialism, the socialists could not retain even their co-operatives; Austrian reaction, to puncture the bubble of socialism, merely had to destroy some plumbing Down went the unions, the mass organizations, everything By blowing to pieces the co-operative houses, the fascists demonstrated not only what they would do to revolution, but how they intended to handle social reform. The whole episode was an excellent illustration of the law that he who stops half way today can get nothing It is either all, or nothing.[1]

Nevertheless, it must be added for the sake of completeness that the socialist workers in Austria behaved far better than the communist workers of Germany. In Austria they did not run away; they actually stood their ground and fought in battle against the army of fascism.

The events in Austria gave the communists in Germany a great opportunity to demonstrate whether they had survived the terror of Hitler. Had there been any regular communist movement, there would have been outbursts in Germany to coincide with the fighting in the sister country. But all was quiet. The complete absence of any disturbance during the Hitler blood purge and the dissolution of the storm troops, during the events in Austria, during the Saar plebescite, and during the rearmament of the Rhine, have furnished mute evidence of the complete breakdown of the communist forces of Stalin in Germany.

[1] This the Spanish Socialists will also learn

No sooner were the socialists put down in bloody struggle when the fight began to rage between the followers of Hitler and the Catholic fascists under Stahremberg, who was linked up with the Heimwehr. The issue between the two forces was the issue between industry and agriculture between Germany and Italy. Had the Nazis won the day, Austria would have been swallowed by Germany and made into a province, like Bavaria. But what Germany could do with Bavaria it could not do with Austria, a far greater country.

The Austrian aristocracy had to struggle against any such fate as Bavaria had met. Like Bavaria, Austria is Catholic, but, unlike Bavaria, it is far closer to Italian influence. For centuries Austria was connected with Italy, and these ties have entered into the very manners of the Austrians. At the moment, too, Italy was rising in relative importance. Italy needed a counterweight to the Franco-Jugo-Slav alliance; she was willing to work through the old Austrian monarchical and agrarian interests that wished to maintain the independence of Austria and at the same time crush the labor movement. The idea of Mussolini was to set up again a new Austro-Hungarian empire under the domination of Italy and thus expand Italian influence on the Danube. As part of its diplomacy, Italy stressed the fact that both countries were Catholic, while Germany, contrariwise, emphasized the fact that both were German. One used religion, the other race for its imperialist purposes.

In this welter of intrigue, one thing is clear: Austria cannot remain as she is. She must either be reduced to a semi-colonial state under Italy, or become fused with Germany. The latter is far more probable.

The efforts of France and the countries of the Little Entente were concentrated to keep Austria as insignificant and helpless as possible. This they did partly through working through the socialists. Indeed, France was accused of aiding the Socialist Party of Austria by shipping them arms via Czecho-Slovak agents, to resist the government. This policy has, however, failed. Italy can dominate the scene not by repeating the choking policy of France, but by working through the royal family, Otto of Hapsburg and others, to restore the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. To this the Hungarian agrarian aristocracy is favorable, and is working day and night with Italy for the accomplishment of this purpose.

Two separate and distinct groups are opposed to the reconstitution of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. They are, first, the countries that would be menaced immediately by the restoration of such a monarchy, namely, Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia, and, to a lesser extent, Roumania and Poland, which countries had also grabbed pieces of the former empire's territory. There is hardly a doubt that the restoration of the Hapsburg monarchy in Austria and Hungary in 1935 would have led to war.

On the other side, also in opposition, is Germany. If Austria and Germany unite, it cannot be under the Hapsburgs. This would be similar to making the tail wag the dog. Germany must rule the fusion, and, just as the industrialists of that country have been unwilling to yield their leadership to the royalist forces of the Kaiser but rather have compelled the Royalist-Nationalists to submerge their identity within the Nazis, so would the industrialists refuse to yield leadership to Austria. A return of the Hapsburgs in Austria would stimulate greatly the royalist movement in Germany to the detriment of the political power of Thynnes and Company. Of course, it is not entirely out of the question that German diplomacy might temporarily become reconciled to an Austro-Hungarian monarchy, provided its internal stability were secure and Germany's ultimate victory inevitable. Then a great alliance could be forged, including Italy and Eastern Europe under the leadership of Germany, against the Soviet Union.

There are elements even among the royalists of Austria who suspect Italy of perfidy, who prefer the policy of playing off Italy against Germany and vice versa, and who dream of a reconstituted old order in which the Austro-Hungarian Empire would arise as independent, as powerful, and as domineering as before. They point out that Italy's interest in Austria is like that of France, namely, merely a negative one to prevent Germany from growing strong in a southern direction, to prevent Austria from improving in any direction, and to keep Austria constantly dependent upon Italy and its allies.

If this is Italy's scheme, it is a lost one. Austria cannot permanently be kept weakened. Such a policy led to the fall of the socialists and would lead to the fall of any capitalist government eventually. The Austrian Heimwehr fascists refuse to serve without perspective, merely as tools of Italy. But to what way out can they turn? To reconstitute the Austro-Hungarian monarchy without Italy is impossible, and would lead to war. To be under the tutelage of Italy means to be linked up with interests that cannot develop Austria. Eventually Austria must turn to Germany.

Confident of their success, the Nazis in Austria pressed impatiently for victory; they assassinated Dollfuss and staged a rebellion. The government was forced to act, although it could not count on the sympathy of the people after the destruction of the socialist and workers' organizations. Indeed, many of these groups tended to favor the Nazis, who at least were allied to modern industry rather than to backward landed property of the old royalty. Nevertheless, the government, behind which were the Heimwehr and Catholic fascists, was able to crush the Nazis temporarily.

The ease with which this was accomplished leads the impartial historian to speculate whether the defeat was not planned by Hitler himself. Such politics is not impossible. At the moment in question, Hitler was

greatly embarrassed by the revolt in the storm troops against his conservative tendencies which compelled him to execute many of his former friends It might well have been that Hitler, knowing Austria must eventually fall into Germany's power, deliberately allowed the Austrian Nazis to be shot down on the grounds that they were not reliable and that the movement was premature. Had the Austrian petty bourgeois Nazis won the victory, Hitler's control might have been greatly threatened. At the same time, Hitler could obtain the same results through negotiation and compromise, rather than through force. After all, the Austrian Nazis did accomplish their first aim, the destruction of the Dollfuss régime. It is questionable whether *der Fuehrer* wanted them to go beyond removing Dollfuss or farther than putting just enough pressure on the government so as to force Austria's fusion with the German rulers.

Assuming such were the calculations of Hitler, recent events have amply demonstrated their worth As the pressure against Austria grows greater, it becomes clear that Austria cannot live without the support of Germany: day by day the influence of the Nazis grows stronger. The socialists, too, remember that it was the Catholic troops who shot them down and not the Nazis Certainly the people do not support the government Some of the socialists even bend towards collaboration with the "National Socialism" of the petty bourgeoisie under Hitler. It is clear that no Austrian government can live long without the Nazis' co-operation Either fusion with Germany (or, what is the same thing, the Austrian Nazis in the government), or perpetual rebellion, turmoil, and chaos—this is the immediate perspective in Austria.

In the meantime, the clerical fascists in power have attempted a reorganization of the government somewhat along the lines fantastically laid out by Saint-Simon, with three separate houses of parliament At the present time it is too early to analyze the effect of the new regulations Already the Catholic fascists are in conflict with the government, and a new dictatorship has been set up, under Schuschnig, which has driven out Stahremberg and his adherents who are too closely sympathetic to Italy's aspirations.

2

The intensity of the world crisis and the rise of fascism have placed the most severe burdens upon the French capitalist system. All signs point to an acute situation within France leading to fascists attempts at power. Although one of the very last countries to be drawn into the crisis, owing to her exceptional economic conditions, such as the high development of usurer capital, the big reparations payments, etc., France has been rapidly reduced to 60 per cent of the production she enjoyed in prosperity, which

had been falling very sharply since 1931, revealing an unemployment of at least two million workers. Bankruptcies and receiverships, too, have mounted to almost one thousand five hundred monthly. Although trade fell, huge import surpluses were accumulated (in 1933 alone mounting to about half a billion dollars), which could not easily be paid for, owing to the drastic drop in tourist income, the cessation of reparations payments, the great lowering of investment returns, the intensified tariff wars, and other losses.

To the three hundred billion francs public debt the French government has been forced to add the annually mounting deficits. In spite of her drastic efforts to reduce the import surplus, to cut down governmental expenditures, and to cancel debts to the United States, governmental financial obligations have so continued to rise that France is threatened with having to go off the gold standard.[1] To the French middle class, this is the most terrible thing that can happen. Deeply involved in financial operations, having already experienced an 80 per cent loss, when all French investments were marked down in order to stabilize the franc after the War, France can go off the gold standard today only with the greatest social convulsions. As the cost of living remains high, the effects of the crisis make themselves felt more tensely. With fascist Germany on its right and the Spanish Revolution on its left, France finds itself in a critical transition period.

To the internal difficulties must be added the external the loss of the Saar Basin, the rise of German imperialism, the growing influence of Italy in the Mediterranean, the break up of France's post-war continental hegemony, the necessity to bolster up the puppet countries supported by France for its protection, the need for increased military preparations, etc No wonder France fears it will be the next country to crack; no wonder class formations have crystallized accordingly.

As elsewhere, however, it is the Right Wing that has taken the aggressive initiative, and among the Rightists it is the Royalists who lead The fact that the Royalists fill such a prominent role is an indication of the fact that France is still agrarian, that her economy is relatively stagnant, and that, not the great industrialists, but the finance and landed capitalist interests still play the leading organizational role in France. Together with the fascists, then, the Royalists, such as *Les Camelots du Roi,* took to the streets in vigorous denunciation of parliament, as in February 1934, and actually built barricades in their fight with the police. While the party of law and order, the Right Wing, used the Stavisky Parliamentary scandal to threaten insurrection, the socialists went to the defense of the government and called a general strike to support the legislature. Here again we see

[1] A recent decree has devalued the franc by about 30 per cent.

that the socialists become active only in the preservation of capitalist democracy; while never dreaming of calling a general strike for socialism, they are very eager to do so where the safety of the capitalist system is involved.

The socialist movement has been temporarily successful in putting down the fascist forces in France, and the recent election returns of 1936 have placed Léon Blum, socialist, as Premier of France. Nevertheless, it is highly questionable whether the victory of fascism in Germany does not inevitably spell the victory of similar reactionary forces in the rival countries of France and England, if only for the self-preservation of these countries Even though the socialists and the communists in France completely capitulate to the theories of nationalist defense and become subservient elements in French capitalist schemes of imperialism—that is, even should these parties demonstrate to the full what amounts to their complete counter-revolutionary activity against the interests of the workers who support them—nevertheless, French capitalism may be compelled to find the socialists and communists entirely too costly and too inefficient for its purposes, and be eventually driven, as the war danger grows near, to bring into existence in France the same sort of co-ordinated integrated militarist dictatorship as exists in Germany. We may say, then, rather safely, that the victory of the Right Wing forces in France is eventually assured The alternative, that the socialists and communist forces would be allowed to retain power, is only conceivable in case capitalist France goes to aid communist Russia, but that is inconceivable France can aid Russia only after Russia has abandoned its communism, which in turn can occur only after a fierce civil war within Russia itself

The oldest French organization to have taken on a fascist color is the *Ligue de l'Action Française* It was organized during the exciting days of the Dreyfuss case, under the leadership of Charles Maurras and Léon Daudet Its policies from the start were strongly nationalistic, anti semitic, monarchical, and Catholic France was to be for the French, not for the Jews and Protestants Bitterly opposed to democratic principles, it organized its shock troops, the *Camelots du Roi,* or henchmen of the King In 1923, these "henchmen" staged a demonstration in which they wrecked the presses of several newspapers and fed castor oil to the Left Deputies They have been enthusiastic in their support of Mussolini's principles and methods. Indeed, the first official book of fascist doctrine, *Fascisme,* written by Gorgolini, was published by George Valois under the auspices of the Ligue.

For a long time the *Camelots du Roi,* mostly students with a penchant for violence, have been systematically drilled, and now have established many arsenals. Following the principles of Mussolini, the Action Française

tried to form corporations of workers and employers, as in Italy. Léon Daudet has declared that everyone must recognize the overwhelming superiority of Mussolini, especially since his display of wisdom in preserving that incomparable force of political stability—the hereditary monarchy, the House of Savoy.

Daudet would welcome a French Mussolini to restore the House of Bourbon. To him, Briand, Boncour, and Poincaire are pernicious fools for preferring their old "democ soc-parliamentary fetich" to the cause of real peace by a Latin alliance Parliaments, parties, and universal suffrage are ruining France. Sovereignty should be taken from the people and given to the State, the goal of which should be not quantity but quality.

In 1923, François Coty, the masculine perfume magnate, also attempted the organization of a fascist group called the "Blue-shirts." He bought over the paper *Le Figaro* for anti communistic propaganda, and, when that failed in 1928, he issued *L'Ami du Peuple*, selling it below cost. Like Daudet, Coty advocated Italo-French amity, and the use of the idea of Latinity as a rallying cry for fascism Having once been a radical socialist, Coty used his slogans of solidarism to organize his *Solidarité Française*, which today is one of the largest fascist groups in France

The fascist movement generally received a great impetus in 1924 during the hectic period preceding the stabilization of the franc, when masses were taking to the streets At that time, two hundred thousand workers assembled to pay their respects to Jean Jaurès in a gigantic demonstration in his honor. The bourgeoisie became frightened and began to organize numerous military organizations, the most important being the *Ligue des Patriotes*, led by General Castelnau These groups, strictly speaking, were not fascist organizations, but leaned in the general direction of fascism with their anti-parliamentary, anti-Bolshevik, anti-labor programs As a subdivision of the *Ligue des Patriotes*, Pierre Taittinger organized the *Jeunesse Patriotes*, or Young Patriots This group strove to build up a national party and openly acknowledged its intentions to seize power in the fashion of Mussolini, with a program demanding the defense of the small middle class, small producers, small pensioners, and French petty property. For the workers, the Young Patriots threatened law and order everywhere, in the streets, schools and factories, and advocated the elimination of strikes.

During this period of fright there was formed also the *Fédération Nationale Catholique*, again under the leadership of General Castelnau. Its base was among the peasants, who were advised to be ready to fight against the dictatorship of the cities. It participated in anti-red and strike-breaking activities. This National Catholic Federation has been intimately connected with the *Jeunesse Patriotes*, to whom it turned over its own

Catholic Boy Scouts. Thus there has taken place a considerable interlocking between the movements.

It should be noted that the chief financial supporters of all of these groups include Marsal, a banker, Arthuys and Mathon, industrialists, Poncet of the steel trust and ambassador to Germany, and Serge André, director of large oil companies and also of the *Societé d'Armaments,* one of the armament firms handled by Sir Basil Zaharoff All of these men, of course, ardently proclaimed themselves "the defenders of the small middle class Frenchmen."

The theoretician of the Right Wing generally has been André Tardieu who has ceaselessly struck at democracy and socialism in favor of Mussolini's model. Parliament is the root of all evil, and Tardieu would curtail drastically its powers His "minimum reforms" are (1) the withdrawal of parliament's power to initiate expenditures; (2) the granting to the executive of power to dissolve parliament; (3) prolongation of parliament's term of office, that is, less frequent elections, and extension of the time during which the executive may rule after dissolving parliament; (4) popular referendum on parliamentary acts whenever the executive sees fit; and (5) defense of the State against the subversive tendency of its own employees. Tardieu is against any interpellations of the government; the executive should be accountable to no one, and should be free to handle expenditures as he sees fit

At present, the Chamber can be dissolved only with the consent of the Senate, and this has happened only once. Under Tardieu's view, the influence of the Chamber gradually would disappear. Tardieu would prevent all State employees from joining any trade union or organization They must be at all times 100 per cent loyal to the régime This is all the more important in France since the number of functionaries is very large Following the philosophy of Mussolini, Tardieu insists upon establishing authority to save liberty.

The most threatening organization in street action has been, however, none of the preceding organizations, but the *Croix de Feu,* which at first was organized to include only war veterans who had been decorated, but later was extended to take in other veterans and finally, the sons of war veterans It is led by Colonel Robert De la Rocque The membership claimed is over one hundred and twenty thousand[1] The program of the *Croix de Feu* is an elaborate one. In its foreign policy, it would scrap the Versailles Treaty, calling for reliance on no other force except the military

[1] Compare the pamphlet issued by the Vigilantes Committee of Anti Fascist Intellectuals on the *Croix de Feu* which points out that the Vice President of that organization is a director of large concerns, the manager is the Vice President of a bank and Taittinger is a corporation director, etc

might of the nation. It also demands two years military service and large increases in the military budget at the expense of social reform and education. In its internal policies, it is opposed to civil liberties for any other but nationalist opinions. On the other hand, it caters strongly to the views of the Catholic Church, challenging the State's monopoly of education, calling for fewer college graduates and for less democracy in the public schools. Of course, it fights the trade unions and favors the dissolution of the National Federation of Labor. In some respects the program of the *Croix de Feu* is far from the theories of fascism, but there is no doubt that every contradiction will be ironed out in time. The *Croix de Feu* apparently carries forward the traditions of Napoleon, and should lend itself to Bonapartist politicians.

The arch foe of this veterans' group admittedly is communism, and La Rocque has promised to hang the communists or socialists, should they attempt to control the government His own positive program, however, is exceedingly vague, advocating abstractly a political clean-up and good leadership; La Rocque has made his aim rather the acquisition of power than a clear statement of social reforms

Under the pressure of the Right Wing, the French government has rapidly taken on aspects similar to that of the Bruening régime in Germany and that of Giolitti in Italy, before the fascist victories While chaos exists in the parliamentary sphere, with one government giving way to another in rapid succession, all during 1934 the Right Wing on the one hand and the workers on the other were arming themselves for physical struggle in the street The Right Wing, under the patronage of the Wendell family of munition makers and the Rothschild family of bankers has now united in a *Unione Nationale des Combattants.*

At the same time, the government, by its treaty with Soviet Russia, has been able cleverly to disarm the workers morally and materially Suddenly the capitalist government of France appears as the champion of the Soviet Union and receives the enthusiastic indorsement of the socialists and communists. If Russia is to be supported and Hitler is to be fought, what more can these so-called revolutionists ask? They now promise to support the French army and no longer to embarrass the ruling class by strikes in the factories. In the Chamber of Deputies, their representatives declare that they gladly will give up their arms and no longer attempt to take matters to the street Thus in France, as in Germany, while the Right Wing cynically organizes itself more strongly than ever, the Left Wing becomes a mere tail end of the republican government. As the communists liquidate themselves into socialists, the socialists crystallize into republican adherents of national defense.

As the day of French fascist victory grows near, we can foreshadow what its general theory will be In economics it will be far closer to Italian fascism than to German national socialism, not only because the country is economically similar to Italy, agriculture and petty industry playing a predominant part, but because friendliness to Italy will fit in with French imperialism to raise the slogan of Latin unity against the Teutons French fascism will follow Sorel and Bergson in philosophic method and will adopt the corporate State in politics, all the while stressing the general will of Rosseau, and the sociology of August Comte

However, within the fascist ranks there are several tendencies which will have to compose their differences First, there exists the struggle between the industrialists and the Royalists. There is this difference between the French and the Italian situation In Italy the King was never overthrown, in France, over sixty five years stand between the present and the last empire Should Germany restore its monarchy, it is possible that French fascism also would require such a figurehead In the absence of such a necessity, it is doubtful whether the industrialists will consent to having such an expensive symbol reinstalled

The second difference is over the question of the character of the actual leader of the movement In Italy and England the fascist leadership is in the hands of men who were active militants in the Left Wing of the Socialist and Labor Parties In Germany, Hitler followed the ideology of Christian socialism In France, national conditions would demand a leader who can pose as a socialist, perhaps a leader of the Catholic union movement, who at the same time intimately will be connected with the military forces of France The army has always played a decisive role in France One who aspires to fascist leadership must have the whole hearted indorsement of the army and veteran forces of the country It is difficult to find such a person in the ranks of the orthodox socialist and trade union movements which for so long a time have taken a sharp anti-militarist position With the physiognomy of Catholic socialism and with the mailed fist of militarism, however, fascism in France has the possibility of playing the same integrating and destructive role as other fascisms have accomplished in other countries

3

That fascism has arisen in Great Britain is amply indicative of two factors, first, the breaking down of the British Empire and its slow disintegration, and second, the fact that all countries today must be prepared for sudden declarations of war Britain can counter the perfected fascist organs of rival countries only by similar governmental centralization It is difficult to see how any country in Western Europe today can avoid

fascist tendencies when all nations are living under the shadow of perpetual war that will begin without the formalities of declarations or warnings That country will win the war soonest that is completely prepared for any emergency, that has mobilized its entire population into an immense frictionless machine, that has wiped out the class struggle or reduced it to innocuous chatterings, that rests upon the most highly developed industries, that has co-ordinated all industrial and social life behind it

Fascism is the only theory and movement that fits in with this scheme of things, and even though the internal situation within the country itself, —namely, the development of class war,—might not necessitate such fascism at this time, the international situation and the war danger may compel it to come into existence This is increasingly the situation with Great Britain, and has begun to affect even the United States.

In spite of their parliamentary traditions, the British have been well prepared for fascist tendencies by the long operations of their powerful imperialism which all classes have ardently indorsed British "democracy" was ready to adopt a policy of blood and iron in its colonies There were no parliamentary elections for the Africans or Asiatics but the cold stark terror of a ubiquitous State How poetically just it will be when precisely because India and other colonial regions are striving to win a maximum of independence and democratic liberalism for themselves, Britain should be moved to fascism!

The huge colonial structure of the British Empire has maintained a cynical State apparatus, highly contemptuous of the common run of mortals, each functionary a petty satrap or nabob thoroughly prepared to adopt the views of Hobbes, views which today can be realized only through fascism The colonials have a saying that only "mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the mid day sun', the immense energy of Britain's rulers will not ooze supinely away should the Empire be in danger because of labor's claims As it crushed the colonials, so will it try to crush the workers at home

Even before the great crash of 1929, the danger of the disintegration of the British Empire had become apparent to the acutest political thinkers of the day, affecting drastically all political parties As G D H Cole put it, "Today, the situation is changed Capitalism is not in Great Britain in any danger of immediate or dramatic collapse, but it is plainly sliding downhill The Socialists, for the most part, are not encouraged by the growing difficulties of capitalism, they are frightened by them" [1] Indeed that was exactly the situation with the socialists One might have imagined that, with the decline of British capitalism, the socialists would have proclaimed the verification of their theories and the necessity of sliding into

[1] G D H Cole *The Next Ten Years in British Social and Economic Policy* p 7

socialism. The socialists have not pressed the point, although for the first time the doubt has begun to penetrate among them as to whether there could be partial, gradual steps to socialism.

Formerly, the socialists used to speak of the nationalization of the mines, the further questions then debated being whether to give compensation to the mine owners, or whether that compensation should be in the form of royalties, general debt on the public, or mine stock payments. Today, the British socialists must comprehend that, even if the State should nationalize the coal mines, the coal would still not be sold. What difference would it make whether the mines were owned privately or publicly, when there would remain the same vast number of miners out of work? Prior to the war, the socialists used to speak of the necessity for a minimum wage; now many of them have admitted that under the present set-up this would only increase the army of unemployed. Previously they had talked of the right to work; the question now has become where to place those unemployed. In short, the novel features created by the great technological changes in the era of imperialism have whirled the socialists into a sea of confusion.

This new situation hastens some of the socialistic theoreticians towards fascism, especially those formerly connected with the guild socialists. Their solution is to rely less on experts, to develop the home market and to revive agriculture. Away from industry, back to the land!

Writers like Cole emphatically polemicized against such measures as work relief on the grounds that the dole was cheaper, the work was entirely too costly and hurriedly improvised, the accomplished task was considered like prison work, men were not selected according to capabilities, the kind of work done was wasteful, etc. Instead of work relief, he argued that every unemployed worker should be given the option to enroll in a volunteer "National Labor Corps." [1] Together with this regimentation of the unemployed should go a complete reorganization of the workers in the factory, somewhat on the style of Mussolini. "There should be in every industrial plant employing more than a handful of persons some sort of *Works Council,* chosen by the whole body of workers in the plant and representative of the different grades and sections. This Council shall be a statutory body, either set up, as in Germany, under a special Act of Parliament, or created as an integral part of the system of State control. . . ." [2] All of these theories Italian and British fascisms may well indorse.

That the guild socialists have become fascist forerunners is especially noticeable in the general theses proposed by Cole,[3] which included the

[1] The same, p. 51.
[2] The same, pp. 163, 164.
[3] The same, pp. 423 and following.

following: (1) The necessity for elaboration of a new economic policy based on the admission of the fact that Great Britain never could regain her old supremacy in overseas commerce; (2) A recognition that the main problem is unemployment to be met by means of National Labor Corps to improve the country through slum clearance, house building, forestration, road making, railway development, electrification, and land drainage; (3) The creation of a Board of National Investment to guide capital investment in creative lines or to borrow money to go into such new enterprises itself, (4) A recognition of the hopelessness of the old trade unions and the encouragement of new Works Councils, connected with the State; (5) The encouragement by the State of all methods of rationalization, the State to take over certain concerns and to see that the new equipment which English industry needs so badly is obtained, (6) The building up of the dairy industry, encouragement of "back to the land" movement, socialization of land and extensive credits given to the farmers [1]

The views expressed above bespeak eloquently of the general pessimism in the ranks of the ruling class of Great Britain, and show clearly the difference between British fascism and Italian Both must stress empire—the Italians, however, in order to win one and to revive the glory that was Rome's, while the British fight to maintain their old standing, pessimistically admitting their deterioration In short, fascist theories are developing in Great Britain not so much because of the rise of the class struggle within the country, or of the fear of communism, but rather because of the shifts in world economy and the changed international position of the British Empire We have here a classic case of slow and gradual desuetude

To provide the monkey glands for Britain's rejuvenation, Cole urges, first, closer international collaboration—evidently through the League of Nations under British control, through cancellation of debts, and through a stopping of the fall of prices—apparently in order to allow Britain to compete despite its antiquated machinery, second, a real disarmament—especially necessary now that Britain has become increasingly vulnerable to attack both in the Mediterranean by Italy and from the air by Germany; and, third, peace with Russia The old individualist liberalism must disappear forever "There must be a large infusion of State socialism into the economic system of every important country . " [2]

In practical politics the fascist movement in Britain has been adumbrated by two important developments; first, the domination of heavy monopoly industry in the British Federation of manufactures with theories most

[1] Incidentally a good many of these suggestions relating to unemployment have been adopted in the United States under the Roosevelt régime

[2] G D H Cole *British Trade and Industry Past and Future*, p 440

clearly expressed by Sir Alfred Mond, calling for a complete self-sufficient empire. Here is the basic slogan of British fascism. Unlike Austria, apparently torn between conflicting doctrines of race and empire, Great Britain must take her stand on the same ground as Italy, namely, "Empire." Britain's economic views cannot be those of autarchy. She is too much involved in international trade as the carrier of the world's goods ever to advocate any disruption of commodity intercourse. Nor can Great Britain take to theories of race. Herself an admitted conglomerate of many races, Danes, Saxons, Welsh, Irish, French, etc., theories of racial purity cannot advance the prestige of Britain. Besides, there is her polyglot empire to consider. Nor can Great Britain make any further pretensions of organizing the world. Such claims are for American fascism to advance. Faced with the superior rivalry of the United States, the most that Great Britain can hope to do is to maintain its scattered forces intact.

The second important development leading to fascism was the organization of the Maintenance Men during the British general strike in 1926. This gigantic strike that involved directly five million workers gave the British ruling class the shock of its life. The bourgeoisie saw clearly that any drastic reduction in the standards of the British workers would be met by a movement leading towards revolution. On the other hand, the capitalists knew that the decline of the economy of the British Empire was bound to lead to reductions of standards at home. The British employers would be gored to death on the horns of this dilemma unless they acted in time. During the strike itself they organized their corps of Maintenance Men to keep order and to help break the strike. With the need for the Maintenance Men arose the need for a fascist program.

The terrific impact of the economic depression in 1929 greatly accelerated all such developments in Great Britain. Finally, under the leadership of Sir Oswald Mosley, formerly a Left Wing socialist, there has been organized the British Union of Fascists. There are other fascist organizations in Britain, such as the Imperial Fascists, the National Fascists and the British Fascists, but they are relatively small compared to Mosley's Blackshirts. Unlike the other three, the British Union of Fascists is not especially anti-Semitic.

According to Mosley, fascism comes to each great nation in turn as the country reaches the crisis inevitable in the modern age, as the epoch of civilization comes to an end, and the necessity arises to reorganize the system. Britain cannot meet the problems of decline, the losing fight to keep her colonies, or the discontent at home, by means of the talking gallery of Parliament. Action is needed on the style of Italy. A stronger State should be established so that every member of the body politic will

act in harmony with the whole under the guidance and driving force of the fascist movement.

All lesser interests, whether of the Right or of the Left, whether they be employers' federation, trade union, banking or professional interest, must be subordinated to the welfare of the nation as a whole. Within the corporate State structure, trade unions and employers' federations no longer will oppose each other, but function as the joint directors of national enterprise. Class war will give place to national co-operation through the formation of corporations Here the British Fascists only modernize the opinions of that inveterate utopian, Robert Owen, who had declared a hundred years previously in an address to the working classes of England that they must recognize "First—that the rich and the poor, the governors and the governed have really but one interest . . Fourth—that the higher classes in general no longer wish to degrade you . . "[1]

The heart of the program of the British Union of Fascists is the question of the empire. According to this organization, only through the corporate organization of Britain can there be the best and maximum development of the empire The dominions and the colonies being natural producers of food stuffs and raw materials, they will be kept as such, while the mother country will remain highly organized to produce manufactured goods. Thus the British Union of Fascists repeats the same coercion of the old mercantilists that led to the American Revolution and would be bound to lead to further explosions in the colonies.

This program only rationalizes the recent efforts of the British government to establish a tariff around the empire, to keep out foreign competitors, and to make the British imperialist system an integrated whole Such efforts, however, cannot succeed permanently The tariff on wheat and meat can tend only to raise the cost of living for the workers of Great Britain The keeping out of foreign finished products will tend only to increase the technical stagnation in Great Britain and to raise costs throughout the empire The establishment of such a tariff only can increase the animosity of the United States, which country, moreover, can evade the tariff by means of the export of capital into the dominions, incidentally reaping an extra profit because of the tariff The idea of an imperial tariff that will hold is a bursting bubble

Together with these policies, Mosley intends to build up the home market, first, in order to compensate England for her loss in foreign trade; second, so as to make England more self-sufficient in time of war; and third, to raise a more powerful middle class throughout the countryside. To the masses, Mosley promises that such regulation of agriculture

[1] Robert Owen "Address to Working Classes, in *A New Society & Other Writings* (Everyman's edition), p 154

and industry will lead to the end of irresponsibility and criminal competition, whereby each employer competes with the others to lower wages, and instead will institute a planned economy and will raise the standards of life everywhere. The middle class will be preserved from the competition of the big fellows, which is driving them to extinction.

While speaking thus prettily to the petty bourgeoisie, the fascists do not neglect to promise the big industrialists that under the control of fascism there would be a real organization of British power to increase exports, under the slogan "Britain buys from those who buy from Britain." Thus there would be a vigorous governmental policy to club weaker nations into line and to make them purchase British goods or suffer the disastrous boycott movement which Britain might be able to enforce under particular circumstances.

Recognizing the weakened position of Great Britain and the existence of powerful labor forces opposed to war, the British fascists have been forced to play down the theories of militarism that flow from fascism. On the contrary, they have declared repeatedly that it is irresponsible liberalism and free trade which have started wars, but that organized economy under fascism could not do so. As they have put it, it is muddle, not organization which leads to war; chaos is more dangerous than thought and method. Fascist organization is the method of world peace among nations bound together by the universal fascism of the twentieth century.

It is significant, too, that the British fascists do not oppose democracy to dictatorship, but, on the contrary, point out that a dictatorship is the necessary culmination of democracy. Fascism will be victorious not against the will of the people but only as its expression. Fascism implies a government armed by the people with power to overcome problems which must be conquered if the nation is to live and to remain great. If the people do not give fascism power, then the State will collapse and nothing will stand in the way of communism. Thus, the dictator should constantly avail himself of plebiscites wherever they can serve a useful purpose, since, according to Mosley, fascism is no less determined to secure popular representation than to secure government itself. Mosley is not too coy, however, to affirm that under some circumstances it might become necessary for a strong man and fascist movement to save England even against itself. History is to decide whether such action is correct. Following Carlyle, Mosley preens himself as another Cromwell.

Of course, even more so than in Italy, fascism in England is loyal to the Crown and pledges itself to co-operate strongly with the Royalty. After all, Sir Oswald is not a mere plebeian like Mussolini or Hitler. The Crown is needed not only because it symbolizes the unity of the British Empire, but because that all men are created equal is a false supposition. Under

fascism, the talented and strong men will rule, these elements, of course, being found in the fascist aristocratic camp only.

Besides the fascist movement's forming from below, similar trends have been recently occurring within the British government itself. A "National" government has been created which undertakes to harmonize the interests of all parties and to end the party system in Britain. The situation today, therefore, is similar to that during the War, when the coalition government prevailed, only, significantly enough, it is not the liberals who have made the coalition, but the conservatives. Here again we see how present-day peace must use methods in ordinary life that were resorted to only during war time in the preceding era. What was a temporary war measure becomes a permanent peace philosophy.

The formation of the "National" government has gone hand in hand with a reduction of the power of parliament whose chattering is being curbed by the ever-increasing authority of the executive arm of the government. More and more the British government is adopting administrative decrees rather than old-style parliamentary methods. In this respect, also, we have a foreshadowing of theories and practice of fascism. In the other countries where fascism has triumphed, a similar set-up has always preceded the accession of the new forces.

Up to now, the fascist movement in Great Britain has not been able to make great headway. The strongly entrenched labor movement in Great Britain, despite its bellicose nationalism and servile imperialism, is a great obstacle in its path. However, as the war danger grows greater and more menacing, there can be no question but that these tendencies must develop further toward victory. The death of King George V may well mark the transition between the old and the new.

4

We are now able to examine more particularly the road and methods by which fascism reaches power. Essentially, fascism is the re-formation and re-dressment of the capitalist front to enable the social order to exist a while longer. It brushes aside the veiled dictatorship of the economic rulers, which exists under a democracy, to establish the open dictatorship of Big Business over the nation. To accomplish its purpose, however, it is compelled to use the middle class which it mobilizes and to which it makes various concessions. The fascist movement arises from the fact that the ruling class is unable to govern as of old and from the further fact that the proletariat is extraordinarily active, threatening to take power. Fascism develops through two routes. First, there is the mass movement organized in militant formation from below; second, there is the insidious fascization of the government from above. In the background is the lack of capacity

of the working class to accomplish what it threatens. These three factors combined allow fascism to get control.

Between parliamentary democracy and fascism there stands the mechanism of Bonapartism as a logical intermediary step in government. The profound necessity of Bonapartism has been proved in Italy, Germany, and Austria, and as the other countries, such as France, England, and the United States, move toward fascism, the definite signs of Bonapartism similarly have appeared. As soon as the struggle of the social strata—the Haves and the Have-nots, the exploiters and exploited—reaches its highest tension, the conditions are ripe for the domination of bureaucracy, police, soldiery; the government becomes "independent" of society. These are precisely the characteristics of Bonapartism.

Bonapartism, therefore, is a governmental régime resting not upon the mass support of political parties, but entirely upon the bayonets of its army and the activity of its functionaries. The government endures solely because the main classes have mutually paralyzed or exhausted each other. Such a situation existed when Napoleon I became emperor. None of the powerful classes, whether represented by Jacobins or Bourbons, had desired the rule of this upstart. He was tolerated only because he was able to secure stability for private property in an era of violence and chaos, when no single class engaged in the civil war could put down the other. A similar situation existed under Napoleon III. As the revolution of 1848 unfolded itself, it was apparent that there was no class strong enough to take the power, so all groups were forced to tolerate a Napoleonic government which each detested.

Generically identical events existed in Italy, Germany, and Austria before the victory of fascism. In Italy, the workers, on the one hand, and the capitalists, on the other, were struggling bitterly in the streets. Neither side was able to put down the other. The government under Nitti and later under Giolitti, Bonomi, and Facta, was merely a frame for the conflicting elements, was simply maintaining the State apparatus necessary to protect private property and order as a whole. None of the contending groups really wanted to support the Giolittis. They were in office through sufferance and because no majority could be found to support any other. The Bonapartism of the Giolitti government was a short one, owing to the fact that, unlike the days of Napoleon I and Napoleon III, the classes had not mutually exhausted themselves, but were still fighting for control. As soon as one or the other opposing class won the day, it was bound to shove aside the temporary governmental régime and install its own representatives. The same situation prevailed in the days of Bruening, von Papen, and von Schleicher in Germany, and of Dollfuss and Schuschnig in Austria.

All this, however, does not mean that Bonapartism is impartial or neutral in the struggle. Bonapartism lends itself very favorably to the struggle for fascism. The very fact that the government was no longer actively supported by the classes but existed solely on sufferance, was an indication to the property owners that the days of democratic parliamentarism were over and that they would have to support a group, like the fascist, which was not afraid to use open terror force to secure stabilization. The very capitalist interests that create the Bonapartist régime in the government in order to hold the fort are the same interests that help to support fascism And conversely, both Bonapartism and fascism being agents of the same class, the old governmental order, although it tries to hold on as long as possible, finally, when it knows it has to go, does whatever it can to aid the victory of the fascists

Thus we have seen in the cases of Italy, Germany, and Austria that the very governmental apparatus which was supposedly opposed to fascist usurpation helped the fascists with all the power at its command, the police and the army disarming the subversive forces, arming the fascists, and gradually fusing with fascism, under its leadership We therefore can declare it to be a fundamental political rule that countries proceeding from parliamentarism to fascism have to pass through the stage of Bonapartism, which exists during the interim, while the classes fight, and which paves the way to and aids fascist victory

To this we may add the further notation that it is the liberals and democrats who, naively enough, ardently support the Bonapartist regime, believing that their support of Bonapartism will prevent fascism By these very actions, however, the liberal democrats help to destroy the authority of parliament, while they give unparalleled power to the executive arm of the government, and increase the might of the military Thus they prepare the people for a new fascist dictatorship

Very often Bonapartism deliberately takes upon itself the initiation of "emergency" decrees hostile to the masses [1] so as to permit the fascist demagogue to stir up the people against the government, now pathetically endorsed by the liberals and social democrats The hatred of the people becomes centered not on fascism but on Bonapartism, although these very decrees are precisely the ones that would have been executed by fascism, had it had the power Thus Bonapartism, in a way, does the groundwork for fascism, takes the blame for unpopular measures, and releases the fascist movement from the possibility of exposure and defeat in advance

It is not to be imagined that fascism arrives only where the internal contradictions have become unbearable It may also arise because of external

[1] Compare the Bruening hunger decrees, for example

pressure's reacting upon the internal life of the nation. Austria is a good example of this possibility. In Austria, unlike the case of Germany, there was no revolutionary situation. The socialists made no efforts to take over the government or to lead a revolt. It was not the Left Wing that threatened the government; it was rather the Right Wing that took the initiative to change the régime by driving out the socialists. What urged the Right Wing forward was primarily international pressure. The breakdown of the Versailles Treaty and the rise of German fascism gave the ruling class of Austria its opportunity to reform its empire and cement its international alliances. It was inconceivable that Germany should declare war against the Soviet Union and be unprotected in her rear by having German Austria dominated by socialists. It was absolutely necessary to straighten out the front to clear the decks for final action. And Austria, as a pawn in the international chess game, was bound to respond.

The rise of fascism in the Western capitalist countries which emerged victorious from the war demonstrates another aspect of the same principle, since fascism may be instituted not because of the danger of the working class's starting a revolution against capital, but because of the necessity to meet the rivalry of countries strengthened by fascism. If fascism enhances the ability of Germany to conduct war, then it is inevitable that France, England, and other countries must adopt similar political machinery.

Fascism does not arise only where the workers are actually in revolt, as in Italy. It can attain power also where the working class is merely on the verge of revolt, that is, where a revolutionary situation is developing but has not as yet matured to an actual insurrection. Germany is a good illustration of this. Austria shows that fascism may triumph where even a revolutionary situation is lacking, but where the change is required for international and imperialist reasons.

The fact is that today political fluctuations can be so violent and sudden that the ruling class cannot afford to wait until the workers have actually burst out in insurrection; it may have to turn to fascism in advance in order to nip the maturing movement in the bud. Thus fascism may take power not only to prepare for war or to meet the fascist consolidations of other countries, but also to guard against surprises.

Naturally, then, if the victory of fascism need not await an actual proletarian insurrection, fascism may be germinating in countries where the labor movement has not yet become threatening. The United States is an example of this. Precisely in such a period of sudden radicalization of the people, when the masses can move quickly from their former positions into violent demonstrations against the State, must conservative governments, even though not actually in fear of revolution, keep in reserve such movements as the fascist to prepare for any emergency.

In Germany and Italy there were powerful communist parties in revolt or threatening revolt. This gave the socialists a chance to charge that the hare-brained antics of the communists breed fascism. But the Austrian example shows that the existence of a strong communist party is not necessary in order to spur fascism to take power, since in Austria the communist party was practically non-existent. Furthermore, in England, the fascist movement is arising without even a strong socialist movement's existing, but only a Labor Party. Finally, fascist trends are rearing their heads in the United States where there is not even a Labor Party.

In short, while it is true that originally for a capitalist class to turn to fascism there had to be the immediate threat or actual outburst of the proletarian revolution under communist direction, today this is no longer so. As the United States is demonstrating, fascist drifts may appear even where the labor movement is weak and poorly organized. The mere fact that the masses potentially may form a powerfully organized militant labor movement is sufficient for the rulers to prepare their fascist weapons in reserve. This is all the more necessary since in countries like the United States there is no doubt that, should the workers make even the most moderate attempt to engage in independent political action or to form national industrial unions, the inevitable clashes that would arise would speedily lead the country to a revolutionary situation. In the United States, above all, there exist the finest potentialities for a deep-going and general radicalization of the masses against which the bourgeoisie can prepare only by forging its fascist weapons in advance.

It is precisely in the latter cases, where the masses are not immediately threatening to overthrow the capitalist order, that fascism proceeds via the governmental route rather than by the road from below. Here there is no occasion for the organization of large mass demonstrations by fascists who shoot down all in their way and who march on Rome. Rather is it a case of the cold and calculating fascization of the apparatus of government and the steady submergence of democratic institutions to give rise to Bonapartism and to dictatorial tendencies that pave the way for fascism. This last is the situation characterizing the United States today.

If we attempt to pass judgment historically upon the fascist movement so as to guide our conduct in relation to it, in short, if we ask ourselves the question whether fascism is reactionary or progressive, we find that the answer is by no means a simple one. If we put the question: Must society pass through a period of fascism in order to reach a higher productive level? our answer must be emphatically, No! Fascism is not inevitable. The human race can proceed from the chaos of capitalist competition with its waste and wars to a planful, organized society without going through

the blood-path and horror of the fascist régime. It was entirely possible, as Russia has shown, to pass from pre-fascist capitalism directly to the rule of the working class.

If fascism is reactionary, it is fundamentally because it has set back the only class capable of moving the world to a higher technique and better relations. Precisely because fascism destroys the organizations of the working class and would prevent them from overthrowing capitalism, does fascism stifle the birth of a new order, and thus becomes reactionary. This is the essence of the matter.

Flowing from this fundamental policy of throttling the working class, fascism has been forced to adopt other reactionary features. In its methodology, it derogates science and intellectual pursuits, emphasizing emotions and passions. It reduces the number of students in the higher institutions of learning; in huge pyres it burns the books of which it disapproves. However, while it pretends to avoid intellectualizing, it spins out all sorts of utopian phalanstaries of organized capitalism, planned economy, self-sufficiency, autarchy, etc. In short, capitalism, in its period of senility, ends up where socialism begins, namely, in utopia, in the belief of its ability to maintain the profit system without its evils and to establish a purposeful order that will eliminate rivalry and secure harmony for all.

Capitalism refuses to recognize that it has passed its menopause. To restore its virility, it resorts to the magic potions of fascism with frenzied incantations to the blood of its ancestors. The sole result is intellectual abortions. As its body fails, it gives up hope in evolution and turns from materialism to idealism, from objectivism to subjectivism, from the bug of reality to the spider-web of wish.

In its reliance upon the middle class, fascism must maintain the backward petty economy of that class, must make concessions to the peasantry and small property holders, and must prevent the development of the productive forces. At the same time, the powers of destruction in the hands of the ruling class become greatly strengthened. None of the basic problems leading to chronic crisis and perpetual warfare can be solved. On the contrary, all become intensified.

The reactionary features of fascism are evidenced, too, in its emphatic insistence on a most intense form of nationalism, adopting theories that could lead only to the strangling of all the races of humanity and perpetual warfare between them. At the very moment when the new productive forces, such as radio, television, and the airplane, imperiously demand the end of national boundaries and the intimate co-ordination of all the productive forces of the world, at that moment fascism increases national restrictions a hundredfold.

Reactionary, too, are fascist reforms in social life. The position of women

is relegated to that of hundreds of years ago; the youth are broken on the wheel of fascist discipline; babies are compelled to be born under gas masks. The masses, already having developed to a point where they can organize themselves in powerful groupings and can express their interests, find all self-development closed to them. They are compelled to be followers of leaders, a species of sheep whose task is "not to reason why, but to do and die" for fascism. The suppression of all initiative, ambition, and desire for advancement on the part of individuals belonging to the lower orders is part of the fascist scheme. All the evils that Herbert Spencer denounced in his tirades against socialism, calling it the new feudalism, or new slavery, have been realized in the guise of National Socialism or fascism. The very policies for which the workers were cursed, such as Luddism, that is, destruction of machinery, sabotage, terrorism, the crushing of individual liberty, etc., all have been realized, not by the workers, but by their capitalist opponents who were the first to attack the workers on these grounds.

On the other hand, strive as it will to prevent the inevitable victory of the working class, fascism both positively and negatively prepares the way for its own downfall and for the ultimate triumph of the new social order. Wherever fascism wins and atomizes the proletarian organizations, it does not really destroy the working class. That it could not do, without destroying the whole system of wage-slavery. The workers can do without their masters, but the masters cannot do without the workers. What fascism does unwittingly is to harden and toughen the workers and to overcome the poison which demoralized them.

In methodology, the very emphasis of the fascists upon emotion and passion plays into the hands of the revolutionists who, contra to the socialists and idealist rationalists who babble about the power of persuasion, have constantly roused the temper of the workers to induce them to get into action. Revolutionary communist theory is above all a theory of action, acclaiming education through action rather than through abstruse book reading and abstract chattering. Practice is the best pedagogue. To fascism, the present is an age of unreason; fascist appeals to babies, to little children and to adolescents are appeals to those *below* reason. The communist, on the contrary, relies on the burning hatred and passions of the exploited adult worker whose life is tortured away under fascism. The age of violence that characterizes the era of fascism fits in well enough with the plans of the subversive forces working for a new order.

In economics, fascism is compelled to base itself upon the highest technique and most developed trustified system. Thus, far from scattering the workers, it must organize them into larger masses and bring them

closer together. The nationalization of industry only emphasizes again the end of private industry and the bankruptcy of the private property owner. The more the State takes over the factories, the easier it is for everyone to see that the capitalist is a mere parasite. How long can the State guarantee the private owners a stated income merely because of their ownership? Sooner or later the question must become acute, whether these payments which drain the vitality of the whole nation should be made in perpetuity.

The National Socialists themselves are compelled to attack "parasitic" capital, viz., interest-capital, stock-and-bond-capital, speculative capital, etc. How long can the fascist divorce these children of capital from their brethren, and on what more equitable basis can they support the claims of the landlord and of the merchant as against the banker and the financier? Fascism here, against its will, is constrained to denounce a part of capitalism, and lets loose a force condemning the entire capitalist system. In this way, also, the petty bourgeois, who feared and hated socialism, eventually is brought to the point of view of adopting theories of socialism, even though at first on a restricted national scale.

Fascism is forced to raise collectivism to an unprecedented level. It wipes out all the filth of criminal individualism that nineteenth-century competition had accumulated. In its strictures against the evils of competition, fascism stimulates all, especially those who learn with such difficulty, namely, the petty bourgeoisie, to think not of themselves alone in the swinish egotistic manner of old, but of the welfare of the State. Soon enough the welfare of the State will be identified with the welfare of the masses. The permanent result of fascist teaching in the long run will be the subordination of the individual, not to the State, but to the needs of all, that is, of the masses who labor and suffer.

The accelerated development of State capitalism which occurs under fascism only brings to a head all the contradictions of the mode of production and prepares the mass of people better than ever for the transformation of society into one where only those who work control the means of work. Simultaneously, the fusion of State and business transforms every struggle of the workers into a political one against the State. State capitalism compels the workers to attack not a particular phase of the system but the heart of the order itself.

Just as fascism has been forced to deride certain forms of capital, so must it praise and idealize labor. The old aristocratic ruling class, like a bird of prey soaring on high, could look with contempt and mockery upon the grubby individuals digging at hard labor in the valleys. Against such birds of prey, the socialists countered with a theory stressing the dignity and value of labor so disdainfully scorned by Nietzsche. Now this very

cry of the dignity of labor is taken up by the ruling class as the sole way to maintain its rule. Only he eats who labors. The only person of value is the worker; idlers have no place in a system fighting for its existence.

Such is the theory of fascism and, whether it likes it or not, this new point plays directly into the hands of the communist revolutionary who easily can point out the abyss between fascist theory and practice, and how fascism protects not the laborer but the destroyer and the loafer, immensely increasing the number of these parasites. For good or evil, fascism has identified its rule with the rule of labor and has therefore confirmed, in its own way, all the pretensions that the laborer has made that he and he alone should rule. Sooner or later, the laborer will decide to remove fascism in favor of a rule more in accordance with his interests; fascism will be hard pressed to prevent its deposition. Theoretically, then, in the very beginning fascism lays the basis for its own destruction.

An excellent step has been made by fascism in exterminating the gangrenous rot which was poisoning the working class in the form of the trade union and socialist-communist bureaucracy. Fascism has squeezed the pus out of the proletarian system. By hanging the labor bureaucrat from the lamp-post and exposing his cowardice to ridicule and shame, the fascists have done an inestimable although unconscious service to the working class. First of all, by destroying these old bureaucracies, fascism gives the opportunity to the workers to build afresh, and has removed the old weights bending the working class to its knees. At the same time, fascism has killed once and for all the possibility of these cancerous growths' returning.

In the second place, the workers have become tremendously hardened under fascism, especially the advanced class-conscious workers. Having been forced to break from their past groupings, these workers, in jail, in concentration camp, and elsewhere, have probed deeply into their souls to discover the sins for which they are being punished. The old sentimental slogans have disappeared. Fascism has completed what the World War started. It has made the working class disciplined, realistic, and hard. If nationalism is fascism, the workers *must* become internationalist! With kicks and blows, fascism forces the proletariat to revolution.

All the problems over which the old movements—may they rest in peace!—used to mull interminably have now disappeared. The problem of *parliamentarism—Should the workers participate in parliamentary democratic elections or not?*—entirely loses its force now that parliaments are abolished. Should bourgeois property be confiscated, should the employers be paid?—is no longer debatable in the light of the complete confiscation of the working class property made by the bourgeoisie. Is insurrection

inevitable, or will peaceful persuasion do the job?—is a subject that now can meet only amused contempt if posed to the proletariat. Thus have the opportunists and the liberal reformists been driven not only out of the ranks of the government but out of the ranks of labor as well. From this hard ordeal of fascism there must emerge a new working class, bred by the even more intense contradictions and antagonisms of the future, thrust forward even still more sharply by the exigencies of world war and similar cataclysms, no longer divided as of old by craft lines, national boundaries, economic distinctions, reforms, ideals, etc., but now thoroughly united and welded together under the leadership of a tested and tempered vanguard.

This is the progressive feature of fascism. History does not proceed in one straight line, nor is it as smooth as the pavements of our boulevard. The road to power is exceedingly hard and devious. Apparently the labor movement is declining, taking two steps backward for every one that it advances. But this is only on the surface. So long as capitalism develops, it must develop these workers, increase their numbers and their power materially and ideologically. If it throws them back it is only in order to enable them to take a running jump towards the next stage before it.

Capitalism inexorably, and through the very reactionary features of fascism, whips and kicks the battalions of progress into line, compelling them to fight for the future, as they paralyze the present. Symbolic indeed is the castor-oil that fascism employs; it has enabled the workers to clean out all the filth of the past and to emerge with their fever gone, ready for battle.

Despite the rapidly menacing rise of fascism, we categorically can declare that fascism cannot last long. The case of Mussolini is no criterion, since Italian fascism was fortunate enough to stabilize its power at a time when the revolutionary proletariat was being defeated throughout the world, and when capitalism was recovering its stability and strength. Italian fascism obtained power in the beginning of the period of prosperity that began in 1923. The victory of Hitler and of other fascists, however, did not occur in this happy interlude of capitalism. Hitler took power in a stage when the economic crisis was at its deepest. He can maintain his power only by showing results in war. In the meantime, the longer fascism remains in power, the deeper grows the gap between it and the masses, and the more fascism degenerates further into a mere apparatus.

However, it is not so much the internal difficulties which will overthrow the fascist régime as will the inevitable bursting forth of the world war for which fascism is the preparation. The direction of this war, in a

basic sense, only can be against the international working class as symbolized by the Soviet Union. Whatever other complications occur are secondary to this fundamental perspective.

It is hardly conceivable, whether the Soviet Union resists the invasion or whether it succumbs, that the terrible holocaust of war will not generate the whirlwind of revolution afterward. The Franco-Prussian War gave rise to the Paris Commune and the victory of the workers in one city; the World War gave rise to the Russian Revolution and the victory of the workers in one country; the next war, unprecedented in its havoc, is bound to raise the problem to a higher pitch and to pose before the working class the inexorable necessity of ending the capitalist system throughout the world.

Of course, it is not inevitable that this next revolutionary attempt must succeed, just as it was possible for the workers to have failed previously. However, the probabilities are that in the next revolutionary wave, the workers, prepared as they have been by fascism itself, will be far more competent and capable of accomplishing the job than ever before. Fascism, in all likelihood, therefore, represents the last political gasp of a dying social order.

XXXII. FASCIST TRENDS IN THE UNITED STATES

I

THE fascist movement is inevitable in the United States. To believe otherwise is to imagine that the capitalists will give up their power without a fight. On the contrary, at the slightest indication of loss of their power, they will be prepared for a most ferocious struggle. The people of this country must learn this important truth.

Already fascist tendencies are in evidence on every side in the United States, in the popular organizations attempted by German and Italian fascisms, in the native secret organizations, in the mass political organizations developed by Father Coughlin, Huey Long, and others, in the movement among the veterans, in the intellectual and engineering fields, and in important governmental activities.

America always has been a battleground on which various European philosophies and powers have fought to obtain mastery. European fascism has continued the attempt to colonize America. As soon as the Mussolini government became stabilized in Italy, it sent to the United States picked agents supported by large subsidies for an organization of the fascist movement among the Italians in this country. The organizational results of Italian fascism in America, however, have not been startling; but while no more than a few thousand were ever organized in separate *Fasci,* Mussolini laid the seeds for fascist propaganda and has steadily been able to influence important Italian societies. Moreover, numbers of Italian youth are to be found sprinkled in divers fascist groupings arising in the East.

The German National Socialists have done far better organizationally in the New World. The Friends of New Germany has progressed into a powerful organization, putting out a paper and a large amount of propaganda. The membership in New York City alone is over ten thousand, while the organization is increasing its control over the very powerful German-American societies which claim to have membership and influence of over thirteen million people in the United States. Of course, this organization is controlled completely by the Nazis in Germany and is used as their foreign weapon to fight for Germany's interests in this country. Thus, propaganda of the Friends of New Germany is naturally intensely anti-Semitic, as well as anti-communist. Steadily all the bourgeois

German groups in the United States are becoming dominated by Hitler's agents sent from Germany.

It is not to be expected that foreign-born elements, organized by European agents subsidized by countries in an infinitely worse financial position than America, can lead or form any fascist movement of any importance in this country. Such organizations are simply reflections of the chaos and conflict in Europe. Business men of these nationalities frequently support their respective fascisms simply because they must trade with Germany or Italy and need the favor of these governments for their business, or they are afraid of boycotts, etc. These very same business men may have all their lives advocated republican and democratic measures, just the opposite to those proposed by Hitler. Still, they are tied to their kinsfolk in the old country. Often they must join in order to prevent harm from coming to their relatives abroad. This adherence, therefore, to foreign varieties of fascism is an exceedingly weak one which cannot develop a genuine fascist movement in the United States. It is simply German and Italian nationalism carried over among the colonists of these countries in America.

However, there is no gainsaying the fact that all sorts of active movements have sprung up with leaders itching to ape Mussolini or Hitler.[1] One of the earliest of the organizations, formed in 1930, was the American Fascistic Association and Order of Black Shirts. This group followed the tradition of the Ku Klux Klan and had its seat in the South, around Atlanta, Georgia. Its slogans were: "Drive the Negroes out of jobs and put whites in their place," "Fight communism in Georgia." With the Black Shirts, the Negro, in a sense, took the place of the Jew in Germany. These people went about blackmailing employers to compel companies to hire only their members whenever jobs were open. At the same time, they saw to it that all members would act as scabs and strike-breakers if need be. They edited a weekly with the motto "America for Americans." Unfortunately for the Fascistic Association, with the oncoming depression job opportunities became scarce and the organization withered away.

Another organization to appear was the Silver Shirts. with headquarters in San Francisco. Their battle-cry was, "The Jews must go, the Pope must go, democracy must go." They advertised as part of their uniform a "knout of rope" to be used against their enemies. The organization adopted the swastika as its symbol and professed itself in sympathy with the Hitler

[1] For an account of some of these fascist organizations, see M. H. Braun: "Fascist Organizations in the United States," *Class Struggle*, Vol. IV, Nos. 1, 2 & 3, Jan. to March, 1934.

movement. Unfortunately for the organization, their leader, Pelley, was arrested for fraud and his influence rapidly waned.

At this time, the Crusaders for Economic Liberty rose in their glory. They succeeded in attracting to their fold the Congressional representative from Pennsylvania, Lewis T. McFadden, who made a brilliant speech on the floor of the House to the effect that Franklin D. Roosevelt was the servant of the international money Jews of the world to whom he had turned over all the gold and lawful money of the country. The scheme of Mr. Pelley's Silver Shirts was to secure the reign of Christ on earth; the plan of Mr. Christian's Crusaders was to establish economic liberty under capitalism by destroying the money monopoly, and by inaugurating the Golden Rule through the introduction of a new monopoly system.

The general discontent prevailing among the masses of people in the United States during the depression has stimulated the mushroom-like growth of a number of secret organizations, some of them known to the public, such as the Order of Seventy-Six, the Khaki Shirts, and, more recently, the so-called Black Legion, and some of them no doubt still uncovered. None of these organizations is of great importance. Their programs are exceedingly vague, mostly confined to negative aspects, launching attacks against the communist, Negro, Jew, Catholic, and foreign-born, mixing this with demagogic criticisms of capitalism. Frequently the groups profess intense religiosity, but of no particular denomination.

Their leadership is mediocre; often they are organized merely for racketeering and blackmail purposes, and they have not been able to last long. However, they are significant in showing the change in the temper of the middle class in the United States. All of these associations have undertaken to mobilize the masses directly outside the pale of the State, to take matters into their own hands and to idealize lynch law and direct action. They generally organize vigilantes made up of stalwart men who secretly drill and prepare for physical combat.

In connection with this trend towards drilling storm troops ready for struggle must be considered the movement among the veterans. Of the greatest significance is the report of Major General Smedley D. Butler, former head of the United States Marine Corps, that he had been offered several million dollars by Wall Street agents to organize the veterans of the country into troops that could march on the government if need be and establish a sort of fascist dictatorship. Mr. Butler testified before a Congressional Committee, giving detailed facts, and mentioned specific names of the conspirators. For the moment, the attempt has been broken. There remains the fact, however, that the attempt was made by elements who play an important rôle in the economic and political life of the country. It is to be noticed, too, that the veteran organizations, such as the American

Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, have intensified their anti-communist, anti-labor campaigns in recent years.

What prevents the organization of such fascist bodies of storm troops on a mass scale is the fact that there is no active movement on the part of the masses toward communism. The communists in America, in the main, are not only insignificant but are an utterly ridiculous group, comprised of Jews and Russian nationalists who play the diplomatic game of the Soviet Union without any regard to the needs of the American working class. Whatever adaptability they have shown to the American scene has often consisted merely of cunning maneuvers to put over Russian nationalist propaganda. Thus in the United States there is no strong communist or organized revolutionary movement for any middle class fascist body to organize against or to strike down. There is, however, vast discontent and militancy among the workers, employed and unemployed. This is still inchoate. It manifests itself in violent, spontaneous outbursts that last but a short time and cannot evoke any fascist reaction. What exists, then, in the United States, is a pervasive restiveness and a desire to break with the old order, coupled with a general inclination towards violence, but no specific large cohesive mass that can threaten the stability of the social order. The present, of course, is a transition period, and marks a turning point in American affairs, as the United States turns from individualism to collectivism.

2

Far more than in previous periods of depression, the middle classes in the United States thoroughly have resented the blows which fate under the present system has meted out to them. As usual, they rationalize their interests in utopian plans of harmony and goodwill, trying to work out some system of planning whereby the capitalism of the big fellow will not drive them still further into ruin. Unable to understand the productive process, they work out their own panaceas in the sphere of the circulation of commodities and the money system. It is not capitalism that is bad, but the money system.

In their outbursts, they repeat the plans formerly presented by the utopians, Josiah Warren, Proudhon, Louis Blanc, and their type. For a century, the middle class has remained in the same rut. What is new in the present situation is that, whereas the middle class, from 1848 on, in its mutterings of discontent, looked to labor for support and turned either anarchistic, as in France, or socialistic, as in industrial countries, in the United States today the new movements ominously steer away from any labor contact and, on the contrary, borrow much of their doctrines from fascism.

In previous periods, when the petty proprietors in the United States had formed their own radical movements, such as the Farmers Alliance, the People's Party, the Non-Partisan League, Farmer-Labor groups, etc., in each case they strove to take under their wing the labor movement as an ally in the struggle for the welfare of the petty bourgeoisie. Today this is not so. The labor movement is too large to become merely a wing of the middle class. In any combined movement today it must be labor that leads, not the farmer or the petty bourgeois, and once labor enters into independent action, the middle class only can trail along.

A feature of the present movement is that labor is not organizing its own party for power. The government has been astute enough not to drive labor into independent political action. On the one hand, the working class is not accustomed to assuming the initiative in politics, and therefore shows much reluctance in sailing such uncharted seas; on the other hand, once the working man enters politics, he will go the whole way in a determined and extremely militant manner. In the meantime, today, as before, political initiative is left to the middle class, at a time, however, when it feels itself a decadent minority of the people, no longer playing the chief rôle as heretofore. For this reason, too, the movements of the middle class contain a certain pacifist and persuasive character and concentrate entirely upon legislation and parliamentary activity. The cowardly petty bourgeoisie does not dare to shake its fist at the wealthy, and there is no organized labor movement for it to crush. It drifts aimlessly, a heterogeneous herd under the crook of demagogic shepherds.

The first of these shepherds is a priest, Father Coughlin. The trouble with this world, according to Coughlin, is that there is not enough silver in America. If we had more silver, money would be cheaper, prices would rise, and prosperity would return. Thus Coughlin advocates that particular form of inflation which would enable his sponsor, William Randolph Hearst, and other silver mine owners, to raise the value of their mine capital. At the same time, it would enable the Shrine of the Little Flower to cash in heavily on the silver speculation in which it had indulged.

This demand for cheaper money is one which the middle classes have always stressed in periods of falling prices, when they have to pay their debts with goods, the prices of which have fallen. It seems to these panting harts that the monetary pools for which they have been thirsting have been drained by the monopolist. The State will not print more money, so that from the reservoirs of the printing press the pecuniary lakes may be refilled and all may quench their thirst. The lower middle class does not wish to realize that before it can get money it must sell goods; before it can sell goods, the world must want them, and that production of big business has reached a point where the wares of little business are worth-

less. The petty proprietors imagine their labor valuable; if they cannot secure cash for it, they mean to overthrow the gold reality and to substitute for it their paper-money dreams. Because they lack money they believe there is a general lack of money, and they call on the State to fill this void of nature Of course, the quantity of money in the country remains the same, and its amount in circulation might even be larger in periods of depression than in periods of prosperity, only the money, alas, is not going their way!

The insolvency of bankers who cannot pay in gold for the paper notes they have issued, the bankruptcy of local communities which are compelled to issue "scrip money" for a time, the reversion of petty producers in some parts of the country to schemes of direct barter, all these things add to the belief of the middle class that the ills of society are due to the methods of circulation and finance rather than to the capitalist mode of production. Storekeepers, salesmen, clerks who produce nothing, they live in a world of exchange; naturally they must seek their panaceas there

The program of Father Coughlin s Union of Social Justice, while it calls for a nationalization of banking for the purpose of insuring a steady currency for the middle class, is careful not to advocate the national ownership of any other economic function[1] By no means would Coughlin, living under the shadow of Henry Ford's plants in Detroit, dare to advocate the nationalization of industrial property Thus Coughlin is willing to attack Wall Street (and the Jew) and offer a demagogic program tempting to the Middle West, while he cleverly diverts the attention of these people from their own enemies at home, the big metal industrialists, the Fords, the McCormacks, the Cranes et al, with their high prices for machinery and metal products and their low prices for all things farmers and workers sell In this separation of finance from industry, Father Coughlin shows himself an apt pupil of Hitler, as he does in his abstract declamations that human rights are to be preferred to property rights, that, in time of war, wealth should be conscripted, that private property should be controlled for the public good, and similar empty phrases that can mean anything to anybody and which are designed to attract every discordant group.

The Union of Social Justice has as one of its principles the "simplification of government." This "simplification" can imply only a fascist orientation. Certainly the fascist movements of Italy and Germany are "simple" if anything At the top is the Grand Council of the Party which is led by the leader and whose words are law. Could anything be more simple than this? Father Coughlin here insinuates an ideology suitable for dic-

[1] For the program of Father Coughlin, see, R G Swing *Forerunners of American Fascism*

tatorial movements contriving to end the "complicated" liberal-democratic check-and-balance system in the United States.

In his labor policy, Coughlin calls for the placing of the labor unions under government protection. In other words, while he will not nationalize the property of Henry Ford, he would nationalize the labor unions, regiment them and discipline them under the whip of the State. The existing trade unions, of course, would be broken up and in their places would be established the vertical unions of General Hugh Johnson of conscription fame. At the same time, to throw a sop to the middle class and to show his humanitarianism, Father Coughlin comes out for a living annual wage for all, although what that means and how that is to be obtained, nobody knows.

We can sum up the program of Father Coughlin by pointing out that in general outline it offers a collectivism based upon the middle class, one which can be used by the large industrialists in their fight for open dictatorship should the need arise. While Father Coughlin does not preach violence, this is no criterion as to his actions in the future. We have already seen that the church plays its best rôle in time of war by projecting peace until the fighting starts. Similarly we have seen that in Italy and Germany the peaceful Catholic and Christian unions quickly lent themselves to the violent schemes of the fascists the moment the time was ripe. It is true that Father Coughlin can be no serious menace to the United States. No Catholic, and above all, no priest, can lead politics in this country. None the less, he has played an important preliminary part for the more serious fascist movements that are to come.[1]

The most militant of the middle class agitation has been the "Share the Wealth" movement, formerly headed by Huey Long, and still strong in the Southwest. This movement, like all the others, also has "a plan," a blue print to appeal to reason and a sense of justice. Naïvely, it barges along with absolutely no conception of the impossibility of burdening business with its schemes of justice without serious militant struggle. The slogan, "Share the Wealth," is typically American and describes accurately the exact process of statecraft which has characterized America from its very beginning. Here the ruling class did not win power by vast armies and physical control. What they did was really to "Share the Wealth." Wealth was so abundant in this country that the masses of people could not be prevented from putting their fingers into the general pie and drawing out some of the plums for themselves. The wealthy were not envied because the others also had their modest moiety; the rich were

[1] During the recent presidential election, Coughlin flirted with the Townsend and "Share-the-Wealth" movements for an alliance. The whole combination made a miserable showing.

not opposed because they were smart enough to part with a portion of resources and wealth of the country in favor of the mass of petty proprietors. The slogan of "Share the Wealth," therefore, is an admirable one to catch the middle class in America.

The plan of Huey Long [1] calls for the elimination of poverty by providing that every deserving family shall share in the wealth of America for not less than one-third of the average wealth, thereby to possess not less than five thousand dollars free of debt. Fortunes are to be limited to a few million dollars maximum, or to such a level as would yet allow American people to share in the wealth and produce of the land. Old-age pensions of thirty dollars a month are to be given to those who possess less than ten thousand dollars in cash, or earn less than one thousand dollars a year.

Together with this program go demands to limit the workday so as to prevent overproduction and to give the workers of America some share in the recreation, conveniences, and luxuries of life The veterans of America's wars are to be well taken care of Taxation will be based upon the large fortunes of the wealthy. Nor is the farmer forgotten Just as Coughlin calls for a "fair price' to be given to the farmer above the cost of production, so Huey Long advocates the need of "balancing" agricultural production with what can be sold and consumed according to the laws of God

The "Share the Wealth' movement, appealing for a drastic redistribution of wealth, has never stopped to consider that the laws of distribution are intimately connected with the mode of production No family that is permitted to have five thousand dollars free of debt ever can be induced to work for the coal, steel, or automobile barons, or to sweat away their lives for the profit of others Should everyone possess five thousand dollars, it would immediately mean the richest flowering out of all sorts of independent petty businesses Work in the large scale factories would be abandoned and the owners of these, in turn, would be compelled either to move their capital elsewhere or to introduce far greater machinery than ever before Furthermore, the competition in the new industries that would arise would soon lead to the same situation of bankruptcy on the one hand and monopoly on the other as had already evolved

It is interesting to compare the Huey Long program with that of the Jacobins in the French Revolution Both wanted to reduce the power of the rich and to equalize wealth But what a difference between their equalizations! Whereas to the French peasant, equality meant all would have the necessities and none the luxuries, to the American petty bourgeoisie, all are to have not only the necessities but all the comforts which

[1] For his program see his pamphlet *Share Our Wealth*

ordinary work can not bring. The French peasants wanted merely to be let alone. Their confiscation of bourgeois property was a war emergency measure. The Americans invidiously want to "soak the rich."

The planning of Huey Long is typical of petty bourgeois scheming from another angle Whereas the Marxist proved that revolution is a product of misery—should there be no hunger and slaughter, there would be no revolution—the petty bourgeois thinks of the revolution as a result of envy. It is not that he is driven to starvation, but that others have more; he is asked to fight not because the practical present is unbearable but because of some shimmering Garden of Eden that will be his in the future. Thus the petty bourgeois conception is that revolutions come about not through deprivation but through the desire to obtain more; not through hunger, but through appeals to cupidity and acquisitiveness. If the source of proletarian motivation is the stomach, that of the petty bourgeoisie is the spleen and gall bladder

This petty bourgeois conception of revolution has also been adopted by the official Communist Parties which call upon the American people to observe the wonders of Russia These Stalinists are sure that, having gazed upon the Elysian gardens that exist six thousand miles away, the American people will take up arms and overthrow the government. Such stupidity fits in well with the Russian nationalism of the communist; it has nothing whatever to do with a realistic analysis of how revolutions come about If America experiences a social revolution it will be not because conditions are good in Russia, but because they are wretched in America Masses do not give up their lives for foreign dreams; they build barricades when life becomes unbearable

Of course, the "Share the Wealth" program also attempts to cater specifically to every division of the middle class, the declassed soldier, those hit heavily by taxes, the farmer who is being ruined, and the formerly comfortably placed middle class now squeezed out of its business by the crisis.

The third movement that has embraced millions of middle class people is that led by Dr Townsend. His "plan" also calls for giving something for nothing to those who have nothing after a lifetime of toil The Townsend Plan would hand out to all old people over sixty years of age a pension of two hundred dollars a month, all of which must be spent within a month Thus the Townsend Plan is not an old-age pension scheme of ordinary cloth, but is woven with the shuttle of grandiose utopianism Here the unique idea seems to be that the old are worth more than the young, and those who can do no work deserve far more than those who toil. Another stupendous conception is that by means of this

redistribution of wealth, industry will be stimulated, a purchasing market will be created, and factories will boom again. Here, again, we see that the petty bourgeoisie tackles the problem from the sphere of distribution rather than the sphere of production. Another little Red Riding Hood, Townsend cannot believe that modern capitalism is the big bad wolf whose teeth are sharp, "the better to eat you with, my dear," but to him it is a good, kindly soul that lives for charity and love, especially for the aged and the weak.

Of course it is absurd to believe that the Townsend movement can receive any further consideration than the contemptuous amusement both of the working class and of the wealthy. The value of the grouping consists simply in its insistence on adequate old age pensions. The movement, however, can be toyed with by certain politicians capable of mock solemnity to secure themselves needed votes.

America has never honored its old. It has always gloried in the fact that the victory belongs to the youth, continually boasting that it is youthful. It is laughable to imagine that the vigorous, virile, mature producer, slaving in the factory, would be willing to shed blood for a condition whereby he would be granted fifteen dollars a week for his life-taking toil, and the older folks, many of whom have never been in a factory in their lives, would live a life of ease at two hundred dollars a month.

Can it be supposed that the capitalists of America who feel their business choked because of high wages even when they pay the code minimum of fourteen dollars a week will consent to have their corporation taxes raised so as to pay two hundred dollars a month to outcasts of industry? Can it be conceived that, in the jungle of ruthless imperialism in an age of violence, a beatific attitude of Christian love will descend on the low brow of the racketeer and profiteer? What the vigorous and heroic struggles of countless millions of workers were not able to attain, surely the pathetic smiles and persuasive phrases of the broken-down and aged will not be able to win. Even if two hundred dollars were given every aged couple, can anyone believe that they would permit their children to work and sweat their lives away in factories for one-fourth of the sum that they are given free? Would they not quickly take their children out of the productive processes, thereby leading to the same situation that we have explained in analyzing the program of Huey Long?

But enough of these hospital utopias fit for the sick and the broken-down. These embittered weaklings are incapable of the slightest shadow of an idea that, if they are going to redistribute the wealth, perhaps at least the producer should keep the product of his toil, or at least the worker should get the two hundred dollars monthly or the five thousand dollars yearly that is to be handed out to "revive the market." Here is the secret

of the fascist tendencies of these middle class movements They want the workers to keep on slaving—but for their benefit, rather than that of the bourgeoisie They would enrich themselves, but entirely ignore the claims of the working class On the other side, the workers know that these miserable movements can raise nothing but hilarious contempt

3

It is not only the aged and home loving elements of the middle class that prepare their utopian schemes of the millennium The section that is active in production also has its schemes, well illustrated by the fad of technocracy that at one time swept into great popularity in the United States The leaders of the technocratic movement were engineers nursing a grievance They believed that they were responsible for all inventions and progress of industry and that to them belonged the leadership of the productive system Thus, they referred in their plans to a line of argu ment very reminiscent of the utopians of the style of Saint Simon and Rob ert Owen Characteristically enough, the movement received inspiration from the works of Professor Thorstein Veblen who, in turn, was inspired by the utopian, Edward Bellamy [1]

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Edward Bellamy wrote his utopia, *Looking Backward* It purported to be a description of America as it would be in the twenty first century Looking back from the twenty first century, the historian analyzes the criminality and waste and foolishness of the capitalism of Bellamy's time Typically American, Bellamy ideal ized common sense of which the future utopia was simply the realization By the twenty first century everything was to be run by machinery and science There would remain no exploitation waste, anarchy and chaos, but a planned economy with plenty and prosperity for all

Bellamy differed from all other utopians who had tended to look backward rather than forward, and who had called for a return to condi tions similar to the Middle Ages where there would be no machinery but the crafts and skills of old, and where love and responsibility would prevail Instead of relying on religion, Bellamy leaned on science and made machinery the archstone of a new social order Here, again, Bellamy was the typical American who had no choice other than to rest his production on machinery, and who was not affected by the feudal conditions of the past How different was this from the utopia of William Morris' *News From Nowhere* put out in England about the same time; or from the esthetic gentility and refined socialism of John Ruskin and Oscar Wilde! [2]

[1] See J Dortman *Thorstein Veblen and His America* p 68

[2] See, for example John Ruskin s *The Crown of Wild Olive* and his *Fors Clavigera*

Deeply moved by this utopia, Thorstein Veblen developed his theories criticizing the capitalist system and calling on the scientists and engineers to change it. Exceedingly bitter was Veblen against the waste that prevailed on every side and for which the capitalists were to blame. In his book, *Theory of the Leisure Class,* Veblen elaborated the point that conspicuous waste and exemption from useful work were the chief qualities by which the ruling class advertised their superiority to the world. So bitter was he that he could actually write that the killing of officers of the army in wartime was a positive boon to humanity since it removed from the earth a large number of useless wastrels and parasites.[1] In line with his iconoclastic thinking, Veblen assailed absentee ownership, attempting to show that active competition and business enterprise were entirely opposed to each other, the business men by the very nature of their urge for profit constantly driving towards monopoly.[2]

In his economic thinking, Veblen drew a sharp distinction between business and industry, between pecuniary occupations and productive ones. True to petty bourgeois type, Veblen would not and could not link theories of prices and profits with theories of production. He came to advocate the thesis that depressions arise not from the accumulations of capital and the mode of production, but from the method of the functioning of credit and money. Thus, with his lopsided economic thinking, Veblen laid the base for the programs of those who sympathize with Hitler, who uses the same approach.

In his other works, Veblen praised the instinct of workmanship to be found among the workers, and, as he attacked the vested interests, he urged the engineers to do away with the system of profit which sabotaged and destroyed all science.[3] The engineers should take over the industrial system. Then we would have a world based on science, a world without money.

As an economist, Veblen threw the orthodox professors into confusion by taking the points which they upheld and then proving the opposite. While the regulars were declaring that business stood for competition, Veblen showed that business demanded collusion; while they hailed the productive power of wealth, Veblen pointed out that wealth sabotaged production; while they affirmed that capital was not only money but goods or stored up labor, Veblen demonstrated that capital could not be machinery; while they praised the rôle of credit, Veblen asserted that credit only meant inflation which raised the cost of living and threw the burden on the backs of the poor.

[1] See, T. Veblen: *The Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution,* p. 269.

[2] See, T. Veblen: *Theory of Business Enterprise.*

[3] See, T. Veblen: *The Engineers and the Price System.* See, also, his book *The Higher Learning in America,* where he shows the lethal touch of business in the universities.

Although Veblen proclaimed that economic advancement lay in the release of the potentialities of technical proficiency for purposes of production, his own positive program was exceedingly vague. He was unable to take the Marxist position.[1]

In their discontent and critique of the capitalist system, the engineers who had been thrown out of employment during the depression were able to expose some startling facts about capitalist evolution. They showed, for example, that; If t equals time, energy has grown to curve t^8, debt to t^4, production to t^3, populations to t^2, man hours per unit output to minus t^4.[2] Translated into everyday language this means, first of all, that there has accrued under capitalism an enormous development of power and energy that ought to be used. If the criterion of civilization is a materialist one, namely, how much matter can man move with a given quantum of energy in a given time—or, to put it another way, how much horsepower per capita is there in the country—then the modern world was immensely superior to every social system that had gone before. Indeed, so wildly had power been generated that no longer could capitalism control it; the social order was choking the forces of production and the technical development. The technocrats completed their survey by an exhaustive study of waste under capitalism.

The school of engineers was thoroughly familiar with the fact that America had entered into the era of tremendous super-corporations and trusts, the management of which was entirely divorced from the owners, the industrial concerns being repeatedly looted by the parasitic "old men of the sea," on the boards of directors.[3] They understood well that already in America corporations were dominating all forms of life, and pointed out that two hundred of the largest non-banking corporations had assets of eighty-one billion dollars in 1930, or half of the corporate wealth of the United States.[4] But even this did not reveal the true situation, since many of these companies were owned or controlled by others in the same group. "Approximately two thousand men were directors of the two hundred largest corporations in 1930. Since an important number of these are inactive, the ultimate control of nearly half of industry was actually in the hands of a few hundred men." [5]

[1] For an analysis of Veblen's views see, P. T. Homan: *Contemporary American Thought*, pp. 111 and following.

[2] Stuart Chase: *Technocracy*, p. 25, pamphlet.

[3] For a discussion of the antagonistic interests of corporation management to stockholders, see, A. A. Berle and G. C. Means: *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*.

[4] The same, p. 19. The 200 corporations are divided into 42 railroads, 52 utilities and 106 industrials.

[5] The same, p. 46, footnote.

Such an analysis was bound to question whether a corporation was any longer to be considered a private enterprise or whether it was not an institution whose social evolution could not be stopped. The large corporations were constantly growing over the small ones through the methods of merger and the issuance of more stock and by their ability to keep a larger share of the profits and to reinvest in industry. "In conclusion, then, the huge corporation, the corporation with ninety million dollars of assets or more, has come to dominate most major industries if not all industry in the United States; a rapidly increasing proportion of industry is carried on under this form of organization There is apparently no immediate limit to its increase. It is coming more and more to be the industrial unit with which American economic, social and political life must deal." [1]

The engineers of a socialistic mind could not help but know that as the corporations advanced to such tremendous size, an increasing proportion of goods produced by a given corporation was produced not for sale but for use in its own connected plants, thus there was a growing tendency in certain industries to end the cheating and adulteration to be found in normal trade and to insist on high standards of quality of goods. Here, then, was a sort of socialism within one corporation which did away with the evils of competitive capitalism to a considerable extent. If this could be done in one corporation, why could it not be done in all industry? Such engineers also noticed that of all the corporations, those which were public utilities were growing faster than all; thus they were induced inevitably to work out plans by which all corporations would have the character of a public utility, and the State itself would take a firm hand in insisting on production for use and not for profit

The engineer no longer could be the partner or even the servant of the capitalist, but his enemy, since capitalism opposed everything that the engineer stood and fought for, and choked the development of science on every side. Under capitalism, while there was literally plenty for everyone, the masses of people, including hundreds of thousands of engineers, were starving

In his critical analysis of the production system, the technocrat, with all his professional gibberish, was only parroting the line of thought which the Marxist had worked out long before, his own contribution being a concrete arithmetical analysis of present-day American society which had not been made by the socialists. However, technocracy was more than a critique of economy from the point of view of the engineer. It was above all a bid for power and a political program The technocrat, like the typical utopian, believed that all that was needed was to work out "a plan," then to prove its reasonableness by scientifically showing how the workings of the

[1] The same, p 44

present system had led to chaos, waste, and destruction. Thus the technocrat was really a rationalist, and showed that he had not as yet emerged from the chrysalis of the college classroom to know the meaning of life. Precisely this fact demonstrated the impossibility of giving the engineer any power whatsoever.

Of course, it was not true that the engineer was responsible for all the advances of industry. The figures of the Patent Office of the United States bear witness a thousand times that it is far more often the actual worker at the machine who makes improvements that are seized by the corporations and capitalized for their benefit. Even when the individual inventor is an engineer, or, better still, even where the engineers gather together in collective research under the aegis of some corporation or government, the important inventions produced are not the work of this narrow professional class alone, but are the culmination of all the experiments and labors of all society, especially the working class.

In America most of all has the gap been closed between the workers and the professional men. There is no country in the world where the working class is so developed in technical culture, where so many have finished high school and know the principles of physical science as intimately as here. It is no accident that in America the most efficient corporations choose their leading staff from the ranks of the workmen. Nor is it an accident that these same corporations insist that the college boy technicians who come to them must learn from the workers the practical handling of machinery by starting from the bottom. The working class long ago emancipated itself from the myth that it is the small staff of engineers from which all production flows.

But the technocrat does not wish to give any credit to the laborer. As a professional man he looks with great disdain on the common variety of worker. He refuses to believe that a new order of planned production will come about only through the misery of the poorest layers of the population and not through the daydreams of the discontented, disemployed professional. Sitting in his ivory tower, he supposes that reason and intellect move the world, not the passion and material interests of the proletariat. This almost starving secondary servant of big business compensates himself for his destitution by grandiose dreams of power realized by remote control.

The technocrat may well be fooled by pretending that when technocracy gets into power, the engineer, with his big scientific "planned economy," will really control industry and government. In his hatred of the workers, he isolates himself from all the mass movements of the day. In his rational appeal he ties himself to the petty bourgeois utopian and flees the class struggle. Thus the technocrat, drawing distinctions between

finance and industry, shows himself closer to Fordism than to Marxism, and lends himself openly to agencies of fascism.

The Right Wing of technocracy rests its head on the shoulders of fascistic Fordism; there is also a Left Wing that leans on the workers. It is composed of a group of engineers and writers who sympathize with socialism and desire to fuse both movements into one Wherever there is a conflict, however, between socialism and technocracy, such persons, as for example, Max Eastman, insist they are Left Wing technocrats rather than Marxists, and prefer the utopian planners, the pragmatists and the Veblens, to the communists In practical political life, this type has synchronized its rhythms with the utopian movement of Upton Sinclair and with such "Left Wing" governmental planners as Mr Hopkins, unemployment relief head

Among the large industrialists, fascist tendencies are naturally finding a foothold An interesting example is Henry Ford Henry Ford started out as a pacifist, adopting the point of view that war can bring no benefit to humanity and that it does not pay In spite of that, however, Ford is an ardent believer in destiny, not only for the individual but for the nation. "The whole secret of a successful life is to find out what it is one's destiny to do, and then do it" [1] It was simply Ford's destiny to be a manufacturer of automobiles rather than a militarist, but should America's destiny compel the use of military force, say to prevent the seizure of Henry Ford's many factories abroad, there is no question that Ford would ardently support such destiny and turn out numbers of airplanes for the combat The pacifism of the American business man, it must be repeated, comes from the fact that American liberalism has entered late into the field of world affairs and relies on its economic might to conquer that which the others seized by means of force

Mr Ford, being the most outstanding independent industrialist, has naturally developed a sharp antagonism to the financiers and money lenders, and thus has also taken to anti-Semitism Such views fit in heartily with the theories of the middle class, especially of the West, which blames Wall Street and stock speculation especially for all its ills Ford is against parasitic capital He is against consumption as an end in life. He is for production as a sort of religion stimulating the community for improvement He is for the organization of the United States so that work and order and science will penetrate every part of the country [2]

There is no doubt but that Ford would like to see the whole country organized in the same magnificent way that he has organized factories.

[1] H Ford *My Philosophy of Industry* p 75

[2] See, G Bradford *The Quick and the Dead* section on Ford

He can become an excellent supporter of the fascist movement in the United States. He knows how to cover the ruthless operation of his plants with all sorts of theories, even including one that workmen are right in resisting scientific management when they feel that they are being transformed into machines themselves[1] Organized planning, scientific coordination, idealization of work, division of proceeds, universal pacifism, and a United States of the World, these are theories of Ford that may well be incorporated into American fascism.

In the intellectual world, the trends towards fascist collectivism, preaching the control by the State of the whole competitive system and embellished with the claptrap so prevalent now in Europe, are progressing on every side It should be borne in mind that, there being no traditions of feudal aristocracy of any importance in America, the fascists of tomorrow must come from the ranks of those who are the liberals of today. It is indeed the very people who claim to be ardent liberals who do most to pave the way for fascism. This can be seen in practical government politics also.

In the professional world, the liberal Charles A Beard has now written a whole series of tomes that tend towards fascism In his *The Idea of National Interest*[2] Beard makes a thorough analysis of the American investments abroad and then comes to the conclusion, in his supplemental book, *The Open Door at Home* that the way forward for America is not by increasing the international co operation of one country with another, but by returning to the policy of isolation hallowed by Washington. "By withdrawing from the war of trade and huckstering, by avoiding the hateful conflicts of passionate acquisition in Europe and the Orient, by offering to exchange goods for honest goods without employing any engines of coercion, by using its own endowment wisely and efficiently, it could really make its diplomacy the diplomacy of 'the good neighbor' as distinguished from the diplomacy of the dollar, the navy, and the marines."[3]

Behind this apparent pacifism lies an important appreciation of the unique methods of work of American capitalism As we have repeatedly asserted already, the American ruling class stands to win world power above all not by the use of its military might, but by the tremendous energy of its economics. Already a good portion of the world intimately depends upon the wealth and trade of the productive system of America. Were America to withdraw in any sense from world affairs, it would mean

[1] See, H Ford *Moving Forward*, p 39

[2] Written in collaboration with Smith

[3] C A Beard *The Open Door at Home* pp 318 319

The rest of the world can burn up, America will have no part in it, except to defend its own borders

the collapse of whole countries abroad. This collapse may induce a communist revolution; for this reason, the American business element has been so careful to refrain from pressing its demands for payments of debts due it, etc.; and was so generous in helping Europe immediately after the War. On the other hand, the collapse of certain other countries would take the form of compelling them to beg with hat in hand for further continuance of support and to place themselves completely under the dominion of the American colossus. Should Europe be engaged in war, for example, there is no question but that this would be the probable result in Central and South America.

Apparently aping the communist successes in Russia, Beard also proposes, in his *America Faces the Future,* a five-year plan for the United States, calling for a National Economic Council which would repeal the Anti-Trust Acts, a National Board of Strategy composed of engineers and functioning like the War Industries Board. This Board of Strategy would co-operate with the Bureau of Standards. In all this, Beard shows himself far closer to Mussolini's schemes than to Russian communism, and significantly enough, he has become a supporter of features of the New Deal.

To conclude, the views of Beard play directly into the hands of those who stand for fascist schemes of autarchy, self sufficiency, complete preparedness for war, and who at the same time can use this ideology to increase American imperialist power

In part of Beard's book, *America Faces the Future,* another writer points out that, while it is estimated the Tennessee hill billy spends $2.40 to produce a bushel of wheat, the poor plains farmer about $2.00, and the skilled farmer about $1 00, the big farms can produce a bushel now at forty cents; so that if wheat sells for seventy-five cents a bushel, all the farmers must lose except the most advanced factory farms. It is the opinion of this writer that only such farms should prevail. But when he comes to a positive solution of what to do with the other farmers and their families who would be thrown off the land, all that the author can advocate is to deport all aliens, to build big public works, and to shorten the work day No doubt this, too, could well fit in with American fascist planning

The liberal, John Dewey, also seems to be changing his liberalism in a direction that fascism might welcome In his recent book, *Liberalism and Social Action,* Dewey admits that liberalism has had a chequered career and that it has meant in practice things so different as to be opposed to one another The liberal of today must restate the ideas of liberty. A new adjustment must be made, and liberalism is created for just that purpose of adjustment Today we need a radical change Renascent liberalism

[1] Mr Walter B Pitkin

stands for organized planning.[1] Liberty now means liberty from insecurity and he who brings security brings liberty. But the fascist also claims to bring security; is there not the danger of new oppressive measures? John Dewey, as though in reply, emphasizes that "liberty in the concrete signifies release from the impact of *past* oppressive forces. . . ." [2] Is it not clear that liberalism is now preparing itself to be the midwife to American organized and fascistic capitalism?

In jurisprudence, the activities of the sociological school, especially some of the theories of the "engineering interpretation" of Roscoe Pound and others, lend themselves to a great growth of State authority, and could easily be part of the fascistic scheme. This school of legal thinkers has always been a follower of pragmatism and therefore quite capable of interpreting truth according to its "cash benefits." [3] Similarly, sociologists who stem from Lester Ward's "sociocracy," historians who follow Seligman's "economic interpretation" and pragmatists who look like materialists, in short, all these chickens offering substitutes for socialism naturally form fine ideological prototypes for the fascist birds of prey.

In the delicate and dilettante artistic world, similar drifts are making their way, as is witnessed in the writings of Lewis Mumford who believes that we should turn back to the romanticism of the past and that "The fact is that an elaborate mechanical organization is often a temporary and expensive substitute for an effective social organization or for a sound biological adaptation." [4]

4

It was not only the engineer who turned to plans of production during the period of depression; there were also middle class elements dabbling with the problem of unemployment who busied themselves with utopia building. An example was Upton Sinclair's "Epic" campaign—"Epic" meant: End Poverty in California.

Sinclair proposed to have the State of California take over idle farms and factories and work them with the unemployed. Owners were supposed to receive a "fair rental" for their property. Products were to be sold at cost and distributed under State supervision. Here, then, was to be formed a State within a State, a Nirvana for the unemployed permanently removed from competition. The means to obtain this limbo, of course, were appeals to reason and parliamentary electioneering. That Sinclair, like Long, Townsend, and Coughlin, received the hearty endorsement of literally

[1] J. Dewey: *Liberalism and Social Action*, pp. 54-55.

[2] The same, p. 48.

[3] For the "engineering interpretation" of Pound, see R. Pound: *Interpretations of Legal History*.

[4] L. Mumford: *Technics and Civilization*, p. 275.

millions of people shows how politically immature and groping the masses are in America.

It is not hard to prove the complete impracticability of Sinclair's planning under the present capitalist system. Just when markets are hard enough to obtain, Upton Sinclair would reduce them practically by half by having the unemployed workers produce for their own needs, and consume the products. Under such conditions, how possibly could capitalism ever revive and the factories privately owned open up again?

Furthermore, the plan calls for payment of a "fair rental" to landlords. This payment could be made only by selling the goods thus created, the factories run by the unemployed and the State entering into direct competition with private industry. Such competition, in turn, would produce another surplus of goods and result either in throwing other workers out of work or in the State's factories' losing out and closing down again. Besides, there are the raw materials that must be purchased, unless the State is to nationalize the natural resources and hand them over free to the unemployed. In that case there would be increased taxation to pay the former owners for the deprivation of their property and the crisis would be still further intensified.

If the unemployed were put to work in factories, naturally the factories would have to be equipped with the most modern machinery, unless the unemployed were to be compelled to use antiquated machinery which would increase costs and drown the workers in an economic Sargasso Sea. Simultaneously, were the unemployed to enter into competition with private industry, they would have to work under the same conditions as the other workers, and thus repeat anew the very causes leading to unemployment. On the other hand, why should the workers in private industry be ruthlessly exploited and the unemployed permanently take it easy? Such contradictions could not possibly be tolerated for long. Furthermore, if the unemployed can work for themselves, why not the other workers? Why should not the State take over all the factories and put all on the same basis as those operated by the unemployed? The favors of a benign socialistic régime could not be restricted forever to but a portion of the population.

Upton Sinclair did not openly propose to introduce socialism or to turn over all the factories to the workers, but merely to execute some plan of State capitalism that would keep the unemployed productive; nevertheless, capitalism could tolerate his utopianism as little as it could stand the real socialism itself.

However, Sinclair's utopia was not far removed from the "plan" of certain figures in the "brain trust" gathered by the Roosevelt administration.

The ideas of Harry L. Hopkins, Chief of the Unemployed Relief Division of the Federal Government, only repeated in another form the utopian vagaries of Louis Blanc and his confreres of 1848. Other Roosevelt advisers, like Rex Tugwell, have openly manifested their support of the technocratic movement and its revival of the cult of Veblenism.[1]

The fact is that the State must shun as a plague any attempt to mobilize the unemployed in competition with private capitalism, since this would be a mortal body blow to the present order. Therefore, the government must take the millions of unemployed and put them to work on the most secondary and inconsequential functions, such as picking up papers from the streets, making toboggan slides in parks, causing the entire population to look upon the projects with the greatest disgust as the quintessence of uselessness. It will be recalled that the French Government had similarly operated Louis Blanc's plan with the deliberate intention of so discrediting the work relief that the middle class would favor its abolition. The Roosevelt régime is working objectively in the same direction.

The government is compelled to act thus by the pressure of its big business critics. It does not dare to have the unemployed carpenter work at his trade, the tailor make clothes, or the weaver produce cloth; this would mean the erection of a complete system of economy in rivalry with private business, and could be accomplished only through a political revolution. The relatively useless compulsory labor to which the mass of unemployed have been put is in harmony with the other destructive processes inaugurated by Roosevelt,—the plowing under of crops, the wholesale slaughter of pigs, the bonuses for reduction of production, etc. The planned economy of capitalism must be not on a plan of plenty, but on a plan of organized scarcity and of an artificially stimulated increase of profits.

Of course, the government agents are not the naïve radicals of the Sinclair type. When they advocate a reconstitution of the federal system for the unemployed under government control, they have in mind, doubtless, that the future of America inevitably lies in the direction of a regimentation of the workers under barrack-like discipline, supervised by the State. These views, hallowed by the ideals of Plato's Republic and bejewelled with scintillating socialistic phrases, in fact drift directly in the direction already being pursued in Italy, Germany, and other fascist countries.

The unemployed, too, have had their day of utopian planning. On the West Coast of the United States, for example, they believed that throwing away the money system and reverting to barter would solve the complicated problems of the day. And for a time the barter idea spread like fire. There was plenty of noise but little improvement. Such schemes could

[1] J. Dorfman openly acknowledges that his book *Thorstein Veblen and His America* is indebted to Tugwell, financially and morally.

come only from people with a backwoods tradition They could not secure any following among those acquainted with large scale industry

The utopianism of the petty bourgeoisie has been brought directly into the ranks of the working class by the Socialist and Communist Parties in the United States This serves as another indication that these Parties are only middle class bodies having really nothing to do with the interests of the workers Witness the character of their unemployed programs which are founded on the slogan, We want work" The socialist and communist officials, most of whom themselves have probably never worked in factories in their lives, all agree on the urgent need to demand work for the rest of the workers and insist that this is the way out of the crisis Some of them are motivated by the fact that if the unemployed are put to work the latter can pay dues and there will be more funds for wages for the bureaucracy Loafers themselves, they grow indignant at the thought that the workers might want rest and the right to be lazy

The slogan We want work' is a perfectly safe one and is very convenient for the fascists who, with Mussolini and Hitler, also idealize labor as the most ennobling activity and denounce as outrageous a program where the workers eat without slaving daily Certainly the master can never object when his slave devotedly insists that all he wants is to continue to work for the benefit of the master and to place his whole life at the service of the capitalist The fascists are quite ready to give the workers work—on the chain gang and through compulsory labor service While the rulers cannot give adequate unemployment insurance they can certainly give work to all, if not in the factories, then in the concentration camps, on military projects and in the army In Germany, the communists who shouted, "We want work, now have their wish amply fulfilled under the Nazis

Thus the slogan "We want work" plays directly into the hands of the master class, since every bit of work that the workers do must yield a profit and thus increase the power and stability of the rulers It is not work that the capitalists fear It is the class struggle But it is precisely the class struggle that the socialists and communists play down They do not demand that the capitalists be hanged from the lamp posts for their conspiracy against the people in wantonly closing down their factories They do not call for the confiscation of the factories, because of sabotage and destruction of goods by the owners They do not raise the demand that the factories belong to the workers who produced them In short, they do not call for socialism, they ask only, in the most servile and abject manner, that the workers be put to work

The slogan "We want work" draws attention away from the main

problem, namely, an understanding of the system of capitalist production and how to liquidate its contradictions. The workers are made to idealize the wages system and become blinded to the fact that unemployment has arisen precisely because of the continued labor under capitalist direction, and that just before every epoch of unemployment we have a period of feverish activity, where everyone is working full speed. It is because everyone is working at top speed, turning over to the private owners of industry a vast amount of goods which they cannot sell, that we have the present unemployment and overproduction.

In short, the trouble is not that labor has been lazy or inefficient or nonproductive or that more work is needed in order to prevent crises or to mitigate them. Quite the contrary, the crisis is caused by the overproduction of goods, by the tremendous productivity of labor which capitalist relations cannot handle. Shouting "We want work," the socialists and communists cannot emphasize the elementary fact that the crisis is due to overproduction and the extra hard work of labor, but instead, must tend to throw the blame upon the working class rather than upon the capitalist, since they assert more work and not higher standards would relieve society of the present congestion of goods.

In this respect, the conservative A. F. of L. has been far more revolutionary than the communists. The unions have constantly threatened to strike unless union rates be paid on unemployment projects. Realistically, they insist on maintaining their standards rather than demand work at any pay whatsoever. While the A. F. of L. declares its members will *not* work unless certain minimum conditions are granted, the communists actually have demanded that the government set a minimum number of hours, not less than thirty, at which all unemployed shall be compelled to work![1]

Operating under the slogan of "We want work," the workers tend to forget that all the factories in the country owe their existence to labor, and that whatever labor gets in relief or unemployment insurance really comes from what labor has produced previously. They are made to feel that relief or insurance given them without working for it is like charity, as though the State were handing them something for nothing. The proletariat, therefore, is asked to give up all claims to the factories and goods which it has produced and, if the unemployed insist they must eat, then it seems they should be compelled to build up new factories or make new stuff. According to the communists, apparently, the trouble with the United States is that the country has not enough factories, dams and highways, and urg ently needs more at once, or the people will starve!

[1] Originally they wanted more than a thirty-hour minimum since they were opposed to the six-hour day on the ground that Soviet Russia had a seven-hour day and how could capitalist America beat socialist Russia?

No wonder the middle class movements of Townsend, Long, and Coughlin do not fight for labor when labor cannot fight for itself. At least the middle class demands a better distribution of wealth; all that the wage slaves demand is—more work.

The demand "We want work," implies that it is great to have a job and wonderful to return to the old state of affairs that existed in 1929 and previously. Thus the workers are now in a position of demanding with the communists the return of "the good old days" when everyone was working, thus hiding the true conditions under which labor operated even in 1929. Furthermore, if jobs at private industry are so fine, why should strikes be tolerated? [1] The unemployed should form long queues outside of every factory competing for employment, thus acting as a club in the hands of the employers to batter down the conditions of those actually at work and to destroy labor organizations. The unemployed, however, instinctively have refused to carry out the logic of the position offered them by their socialist and communist misleaders. The strike demonstrations that have taken place recently have been remarkable in the complete solidarity which the employed and unemployed have displayed together.

Naturally, those who shout for work cannot object if they are put to work constructing military roads, improving naval stations, building battle ships, preparing for war. Nor can they complain too much of the pay and working conditions since they ought to be glad to get a job. If they insist on work they cannot at the same time throw their energies into strikes or class struggles. Thus the socialist and communist forces have become instruments chaining the workers to the present system.

These parties have become ardent supporters of the basic principles behind the present administration's work relief plans, criticizing the projects only on the ground that there are not enough of them and that they are temporary. They are quite satisfied with the character of the projects, defending their social usefulness, and would consider it ideal were their members to become permanent pensioners on an eternal State. This would indeed be the American substitute for Stalin's "socialism in one country." [2]

American communists carefully refrain from calling on the workers *not* to work under capitalist control, since the capitalists are responsible for the crisis and all capitalist control leads to destructive activity, not construction of the nation. So long as they are paid to work, apparently they do not care that capitalism has paid billions for the destruction of crops, the wasting of soil, the rotting of the products, the rusting of machinery,

[1] We note that in the recent automobile strike (January, 1937) the General Motors Corporation organized a mass meeting of anti-strikers who raised the slogan "We want work!"

[2] This assumes the Stalinists could stand the shock of imagining socialism in *two* countries alone!

the wanton killing of animals, etc. Praising the State for its constructive projects, these groups, for thirty pieces of silver, conceal the basic fact that today the State's chief function is war and destruction, not aid to old ladies crossing the street.

The socialists and communists demonstrate the complete degeneration prevailing in the ranks of the movements that have sprung from liberalism. The workers of America have indeed shown their good common sense and virility in avoiding these organizations so patently bankrupt and with policies similar to those which have proven so disastrous to Europe.

5

With the first advent of imperialism there could already be discerned in the operations of the government the germination of policies resembling those of fascism. Significantly enough, precisely the more militant liberals develop these new trends. Ever more energetically, the government begins to favor executive and administrative action through boards of health, public utility commissions, boards of engineers, probation commissions, pure food commissions, trade commissions, labor boards, immigration bureaus, etc.[1]

These policies were aggressively pushed forward by the forceful Theodore Roosevelt who, indeed, furnishes a good political prototype of the future American fascist leader. Theodore Roosevelt was the incarnation of boisterous militancy and lust for power. He started his career with an attack on the graft and corruption in the government, and became police commissioner in New York City, where he vigorously endeavored to reform the police system. In Washington he came out as a patron of the navy. In his foreign policies while President, he showed his "big stick" everywhere, seizing the Panama Canal, energetically entering into the internal affairs of South America and Cuba, intervening in the Russo-Japanese War, and so forth.

Particularly significant were Roosevelt's views on war. "When men fear work or fear righteous war, when women fear motherhood, they tremble on the brink of doom. . . ." [2] "To no body of men in the United States is the country so much indebted as to the splendid officers and enlisted men of the regular army and navy." [3] "It is only the warlike power of a civilized people that can give peace to the world." [4] "We cannot, if we would, play the part of China . . . in this world the nation

[1] In America it is the Labor Department to which is entrusted the deportation of undesirable workmen.

[2] T. Roosevelt: *Strenuous Life*, p. 4.

[3] The same, p. 13.

[4] The same, p. 17.

that has trained itself to a career of unwarlike and isolated ease is bound, in the end, to go down before other nations which have not lost the manly and adventurous qualities." [1] No wonder Theodore Roosevelt and the German Kaiser admired each other.

His social views were characterized by a denunciation of the wastefulness of big business; he emphasized the necessity of the State's controlling the trusts, and conserving natural resources In other matters, too, he foreshadowed the European fascists of today, hailing labor as the basis of American life, appealing for large families,[2] and praising the fighting character. His own personal life was an exemplification of his theories, his will and determination having been sufficient to overcome the handicap of an originally puny body so as to develop him into a rough and burly personality, fond of hunting and warlike pursuits, proud of his Rough-Riders and Cowboys.

Theodore Roosevelt was willing to break precedent and tradition where needed. As police commissioner, he tried to be above parties [3] As a politician himself, he formed a new radical "Bull Moose" organization that strove to end the traditional ties of the old parties His denunciation of the obsolete penetrated even his literary activities, where he appeared as a protagonist for simplified spelling Theodore Roosevelt was the type of man in politics that Henry Ford could idolize, a man who could get things done, who believed in work and not talk, who was a mine of activity

Under the liberal Woodrow Wilson, fascistic trends became still further marked, as the State and nation were mobilized for war A whole series of Boards and State agencies were created to supervise every economic and social function of the people, including a War Industries Board, a War Shipping Board, a Railroad Administration, a Food Administration, a Fuel Administration, State machinery to cover espionage and property of the enemy, a Committee on Public Information, etc Through the Selective Service Act, thirty two cantonments and special officers' camps were erected. Under the Emergency Fleet Corporation, big shipyards—one of them alone, Hog Island, employing three hundred and fifty thousand men —were erected, so that within a year the United States, which had only ninety-four thousand tons of Atlantic shipping in July 1917, had, by December 1, 1918, over three and a quarter million tons, mostly owned by the Federal Government.

Here, then, was a great development of State authority and State capi-

[1] T Roosevelt, work cited, p 6

[2] "The woman must be the housewife (The same, p 4)

[3] "We wanted at one time to get plenty of strong, honest young men for the police force, and did not want to draw them from among the ordinary types of ward heeler Two fertile recruiting grounds proved to be, one a Catholic church and the other a Methodist church" (T Roosevelt *Strenuous Life*, p 97)

talism. Once having tasted power, government officials could hardly be expected permanently to be reconciled to its loss after the War. They bided their time. In the meantime, the war machinery of government had grooved the channels and laid out the direction which a corporate or totalitarian State in this country will take. The machinery set up for the exceptional occasion of war, now that war is always near us, can easily become a permanent apparatus to govern the people all the time.

While these tendencies were being developed in the Federal Government, fascist germs were appearing in municipal administrations. Here, too, it was the reform liberal who undertook to inoculate local government with this virus under the guise of improving the old checks-and-balance system of the nineteenth century. The type of city government, then widely in use in the United States, was the mayor-council form in which the legislative and administrative functions were separated. Just as imperialism inaugurated a general blending of government with industrial and financial management, so did this synthesis of power introduce in municipal government the movement for the Commission or the City-Manager form of government. As a transition to these new forms there was developed the "strong-mayor" type of city government where the mayor had considerably greater administrative power than previously. From the "strong mayor" to the City-Manager plan was not much of a jump.

However, the City-Manager plan of government developed from the Commission form of local government rather than from the old mayor-council arrangement. The Commission form of administration had been part of the liberal-radical program to introduce direct methods of popular control, the initiative, referendum, and recall into local government. A small Commission of from three to nine constituted the ruling body, replacing both mayor and council. The commissioners served in a dual capacity; collectively they were a legislative body, individually each was the administrative head of a city department. While this simplified the government, it failed to bring about adequate co-ordination of activity, an administration weakness inherently springing from the diffusion of responsibility among the commissioners. To overcome this defect, the City-Manager plan was adopted, having as its unique feature the appointive executive.

The City-Manager plan fully retained the three integral principles of the Commission plan; namely, the unification of powers, the short ballot, and "non-partisan" elections. There was a small council or commission in which was invested every power of the city, legislative and executive. These councilmen were the only elected officers in the city government

and were elected on a ballot that did not permit political party designations. To these principles was added the additional one that the council or commission was required to appoint a chief executive officer, called a City Manager, chosen for his training, ability, and experience, regardless of the local political lineup. Frequently, he came from a distant city. Supposed to be an expert, he was put in full charge, directly responsible to the elected authority.

In the old days, the mayor was considered primarily a good ward politician, that is, a dispenser of patronage rather than an administrator; and with the efficient operation of the "spoils" system, the cities' treasuries were plundered regularly While business was good, business men did not complain too much of the wasteful, grafting system that grew up in the cities. With the fall in the rate of profit, however, and the rise of big trusts, the old situation became unbearable It was big business that took the leading rôle in municipal reform to drive forward for the City Manager plan The haphazard functioning of municipal government also became impossible in the light of the increasing functions which the rapidly growing cities had to perform Detroit, for example, added 136 new activities in the years between 1910 and 1930, compared to the 147 acquired during the eighty six years prior to 1910.

The twentieth century business men who had already reorganized industry drew an obvious analogy between industrial corporations and the municipal government, and pressed home their opinion that the city must be managed precisely like a business undertaking of tremendous complexity. Not only must the efficiency of government be increased, but its cost must be reduced The executive must be completely free from the influence of ward politicians who might be swayed by popular pressure. A centralized city government could also handle union and labor troubles more effectively Above all, the corporation men hoped to gain control of local affairs by placing their own men in strategic positions as experts. They proposed, then, to handle the city government on the style of a corporation, the City Commission, concentrating executive power in one responsible office, the City Manager, just as a stock corporation chooses a Board of Directors which in turn selects the President or Manager The City Manager, like the company executive, was to have power to choose most or all of his operating staff, and was responsible to the Board of Directors only for getting results

The rise of the City Manager plan is a manifestation in municipal government of the increasing recognition of the technological revolution in industry It replaces the amateur by the technician who, trained by industry, now organizes and runs the city Here, on a local scale, it would seem as though the aims of the technocrats have been partially realized, indeed,

the City-Manager plan is one of the most advanced points in the movement towards government by expert. In the United States, of the 629 City Managers, 52 per cent have been chosen from responsible business or industrial positions, and are mostly men trained by the trusts

The City Manager appoints, without regard to political affiliations, competent department heads, supposedly experts like himself. He appoints all of the city officials and employees "subject to civil service regulations," assigns to each his particular work, and may suspend or dismiss them for proper cause In this way, with his trained experts around him, he forms his own city "brain trust," and becomes the autocrat of the city administration. Here is a realization of the strong man ideal on a local scale.

Many cities which did not adopt either the Commission or City-Manager plan of government instead have developed a "strong mayor." Thus, on every side, the old mayor-and-council scheme is disappearing in favor of centralized action and executive responsibility. From the trusts, the City Manager or "strong mayor" copies plans of rationalization, and introduces into the government machinization, electrification, motorization, new methods of incineration, standardization of tasks, abolition of redundant posts, combining of duties, reduction of wages and salaries, etc Such a city, while not a corporation City State, is certainly a City-State run like a corporation

It is meaningful that the Commission and City-Manager plans come into being as a result of the pitiful inability of the old form to meet critical situations, either national calamities or social disorders When the government manifested its incompetency in the City of Galveston during the tidal wave of 1900, the electors decided radically to change its structure; similarly after the 1913 flood in Dayton, Ohio The reform movement was spurred on during the War when the federal government established great army training camps which had all the facilities of modern cities and which were put under the control of practical managers, known as "officers in charge of utilities," who were often members of the City Managers Association The City Managers, with their centralized power, also proved well able to handle in a very energetic manner the various phases of war work which they were called upon to do, especially in regard to the fuel question, the housing problem, etc These emergencies, leading to the termination of the old liberal style of municipal government in favor of the new centralized form, tend to become more frequent in an age of violence and depression

In all phases of this movement to centralize the powers of the city government, there exists a fertile field for the growth of fascist forms. The fascist doctrine of the centralized State is quite in harmony with the City-Manager theories which give to the whole mechanism of city government

that single controlling composite action which fascism finds necessary for its success In Italy and in Germany the same centralized city government has been created with the head directly appointed by the national authority. In America, with slight changes, pre-war liberal-radicalism can provide the basis for fascist programs of local administration. Already we have certain precedents for such action In Alaska, for example, the governments of many communities are carried on by United States officers whose duties correspond very closely with those of a city manager When the Commission plan was adopted in Galveston, three of the five commissioners were appointed by the governor In Washington, D C., also there has been a Commission government since 1878, the Commission being appointed by the President and the Senate Fascism would simply universalize these methods already extant

It is not merely in the specific form of the administration of local affairs but also in its whole theory that the "strong man" city government and the City Manager plan fits in well with fascism In the Commission and City-Manager forms of government there are usually no party lines as such, and the policy is actively carried out that there must be no class alignments in municipal election Thus, in the important local elections, the workers have found it generally impossible to organize their own class parties separate from the others This destruction of parliamentary precedents in elections governing the municipality and affecting so much of the people's actual day-to day lives leads to the general attitude that parliamentarism, at least in the form of city councils, political party and opposition, are harmful to the community and to society Such views are part of the tenets of fascism

It makes no difference that the City Manager plan was first hailed by liberals and radicals as a reaction to the spoils system of the past The fact is that the nineteenth century system, even with its ward heelers and graft, was often far more responsive to the ordinary claims of the people in the cities than the City Manager can be, since the ward council man was much closer to the desires of his neighborhood constituents Under the City Manager plan, the control is removed from the many to the few Naturally, the small controlling Board can be "reached" more easily by big business It is simpler by far for the trust-trained and dominated councilman to become the controlling influence in a small centralized body with its semi secret sessions, than could be possible in a larger localized Board of Aldermen of the old type

It must not be forgotten, too, that fascism in its drive for power in America will declare, as the City Manager does, that only by centralizing control will there be established competency, efficiency, and cheapness in government and an end be made to racketeering, graft, and gangsterism.

All the evils of parliamentarism will be blamed upon the liberals; and the fascists will use these evils as the basis from which to drive democracy out of existence in America.

Under the strain of the unprecedented economic depression which has been America's lot since 1929, the national government, too, is making a complete *volte face* from nineteenth-century ideals of checks and balances in the government, and under the provisions of the Constitution itself there are being rooted deep dictatorial tendencies and a fascist method of work. The fascist germs in the Roosevelt régime counter the potentialities for a deep-going and rapid radicalization appearing in the working class. Despite liberal gestures, the Roosevelt administration may be said to be paving the way for Bonapartism on the road to fascism.[1] The economic crisis is slowly maturing into a political one in the United States.

The departure from the nineteenth-century scheme of things can be summarized as follows: First, the relative importance of the locality and of the State is greatly reduced and the Federal Government becomes all-powerful. Second, the national government itself becomes far more sensitized to shifts in events and centralized in the hands of the executive. Congress is relegated to a secondary rôle and more and more the judiciary is shoved into the background. Third, the executive arm of the government tends to be symbolized by the "strong man" who bears the responsibility of everything upon his shoulders and has unprecedented and enormous powers. Fourth, the importance of the Party is superseded by that of the leader who thrusts aside party programs at will, constructing new ones overnight. The leader now uses the State apparatus, not to give the spoils of office to his party, but to build a strong army of henchmen around himself. Finally, in the policy of the government there is to be found some orientation and methods of solution of problems which, in Europe, the fascists have claimed as their own.

A good illustration of the increasing sensitiveness of the government is the practically unanimous passage of the legislation that ended the "lame duck" Congresses. Previously, although elections occurred in November, neither Congress nor the President could be installed in office until March of the following year, or four months later. In the leisurely days of the nineteenth century this could be tolerated, although the history of the United States immediately preceding the Civil War shows how this four-month period was used to foment rebellion and to harass the incoming

[1] President Roosevelt declares his régime is not fascistic simply because it draws its inspiration from the mass of people, rather than from a class or group or marching army and because it has worked within the pattern of traditional political institutions. (See F. D. Roosevelt: *On Our Way*, pp. ix, x. This is a very precarious distinction, if true. It is the stock in trade of most fascist leaders to claim to be inspired by the whole people.

administration. Today, however, sudden political changes are everyday occurrences. The exigencies both of foreign and internal affairs make dangerous any four-month hiatus in government.

The most important method of achieving sensitivity has been through the creation of a host of administrative boards with power constantly to change and to revise rules along the lines of the general standards and principles which have been laid down by Congress and the President. A good example of this is the Board in charge of Tariff Revision Thus has it become demonstrated that large legislative bodies cannot handle the day-to-day adjustments that are needed in the complex governmental activities of the twentieth century The legislature tends steadily to yield its prerogatives and power to administrative boards for action Congress increasingly appears as useless as the appendix in the human body; an operation for its removal seemingly eliminates mere waste

The dictatorial powers of the President have grown enormously in the past few years Under the pressure of the crisis, he has been given an almost unlimited power of inflation and virtual command of banking and fiscal policy Congress, too, has handed over to him extensive powers of taxation Today the President can juggle postage rates, impose taxes upon manufacturers and basic farm processes, in addition, the President now has the right to change tariff rates by simple executive proclamations. Congress has also given to the President vast and increasing powers of appointment, as well as virtual control of the pension system

Naturally, with such enlarged powers, the President has risen to an unprecedented stature in political affairs Hitherto, corporations had to establish powerful lobbies to persuade congressmen to pass tariff bills or other measures in their favor, today these favors are to be received best from the hands of the President Thus, as these interests concentrate their efforts to control the executive arm, in turn the executive is able to build an enormous army of civil retainers who owe their jobs entirely to him In this way, the hardy democracy by which the candidate was controlled by the Party tends to break down completely Now we have a political Napoleon supported by a host of functionaries Around him there have been gathered millions of public employees and pensioners

The dictatorial pre-eminence of the President has been accomplished within the framework of the Constitution of the United States which, in its origin, was designed to suffocate the will of the masses and to delegate to the office of the President greater powers than even kings enjoyed in other countries In 1917, the power of the President was demonstrated in the manner in which Woodrow Wilson involved the United States in the War without needing the consent of the Senate or of the people During the emergency of the present depression it has been illustrated in the

way in which the President, through the National Recovery Act, the Agricultural Administration Act, the banking and railway measures and other means, has commanded all the basic processes of production and distribution of wealth in the United States. Today there is allocated to him the full responsibility for the expenditure of many billions of dollars. Through emergency relief measures, he is in complete control of all money given to the unemployed.

As the tension of the social situation increases, inevitably the tendencies symbolized by Roosevelt will develop into fruition and mature into a well-rounded Bonapartism until the classes can fight it out on the issue dividing labor and capital. That Roosevelt has not completed the stage of Bonapartism is primarily owing to the fact that there is no proletarian revolutionary organization of any large size or any movement threatening to overthrow the system. When such a development does occur, the new orientation in government will be completed rapidly and the way will be prepared for the advent of fascism into power.

The measures of the Roosevelt administration have been in line with those which fascists in other countries have brought forth. Its theories of planned economy are variations of Mussolini's self-sufficiency, Hitler's autarchy, and Mosley's self-sufficient British Empire. In his friendship to Soviet Russia, President Roosevelt's phrases of "planning" might seem to be a reaction from the communistic plans abroad and appear a bid to the socialists and communists and such groups as the technocrats. As part of the "planning," there has been the setting up of the "brain trust" by which the present régime would give the impression that it has mustered all the forces of science at its disposal to solve the problems of the day. In reality, the only planning that capitalism can accomplish is the kind that is being done under the fascist banner in Europe.

One of the characteristic signs of the times is the steady drive on the part of the federal government for the establishment of a federal police. Already the Federal Bureau of Investigation has been greatly expanded and has won a reputation in the handling of kidnapping cases. The Bureau has extended its functions to take control over the American Association of the Chiefs of Police and to issue uniform crime reports. Increasingly it is being called upon by local and state officials to take charge of the curbing of certain criminal activities. It seems probable that this field will be exploited progressively by governmental officials who plan to enlarge the authority of the State, especially through strengthening the hands of the administrative and executive organs.

The establishment of a federal police will have to go hand in hand with the formation of uniform criminal legislation and may lead the way towards the establishment of that Ministry of Justice which the sociological

school of jurisprudence has been advocating for some time. Such a Ministry of Justice and Federal Police Force must tend further to batter down the distinctions between local and state governmental activities and federal administration, gradually centralizing all power in Washington. This centralization, of course, must fit in nicely with any fascistic trends and dictatorial tendencies that exist in the national government.

It must be remarked that the Roosevelt régime has made a strong appeal to the middle classes and has striven to separate them from the workers. It has allocated about two billion dollars to farm crops to help the farmer. It has given a similar amount to the Home Owners Loan Corporation. At the same time, it has yielded to the pressure of elements of the middle class by adopting a more latitudinarian policy regarding silver and inflationary currency, thus raising prices and allowing the lower middle class to pay some of its debts. It is true that none of these measures can be of any permanent relief to the petty bourgeoisie, and in fact must aggravate the situation in the long run; but at least for the moment, the Roosevelt régime can boast of carrying out the interests of the small fellow. All failure can be blamed on the Supreme Court. At the same time, the Administration has been careful to increase the profits of the largest concerns and to fuse the interests of the State with big business, pouring out billions via the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and other bodies for the aid of the railroads, mortgage and insurance companies, and big industrialists.

In regard to the labor movement, however, matters have been otherwise, efforts being made to keep wages at their lowest point since the war, while raising the cost of living. Through the National Industrial Reconstruction Act, schemes of compulsory arbitration were attempted and the government has taken a hand in propagandizing for the breaking down of the old craft unions and the establishment of "vertical" unions more intimately connected with the government. Only under the great pressure of the emergency has the most meagre legislation for social insurance been passed. Relief is still carried out in the most haphazard manner, although with a cleverly concealed purpose.

Apparently the unemployed are to be divided into three distinct categories: The youth are herded into C.C.C. and other camps where they are placed under barrack discipline and trained for the military events in the future. Part of the virile unemployed are put to work on projects that will enable them to obtain slightly more necessities than they can secure under the dole. The older folks are to be dropped completely and handed over to the mercies of the bankrupt local and state officials. By thus dividing the unemployed, the government hopes that their demonstrations will not be too threatening, and that they can be better controlled by the authorities.

The problems of the day are rapidly taking the ruling class far from

the old standards of liberalism.[1] The old nineteenth-century schemes of government and control can no longer hold, whether they are executed by a Democratic Party or by a Republican Party or both. The problems in the coming elections must emphasize the great turn in the road that America is making, from individualism to collectivism, from a backward, haphazard State to a tremendously complex and all-inclusive State authority, from liberalism towards fascism.

[1] The present administration believes it has fused the principles both of Theodore Roosevelt and of Woodrow Wilson into a higher synthesis Hence the "New Deal", a compound of "Square Deal" and "New Freedom" (See F D Roosevelt *On Our Way*, pp. x-xi.)

Characteristically American, Mr Roosevelt knows we are "on our way" although he is not quite so sure just where we are going

XXXIII. THE FUTURE PHYSIOGNOMY OF AMERICAN FASCISM

I

ASSUMING that fascism as a political tendency will sooner or later make its appearance in the United States as a serious force, the question remains, what are the national peculiarities that this movement will show in this country? American fascism does not have to take the name "Fascism" or "National Socialism." Differing from the European brands, it can simply take the name "Americanism" and appear on the scene as the "American Party." If it is to hold true to Americanism, it will blazon forth as its goal the magic word "Utopia," where planned social science under the direction of the technician will be assured

Like the English variety, American fascism will not be able to exaggerate racial theories of chauvinism based on race, that is, so far as white people are concerned The fact is, there is no American race unless thereby we mean the American Indian America has been peculiarly the melting pot of the world, where all white races come together and have been assimilated To emphasize racial peculiarities now would be, far from uniting the entire nation, but the surest way to throw it into incessant turmoil Therefore, in this respect American fascism will have to take a completely opposite stand to German Nazism which stresses race.

In this country, if any racial angle is put forth at all, it probably will be on the ground of non assimilability, rather than the rejection of any race as such. Such a reason given will excuse the attack against the Chinese or Japanese or Negro, or even the Jew. On the other hand, those people who are willing to assimilate themselves with America, to identify themselves with this nation and to lose their old European traits, will be accepted willingly. Of course, there still will be room for thrusting out "aliens" where they make themselves inconvenient to authorities by joining subversive movements or where unemployment necessitates such pressure.

In the nineteenth century, the "American Party" or "Know Nothing Party" had already enunciated the ideal that only native-born Americans were to hold office. While this may be continued as a program of fascism, certainly it would be suicide for any native group to attempt to win the country with any program that would create hostility to all those born on the other side, who number today fifteen million, and with their descend-

ants forty million, in the United States. The attitude of embracing the foreign-born and alien, moreover, is a policy that fits in well with the past of the country, with the imperialist pretensions of the United States, and with America's general rôle.

Always America has appeared as a sort of New World where the Old World racial combinations, national prejudices, and class struggles could play no part. America as a whole stood for a new deal, for a new social order, for the forgotten man. It seemed, moreover, that the West was destined to counter and to reverse all the social processes immemorably ingrained in the East. If in Europe there were many races, each antagonistic to the other, here all races could fuse into one.

The unbridled nationalism of the cultured members of the ruling classes of Europe did not necessarily prevent them from having their own type of internationalism. European internationalism, however, was an internationalism that emphasized national differences. In so doing, the most reactionary variety of such internationalists could support the claims of its particular ruling class, proving that its rulers were better than all the others, and must conquer and subject the others. The best of these internationalists were willing to admit that Europe would be much the loser should any race such as the French or German or Italian or Hungarian be subjected completely and broken over the wheel of oppression. These people conceded that the worth of Europe consisted precisely in that the continent was a variegated blend of composite parts, each different from the other. To this latter school of thinkers, each nation of Europe should have its own independence and culture to make the European as richly cosmopolitan as possible.

Yet both types of European internationalism insisted that each nation should know its place, and strongly marked the differences among them in regard to habits, customs, ideals, etc., rather than their similarities. The Frenchman was French in exactly those aspects in which he was not German, and vice versa. The historical destiny of each nation was to emphasize and to exaggerate precisely those traits which separated it from other groups. Thus the internationalism of the European on the whole was of a merely negative nature that rejected adulteration of the races and their mixture and tolerated other races only if they were separate and outside of their own country.

American internationalism was just the opposite. It did not reject the other races. It took them all into its bosom and remade them in its own image. The internationalism of America was really a supernationalism. Apparently, just as the United States was greater than one country geographically, but equal to the whole continent of Europe in area, so it was more than one nation socially but a whole world in itself, ethnically

and sociologically. In Europe, too, racial struggles were bound up with class struggles In America, just as there was a general classlessness, so all races were fused into one

Just as convenient as the theory of race is to the German ruling class would be the American theory that Americanism embraces the whole world and is a world philosophy that can take in and assimilate all peoples. It is with this theory that American imperialists can go out to conquer and digest the world, and, scorning the chaos of old Europe, cut across all its antagonisms

Since, historically, Europe is dying as a progressive force, America can now step out and take leadership At any rate, such will be the imperialist objective of the future fascist "American Party," with its program of "Americanism" Europe has been a failure It could not bring peace and prosperity into the world, but only conflict and war It is made up of a lot of little decadent nations whose heads have to be cracked together so that they will listen to reason. In this way, too, can the door be shut to communism and class war Just as Germany, before the War, felt compelled to organize Europe, so America under the fascists will feel it its duty to organize the world Here, then, is the program for American fascism—the organization of the world, planned economy for the world, utopia for the world

Utopia always has been connected intimately with the ideals of America By its newness, by its uniqueness, by its apparent violation of historical laws, by the intrinsic experimentation of its life, America always has appeared as the new Jerusalem The idea of being able to violate the traditional has gone hand in hand with the widespread belief in luck that prevails in this country, whether in the form of Santa Claus who hands out something for nothing, or in the general pass-word of "Give us a break"

Utopia is the magic pass key that brings hundreds of thousands of voters to the plans of Upton Sinclair It is the program of various fascistic movements that already contain hundreds of thousands, even millions, of adherents In this country, then, utopia becomes not a sneering name for a dream impossible to realize, but the daring scientific experimentation and pioneering that has always characterized America and that has permitted this country to accomplish the apparently impossible. With an unconcealed program of utopia, American fascism may well gather into its folds the mass of petty bourgeois elements that it needs

The utopianism of America will be not the dream of the poet, but the ideal of the scientist; it will propose not a sentimental return to the past, but a well-organized and planned social order The industrialism of

American life, the extremely well-developed technique of American engineering prevents utopianism from having anything but a scientific character. On the other hand, the general immaturity of social life in this country has, at least up to now, prevented the scientist from being anything else but a social utopian. The phenomenal rise of technocracy with its "planned" economy of plenty under the rule of scientist and engineer is a harbinger of the type of theoretical program that our future "American Party" will try to advance.

In other countries, fascism has fought openly the slogan of the French Revolution, "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity," using its own passwords, "Order, Discipline, Hierarchy" In the United States, however, an incipient fascist movement may well use these very liberal terms for its own purpose. There is nothing more conservative in America than these traditional concepts Fascism could not overthrow them.

It must be borne in mind that in America the government has never been controlled directly by Big Business men; that is to say, the extremely wealthy heads of corporations have not sought political posts in order to take charge of the government Big Business rather has operated by utilizing the ubiquitous and decisive middle class In the United States, it is the middle class that has historically taken the initiative in things political, where petty bourgeois equalitarianism always has been a predominant feature precisely because of the general classlessness that prevails and because of the fact that the nation as such was always identified with the middle class For these reasons, every political party and administration has paid so much attention to the middle class, that class, so to speak, from whose loins both capital and labor have sprung.

The fascist movement must rely on this middle class Slogans of equality and fraternity go hand in hand with the slogans against class war. If the fascist movement arises in this country it will not be so much because there is an open threat of communism uttered by mass organizations of half a million members or more, but rather in order to prevent this class struggle from even appearing in such a revolutionary formation. Fascism in Italy sprang up in order to crush communism Fascism in the United States will appear in order to prevent a native communism from rearing its head.

This is also true since once the American proletariat really moves in the direction of communism, the end for world capitalism will soon be in sight There will be no long process between beginning and end in America, as there has been in Europe. The American tempo, if nothing else, guarantees directness and speed in social evolution. Therefore, the chief job of the American ruling class must be to prevent the masses from even starting to move in the direction of communism

European fascism stresses self-sufficiency, autarchy, empire, etc. America, being more self-sufficient than any other country, does not need to stress this In its role of conquering and organizing the world, it will have to emphasize other features more in harmony with its *supernationalism*. As it puts Europe further on the dole, as it injects its mighty force in the wars and conflicts of Europe, it must rationalize its processes with the theory of extending the United States of America to become the United States of the World under America American fascism indeed can be the creature to try to carry out Karl Kautsky's theory of ultra-imperialism.[1]

For the same reason American fascism, unlike the European varieties, will be able to employ not jingoistic, but pacifistic phrases. It is Europe that is always at war and engaged in interminable internecine fights. An end to this chaos; an end to eternal wars! Peace and plenty; planned economy for the world! These are the catchwords that American fascism can use, and in this way American *supernationalism* will offer itself as a substitute both for the anarchical internationalism of the European bourgeoisie and the Marxist internationalism of the proletarian communist.

European fascism has been born in a struggle against the existing constitution and framework of government that has permitted communism and the labor movement to grow In its attack against communism, fascism has also blamed the liberal constitutions which had allowed the subversive movements to advance to such strength In America, however, fascism can arise well within the framework of the Constitution, through a Constitutional dictatorship After all, the Constitution arose without a labor movement in America and has continued until today without much of a labor movement. Under the Constitution, dictatorial powers of the President may be provided, company unions formed, criminal syndicalist laws enacted, thousands of Negroes lynched, etc. Such a Constitution of theoretical classlessness and pragmatic lynching of labor need not be fought by fascism The Constitution may have to be modified in interpretation and even in letter, but American fascism may well advance against communistic labor with the slogan "Obey the Constitution" on its lips

As in economics and in politics, so in general philosophic theory and method If fascism in Europe needs a State religion and to achieve it has to revert to Catholicism or paganism, the United States can turn to nothing. It cannot reproduce in this country the old forms of a *passé* Europe Rather, the problem in America will be how to embrace all

[1] "If we can learn to adjust our interest to the rights of others, we stand to knit the world into an economic federation to which war would be the supreme calamity and to spread a Pax Americana over the greater portion of the globe If we can take the nations into partnership with us, it is our manifest destiny to control the world as it has never been ruled before informally unobtrusively, invulnerably" (J Carter *Conquest—America's Painless Imperialism* pp 267 8)

religions. Deism does so and Deism is the traditional religion of the leaders of America. At present, many moves for the unification of all Protestant Churches have been launched and prove again that the American bourgeoisie begins where the European ends By means of Deism, that is, by insisting in the belief in a God and a divine power over all, American fascism can unify all the groups within the country and the nations outside of it. With Deism as its religion and pragmatism as its method, American fascism can be inspired to lead the world.

2

The fascist movement must take an irreconcilably hostile attitude to the Negro and will immeasurably burden his lot. German fascism burned books; American fascism will burn men Lynching is too old a genuine American custom not to be indulged in by fascism when it becomes a force in this country. In all critical moments in American life there has been a tendency for the propertied elements to come together in citizens' vigilante committees to take the law into their own hands This is perfectly understandable in a country where the State has been despised and is corrupt, while individual business men have been so strong

The formation of these vigilante committees need not necessarily be secret. This can be seen, for example, in the records of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilantes formed in 1851 Here the Vigilantes Committee met openly and passed a resolution "Whereas it has become apparent to the Citizens of San Francisco that there is no security for life and property, either under the regulations of society as it at present exists or under the laws as now administered, therefore the Citizens whose names are hereunto attached do unite themselves into an association for the maintenance of the peace and good order of society. . . . We are determined that no thief, burglar incendiary assassin . . shall escape punishment either by the quibbles of law, the insecurity of prisons, the carelessness and corruption of the police or the laxity of those who pretend to administer justice—. . ."

". . . and if in the judgment of the member or members of the Committee present it be such an act as justifies the interference of this Committee . . . the Committee shall be at once assembled for the purpose of taking such action as the majority of the Committee when assembled shall determine upon." [1]

The Committee then calmly records how it handled ninety-one cases, of which four were hanged, three of them being merely for larceny. Such lynching traditions have been kept fresh in the Far West, and in the South

[1] Papers of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1851, edited by M. F Williams, pp 1 and 2

against the Negro. The fascists will gladly take to this method of operation against the Negro. The Negro is too dangerous an element of social life. He is too much a representative of unskilled labor and of the existence of classes not to be made to feel the full brunt of fascism. The fascist way to eliminate class struggles will take the course of the physical extirpation of the black man.

That American fascism will declare the Negro undesirable and launch its most ferocious attacks against the black worker becomes clear the moment we compare the relative standing of the communist to the Negro in America In other countries, communists have been the most hated, feared, and persecuted by the ruling class In order to crush communism, fascism rises and comes to power. In Europe, classes exist as a fact, and the oppressed class can be prevented from seizing power only if the leadership of these lower classes, namely the Communist Party, is destroyed.

In this country, however, the problem always has been posed differently. It is not the communist representative of the class that is alien to American soil, rather, it is *the class itself,* as a class What the American bourgeoisie fears is not the communist, but the mere organization of the workers into class formations. Since it is the Negro who has always symbolized the class of labor and whose black skin casts its shadow upon the capitalists' dream of classlessness, we have here the reason for the traditional ferocity against him, while the communist is not even taken seriously. These communist groups are still mulling over the played-out European problems and are composed of elements still alien to the native proletariat; the Negro, on the other hand, has no other problem but how to fight his American masters.

If we compare the two groups, Negro and communist, we can see the reasons why the bourgeoisie of this country fears the Negro rather than the communist. First of all, the Negro is rooted in American life and history; the communist merely flirts around the fringe. Second, the Negro is the most exploited and propertyless section of the American toilers; the communist has been generally of foreign-born extraction, and often has a good job and high pay. Many of them are Jewish intellectuals. Third, the Negro has a long history of actual rebellion and insurrection behind him; the communist has never tried his hand at insurrection in this country. Fourth, the Negro once held State power in some of the states after the Civil War and demonstrated there his revolutionary character; the communists have been only talkers. They have not dared seriously to undertake the penetration of the South. Their ranks are filled with white chauvinist poison. They would not even understand, most of them, the present lines that are being written. Fifth, the Negro has a long history of illegal and conspiratorial work; the communists of this country would

not know what to do in periods of illegality, but would flounder helplessly.

Let us compare the difference in treatment which the two groups have received up to now. Since the Civil War, over five thousand Negroes have been lynched, the writer does not know of one communist who has ever met such a fate Daily, the American bourgeoisie carries on the ferocious war against the Negro Compared with this, the treatment given the American communist is relatively mild Communists like Corliss Lamont, or John Strachey, of "noble" blood, can get into the best of society, not to speak of the lesser lights such as Mike Gold and Sydney Hook who would be barred rather because of their Jewish origin than for their communism On the other hand, the Negro is treated like a beast

The American white worker has had the rankest illusions about equality, liberty for all, no classes, rich and poor are alike, etc , not so the Negro The Negro knows very well that there is a line which he can cross only after a fight Generally, the white worker lives off the exploitation of the black, the black worker lives off no one Is it not clear from these facts how far more dangerous and potentially more revolutionary is the "unconscious" Negro than is the conscious" communist in the United States?

All this, however, is not to say that fascist power would not attack the communist movement Quite the contrary The communist also will feel the heavy lash of the fascists knout As a matter of fact, at the first breath of fascist victory, the regular Communist Parties will run to cover and disappear Fascism is not to be fought by workers who are imperialistically minded or by soft headed intellectuals, both of which types now infest the revolutionary organizations These communist movements will simply shatter themselves into so many atoms

An entirely new communist movement will have to arise This time the elements will be different, made up mainly of American workers, to a very considerable extent of Negroes It is only then that communism will have a chance of becoming Americanized

Since fascism cannot assimilate the Negro, the future in the United States is posed by the problem, fascism, or Negro liberation, which is another form of saying, fascism or communism and the permanent victory for labor

3

The lines on the physiognomy of future American fascism will grow clearer if we consider more closely the unique circumstances characterizing the social and political life of this country

Fascism is essentially a movement of order It carries out the old

Prussian dictum *"Ruhe ist der erste Pflick des Burghers,"*—quiet is the first duty of the citizen Each man is to have a place and to be put in his place In America, however, such a philosophy would be absolutely fatal to all the traditions and sentiments that go to make up Americanism For every man to have a place presupposes a society of classes, each class mutually dependent on the other, or it presupposes a definite stratefication of functions The son of the shoemaker takes up shoe-making; the son of the laborer is a laborer, etc Such a philosophy never had any place in this country.

It has been the boast in the United States that fortunes have been made and lost within three generations, grandfather and grandson both starting in shirtsleeves [1] In short, whereas in Europe classes have always existed under the leadership of the aristocracy, or bourgeoisie, in America the job has always been to prevent the formation of classes Thus, class struggles will arise in this country on the principle that classes should not be formed The fascist movement in this country cannot adopt a philosophy of every class or every man in his place Quite the contrary, it must reaffirm the old doctrine of opportunity for everyone

As we have repeatedly stressed, in America capitalism has been compelled to work through the wide strata of the middle class whose representatives took charge of the government machine And just as the bourgeoisie became typified by the tremendously powerful captains of industry, so the little man became symbolized in the powerful political figure of the President, who has never failed to acknowledge his allegiance to that middle class Thus, in Europe the fascist movement is a mobilization of the middle class by a frightened bourgeoisie that wants to maintain its control by crushing the workers, the situation is the opposite in the United States In Europe, the bourgeoisie is already in direct control, while the lower middle class is not, it is the reverse in this country The middle class, traditionally, has furnished the members of the government If big business should want to take over the government in the United States, above all it would have to fight the middle class, which would refuse to give up its hold on the juicy posts which have belonged to it for so long and which are needed especially now Evidently, then, fascism in this country will have to rely upon the middle class, not only to form the main army of fascism, but also to be its leaders to transform the government

Fascism has symbolized the intimate fusion of trust capital with the State and the formation of State capitalism In America, since the State has been controlled by the middle class while the trust, on the contrary,

[1] One American writer has put it The commonest axiom of history is that every generation revolts against its fathers and makes friends with its grandfathers (L Mumford *The Brown Decades* p 3)

was controlled by the big bourgeoisie, the fusion between State and trust must precipitate a clash as to who will control. It is clear that, should the State take over the industries of America, such as the railroads, or the banks, or the mines, the pragmatic functionary, typical member of the middle class in control of the government, will do his best to control the trust. Thus, instead of "bust the trust," now the middle class will adopt the theory of taking over the trust and using it for its own benefit and for the re-establishment of classlessness. Hence the establishment of State monopoly will appear to the middle class as the termination of monopoly of the industrialist, since the State will be controlled "by the people."

Now it is precisely this middle class that feels itself choked by any thought that it must be put in a definite place. In America it has always lived in the hope of advancement, and was never satisfied merely with maintaining the status quo. The economic attitude of the American middle class was the opposite to that of the European. In Europe, for example, if the middle class family wanted a piano, the income was carefully saved until the funds were sufficient to purchase the instrument. In America, the breadwinner simply went out and hustled harder to get the extra money. The European petty bourgeois economy was a saving economy, a husbanding of limited strength; American middle class economy was always an aggressive one, one that knew not its limits and had never been checked. A fascist theory that would tell the middle class that it must know its place and that its place was a subordinate one would be bound to meet with overwhelming resistance. For the Americans, there must always be kept the illusion that "there is plenty of room on top."

German fascism has developed a theory denouncing all speculative capital. Such a theory never could be supported in America by the middle class whose very essence has been twined around speculation, horse-trading, pioneering, gold-mine hunting, real estate investment, etc. Consider, for example, the difference between the farmer in America and the peasant of Germany, where the Nazis have passed their Hereditary Homestead Law forbidding the alienation of land. Is it conceivable that American fascism could take such a position to prevent the farmer from selling his land, forcing him to remain in one spot forever? Such an idea would be absolutely abhorrent to the American farmer. The American farmer is no peasant. He is not and never has been rooted to the soil. There is an immense difference between land hunger and love of soil. The American farmer has often enough been land hungry, but he never has had a true love for the soil. He has treated his farm as others treated their business; he was always ready to pack up and leave if a new and better opportunity showed itself. Often the land was held merely for speculation, and millions of members of the middle class have been able to exist as long as they have,

simply because of the booming land values. The purchase of land in the countryside for practically nothing, the holding on to it while big cities arose on every side, increasing the value of the land, the cashing in of the land when prices reached their highest point, when the family can then betake themselves to California, or elsewhere, for new speculative adventures,—this was the routine for many a shrewd Yankee

It must never be forgotten that, in the main, agriculture in America was developed after capitalism had become powerful in England, the mother country, and thus agriculture did not precede capitalism, but borrowed all capitalist features in its production of land products The American farmer was a capitalist adventurer, going where profit was high He had no feudal traditions He migrated from New England to the Middle West, and from the Middle West to the Far West Within each state, the mobility of the farmer was notorious Even among the Negro share croppers it is estimated that their migration within the South was far greater than even their extraordinary trek to the North

In short, European fascism means immobility and stationary life But the Americans are an uprooted people who have their tentacles in no particular spot In this respect they have much in common with the Jews America has symbolized mobility Incidentally, there is no country where the automobile prevails that as yet has swung to fascism Italy and Germany are the land of the bicycle In America there are close to thirty million automobiles, constantly moving To take these exceedingly active energetic atoms of the middle class who drive the automobiles and to place them in some stationary category would be indeed to transform the bright blue sky of America into the dungeons of Europe

No, fascist claims in America must not take the form of the advocacy of hereditary land laws and the creation of an immobile stationary society of classes and occupations It must be a philosophy that will open up still greater opportunities for the middle class to replace those which are being closed by the trusts Thus the schemes of Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and Doctor Townsend are schemes to give money to the middle class so that they may continue their speculation their initiative, their driving around the country in automobiles, and similar customs

All fascist philosophy has been a turning back to the past, but America has no past to which to turn back Fascism is a sign of a defeated country, a country slipping, a country afraid The Americans know no fear They have never been defeated They do not appreciate their limitations and would not recognize them if they saw them Why should the American middle class turn back? What force is oppressing it? Who dares to order it? In Europe, fascism is the sign of the weak and desperate, in America, it will take on the Messianic feature of saving the world

Old World fascism is a movement that proposes to the middle class that it can keep its security and position only by crushing the working class; in America such a theory of progress by crushing others never has been adopted. In general, the philosophy of Meliorism and expansive humanitarianism has been particularly deep-seated in this country. There has been generally wealth enough for all, so that one did not have to bother his neighbor. Wealth came from one's own initiative and hard work rather than from pushing others down. At least, the contrary was never admitted by the middle class of the United States, where the class struggle was still in an unconscious state. Here, the middle class always idealized labor, and it has been from the middle class that the native laboring elements have come. On the other hand, the native labor movement always has been closely allied to the middle class. It is hard to believe that the millions of middle class members can adopt as their philosophy in America that their position can be secured only if they trample those who are under them still further down the scale.

From all these considerations we may conclude that the fascist movement in the United States, that is, the movement towards complete governmental control, collectivism in all forms of life, destruction of the labor movement, and compulsory abolition of classes, will take on forms in this country entirely different from those anywhere else.

The mere formation of fascist groupings, the continued centralization of the State, and the wiping out of political democracy and parliamentarism are bound to create a profound reaction in the ranks of labor itself, leading to open class formations in the interests of labor. Once the labor movement will have organized on its own account, it will clear the political atmosphere. The middle class is floundering today precisely because it has no one to whom to look for aid. The labor movement, strangely politically silent, with no adequate program and organization of its own, makes no attempt to fight for power.

When labor does begin to move, however, it is bound to show such strength as to win to its side large numbers of the middle class whose interests labor really carries forward. If fascism results in the stimulation of the labor movement to counter with its own mass organizations, then it will have accomplished the setting off of the spark of the struggle for power between capital and labor in America. From this it can be seen that fascism can have no long future in America.

So virile, so energetic, so intrinsically unspoiled is the American laborer that his mere organization and first timid steps towards power will shake the entire structure. There can be no long period of time between labor's awakening and labor's victory; it is the awakening that is slow and painful. Contrary to the Russian, the American has a hard task to reach power;

he will have an easy task to hold it. And if the task to reach power is difficult, it is because the task of awakening the worker is difficult. Once on the road of class consciousness, his pace will be terrifically fast until the goal is completed. He will advance with the same spirit that makes him a foremost sportsman, with a whirlwind release of his pent-up energy.

As Friedrich Engels put it: "To expect that the Americans will start out with the full consciousness of the theory worked out in older industrial countries is to expect the impossible." [1] "Once the Americans get started it will be with an energy and violence compared with which we in Europe shall be mere children." [2]

[1] *The Correspondence of Marx and Engels*, Letter of Engels to Florence Kelley Wischaewetsky, No. 203, pp. 453-454.

[2] The same, Letter of Engels to Schlueter, No. 222, p. 497.

BOOK VI: COMMUNISM

I. THE ZIG-ZAG CHARACTER OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

XXXIV. EARLY COMMUNIST UPRISINGS

I

LONG before its scientific principles had been laid down by Marx and Engels, communism had arisen from time to time as a powerful movement frightening the ruling classes. Communism is a movement of the lowest classes to terminate private property in the means of production for the general social advancement. No matter how strong or powerful the State, always the slave, the serf, and the laborer had been prone to remember that the race had originated with a communism which had been for the benefit of all and that, in the course of the development of private property and the State, the people had been deprived of their possessions and with them of their power.[1] Thus the discontented masses who took to communism only were following the old rule that revolutionary classes always look to the past for their inspiration. "The tradition of all past generations weighs like an Alp upon the brain of the living. At the very time when men appear engaged in revolutionizing things and themselves in bringing about what was never before, at such very epochs of revolutionary crisis do they anxiously conjure up into their service the spirits of the past, assume their names, their battle cries, their costumes to enact a new historic scene in such time-honored disguise and with such borrowed language." [2]

At the dawn of the human race, a primitive communism had existed among the savages and barbarians that then peopled the earth. The low productivity of labor of mankind in the hunting and fishing stage or agriculture and the domestication of animals made necessary a pooling of the resources of all in order to survive.

Indeed, the existence of the herd, or rather the horde, was the factor that enabled *homo sapiens* to emerge from the ape stock. It was the horde that provided the plastic milieu by which every innovation that improved the ability of the stock to survive could be imitated and passed on. The collective form of labor of the horde with its rude subdivisions mightily increased the ape-stock's strength and power. Through the existence of the horde, *pithecanthropos erectus* was able to utilize tools and to rise to the

[1] See, for example, M. Beer: *Social Struggles in Antiquity;* also M. Beer: *Social Struggles in the Middle Ages.*

[2] Karl Marx: *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,* pp. 9-10. (Kerr ed.)

dignity of man. Naturally, the ties that held the individual to the group were extraordinarily strong and, in the early period of savagery, each one thought himself bound to the group as the finger is bound to the hand.

In such a low stage of technical development, where man was far more the victim of nature than its master, the ecological arrangements of such social animals had to be in the form of primitive communism, where each shared alike and where the means of production as well as the general product belonged to no one individual. Some of the primitive tribes, indeed, had no word for "I" separate from the term "we." [1]

The implications of this early stage of social life are drawn with a skillful hand by Friedrich Engels: "How wonderful this gentile constitution is in all its natural simplicity! No soldiers, gendarmes, and policemen, no nobility, kings, regents, prefects or judges, no prisons, no lawsuits, and still affairs run smoothly. All quarrels and disputes are settled by the entire community involved in them, either the gens or the tribe or the various gentes among themselves. Only in very rare cases the blood revenge is threatened as an extreme measure. Our capital punishment is simply a civilized form of it, afflicted with all the advantages and drawbacks of civilization. Not a vestige of our cumbersome and intricate system of administration is needed, although there are more public affairs to be settled than nowadays: the communistic household is shared by a number of families, the land belongs to the tribe, only the gardens are temporarily assigned to the households. The parties involved in a question settle it and in most cases the hundred-year-old traditions have settled everything beforehand. There cannot be any poor and destitute—the communistic households and the gentes know their duties toward the aged, sick and disabled. All are free and equal—the women included. There is no room yet for slaves, nor for the subjugation of foreign tribes." [2]

During the Middle Ages, the opposition of the serfs to the oppression of the Catholic Church and of the landlords took the form of religious communistic schemes that were denounced as heresies by the church and were put down with a great deal of bloodshed. In Southern France, for example, the mass of poor took to the heretical beliefs of the Waldenses.[3] Veritable crusades were launched against them and, after they had defeated several armies, they were practically exterminated with ferocious beastliness by order of the church.

The communism that flourished in the Middle Ages must be carefully distinguished from primitive communism and the religious communism

[1] See Mary Austin: *The American Rhythm*, p. 20.
Lewis Morgan in his *Ancient Society* explains how the horde develops into the tribe.
[2] F. Engels: *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, p. 117.
[3] Lack of space prevents us from giving the views of these sects in detail.

that had preceded it, as well as from the communism of modern capitalist times. The communism of the Middle Ages stood for the equality of the beggars' wallet, for a communism of consumers, for communal housekeeping, not communal labor. "Wherever we find co-operative production among the communistic sects of the Middle Ages, it is the effect, not the cause of housekeeping in common." [1]

While "The character of Christian asceticism in its beginning was chiefly determined by the ragged proletariat whose prominent peculiarities were idleness, dirt and stupidity," [2] the communism of the Middle Ages had a truly revolutionary spirit. The early Christian communists were unpolitical and passive, the communists of the Middle Ages took to the theory of the apocalypse and the active doctrines of the Old Testament. Reading the Bible for themselves, they ended their humility before the powers that be.

As feudalism broke down, the peasants, in their struggles to emancipate themselves from serfdom, became the natural allies of the merchants and other groups in the cities which also were struggling against the feudal forces and supporting the development of absolutism in the monarchy. Peasants' revolts burst out in England whenever the ruling group was in difficulties and was pressing too hard upon the peasantry, as in 1381 under John Ball and in 1449 under Jack Cade. These peasants combined heterodox religious beliefs such as those of Wyclif and Huss, with political views that hailed communism on the one hand and the King on the other. Their chief enemy was the feudal lords. Similar eruptions occurred in France, in the wars known as the *Jacqueries*. Finally, in the sixteenth century, they broke forth in prolonged Peasants Wars.

In this last outburst the peasants were aided by the mass of plebeians in the cities. What the conditions of the latter were may be seen from the Statute of Labourers passed in 1547 in England. "By this Act of 1547 it was laid down as law that every able-bodied loiterer should be branded with a hot iron and handed over as a slave to the person who denounced him. Thus if an employer wanted a slave to work for him, he had only to drag the first vagrant he met before a magistrate and his need was supplied. The slave might be kept on bread and water . . . he might be compelled to undertake the most filthy tasks by means of flogging or other torture. If he ran away for a fortnight he was condemned to perpetual slavery, and to be branded with the letter S on his cheek and on his forehead; if he ran away again, death as a felon was his doom. His master could sell him, bequeath him, or let him like a horse or a mule. Death is the punishment of slaves who 'contrive aught against their masters.' When one of

[1] K. Kautsky: *Communism in Central Europe in the Time of the Reformation*, p. 12.
[2] The same, p. 22.

the vagabonds is caught on the roads by the public officers he is to be branded with the letter V on his chest, and brought back to his birthplace, where he must work in chains on the public works. If a vagrant gives a false birthplace he becomes a slave of the municipality, and is branded again. His children become the apprentices of the first-comer who want them—the lads up to the age of twenty-four, the girls up to the age of twenty. If these poor creatures take to flight they then become . . . slaves to their masters, who may put them in irons, whip them to their heart's content, put rings around their necks and the like." [1]

By the sixteenth century, the situation came to a head under the leadership of the Anabaptists in Germany. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Germany under the Hanseatic League had made considerable progress and was getting out of medieval barbarism. None the less it was still behind other countries. It had no central city like London or Paris; the means of communication were poor and civilization existed only in scattered territories near the towns. Germany was marked by a political decentralization with the feudal Holy Roman Empire falling apart and big independent princes arising.

The Emperor was only a prince among other princes who acted independently and were absolute despots within their own provinces, each with a strong centralized machinery of state. As Germany decayed, with the shift of the trade routes to the West and the rise of superior manufactures elsewhere, the princes heavily increased their taxes. Since they could not enforce their taxes against the big cities which were able to protect themselves, the entire burden fell upon the peasantry, who hated the princes as outright bandits. Also pressed to the wall were the elements of the lower nobility, the knights, whose castles had become pregnable to attack, who were useless as cavalry since the introduction of gunpowder, and who had now become impoverished and had turned into robbers.

As the oppressed elements of the countryside, in their desperate need to strike back against the system, looked around them for the weakest link in the armor of the rulers, the Catholic Church met their hungry eyes as a fat parasitic organism sucking their blood. The upper clergy were part of the prince-caste and partook of all the spoils obtained by the princes. Yet by this time the clergy were fast losing all trace of social usefulness. The printing press had deprived them of their intellectual monopoly and the civil magistrates were driving them out of jurisprudence.

The peasantry could remember the good times when the German tribes were run by the system of the *Mark* where land was held in common and

[1] H. M. Hyndman: *The Historical Basis of Socialism in England*, pp. 41-42.

a blood brotherhood was recognized.[1] Then the land had been cultivated in common and the products divided among the families that settled round the village land or *Mark*. As the peasants bore the yoke of the Catholic Church of Rome they could not help but feel that this was an alien master having nothing to do with the Germanic peoples. They betook themselves to the doctrines of primitive Christianity that had prevailed when the disciples of Christ had lived in common. They raised as a virtue the ascetic rule that all should be poor and that the wealthy and idlers should be put out of the way. Asceticism and mutual poverty were inevitably the ethics of the rebels of this time owing both to the impossibility then for all to be wealthy with the prevailing low productivity of labor of the agrarian, and to the natural revulsion from the orgiastic parasitism of the church.

Finally in the sixteenth century, the desperation of the peasants broke forth in the prolonged Peasants' Wars, in which the peasants were aided by the mass of plebeians in the cities.

Organizations such as the Union Shoe and Poor Konrad and the religious communist sect of the Anabaptists focussed the discontent of the peasants. Outbreaks of peasants throughout Europe occurred until finally, concurrently with the Reformation agitation of Luther, the great Peasants' War broke out in 1525 under the leadership of Thomas Muenzer. The demands of the peasants envisaged relief from serfdom and the excessive oppression of the lords. Their program consisted of twelve articles: the right to choose their own pastor; the right to pay reasonable tithes only; release from serfdom; abolition of the hunting rights of the lords; the return of the woods back to the people; the termination of the oppressive demands of the lords; the abolition of exorbitant dues; fair rent; the institution of a formal code and the end of arbitrary justice; the restoration of the commons to the people; the abolition of heriot; submission to the scripture, and willingness to withdraw any demand if proven against the scriptures.

Because of the naïvety of the peasants and their general backwardness and isolation and because also of the vacillations of the cities, the Peasants' War was crushed with dreadful slaughter.

After the peasant forces under Muenzer were annihilated, the lot of the agrarian in Germany became much worse. The only gainers in the struggle were the princes. Germany became more definitely decentralized than ever. The masses were defeated because the peasants, plebeians, and middle classes could not unite. They localized their actions and were crushed separately. From now on it was not the country that would lead the city, but the reverse; the urban middle classes would have to take the leading

[1] Compare F. Engels: *The Mark*, pp. 5-6.

rôles. The religious argument would give way to the political and social polemic.

The Anabaptist communists appeared for the last time as an important force in the English Civil Wars, where they formed part of the group of Diggers As though suffering from an intermittent fever, society from now on must feel itself sweat every so often under the internal fires of communism Up to the nineteenth century the intervals between communist spasms lasted about six score years; after the introduction of machinery, the intervals become much shortened, the fever more intense. With the twentieth century, communism had become chronic and all pervasive.

2

Over a century elapsed after the English Civil Wars before the communists raised their heads again This time it was not the peasantry that spoke, looking back to the ideals of primitive communism, but the plebeian and proletarian masses of the foremost city of the world—Paris The wretches in the slums of Paris had seen the French Revolution unfold from the movement calling for the *cours de lit* of the nobility to the directorate of Robespierre In every case the revolution had rested within the framework of private property and had not succeeded in solving the problems of the poorest layers of the people of Paris Under Robespierre, the Committee of Public Safety had enacted severe regulations against workmen's combinations or other assemblies having in view the raising of wages or the affecting of trade interests in any other manner. Many hundreds of workmen had been brought to the guillotine and, when the Commune under Hébert rose in revolt, the people's leaders were summarily executed This in turn so weakened the régime of Robespierre as to allow the Right Wing to do away with him and usher in the power of the Directory

All of these revolutionaries had been ardent supporters of private property, when the Thermidorians took power there was an unconscionable scramble for loot Barras obtained five estates, de Thionville seized immense landed property, as did Talien and Legendre. During the five revolutionary years before Thermidor, the paper currency, the *assignat,* based on land values, had been kept within some sort of bounds, being restricted to seven billion francs, but under the Directory it soon reached the staggering total of thirty-eight billion, causing an immense rise in the prices of necessities, chaos in the city, and great suffering among the masses Among the poor there was generated the most intense hatred for these *nouveaux riches* and for their entire system of property The basis was laid for a genuine communist movement. A leader was soon found, Baboeuf.

Baboeuf was one of those middle class Jacobins who had moved steadily

to the Left with the unfolding of the revolution. While in jail he had become immensely impressed with the work of Morelly, utopian communist littérateur. Morelly was among the first to put forward the idea "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs."

According to Morelly's system, which had much in common with that of Rousseau, all primitive instincts were good and had resulted in a primitive communism which later had become spoiled. Avarice was the only vice in the world; property was the source of avarice.[1] The root of all conduct was self-love, but man to be happy must be a social person, and the key to happiness was to be found in moral rectitude. Fixed moral rules were to govern society which was to be divided along some mechanical scheme similar to the phalanstaries of Fourier who, indeed, seems to have borrowed some of his ideas from Morelly. There was to be common ownership of all wealth and equal enjoyment of it.[2] Men do not avoid labor but the unpleasantness of it.[3] The directors of this society should be the talented ones and, if necessary, should be empowered to use force to prevent any backsliding into the present immoral system.

Morelly undertook to lay down the rules even to marriage. All must marry; only those over forty years of age could remain celibate. The first marriage was to be for ten years. Then divorce could be granted on the demand of one party. The only condition to the divorce was that the same persons could not remarry each other within a year, or any person younger than the original pair. In this way, with such familial and property rules worked out, mankind could reach his highest happiness and perfection.

Another contemporary to inspire Babœuf was Mably.[4] Mably spoke most longingly of communism, but to him it was an ideal impossible to achieve. The primitives had practiced communism, but it was now gone never to return. The next best thing was a modified feudalism. "The distance between Mably's idea of a republican communism and his improved feudalism which was to serve as the first step towards reform was so wide and filled in by so many alternative stages that it became easy for nearly all parties to appeal to him for support." [5]

To Mably the Law of Nature was the law of equality among men. This equality had originally existed but had been obscured by the establishment of private property, that root of all immorality. He was opposed to equal

[1] Morelly: *Code de la Nature ou le Veritable Esprit de Ses Loix*, p. 15. (No English translation available.) Paris, 1910 edition.

[2] The same, Fourth Part.

[3] See W. B. Guthrie: *Socialism before the French Revolution*, p. 262.

[4] Mably was astute enough to have predicted the course of the French Revolution as far back as 1758, even to the extent of showing how the States General would have to be called, how it would split into factions, and in the end give way to a dictatorship.

[5] E. A. Whitfield: *Gabriel Bonnot de Mably*, p. 30.

distribution of goods, since in a short time such a distribution would cause the same evils to arise again. He was for a communized production rather, of the type that had existed in primitive society. This agrarian communism was based not on economics, but on ethics. Men would do that type of work for which they are best suited; their products would be gathered into common store houses, from which magistrates would distribute them according to the needs of the recipients.

Deeply affected by these ideas, and disgusted with the unequal results of the revolution, despite the rivers of blood that had been shed by the people, Baboeuf, in 1795 began his secret organization of the Society of the Equals. The *Manifesto* of the Equals declared: "The French Revolution is but the precursor of another, and a greater and more solemn revolution, and which will be the last! . . . We aim at something more sublime and more equitable—the common good, or the community of goods. No more individual property in land; the land belongs to no one. . . . Let disappear, once for all, the revolting distinctions of rich and poor, of great and small, of masters and valets, of governors and governed." [1]

The constitution of the Society of the Equals had for its motto: equality, liberty, universal well-being. According to its principles, the poor were to get the houses and furniture of the rich; a national community of goods was to be established; the right of inheritance was to be abolished; the national community was to guarantee to all an equal and moderate existence and assure to each person a dwelling, clothes, food, heat, light, laundry, and medical aid; all members of society were to work except the aged and the sick; each industrial group was to be organized, elect officers, and see that labor was carried out. The length of the working day was to be definitely determined, machinery was to be introduced to relieve toil. Those who refused to work were to be arrested. Public meals were to be served. The military were to be treated the same as the civil institutions. The use of money was to be abolished within the country and the saving of money prohibited. All private trade with foreign countries was to be forbidden and a national monopoly of foreign trade established. Taxes were to be placed only on non-members of the community. The national debt was to be extinguished for Frenchmen. As for the foreign debt, the republic would repay the capital loaned, but not the interest. Pupils were to be brought up in national institutions. The program was acute enough to call for the use of the telegraph, although this invention was perfected only in the middle of the nineteenth century.[2]

Here was a program pregnant for the future, a close comparison demonstrating how much of it the Russian Revolution actually carried out. Even

[1] See E. B. Bax: *The Last Episode of the French Revolution*, pp. 109-110.
[2] The same, pp. 124-134.

the most extreme of the revolutionists, such as Hébert, Roux, Clootz, and others of an Anarchist trend, had not dared to advocate the termination of private property; the few writers who had attempted to work out such dread pictures had no influence upon the masses. It was Baboeuf's unique contribution to France that he was the first to attempt actually to realize a communist society by means of insurrection. Baboeuf was the first genuine communist revolutionary

Instinctively he understood that to accomplish this program he must base himself upon the poor and not upon the wealthy, and that among the poor it was the working class that was to make up the core of his army. All of his program was designed to win that class in a practical and thorough manner. And in his program there was very little of the utopian wish mongering that characterizes the genteel literary men who want to reform the world There were no fantastic religious, nor ethical theories There was, instead, a practical concrete economic and political program worked out for the consideration of the masses

None the less, the program was an impossible one to realize. The only ones who could fight for such a program were the proletariat and the propertyless. But these constituted but a small proportion of the population The great majority of the nation was made up of either peasants, shop keepers, artisans, and such petty owners, or those who ardently desired to obtain some property. The technical level of society was still insufficient to have generated masses of city factory workers who would pool their collective labor in large scale plants for the production of articles in an intricate network of subdivision of labor Baboeuf amply forecast the orientation and direction of future champions of the working class, but he came too early upon the scene to be able to realize that goal himself.

Baboeuf himself, however, could not predict the tragic nature of his actions Optimistically, he believed that all that was necessary was an irrefutable program and a vanguard of determined fighters Thus, at bottom, Baboeuf revealed himself incapable of appreciating the actual situation Will and determination were to make up for numbers In his Manifesto he declared, for instance, "The day after this veritable revolution they will say, with astonishment, What? the common well being was to be had for so little? We had only to will it. Ah! why did we not will it sooner?" [1]

Baboeuf soon was to realize the premature character of his attempts With extraordinary ability he was able to organize his secret society and prepare for the insurrection which took place in 1796 But alas, with all his will, his determination, his care and his secrecy, the adventure was soon over, the organization shattered, and Baboeuf himself brought to trial. Here Baboeuf behaved like a hero, but the movement perished with him

[1] The same, pp 112 113

and might have been lost to posterity had not Buonarotti preserved the record with his work on the Babouvist movement. This work of Buonarotti was to furnish the inspiration for the movement of the Blanquists, the logical heirs of the Babouvists in the nineteenth century.

The time was now at hand when the industrial revolution in England was doing its quiet work in creating a working class, and when all of Europe was beginning to be convulsed in modern capitalist crises. On the continent there was a great deal of ferment. Thinkers were building all sorts of utopian schemes of harmony and social justice. Soon the proletariat would make its first great bid for power, in the June days of the 1848 insurrection.

During this period, from the band of German exiles in Paris there was formed in 1836 the Federation of the Just This Federation became an active factor in French proletarian communism and carried on the Babouvist tradition, demanding a community of goods and dividing its activity between propaganda and conspiratorial work. The organization was in close touch with Blanqui and Barbès, and fought shoulder to shoulder with them in the abortive 1839 Paris revolt.

The League of the Just was strongly influenced by the views of the contemporary Frenchman, Cabet Cabet had been one of the actives in the Carbonari and, after the Revolution of 1830 in France, had been exiled for five years In England he became a utopian Communist As a transition to Communism Cabet wanted to set up a democratic republic composed of self-governing communes National workshops were included in his plan, together with a tax on income and the communization of public lands.

"By the absorption of inheritances under an extended law of escheat, by the mode of imposing taxes, by the legal regulations of wages, and by the development of large national industries, the state would absorb all private property and all industrial and social functions, so that, at the end of half a century, the people would find themselves transformed into a vast partnership—a great national hive, where each labored according to his abilities and consumed according to his necessities; where crime had vanished with poverty, and idleness with luxurious wealth, where peace and plenty, liberty and equality, virtue and intelligence reigned supreme. Thus the former *political* unit of the commune would have developed by a gradual and simple process into the unit of social and industrial cooperation. The waste of competition would have been replaced by the economy of general organization. Buying and selling and all monetary operations would obviously have become obsolete." [1]

[1] A Shaw *Icaria*, pp 13-14

At the start, the most influential member of the League of the Just was the German tailor, Wilhelm Weitling, who joined the organization in 1837 and divided his time between propaganda work explaining communism and practical organizational activity. In 1839 he wrote his book, *Mankind as It Is and as It Should Be* and in 1842 his *Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom*. His *Gospel of the Poor* came out in 1845.

Weitling borrowed much of his "Guarantees of Harmony" from Fourier and, like the latter, founded his plan of reorganization of society upon the nature of man whose desires are to be placed in three categories, to acquire, to enjoy, and to know, and whose means to satisfy these desires are his capabilities as embodied in production, consumption, and administration. Private property causes the lack of satisfaction of the desire of knowledge; labor produces wealth or money, which is taken away by the employer. This is capital. Capital is, therefore, originally the property of the laborers, and the greater the capital, the greater the exploitation of labor.

Against this capitalist system Weitling proposed to build a social State. Like other utopian thinkers, Weitling would have the power in society rest not in a dictatorship of majority rule but in intelligence. At the head of his society there would stand the three greatest philosophers, a triumvirate, with supreme control and administration. These triumvirs would adjust the needs of consumption. Six hours of labor were to be the average. All material products and intellectual labor were to be estimated according to their value in labor hours. Authorities would set the rate of exchange. Each worker would have a labor book with labor notes. Full education was considered necessary for progress and for the evolution of the race. Education was to cease to be a privilege and was to be given to all under the rule of Philosophy.

From these views it can be seen that although Weitling still had his head in the clouds of petty bourgeois utopias and still was dazzled by Saint-Simon and Fourier, yet he was entirely different from these others in that he had his feet in the ranks of the workers. Thus Weitling furnished a peculiar bridge between the utopianism of the French and the later materialism of the Marxists. He was a true forerunner of proletarian communism.

According to Weitling, the new order was to be established when a majority of the proletarians in any locality decided to introduce it. "If resistance is offered, then more drastic measures are resorted to. The proletarians are to declare a provisional government, depose all existing offices, especially the police and judges, and elect new officers from their own ranks. The rich are to be disfranchised and compelled to support the poor and destitute while reconstruction is pending. The property of the State and of the church at once becomes communal. Those who choose to

leave the country may do so, their property being confiscated. The rich who offer their means for the support of the new society are promised a pension during life; the rest, by limitations on their activity, by punishments and penalties, will be forced to succumb. If all these means fail, then 'a moral must be preached which no one now dares to preach.' A revolution after the order of Baboeuf is the 'moral'." [1]

The works of Weitling made a profound impression upon the advanced German workers of his time. It was of Weitling that Marx later wrote, "It must be admitted that the German proletariat is the theorist of the European proletariat, just as the English proletariat is its political economist, and the French proletariat its politician." [2]

But Weitling was not only a propagandist but a splendid organizer and an excellent agitator, surpassed only by Lassalle among the Germans. The plan of the League of the Just was to organize innocent "surface" groups, such as singing societies, educational and sport clubs, etc.; within which there were to be established the nuclei of the Federation and also unions of the workers for struggle on the economic field. In the course of his work, Weitling was able to build up a considerable network of such societies.

Weitling was unable long to remain a pioneer. The prominence of his writings prompted him to take a sort of messianic rôle and, like Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte, he took to religion, fighting for the belief that Jesus Christ was the first communist. After the defeat of the workers in 1848, he moved to America, where he tried to set up a communist colony. In Europe, Weitling was a revolutionary; removed to the happy hunting grounds of America, he became a pure utopian.

Upon the collapse of the Blanquist *putsch*, in which some of the leaders of the Federation of the Just, such as Schapper and Bauer, were involved, these people were forced to leave France. In England in 1840 they formed a German Workers Educational Society, recruiting members for a local of the Federation in London and successfully building up branches in a number of cities. Gradually, the Federation became international in character, the London Workers Educational Society was turned into the Communist Workers Educational Society, a secret organization being retained.

The Federation at this time was composed mostly of craft workers employed in small shops. With such elements it could not advance much farther along the lines of scientific communist struggle. But at this juncture the Federation of the Just was enriched by the aid of Marx and Engels,

[1] F. C. Clark: "A Neglected Socialist," in *Annals of The American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Vol. V. pp. 736-737. (1894-1895.)

[2] Karl Marx: "On the King of Prussia and Social Reform," in *Selected Essays*, p. 124.

who had formed a German Workers Society in Brussels in 1845. The views of Weitling and of French equalitarianism proving inadequate, the Federation of the Just asked Marx and Engels to join and put forth their views, some of which had already become known in the English Chartist paper, the "Northern Star," and in the French organ, "La Réforme." Under the guidance of Marx and Engels, the Federation changed its rules and adopted a new purpose, brilliantly affirmed in the document, the Communist Manifesto, which these two revolutionists had been asked to draw up and which had been accepted. Conspiratorial methods were abolished and the Federation functioned as a propaganda society until the outbreak of the February Revolution in 1848. Entering this revolution, the Federation of the Just became the Communist League.

3

The Communist Manifesto is one of the most astounding documents in the history of revolutionary movements Boldly it declares: "The communists disdain to conceal their views and aims They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling class tremble at a communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains They have a world to win Workingmen of all countries, unite!" [1]

In this "Bible of the working class" there are to be found all the fundamental principles of revolutionary communism. The document traces the history of civilized society as a history of class struggles and, basing itself on the materialistic conception of history, shows that the rise of the bourgeoisie to power only creates its own grave-diggers, the proletariat. No sooner are the capitalists firmly in the saddle than the executioner is at the door. The Manifesto then enters into an analysis of why the bourgeoisie cannot control the forces it has generated and how the proletariat inevitably must take power and usher in the new society To do this, the proletarist must organize its own party, the Communist Party, since every class struggle is a political struggle, and since the organization of a class is its organization into a political party.

"All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority . . Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country, must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie. . . What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above

[1] Marx and Engels *The Communist Manifesto* p 58 (Kerr Ed)

all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable." [1]

The Communist Manifesto then lays down the principles governing the relation of communists to the class they represent. It declares, "The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working class parties. They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole. They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement. The communists are distinguished from the other working class parties by this only: 1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat independently of all nationality 2. In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole. The communists, therefore, are, on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement. The immediate aim of the communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties, formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat" [2]

As the Revolution of 1848 began, the Communist League understood well that it would have to work hand in hand for the while with the petty bourgeois democrats to struggle for immediate demands Communists were to support every revolutionary movement against the existing order and to bring to the front the property question, no matter what the degree of development of property prevailing at the time Although the Communists were to labor to unite all democratic parties of all countries, by no means were they to lose their identity "The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of the movement" [3]

In the struggle against the old order by the democratic forces, the communists were to take part actively and as soon as possible to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, that is to win the battle of democracy. Once in control under the situation that existed, the workers were

[1] *Communist Manifesto*, pp 28 29
[2] The same, pp 30-31
[3] The same, p 57

to introduce communism, not immediately, but step by step. "The proletariat will use its political supremacy, to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State, *i.e.*, of the proletariat organized as a ruling class; and to increase the total productive forces as rapidly as possible." [1]

The measures that were to be introduced at once were: the abolition of property in land and the application of all rents of land to public purposes; a heavy progressive or graduated income tax; abolition of all right of inheritance; confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels; centralization of credit in the hands of the State by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly; centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State; extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; the bringing into cultivation of waste lands and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan; equal liability of all to labor; establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture; combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; the gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of population over the country; free education of all children in public schools; abolition of children's factory labor in its present form; combination of education with industrial production; and similar measures.

After the French revolution of 1830, Europe was sitting on a powder keg which not all the water of the Metternich Holy Alliance could prevent from blowing up. Recognizing this situation, the smaller States of Germany had granted constitutions to the people in order to rally the population of these principalities against possible aggrandizement by the big States of Austria and Prussia. To play with liberalism was not too dangerous for these petty rulers, since the big States would see that the people did not go too far. These constitutional and republican tendencies were much advanced by the French Revolution of 1830. But as time went on, the petty potentates began to retract the constitutional rights given the people.

Within Prussia, the stupid tactics of Frederick Wilhelm IV compelled the bourgeoisie to resist. Business, with the lower nobility, forced the King to create a "Diet." When this body was granted only consultative powers, the bourgeoisie continued its resistance by refusing the financial aid necessary to the State and, as it needed to appeal to the people for support, it began to pose in a way as socialistic. In Germany there was no separate republican party, the people being either constitutional monarchists or socialists and communists. In the meantime, the proletariat was starting to organize on its own account. The Rhenish Gazette, edited by Marx,

[1] The same, pp. 40-41.

fired the first shot in 1842. In 1844 there occurred the big strike movements of the Silesian and Bohemian workers which were bloodily suppressed. French socialism won headway and the Communist League was formed.

By 1848, Germany was on the eve of revolt, and the French Revolution opened up the way. At the same time, in Vienna itself, under the blows of a unanimous popular revolt, the whole rotting reactionary system of Metternich crashed. No sooner, however, was the old Austrian régime removed than differences began to appear among the groups which had revolted. While a Committee of Safety was being formed with the bourgeoisie at the head, another and dual power was arising in the form of a student "Aula" body which had borne the brunt of the fighting and was an intermediary between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. While in the city the students and workers were trying to push forward their claims, in the countryside the peasantry smashed feudalism once and for all.

It was now the turn of Berlin to rise, but the situation here was entirely different from that in Paris. In France, the proletariat from the start had taken a hand in the political turn of affairs and had prevented the formation of a constitutional monarchy. Instead, the monarchy was overthrown and a republic was created. Thus the French revolt was against the very system which the Germans were trying to install. The German bourgeoisie, fearful that their workers also would go too far, capitulated to the King against the lower classes and, believing that the old absolutism could not return, granted a new loan to the government and established an indirect system of voting.

At the same time there arose a petty bourgeois People's Democratic Party which demanded reforms similar to those won in France, namely, direct and universal suffrage, single legislative assembly, open recognition of the March, 1848, Revolution and of the National Assembly at Frankfort. Within this Party, the Right Wing wanted a democratic monarchy, the Left Wing called for a Federal Republic.

Far to the Left was the proletarian party whose kernel was the communist groupings. At the beginning, the workers functioned as the tail to the petty bourgeoisie but gradually they increased their strength and put forth their own claims, defending the extreme party in France and calling for a unified German Republic.

In Germany, the liberal bourgeoisie took power directly and formed its National Assembly in Frankfort; in Austria, the liberal bureaucracy took the power in trust for the bourgeoisie. The German Assembly should have dissolved the reactionary Diet and created an armed force for action. Instead, it talked and talked, until it talked itself to death. When the Poles revolted, these liberal bourgeois gentlemen, instead of declaring war on Russia to support Poland, helped Russia to overwhelm the Poles. Simul-

taneously, the Austrian monarchical forces, by means of reactionary slogans catering to pan-Slavism, were able to rally the Czechs and Croats for counter-revolution.

As the Liberals exposed their impotence on the continent, reaction began to consolidate its forces. The Bohemian movement was crushed; in Italy, King Bomba regained his throne and Italian unification was thwarted; the Hungarians were stifled into legality; in Germany, the conservative assemblies became stronger. In England, an ill-timed Chartist movement ended in defeat. There remained but one place whence decisive action could come and that place was Paris.

But in Paris the only force capable of carrying forward the revolution was the proletariat. "If Paris, because of political centralization, dominates France, so do the workers dominate Paris in moments of revolutionary earthquakes." [1] The bourgeoisie imagined that only Louis Philippe would be overthrown and that the old system would remain. However, the workers, in compelling the formation of a republic opened up to all classes the fight for power and came to the front as an independent class and party. Now the workers compelled the revolution to move to the left and carried out measures of social reform. While the officialdom, as a sop to the toilers, formed a "Labor Commission" to discover means of improving the condition of the masses, it was busy with plans to provoke the workers into battle and to annihilate them. At the same time, the provisional government did its best to make the republic palatable to the bourgeoisie. The old officials were invited to remain. The government drained its treasury to pay in advance its debt to private bankers. Then to fill its unnecessarily depleted coffers, the government taxed the peasantry and forced them to fall into the hands of the financiers. Concurrently sharp pressure was put against the workers.

The strategy of the French bourgeoisie against labor contained two main features: first, to increase the strength of its own armed forces; and second, to divide the workers. The first aim was realized by adding to the army and the National Guard a new force, the Mobile Guard. This was recruited from elements of the slum proletariat residing in workers' quarters. Here the working class committed a great error. Believing that the Mobile Guard was theirs because of its composition, the workers made no efforts to counter this force. They were to learn, to their sorrow, that the slum elements composed of degenerate sections of the workers are easily bribed by reaction to shoot down their own brothers and friends.

On the other hand, the government organized its National Workshops as a measure of winning over the unemployed and separating them from the other workers. Here the government miscalculated, since the unem-

[1] Karl Marx: *Class Struggles in France* (Socialist Labor Party edition), p. 42.

ployed refused to take the part of the government, but sided with their rebel fellow workers. The government did succeed, however, in discrediting entirely the Louis Blancs by giving the impression that these National Workshops were synonymous with socialism. The petty bourgeois, looking at the wasteful work at which the government put the unemployed, hated the expense and blamed the workers. Thus by means of their method of distributing unemployed relief, the government bureaucrats won away the petty bourgeoisie from the idea of socialism.

Having carefully prepared its way, the government now entered into a series of provocations, calling in the army into Paris, forbidding public meetings, throwing many workers out of the National Workshops and thus off relief, and so forth. Upon this, the workers were forced to take up the challenge and they revolted in June, 1848. With the brutal stamping down of this insurrection all illusions as to the kind of "fraternity" workers may expect within a bourgeois republic disappeared; the republic now became only another instrument of oppression in the eyes of the masses.

Confused as the proletarians were with all sorts of schemes of State socialism, their defeat was inevitable. It soon became clear to all that the defeat of the proletariat in France meant the downfall of the democratic liberal bourgeois elements throughout all Europe. Because the workers could not win in France, none of these latter groups could succeed in liberating itself. Neither Hungary nor Poland nor other countries could realize their freedom precisely because the French workers could not win socialism. Here is an excellent illustration how the struggle for socialism coincides with the struggle for democracy.

"Finally, Europe, through the victories of the Holy Alliance, took on such shape that every new proletarian insurrection in France would at once become coincident with a world war. The new French revolution would be forced at once to go beyond the national confines, and to conquer the European terrain upon which alone the social revolution of the 19th century can establish itself.

"Only through the June defeat were created all the conditions within which France can take the initiative in the European revolution. Only when dipped in the blood of the June insurgents did the Tricolor become the banner of the European revolution—the Red Flag." [1]

After the proletarian resurrection in France was broken, the petty bourgeoisie was the next to lose control; the industrial bourgeoisie took the helm while the monarchists who were hiding as republicans now openly showed themselves as a minority opposition. The reforms were abrogated, imprisonment for debt was re-established, freedom of the press and the ten-hour work law were repealed. An immense pressure was put on the shop keepers,

[1] The same, p. 72.

and many were forced into bankruptcy. The government worked hand in glove with the financiers. The "right to work" which previously had been affirmed theoretically was now taken away. The progressive tax was banned, thus throwing the tax burden on the petty bourgeoisie. The judges were made indeposable, thereby aiding the monarchists.

In revenge against these measures, the peasantry and petty bourgeois groups voted for Louis Bonaparte for President rather than for the Assembly candidate. Now the industrial bourgeoisie was kicked out of all the posts of government and the royalists were put in charge. Bonaparte opened fire upon the Assembly. He dissolved the Mobile Guard. He attacked the Republic of Rome which fell under the weight of French arms. He engaged in a reactionary foreign policy in aid of the Czar.

Again the petty bourgeoisie were forced to take the lead in the opposition, since the workers had been suppressed and the big bourgeoisie was too small a group. But by June, 1849, the little property holders miserably ran away from the struggle. Now the National Guard was dissolved, leaving only the regular army. The press was gagged, Paris put in a state of siege, the right of association destroyed; reaction was completely victorious. Because of the deadlock created, the adventurer Louis Napoleon ultimately was crowned Emperior.

With the defeat of the proletariat in France, reaction raised its head throughout Europe. In Vienna, the bourgeoisie attempted to attack the student petty bourgeois dual government and, when that failed, the National Guard broke with the proletariat over the question of unemployed relief and shot down the workers. The students vacillated and did not come to the aid of the workers who were disarmed. Thus in Vienna confusion reigned, with no adequate leadership. Now was the time for the Emperor to act and, with the help of the Slavs, he stormed the city. Although the Viennese had defended the Hungarians, the latter did not come to the aid of the Viennese. The German people did not help because they were paralyzed by the inactivity of the Frankfort Assembly. Thus Vienna fell. This was decisive for Germany.

The King of Prussia marched on Berlin, which was yielded without a struggle, the Liberals displaying such cowardice as to bring down upon themselves only the greatest contempt. In a revolution, he who commands a decisive position and surrenders it instead of forcing the enemy to try his hand at an assault, invariably is treated as a traitor.

Now the final act of liquidation of the revolution was possible. In Austria, the Emperor turned savagely upon the Slavs who had helped him against Vienna and flayed them mercilessly; in Germany, the King of Prussia dissolved the National Assembly created at Frankfort. As the Prussian King began hostilities, the mass of people took up arms. Especially the

workers fought bravely in Dresden, Rhenish Prussia, and Westphalia, in the Palatinate, Wurtemberg, and Baden. But here again it was of no avail, since everywhere the liberal bourgeois and petty bourgeois forces abandoned the struggle. It became crystal clear that from now on all revolutionary movements would have to be led by the proletariat, and that the proletariat would embrace communism.

What would also be further learned is that insurrection is an art the basic rules of which are: "Firstly, never play with insurrection unless you are fully prepared to face the consequences of your play. Insurrection is a calculus with very indefinite magnitudes, the value of which may change every day; the forces opposed to you have all the advantage of organization, discipline, and habitual authority; unless you bring strong odds against them you are defeated and ruined. Secondly, the insurrectionary career once entered upon, act with the greatest determination, and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising; it is lost before it measures itself with its enemies. Surprise your antagonists while their forces are scattering, prepare new successes, however small, but daily; keep up the moral ascendancy which your first successful rising has given to you; rally those vacillating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse, and which always look out for the safer side; force your enemies to a retreat before they can collect their strength against you; in the words of Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known, *de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace.*" [1]

The fact of the matter is that the revolution could not be sustained for any great length of time. It had been precipitated by the panic of 1847; it was terminated by the prosperity of 1849. The crisis did not last long, and good times were restored to the workers and the petty bourgeoisie.[2]

At the earliest possibility, Marx and Engels hastened to Germany to take part in the revolutionary events, Marx to edit the new Rhenish Gazette and Engels to serve as an adjutant in the army against the Prussians. Engels was among the very last to give up the fighting; he retreated with his group only under the heaviest odds. With the close of the revolution, the members of the Communist League were tried in Koeln and, although some of them were acquitted, the Communist League was dissolved.

The Communist League had been a secret conspiratorial organization. ("He is a coward that under certain circumstances would not conspire just as he is a fool who under other circumstances would do so." [3]) To the

[1] Karl Marx *Revolution and Counter Revolution*, p. 120. (London, 1896 edition.)

[2] A comparison of the figures for wages and prices, taking 1837-1841 as 100, shows that in 1846 wages stood at 104 and prices at 95.5; in 1847 wages fell to 96 while prices rose to 115; in 1850 the figures were 96 and 71 respectively. See P. W. Slosson: *The Decline of the Chartist Movement*, p. 137.

[3] Karl Marx: *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, p. 137.

genuine revolutionist, the necessity of illegal conspiratorial work is unquestioned, and, in forming secret bodies, the advanced proletariat is only imitating the bourgeoisie itself. This, such secret orders as the Masons, the Illuminati, the Carbonari, the American Committees of Correspondence, and similar societies, amply show

For hundreds of years the Masons have flourished in secret bodies, being part of the bourgeois apparatus of struggle ever since the Reformation. Whatever the original purpose of the Masons or of their Rosicrucian mysticism, it is certain that they frequently developed into congregations of business men who plotted how to control affairs during times when they were forced into revolutionary struggles Examine, for example, the constitutions of Anderson "If a Brother," writes Anderson, "should be a Rebel against the State, he is not to be countenanced in his rebellion, however he may be pitied as an unhappy man, and if convicted of no other crime they cannot expel him from the Lodge, and his relations to it remain indefeasible" [1] At a time of narrow provincialism and bigoted nationalism, the Masons adopted as two of their basic principles, indifference in matters of religion and a tendency to cosmopolitanism or internationalism The Masonic oath is "to sustain *by all means* and *under all circumstances*' liberty of speech, liberty of thought and liberty of conscience in religion and political matters Freemasons are supposed to stick together whether right or wrong

In the struggle against the Catholic Church, the Freemasons' secret order became an important appendage to the capitalists The British Party in Ireland relied especially upon it The Dublin police, for example, were excluded from all secret societies save Freemasons "In the two Home Rule Acts for Ireland, those of 1914 and of 1920, the Irish Parliaments were definitely precluded from any power to 'abbrogate or prejudicially affect any privilege or exemption of the Grand Lodge of Freemasons in Ireland, or any lodge or society recognized by the Grand Lodge'" [2]

According to Cahill, in 1930, of the 580 deputies in France, 300 were Freemasons, though there are only 52,000 in the country, and of the Senate of 300 members, 180 Freemasons were to be counted In the United States, 356 out of the 531 in the House of Representatives belong to the order. It is estimated that in the United States there are about 3,250,000 Masons, 700,000 Knights of Columbus, and 850,000 Elks, to mention merely three of the many secret orders that abound among the business men, bourgeois and petty bourgeois [3]

[1] F Cahill *Freemasonry and the Anti Christian Movement* p 5 (1930 edition)
[2] The same, p 10
[3] See M J Bonn *The American Experiment*, p 196

Connected with the Masonic order in the eighteenth century was Adam Weishaupt who founded the secret order of Perfectibles later changed to the Illuminati. His creed embraced support for philosophical Anarchism, while it stood opposed to despotism, nationalism, the State, races and patriotism. "Reduced to simple formula, the aims of the Illuminati may be summarized in the following six points: 1. Abolition of monarchy and all ordered government. 2. Abolition of private property. 3. Abolition of inheritance. 4. Abolition of patriotism. 5. Abolition of the family (*i.e.*, marriage and all morality and the institution of the communal education of children). 6. Abolition of all religion." [1]

Of course this "terrible" program was known only to the few initiated into the highest secret layers of the organization which Weishaupt built up. On the surface, the Illuminati appeared similar to the Masons. This was the method of the intellectuals for promoting their ideas and was perhaps the only method feasible under the despotisms prevailing in Central Europe at the time.

In the nineteenth century, bourgeois liberals created all sorts of secret societies such as the Carbonari (charcoal burners) in Italy and France, just as the Americans had formed their secret revolutionary "Committees of Correspondence" in 1775. Similarly, various other property owning groups built their covert organizations, such as the Catholics in their secret orders, and the Jews in their synagogues.

But with what horror the secret organizations of the proletariat have been regarded, since the ruling class always will attempt to extirpate with the greatest ferocity any and all revolutionary groups upon which it can lay hands! Revolutions are no delicate affairs. In the ruthless struggle for power, the victims who plot revolt must gather together in secret formations. The law which is on the side of the strong and the wealthy compels the poor and downtrodden to form their vanguard organizations in the cellars and secret corners of the social order. We shall see that one of the most important problems of the communists is precisely the question of organization, of illegal conspiratorial work so as to take advantage of all the opportunities open for revolutionary activity.

The Revolution of 1848 was the first great attempt of the proletariat to take power. After their defeat, a serious discussion took place among the communists as to the value of the barricades which the workers had set up during those days. It was the opinion of Friedrich Engels in the latter part of the nineteenth century that the fighting methods of 1848 were obsolete. He stated: "The rebellion of the old style, the street fight behind barricades, which up to 1848 gave the final decision, has become anti-

[1] N. H. Webster: *World Revolution*, pp. 22-23.

quated." [1] Thus, Engels created the impression that the workers no longer would utilize barricade fighting. The opportunist socialists distorted his arguments to mean that Engels did not believe revolutionary methods should be used any more; this was a distinct forgery of Engels remarks and nothing further need be said about it. The question of barricade fighting, however, is important and must be discussed.

Engels made the point that insurgents never really plan a victory over the military in street battle, that such a victory is rare. What the insurgents really hope to do is to disintegrate the military by moral influence when they make such a barricade stand. If the soldiers are not demoralized, then the military have an excellent chance of winning the fight, because of their equipment, training, and organization. The rebels cannot do much more than offer passive resistance in fact. Paris, June, 1848, Vienna, 1848, Dresden, 1849, all showed that the people could not overwhelm the army. Wherever the people were successful in 1848 it was because the Citizens Guard went over to their side against the army or caused the army to waver. Where the civil guard was not won over, there the insurrection was lost. In the case of Berlin, 1848, the people won because the troops were exhausted and badly nourished. Also because of the poor command and because the new forces went over to the rebels. Hence Engels came to the conclusion, ". . . even during the classic period of street battles, the barricade had a moral rather than a material effect. It was a means to shake the solidity of the military. If it held until that had been accomplished, the victory was won; if not, it meant defeat." [2]

According to Engels, the evolution of military technique made mass barricade fighting increasingly difficult. The soldiers became accustomed to the barricades and developed new tactics; the armies were larger and the mobilization was quicker; there was great technical advance in armaments; the streets were wider and well paved, thus making barricades more difficult to build; finally, it was now much harder to get arms. Engels, however, closed by saying that of course the communists have not abandoned the right to revolution.

Engels was a military expert and his opinion was based on a thorough study not only of 1848 but above all of the Paris Commune in 1871 wherein the workers had been signally defeated in such barricade fighting. Nevertheless, Engels did not say the last word on this question. In the Russian Revolution of 1905 the workers were able to develop a new type of barricade fighting which required but few men to hold the barricades and which wearied larger numbers of the Czar's soldiery. Instead of maintaining the barricades with massed men, a few picked cadres held off the soldiers until

[1] F. Engels: "Preface" in K. Marx: *Class Struggles in France*, p. 19.
[2] The same, p. 21.

the barricades were stormed or blown away, whereupon the defenders would retreat to others built directly behind them, and so on. And no sooner was a quarter taken by the soldiers than they would find that the barricades had been rebuilt in their rear.

Even Karl Kautsky had to point out the contribution of the Russian workers in their new style of barricade fighting, an immense improvement over 1848.[1] There is now far more material than ever to build such barricades and to obstruct the military, what with the enormous number of vehicles such as automobiles that can be commandeered by the proletariat. But should barricade fighting prove it cannot endure before perfected military technique, yet it may have to be undertaken, if only for its moral effect, if only to enable the workers to meet the militia face to face and to show that they are ready to die for their cause.

There is one further fact of the greatest importance. Engels had spoken of the need to crack the army and to demoralize it if the workers were to win. Engels did not live in a period of perpetual warfare such as the present where practically the entire population has been trained in the most frightful wars and where every worker knows how to shoot and has faced death in the trenches. The French and the German proletariat, for example, do not fear the soldiers; they understand discipline and methods of fighting as well as the armed forces of the state. Indeed, such proletarians are simply disbanded soldiers now turned worker-revolutionists. Under such circumstances, it is no longer a case of trained troops against mere rabble, but rather more generally a case of callow mercenaries pitted against well-trained veterans of whom there are to be found literally millions among the people. Thus the relation of forces becomes entirely reversed. And it may well be that Engels' hard and fast rule—either to demoralize the army or suffer defeat—no longer applies. The February, 1934, days in Paris, for example, showed how former veterans could stand their ground before the most determined charges of regular troops. Had the situation been more acute, there is no question that the veterans would have been able to return blow for blow, even though the regular army had not cracked at all.

In short, regarding barricade fighting, the last word must yet be worked out in practice. Always new technique is being developed on both sides, whether in Paris, in the Chapei district of Shanghai, China, in Spain or elsewhere.

4

The period of 1848 to 1871 was one in which the proletariat was slowly getting on its feet and arriving at an understanding of matters political. In this period, the intellectual elements of the middle class who were acute

[1] See V. I. Lenin's comments on Kautsky's article in *Selections From Lenin*, II, p. 170.

enough to realize that their class had lost its historical force and to attach themselves to the workers played an enormous educational and organizational rôle. It was a period of transition, in which the declassed intellectual relied upon the working class, preached revolution, and yet could not conduct the revolutionary movement with proletarian methods, but rather ran it for the proletariat. On the other hand, the skilled worker, turning to revolution, remained tied to the petty bourgeoisie by an umbilical cord which he could not as yet sever. In this period occurred the extraordinary revolutionary movement developed by Auguste Blanqui.

Blanqui himself started out in his youth as a republican and, in 1821, at the early age of sixteen, joined the Carbonari in Paris. Here he imbibed the traditions of militant Jacobinism and learned of the movement of Baboeuf in the French Revolution. All through his youth, up to the time of the Revolution of 1830, Blanqui remained no more than a loyal and vigorous member of the republican movement. This adherence to militant Jacobinism, however, only prepared him for his career as a revolutionary communist.

After all, it had not been a far cry from Jacobinism to Babouvism, and Blanqui was the legitimate heir of Baboeuf. Militant Jacobinism had always stressed equality; what was a step forward in Baboeuf's plan was the insuring of economic equality and security for the working class by means of methods of revolution to which the Jacobins could heartily aspire. In closely following Baboeuf, Blanqui was able to win over to his side many intellectuals who had admired the Jacobins of the French Revolution. While Proudhon and Louis Blanc were preaching reform and quiet peaceful action, both Blanqui and the nineteenth century Jacobins were advocating the solution of all problems by means of the insurrection and coup d'état.

"Although subscribing thoroughly to the democratic implications of Rousseau's general will, Jacobinism habitually drew a distinction between the general will and the will of all, quite destructive of democratic practices and policies. However equal men might be at birth in their natural inheritance of reason and goodness, the environment provided by contemporary society was not universally conducive to the development of the qualities necessary to the free man and the citizen. Not only was the ruling class, the clergy, and their servitors disqualified, but the peasantry was in large part so steeped in the tradition of servility as to be unfitted, immediately, for the performance of the functions of citizenship. Jacobinism tended to mean, therefore, a minority dictatorship of the elect." [1]

From all of these traits Blanqui could not break. Thus we may say that Auguste Blanqui, like Baboeuf, was an example of Jacobin turned

[1] E. S. Mason: *The Paris Commune*, p. 15.

socialist and, while he became an heroic figure and a true leader of the proletariat, yet he was such only in consideration of his environment and the general immaturity of the working class. His views would be inadequate to meet the situation of today. As Friedrich Engels put it, "Blanqui is really a political revolutionary, socialist only in his emotions, sympathizing with the suffering of the people, but without a socialist theory or definite, practical proposals for social reform; in his political activities he is essentially a man of deeds, and of the opinion that a small, well-organized minority, which strikes at the right moment, can carry with it the mass of the population and thus consummate a successful revolution. One sees that Blanqui is a revolutionary of a past generation." [1]

Like the Jacobins generally, and like Bakunin, who borrowed much from him, Blanqui adopted views which were essentially a-historical, individualist and idealist, rather than materialist. Ideas and habits to him evidently were not determined by any such instrumentality as the mode of production; on the contrary, human institutions apparently were the product of the human mind. It was not necessary to wait until the proletariat, the class that could usher in the future, could mature and grow strong. The society of the future could be built by the unaided action of the intellectual, guided by reason, and institutions could be built in a logically rigid way according to certain postulates of justice and morality.

While believing in the labor theory of value and the right of the laborer to the full product of his toil, like Babocuf, Blanqui did not develop these ideas in any scientific manner but made them flow from ethical premises confusedly jumbled with economics. Like Bakunin, Blanqui considered the church as his chief enemy. Thus in a nutshell, his program could be put as atheism, communism and revolution.[2]

After the Revolution of 1830, Blanqui began to move to the Left. He joined the "Friends of the People" headed by Godefrey Cavaignac.[3] When this group was suppressed in 1834-35, he started his own organization, "The Society of the Families," with a communistic program.[4] Through this organization he suffered his first arrest. Upon his emergence from jail he began seriously to work along the line of revolution and, in 1838, organized his "Society of the Seasons." Now he carefully picked his men. Political discussion and theoretical arguments were restricted, and the men were trained for action. Blanqui's party was Blanqui's army.

[1] The same: quoting F. Engels' "Program der blanquistischen Kommune," *Fluchtlinge Volkstaat* (1874, No. 73), p. 19.

[2] Blanqui at one time put out a paper with the title *"Neither God nor Master."*

[3] A brother to the general Cavaignac who put down the 1848 June insurrection with so much slaughter! It is interesting, too, that the brother of Jean Jaurès, leading socialist, was an Admiral in the French Navy and an ardent Royalist.

[4] See R. W. Postgate: *Out of the Past,* p. 5 and following.

In 1839 he made his first attempt to overthrow the government by means of an insurrection staged with six hundred men. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, Paris woke up to find that there had been an insurrection. A small determined handful of men had stormed the city hall and the police stations, but had been routed and completely overwhelmed. Many of his followers had been bourgeois Jacobin youth but included were also some workers. Although most of the Parisians smiled at this harebrained attempt, the government took the matter more seriously and sentenced Blanqui to ten years in prison. This was the first of a series of long sentences that was to place this indefatigable fighter behind the bars for practically all of his life. It was only just before the Revolution of 1848 that Blanqui was released.

By no means had Blanqui given up his plans. As soon as he was freed, he became a tremendous figure among the proletariat as the foremost veteran revolutionist. He had learned, however, from the past. Instead of urging premature adventures, he now bent his efforts to prevent the workers from being provoked too early into battle. The government recognized in him its foremost enemy and took the earliest pretext to arrest him as part of its policy of provoking the workers and removing their leadership at the same time. Thus the historic June days occurred with the workers leaderless and the foremost champion of their insurrectionary tactics in jail. This was to become the tragedy of Blanqui's life: in all the decisive battles of the revolutionary proletariat he was to find himself out of the events and in jail.

With the fatal ending of the June days, and with the elimination of its principal leaders, either through death or incarceration, the proletariat was forced to retreat. The leaders who now stepped forth were shabby mediocrities, and the workers turned to doctrinaire experiments of co-operative banking and labor exchanges. It was the day of Proudhon and Louis Blanc. By giving up their insurrectionary weapons for such schemes, the proletariat went into movements whereby it gave up its own task of revolutionizing the old world with its own large collective weapons and, on the contrary, sought to bring about its emancipation behind the back of society, in private ways, within the narrow bounds of its own class conditions. These attempts inevitably had to fail. It was the petty bourgeoisie that now took the lead.

During this whole period, Blanqui's essential views and plans constituted the very opposite of those of Louis Blanc, whom he hated furiously. Blanc had proposed that the workers rely on the State for the constructive measures of ushering in socialism. With Blanqui the foremost duty was first to destroy the old State, that monster of the people. While Blanc had a complete blue print plan ready in his pocket, Blanqui was strongly averse

to such intellectualizing and "idiotic" plans. He had come out against the type of planning of Saint-Simon and the utopians and he was against the rationalist strictures and preachings of the Blancs. His own positive program was rather vague but he trusted to the future. "As one of his followers put it, 'As socialism the Blanquist theory can be summed up as follows: nihilism first; then at the mercy of evolution.' "[1]

Although Blanqui had great respect for Proudhon, especially because of the latter's fight against the Church and his adoption of the traditions of the French Revolution, yet the two had really very little in common. Blanqui was the political conspirator par excellence. Proudhon advocated peaceful reforms; Blanqui was against fighting for reforms, even those which improved the lot of the workers, but stood for the insurrection only. Proudhon was in favor of banks and co-operatives and against strikes; Blanqui was opposed to all such co-operative schemes, and advocated strikes by workers as preparation for insurrection. In his whole plan of struggle Blanqui was opposed to the Proudonists, so much so that they never were able to get together, even within the First International.

Having crushed the workers, the government felt itself safe enough to release Blanqui, who immediately went to work to organize his new society. This time he saw to it that the intellectuals were in a minority and that the workers were represented in the proportion of two to one. He was now careful and patient, and urged the necessity of winning the peasantry over to the side of the workers. As the government moved to the Right, however, and the petty bourgeois opposition collapsed, the authorities again arrested him and sentenced him to another ten long years in prison.

When he emerged from prison this time the world was quite changed. The working class was growing far more mature and ever more ready to understand his views. He, on his part, had become the most hardened and tested revolutionist of his age. It was true that his former partner, Barbès, had weakened enough under the mental strain of prison to believe that Blanqui had become a traitor and an informer to the police, but the mass of workingmen knew better and the scandal that broke out between the two had no fatal results for Blanqui's work. Between his release and the time of the Paris Commune, Blanqui found a wife, obtained some rest, and worked out his theories more thoroughly.

In this interim the struggle between the Blanquists and the Proudhonists reached its sharpest point. Strangely enough, Proudhon himself sprang from the proletariat, yet had placed himself "above" the class struggle, while Blanqui, who had gathered around him many student and intellectual elements of the middle classes, favored the workers' insurrection. The Blanquists' lack of contact with the masses of workers was closely

[1] E. S. Mason: *The Paris Commune*, p. 20.

bound up with their underestimation of the proletariat; they operated like a sect rather than a political party and, when the Paris Commune burst forth, instead of really leading the people, they were found moving in an exclusive circle of friends.[1] This isolation was fatal, not only for the Blanquists, but for the workers who found themselves without adequate leadership. No doubt this particular turn of history contributed to the tendency of the French masses to rely upon themselves without too great organization or leadership.

The Proudhonists, on the other hand, were closely in touch with the workers and had taken over the trade unions and co-operatives. Thus at this time there were three groups in France, the co-operatives under Proudhon's influence of mutualism, the trade unions made up of skilled workers and under the patronage of Napoleon III's family, but also connected with Proudhonism, and the insurrectionary party under Blanqui. When the First International was formed, it was the Proudhonist unionists who joined and attempted to take an international point of view. Blanqui and his Jacobin friends could never take such an international point of view but rather tended to ardent nationalism, at times even to chauvinism. The Blanquists, therefore, did not join the First International before the Paris Commune.

Proudhon relied on slow economic forces; Blanqui was an impatient political revolutionist. Proudhon favored federalism and fought any and all authority. Proudhon's chief distinction was that between authority and liberty. Under the rubric of authority he had put 1. the government of all by one, or monarchy, and 2. its counterpart the government of all by all, panarchy, or communism. Both these régimes were to be combatted. On the other side, under the rubric of "liberty" there was 1. the government of all by each,—democracy, and 2. the government of each by each,—Anarchy or self-government.[1] Proudhon advocated the last.

But for insurrection there was needed centralization, Dictatorship of the Proletariat, force, coups d'état, terrorism, etc. In all of this the Blanquists stood at the opposite pole to Proudhon. In short, if Proudhon made all the mistakes of the opportunist and collaborator with the bourgeoisie, Blanqui made the mistakes of the sectarian Leftist who conceives of the revolution as made by a small minority for the proletariat, but not of them. Both were doomed to failure. After the Paris Commune, the Blanquists came to appreciate the value of international solidarity and working class aid throughout the world; also they were made to feel that they no longer could be the sole cocks of the walk, and, as they fled in exile to London, they were brought into the circle of the First International. However, as the

[1] Compare Lissagaray: *History of the Commune of 1871*, p. 26.
[2] See P. J. Proudhon: *Du Principe Fédératif*, pp. 13-14 (1868 edition).

fight grew hot against Bakunin, they soon withdrew with the following statement:

"For us the International was neither a union of trade unions nor a federation of trade societies. It should have been the international vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat. We recognized the utility of these vast workers' associations, organizing revolt upon the economic field, and time and again breaking by their unity, by the strike, the stifling circle o oppression. We recognized the indissoluble unity of proletarian revolu tionary activity in its double character (economic and political) too well to fall into the error of our adversaries and to deny one side on the pretext of stressing the other. We knew that it was by economic struggles that th proletariat began to organize, by them that it began to be conscious of itsei as a class and a power, by them, finally, that were created the condition. that permit it, formed into a proletarian party, to accept battle on all fields —a struggle without mercy or truce, which will only end when by th conquest of political power and by its own dictatorship the proletariat has broken the old society and created new elements of the new. . . .

"But for the realization of this emancipation of the workers, this abolition of the classes, aim of the social revolution, it is necessary that the bourgeoisie be deprived of its political privilege by which it maintains all its others. It is necessary during a period of revolutionary dictatorship fo the proletariat to employ for its freeing the power till then used against i to turn against its adversary the very weapons that till then have held it down in oppression. And only then, when *tabula rasa* has been made of its institutions and privileges which make up present society, will this dictatorship of the proletariat cease as being without objective, the abolition of all classes carrying with it naturally the disappearance of class government. Then groups like individuals will be autonomous, then will be realized that federation, result and not means of victory, that *anarchy* which victory will produce and which during the struggle is failure and disorganization where it is not imbecility or treason."[1]

Here we see the Jacobinical Blanquists lean heavily towards Bakunin, not understanding the value of the First International, despite its broad and amorphous character, not understanding the meaning and importance of the trade unions, not seeing the necessity of the economic processes as factors in the political revolution. After the Commune, the Blanquist movement comes to an end.

[1] Given in R. W. Postgate: *Out of the Past*, pp. 51-53.

XXXV. THE PARIS COMMUNE

I

THE Revolution of 1848 brought in its train the first attempt by the working class to take power in a single city. By the time of the Paris Commune, not quite a quarter of a century later, the workers already were able to seize control of the most important European city, although unable indefinitely to hold it. Now for the first time, too, did the intimate connection between capitalist war and proletarian revolution make itself felt. The Paris Commune came at the end of the Franco-Prussian war, just as the Russian Revolution of 1905 came on the heels of the Russo-Japanese War and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 followed the World War. Conversely, a victorious workers' revolution must involve the country in international warfare. It is preposterous to believe that socialism can exist in one city or even in one country alone.

The Paris Commune marked at last a break with the traditions of the past. There was now an end to the nostalgic dependence upon history for inspiration. Henceforth the social revolution would draw its poetry not from the past but from the future. "Former revolutions required historic reminiscences in order to intoxicate themselves with their own issues. The revolution of the nineteenth century must let the dead bury their dead, in order to reach its issue." [1]

As soon as the declaration of war against Prussia had been issued by Napoleon III, the First International issued a Manifesto to arouse the workers. The Manifesto pointed out that Napoleon III had been the great enemy of the First International which constantly had warned the workers of the chauvinist and adventurist policies of this upstart. On the German side, it was a war of defense, although Prussia had provoked the war in order to crush the workers' opposition at home and to unite the German Empire. Under the influence of the International, many of the French trade unions had protested against the war, but the workers had been prevented from demonstrating. The war meant the death knell of the Second French Empire, but, if the German workers permitted what had begun as a defensive war to become a war against the French people, then victory or defeat would be alike disastrous to them. The way out, the Manifesto concluded, was for the German workers, who also wanted peace, to unite

[1] Karl Marx: *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, p. 13. (Kerr edition.)

with the French under the banner of the International and unitedly to abolish war by establishing the international rule of labor.

In the course of the war, the worst fears of the International were realized. As Friedrich Engels had brilliantly foreseen,[1] Napoleon's army was empty boastfulness. He was caught unprepared. He foolishly engaged in the tactics of a braggadocio and encountered one disaster after the other, culminating in his surrender at Sedan. The fall of Metz followed, and the supreme Prussian army invested Paris.

Now was the time for the French to have rallied their strength to throw back the invader. On the side of the Prussians it had become clearly a war for plunder, devoid of any connection with defense. On the other side, the French Empire was now overthrown and the republican bourgeoisie could rally the entire nation to the defense. It was one thing for the Prussians to take a city; it was another matter for them to control the entire country. Already all over the countryside the peasants were carrying on a guerrilla war against the invaders, despite the most ruthless terror launched against them by the Prussian officers who did not hesitate to burn down whole villages and slaughter the inhabitants. This could only stimulate the French to fight harder. Then there was the South of France which was entirely untouched and which could raise large armies for the fight. Finally, there was Paris which was still being besieged.

However, the bourgeoisie realized that, with the downfall of Napoleon III, not they would come to power, but the people led by the workers whom they feared most of all. "Thanks to the economic and political development of France since 1789, Paris has for fifty years been placed in such a position that no revolution could there break out without assuming a proletarian character, in such wise that the proletariat, which had bought the victory with its blood, would immediately thereafter put forward its own demands." [2]

With the ignominious surrender of the Emperor at Sedan, the people of Paris invade the legislature, although the supposed republicans, Gambetta and Favre, try to prevent it. The National Guards of the people push the gendarmes aside and the Republic is proclaimed September 4, 1870. Just prior to this event, the Blanquists have tried to stage a communist *putsch*, but the masses have not been prepared for the attempt, and the group is arrested and condemned. A committee of twelve former deputies of the government provisionally controls Paris, and Blanqui, although he has aided mightily in the overthrow of the old régime, again can take no part in the actual decisive events. The new régime, however, releases him.

[1] See his *Notes on the War*.

[2] Friedrich Engels: "Preface" to Karl Marx: *Paris Commune*, p. 3 (Socialist Labor Party edition).

In the meantime, as Paris is being attacked by the Prussians, all the workers, including the Blanquists, rally to the defense of the city. The workers establish their Committee of Vigilance, made up of many trade unionists and First International members, to prevent any treachery. This committee now demands that municipal elections be held, that the police be placed in the hands of the people of Paris who are also to elect and control all the magistrates, that absolute freedom of the press and public meetings be granted, that all necessities be expropriated and carefully rationed out to the people, and that all the citizens be armed and the provinces aroused. Thus the working class, in a frenzy of patriotic fervor, takes up the defense of Paris, although nominally the head of the defense is left to Gambetta, Favre, and General Trochu.

But the workers do not reckon with the treachery of the bourgeoisie who understand their class interests entirely too well not to prefer to make peace with the Prussian Bismarcks rather than permit their own nation to triumph. Outside of Paris, the bourgeoisie carried on the fight in a most slackadaisical fashion. They do not arouse the peasants to volunteer nor comb the South of France for new armies. Paris is left practically abandoned.

At the same time, the bourgeois defense of Paris is conducted wretchedly. General Trochu behaves like an agent of the Prussians. The capital should have been able to secure sufficient food for itself; so poor is the defense of the city, however, that Paris becomes completely surrounded and cut off. Despite the most brilliant sorties and heroic defense of the National Guard, the people of Paris are forced to witness the surrender of the city under humiliating terms.

After the fall of Sedan, the First International had put forth a second Manifesto to rouse the German workers to demand peace and to rally behind the working class of France and Paris. The Manifesto declared that if Germany won, it either would become the tool of Russia, oppressing the workers at home, or pave the way for a new war in which France would be united with Russia, and the reactionary Czarist system buttressed by the West. In either case, the outcome would be a mighty defeat for the workers of the world, leading to a new blood bath. The predictions of this Manifesto have come true in every respect, although not until forty-five years later.

The French Government has stipulated that Paris is to be disarmed The crafty Bismarck, however, far more afraid of the street fighting of the Parisian workers than all the armies of Thiers and Gambetta, refuses to disarm Paris and forces the new French Government itself to perform the job. In order to do this, the bourgeoisie and old ruling cliques quickly call a special election in which the masses understand little of the issues and,

through this trick, reactionists and monarchists are elected. The rural regions are given a predominant place, while Paris has not been able to make itself heard. This new government convenes in Bordeaux and gives orders to the defenders of the country, the workmen of Paris. Thus, despite their fighting, the workers of Paris hear that the war is to result not even in a republic, but merely in a new monarchy. Further, Paris learns that its heroic National Guard is to be disarmed, that the thirty cents a day that have been given to all workmen during the siege is to be discontinued, and that all house rents and debts in arrears are to be enforced in spite of the fact that the siege of Paris has made such debts absolutely unavoidable.

Protected by the arms of Bismarck and the Prussians, the National Assembly now moves from Bordeaux to Versailles. It is absolutely necessary to crush the masses, since the sufferings due to the war are becoming unbearable, and there is bound to be resistance to the new government so hastily established. Not only are there the terrible debts previously incurred by Napoleon III to pay, but the war expenses and the huge war indemnity of five billion francs are now to be saddled upon the country. Having made his secret deal with the Prussians to prevent the republic, so as to form instead a new monarchy, Thiers is now ready to provoke the people into open resistance so that he can shoot them down.

The new government moves into action at once. All newspapers are taxed. Overdue rent bills are enforced. Republican journals are suppressed. Then the government arrests Blanqui, who, as usual, entirely underestimates his value to the proletariat and lets himself be caught; the court condemns him to be executed. Finally, the government declares its intention to disband the National Guard and to remove the cannon from the people, the cannon which the National Guard have bought and paid for from its own private subscriptions. When the National Guard discovers a clandestine attempt on the part of the regular army groups to steal this cannon, there is nothing to do but to resist.

The National Guard now elects a Central Committee to unite the resistance of the people opposed to the return of the monarchy. This Central Committee is made up of "men of the small middle-class, as well as workmen, shop keepers, commercial clerks, mechanics, sculptors, architects, caring little for systems, anxious above all to save the Republic." [1]

How can such a committee really understand or carry out the interests of the masses? The Committee realizes little of the fierce struggle that is to come and yields completely to the happiness of the moment, imagines all problems of easy solution. This is the "honeymoon period," when all appears to be rosy, when the middle class, taking power for the moment, becomes intoxicated with its own phrases and believes it can put aside the

[1] Lissagaray: *History of the Commune of 1871*, p. 88.

class struggle and live peacefully ever after. The deep gulf existing between these committeemen and the workers soon becomes apparent. Instead of vigorously marching on Versailles and taking the initiative to disband the gang of reactionary monarchists who have gathered there, the Committee decides to stop and hold municipal elections, since it has not been elected originally by the whole people. Thus, under the pretext of more democracy, the Commune allows those at Versailles to withdraw all their forces, and to gather an immense army around them from the rural regions of France and from troops which Bismarck kindly releases from his prison camps for their benefit.

At the same time, the Committee conveniently neglects to close the gates of Paris and allows the all-important fort of Mt. Vallerian, overlooking the entire city, to be taken by the Rurals. Other forts are abandoned, the barricades are dissolved, and the generals of the reactionists are freed. At this very time, Thiers, who is plotting destruction for Paris, is doing his best to disorganize the hospitals, the markets, the finances, the lighting systems, the unemployed relief, etc., so as to throw Paris into chaos. Thus, while the instinct of the masses urges drastic and immediate action, the petty bourgeois leadership behaves in an extremely naïve fashion that is to have terrible and fatal results. Everything in Paris, at a critical moment when the most decisive and determined action alone could have saved the day, is suspended while "elections" take place.

At this point, how much would one Blanqui be worth! But the bourgeoisie knows this far better than the workers and, when later the Commune offers any number of hostages in return for this one man, Thiers refuses under any circumstances to release him. Thus again, and for the last time in his frustrated life, this arch revolutionist to whom death holds no terrors is to miss the revolutionary events of France. But even greater than the loss of Blanqui was the tragedy of the proletariat.

As Paris is thrown into the turmoil of elections, for the first time in the history of revolutions in France the students attack the revolutionary movement rather than lead it. Here is an important law that is to be underlined in the future; where the revolution is merely democratic, the students play a leading and important role; where it becomes a question of communism and the abolition of private property and special privileges, the students reverse their stand and show themselves to be often the arch enemies of the workers and the revolutionists.

In the meantime, the masses, including those belonging to the First International, are moving rapidly to the Left, and even the most radical of the deputies begin to stand appalled at the initiative of the people. As the Red Flag flies over the City Hall, court martial is abolished and amnesty is given to all politicals. This further enriches the forces of the

Left Wing, which now put forth demands for actual municipal liberties, for the suppression of the police prefecture, responsibility of the police to the people of the city and not to the central government, for the right of the National Guard to name its chiefs, for a republic, for the cancellation of rents and bills due and for the evacuation of Paris by the army. Thus the masses are demanding the Commune rather than communism or the abolition of private property.

On the surface, the program of the Paris populace seemed to call for a return to the decentralized condition of medieval days and for the breaking up of the nation into loosely federated Communes. In reality, what the Communal Constitution would have done was to bring the rural producers under the intellectual lead of the central towns of their districts held by the workingmen. It also would have realized that catchword of the bourgeoisie, a cheap government, by destroying the two greatest sources of expenditure, namely, the standing army and state functionaries. Thus, incidentally, there would have been guaranteed both the republic and a cheap government.

But, most important of all, if the demands of the Paris masses had been satisfied, the working men would have controlled all the important and decisive national operations. Once the workers took power they could not limit themselves to demands compatible with the system of private property. Thus the Commune also meant communism. So the bourgeoisie understood it and prepared for a struggle to the death.

Only the Liberals who are in control of the Council of Mayors, with old Louis Blanc at their head, try to reconcile the interests of Versailles and those of Paris and make hurried trips between the two cities. But the Revolution flows on. The Central Committee is forced to suspend the sale of pawned objects, overdue bills are prolonged, and evictions are forbidden. Thus the holy institution of private property is attacked. A reactionary mob then tries to storm the City Hall, but is dispersed. Paris enters into civil war without a party or a program, but with deep instincts for communism.

The "elections" are held finally on March 26, and the Paris Commune is proclaimed with immense enthusiasm. The innocent people fail to realize that they have wasted precious time for which they will pay heavily with their life blood later on. The elections produce no better results than before. Sixteen Liberals are elected, four Radicals, and sixty revolutionists. None of these candidates had been put to the test; the people vote for names rather than for programs. Of the total, only twenty-four are workers, of whom sixteen belong to the International or workingmen's societies.[1]

[1] In the Paris Commune, forty-six sections of the International could be counted, according to R. W. Postgate: *The Workers International*, p. 113.

The rest are petty bourgeois intellectuals. Incidentally, the Central Committee of the National Guard, in the interest of "fairness" and "democracy," had refused to run again.

How much these elections are really worth is seen when once the fight is started. Of the total delegates to the Commune Assembly, nine are Blanquists and seventeen Proudhonist internationalists; these are practically the only ones who stand firm. Before the first shot is fired, the Moderate Republicans resign and run away, soon to be followed by the Radical Republicans. All that this election actually accomplishes is to produce several dual bodies. Sharp squabbles break out between this Commune Assembly and the still functioning Central Committee of the National Guard, and later between the Assembly and the Committee of Public Safety which is set up to control the fighting forces of the Commune.

2

"World history would indeed be very easy to make, if the struggle were taken up only on condition of infallibly favourable chances. It would, on the other hand, be of a very mystical nature, if 'accidents' played no part. These accidents themselves fall naturally into the general course of development and are compensated again by other accidents. But acceleration and delay are very dependent upon such 'accidents,' which include the 'accident of the character of those who at first stand at the head of the movement.'" [1] Had the Parisians not taken up the struggle, the demoralization of the working class would have been a far greater misfortune than the fall of any number of leaders. Although the Parisians had not appreciated the tremendous value of the initiative in attack at the decisive moment, at least they realized the importance of a well-contested defeat. Under the impact of the fighting, Paris moved to communism.

From the very outset, the Commune had to recognize that the working class, having once attained supremacy in the State, could not work with the old machinery of government; that this working class, if it was not to lose the position which it had just conquered must, on the one hand, abolish all the old machinery, good only for bourgeois chicanery, cheating, and swindling, and set up its own. The Paris Commune showed that the workers could not transfer the bureaucratic military machine simply from one hand to another, but had to smash it completely.

The Commune Assembly furnished an extremely haphazard and muddled leadership and committed many fatal errors. Yet despite these mistakes, the number of revolutionary acts the Communards were able to accomplish is remarkable. First, conscription and the standing army, to-

[1] Karl Marx: *Letters to Kugelmann*, p. 125, Letter of April 17, 1871. (International Publishers.)

gether with the police, were abolished, and all citizens who could bear arms were enrolled into the National Guard that elected its own officers and became intimately fused with the people. Death being decreed for all thieves, remarkable order prevailed in the capital. The second step was to remove entirely all the special privileges of the state functionaries. All officials received but workmen's wages. Political functionaries were easily and directly elected and recalled, judges included. Of course, Church and State were separated. Thus an entirely new governmental set-up, unprecedented in the history of the world, was created. As the Manifesto of the Commune, April 19, declared: The Commune ". . . inaugurates a new era of experimental, positive, and scientific politics. It means the end of the old governmental and clerical world, the world of militarism, of functionarism, of exploitation, speculation, monopoly, and privilege, to which the proletariat owes its slavery and the fatherland its misery and disaster." [1]

The plan of Paris was to establish all over the country communes after its model. Instead of a national army, there was to be a national militia of very short service. Two important points were involved, first, the need of universal arming of the people as a measure of insuring peace, the army to be fused with and become part of the people; and second, the short duration of the actual term of service. The people knew that the long conscription service was decreed by the former State not in order to make better soldiers but to break the spirit of the recruits. All the important arms of warfare could be mastered by the average soldier in six months; he did not require two or four years of discipline in the barracks.

The unity of the nation was not to be broken by the communes, but only the old central state power was to be destroyed. This was insured by the decision that the decrees of the central government were to be carried out only by communal agents and never must be imposed from the top upon the locality. This important principle, as well as other points, was to be taken up by Lenin in the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Within Paris the middle class followed the lead of the workers, a usual procedure whenever workers show themselves firm and determined. The chief problem was to reach the agrarian petty proprietors. Although the victory of the Commune would have freed the peasantry of taxes, would have released it from debt, and would have imposed the cost of the war upon its true originators, although the new government would have given the peasant a cheap government and would have educated and freed him, yet the Commune's propaganda never penetrated the countryside. The rural deputies prevented Paris from reaching the provinces, and it was the peasantry that eventually drowned the city of Paris in blood.

From the very beginning, the Commune demonstrated its international-

[1] The Manifesto is given in E. S. Mason: *The Paris Commune*, p. 256.

ism. It gave foreigners full right to participate in elections. It placed a German at the head of its department of labor. It had a Pole in charge of its military forces. It pulled down Napoleon's statue, denounced nationalism and chauvinism, and came out as champion of the workers of the world.

But it was in its social measures especially that the Commune showed itself to be a rule of the workers.[1] Back rent of the workers due for 1870-1871, was wiped out. Pawnshops were first restricted and then abolished. Church property became national property. Capital punishment was done away with. All closed factories were turned over to the workers and workers' control over production was established. Stoppage of wages was ended, night work for bakers prohibited, etc.[2] Full publicity was given to all acts of the Commune and conniving and swindling in the government disappeared.

The workers had seized power easily enough. They were now face to face with the far more difficult problem, that of holding power. In this, the leaders revealed themselves as amateurs who needed long and hard experience before the common sense of morality would be remolten in the crucible of civil war into an art of insurrection and a science of revolution.

The Commune Assembly was composed of Proudhonists and Blanquists. The latter became the majority, especially after the new elections were held in April, where the workers stepped forward more boldly. In the course of the struggle, both groups violated their own principles. The Blanquists, although strong centralists, agreed to the scheme of a federation of communes, while the Proudhonists, traditionally opportunists, came out for insurrection. These men were socialists rather by instinct than as a result of scientific study. Only a few of them were clear, theoretically, and the members of the First International were in the minority.

From the first intimations of the Commune, Marx had sent urgent letters, strongly advising against the revolt as premature; within the letters, however, were also to be found instructions and advice on how to proceed should the decisive revolutionary steps be taken. Once the Commune was established, Marx did all he could to guide and support it. However, the confused leadership ignored his explicit warnings.

There was in the Bank of France at Paris, 2,180,000,000 francs, an enormous sum. This the workers should have confiscated and used for their

[1] Although the Commune permitted all to vote, the workers completely dominated the elections and, since the bourgeoisie had fled to Versailles, there was no need for restricting the vote specifically to toilers.

[2] The trade union groups, of course, were very much broken up by many of their members being on the firing line. See *Les Séances officielles de l'Internationale à Paris pendant le siege et pendant la Commune.* (No English translation available.) Paris, 1872 edition.

own purposes. Instead, under the influence of the Proudhonists, especially Beslay, with their unsound ideas of a People's Bank, the money was carefully protected; the bourgeoisie at Versailles breathed a great sigh of relief. This did not prevent the capitalists, however, from wreaking the direst punishment upon Proudhonists as upon others.

The second important error was the complete failure of the Communards to invade the Department of State in Paris and publish the documents in the files. This was a serious mistake, since the publication of the correspondence of Napoleon III and the politicians resident at Versailles clearly would have exposed their guilt in the war. To reveal to an unsuspecting world all the crimes of the French bourgeoisie for the past twenty years would have isolated and demoralized the bourgeoisie. The decent and common people of France would have been won to the side of the Commune.

The third dire mistake was the failure to centralize the government within Paris for the struggle. The Blanquists and the Jacobins wanted to set up a Committee of Public Safety with dictatorial powers. This led to prolonged bickering and only on May 1 was such a committee elected, lasting only to May 9, while twenty-three members of the Assembly resigned in protest. However, those who resigned soon returned to their posts, and a new committee was elected. In the midst of all this confusion, however, it was impossible to adopt a uniform policy for all the departments of the Commune.

For some time there existed the possibility that the Commune of Paris would reach other cities and the countryside of France. Indeed, communes were actually established at Marseilles, Narbonne, Toulouse, Lyons, St. Etienne, and Creuzot, but they were easily swept away. The fact remains that Paris did not make sufficient efforts to win the provinces to its cause.

But the chief defect of the Parisians was their good nature and naïvete. They should have taken the offensive. They should have marched on Versailles, whose main support at first was the artillery and not the infantry; only later did the reactionaries obtain infantry.[1] In the meantime, only by the grace of the Prussians was Paris even partially surrounded. Thiers had to ask the Germans to post one hundred and thirty thousand men around Paris, although the truce had called for only forty thousand, so as to surround the city and enable Thiers to act. Had it not been for the Prussians, Thiers could never have won the day. Here was eloquent proof that when

[1] It may be observed that the divisons of the regular army are sharply unequal in their responsiveness to the mass of people during civil war. The cavalry is often controlled or close to the landed aristocracy, the artillery by the bourgeoisie, as is the corps of aviators. Closest to the mass of people, workers and peasants, is the infantry and it is also this arm that tends first of all to crack and go over to the side of the people.

the proletarian revolution breaks forth, all governments put aside their quarrels to protect international capital.

"That after the most tremendous war of modern times, the conquering and the conquered hosts should fraternize for the common massacre of the proletariat—this unparalleled event does indicate, not as Bismarck thinks, the final repression of a new society upheaving, but the crumbling into dust of bourgeois society. The highest heroic effort of which old society is still capable is national war; and this is now proved to be a mere governmental humbug, intended to defer the struggle of the classes, and to be thrown aside as soon as that class struggle bursts out in civil war. Class rule is no longer able to disguise itself in a national uniform; the national Governments are *one* as against the proletariat!" [1]

The suppression of the Commune was marked with a bestial ferocity unprecedented in the annals of modern Europe. The proletariat was burned and bombed out of the city, the number of victims who perished ran into the tens of thousands, the number imprisoned and exiled reached many times that number. Altogether it was a slaughter that drenched the soil of France with the blood of its best members. The bourgeois elements who had run at the sight of the Prussians indulged in the most sadistic orgies at the expense of Frenchmen.

The Paris Commune taught the world some significant lessons. In the first place, it demonstrated that to take power is not sufficient, that, especially in an agrarian country, the real fight occurs after the workers have attained power, when they are trying to establish a new world. In the second place, it made it plain to the workers that insurrection is indeed an art, that amateurs first must graduate into professionals, and that revolutionists must wait until their number has increased from a small handful to a decisive size throughout the country before another attempt could be made. In the third place, the Commune outlined in deep grooves the inevitable channels that proletarian revolts would have to take. It furnished indelible lessons to the Russian Bolsheviks who later carried forward the whole line of the Paris Commune on an even more magnificent scale. Finally, it taught the world that no great war can exist without its aftermath of proletarian revolt.

The workers were able to maintain their Commune for two whole months because of a peculiar combination of factors operating in France. The government had been disastrously defeated in the war and had lost entirely its prestige. The new government of the bourgeoisie was provisional and extremely weak, burdened as it was with the debts of its predecessor. The workers who predominated in Paris had arms in their hands; they were the ones who had demonstrated their heroism in national

[1] Karl Marx: *Paris Commune*, pp. 103-104.

defense and who had saved the honor of the country. These extraordinary circumstances impelled the workers of Paris to make their attempt even though they realized it was still premature to try to introduce the new social order.

On the other hand, these workers were defeated so easily only because of their neglect of the important rules of struggle, because they were sentimental towards their national bourgeoisie, because they refused to take the offensive and go the whole route to the end. Had they been more ruthless and practical, they inevitably would have made more headway with the peasantry. At is was, the French bourgeoisie could win only because of the enormous aid of the Prussians, who furnished them with the soldiers necessary to surround the city and who released the most backward prisoners for action against Paris. Further, the mere fact that Paris had revolted under the Red Flag caused the monarchists, who previously had been so certain of their monarchy, to flee. Thus, even in its defeat, the Commune was strong enough to compel the establishment of a democratic republic; at the same time, it was clear to the people that even a democratic republic was a product of counter-revolution. The Third French Republic was born with a congenital defect.

Speculations as to what might have happened had the Paris Commune better understood the art of insurrection are entirely out of place. It would be strange indeed were the working class, only recently arrived upon the scene of history, able, like one sprung full blown from the brain of Jupiter, to have acted in the masterly manner which can be worked out so clearly many years after the event. At the time, the workers of France were still engaged in petty industry. Their program could not be anything but vague and confused. The workers of the world were not united in any solid body; they were but beginning to grope their way. Above all, there was no international party, no scientific vanguard capable of giving to each section the lessons of every workers' struggle throughout the world. Such an international was to be formed later on. Under these circumstances, no other result could have occurred than the defeat of the brave French proletarians.

Had the workers blasted their way through to Versailles, had they been able to win elements of the peasantry to their side, they immediately would have been faced with a world war. The Prussians were already at Paris, in the heart of France. The British and international bankers would have rallied their forces to put down this monster of iniquity, communism, which threatened to wipe out forever all private property and plunder. International pressure would have been entirely too severe even for heroic France. Eventually communism would have been overwhelmed with even greater loss.

The Paris Commune at least put flesh and blood on the spectre of communism that had haunted Europe from 1848 on. Henceforth, the great problem was to be the social problem. While the revolution from below came to an end, the revolution from the top went on ruthlessly. The capitalists could not prevent factories from being established or proletarians from increasing in number and in the understanding of their rôle. What the workers could not learn from the Paris Commune they were taught by the employers through the contradictions of the capitalist system. Sooner or later the conflagration was bound to burst forth again.

The first two Communist attempts had been restricted to one city; the next was to involve a whole country. In 1905, the Communists in Russia tried but failed. In 1917, they tried again, won, and began to make a bold bid for the world. Only time can reveal whether these communists will be able to dominate indefinitely the country of the Soviet Union. Certainly they have surpassed the two months' record of the Paris Commune; they have held the fort already for close to twenty years.

XXXVI. BOLSHEVISM

I

THE heirs of Baboeuf, Blanqui, Marx, and Engels were the Russian Bolsheviks. After the Commune had perished, there was a short lull during which it seemed that the palm of revolutionary leadership had passed to the Germans. This, indeed, was the express opinion of Engels himself. However, it was not in Germany that the revolution was to break out next, but in Russia. On the Russian anvil was hammered out a social-democratic group which alone, of all the parties within the Second International, really understood and carried out the policies of the founders of communism. Russian Bolshevism was born out of the womb of the hideous conditions of Mother Russia, sired by the world revolutionary movement. With such notable parentage, it was bound to go far.

Capitalism developed in Russia notoriously late and under peculiar circumstances. In the Middle Ages, Russia had been fairly on the road to active commercial life, the fairs at Nishni Novgorod, for example, attracting the merchants of all Europe. However, the country was in the direct course of the Mongolian invasions. With no geographical obstacles to overcome, the hordes of Ghengis Khan and the Tartars swept over the steppes and set back the Slavs for over four hundred years. Gradually the Russians emerged from the Asiatic flood and turned towards Europe. Only in the seventeenth century was serfdom really instituted in that benighted land. Thus, contrary to popular conception, Russia really never had a strong feudal class. Also, there was no merchant and trading class, no capitalist elements that supported the King, as had been the case in Western countries, so as to create an absolute monarchy. The power of the Czar arose, not because of the pressure of modern and progressive forces, but rather from the decay of the old and the defeat and assimilation of the Asiatics. Instead of absolute monarchy's springing from feudalism, there resulted a semi-oriental despotism arising from the decline of the inferior princes and their gradual subjugation by the Muscovites.

The Russian State, which arose upon primitive economic foundations, in its progressive development clashed with other national States functioning on a higher plane.[1] In order not to succumb to the pressure of Poland,

[1] In this section we follow closely L. D. Trotsky's analysis of Russian conditions to be found in his "*1905*." (English translation non-existent.)

Lithuania, Sweden, and other Western countries, the Russian National State would have to adopt the methods of the West. To do this it had increasingly to absorb the living sources of the nation; thus the State constantly grew and expanded until it became the greatest force within Russia. In order to hold out against its better-armed enemies, the Russian State was forced to create its own industry and technique, to engage in its service specialists in military arts, powder-makers, public coiners, and to procure manuals of fortification, to set up naval schools and factories, to maintain secret court counselors, and so forth.

While it was possible to obtain military instructors and secret counselors from abroad, the material means, cost what they might, had to come from the country itself. The history of Russian political economy then was made up of a series of efforts to guarantee the armed forces of the State; the task of its rulers was to see that every atom of the nation's strength furthered this purpose.

In its quest for the indispensable funds, the government imposed the most arbitrary and excessive taxes upon the peasantry, established the collective responsibility of the Mir, extorted money from merchants and monasteries. In the seventeenth century, about 85 per cent of the budget was used for the upkeep of troops; when, in the eighteenth century, Peter's military reverses compelled him to reorganize his infantry and also to create a fleet, these expenses became still larger. With the Crimean War, the Russian State was forced to establish a system of universal military service, even though this meant the freeing of the serfs, and to introduce railroads and modern factories.

In spite of all such measures, the internal resources were not sufficient to enable the Russian State to oppose the most powerful States in Europe in armed conflict. However, with the accumulation of capital reserves in Western Europe, in Paris, London and elsewhere, Czarism was able to borrow immense supplementary sums. From this time on, international finance capital exercised a fatal influence on Russia's political development; gradually Russia was transformed into a sort of semi-colony for the international bankers. The growth of the State went hand in hand with the increase of the public debt. In the ten years from 1898 to 1908 this debt increased by 19 per cent and, at the end of this period, it reached nine billion rubles, the interest on the debt alone absorbing about one-third of the net revenues of the treasury.

To procure these vast sums necessary to maintain the Russian State, the government had to absorb a huge portion of the surplus of the country. So severe was the taxation that it was not possible for individuals to accumulate capital, and merchant and private industrial capital remained in an infantile state. But more than that, so heavy was the burden on the

peasantry that they could hardly keep body and soul together and suffered periodic famines. Totally unable to improve their lot or their technique of production, they were loaded down with unbearable debts. Thus the State, through the enormous demands of its superstructure, the political military state, destroyed even the possibilities of improving its economic foundations. At the same time there existed no class that could possibly overthrow this enormous weight. As all the challenging forces atrophied, the only progressive and creative agency able to change conditions was the State itself.

The Russian State could not live in a vacuum; it was part of Europe and as such had to connect itself and become the servant of international capitalism. By relying on this force, Czarism was able to consolidate itself, to bring in railroads and telegraphs, and to unite the country more firmly. The Russian Army was developed to a colossal size and, while unable to meet the task of the Russo-Japanese war, was quite capable of maintaining order internally. This military Juggernaut crushed even the barest signs of liberalism and loomed as an independent power over the classes then extant. In this way, the administrative, military, and financial power of absolutism which gave it the possibility of subsisting in spite of social development, far from preventing all revolution, as liberalism thought, on the contrary, made revolution the only conceivable outcome; this revolution was destined to be all the more radical as the power of Absolutism deepened the gulf between the ruling power and the masses of people involved in the new economic movement.

"Thanks to the rapacity of the state, the level of development of the productive forces was too low to permit either the accumulation of surplus, a great extension of the social division of labor, or the growth of cities. The handicrafts were not separated from agriculture, and concentrated in the cities, but remained scattered among the rural population in the hands of village artisans, throughout the whole extent of the country. On account of this very dispersion of the industries, the artisans were obliged to work not to order, as in European cities, but for gross sale. The intermediary between the isolated producers and the not less isolated consumers was the merchant. (Russian *gost*, the guest, the traveller.)" [1]

Thus, while the general population, scattered and impoverished, was connected only by merchant capital of small amount and mostly in the hands of peddlers, the State felt the urgent need to create big cities and big industry. To maintain the army it was necessary to have clothing factories, arms, munitions plants, and similar works. The needs of war compelled Peter the Great to industrialize his forces. During his reign

[1] L. D. Trotsky: *1905* (French translation by Parajanine), p. 22.

there were introduced over two hundred and thirty public or private enterprises of great scope, mines and arsenals and such. Unlike the situation in the West, where the factory system had brought order to a disintegrating feudal system and where free laborers could be obtained, the factories in Russia had to be run by serfs. Thus, in the eighteenth century, the Russian factory was free from competition from the cities; on the other hand, the country artisans did not compete with the factories which worked almost exclusively for the State or for the ruling and wealthy groups.

In the nineteenth century, the textile industry finally broke down the norms of serfdom and instituted free wage labor. Although Russia needed free trade and labor, yet the claims of the State had prevented such a development and had compelled Russia to institute closed monopolies and to take control of the tariff. There had been no force within Russia capable of ending serfdom. The capitalists were entirely too weak, the peasants had no cities to support them; the abolition of serfdom had to come from the top due to the disasters in the Crimea and the necessity to modernize the military.

With the emancipation of the serfs there took place an immense development of the factory system in Russia. Owing to the extreme oppression of the people of Russia and the complete monopolies granted by the State, European capital could realize enormous profits and it poured its capital into Russia at a great rate. Thus Russia moved overnight to modern, large-scale industry owned and controlled by foreign investors and subsidized and watched over by the State. Prodigious railroad construction took place. And with this development there arose a many-headed proletariat, the number of railroad workers in 1905 alone totalling close to seven hundred thousand.

The flood of capital into Russia was stupendous. In the last decade of the nineteenth century alone, over a billion and a half rubles of industrial capital were introduced. While during the forty years preceding 1892 the funds of stock companies amounted only to 919 millions, in the ten years following they leaped to 2.1 billions. In the ten years from 1890 to 1900 the value of factory production leaped two and one-half times and the number of workers in factories and mills doubled. In that time 40 per cent of all existing enterprises made their appearance.

Together with the railroad and general industrial development there occurred a grand development of the coal and petroleum industries in the South, to which the center of gravity shifted. This part of the country took on a sort of American boom aspect. For this growth there was combined with the best technique of America the great subsidies of the Russian State. All the metallurgical mills in Russia received, upon installation,

State orders for several years. Thus Russian industry did not grow like the English, slowly from small factories to large ones, but advanced overnight to tremendous size. "In Russia the ratio of large establishments (employing two hundred or more) to medium sized establishments (employing fifty to two hundred) was, in 1913, as 1 to 7.4. In Germany that ratio was, in 1907, as 1 to 50.7." [1] The productivity of labor, however, was exceedingly low. Nor could this be increased without raising the economic level of the masses, both peasants and workers, and this in turn could not be achieved without entailing the revolutionary overthrow of Czarism.

Together with the rise of industry there took place in 1861, following the emancipation of the serfs, a deep accentuation of the peasant problem. The land was not given to communes for collective utilization, but individual peasants were enabled to buy small pieces, too small really to support them, at exorbitant prices that threw them directly into the hands of the usurer and soon thereafter drove them out of their farms. While on the one hand a small kulak or capitalist farmer class emerged and the large estates of the big landlords flourished, for the mass of peasantry, especially in the "black earth" region of central Russia, conditions became unbearable. The peasant was forced to exist on bread made of flour mixed with shavings or ground bark.

"In places the misery of the peasants reaches such proportions that the presence of bed bugs and cockroaches in the isba is considered an eloquent symptom of comfort; and indeed, Chingarov, a Zemstvo physician, now a liberal deputy to the Third Duma, has testified that among the landless peasants, in the districts of Voroneje province, which he explored, bed bugs are never found, while as for the other categories of the rural population, the quantity of bed bugs that lodge in the isbas is in proportion to the well-being of the families. The cockroach it seems has a less aristocratic nature, but even it needs more comfort than the poor humans; among 9.3% of the peasants no cockroaches are found because of the hunger and cold that prevail in their dwellings." [2]

Simultaneously with the rise of the peasant question to acute proportions came the problems of the cities. Because of the lack of commercial and industrial development in Russia in the eighteenth century, there were few cities, and these were almost entirely of a governmental character, constituting military and administrative points rather than centers of manufacturing and production. With the introduction of large scale industries, cities were built overnight and laid out in barrack formation. Thus what existed in Russia was the most concentrated industry in Europe on the basis of the most backward agriculture, with the most powerful govern-

[1] S. Perlman: *A Theory of The Labor Movement*, p. 23, footnote.
[2] L. D. Trotsky: work cited, p. 37.

mental machine in the world hindering the progressive development of its own country. The Russian bourgeoisie was very weak. The big factories were controlled by foreigners, who, moreover, would not support the native capitalists in any struggle against the Czar, first, because there was no other government that safely could be established; second, because the Czar was their great supporter and subsidizer; and third, because these foreign financiers were the hated enemy of the arising proletariat.

In ignoring small industry, the financial bourgeoisie and Czarism had taken away the very basis of liberalism and democracy. Between the toilers and the rulers there was no large and solid middle layers of population, as in England or France or America. Just as the native bourgeoisie could play very little rôle by itself, neither the petty bourgeoisie of the cities nor the peasants scattered throughout the countryside could function alone.

The only class within the country that could possibly change the situation was the proletariat. Already in 1897 the figures showed that there were over nine million wage earners in the country, of whom about three and one-half million were in the principal industries, workers who were in the decisive sectors of the nation's economy and who, although a minority in the population, could paralyze the whole system. In a country like Russia, the government had to rely for its control upon the railroads and telegraph far more than in the West.

Within the proletariat, the sections employed in the large factories and heavy industries, laboring under unspeakable conditions, had to take the lead. These heavy industry workers avidly took to socialism. Hence, Russia furnished another contrast: on the basis of the greatest illiteracy and in a country heavily agrarian and the most backward of Europe, there flourished a socialistic proletariat that could read and write, which actively followed world affairs, whether these were events in the Balkans, debates in the Reichstag, or news from America. No counter force could compare with this class of workers in numbers, in understanding, in power.

Thus, even if in Russia the only revolution possible was a bourgeois capitalist one for the abolition of absolutism and the introduction of the capitalist system of the West, yet it was not the bourgeoisie, too small and too fearful to act, nor the peasantry, benighted and isolated, but only the proletariat which could accomplish the task. This was apparent by the time of the first revolution of 1905. Russia skipped the whole period of democracy, whether liberal or social, and moved straight from Czarism to the Soviet.

2

The stifling nightmare of Czarist despotism was bound to drive every courageous and honest intellectual into the ranks of opposition. Every

trip abroad that was made, every book produced in the West that was read in Russia, every contact with other countries, profoundly convinced him that the social and political order of Russia was doomed Czarism could exist only by isolating the country from Europe, as the Kremlin was isolated from Russia, and by erecting an intolerable tariff wall on goods, coupled with a complete prohibition of intellectual intercourse. But such complete isolation had become impossible The very needs of the State compelled communion with the rest of the world; in spite of the most rigid censorship, Western ideas began to penetrate and Western customs to be adopted The walls of semi Asiatic, semi colonial Russia could no more enclose than the walls of colonial and Asiatic China

The first discontented intellectuals came from the nobility, they were "repentent noblemen,' whose consciences were smitten by the atrocious crimes being committed against the serfs and people of Russia As the middle of the nineteenth century approached, these people discovered that deep in the heart of Russia the old customs of primitive communism were still existent, just as the Germans were unearthing the ancient Teutonic *Mark*, they discovered with joy the old Russian *Mir* in the primitive agrarian countryside

Here, then, was the basis of a home grown socialism—the *Mir* The *Mir* was peculiarly Russian and it was flattering to the Russian intellectuals to believe that Russian genius had understood the need for collectivism and co-operation What other interpretations could Russian "enlightened' noblemen and landlords possibly have made of socialism? They hated the Czar, there was no capitalism, the only antithetical régime known to them was the *Mir* typifying the very soul of the Russian people and covered with the religious mysticism of the immemorial past Against the constant revolutionism of the West they posed the deep placidity and tradition of the *Mir*.

With the emancipation of the serfs, these intellectual elements of the nobility were forced to witness the more or less complete breaking up of the old village *Mir* formations and the introduction of capitalism, with all its individualism and differentiations, to the countryside These intellectuals then turned to nihilism, or nothingism, a philosophy against the State and against all authority To the nihilists' negative ideas was added a faith in the goodness and value of the people and a belief in the necessity of going to the masses to enlighten them, to bring them culture and science so that they could improve their condition Thus nihilists became narodniki or populists

The narodniki or populists of the 70's were collectivist Anarchists limited by their Russian agrarian horizon They were willing to admit that, in the West, with capitalism gripping both city and country, and with

political democracy achieved as the heritage of past revolutions, the road to socialism lay through a revolutionary political movement of wage earners. In absolutist Russia, however, they held that socialism, avoiding the painful capitalistic period, could be evolved directly out of the *Mir*. And thus the narodniki appealed to the peasants and advocated loosely federated peasant communes.

These "enlighteners" had a violent hatred of the feudal régime and of all its social, economic, and judicial consequences. They had a profound attachment for the liberty and science and enlightened culture of Western Europe, and believed they were carrying forward the traditions of Voltaire, Rousseau, and the enlightened philosophers of the eighteenth century before the revolution. To this was added a genuine love for and interest in the people, particularly the peasantry.

The narodniki were ready for socialism, they were ready for revolution, and their chief enemy was Czarism. They were unable, none the less, to attain any of their aims for the simple reason that there was no class capable of responding to their ideals. Furthermore, the fact that capitalism not yet had developed to any great extent in Russia made the narodniki believe that peasants and villages, not proletarians and cities, would be the basis for socialism, that the soul and destiny of Russia would enable the country to skip the period of capitalism.

As their campaigns among the peasantry failed, in spite of the greatest nobility of character and heroism of action on their part, the more desperate element began to take to terrorist deeds, from 1878 on, culminating in the assassination of Alexander II in 1881. This act was the swan song of these narodniki. The government let loose a ferocious counter-attack that smashed their organizations to pieces. At the same time, with the rise of capitalism in the 80's, the intelligentsia was changing its character and rôle. Intellectualizing was no longer monopolized by the nobility. Bourgeois students and thinkers were turning to socialism, now become a great movement throughout Europe. It was becoming clear that Russia could not skip the stage of capitalism.

Thus the terrorist and narodniki movement died, both from the arrests and execution of its leaders by the government and because of the abandonment of its cause by the new generation. Moreover, the narodniki had lost their historic progressiveness as they fought against the internationalist Marxists with their nationalist program that Russia must not follow the "barbaric" West. Because of this hostility to Marxism, although the remnants of the narodniki in the 80's and 90's retained some following and prestige, and it was from their ranks that the Marxists generally evolved,[1] it had now become necessary for the Marxists to enter into the sharpest

[1] Plechanov, Lenin and Trotsky all started out as narodniki.

polemic with these remnants of the past so as to eradicate their influence altogether.

The rise of the typical bourgeois intellectual resulted in the spread of Marxism from various angles Such intellectuals, products as they were of the city, factory, and commerce, could not idealize the backward village Marxism from the very start had attracted them, since one of the cardinal points elaborated in "Capital" was that the victory of capitalism was bound to overthrow the old order of Czarism. It was no accident that Marx received the highest praise not from German and Western professors but from the professors of economy in St. Petersburg. Here, then, was a whole line of intellectuals who believed thoroughly in the economics of Marx, although they refused to become revolutionists. This was the school of "legal" Marxists best exemplified by Peter Struve.

On the other hand there was another line of intellectuals who had come from the revolutionary narodniki, who accepted not only Marxist economics but above all Marxist revolutionary theories, who were willing to go into action, and who based themselves upon the proletariat In the struggle against the old narodnik theories, both these Marxist elements, the proletarian and the "legal," united This unity could be effected since the "legal" Marxist, while anxious for his own preservation, by no means intended to weep over the fall of the Czar, and was quite willing to wish others luck in their revolutionary attempts On the other side, among the proletarian Marxists, it was realized the time had not yet come to act alone, that the whole situation was still amorphous, that it was necessary to keep in contact with all other anti Czarist movements

The first great step to clarify the movement was taken when George Plechanov together with Vera Zasulich left the narodniki to form the first genuine Marxist group abroad From then on a stream of Marxist literature of a high quality began to pour forth in the Russian language, and this group gradually began to win great influence To this nucleus Lenin soon adhered, but instead of remaining abroad, he concentrated his efforts, as long as he was able on the building of groups within Russia itself.

Henceforth, until the 1905 revolution, the big question before the Marxists was the establishment of an adequate program, a party organization, and tactics. It was on these questions that the Marxists not only separated themselves from other groups, but within their own ranks broke sharply into three different tendencies the legal Marxists, the Mensheviks, and the Bolsheviks. Rapidly Lenin sprang to the fore as the great leader in every phase of the struggle.

Lenin's first step was to divorce himself as drastically as possible from

the populists of whom he had been a member. He pointed out that populism was distinguished by three reactionary ideas: first, that capitalism in Russia was a symptom of decline, a "retrogression," thereby inducing the populists to try to "restrain" capitalism and thus to play into the hands of reaction; second, that the economic system of Russia with its communes, *artels* and *Mirs,* was something peculiar to Russia and not a general phenomenon characteristic at one time of all backward people, thereby leading the narodniki into the swamp of nationalism; and third, that the intellectuals could "divert history" and change the course of material interests and social evolution, thus giving rise to a false idea of the relation of the intellectuals to society and to the masses.

From these views of the populists of the 90's, Lenin arrived at the conclusion that such populists really had nothing to do with the heritage of the "Enlighteners" of the 70's, that in fact it was the Marxists who carried forward the historic work and noble traditions of the democrats of the past generation. Here was a classic example of the methods of Lenin. In every possible way he tried to make Marxism fit in with Russian traditions and Russian character and to root it deeply in the nation. By no means could Marxism appear as something foreign or artificially applied to Russian conditions. Revolutionary scientist, he knew the value of traditions, customs, and morals.

Whereas the "Enlighteners" had fought reaction and favored the West, the populists were turning towards Asia and were idealizing the backward peasantry, therein hindering agrarian improvement. Furthermore, the populists, entirely unlike the heroic "Enlighteners," were bureaucrats through and through. "But populists always think of the population generally, and the toiling population in particular, as the object of various more or less intelligent experiments, and as inanimate material which can be directed along certain paths. They never look upon the various classes of the population as independent historical factors in the given path, they never consider that the conditions of that path may cause either the development or the paralysis of the independent and conscious activities of these makers of history." [1]

Finally, Lenin summed up the three groups, the "Enlighteners," the decadent populists, and the Marxists, as follows: the "Enlighteners" had favored contemporary social development in Russia but had not understood the inevitable contradictions; the populists opposed this social development because they did understand its contradictions; the Marxists advocated social development because they understood its contradictions and knew that these would usher in a new world. Both the "Enlighteners" and the Marxists were optimists and wanted to clear away barriers; their aims

[1] *Selections from Lenin,* I, 24.

corresponded to classes arising and growing with capitalism. The populists were doomed to futility.

Under such an attack, the old populists indeed could not for long maintain their position and, in 1900, they formed a new organization, the social-revolutionaries, with a platform calling for a democracy in Russia and a capitalist liberalism. Now basing themselves on the city and not on the country, the social-revolutionaries, however, continued to emphasize the agrarian program. Later, in 1917, a Left-Socialists-Revolutionists Party split off and for a while co-operated with the Bolsheviks on the question of immediate socialization of the land and the establishment of a Soviet Republic. But the alliance broke down in 1918, and the social-revolutionaries were erased from the scene.

3

The next battle was to be within the ranks of the Marxists themselves. First, the conflict would have to take place with the Legal Marxists in an effort to drive them out of the movement and to liquidate their influence among the workers. At that time the movement was extremely inchoate, with scattered circles operating independently in various cities of the country. These local circles established no traditions and maintained no continuity. Lenin set to work to remedy these conditions and, while Plechanov was building his League of Social Democrats abroad, Lenin was forming his League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class in St. Petersburg. At that time the intellectuals had no idea of remaining separate and apart from the masses, but tried in every possible way to penetrate the ranks of the workers and to meet them on every occasion. On their part, the advanced workers welcomed this intervention of the intellectuals and took advantage of their help in strike struggles and organization problems. The dangerous character of the work under Czarist conditions prevented any snobbish and bureaucratic tendencies from becoming strong among the sincere intellectuals. Thus it was part of Lenin's tasks to help in the strike agitation and organizational activity of the workers; while thus engaged he was arrested in 1897 and sent to Siberia.

In the meantime, in 1898 the social-democrats decided to hold a convention to work out a definitive program. In this convention, Lenin and many other characters in exile could not participate. The convention itself was broken up by the police before a program could be worked out and a national organization established. Meanwhile there had been little effort on the part of anyone to prevent the bourgeois Marxists from calling themselves social-democrats.

Upon his release from Siberia in 1900, Lenin was commissioned to go

abroad and found a paper that would present these very points before the revolutionary Marxists. This was done, and in collaboration with Martov, Plechanov, Potressov and others, Lenin founded the paper *Iskra* (the Spark). From its inauguration, it was the policy to keep Legal Marxists like Peter Struve out of the editorial board, although they might be used as collaborators. Thus, for the first time there was drawn a very sharp line between those who based themselves on the workers and favored revolution, and those who were only liberals using Marxist phrases.

As the movement began to grow throughout Russia, it was necessary to call another Congress in 1903. In preparation for this, Lenin opened up a sharp polemic against the so-called "Economists" or trade union communists. All through the years 1900 and 1901 this battle was fought, until, by the time of the Conference in 1903, the issue had been clarified in favor of the position of Lenin. Knowing well that the movement was not homogeneous, Lenin was not in favor of rushing into a new congress or elections until all matters had been clarified; he believed that it was the duty of a revolutionary paper to bring openly before the workers all the disputed questions. This was the function of the *Iskra*.

The paper was designed to give space to theoretical questions, to furnish information on the Parties in the West, and to respond to questions that arose in all spheres of daily life at home or abroad. The paper was to prepare for the drafting of a real Party program, especially on organization questions, and to study carefully the conditions of the working class and the methods for arousing it. Above all it was necessary to fuse the growing Russian labor movement with the Marxian socialists. "Only when this contact has been established will a Social-Democratic Labour Party be established in Russia; for Social-Democracy does not exist merely to serve the spontaneous labour movement . . . but to combine Socialism with the labour movement." [1] While firmly upholding the Marxist tendency, the paper would be open for discussion to enable all fighters against autocracy to use it.

From the very beginning, Lenin took the position: "Consequently, while appealing primarily to the Russian socialists and class-conscious workers, we do not appeal exclusively to them. We also call upon all those who are oppressed by the present political system in Russia, to all those who are striving for the emancipation of the Russian people from their slavery to support the publications which will be devoted to a work of organizing the labour movement into a revolutionary political party. We place our columns at their disposal in order that they may expose the despicability and criminality of the Russian autocracy. We make this appeal in the conviction that the banner of the political struggle raised by

[1] V. I. Lenin: *The Iskra Period*, I, 18.

Russian Social-Democracy can and will become the banner of the whole people." [1]

Thus, before the Party really was created, Lenin had formed his own paper to obtain that unity of ideas which was essential To present this ideological agreement, the paper *Iskra* entered, not merely into questions of wages and working conditions for the workers, but above all into the political questions of the day centered around the question of overthrowing Czarism The *Iskra* became filled with important articles of such a nature as those on May Day, on the war against China, on a program for the peasantry, on police brutality, on the revolt of the students in the universities, on the liberal movements, and on the famine As this whole orientation was opposed by the "Economists," it was necessary to drive them to the wall before the Party Congress of 1903.

While the Iskraists were concentrating on connecting all the isolated circles and directing their struggle against Czarism, the "Economists" had done some valuable work in the factories, leading strikes, winning demands for the workers, organizing them secretly, etc As they became successful they declared that only the trade union work was important, that political circles did not have to be connected, that politics belonged to the intellectuals and not to the workers who could get all they wanted by strike action against the employers The "Economists" sneered at the various conspiratorial groups created by Lenin and called for broad mass organizations Besides, they affirmed, this was not yet the time for the political struggle against the Czar First, the workers were not yet ready They had to be educated to politics gradually This education was to be given in stages In the beginning there were to be strikes for economic aims, then strikes with political aims, only then could there be direct political movements, only after the confidence of the workers had been won in the economic struggle Second, said the "Economists," the moment was not a revolutionary one If it should become revolutionary, then it would be all right to change tactics and insist on the political struggle against the Czar The *Iskra* was run by a bunch of sectarian intransigeants who overestimated the influence of social science and intellectualism among the workers and were too idealistic, not taking into sufficient consideration the material environment Furthermore, the 'Economists" claimed the Iskraists, while very sharp to the real workers' champions themselves, made alliances with the Liberals and others, to induce them to write for their paper

There was no question but that much of the "Economists' " criticism was correct as it concerned many individuals then connected with Lenin, but before Lenin could deal with his allies he had to deal first of all with the "Economists", some of their supporters, moreover, on certain points

[1] The same, p 21

agreed with Lenin. It is important to note that Lenin attacked his semi-supporters far more bitterly than he did the open enemy. This was one of Lenin's cardinal polemical tactics and helped to account for the extreme bitterness of all debates within the ranks of the Marxists of Russia. Repeatedly Lenin insisted that the near-friend was far more dangerous than the open enemy; he turned his heaviest fire not upon the opportunist but upon the conciliators to the opportunists who were to be found nearest him.

In answer to the "Economists," Lenin pointed out that they were underestimating the political struggle and were divorcing the workers from politics, thus driving the social-democratic movement into the old sectarian ruts and keeping the workers benighted. Isolated from social-democracy, the labor movement would become petty and would function only as the tail to the capitalist parties. The real task was to imbue the masses of the proletariat with the ideas of Socialism and political consciousness and to organize a revolutionary party closely connected with the spontaneous labor movement.

Furthermore, the revolutionists were not to be mere coolies catering to the prejudices of the workers and their day-to-day fights. "Social-Democracy is a combination of the labour movement with Socialism. Its task is not passively to serve the labour movement at each of its separate stages, but to represent the interests of the movement as a whole, to point out to this movement its ultimate aims and its political task, and to protect its political and ideological independence."[1]

According to Lenin, it was absolutely necessary at this stage of the struggle in Russia not to draw an artificial distinction between the intellectual and the worker, but to unite the two as closely as possible. People were to be trained who would devote to the revolution not only their spare evenings, as the workers could do, but the whole of their lives, in an effort to build up an organization with a vast division of labor.

Constantly must it be borne in mind that the chief enemy was the State. Only if there was a strong political party could the local strike or local rebellion flare into a revolution. The concessions to be won on the economic field were but slight skirmishes with the enemy, mainly valuable for training good troops. To fail to attack the State was to play into the hands of the Czar, who was pursuing a subtle policy. Unlike Bismarck, who had made an alliance with the employers against the workers, the Czar was trying to play off one against the other, since he despised or feared both. For example, the Czar was taking a hand in passing legislation to force employers to improve conditions of work; thus, he was posing as a friend of the workmen against the employer. The Czarist police agent, Zubatoff, actually began building police trade unions. Everywhere the Czar pre-

[1] The same, II, 54.

sented himself as the "Little Father" of his people. Under such conditions it was dangerous for the revolutionists to isolate the struggle for economic demands from the struggle for the end of Czarism. And the workers increasingly were beginning to see this. Repeatedly, large strikes broke out in support of the political demonstrations of the peasants and the students, and for political aims. Life itself was refuting the "Economists" and showing that they who claimed to be close to the workers were really shirking the revolutionary struggle and isolating themselves.

According to Lenin, the "Economists," in ridiculing theory and the discussion of the principles of the class struggle, were relying entirely too much upon the spontaneity of the masses to produce the revolution. They were overlooking the fact that, without a professional revolutionist organization, the victory of the workers would be impossible; thus, they were falling into the errors of the opportunists generally. What was needed in Russia was not the stimulation of spontaneity—Czarism would see amply to that—but the raising of that spontaneous revolt to the level of conscious, connected, systematic, class struggle. Encouraged by the mass organizations they had created, the "Economists" tended to lose themselves in the mass; they failed to understand that the mass character of the movement only rendered it more obligatory than ever that they should build up a centralized, disciplined organization of revolutionists.

The catering to spontaneity on the part of the "Economists" had led them to move hysterically now from one extreme position to another and, in periods of retreat, they tended to give up the battle. Lenin warned them that "It would be a grievous error indeed to build up the party organization in the expectation only of outbreaks and street fighting, or only upon the 'forward march of the drab, every-day struggle.' We must *always* carry on our every-day work and always be prepared for everything, because very frequently, it is almost impossible to foresee beforehand when periods of outbreaks will give way to periods of calm." [1]

As for working with the liberals, this was necessary in the political struggle against Czarism, although it might not be possible in the economic struggle against the employer or in the fight for socialism directly. "The party of the proletariat must learn to catch every liberal just at the moment when he is prepared to move forward an inch, and compel him to move forward a yard. If he is obstinate and won't—we shall go forward without him, and over his body." [2]

The "Economists" should not imagine, Lenin thundered, that those who were with *Iskra* had failed to go to the workers or to enter into the

[1] The same, pp. 244-245.
[2] The same, II, p. 87.

work of strikes and economic organization. Quite the contrary. They had been noted for this very ability and had been arrested on this account. They were no ivory-tower intellectuals far removed from the masses, telling the workers what to do. But they did not limit themselves merely to trade union agitation in an absolutist country like Russia. It must not be believed that the socialist movement was made up only of workers. The history of all countries showed that the workers by themselves were capable only of trade union action and alone could not reach the level of political revolutionism. To attain this level there must be added the theory and science of socialism which workers at the bench toiling their lives away could not evolve.

It had been assumed that socialism necessarily and absolutely arose from the class struggle. But already Kautsky had shown this to be untrue. "Of course, Socialism, as a theory, has its roots in modern economic relationships in the same way as the class struggle of the proletariat has, and in the same way as the latter emerges from the struggle against the capitalist-created poverty and misery of the masses. But Socialism and the class struggle arise side by side and not one out of the other; each arises out of different premises. Modern Socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge. Indeed, modern economic science is as much a condition for Socialist production, as, say, modern technology, and the proletariat can create neither the one nor the other, no matter how much it may desire to do so; both arise out of the modern social process. The vehicles of science are not the proletariat, but the *bourgeois intelligentsia:* It was out of the heads of members of this stratum that modern Socialism originated, and it was they who communicated it to the more intellectually developed proletarians who, in their turn, introduce it into the proletarian class struggle where conditions allow that to be done. Thus Socialist consciousness is something introduced into the proletarian class struggle from without and not something that arose within it spontaneously." [1]

The socialist movement was to be a fusion of both groups, and the workers were to take an active part in it, not as workers, however, but as scientific socialists. It was vital to develop leadership, and the social-democratic movement had to pay the greatest attention to theory and science so as to lead the workers rather than to trail after the events.

The "Economists" were concentrating entirely upon trade union action, as though this were the sole or best method to produce the revolution. Such a position was absolutely false, especially in Russia. There were many ways by which the revolution could break out other than through strikes.

[1] K. Kautsky: quoted by Lenin in "What Is to Be Done" in *Collected Works,* Vol. IV, Book II, p. 122.

"All and sundry manifestations of police tyranny and autocratic outrage, in addition to the evils connected with the economic struggle, are equally 'widely applicable' as a means of 'drawing in' the masses. The tyranny of the Zemztvo chiefs, the flogging of the peasantry, the corruption of the officials, the conduct of the police towards the 'common people' in the cities, the fight against the famine-stricken and the suppression of the popular striving towards enlightenment and knowledge, the extortion of taxes, the persecution of the religious sects, the severe discipline in the army, the militarist conduct towards the students and the liberal intelligentsia—all these and a thousand other similar manifestations of tyranny, though not directly connected with the 'economic' struggle, do they, in general, represent a *less* 'widely applicable' method and subject for political agitation and for drawing the masses into the political struggle?" [1]

The workers could not win by looking only to themselves. They had to know the workings of all classes of society. Without a knowledge of the whole they could not know even their own part The workers could acquire political consciousness not solely from within their ranks but also from without, outside the bounds of the economic struggle of workers and employers "The Social-Democrat's ideal should not be a trade-union secretary but a *tribune of the people,* able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it takes place, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; he must be able to group all these manifestations into a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; he must be able to take advantage of every petty event in order to explain his Socialistic convictions and his Social-Democratic demands *to all* in order to explain *to all* and every one the world historical significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat." [2]

The problems of mobilizing workers were entirely different from those of organizing revolutionists The workers' organizations must be broad, open, and of a mass character They must function legally in the main The revolutionary organization, on the contrary, must know how to go underground and to operate secretly, and must be of a trained conspiratorial character whereby every member is tested and can be relied upon, where the discipline is of the strictest The proletariat needed both types of organizations

Under Czarism, the method of approach was with the strong revolutionary organization, that is, from the top and not from the bottom, with tested members and leaders engaged in mass work of an all-rounded character ". . without the 'dozen' of tried and talented leaders (and talented men are not born by hundreds), professionally trained, schooled

[1] The same, p 140
[2] The same, pp 159 160

by long experience and working in perfect harmony, no class in modern society is capable of conducting a determined struggle." [1] The student should supply the workers with his crumbs of knowledge, but above all it is the talented workers who should be trained for leadership. It was a "duty to assist every capable worker to become a *professional* agitator, organizer, propagandist, literature distributor, etc., etc." [2] "A workingman who is at all talented and 'promising' *must not be left* to work eleven hours a day in a factory. We must arrange that he be maintained by the Party, that he may in due time go underground, that he change the place of his activity, otherwise he will not enlarge his experience, he will not widen his outlook, and will not be able to stay in the fight against the gendarmes for several years." [3]

The bitter fights within the Marxist ranks had led to a split in 1900. The minority adherents of Plechanov and Lenin, formerly of the Emancipation of Labor Group later reorganized as the League of Social-Democrats Abroad, now formed a new body called "Social-Democrat" while the majority made up of the "Economists" and conciliators retained the old name. In the course of the sharp debates, however, the majority steadily lost ground. They argued, therefore, that in the Party there was room for both, implying then that the Party was not to be a unified centralized whole, but a loose body of various factions. In effect, this was connected with their theories which played down the rôle of the Party and relied solely upon the spontaneity of the masses. Lenin's whole theory, however, was one of tremendous emphasis on the rôle of the Party, the vanguard of the workers. Although this question of what sort of Party should be built was to be threshed out later in the fight with the Mensheviks, it first became raised in the struggle with the "Economists." Against the "Economists' " position, Lenin called for the formation of a Party that would expel the opportunists and the revisionists from its ranks. The idea of a Party containing elements far apart and constantly attacking each other was abhorrent to him, as such factions would paralyze the organization and turn it into a debating society rather than a revolutionary organ of action.

Lenin was attacked on the ground that he was dictatorial and did not believe in democracy within the Party. The "Economists" and conciliators pointed out that the kind of centralized leadership Lenin advocated, with the Party built from the top, would give rise to a tendency to adventurism in politics. Also, it was anti-democratic; the Party should be built from below, not from above.

[1] The same, p. 196.
[2] The same, p. 205.
[3] The same, p. 206.

Lenin replied that, under Czarist conditions of illegality, it was absolutely impossible to maintain full publicity for elections and the exposure of candidates, without which democracy would be a farce. The secret acts of revolutionists could not be controlled by all the membership; thus elections were impossible on the basis of acts After all, democracy was only a vicarious mechanism for confidence. Confidence could be attained only in the course of the struggle wherein leaders and workers fought together and showed their respective worth "The only serious organizational principle the active workers of our movement can accept is strict secrecy, strict selection of members, and the training of professional revolutionists If we possessed these qualities, 'democracy' and something even more would be guaranteed to us, namely complete comradely, mutual confidence among revolutionists" [1]

Even without democracy, the membership of a genuinely revolutionary organization actually would control, since genuine communists would stop at nothing to rid themselves of an undesirable member. Such revolutionists had a lively sense of their responsibility and had no time to think about toy forms of democracy "Myshkin, Rogachev, Zhelyabov, Mikhailov, Perovskaya, Figner, and others never regarded themselves as leaders, and no one ever elected or appointed them as such, although as a matter of fact, they were leaders because both in the propaganda period, as well as in the period of the fight against the government, they took the brunt of the work upon themselves, they went into the most dangerous places, and their activities were the most fruitful Priority came to them not because they wished it, but because the comrades surrounding them had confidence in their wisdom, their energy, and loyalty To be afraid of some kind of Areopagus . that would arbitrarily govern the movement is far too naive Who would obey it?" [2]

Before the 1903 Congress was held, the "Economist" wing capitulated and yielded their arguments on trade unionism But the truce was but temporary The same elements were to fuse with the Mensheviks and re-phrase their opportunism at the Second Congress This in turn led to the famous split between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks

To sum up, we can say that the history of social democracy in Russia can be divided into three periods The first lasted from 1884 to 1894 Here theory and program took root, but the numbers were small and social-democracy was isolated from the labor movement. This was the period of gestation The second period was from 1894 to 1898, a period of infancy and adolescence Here there was a social movement and a political party Big strides were made by the intelligentsia who circulated among the

[1] The same, p 213
[2] The same, pp 212 213

workers. The third period was from 1898 to the Convention of 1903, and was marked by confusion and vacillation, Legal Marxism, "Economism," etc. This period was to culminate in the Congress of 1903.

4

Having settled the important questions of political program, the struggle against Czarism, and the relation of the Party to the class, it had become time for Russian social-democracy to end the chaotic situation of isolated circles and to build a centralized, disciplined national organization. The Second Congress witnessed the struggle between the opportunists and the revolutionary elements over questions of organization.

In Russia the situation at the time was as follows: social-democratic "committees," composed of a small selected number of revolutionaries, existed in various cities. These committees were at the head of the local labor movements. Behind these committees were numerous circles of sympathizers and militant elements that carried out special work but were not part of the organization itself. The question was: What should be the relation of these sympathetic circles and detached individuals to the organization?

On questions of organization the old Iskra group itself split up. On the one side was Lenin, to whom Plechanov was attached, and on the other side were Martov and Axelrod. Close to these was Trotsky. Later Plechanov was to leave Lenin and go over to the opposite camp. The Right Wing wanted to permit all of the circles mentioned above to call themselves part of the Party, provided they paid dues and put themselves under the directions of the Party, regularly participating in its activities. Lenin's formula was somewhat different. Members not only would have to pay dues, but they would have to join one of the Party organizations. On the surface it seemed the differences between the two formulas were slight indeed.[1] But, as the debate progressed it became apparent that the issue was based not merely on organization but also on the relation of the Party to the class in general, on the rôle of the Party in the class struggle, on the relations within the Party, and on an estimate of the particular situation in which the revolutionists lived. Questions of organization became intimately linked up with those of tactics, strategy, and program, absolutely vital to the movement.

This is very often the case. It is a great mistake to believe that organization questions are secondary matters. Certainly organization is a means

[1] Lenin's formula was "A member of the Party is a person who accepts the Party programme, pays Party dues and personally joins one of the Party organizations." Martov's formula was: "A member of the Social-Democratic Labour Party of Russia is a person who adopts its programme, pays Party dues and regularly participates in its activity under the direction of one of its organizations." See *Selections from Lenin*, I, 154.

to an end, an instrument in the struggle; but one builds an instrument in accordance with one's use and need. If the instrument desired is one which could not possibly become a weapon in the class struggle, it is clear that the fight for such an organization to prevail is a fight for a non-struggle program and is intimately linked up with other questions of program. Indeed, very often differences on questions of organization are profound indicators of differences in programs of struggle reflecting antagonistic classes of society.

At that time in Russia all sections of the revolutionary movement were compelled by the ruthless terror of Czarism to adhere to a program calling for the violent overthrow of the Czar. It was only through questions of organization that the existing differences within the Marxist camp could arise in acute form before the Czar was overthrown It was the genius of Lenin that, in the discussion of relatively picayune questions, such as who should be considered a member of the Party, he could discern differences which later were to compel the different factions to shoot each other from opposite sides of the barricades

In the course of the discussions it became plain that the Right Wing wanted a loose grouping called the Social-Democratic Party which would be made up of all sorts of elements in the various circles In this way the Party would be practically indistinguishable from the class, it no longer would be a highly selected group of revolutionists who had dedicated their lives to their cause Within this vague and loose Party, in view of the prevailing conditions of persecution, there would have to exist another tighter, more conspiratorial group Hence there would be two categories of citizens within the Socialist Party, one made up of ordinary members who would not be disciplined strictly nor necessarily active, the other composed of the active functionaries who would work conspiratorially

The Lenin wing was opposed to this whole conception. It was in agreement with the theory that a political party must embrace more than professional revolutionists This wing defined professional revolutionist as one who considers it his life work to help to bring about the revolution; a professional revolutionist was not necessarily one paid by the organization to devote full time to it, but rather one who gave all his time to the revolutionary movement, whether paid or not, one who considered his private employment, if he was forced to work for others in order to live, as merely an interlude or a side line The Party had to admit masses of militant workers who were not ready to renounce their jobs and their families in order to travel anywhere the Party needed them. While these could not be professional revolutionists and lead the Party, they could be good soldiers in the ranks. Thus Lenin also agreed to the need of extension of the membership. The disagreement consisted in how loose the Party

organization should be, which elements should be excluded and which included and what should be the minimum activity and discipline to be exacted.

Far from fusing the Party with the class and taking in every striker or every intellectual who called himself a socialist, Lenin believed in distinguishing the Party from the class on the ground that the Party was to be solely the vanguard, the selected best elements. Every member must be active, must be ready to do his duty, must be disciplined, accountable, and loyal, while, at the same time, the Party was to be responsible for the actions of every member. If all sorts of elements were admitted, it would be impossible to trust the rank and file; the result would be bureaucracy, the separation of the officials from the members, an undemocratic and unreliable organization. There were to be no first and second degree citizens within the Party, the mass of members to perform the hard work, while the functionaries and the professional revolutionists enjoyed the only real democracy within the Party.

It had been argued by the Mensheviks that, since the Social-Democratic Party was to be a class organ, it should take in every member of the class. Every striker, when arrested, should be allowed to say in a court room that he was a socialist; the more widespread the title of Party member, the better, and the greater the prestige of the Party. To this Lenin answered that the better organized the vanguard of the workers was, the less easily could the police break up its ranks, the better could it control mass organizations, unions, strikes, demonstrations, etc. The higher the quality of the vanguard, the easier to organize the mass of workmen and to win their respect. ". . . the stronger our Party organizations, consisting of *real* Social Democrats, will be, the less will the vacillation and instability *within* the Party be and the wider, the more many-sided, the richer and the more fruitful will the influence of the Party be over the elements of the surrounding working class *masses* which it leads." [1]

According to Lenin, whether the Party became a mass organization or a sect, was measured not necessarily by whether it admitted the masses into its ranks, but rather was tested by the criterion whether it expressed the needs and interests of the masses and fought for them, whether it was followed and respected by the masses. In the latter case, it would be a mass Party, regardless of the actual numbers in its ranks, although, naturally, should there exist such an organization fighting correctly and bravely for the mass of people, it would soon grow in size accordingly.

The Right Wing would have lowered the Russian Party to the same level as the Second International, with its British Labor Parties which were hardly better than the reformist trade unions. In Russia the movement

[1] From "One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward" in *Lenin on Organization*, p. 135.

was faced with a similar identification of Party with union and mass organization, but for the opposite reason; that is to say, in Russia, both the Party and unions were illegal, both had to be constructed along secret conspiratorial lines, both were severely punished by the dreaded Ochrana, or secret police of the Czar. In both cases, whether in England or in Russia, Right Wingers believed that the Socialist Party and the trade unions were two arms of the same body, the working class. Opportunists, they refused to see that the relation between them was not one of limb to another, but rather of brain to body. Mass organizations such as the unions and similar groups were part of the body of the working class; the party was to be the brain, the central ganglion co-ordinating all phases of action, made up of the best, most sensitive elements only.

While the Party must thus be distinguished from the class, in the sense of containing only the most advanced elements, and not lowering its bars to include all, within the Party there must be no distinction between functionary or "professional" and the ordinary member. All were to be tested. There was to be strict centralization of leadership and just as strict decentralization of tasks and responsibility. Every member was to be given responsible and dangerous work which might lead to his arrest. The best and most capable and tested were to rise to the leadership. The leadership itself was to have experienced all the phases of the struggle, to be master of all the political weapons and schools of arms extant, and should be constantly refreshed in the struggle. In this way the old amateurishness of the discrete circles would disappear, and the Party would become the professional revolutionary factor within the less conscious mass of workers.

Every member had the duty to report at least once a month. There must be a strict division of labor and an end to the continual chattering and waste of time within the Party. Those who refused to perform the dangerous, concrete tasks of the movement, to immerse themselves in the struggles of the workers, were to have no place within the organization. Thus the intellectual butterfly was to be driven out of the Socialist Party. Around the Party, of course, there must be concentric circles of sympathizers, from groups relatively narrow and close to the Party to broad groups, such as the trade unions, which might be very far from the Party itself, although controlled by it. But in every case the sympathizer was far removed from the member, the Party remembering that "The whole art of conspiratorial organization consists in making use of *everything and everybody* and in finding work for everybody, at the same time retaining the *leadership* of the whole movement, not by force, but by virtue of authority, energy, greater experience, greater versatility, and greater talent." [1]

[1] *Lenin on Organization*, pp. 124-125.

As the polemic on organization questions heightened, it became apparent that the struggle involved also the question whether the Party should be based upon the workers or upon petty bourgeois intellectuals who would learn that, within the Party, rules of discipline and activity were not indispensable. The intellectual characterized by individualism, careerism, and instability hated discipline, but liked to work out theses and programs ad infinitum. But, as Lenin put it, "It would be far better that ten men who worked (men who really worked and were not striving for office) should not call themselves members of the Party, than that one chatterbox should have the right and the opportunity to become a member." [1] In plain language, the formula of Lenin as elaborated meant that if one wanted to be a member of the Party one could not regard organizational relations purely platonically. The difference between Lenin and Martov was expressed by Lenin in another manner: "The fundamental idea of Comrade Martov—self-inscription in the Party—is the false 'democratic' idea of constructing the Party from the bottom upwards. On the other hand, my idea is 'bureaucratic' in the sense that the Party should be constructed from the top downwards, from the Party Congress to the individual Party organization." [2]

Lenin insisted that the composition of the Party be thoroughly proletarian, and that such rules of organization be laid down as would insure that proletarian elements predominated. "Discipline and organization, lessons which a bourgeois intellectual learns with such difficulty, are learned with facility by the proletarian precisely because he received his training in the 'school' of the factory. Mortal fear of this school and a complete failure to understand its organizing significance are characteristic of the methods of reasoning which reflect petty bourgeois conditions of existence, which give rise to the form of anarchism which the German social-democrats have described as 'Edelanarchismus,' the anarchism of the nobleman. . . ." [3]

"This is where the proletarian who has passed through the school of the factory can and must give a lesson to anarchist individualism. The class conscious worker has long ago abandoned his swaddling clothes; he no longer flees from the intellectual as such. The class conscious worker fully appreciates the rich store of knowledge and the wider political outlook of the social-democratic intellectual. But to the extent that a real party is growing up among us, the class conscious worker must learn to distinguish between the mentality of the soldier of the proletarian army and that of the bourgeois intellectual flaunting anarchist phrases; he must learn to

[1] *Selections from Lenin*, I, 161.
[2] *Lenin on Organization*, p. 188.
[3] *Selections from Lenin*, I, 188-189.

demand the fulfillment of the duties of membership of the Party, not only from the rank and file, but also from the comrades in high places; . . ."[1]

The rigid insistence by Lenin on the need to build the organization from highly selected elements, starting at the top rather than at the bottom, or, as he put it, "bureaucratically" rather than "democratically," made his group appear in a false light, even to those who were part of the Left Wing of the Second International. Rosa Luxemburg, for example, was much opposed to Lenin's theories of organization, describing them as belonging to Jacobins attached to the proletariat rather than to a truly working class party. But time has shown that, in Lenin's hands, the revolutionary group developed a centralism balanced by democracy, while in the hands of his oponents, the Socialist Parties, although apparently managed from below, were corrupted through and through with bureaucracy. The methods of Lenin were the only ones appropriate to meet Czarist conditions and to insure that the Party would lead, not follow, the course of events.

Even though a number of brilliant intellectuals were eliminated thereby from the Party, the gains would be far greater than the loss, since the workers would gain organizational stability and discipline. "The proletariat has no other weapon in the fight for power except organization. Disorganized by the domination of anarchic competition in the capitalist world, oppressed by forced labor for the capitalists, constantly forced 'to the depths' of utter poverty, ignorance and degeneracy, the proletariat can become and inevitably will become an indomitable force only because its intellectual unity created by the principles of Marxism is fortified by the material unity of organization which welds millions of toilers into an army of the working class. . . . This army will close up its ranks more and more closely in spite of zig-zags and retreats, in spite of the opportunistic phrases of the Girondists of contemporary Social-Democracy, in spite of the smug self-satisfaction of obsolete study circleism, and in spite of the brilliance and bustle of intellectual anarchism."[2]

The function of the Party being to act as the leader of the class, it was imperative that the Party train workers from its ranks into leaders; to do this, it was necessary to make the whole activity of every candidate for every post well known to the members. To place each person in his proper place, full publicity was necessary. Sometimes, under Czarism, such publicity was impossible. For that reason, while centralism could not be dispensed with, democracy could be subordinated to the conditions of the struggle since, as has been remarked above, democracy was only a sub-

[1] The same, pp. 103-104.
[2] *Lenin on Organization*, p. 193.

stitute for confidence as a method of sifting out the inefficient and poor material from the more capable and tested.

If we sum up the quarrel between the two factions at the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, it can be seen that the Mensheviks wanted to build, along the lines of Bernstein or of Kautsky, some loose organization that would be incapable of actual insurrection and wherein not the workers but the petty bourgeois intellectuals would predominate. The Bolsheviks were of sterner stuff. They realized that the revolution against Czarism was actually at hand and they meant to take advantage of every opportunity. Anticipating the growing spontaneous revolts that would break out, the Leninists wanted to inject the factors of consciousness, of theory, of science, of organization, of leadership, of steel-like firmness into the pattern of politics.

It was no accident that those who were opportunist on questions of organization also believed that the Czar could not be overthrown, or that, should he be overthrown, the new social order would have to be of a capitalist nature whereby the workers and peasants would not take power directly. If the proletarian revolution was far away and the day of insurrection was not at hand, it was not necessary to build a disciplined and tested Party. On the other hand, if one appreciated the basic fact that the present was the period of action for the workers, it was absolutely imperative to construct a Party capable of leading the insurrection. At bottom, therefore, the questions of organization had to do with the question whether the workers should take power in Russia or whether it was the turn of the petty bourgeois and bourgeois elements to do so, the workers simply fighting the battles of capitalism rather than their own. Those who thought the workers could take power directly refused to allow the agents of other classes to dominate the organization of the workers, the Revolutionary Party.

At the Second Congress, a split occurred on these questions. At first Lenin was in the minority and, because he felt the question not acute enough to warrant an immediate split, remained within the Party. But in the course of the Congress, the Jewish Bund withdrew because they were not permitted the autonomy they had demanded. This changed the situation, and the followers of Lenin now became the majority (those of the majority being called Bolsheviki in Russian). Now it was the turn of the opportunist wing of Martov to become the minority (Mensheviki). But instead of abiding by majority rule, these lovers of democracy decided to split and form their own faction, meeting separately within the organization. Thus two groups crystallized themselves, the Bolsheviks under Lenin and the Mensheviks under Martov. Plechanov, after the Congress, left the Leninists to side with Martov in order to give control of the Iskra

to the Mensheviks. The two groups worked together during the days of 1905 but broke again in the latter part of that year. Attempts were made as late as 1910 to bring them together, but the efforts failed and, with the World War and the Russian Revolution, the two came into deadly hostility.

Under Lenin's guidance, the Bolsheviks as far back as 1903 were able to foretell that the Mensheviks would be the Party to oppose the proletarian revolution; thus the Russian communists were the first to train themselves for struggle against the revisionists and opportunists of the Second International. They became demoralized the least in periods of defeat or stress and storm. Only because they had organized as far back as 1903 were they able to keep themselves intact in 1914 and 1917, and to take the leadership in the revolutionary movement throughout the world.

XXXVII. THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1905

I

THE Russian Revolution of 1905 proved again the truth which underlay the action of the French in the Paris Commune, namely, that from then on every major war would be followed by revolution, just as every successful revolution would have to be met by war on the part of the old order.

In 1903 all signs pointed to a great movement forward on the part of the workers throughout Russia. The Czar was forced into a number of concessions. A surge of strikes broke out with a corresponding growth of revolutionary activity. Even the Zubatoff police unions were becoming transformed into genuine workers' organizations.

At this point the disastrous Russo-Japanese War occurred and demonstrated anew the terrible criminality and reactionary character of Czarism. By now, discontent was rife among all classes and, with the assassination of von Plehve, the Liberals began openly to express themselves in the form of banquets where they passed resolutions, while the Zemstvos sent in petitions for a constitution. Peasant revolts began to flare up all over Russia.

Then came the events of January 9, 1905. A great general strike having occurred in St. Petersburg, the workers decided, under the leadership of a priest, Father Gapon, to present a petition of their grievances to their "Little Father," the Czar. Donning their best clothes and in the most peaceful manner, the people staged on that fateful Sunday a tremendous gathering before the Winter Palace of the Czar.

Their petition began: "Sovereign, we the workers, with our wives and children and our helpless old parents, have come to you to ask for justice and protection. We are reduced to want; we are oppressed; we are overworked beyond our strength; we are cursed at, we are not considered as men, but are treated like slaves who must either endure their lot or keep silent. We have been patient, but we are being driven deeper and deeper into an abyss of poverty, slavery and ignorance. Despotism and absolutism are crushing us, choking us. Our strength is failing, Sovereign. The limit of endurance has been reached; the terrible moment is at hand when death seems preferable to the prolongation of unbearable torture." [1] Although a priest led the way, the language was that of revolutionary

[1] See L. D. Trotsky: *1905*, p. 68.

groups who had convinced the workers to present a large number of demands, the chief of them being for amnesty, civil liberty, separation of Church and State, the eight-hour day, a normal wage, and progressive transfer of the land to the people. But, above all, the petition asked for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, to be elected by free, universal suffrage not based upon property.

In solemn language the petition declared, "Here are the principal demands we are submitting to you. Give your orders and pledge yourself to grant them—and you will make Russia powerful and glorious, you will impress your name upon our hearts, in our children's and grandchildren's hearts, forever. If you refuse to hear our entreaty—we shall die here, on this spot, in front of your palace. Two roads only lie open to us—either to freedom and happiness or to the grave. Tell us, Sovereign, which we must choose; we shall follow it without a word, even though it be the road of death. Let our life be sacrificed for Russia worn out with torments. We shall not regret the sacrifice; we shall offer it voluntarily." [1]

And indeed the sacrifice was made. Out from their hiding places came the government troops, shooting the people down on all sides. The number of dead ran into the hundreds, the wounded into the thousands. After this massacre the workers came no more with petitions and prayers, but with bullets and curses. As with the Paris Commune, the action began with patriotic motives (following the defeat of the country in the Japanese War) and beseeching the most modest and humble requests. It ended with the red flag flying for communism. When the news of the massacre flashed around, the whole nation stood horrified. From one end of the land to the other a grandiose wave of strikes shook the very body of the nation, spreading to 122 cities and localities and drawing nearly one million persons into its swing. The railway workers took the initiative, and the railroads became the route for the epidemic to spread until it included innumerable trades. Without a definite plan, often without even formulating any demand, interrupting itself and beginning over again, guided by the sole instinct of solidarity, the general strike prevailed in the country for nearly two months. Sporadic fighting erupted everywhere. All progressive groups now looked upon the government only as a monster to be destroyed. The demand for a Constitution and a Constituent Assembly grew louder and more threatening. It was now clear that revolution was inevitable.

On the heels of the assassination of von Plehve, the government had put forth the so-called conciliator of the people, Sviatopolk Mirsky, to make a pretense of liberality. Enamored with the genial Mirsky, the liberals had declared there was no need for revolution. After the events of January, 1905, the liberals had to realize that any softening of Czarist rule only

[1] The same, p. 69.

opened the way for the demands of the proletariat and for the revolution itself.

The question that faced the Russian social-democrats most acutely in the light of the impending events was: What should be the attitude of the revolutionary workers to the other classes, such as the bourgeois liberals who were also opposed to the Czar? The Mensheviks proposed the following fundamental thesis: The Dictatorship of the Proletariat was impossible. The revolution would have to be a bourgeois one, even in spite of the bourgeoisie and, although the workers had to participate in the revolt, they must turn the power over to the capitalists and be content to remain as a minority pushing capitalism forward until the time became ripe, years later, for the proletarians to establish socialism.

They argued that if the proletariat took power it would be because it was the strongest and best prepared class, but, once it took power, it could not limit itself to capitalist forms, but would have to transform society on socialist lines in order to solve such questions as factory exploitation and unemployment. Thus the victorious proletariat would proceed inevitably to set up its own dictatorship. But since such a dictatorship was premature in Russia, where the workers were but a small minority of the population, this attempt by the proletariat could lead only to a tremendous blood bath, a new Paris Commune on a Gargantuan scale.

Nor could the workers, according to the Mensheviks, seize power in alliance with the petty bourgeoisie, since then the former would have to carry out the program of petty property and act against their own interests. In any event, the mere attempt of the workers to take power would drive the bourgeois property owners back into absolutism. Therefore it were better for the proletariat to renounce the task and to let the capitalists take the power. Since the revolution could be only a bourgeois democratic one, the bourgeoisie itself should lead the way and, if it vacillated, the working class should compel the wealthy to take the helm.

Thus the Mensheviks, while calling themselves socialist, shrank from taking leadership in the revolution and wanted the proletariat to surrender to the bourgeoisie. Against this idea both the Bolsheviki and the Centrist grouping, headed by Trotsky and Parvus, were strongly opposed. According to Parvus (and Trotsky allowed himself to be identified with this view),[1] the workers were to raise the slogan "Down with the Czar and for a Workers' Government," and were to seize the power and establish a socialist government. In this fashion, Parvus overlooked the great fact that it was the peasantry who composed the enormous bulk of the revolutionary

[1] Afterward, Trotsky declared that the views were those of Parvus alone, but this explanation came rather late.

elements against Czarism. Their shibboleths, "Down with the Czar and for a Workers' Government," contained no mention of the peasantry except to ask that class to yield its property in favor of nationalization and socialism under the leadership of the proletariat. Such a course truly would have led to a repetition of the Paris Commune, wherein the city would be isolated from the countryside and put down by rural troops.

A third point of view was expressed by Lenin and the Bolsheviks. With Trotsky they agreed that the workers were to lead the revolution; that, having done so and having sacrificed the lives of many on the barricades, the workers could not be asked to give up power to another class. The Bolsheviks proposed, however that there be established, not the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, but the joint democratic-dictatorship of the workers and peasants. In a rather vague manner, the Bolsheviks were working out a sort of intermediate form.

Several matters had to be cleared up before the revolutionary movement could advance farther. First, clarification was needed as to what was meant by the term democratic-dictatorship and wherein it differed from democracy. Democracy, in its fullest expression, is a type of state wherein everyone can express himself freely, can vote, and can elect representatives to the government. Lenin proposed to limit this democracy so that only those favoring democracy, namely the Parties of the people, the Socialists, the Social-Revolutionaries and such, would be allowed to vote and agitate; those who favored a return to the Czar and to absolutism, or who would restrict the franchise of the people, would not be allowed to vote. The democratic parties would establish a dictatorship and ruthlessly put down by force all counter-revolutionary and anti-democratic organizations. Here then was a most important distinction between the ordinary form of democracy and the form called the democratic-dictatorship. Under ordinary capitalist democracy, it was really the bourgeoisie and private property that controlled; under the open "democratic-dictatorship" there was to be established the dictatorship of the workers and peasants.

The next question that had to be solved in this connection was whether any distinctions among the peasantry should be recognized. As the revolutionary events grew nearer, Lenin reformulated his slogan to call for the democratic-dictatorship of the workers and *poor* peasants in alliance with the middle peasants. The poor peasants were to be part of the dictatorship; the middle peasants were to be befriended, although having no decisive control in the events. The other sections of agrarians, the kulaks or rich peasants, the landlords and the capitalist owners of large estates were to be fought bitterly.

However, what Lenin and the Bolsheviks left unclear, and what Trotsky and Parvus brought out most forcibly, was the point as to the relation-

ship of the workers to the peasants in the democratic-dictatorship of both. In short, within the mechanism of the State, which of the two groups would dominate? Would the workers limit themselves to the demands of the poor peasants and restrain themselves from marching to socialism, thus letting the poor peasantry have the leadership, or would the opposite prevail? Trotsky pointed out, as had also the Mensheviks for that matter, that the workers, once having grasped power, never would allow themselves to be cheated of their goal, that the proletariat would be forced to move towards socialism; what in reality would be established would be, not the democratic-dictatorship of two classes, with the peasantry equal to the workers, but the dictatorship of the proletariat, which would move to socialism but move in such a way as to maintain the friendliest contact with the masses of poor peasants who would support the city workers, while the middle peasants would be neutralized.

This, indeed, is what actually happened in the course of the revolutions of 1905 and 1917, and both Lenin and Trotsky came closer to each other's viewpoint as the events progressed. The mistake of Trotsky was that, in his formulations, he left little intimation to the peasantry that a friendly alliance would be open for them and that the workers would proceed towards socialism gradually, and only after convincing the poorest peasantry of each step of the way. The strong point of Lenin's formula was that it stressed that alliance. On the other hand, Lenin did not make it sufficiently clear that, within the alliance of both classes, it would be the workers and not the peasants that would lead, that the workers could not limit their dictatorship by the dictates of private property, but would move on irresistibly to make the revolution permanent. Both Lenin and Trotsky were in basic agreement but emphasized different aspects of the same problem. As a matter of fact, a democratic-dictatorship is a régime impossible for any length of time. It can only be a transition, either towards the dictatorship of the capitalist or towards the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Mensheviks, like other representatives of the Second International, were not able to appreciate the dialectical connections between the democratic and the socialist revolutions. They conceived of the two periods as though cleft by a deep abyss and could not comprehend how they could merge. The merit of both Lenin and Trotsky was that they understood how a revolution, originally democratic, could be turned into a socialist one to end capitalism.

The Mensheviks were of the opinion that socialist revolutions were not possible in agrarian countries, that the private property of the peasants was irretrievably bound up with bourgeois ownership and imperialism. The Mensheviks professed to believe also that the proletarian revolution could come only in the most highly industrialized countries like Germany, Eng-

land, and the United States. In Russia and Asia, the masses would have to wait hundreds of years, perhaps, until capitalism could uproot the peasants and expropriate them. Only when capitalism had become predominant all over the world would the socialist revolution be possible in each country. The Bolsheviks on the contrary affirmed that it was false to abandon the peasantry to the bourgeoisie, that the peasants could be won as allies and fighters for the victory of the workers, since the enemy of both groups was the same bourgeois class of imperialists.

Not only did the Menshevik viewpoint underestimate the ripeness of the world proletariat and its ability to win other sections to its side, but it failed to appreciate that socialism could not be victorious even in the most industrial country unless the world as a whole was ready for it. If the world were not ready for worker's rule as a whole, then, should the workers take power even in a Germany, they would have to meet a united capitalist world in merciless war, and would go down in defeat. Thus, the same arguments that proved that the proletarian revolution was unripe in Russia would make it hazardous in Germany as well. The alternative was to declare that socialism could be built in one country alone, that socialist countries and capitalist countries could co-exist peacefully, side by side, capitalism going quietly and peacefully into the grave. Such a theory was left for Stalin to enunciate later. Even the worst opportunists of the Second International did not go so far.

It appears, however, that the whole world is becoming ripe for socialist victory. This became clearer after the World War. One of the contributions of Lenin in his study of imperialism was to point out how capitalism had in reality dominated the entire world, and that, in the era of imperialism, it was entering into its period of decline, a period which would convulse all countries. Under such circumstances it might become imperative for the workers in a less industrialized country to go into immediate action. The most recently created working class could often stand on the shoulders of movements that had gone before. There was a basic law of uneven development through which capitalism worked. It was quite possible that, should the workers and peasants in Russia sweep into power, a conflagration would start throughout Europe that would consume capitalism and, in turn, drive the Russian revolution farther than it ordinarily could go.

Thus Lenin believed "Due to our efforts, the Russian revolution will become a movement not only of a few months' duration, but a movement lasting many years, so that it will lead, not merely to a few paltry concessions on the part of ruling sovereigns, but to the complete overthrow of these rulers. And if we succeed in doing that—then . . . the revolutionary conflagration will spread all over Europe; the European workers languishing under bourgeois reaction will rise and in their turn show us 'how to

do it'; then the revolutionary wave in Europe will sweep back into Russia and convert the epoch of a few revolutionary years into an epoch of several revolutionary decades. . . ." [1]

The strategy of working with the peasantry in order to form a democratic-dictatorship implied that, should such a provisional government arise, the proletariat would exist in a government which might have a majority of private proprietors in control. This, argued the Mensheviks, only could discredit the workers as it had discredited the socialists in France who had supported Millerand's entrance into the Cabinet. In this way the Mensheviks tried to attack the position of the Bolsheviks from the Left, as though Lenin were forgetting the necessity of keeping the proletariat independent from the petty bourgeoisie.

The answer of the Bolsheviks was that, while it was certainly not correct for socialists to belong to a bourgeois government fighting socialism, as was the case with Millerand in France, such a situation was not to be confused with one wherein the proletariat was participating with the revolutionary bourgeois democracy in a democratic revolution and in the transitional democratic régime essential for the complete accomplishment of such a revolution. The democratic-dictatorship meant putting into effect the minimum program of the revolutionists, namely, the arming of the people, a republic, democratic liberty, and certain economic reforms. In such a transition régime, the proletarian representative in the government would be in a far better position to drive the revolution forward to the Left than were he voluntarily to exclude himself. Of course the workers had to march separately from the petty bourgeois revolutionists, but both columns could strike together at the same enemy.

Although to overthrow the autocracy a revolutionary provisional government was absolutely necessary, according to the Mensheviks, the social-democrats could not participate in such a government. To the Bolsheviks, such action was perfectly correct, since proletarian participation in the provisional government was not in order to establish socialism immediately nor to bolster up capitalism but rather to drive the revolution by degrees forward to the Left. Should the proletariat refuse to take, with the peasants, joint responsibility for the revolution, such refusal would result either in the isolation of the peasantry and its defeat or in the sharpest antagonisms between the proletariat and the peasantry. Similarly, were the proletariat to enter into a sharp head-on collision with the peasantry in the fight for socialism, such impact would spell disaster for the revolution by driving the peasantry into the hands of the bourgeois-Czarist reaction.

In line with these questions was the additional one as to what the

[1] *Selections from Lenin*, II, 63-64.

socialists could do to help the revolution. Here, too, the sharpest differences arose between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks. To the Mensheviks, the revolution was to be an entirely spontaneous process, unleashing itself as events unfolded; their policy was simply to follow the events in an agitational manner. They drew no distinction between a revolution and an insurrection.

Lenin, on the contrary, carefully distinguished the period of general propaganda for the revolution from the later period when the question of insurrection was a practical reality By no means was he willing merely to follow the actions of the masses, making a fetish of "spontaneity." The Bolsheviks could not create a revolution, just as they could not create a labor movement, but they could help to organize the insurrection so that it would have some sort of plan, just as they could help to organize a strike "A popular revolution cannot be arranged beforehand, that is true . . But if we have really prepared for the popular rebellion, and if that rebellion is possible because of the changes that have been brought about in social relations, then it is quite possible to fix the time for such a rebellion." [1] Constantly Lenin stressed the point that the rôle of the vanguard was not the same as that of the masses, but rather that the former had the duty of organizing, preparing, and leading the latter and must not drift along with spontaneous chaos which could result eventually only in the defeat of the workers.

While the Mensheviks were carrying out agitation and relying on the spontaneity of the masses, the Bolsheviks were not merely agitating, but also working out their plans First it was necessary to urge the arming of the masses. "We must have arms at the very outset of the insurrection; with this end in view, we must organize the pillaging of armourers and, wherever possible, of arsenals To achieve this it is necessary first of all to have an armed force, not necessarily a numerous one, and men who could immediately distribute the arms and give instruction in their use; the importance of having contacts with soldiers and officers, with arsenal workers . cannot be overrated." [2]

"Armed insurrection does not, as a rule, develop according to plan, as the people is not an army and the revolutionaries, unfortunately, are not captains. Nevertheless, it is possible to be prepared to a certain extent. Each local branch must draw up beforehand a strategical plan of its city and its surroundings, so as to know where resistance should be offered, where barricades should be erected and where they would be unnecessary, where it would be more convenient to cut the means of communication . . . where the arms shops and stores and the quarters of the commanding

[1] The same, pp 16 17
[2] The same, pp 41 42

officers are situated. . . . The release of prisoners from jail, the confiscation of governmental funds, and the speedy organization of courts martial to try spies are desirable from the very outset of the insurrection. . . ." [1]

While the Mensheviks shrank from helping the proletarian insurrection, they heartily advocated a policy not to antagonize the liberals but rather to push them forward. In line with this, Menshevik demonstrations took the form of rallies before the liberal municipal councils and Zemstvos to press their demands. Lenin, on the contrary, urged demonstrations before the prisons, the police censor's office, and the police stations, since the demonstrations were not for the purpose of pushing forward the liberals but rather of rallying the people to overthrowing Czarism. The attack must be made first of all upon the government.

This wide difference of approach of the two groups was expressed strikingly in the Congresses held separately in April of 1905 by the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks. At the Menshevik Congress, it was decided that the socialists must drive the revolution forward, but must not organize it and must not aim at sharing power in the provisional government except where the revolution should spread to European countries more or less ripe for socialism. On the other hand the Bolshevik Congress, really the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party, adopted Lenin's ideas. While the Mensheviks were fearful of offending the liberal bourgeoisie, the Bolsheviks cultivated the friendship of the peasants and struggled against the bourgeoisie. "The proletariat must carry the democratic revolution to its logical end, and in so doing, must bring over to its side the masses of the peasantry in order to break the power of resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must bring about a social revolution, and in so doing, must bring over to its side the masses of the semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to break the power of resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie." [2]

2

By October, 1905, another formidable strike wave broke out. This time it was the printing trade, the Moscow compositors, who touched the match to the flame. They went on strike demanding an increase in their piece rates, with pay for punctuation marks. This apparently insignificant question was to lead to nothing less than an assault on the ancient bastilles of absolutism. On October 2, the compositors of St. Petersburg went on a sympathy strike, and the strike spread to other industries. After a brief lull, the railway workers, always the stormy petrels of the 1905 events, de-

[1] The same, p. 42.
[2] The same, pp. 102-103.

clared a general strike, demanding the eight-hour day, civil liberties, amnesty, and the Constituent Assembly.

Where the telegraph workers were not ready to join, the strikers cut wires and uprooted poles. They tore up railroad ties and placed cars across bridges. By the tenth of October, traffic was almost at a standstill on all lines out of Moscow. By the twelfth, all work was stopped on the St. Petersburg branch. The strike spread rapidly to the rest of the country. Soon seven hundred and fifty thousand railroad workers were on strike. Nothing remained standing before this tornado of a general strike; it closed shops and mills, stores, offices, and courts. On October 10 a general political strike was declared in Moscow, Kharkov, and Reval. Six days later at least forty cities were affected. Barricades were erected in Kharkov, Ekaterinoslav, and Odessa.

The paralysis of economic life, the uselessness of the telephone and telegraph, the failure of the mail, the demoralization of the stock exchange, the immobility of the railroads, all had their effect. The excitement which gripped the entire country shattered the front of reaction, and the Czar yielded. Frightened by the growing revolutionary events, he made certain minimum concessions. In the Manifesto of October 17 he granted a sort of constitution and agreed to call a Duma.[1] There would be two Houses, the upper House to be appointed by the Czar, the lower House to be elective; the franchise was to be strictly limited to the rich and to be administered through three elaborate stages. The Duma was to have no real power but was to meet only one and one-half to two months during the year to "advise" the Czar. Such miserable concessions could merit only the decided contempt of the people. Far from appeasing the masses, it nevertheless showed the Czar was weakening, and whetted their appetite for more.

For the first time was demonstrated what a tremendous weapon the general strike, born of modern industry, was to become in the hands of the proletariat. The leadership of the workers in the struggle now became indisputable. It is true that some professionals, lawyers, doctors, and engineers had also struck, and that the most revolutionary group among the intellectuals, the students, long had been accustomed to use the strike in their struggles against autocratic repression. However, the liberals in the Zemstvos, the bourgeois opposition, played no rôle in the events. The revolution against Czarism was being made by the proletariat. The great extent of the battles made it clear that the possibilities for power lay in the hands of the workers of industry. Furthermore, the struggle was now centered in the cities; the old populist idealization of the countryside was henceforth no longer possible.

Although the October strike had shaken the old régime tremendously,

[1] Called the Bulygin Duma after the Czar's minister.

nothing in the political situation was changed; the power remained where it had been. The general strike thus exposed its limitations. It could weaken the ruling classes and lay the basis for a change of power, but much more was necessary actually to bring about this change. Certain tasks of revolution, however, from now on clearly were defined: to organize the countryside and unite it with the cities; to get into closer contact with the army, and to arm the workers.

The general strike came into use as a great proletarian weapon in 1905; a new form of revolutionary proletarian organization also appeared, the soviet. On October 13 took place in the halls of the Institute of Technology the first gathering of the future Soviet of Petersburg. There were only thirty or forty delegates present. At the second session, forty large mills were represented, two factories and three unions (the printers, store clerks, and office clerks). From the beginning, the Soviet was proletarian, based on industry and the unions. Eventually, in the fifty days of its existence, its numbers were to grow to nearly 600, representing 147 factories and mills, 34 workshops, and 16 unions. A majority of the delegates, or 351, came from the metal industry; thus heavy industry is seen to play the predominant rôle in the revolution in Petersburg. Although the Soviet represented about two hundred thousand souls, the scope of its influence politically was much broader. Insofar as it was the undisputed proletarian organ, and as the proletariat then comprised about 53 per cent of the population, it can be said that the Soviet represented the majority of the city. The enemies of the Soviet were all representatives of capitalist robbery, brokers, entrepreneurs, merchants, and exporters ruined by the general strike, the hangers-on of court life, the high bureaucracy, with their lackeys and their kept women, everything that was connected with the cupidity, brutality, and debauchery of a big capital.

"What was the essential character of this institution which so quickly won such an important place in the revolution and so distinctively marked the height of its power?"

"The Soviet organized the working masses, directed the strikes and demonstrations, armed the workers, protected the population against pogroms. But other revolutionary organizations filled the same task before it, side by side with it and after it; yet they did not have the influence the Soviet enjoyed. The secret of this influence is this: this assembly comes forth organically from the proletariat in the course of the direct struggle, predetermined by events, which the working class conducts *for the conquest of power*. The proletarians on the one hand and the reactionary press on the other gave the Soviet the title of 'proletarian government,' and indeed the fact is that this organization is nothing else but the embryo of a revolutionary government. The Soviet realized the power to the extent that the

revolutionary force of the workers' quarters guaranteed it; it struggled directly for the conquest of power to the extent that the power still remained in the hands of the military police monarchy." [1]

The Soviet did not need to worry about conciliating various classes, and thus had no democratic shame of two chambers. Neither had it a paid bureaucracy. It was a non-partisan organization which linked up the scattered elements of the workers as no one political party could do. Symbolizing the interests of the workers as a whole, it could digest and maintain in its ranks the representatives of the different workers' parties, whose function was to throw light on the political significance of events, to propose the correct slogans and to stiffen the struggle. The Soviet was much broader than the parties.

Although, at the height of the October strike, the Czar had not resorted to the army to crush the movement (not out of humanitarianism but from sheer demoralization and helplessness), the inevitable reaction was not slow in coming. "The Soviet liquidated the October strike in somber days; the tears of slaughtered innocents, the curses of mothers, the death rattle of old men, and the groans of despair rose to heaven from all parts of the country. Countless cities and localities were turned into a veritable hell. The smoke of incendiary fires darkened the sun's rays, flames consumed entire streets, with the houses and their inhabitants. The old régime was taking revenge for the humiliations it had undergone."

"Everywhere it gathered its cohorts in every corner, in every hut, in every shack. In this army we see the little shop-keeper and the down-and-out, the café owner and the café habitué, the stable boy, and the police spy, the professional thief and the occasional offender, the petty artisan and the pimp, the obscure starving peasant, and the new comer from the countryside deafened by the noise of the factory. Stark misery, darkness, and venal debauchery place themselves at the orders of rapacious privilege and high anarchy." [2]

In these October days of the Czar's revenge, there were three to four thousand people killed in one hundred cities, and ten thousand more mutilated and injured. The President of the American Federation of Labor sent a telegram to Count Witte urging the Russian workers to resist the pogroms which were threatening their newly acquired liberties. This, Witte hid in a secret drawer. But, in many cities, the workers organized armed bands which heroically resisted the Black Hundreds. In Petersburg, although preparations for a pogrom were made openly, and the vigilante bands harassed Jews, students, and worker agitators, yet the atrocity did not occur. The soviets and the workers' parties armed their members as best

[1] L. D. Trotsky: *1905*, p. 211.
[2] The same, p. 115.

they could. All metal shops worked overtime to turn out weapons of any sort they could produce. On the evening of October 29, at the meeting of the Soviet, one deputy after another got up and brandished his sword, his knife, his black-jack. A night patrol was organized which paced the city streets in groups of ten. The regular troops fired on this workers' militia, but by that time the danger of the pogrom was averted.

In fighting censorship, too, the workers took matters into their own hands and won. Of twenty thousand typesetters, not one could be found to set up the Czar's Manifesto. But the papers of the social-democracy which printed this Manifesto with their own commentaries came out in great numbers. The Soviet sent its deputies to compel the reactionary and bourgeois papers to go to press without submitting their proofs to the censor. So was the age-long censorship lifted. One hundred thousand copies of a manifesto signed by a so-called "group of workers" and inciting the people against "the new Czars" (the social-democrats) were confiscated. The circulation of the revolutionary press grew by leaps and bounds. In Petersburg appeared two social-democratic papers, one with a subscription list of fifty thousand, the other soon reaching a circulation of one hundred thousand. In the province, people clamored for papers from the capital and also set up their own papers. The Soviet, too, wanted to issue a paper, but had no press. This was no difficulty, however; a group of delegates was sent to take possession of a large printing press, the management was declared under arrest, and reliable printers were sent in. In a few hours *Isvestia,* ["News"] *of the Soviet,* appeared.

The employers had maintained a certain neutrality during the October strike, had refused the services of the Cossacks in Moscow, and had even paid the workers their wages for the time on strike, hoping to see an expansion of business under a legal régime. But their hopes were not realized. Far from being calmed by the Czar's Manifesto, the masses became more and more independent and threatening. The answer of the soviet to the October 17 Manifesto was a decision to continue the general strike. The pressing need of money above all drove the capitalists into the arms of the government. They were rewarded. Money flowed freely from the banks, and the employers lined up as the most resolute enemies of the soviet. The Radical, intellectual petty bourgeoisie in the meantime played a pitiable rôle. At the height of the October strike, these elements came together and organized the Kadet (Constitutional-Democrat) Party, which declared their Platonic solidarity with the general strike. They were isolated and without influence, however, and could only wait helplessly.

November saw a renewal of the general strike, this time in solidarity with the military revolt which had taken place in Kronstadt in protest

against the régime of martial law which had been declared throughout Poland and against the death sentences of the leaders of the Kronstadt revolt Count Witte, the Czar's minister at that time, addressed a tearful telegram to the workers, begging them to go back to work To this the soviet made the following answer

"The Soviet of Workers Deputies, after hearing Count Witte's telegram to his 'brother workers,' expresses first its extreme astonishment at the lack of manners of the Czar's favorite in calling the workers of Petersburg 'brothers' The proletarians have no bond of relationship with Count Witte

"On the question at issue, the Soviet declares

"1 Count Witte urges us to take pity upon our wives and children The Soviet of Workers Deputies in reply urges all workers to count how many new widows and orphans are crowding the ranks of the working class since the day Count Witte took power

"2 Count Witte mentions the gracious solicitude of the Sovereign for the working people The Soviet of Workers Deputies recalls to the memory of the proletariat of Petersburg Bloody Sunday of January 9th

"3 Count Witte begs us to give him the 'necessary time' and promises to 'do everything possible' for the workers The Soviet of Workers Deputies knows that Witte has already found time enough to give Poland over to the military executioners and the same Soviet does not doubt that Count Witte will do *everything possible* to crush the revolutionary proletariat

"4. Count Witte says he is a well meaning man who sympathizes with us. The Soviet of Workers Deputies declares it has no need of the sympathy of the Czar's favorites It demands a people's government based on universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage" [1]

In the audacious tones of this answer we can see how far the working class had traveled since the days of humble petitions in January preceding

The strike was successful the government retreated and for the moment calm returned Now that the workers had returned to the back breaking, brain-destroying toil of industry, they became conscious that their most crying immediate need was for shortening the hours of work. This they proceeded to obtain in their own way Several big shops in Petersburg, through their shop committees, took a secret vote, and the workers themselves carried out the decision to stop work after eight hours The movement quickly spread But this time the enemy knew how to strike too. First the state industries, then the private shops, instituted a lock-out Thousands of workers were thrown on the streets Although some sections of the workers wanted to continue the struggle, particularly the ill-paid women

[1] Trotsky *1905* pp 146 147

textile workers, yet the majority of the Soviet decided it was expedient to yield.

Simultaneously a general strike raged in Poland and led to local insurrections. Under such conditions, even the liberals decided to boycott the elections, although the Union of Unions, with liberal employees at the head, condemned the Duma while the majority of the Congress of Zemstvos insisted on a real constitutional monarchy.

The struggle on the countryside had followed its own course. Widespread revolts took place, the movement becoming deeper and more violent after the October strike, when the example of the cities had penetrated into the remote villages. Especially militant were the peasants in the central part of the country where land was scarce and famine a common experience. The struggle took on various forms: strikes of the agricultural laborers, boycott by the peasants of work on the lord's domain, refusal to recognize the administrative powers and to pay taxes.

In one province the peasants appropriated from the owner's barns whatever grain and supplies they needed. Elsewhere they went in great crowds from one demesne to another with their wagons and took what they felt to be their share of the crops. The owners and managers were terrified and fled. In the same province, a struggle took place to reduce the rents, the peasant communes themselves setting the prices. Meanwhile, at the Bezukov monastery, the peasants seized fifteen thousand desiatins of land for which they refused to pay, declaring it was the monks' business to pray and not to meddle in real estate. But the most violent events took place in Saratov province, where owners were forced to flee before the red flames consuming their manorial homes. The peasants adjudicated the land to the *Mir*, as well as the money which was seized from the landlord's house. Altogether throughout the country about two thousand manors were destroyed, at an estimated money loss of twenty-nine million rubles for the proprietors.

For all these actions, Social-Democratic propaganda, carried on in the country for several years, had paved the way. And yet the peasant revolt was the release of a primitive tide, the result of generations of sufferings endured, rather than a movement of clear ideology and purpose. However, the peasants recently had formed their organization, the Peasants Union, which held a second meeting on November 6. The methods of action proposed ranged from peaceful meetings to armed insurrection. Three days before the Congress met, the government had published a Manifesto announcing the abolition of repurchase taxes on land and increasing the resources of the Peasants' Bank. On November 12 the Congress convened, and on November 14 its office force in Moscow was arrested. Not long afterward, the Ministry of the Interior issued an announcement that the peasant revolt must be put down by no matter what means. And now the

horrors of the pogroms in the cities spread to the villages throughout Russia.

So far, the rôle of the armed forces had not become decisive. As the revolution drew to its height, this question was to be solved. At last, the disorders spread to the soldiers and sailors. There had already taken place in June a revolt on the armored cruiser "Prince Potemkin," provoked by the presence of worms in the decayed meat which was served in the crews' mess. During the October strike, great mass meetings of soldiers and sailors had been held. When the armed forces were forbidden to attend the workers' gatherings, meetings were organized in the courtyards of the soldiers' and sailors' barracks. At Sebastopol on the Black Sea, the barracks were open day and night to the representatives of the social-democrats, the officers not daring to protest. The plan was to create a soldiers' and sailors' soviet and link up the military struggle with that in the cities. When the commandant of the fortress Nepluev arrived with General Sedelnikov, Chief of the Division, the sailors arrested both, disarmed them, and locked them up in the barracks. Later, however, they were released. A great demonstration of soldiers and sailors passed through the city. The sailors persuaded the machine gun company to get their guns out of sight . . . later, however, the machine guns reappeared. In the meantime, the "Potemkin" had hoisted the Red Flag.

A committee composed of soldier and sailor delegates with a few representatives of the social-democratic party was in control of the military and naval revolt. Although the arrested officers of the Brest regiment had demoralized the soldiers in the barracks with drink and debauchery, nevertheless it was necessary to go ahead with the revolt. Declarations of solidarity were received from another cruiser, and from two destroyers. A telegram came from the Czar ordering the rebels to lay down their arms within twenty-four hours. The officer bringing this telegram was kicked out. Patrols of sailors kept perfect order in Sebastopol. A certain Lieutenant Schmidt, retired naval officer who had become popular as a speaker in the sailors' and soldiers' meetings, was made the military head. At once the following telegram was sent to the Czar:

"The glorious Black Sea fleet, keeping sacred faith with the people, demands from you the immediate convocation of a Constituent Assembly, and will no longer obey your ministers.

Commandant of the Fleet,
Citizen Schmidt."[1]

The inevitable answer from Petersburg came: "Crush the revolt." The city and fortress were occupied by troops, and the rebel vessels were sub-

[1] Trotsky: *1905*, p. 176.

jected to terrific bombardment. For hours the battle went on More than two thousand men were taken prisoner. The soldiers, who had never been definitively compromised from the beginning, abandoned the sailors, fired on the sailors' barracks, and the revolt was crushed [1]

3

During this period the Mensheviks proposed to utilize the electoral campaign in order to establish semi-legal workers' committees of agitation to exert pressure on the enfranchised groups to fight for the convocation of a constitutional assembly These workers' committees were to conduct their own plebiscite and to elect a network of organs to operate as though they constituted a revolutionary self government which could dictate its will to all the other groups The Mensheviks substituted this tactic for the active boycott and demonstration strike

The Bolsheviks on their side ridiculed as purely utopian the idea of electing workers' committees for the establishment of another government before the insurrection occurred What was necessary were demonstrations, active boycotts, the breaking up of Czarist election meetings, political strikes, etc Only after the revolution was on its way could a dual government be considered The principal revolutionary slogan was to be armed insurrection to establish a provisional government to carry out the following program convocation of a national constituent assembly, arming of the people, institution of political liberties, establishment of cultural and political liberty for all oppressed and disfranchised nationalities, adoption of the eight-hour day, and the formation of peasant committees for confiscation of land and securing agrarian reforms

As a matter of fact, the Mensheviks had hit upon a proposal which actually was to be carried out by the Russians when they spontaneously set up the soviet as a dual government to the official State Here also, it seemed, was a verification of the theory of reliance merely upon the spontaneity of the masses, since the soviets were foreseen by no party, even by the Bolsheviks who had talked of organizing and laying plans The ingenuity and initiative of the masses surprised all Parties Nevertheless, the position of the Mensheviks was untenable in spite of their apparent theo-

[1] It is significant that the Navy has led popular revolts in a number of important instances, not only in the Russian Revolution of 1905 but in the German Revolution of 1918, the Russian Revolution of 1917 the French revolutionary ferment after the War the Spanish Revolutionary events of 1936 etc This can be traced to numerous causes The sailors have occupations in the main similar to workmen their conditions are generally bad they live close together and can communicate their ideas to each other easily they travel around and get to compare the lot of their people with those abroad while they are seldom given the functions of coming into conflict with their own countrymen Thus the Naval forces are often ripe for subversive propaganda during revolutionary moments and are generally not the strongest or most reliable troops for reaction

retical triumph. The fact is that the Mensheviks had called for the setting up of these self-government bodies, not as part of the insurrection, but as a substitute for the active boycott of the Bulygin Duma. Thus whatever may have been progressive in the Menshevik proposals was rendered nugatory by their anti-insurrectionary program. Conversely, Lenin, who had insisted most of all on the need for the insurrectionary struggle against Czarism, on destruction of the old before construction of the new, nevertheless thoroughly understood the importance of the soviets when they appeared and at once called upon them to take full power into their hands To Lenin, the soviets were not primarily institutions of government, but organs of civil war.

It must not be imagined that the views of Lenin were the views of all the Bolsheviks. On the contrary, Lenin's insistence on the need for preparing the armed insurrection, a revolutionary army, and a provisional revolutionary government, and for making these points the central part of the strategy of the Bolsheviks met with the opposition of the majority of the Central Committee of the Party who believed these plans were premature and advocated them conditionally, according to the degree of preparation In August, 1905, the Central Committee significantly omitted the term "insurrection" from its resolutions Swiftly following events nevertheless amply exposed the vacillating character of the Bolshevik Central Committee and the correctness of Lenin's views

Soon after the decision of the Central Committee to oppose Lenin's unconditional call for revolt there took place the unprecedented general strike in October, 1905, throughout all Russia To appease the masses, the Czar now changed the consultative Duma to a legislative one elected by a wider franchise In the course of the strike, new organs of the masses, the soviets, sprang up, elected directly by the workers in the factories and in the neighborhoods, and taking in all, regardless of political affiliations In the light of this event, both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks came together and formed a Federal Council Within the soviets, the question was raised of the relation of the soviets to the social-democrats Although the Federal Council wanted to secure the soviets' acceptance of the social democratic program, the majority of the delegates, despite the fact that they themselves were social-democrats, refused to open the question This was a fortunate decision, since to bring the matter before the soviets in such an abstract manner would have split the unity of the workers

All this time Lenin had been unable to be present at the scene of action. At last, by November 12, he reached Russia from Switzerland and at once the situation changed sharply He forcibly drove home the tremedous importance of the soviets, not as workers' parliaments, which the Mensheviks believed they were, but as united-front bodies for the seizure

of power, which indeed they had become. Lenin insisted that the soviet be recognized as the fighting organ of the working class, without distinction of Party. On their side, the soviets did nothing to antagonize the socialists, but permitted each of the main parties, Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, and Social-Revolutionaries to have three delegates each with consultative voice and vote. Incidentally, a preponderance of the soviet delegates belonged to these Parties. The only ones excluded from direct invitation were the anarchists, because of their wretched traditions in the First International and because they did not believe in any organization nor in the establishment of a workers' State.

With the arrival of Lenin, the Bolshevik Party began to adhere to a more revolutionary position. After losing control of the *Iskra* in 1903, the Bolsheviks had put out a paper, *Vperiod* (Forward) in 1904 and, with the outbreak of the events in 1905, issued *Proletarii*. Now they were growing so fast that they could print a daily paper, *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life). Lenin saw to it that the paper became truly a communist sheet. Half of the editorial staff, especially the decayed literateur and liberal intellectual types, were removed, and for the first time appeared the slogan, "Workers of the World, Unite." This is eloquent testimony to the mess of opportunism that existed within the ranks of the Bolsheviks themselves. Here, too, 1905 was to be but a prelude for 1917.

All through November and December of 1905, the proletarian vanguard tried to broaden and deepen the strike movement. In St. Petersburg, the soviet called on all to withdraw their savings from the banks, so as to cause a financial panic, and to refuse to pay taxes. After their many strike actions, however, the skilled workers of St. Petersburg, who were in the lead of the movement, found themselves too weary to be able to carry on actual insurrection. A major part of the army was not in support of the strikers. The proletarians were isolated from the peasantry. Liberal society, now deeply frightened, hastened to support the cause of law and order. The St. Petersburg factories were of the heavy metal type which had been subsidized extensively by the Czar and the owners of which, quite satisfied with the concessions the Czar had been forced to grant, were intimately in support of the aristocracy.

The situation was somewhat different in Moscow where the factories, mostly textiles, were not so closely connected with the State and government, and whose owners desired still greater concessions. There the workers came out in actual insurrection from the eighth to the seventeenth of December. Barricades were thrown up in the streets but here, too, the mass of workers had become fatigued and did not support the small minority of active revolutionists. Nonetheless, the vanguard manned the

barricades with small groups and carried out a new style of guerrilla fighting that wearied the picked troops of the Czar, far superior in numbers, and forced the government to send in heavy reinforcements. However, not supported by St. Petersburg and abandoned by the petty bourgeoisie, the Moscow proletariat was bound to succumb and the insurrection was doomed.

In Moscow, the soviets and other organizations were insufficiently prepared for the insurrection. Even the soviet executive of the combat units did not participate in the street fighting. While there were one hundred and fifty thousand strikers at the time, there were only fifteen hundred barricade fighters. The strike had become an insurrection due to the organization of the counter-revolution by the government, and spontaneously the events had proceeded from strikes and demonstrations to single barricades, from single barricades to the mass construction of barricades and to street fighting against the troops. Over the heads of the organizations the mass proletarian struggle had become transformed from a strike into an insurrection. As is always the case, practice ran ahead of theory, and the proletariat sensed sooner than its leaders the change in the objective conditions of the struggle which demanded a transition from the strike to insurrection. The instructions to set up barricades came belatedly, after the workers had done so themselves. The leadership failed to use the masses of workers who were eager to fight.

Although the revolt failed, it would be incorrect to conclude that the workers should not have taken up arms. On the contrary, their mistake consisted in not having taken up arms more aggressively. They failed to realize sufficiently that they had to make a physical fight to win over the troops to their side. There should have been far better fraternization of the workers with the troops. At times the soldiers were wavering and could have been won over by energetic action. The revolutionists failed to realize the need for determined attack. Also, the extermination of certain military officers and officials would have enabled the workers to win over troops at critical moments.

Now that the movement had been put down and the leaders arrested, the government was in a position to increase its repressive measures. The Czar repudiated his promises and the Duma was again reduced to merely a consultative body. The question then arose: what policy should the social-democrats take in regard to the new Duma? The discussion involved the question whether the revolution was exhausted or whether the present period was but a lull before a new spurt forward.

Naturally the Mensheviks came out for participation in the election, for full parliamentary activity wherever possible, and for full attention to the bourgeoisie wherever alliances could be made. As now the Mensheviks

and Bolsheviks had established their common paper, *Izvestia* (News) of *the Party,* the discussion raged in the common organ of both factions. Lenin insisted that again the Duma be boycotted for the reason that the revolution was not yet exhausted, but only temporarily repressed.

In 1905, as in 1848 in France, the government had provoked the armed uprising when the workers were not sufficiently prepared nor organized, and reaction had been triumphant, regardless of the heroism of the proletariat. Yet there was this distinction between 1848 and 1905: The defeat in Paris meant defeat in all of France; by no means was this the case in Russia, since the Moscow defeat was not necessarily decisive for the workers of St. Petersburg, Kiev, Odessa, Warsaw, Lodz, and other places. Again, in 1848 the peasantry had been on the side of reaction, but not in 1905, and the Bolsheviks estimated that peasant revolts were bound to break out again shortly. The revolution of 1848 had been induced by the crisis of 1847 which became liquidated with the return of prosperity. In Russia, however, the present régime could lead only to an accentuation of the crisis which had been hovering over the country for a long time. Added to all this, a new financial panic was approaching, a new agrarian famine was impending, and the country's structure had been weakened by the strikes.

If the revolution really had become exhausted, Lenin felt it was the duty of the social-democrats to announce this fact and to adapt their tactics accordingly. In that case, he was in favor of participating in the elections of the Duma, of putting the legal Party to the forefront, and of abandoning the plans for continuing the insurrection. Also there should then occur an end to arming of the people, and the workers should try to make alliances with the democratic liberals in parliamentary activity. "Then we must regard the task of organizing trade unions as being a first-class Party task, as in the previous historical period we regarded the task of armed rebellion." [1]

On the other hand, should this be but a lull between two revolutionary waves, then the task of the revolutionists and workers was to carry the democratic revolution to the end, the central and immediate political task being to create the armed forces for rebellion. "In that case it is necessary to prepare for rebellion by means of guerrilla attacks, for it would be ridiculous to 'prepare' merely by enrollments and drawing up lists." [2] All revolutionary slogans should be retained and offensive operations organized.

All of these views were threshed out at the Fourth Congress of the Russian Party, a unity Congress of both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks taking place in April, 1906. By this time it had become clear that the sporadic

[1] *Selections from Lenin,* II, 172.
[2] The same, pp. 173-174.

peasants' revolts that had broken out had remained isolated from the workers' attempts and that, because the revolutionary activity had not been co-ordinated sufficiently in city and country, both sections temporarily had been defeated. Lenin was now in agreement with the tactics of participation in the elections of the new consultative Duma as the best that could be done under the circumstances. Still the Bolsheviks were not willing to admit that they had made an error previously in urging the boycott.[1] While the Mensheviks called for support of the Duma against the Czarist bureaucracy, the Bolshevik faction, which still kept its ranks intact,[2] urged that the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie be broken away from the Kadets at the head of the Duma.

Now it was time for the Czar to take the next step in reaction. As he attacked the Duma, that body retreated to Finland and, in a Manifesto, prohibited the collection of taxes, enrollment of recruits, loans, etc. Under the pressure of the Bolsheviks, the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party issued an appeal to the army, navy, and peasants, declaring the government illegal and calling on the peasantry to take possession of the land, and on the soldiers to refuse to fire. The tactics of the Bolsheviks were to fuse the strikes into a general one, to stimulate and unite the peasant revolts and mutinies and co-ordinate them into one grand struggle on all fronts. While they had given up the idea of boycott, they called attention to the fact that work within the Duma was subordinated to other forms of struggle, strikes, insurrections, etc.

The year 1906 was marked by great tumult throughout the countryside. In this period the Bolsheviks decided to carry on a regular guerrilla warfare against the government, or rather to participate in what was already raging. The Bolsheviks even organized groups for the expropriation of wealthy private and governmenal institutions so as to secure funds. The Mensheviks were horrified at this and at the Fourth Congress passed a resolution demanding the immediate liquidation of these groups of "partisans." The Bolsheviks supported the terrorism on principle, on the ground that such actions disorganized the reactionaries and educated the revolutionists. They insisted, however, that these operations be carried on under strict Party control, and then only where the attacks could be made safely and without being misunderstood either by the labor movement or the local public. There was a further necessity to conduct a relentless struggle against the gangs of the Black Hundreds. The Bolsheviks here in practice disobeyed the decision of the Fourth Congress and maintained their

[1] Much later Lenin did declare that he had erred in continuing the boycott after the objective circumstances had changed. See his *"Left" Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, p. 44. (Toiler edition.)

[2] And put out its own papers (*Volya*, *Vperiod* and *Echo*).

fighting groups on the ground that this was the only way to fight the terrorism of the Czar.

By the end of 1906, the Bolsheviks were advocating a series of rear guard struggles to enable the workers to resist the ever intensifying repressions of the autocracy. In coming out for guerrilla warfare and conspiratorial terrorism during the period when the Bolsheviks believed the masses had been put down only temporarily, Lenin showed his acuteness as a revolutionary strategist. The Russians had gone through many forms of struggle, and he considered it incorrect to make a fetich of any one of them.

According to Lenin, during the period of retreat and lull it was perfectly proper to encourage individuals or small groups, whether social-democratic or "partisan," to assassinate government officials and to confiscate funds from the government or the wealthy, even though these were tactics generally employed by the slum proletariat and by anarchists. Part of the funds were sent to the Party, especially the large expropriations, while small amounts went for the upkeep of the group. Lenin laid down the conclusion that "Guerrilla warfare is an inevitable form of struggle when the mass movement has reached the stage of rebellion and when more or less prolonged intervals of time intervene between the 'big battles' of the civil war." [1]

The concrete reality was that guerrilla warfare was a factor of the times and an instrument which the masses themselves were employing effectively; the question, therefore, was not whether the social-democrats should initiate this form of struggle or make it the principal weapon in its arsenal, but rather what attitude should the social-democrats take to a conflict already going on, whether they should participate or not. To this Lenin replied, "Social-democracy has no universal means of struggle which would separate the proletariat, as by a Chinese wall, from the sections that stand a little above or a little below it. At different times Social-Democracy employs different methods, always applying them under strictly defined ideological and organizational conditions." [2]

Correlated to this question was the policy of individual terror. The Mensheviks had shrunk from such a form of struggle as anarchistic; the Bolsheviks did not hesitate to adopt it wherever it would further the needs of the struggle. To Lenin, terror was a form of military operations that might be usefully applied or might be essential in certain moments of the battle, and under certain conditions. Terror never could become the regular means of warfare, but, at best, only one of the methods of the final onslaught. In other words, individual terror, in and of itself, was to be condemned but was justifiable as part of mass terror, which in turn was but

[1] *Selections from Lenin*, II, 221.
[2] The same, p. 225.

one of the methods by which the masses conquered and held power. For example, it would be manifestly proper to start an insurrection by assassinating the governor or blowing up of the State House, while ordinarily such actions were to be condemned, yet in the light of the civil war that was presumptively indicated, they might constitute the only type of signal that the masses could understand, informing the discontented that the die was definitely cast and that the combat was on. Such a policy might help to demoralize the enemy and to hearten the revolutionary forces at a critical moment, or might be a demonstration to compel the conflict to go on to the bitter end.

4

After the events of 1905, reaction once more sat securely in the saddle. The Witte Duma was dissolved, the electorate much cut down, and a new futile Duma installed. The revolutionary forces, disheartened and pessimistic, began to disintegrate and the members tended to abandon the conspiratorial struggle and to adopt forms of idealism and religion, or to emphasize sexual questions. This was called Seninism after its representa tive Senin. The old generation was tired; the new generation had not ye come to maturity.

The Bolsheviks made the most energetic fight against Seninism in per sonal conduct, against God building and idealism in philosophy, and liquidationism in politics. They reaffirmed the Marxist view that religion never could be a private matter for individuals in the Party, as the Mensheviks claimed, although of course it was wrong to emphasize religious divisions which would divert the workers from the real issues.

Religion was not merely a product of ignorance, as bourgeois atheists maintained, but had its roots in the social and material environment of which it was a part. Religion had existed before the class struggle was known, in the days of primitive tribal communism. Then it served as a system of cosmology, as a rationale to explain such phenomena as lightning, death, dreams, or mental and physical diseases. With primitive people, religion was highly materialistic; the gods, feared and unknown, were conceived as similar to human beings with homologous lusts and passions. Religion was basically the reflection of the fact that man could not control, rather was a victim of, natural forces which he did not understand.

As society progressed, religion came to rationalize ethical customs important to the tribe and race, and, with the advent of private property and the State, this ethical part of religion became of the utmost social importance as a means by which the State could control the oppressed classes. For the masses, on the other hand, religion with its dreams of a future, better life, was the drug which dulled them to their sufferings in this

world—as Karl Marx put it, "Religion is the moan of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the opium of the people." [1]

The ruling classes embraced religion in order to give a supernatural backing to their creed of rendering unto Caesar what was Caesar's and to keep the masses docile and meek. The Church became an intimate part of the State apparatus.

With the development of capitalism, definite atheistic trends arose. Science broke away from the Church; thus, religion was no longer a cosmological system satisfying to the intelligent. Attempts were made also to separate ethics from religion and to work out a system of morality upon the basis of utilitarianism and a scientific analysis of social laws. All that was left to the Church was the dry-as-dust scaffolding of theosophy, the mumbo-jumbo of gods and angels. The Church belonged no longer to this world.

And yet the ruling classes needed the Church and religion, not merely because it helped them to control the masses, but also because even the rulers were in no position to explain the events of nature and of society. They could not explain crises and depressions, wars and revolutions, nor the laws of social change. And in proportion as the capitalists became victims of their own social system, of price fluctuations, of their own national chauvinisms, and of the very improvements in their technique of production, they could not emancipate themselves from their religious fetters. Science comes to a blind alley under capitalism; only the proletarian will release science and enable it really to flourish.

The working class turned to atheism, not so much through books as in the course of its functioning in the class struggle. In strike times, the worker found the Church ranged against him. Since he produced all that was good and beautiful in the world, unlike his employer he was not mystified as to how he earned his daily bread and he did not find it necessary to thank God or some other creator for it. He himself was the creator. While the petty bourgeois would limit religion to love ("God is Love") because he needed to conciliate all classes, placed as he was between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the proletariat as it fought capitalism and the State had to contest all systems of social control, including the material institution of the Church and its rationale of religion.

The best way for the communist to turn the workers from religion, therefore, was not to subject them to abstract preachments but to involve them in the class struggle itself and there to clarify the material issues before them. "A Marxist must be a materialist, that is an enemy of religion, but from the materialist and dialectical standpoint, i.e., he must conceive

[1] Karl Marx: *Selected Essays*, p. 12.

the fight against religion not as an abstraction, not on the basis of pure theoretical atheism, equally applicable to all times and conditions, but concretely, on the basis of the class struggle which is actually going on and which will train and educate the masses better than anything else." [1]

On the other hand, while it was possible to break down the prejudices of religion in backward workers by mass struggles, emphasizing material issues, yet religious workers could not belong to the revolutionary vanguard. The Bolsheviks, unlike the Socialist Parties of the West, insisted that ardent religionists had no place in their ranks. It was easy for the Russians to reach this conclusion since, there, Church and State were linked into one, and the struggle against the State was extremely severe and ruthless. The Bolsheviks were ready to take in individual religious workers, provided they were willing to read and to study and were amenable to change, but such religious people were not fit to assume leadership in the organization. Certainly ministers and those who preached religion could not be allowed in the organization.

During the period of retreat in Russia, from 1906 to 1910, this whole problem became acute. Some of the social-democrats interpreted socialism as their "religion" so literally that they actually bolstered up faith in religion generally. Lenin, on the other hand, wanted to throw such people out of the Party and succeeded in doing so until the theoretical supporters of God gave up their myth-building and abided by the line of the Party. Thus the Bolsheviks were able early to cleanse their ranks of those who ideologically yielded to reaction and mysticism; the Mensheviks, on the contrary, having a far greater number of intellectuals and petty bourgeois elements in their ranks, were broken to pieces by such tendencies.[2]

The chief struggle within the social-democratic movement during the period was against liquidationism, marked by the tendency to repudiate the class struggle and the leadership of the workers in it, and expressed organizationally in resignations from the Party and in the columns of the legal press and, in the legal labor organizations, in a struggle against the need for a secret revolutionary organization. At the same time another deviation arose, to which was given the name of Otsovism. The Otsovists desired to maintain the boycott of the Duma on the ground that it was a sham parliament and, in the period of reaction, a worthless instrument. While Lenin wanted to center the activity of the Party upon parliamentarism, the Otsovists declared the chief task was military preparation and the training of instructors for future battles. The Otsovists therefore were Leftist groups

[1] *Selections from Lenin*, II, 277.

[2] At the 1907 Convention it was revealed that 52 per cent of the Mensheviks were intellectuals and only 6 per cent of the Bolsheviks.

which were opposed, for example, to the liquidation of the expropriation groups to which the Bolsheviks had finally agreed in 1909, after such groups had degenerated greatly and the basis for their continued operations had disappeared.

According to Lenin, just as the Mensheviks and liquidators had lost their head in one direction, the Otsovists had lost their bearings in another and also did not know how to work in periods of reaction. Lenin averred: "It is precisely amidst acute and growing reaction, when the mechanical force of reaction really breaks our contacts with the masses, hampers our efforts to carry on sufficiently extensive work, and weakens the Party, that the specific task of the Party is to utilize the parliamentary weapon, not because the parliamentary struggle is higher than other forms of struggle—but because it really is lower than the other forms which draw even troops into the mass movement, which give rise to mass strikes, insurrection, etc. Why should the use of this lower form of struggle become the specific task of the Party (i.e., the one distinguishing the given period from other periods)? Because the stronger the force of the reaction and the weaker the ties with the masses, the more urgent becomes the task of preparing the mind of the masses (and not the task of direct action), of utilizing the channels of propaganda and agitation created by the old régime (and not the direct attack of the masses upon the old régime itself)." [1]

However, in the struggle against the Otsovists, against the God Builders and other groups, Lenin, while urging their expulsion from the Bolshevik faction, was not desirous of expelling them from the Party itself. To Lenin the Party was no rigid instrument in which everyone had to think exactly alike on every question. On the contrary, within the framework of the Party program there could arise great and sharp divergences which yet could be confined within one organization under certain conditions.

It was inevitable that a mass party should attract to itself a certain number of camp followers of various shades. There was nothing alarming or abnormal in this so long as the proletarian element managed to assimilate them and knew them for what they were. But it would be an entirely different thing were they to control the organization.

"To break away from a fraction is not the same as breaking away from the Party. Those who have left our fraction are by no means deprived of the possibility of working in the Party. They will either remain 'unattached,' i.e., outside the fraction, and in that case they will be absorbed in the general work of the Party, or they will try to establish a new fraction, which they have a perfect right to do if they desire to defend and develop their special shade of views and tactics; in that case the whole Party will

[1] *Selections from Lenin*, II, 311-312.

very quickly see the manifestations of those tendencies, whose ideological significance we tried to appraise above." [1]

Thus, when the Otsovists, expelled from the Bolshevik faction, wanted to form a faction of their own, Lenin emphasized their right to do so, since they represented a distinct tendency at the time as when their place was still among the social-democrats. Here, then, must be noted an important point in the Lenin theory of a Communist Party. While the Party must insist on an adherence to a definite platform and policy, within limits it was certainly possible for the inevitable different shadings within the Party to gather into factions, to have their own caucuses, and so on.

In 1903 the Bolsheviks had obtained a majority in the Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia. During the events of 1905, when they worked together with the Mensheviks, they lost that majority but did not break from the Party. By 1907, with the heavy losses which the Mensheviks suffered through liquidationism, the Bolsheviks were able to regain the majority, but by that time they had become convinced that the Mensheviks were class enemies of the workers. The formal split, however, did not occur until 1912 when, with the revival of the movement, the liquidators were expelled, and the Mensheviks finally separated organizationally from the Bolsheviks.

When the Mensheviks were in the majority in 1905, Lenin insisted on freedom of factional conflict, freedom of discussion and criticism of the central committee, the rights of the local organizations. At the same time, however, he stood for democratic centralism and strict party discipline. The problem was how to obtain freedom for criticism and yet maintain discipline and unity in action, at the same time recognizing that there are times when discipline and organizational unity must be broken, that is, when the leaders of the party became opportunists and traitors to their class. It becomes a very fine question where to draw the line, since both strict discipline and factional splits become necessities at different times.

Lenin's theories of democratic centralism provided for full discussion before and after the action, but for complete unity during the course of the action. While it was true that without organization the strength of the proletariat was nothing, and the essence of organization lay in unity in action, it was also true that it was possible for the Party to embark on a wrong course of action. Only full discussion could determine when this had happened. Organization without ideas was an absurdity. Consequently, without the freedom of discussion and criticism, the proletariat did not recognize unity of action. For that reason, intelligent workers must never forget that sometimes serious violations of principles could occur which

[1] The same, pp. 300-301.

make the break-off of organizational relations absolutely necessary. Thus Lenin, who was for the strictest of disciplines, understood also the limitations of such discipline and knew when to break it.

In the Bolshevik Party there was a voluntary intelligent discipline based on the principle that the interests of the proletarian revolution and of the Communist Party stood above all. "We must always bear in mind that the army (our Party) of six hundred thousand men must be the vanguard of the working class, that without iron discipline it will be impossible to fulfill our task. The fundamental condition for the maintenance and preservation of our strict discipline is loyalty. All the old methods and resources for creating discipline have been destroyed. At the basis of all our activity we have laid only a high degree of thoughtfulness and intelligence. This has enabled us to maintain a discipline that stands higher than the discipline of any other State, and which rests on a basis totally different from that upon which the discipline of capitalist society is barely maintained, if it is maintained at all." [1]

Later, in dealing with the October, 1917, Revolution, Lenin wrote that one of the principal conditions of the success of the Bolsheviks was their iron discipline plus the fullest and unreserved support of advanced, sensible, honest, devoted, influential workers capable of leading and inspiring the working class. "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat is the fiercest and most merciless war of the new class against its most powerful enemy, the bourgeoisie, whose power of resistance increases tenfold after its overthrow, even though overthrown in only one country. The power of the bourgeoisie rests not alone upon international capital, upon its strong international connections, but also upon the force of habit, on the force of small industry of which unfortunately there is plenty left, and which daily, hourly, gives birth to capitalism and bourgeoisie spontaneously and on a large scale." [2] To Lenin, the experience of the triumphant proletarian dictatorship proved that unqualified centralization and strictest discipline of the proletariat were among the principal conditions for the victory over the bourgeoisie.

"Upon what rests the discipline of the Revolutionary Party of the proletariat? How is it controlled? How is it strengthened? Firstly, by the class consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and, by its devotion to the Revolution, by its steadiness, spirit of self-sacrifice and heroism. Secondly, by its ability to mix with the toiling masses, to become intimate and to a certain extent, if you will, to fuse itself with the proletarian masses primarily but also with the non-proletarian toilers. Thirdly, by the soundness of the political leadership, carried on by this vanguard, and by its correct

[1] *Lenin on Organization*, p. 33.
[2] V. I. Lenin: *"Left" Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, p. 6.

political strategy and tactics, based on the idea that the workers by their own experience must convince themselves of the soundness of this political leadership strategy and tactics. Without all these conditions, discipline in a Revolutionary Party, really capable of being a Party of the advanced class whose object is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform society, is impossible of realization. Without these conditions, all attempts to create discipline result in empty phrases, in mere contortions. On the other hand, these conditions will not arise suddenly. They are created through long effort and bitter experience. Their creation is facilitated by correct revolutionary theory, which, in its turn, is not dogmatic, but which forms itself in its finality only through close connection with the practice of the real mass and true revolutionary movement." [1]

Thus discipline was irretrievably connected with the correctness of the political line of the party. Should the party be leading the masses against the revolution, by all means was it necessary to break from such an organization and to build up a revolutionary one.

Between this extreme duty of split and the one of unconditional obedience there were numerous intermediate positions. If the Central Committee of the Party was committing isolated acts detrimental to the masses, then it was the duty of the genuine communist to raise his voice in criticism. Where the Central Committee was guilty of a whole series of such acts which were no longer merely isolated but were bound together into a tendency, there the criticism could begin to take a more hostile tone. When the tendency developed into a regular deviation from revolutionary communism, it became the duty of the communist to fight against such deviation by means of organized criticism in the form of a faction.

But the logic of factional fighting leads to a split. Such factions should not split away from the party so long as the party is putting up a correct battle on the whole and has a scientific program in spite of its inconsistent deviations. Where, however, the deviation is becoming the main line and the Central Committee is really on the road to counter-revolution, then it is imperative for the faction to prepare for and organize the split from the party. Here is the limit of discipline, where loyalty to the class conflicts with loyalty to the instrument of the class, the party. In such cases, the class must always prevail.

On the other hand, the Central Committee must create such a régime that both discussion and criticism in full be permitted. Nor can the Central Committee act upon the formation of factions so as to expel them automatically. Factions are bound to arise in every mass party. The world moves on; some of the members of the party stand still, others follow ideologically the real movement and are ready with new proposals. It is most

[1] The same, pp. 6-7.

natural for each grouping to band itself together and to conduct struggles for control of the party according to their views. Such an internal life of the party, far from being detrimental, is a sure sign that the party is alive and sensitive to the new events. What is to be condemned is unprincipled factional fighting where cliques struggle for power. This is a sure sign that the organization has nothing to do with the revolution but is a breeding place for careerists and all sorts of counter-revolutionary elements within the working class, those who substitute their own future for that of their organization or for the welfare of their class.

In a Leninist organization, the Central Committee is bound to tolerate the faction where the faction abides by the discipline of the majority and insures unity in action and where the program of that faction is on the whole identical with that of the party itself. Where, however, the faction has passed beyond that stage and is trying to bring into the ranks of the communists a program fit only for opportunists or enemy elements, then there is nothing left for such a Party to do but to expel the faction.

Here, then, was the basis and the limitations of discipline among the Bolsheviks. The Bolshevik Party under Lenin was able to be the vehicle to accomplish the revolution precisely because it tested out all its elements in all sorts of struggles, not merely in Russia, but abroad, and allowed the freest discussion of all communist elements within its ranks. The Bolshevik leaders, forced to emigrate to other countries, were able to overcome national provinciality and to realize very rich international experiences.

In their practical history, the Russians went through a wide revolutionary experience, embracing a great variety and rapidity of shifting forms, adaptable to legal and to illegal work, to peaceful and stormy periods, to parliamentary and terrorist activity, to open and underground organizations, to small circles and large masses. Through these experiences they were able to steel themselves for the events of 1917.

In preparation for their great achievements of 1917 the Bolsheviks had to go through several stages. In the years prior to 1905 there raged the bitter fight on questions of program and tactics. In these fights, the class was able to forge an adequate program for itself. In the period of the Revolution, from 1905 to 1907, all the programs and tactics were tested out. Strikes of unprecedented extent and acuteness arose, first economic, then political, finally turning into insurrections led by soviets. Here also was tested out the relationship of the workers to the peasants. Without the general rehearsal of 1905, the victory of 1917 would have been impossible. But it was not enough to go through the period of preparation and action, it was also necessary to experience defeat and depression, when demoralization, schism, dispersal of forces, renegacy, pornography, took the place of revolutionary politics. It was really in this period of defeat and retreat that the political

Party of Lenin became hardened and tested the most. It was in this period that the phrase-mongers were most sharply exposed and could be expelled from the ranks while the organization was prepared for the new advances that would be made.

After 1910, the movement began slowly to revive; it became active again in 1912. Now, because of their hard work in the period of retreat, the Bolsheviks were able to drive back the Mensheviks and succeeded in coordinating illegal forms of work with the obligatory utilization of all legal possibilities. By the time of the imperialist war, the Bolsheviks were prepared to take a revolutionary position against the Second International and to take advantage of the first break that should occur in the ranks of the Czarist absolutism. When the great Russian State began to crumble, as a result of the War, and the Revolution of 1917 began, they were ready.

XXXVIII. THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1917

I

THE World War slit open the living corpse of the Russian State from top to bottom and exposed the mass of maggots and parasitic pathogens that had been feeding upon the body politic. Under the onslaught of the German army, the whole rotten tissue of the ruling class fell to pieces in one disgraceful military debacle after another. To make up for its lack of technique, the Russian general staff mobilized fifteen million men, of whom soon five and a half million were counted as dead, wounded, or captured.[1] No wonder the mass of deserters reached unheard-of proportions, no wonder the revolutionary movement burned fiercely everywhere.

Now that the life of Czarism was in danger, the liberal bourgeoisie, as the chief beneficiary of the flood of gold and profits that came from the War, hugged closer than ever to the bureaucracy. The people, on the other hand, had first to drink to the dregs all the horrors and misery of the War before they could mobilize their forces for the revolt.

In the years just prior to the War, the labor movement already had begun again to raise its voice in no uncertain terms. After the massacre in the Lena Gold Fields in 1912 there came a series of strikes and demonstrations mounting in the first half of 1914 to an extent surpassed only by the events of 1905. In the seven months of 1914, the strike wave embraced one and a half million workers. In July alone three hundred and twenty-five thousand, or one-tenth of the total proletariat was on strike. Immediately upon the declaration of War, the movement had been sternly suppressed but, by the first two months of 1917, labor activity had regained its extraordinary high level. The War retarded the revolutionary process only later to drive it deeper, to accelerate it and aid it to grip the very vitals of society.

When revolutionary activity reappeared in 1917, it was quite a different sort of movement than that which had existed before the War. First, the Second International had collapsed and its fall had greatly disorientated the workers. Second, many of the older fighters had been called to the front

[1] The total loss to Russia, including loss of children due to decreased birth rate, has been estimated at eight million souls! (See S. Kohn and A. F. Meyendorff: *The Cost of the War to Russia*, p. 138.)

and there either had perished or were lost. At the same time immense numbers of new villagers were brought into the city to dilute the ranks of the conscious proletariat. These new elements had to learn the lessons of the past all over again before they could become soldiers in the class struggle. The War also made the backward workers intensely patriotic. In fact, their discontent with the government began not with the declaration of the War but with the manner in which the War was conducted. They resented the bottomless treachery of the government and the immense loss of lives due to criminal irresponsibility and waste. They hated the profiteers and other parasites growing fat off the War and making the ruin of the country inevitable. Protesting against the methods of conducting the War, they came in conflict with the government and thus learned their first lessons in the class struggle. But all of this took time.

At the same time the revolutionary forces had become much dispersed and had taken opportunist and nationalist positions. Even the Bolshevik faction in the Duma displayed certain weaknesses. Lenin was abroad, and his defeatist position on war was shared by no Russian organization.[1] However, the percentage of patriots in the ranks of the Bolsheviks was not large, and the deputies soon recovered their balance and continued their struggle against the War. The government followed all their moves very closely, and in November the group of deputies was arrested and exiled to Siberia.

It should be remarked that already the police had noted: "The most energetic and audacious element, ready for tireless struggle, for resistance and continual organization is that element, those organizations, and those people who are concentrated around Lenin." [2] So closely were these elements watched that in the St. Petersburg Committee of the Bolsheviks alone, three out of the seven members were in the employ of the government's Secret Service.

"By the end of 1916, prices are rising by leaps and bounds. To the inflation and the breakdown of transport, there is added an actual lack of goods. The demands of the population have been cut down by this time to one-half. The curve of the workers' movement rises sharply. In October the struggle enters its decisive phase, uniting all forms of discontent in one. Petrograd draws back for the February leap. A wave of meetings runs through the factories. The topics: food supplies, high cost of living, war, government. Bolshevik leaflets are distributed; political strikes begin; improvised demonstrations occur at factory gates; cases of fraternization between certain factories and the soldiers are observed; a stormy protest-

[1] See L. D. Trotsky: *The History of the Russian Revolution*, I, 37.

[2] The same, quoting Police Report, p. 36.

strike flares up over the trial of the revolutionary sailors of the Baltic Fleet." [1]

The same thing was occurring in the provinces. When the Duma met on the fourteenth of February, bread cards were distributed in Petrograd. Strikes now occurred more frequently. At the same time, the unsolved agrarian problem flared forth again, fusing the proletarian revolt with the peasant war. After 1905 the government had made some attempts to pacify the peasantry by abolishing the old land redemption payments and opening the way to a broader colonization of Siberia. Landlords had begun to make concessions in the matter of rentals and to sell their land in far larger quantities than before. This did not, however, help the great mass of peasants but only facilitated the rise of the kulak and capitalist section of the peasantry. To cap the climax, the War, in drawing two million horses and fifteen million men into the army flattened out the poorer sections even further and caused the agrarian crisis to enter a most acute phase.

The chaos on the countryside could not but find an echo in the chaos in the ruling class itself. The isolation of the monarchy from the people had led to the most idiotic and stultified condition of the Court and to the concentration of a religious hysteria and mysticism that found an outlet in the magic of Rasputin. The Court's isolation was deepened by its definitely pro-German sympathies The Czarina herself was a Hessian.

The traitorous leanings of the Court offered the mass of people of Russia a convenient pretext for their demonstrations. As in the French Revolution, where the Austrian born Queen was suspected of being against her adopted country, and the people, by directing their attacks against the foreigner, were able to overthrow the old French régime, so in Russia, the masses, by concentrating their hatred against the German camarilla and the Hessian Queen, could move step by step objectively against their own "Little Father" and overthrow the old order. Every defeat of the Russian Army was laid to the treachery of the pro-Germans in the Czarist Court. At first it was considered as a problem of saving the Czar from his treacherous advisers, then it became a matter of dealing with the Chief himself, of eliminating him as the real public enemy of the people.

The idiocy of the monarchy, the deep cleft in the ranks of the nobility between the pro-Germans and those in favor of the Triple Entente, the general network of intrigue and distrust around the leading centers of the government, all helped to paralyze the ruling cliques and to accelerate the developments of the Revolution. Added to this were the plots of the English and French diplomats who were greatly discontented with the part Russia was playing in the War and wanted a change in the régime so as to insure

[1] The same, pp 42-43

greater efficiency at the front. Finally came the palace revolution wherein Rasputin, the Queen's favorite priest, was murdered by elements of the aristocracy.

"The murder of Rasputin played a colossal rôle, but a very different one from that upon which its perpetrators and inspirers had counted. It did not weaken the crisis, but sharpened it. People talked of the murder everywhere; in the palaces, in the staffs, at the factories, and in the peasants' huts. The inference drew itself; even the grand dukes have no other recourse against the leprous camarilla except poison and the revolver. The poet Blok wrote of the murder of Rasputin: 'The bullet which killed him reached the very heart of the ruling dynasty.'" [1]

Thus the attack upon the monarchy by the masses from below was preceded from above by the disintegration of the ruling groups whose mutual struggles attested to the fact that they no longer could control either events or themselves.

On the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth of February [2] the action came to a head. At first the disorders at Petrograd and the insurrection of the entire garrison there compelled the Czar to flee to the front, that is, to the general headquarters of the army. When the crisis deepened, the Czar determined to return to his family, but on the way back he was held up by the workers in revolt. The Monarch decided to wire the Council of Advisers, at the head of which stood the bourgeois Rodzianko, that he should form a new government. By this time, however, the troops already had invaded the Czar's palaces and his private sentries had disappeared. Far away from the scene of action, the Czar was pitifully belated with his concessions. The very general whom the despot appointed to deal drastically with the situation, arrived at the capital, and found he could accomplish nothing. All over the country the army was in revolt and was recognizing the new régime that had not yet formally been established, but which was presumed to be composed of the ministers abandoned by the Czar when he fled.

By the time the Czar had been convinced that the revolution could not be stopped and had wired Rodzianko to form a responsible ministry and a Constitutional Monarchy, it was too late; the question now being debated was whether Nicholas himself should be further tolerated by the people. The generals at the front advised the monarch to abdicate; the Czar hesitated between abdicating in favor of his son or his brother; the revolution pressed on and threw the entire monarchy into the discard.

[1] The History of the Russian Revolution, I, 75

[2] The dates are of the old Russian calendar, that is thirteen days behind that of the ordinary calendar.

The events had started with the celebration of International Women's Day, February 23, when working class women, incensed at the high cost of living and the waiting in line for bread, called the workers on strike. The next day the slogan for bread was drowned by the slogans, "Down with the Autocracy!" "Down with the War!"

Instinctively the masses were differentiating between the police and the regular army. Towards the former there was unmitigated and relentless hostility; towards the latter every effort for fraternization and conciliation was made to win them to the people's side. Here, indeed, is an important lesson. The police were professional dogs of the government. They were involved in all the graft and corruption of the old régime and intimately connected with the vice and other institutions of the slums that had dragged the people down. All during their professional lives they carefully had calculated how much they could possibly squeeze and blackmail from each and every individual. With such debased and degenerate elements the people could deal only by extermination.

It was entirely different with the regular army of conscripts who came fresh from the factory and the farm, who were close to the people and who were not accustomed to shooting at their own countrymen. Although unarmed, the people were emboldened by desperation to stand firm in the face of the troops' charges. They attempted physically to demoralize the troops so as to compel them to disobey their furious officers who had ordered them to shoot to kill, and to induce them to turn upon these very officers with their guns and to go over to the side of the revolution. Thus the revolution was able to crack the army and to win the first troops to the side of the masses. This in turn compromised these soldiers to the extent of making them the most firm defenders of the movement, since their mutiny would now cost them their lives should the revolution fail. The mutineers became the ardent trainers of the revolutionary army. For them the die was cast; they had backed up their opinions with their lives.

Not that the government had been caught unprepared for the revolt. For years, ever since 1905, the authorities carefully had worked out plans to meet the next attempt. A commission under General Khabalov had completed, by the middle of January, 1917, an exact scheme for the crushing of a possible insurrection in St. Petersburg. The difficulty lay not in the plan but in the ability to carry it out; the human material refused to function since the garrison itself had revolted.

In a sense, a similar situation existed among the workers. For a long time the revolutionary movement had been preparing for the new revolution, but the events caught the organizations unready. It was the women, mostly unorganized, who led the way and started the ball rolling, just as it was the women who most courageously faced the troops and shamed them

into lowering their guns The organizations, even the boldest of them, the Bolsheviks, tended to lag behind the events However, there is this important dialectical connection to be noted between the spontaneous mass actions and the workers' revolutionary organizations, like the Bolshevik party It was the masses that pressed forward creating events that dragged the Bolsheviks with them, but once the Bolsheviks and the other organizations similar to them participated, they stiffened the people in the course of action There existed no longer the jelly like wavering, the general hysteria; the ranks held more firmly and the lessons of events were brought up for scientific discussion If the organizations' theory lagged behind the practice of the people, in turn this theory helped to guide that practice ever to higher levels

Within the organizations themselves, as events moved with the swiftness of the airplane, the gap between theory and practice caused peristaltic convulsions to shake the whole organism from time to time Generally it was to be found that the functionaries of the organization were further removed from the events than the rank and file members who ran into battle and were closer to the praxis of the people The functionaries had been elected on the basis of past events, already dead and buried in the light of the tidal wave sweeping society, these functionaries by no means could guarantee that they would remain as flexible as in the past when they had won their superior positions of control They tended to a certain rigidity and conservatism in spite of themselves On the other hand, their position and training allowed them to see the problem more in its true perspective and breadth, and this too tended to make them hesitate to take the enormous responsibility which the decisions of the day entailed The action of the masses relieved them of this responsibility but, should they not support the mass struggle, everything might be compromised because of the masses' insufficient understanding of the process as a whole, and insufficient organization and preparation for the events of the future

Thus there had to be found within the organizations of the working class a membership close enough to the workers and to decisive class actions to enable them sensitively to follow every event and to push forward leaders who would see that the lag between theory and practice was not too great Genuine leaders constantly would refresh themselves in the struggle and would remain close to their membership and their class, such people overcame the general conservatism of the functionary and supplemented the action of the class with the leadership of the organization necessary for victory In Russia, the only organization trained to do so was the Bolshevik party and even this one could proceed only haltingly and with a good deal of friction So delicate was the equilibrium that it was possible for the

weight of even one man to change historic events. The events produced the man—Lenin.

"To the question, Who led the February revolution? we can then answer definitely enough: Conscious and tempered workers educated for the most part by the Party of Lenin. But we must here immediately add: This leadership proved sufficient to guarantee the victory of the insurrection, but it was not adequate to transfer immediately into the hands of the proletarian vanguard the leadership of the revolution." [1]

The February revolution was achieved in Petrograd The rest of the country followed, not because it was accustomed to do what the capital did, but because the capital expressed in the most concentrated form the aspirations and needs of the entire country The fighting was limited in the main to one city. Thus the February revolution, for an action of that scope, was practically bloodless Less than one thousand five hundred casualties, including killed and wounded, were reported for the historic days of the overthrow of the monarchy and for the establishment of a bourgeois republic. The democracy lovers, especially those who later denounced the Bolsheviks for having seized power without taking a vote throughout the country, have little to say generally on the fact that the action in one city decided the fate of the entire country and that, if such could be a realistic expression of the feelings of all the people, the action of the Bolsheviks in October might also have been such an expression. We shall return later to the question of the "democracy" of the October revolution.

2

The elemental forces that had so brusquely pushed aside the monarchy now threw all the problems of 1905, which had remained all this time in chiaroscuro, into the brightest light. There had been no responsible Duma or Ministry. Indeed, the Czar had dismissed even his rubber-stamp Duma when the telling blows were delivered by the soldiers and masses. When the first shock of revolution was over it occurred to the bourgeois leaders of the Duma to form a Provisional Committee of the Duma Members to run affairs. Simultaneously, with the release of the political prisoners and the advance of the revolution, there was created also a Provisional Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies composed of old, experienced revolutionists. This Executive Committee immediately called for the elections of regular delegates from the soviets of workers and soldiers which were spontaneously springing up on all sides The experiences of 1905 had not been in vain.

"From the moment of its formation the Soviet, in the person of its Executive Committee, begins to function as a sovereign. It elects a tempo-

[1] The History of the Russian Revolution, I, 152

rary food commission and places it in charge of the mutineers and of the garrison in general. It organizes parallel with itself a Provisional revolutionary staff—everything was called provisional in those days—of which we have already spoken above In order to remove financial resources from the hands of the officials of the old power, the Soviet decides to occupy the State Bank, the Treasury, the Mint and the Printing Office with a revolutionary guard. The tasks and functions of the Soviet grow unceasingly under pressure from the masses The revolution finds here its indubitable center. The workers, the soldiers, and soon also the peasants, will from now on turn only to the Soviet. In their eyes, the Soviet becomes the focus of all hopes and all authority, an incarnation of the revolution itself. But representatives of the possessing classes will also seek in the Soviet, with whatever grindings of teeth, protection and counsel in the resolving of conflicts." [1]

What was to prevent the masses through their soviets from taking over the power then and there? The bourgeoisie had made not the slightest pretense of favoring the revolution; on the contrary, they were in deadly fear of the people and acted in close conspiracy with the monarchy for the restoration of Czarism in one form or another. They had not even dared to create a formal Provisional Committee of the Duma but only an unofficial one to keep the government functioning during the period of chaos. At this moment the delegation of the Provisional Executive Committee of the soviets came to the Duma representatives and begged them to take the power.

Here we have the unprecedented situation wherein revolutionary socialists, Mensheviks, and Social-Revolutionaries, themselves in charge of the organs of real power, the soviets, the only institutions that the masses respected, went to their enemies, the capitalists, and begged them to take power. This could happen only because the Mensheviks had developed the theory that the revolution had to be a bourgeois democratic one and that, in such a revolution, only the bourgeoisie could lead the way and take control. Finally, after repeated urgings by the Provisional Executive Committee and after the bourgeois ministers could not help but realize that, if they did not accept, the masses would indeed take things into their own hands, the Miliukovs, Guchkovs, Rodzianko, et al, decided, as loyal subjects to the Czar, to assume control and try to save the old order and capitalism. Thereupon these craven elements suddenly blossomed out as the "Revolutionary Government" and were enabled to maintain this pose, not because of their revolutionary activity but simply because Menshevism and socialist populism had coolly and calculatingly turned over all power to them and had quit the fight for control

[1] The same, I, p 159

The masses, intoxicated by the first honeymoon days of the revolution, did not realize that their chief enemy was to be found entirely within their own ranks. They had yet to learn the bitter lesson that always the fight has to be waged on two fronts, one against the open enemy, the other in the rear—in their case, against the agents of the enemy who were paralyzing the working class from within

In the struggle against Czarism various classes and sections had participated in such a way as often to blur distinctions In a common front were not only the workers in the large factories, but those of the small and the light shops, not only the unskilled laborer but the skilled mechanic, together with elements of the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie. These masses had been fused into one uncritical mass against the old order; they had not as yet become differentiated into their various component parts Naturally, at this stage of events, it was the upper strata, the more articulate elements, that took the lead These were the skilled workers and the petty bourgeois groups adhering to the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries At this period, the masses could not as yet distinguish the true from the false, the genuine from the sham revolutionists For that matter, the Bolsheviks themselves had not been prepared for the events and were not able either to crystallize at once a correct policy or to win the confidence of the masses All the pressure of capitalism inclined to favor the parties of the Right among the revolutionary masses rather than those of the Left. This was another way of saying that the revolution could not proceed immediately to give victory to the Soviets because of the lack of clarity and understanding on the part of the workers and their leaders and organizations Clarity and firmness had to be gained in the course of a long struggle wherein every day was to count as a year The Bolsheviks were to win only after the masses had tried all other parties and these organizations had failed them.

It would seem, from the formal argument of democracy, that the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries, those staunch protagonists of the rule of the people, could not have supported the Provisional Committee of Duma Members This committee had not been elected by the people. According to the Czar, the Duma had been dismissed Had the Mensheviks believed that the Duma was indeed a more democratic mechanism than the soviets, at least they could have taken the power in order to call for immediate elections by the people But it was precisely these democrats who steadily insisted on postponing the elections and retaining a government not elected by the people. These were the politicians who attacked the Bolsheviks for lack of democracy!

In spite of themselves, however, the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries could not liquidate the soviets. All they could declare was that the soviets would agree to support the Provisional Committee of the Duma and

a Provisional Government, but they added the condition that the government must allow the soviets the complete right to develop themselves. The government itself soon enough would come to realize that it existed only because of the good nature of the masses and at the will of the soviets During the whole period there existed a dual government—on the one hand the Provisional Government living by the good graces of the soviets, and on the other hand the soviets supported by the masses but abdicating power to the Duma Committee. A fierce struggle ensued between these two forms of government The Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries in charge of the soviets supported the power of the Duma Only the Bolsheviks, at first a small minority, raised the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" and convinced the masses behind the soviets that they themselves no longer should abdicate their power, but must grasp immediately and permanently what had been available to them from the beginning

This was how the Russian situation stood until the gigantic problems of the day came up for solution The matter of the War, of hunger, of land distribution, of disorganization, these were pressing questions that neither the Duma nor the parties in control of the soviets could answer Slowly the masses were forced to take matters into their own hands, they placed the control in the Bolshevik Party The period from February to October, 1917, was the period of the gradual, zig zag movement of the masses to accomplish the basic tasks before them by the assumption of complete power

"On the 1st of March the Provisional Committee undertook the formation of a ministry, appointing to it those men whom the Duma had been recommending to the Tsar since 1915 as enjoying the confidence of the country They were big landlords and industrialists, opposition deputies in the Duma, leaders of the Progressive Bloc. The fact is that, with one single exception, the revolution accomplished by workers and soldiers found no reflection whatever in the staff of the revolutionary government The exception was Kerensky" [1] Still without calling elections, the Kadets in the saddle named Prince Lvov as the Prime Minister and supported him with two other Right Wingers, Miliukov and Guchkov

On the surface this group had obtained central power; in reality they were prisoners of the revolution and had to come to the soviets for approval of all their acts In the provinces this was far more true than in the center, and while the Provisional Government appointed commissioners to govern the rest of the country, such commissioners usually achieved nothing They complained that no one obeyed them, but heeded only the soviets in charge of the villages, towns, districts, and provinces. In other words, the top leaders of the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries who turned over their

[1] The History of the Russian Revolution I, 183

power in the capital were not followed by their own members living closer to the masses, in the back parts of the country; it became the duty of the provinces to push forward the center.

It should be borne in mind that the Executive Committee of the Soviets had not been created, as in 1905, from a strike wave of which they had been the leaders. The February revolution, thanks to the revolt of the troops, was victorious before the workers had created any soviet at all. The Executive Committee, then, was self-constituted in advance while many of the real leaders were still engaged in insurrection. Both in the soviets and in the government, the people in charge were interested only in maintaining the status quo and not permitting the revolution to progress to its end.

At the start, the workers could not raise their voice too authoritatively in the soviet, since extreme chaos reigned, and many petty bourgeois careerists crowded into the soviet and became "delegates" representing no one. Then, too, the country was at war, soldiers were flooding the cities, and, for every two delegates who were workers, there were five who were but peasants in uniform. The revolution could proceed farther only when the drive of the proletariat was buttressed by the needs of the peasants' war. Within the soviets, the political representatives of the peasantry, the Social-Revolutionaries, dominated the scene and, together with the skilled workers and petty bourgeois elements of the city, overwhelmed all other factors.

Within these parties definite clefts soon began to appear, especially as the old leaders returned from abroad or from exile. On the Right were those people who had been patriotic from the outset of the War, such as Plechanov, Zasulich, and Deutsch among the Mensheviks, and Chaikovsky and Breshko-Breshkovskaia among the Social-Revolutionaries. In the Center there were those who had been part of the Zimmerwald conference, who had opposed the War when conducted by the Czar but who found the War agreeable when it was conducted by democracy. These men found themselves in the same camp as the other Socialist opportunists who were fighting the War "for democracy's sake." Among the Mensheviks they included Tseritelli, Cheidze, and Dan, while farther Left, opposing the War, yet wanting a rapprochement between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks, was Martov who had been connected with Trotsky in editing *Nashe Slovo* (Our Word) in Paris. Among the Social-Revolutionaries the Centrist position was occupied by Kerensky and Chernov, both of whom wanted war to the end, once the War had been connected with the introduction of democracy in Russia.

However, within the soviets were elements of these parties that were forced to take on those responsible tasks which brought them into conflict with the old régime. The soviets, under mass pressure, had to suppress the monarchist press, although later the right of the press to advocate the

return of the Czar was restored. The soviets were forced to issue an order to prevent the Provisional Government from releasing the Czar. They also had to solve the problem of feeding the people, and this led them to expropriate private property, to control speculation, and to organize a market The soviets were obliged to declare all grain stores to be public property, to fix prices for bread, to take control over industry, to regulate exchange with the peasantry, precisely as the Jacobins had done in the French Revolution.

Thus, although the leaders wanted to maintain the status quo, this had become impossible Soon conflicts arose between the Provisional Executive Committee and the workers The overthrow of the monarchy had been accompanied by strikes of the workers, mainly for the eight hour day. The leaders of the soviets ordered the strikers back to work, the strikers refused, and carried on until they had won their principal demand The Menshevik leaders had wanted the revolution to be merely political, the workers insisted on making the revolution operate to their advantage and began to fight for the real improvement of their position In their own way the proletarians were testing their strength for the real struggles ahead In the strike victory for the eight hour day it was the Bolsheviks who were beginning to make themselves heard over the parliamentarian opportunists In the action of the soviet executives who opposed the workers' continuing the strike until their demands had been won already there was to be seen a basic struggle between the workers in the unions and the peasants in the country Already the fact was apparent that the soviet deputies no longer represented the real situation in the country and that the soviets had become an organ for the intellectual politicians and careerists who meant to block the will of the most advanced section of the proletariat. Through the Executive Committee, the politics of the bourgeois order, crystallized in the most revolutionary organs, vainly tried to prevail over the economics of the workers enunciated through the regular institutions of the trade union and the strike Such was the paradoxical dialectics of the revolution In the long run, the soviets had to give the order for the establishment of the eight-hour day, politics began to catch up with economics, and the workman began to take the leading rôle

"The events connected with this struggle for the eight-hour day had an immense significance for the whole future development of the revolution The workers had gained a few free hours a week for reading, for meetings, and also for practice with the rifle, which became a regular routine from the moment of the creation of the workers' militia Moreover, after this clear lesson, the workers began to watch the Soviet leadership more closely. The authority of the Mensheviks suffered a serious drop The Bolsheviks grew stronger in the factories, and partly too in the barracks. The soldier

became more attentive, thoughtful, cautious: he understood that somebody was stalking him. The treacherous design of the demagogue turned against its own inspirers. Instead of alienation and hostility, they got a closer welding together of workers and soldiers." [1]

Through their closeness to the soldiers, who were peasants in uniform, the workers were able to get nearer to the peasantry, far nearer than in 1905. These soldiers formed the natural contact committee between the two classes and frequently visited the factories to fraternize with the workers and then went to the villages to translate the meaning of the struggle to the people there. The existence of a vast army of conscripts had immense effect upon the ability of the workers to impress their will upon the countryside and to lead the peasantry to victory.

One of the first acts of the soviets was to free the soldier through its famous Order No. 1 in which it declared in bold paragraphs that elective committees should be formed in all military regiments; soldiers' deputies should be elected to the soviet; in all political acts the soldiers should submit to the soviet and its committees; weapons should be in the control of the regimental and battalion committees, and should in no case be given up to the officer; on duty the severest military discipline—off duty, complete citizens' rights; saluting off duty and titling of officers were abolished; uncivil treatment of soldiers was forbidden. "That Order of the Day gained wide and painful notoriety and gave the first impetus to the collapse of the army." [2] When the Executive Committee later wanted to modify this Order, the typesetters refused to set up the type for the print. Thus the leaders of the soviets could not retract in time the Order breaking the discipline of the Czarist army. In revenge, the Executive Committee permitted practically all the old Czarist officers to remain in charge. It was left to the soldiers themselves to deal with their former masters in their own way.

In the meantime, within the ranks of the Bolsheviks themselves, sharp disputes were taking place. At the start, the Bolshevik leaders acted as though they were merely a Left Wing of democracy and not a proletarian party fighting for power. Eleven of their members or adherents were members of the Executive Committee of the Soviets and their fraction in the soviet numbered forty, and yet without an official protest on their part they allowed the soviets to give up their power to the Provisional Government. Only on the fourth of March did the Bureau of the Bolshevik Central Committee issue a statement that the Provisional Government was

[1] The same, p. 244.

[2] General A. I. Denikin: *The Russian Turmoil*, p. 61.

Denikin declares: "Kerensky is reported to have declared afterwards pathetically that he would have given ten years of his life to prevent the Order from being signed." (The same, p. 62.)

counter-revolutionary, but nothing concrete was done about it. Such friendliness to the new government was not the viewpoint of the membership of the Bolshevik Party, but it was the leadership that controlled the situation. This opportunist policy was rendered more secure when Stalin and Kamenev returned from exile and veered the Bolshevik Party sharply to the Right. These leaders came out with slogans that varied but slightly from those of the Menshevik defensists, who called for the continuation of the War in order to save the revolution. Thus, as they moved to the bourgeoisie and to a coalition with the Mensheviks, the Bolshevik officials began to break sharply from Lenin, who was in Switzerland and up to then unable to reach Russia.

"The policy of the Party throughout the whole country naturally followed that of *Pravda* (Truth) [1] In many Soviets, resolutions about fundamental problems were adopted unanimously the Bolsheviks simply bowed down to the Soviet majority At a conference of the Soviets of the Moscow region, the Bolsheviks joined in the resolution of the social patriots on the War And finally, at the All-Russian Conference of the representatives of eighty-two Soviets at the end of March and the beginning of April, the Bolsheviks voted for the official resolution on the question of power which was defended by Dan This extraordinary political rapprochement with the Mensheviks caused a widespread tendency towards unification In the provinces, the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks entered into united organizations The Kamenev-Stalin faction was steadily converting itself into a left flank of the so-called revolutionary democracy" [2]

Although removed from the scene of struggle, Lenin had correctly diagnosed the situation and, fuming and fretting, was exhausting the ingenuity of all his contacts in order to return to Russia As soon as the reports of events had reached him, he had pointed out the fact that, while the workers had done the fighting, they had turned over the power to their enemies; this could be only the first stage of the revolution What was necessary was the organization of a genuine revolutionary party, a break with the Mensheviks, struggle for a republic, war against imperialism, activity for the international proletarian revolution and pressing for the realization of the demand. All Power to the Soviets [3]

Lenin, and Zinoviev with him, were under no illusions about the new Provisional Government. This government could not establish peace, it would not publish secret treaties, nor conclude an armistice, nor free the colonies and subject nations of Russia, nor give bread to the people. Only a workers' government, allied first with the mass of poorest village

[1] The official organ of the Bolsheviks edited by Kamenev and Stalin
[2] The same, pp 291 292
[3] See V I Lenin *Collected Works*, Vol XX, Book I, pp 19 20

population and second with revolutionary workers of all warring countries, would be able to perform these tasks. The job of the revolutionary movement was to expose the government, to organize soviets, to arm the workers, to work in the army, to organize in the countryside, particularly among the agricultural workers.

Lenin now sent a series of "Letters from Afar" to be published in *Pravda,* official organ of the Party. Significantly, only one of the letters was allowed to be published and then only on the date that Lenin actually arrived in Russia, that is, on April third. In these letters, Lenin urged that the Bolsheviks fight for the overthrow of the Provisional Government and use the soviets as the organs of insurrection. The workers must create their universal militia.

Like a caged lion, Lenin understood he must break out of his prison and enter Russia at all costs if he was to change the fatal direction given to the Bolshevik Party by the old leadership now in control. He knew Bolshevik leaders were taking a nationalist and class collaborationist direction approaching the line of the Menshevik opportunists. As a desperate measure, he agreed, therefore, to permit the German government to send him in a sealed train through Germany so that he could return.

The German government, of course, had its own purpose in so doing. It hoped that Lenin would be able further to demoralize the Russian government so that an early peace could be made, thus releasing all German troops for action on the Western Front. Affairs were going against the German imperialists, and America was on the verge of entrance into the War. Decisions had to be reached quickly or all would be lost. The imperial government of Germany was therefore willing to play with the revolutionist Lenin. Under such circumstances, Lenin had difficulty in meeting the propaganda of the Entente and hostile press that he was a German agent.

On his side, Lenin had no choice but to accept the offer, his sole condition being that the train be sealed so that no person could enter it while he was passing through Germany. There was absolutely no other means of reaching Russia and, in the light of the opportunism of the Bolshevik leadership, it was urgent that he delay not one day more than was necessary. In his farewell letter to the Swiss workers, Lenin took pains to expound his conception of the Russian revolution and the idea that the Russian revolution could not be successful without the world revolution and the end of capitalism. He writes: "The Russian proletariat single-handed cannot bring the Socialist revolution to a victorious conclusion. But it can give the Russian Revolution a mighty sweep such as would create most favorable conditions for a Socialist revolution and would in a sense start it. . . . It can help create more favourable circumstances for its most important,

most trustworthy and most reliable collaborator, the European and the American socialist proletariat, to join in the decisive battles." [1] How different was this world conception from the nationalist practical politics of Stalin and Kamenev at the time.

Lenin arrived in Russia not a day too soon. His first words were in the nature of a scathing attack upon the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and the editorship of the *Pravda* Immediately he advanced his theses "The peculiarity of the present situation in Russia is that it represents a *transition,* which, from the first stage of the revolution because of the inadequate organization and insufficient class-consciousness of the proletariat, led to the assumption of power by the bourgeoisie, to its second stage which is to place power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest strata of the peasantry." [2]

Lenin insisted no concessions be made to revolutionary defensism so long as the workers and poor peasants had no power, secret treaties existed, and the War was being fought for imperialist aims He pointed out that capitalism could never give peace, that the battle for peace must be part of the struggle to end capitalism As Lenin saw it, the only reason why the workers did not take power in Russia was because they were not class conscious and not sufficiently organized. It was necessary to use the period of legality given to the Bolsheviks to explain to the workers that it was imperative for the soviets to take all the power into their hands So long as the Provisional Government did not forbid freedom of speech and press, so long would the Bolsheviks abstain from violent insurrectionary tactics and take solely to methods of persuasion to win the majority of the workers to the side of the victory of their own organs, the soviets.

The program of the Bolsheviks would have to call for nationalization of the banks, workers' control over production and distribution. Above all was it necessary to clear up the confusion within the Bolshevik ranks in order to put an end to the situation where ". . even our own Bolsheviks show confidence in the government' [3] An immediate convention must be called for the entire Party that would change the Party program on the question of imperialism and imperialist war, on the matter of the proper attitude toward the State and soviets, and on the minimum program required The Party name should also be changed to Communist Party so as sharply to distinguish it forever from the Menshevik Social-Democratic. A new international of revolutionary socialists must be created. Those who refused to go this way would have to break with Lenin, the leader and founder and genius of the Party.

[1] The same, p 87
[2] The same, p 97
[3] The same, p 98

This speech of Lenin, delivered to a caucus of Bolshevik members of the All-Russian Conference of Soviets on the day of his arrival, came as a veritable bombshell. Lenin had warned them he would rather be with one Liebknecht than with one hundred and ten defensists. Here was proven again the paradox that, in politics, the part is sometimes greater than the whole, Lenin was greater than all the rest of the Executive Committee that opposed him. Stalin was forced to yield in silence, a silence that was to endure practically until the death of Lenin; the others were defeated overwhelmingly The fact was that the Bolshevik worker members long ago had been prepared for just such policies as Lenin had proposed, and, even before Lenin's arrival, had fought against the opportunism of their leaders. The arrival of Lenin helped immensely to close the gap between the leadership and the members of the Bolsheviks as well as between the Bolshevik organization and the masses From now on the action of the masses would be sensitively followed, understood, and even anticipated by its scientific vanguard, the Russian Communist Party, that would interpret every experience and constantly raise the struggle to a higher level

3

The Czar had been overthrown, but when was the War to end? This was the question on the lips of the people; it was on this question that the Provisional Government was to fall The Guchkovs, Miliukovs, and Rodzianko had no intention of ending the War until the imperialist aims of the Russian Czar had been realized the capture of Constantinople, Armenia, Northern Persia, portions of Austria and Turkey The soviets, however, issued a proclamation that Russia was no longer interested in annexations and would carry out only a war of defense Ignoring this action and not waiting to test the temper of the masses, Miliukov published a note to the effect that Russia would continue the War Herein lay his fatal error On the twentieth of April, the masses invaded the streets with arms in their hands to demand "Down with Miliukov" Again it was the soldiers who led the way, the workers quickly followed and streamed out of their factories That day the masses were persuaded to return to the barracks and to the factories, but the next day they came out again, this time on the call of the newly revived Bolshevik Party itself In turn, the Kadets supporting Miliukov organized their own demonstration in the bourgeois center of town Thus two hostile forces met in a head-on collision; the stage was set for the further course of the civil war.

At this critical moment the revolution was menaced by a great threat In the first place, many of the Bolsheviks, apparently having quelled the Right danger in their ranks and having realized how power had

slipped from their hands into that of the bourgeoisie, believed, together with the soviet workers, who also now appreciated that the Provisional Government lived only by sufferance, that it would be a very easy thing, as easy as the downfall of the Czar, to overthrow the Provisional Government and capitalism. In these days, the Petrograd Bolshevik Central Committee actually put forward the slogan, "Down with the Provisional Government!" They did not consider such a move totally unprepared for; that it was one thing to put down the remnants of a decayed monarchy supported by no active class, and another thing to put down the capitalist system then dominant throughout the world. The seizure of power would have to be maintained and supported by a proletariat only recently awakened and organized, still far removed from the peasantry and soldiery so far as socialist demands were concerned. The submersion of the Provisional Government could have been only a Blanquist adventure and would have led to the sternest repression by the reactionary forces aided by middle layers of the population.

The danger manifest in the "April Days" is inherent in all people's revolutions. The masses in their "honeymoon" stage underestimate their difficulties and the power of the enemy. They believe that "the people" are basically united and that the conquest of power for the new social order can be achieved at one blow. In such a parlous stage of the revolution, only a stern and tested party close to the realities of the situation can prevent the masses from compromising themselves and going too far. This is precisely what Lenin attempted to do. He threw all his energy against the "Leftist" Central Committee of the Petrograd Bolshevik Party. The slogan, "Down with the Provisional Government," was dropped.

On the other hand, the government had prepared for precisely this sort of provocation. Milukov had already been in consultation with General Kornilov for the stationing of troops and cannon and the smashing of the demonstration. But here, too, the counter-revolutionary forces miscalculated and were made to appreciate the fact that behind the Bolsheviks stood the soviets. Faced with the menace of Kornilov, the Executive Committee of the Soviets was impelled to wire all the regiments that *"To the Executive Committee alone belongs the right to command you.* Thereafter every order for the despatch of troops had, besides the customary formalities, to be issued on an official paper of the Soviet and countersigned by no less than two persons authorized for this purpose."[1]

Thus, despite itself, and to save its own neck, the Executive Committee was forced to divorce itself farther from the Government and to demonstrate its own power. The Provisional Government had exposed itself openly as the enemy of the people, not only in its note for the continuation of the

[1] L. D. Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution*, I, 348.

War with Czarist aims, but in its readiness to shoot down the revolution whose agent it professed to be. Although the civil war was averted, Miliukov had to resign, together with Guchkov. With the ousting of the Kadets, it became necessary to establish a new government, which was accomplished, still without elections, by the formation of a coalition between the remnants of the old Provisional Committee and the elements controlling the Executive Committee of the Soviets. The Social-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks entered the government.

Within the soviets, support was accumulating for the demand of the Bolsheviks that the soviets take the power. Already the April Days had forced the hand of the Executive Committee and, as a result, the Bolsheviks had rallied at least one-third of the Petrograd proletariat behind them. Within the Bolshevik Party, the line of Lenin clearly had become recognized as indisputably correct. The whole atmosphere was clearing. To overcome this Bolshevik pressure, the opportunists decided to enter the government. The coalition in fact was to be a substitute for the soviets' taking power. The self-appointed leaders of the soviets were to enter the Provisional Government, not as a majority, of course, but as a minority, not to take responsibility for the events, but only, like the dog in the manger, to prevent the masses from taking the responsibility which the leaders renounced.

The entrance of the Mensheviks into the government was also for the purpose of stabilizing the government and renewing the offensive against the Germans. The April offensive of the Entente had failed. It was necessary to renew the war on the Eastern Front in order to stave off the Germans until the Americans could arrive. Socialists from France, Belgium, and England were shipped into Russia by their respective governments to persuade the soviets to continue the war. Nonetheless, the entrance of the Mensheviks into the government was the very act necessary to expose them. Only by hoisting them into the high office of leadership could the masses hang them by their own petard. While the revolution here made another definite turn to the Left, simultaneously the socialists were forced to take responsibility for all the crimes of capitalism and to move to the Right.

On June 18, the new Provisional Government, socialists and all, began a new offensive on the Western Front. By July 9, this was transformed into a catastrophic defeat and, with the rout at the front, the revolution took another tremendous leap forward. Throughout the provinces the peasants were beginning to take matters into their own hands and to confiscate the estates of the nobles. In the cities, hunger grew apace, and the employers began a systematic series of lockouts designed to demoralize the workers and to throw the country into a panic.

By June the Bolsheviks were winning the majority of the shop committees, which were closer to the proletariat than the soviets, and thus understood better the aims of the Bolsheviks. At a conference of the factory and shop committees of Petrograd, for example, the Bolshevik resolution won 335 out of 421 votes. Throughout the trade unions the Bolshevik influence was becoming strong. All the by-elections to the soviets also were showing a victory for the Left, and the Bolshevik Party was growing at a great rate. The agitation of the Leninists everywhere resulted in a workers' militia taking form under the direction of the factory committees. Among the Kronstadt sailors, the Bolsheviks early had won a majority, and also in certain key regiments in the army, such as among the Lettish troops.

During this period, too, the workers were beginning to realize that small and sporadic strikes would not enable them to solve any of their important problems. They were now being persuaded by the Bolsheviks not to waste their strength in such maneuvers, but to conserve their energy for the second revolution that would soon come to complete the first. As a result of the victory of the Left in the conference of shop delegates, the struggle between the Bolsheviks and the socialist compromisers took on the form of a conflict between the soviet executives backed up by a National Soviet Congress, called in June, and the workers in the shops. To bring the matter to a sharp issue, the Bolsheviks determined upon a demonstration in Petrograd on June 10, during the sessions of the Congress of the Soviets. The manifestation was to raise the banner of "Power to the Soviets" and to demand "Down with the Ten Capitalist Ministers." Upon hearing this, the Congress of the Soviets categorically demanded that all demonstrations be forbidden for three days. Thus, when dealing with the Bolsheviks, the soviet compromisers did not hesitate to use the power that they were constantly swearing belonged only to the State. In the face of this drastic decision, the Bolsheviks decided to postpone their demonstration. Pressing their advantage, the Mensheviks actually tried to disarm the workers and the Bolsheviks, but this was attempting too much, and they were forced to withdraw from an action that would have led to civil war. So matters stood for the moment. In the end, the Soviet Congress itself had to call the demonstration for June 18; in that demonstration, the Bolshevik banners and slogans overwhelmingly dominated the parade.

It had now become clear that the revolution could not stand still, but would either turn backwards into the hands of the reactionary forces or go forward towards the soviet power and the solution of the difficulties which constantly were growing worse. At the top, the leaders of the soviets were working more closely with the bourgeois Provisional Government; below, the masses began to press forward on their own initiative for a

permanent solution of the question of power. Particularly impatient were the soldiers who, being peasants, did not entirely understand the relation of forces throughout the whole country. Moreover, these soldiers had arms in their hands and believed that they could do again what they had done in February. When these militants were ordered to the front at the same time that the Kadet ministers resigned from the government with the intention of preparing for the counter-revolution and throwing the blame of the collapse of the renewed offensive at the front upon the soviet opportunists in the government, the impatience of the masses could no longer be contained. Stimulated by the Anarchists who were now beginning to make themselves felt, the masses poured out into the streets on July third with demands for the removal of the ten bourgeois ministers, all power to the soviets, cessation of the offensive, confiscation of the printing plants of the bourgeois press, the land to be State property, and national control of production.

Paradoxically, while the slogans were indeed Bolshevik ones, the demonstration was bitterly opposed by the Bolsheviks. It is strange that the most revolutionary party should be placed in a position to restrain the revolution, yet that was precisely the situation in which the Bolsheviks found themselves. They knew that such an armed demonstration could be followed only by civil war, and they understood that, in this respect, Petrograd and Kronstadt were far in advance of the rest of the country. It was necessary to organize more solidly, to prepare better, and to wait for the rest of the country to catch up to its vanguard. In spite of these arguments, the masses decided to act; once the demonstration was in progress, the Bolsheviks participated in it in order to be with the masses in all of their battles, even when they were doomed to defeat.

What is further significant is the fact that the masses could so easily shove aside the opinion of their most trusted section, the Bolshevik Party. It was a symptom of the enormous energy and initiative of the toilers, and also a sign that they had not yet come to appreciate the value of organization and a vanguard leadership. The newly awakened people believed the formless mass in the street, stiffened by some regiments, could take the place of prepared insurrectionary forces. They had the illusion that the action would be a matter of a few blows, and conceived of the conquest of power in an entirely too haphazard fashion.

On the other hand, to the clearest thinkers among the Bolsheviks, such as Lenin and Trotsky, it had become clear that from now on there must be the most feverish haste in mobilizing the masses for the insurrection. The disregard of the warnings of the Bolshevik Party combined with the utilization of its slogans was an ominous signal that the Party was lagging behind events, and that it must work day and night with maximum

strength to organize the masses for the advancement of the revolution; otherwise the toilers would be defeated by the counter revolution and the plans of the Party would mature entirely too late From now on, Lenin bent all his energies for the preparation of the insurrection that would come in October. In the course of this orientation, the leadership of the Bolsheviks split wide open, several of the most prominent functionaries showing their opposition to the second revolution

The July demonstration made the Provisional government understand that it was absolutely imperative to disarm the masses, and that the first step in this direction would have to be a reign of terror against the Bolsheviks But in fighting the Bolsheviks, the coalition régime only could play into the hands of the counter-revolution and stand fully revealed as the enemy of the people. This in turn would eventually spell the doom of the government and would bring the victory to the Bolshevik forces

To meet the July demonstration, Kerensky was sent to the front to round up loyal regiments who were to be ready to shoot down the masses. Conspiring with Kerensky against the people were the leaders of the soviets themselves A ferocious attack was launched against the Bolsheviks; they were hunted down, their headquarters destroyed, and their leaders arrested A great hue and cry was raised that the Bolsheviks were the agents of the Kaiser The Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries took prominent part in this disgraceful campaign. Finally, with the help of the most reactionary regiments, the Provisional Government and the Executive Committee were able to put down the demonstration

The "July Days" resulted in making clear the great difference between the shop committees and the soviets As we have seen, the shop committees, composed solely of proletarians mostly from the big factories, had gone Bolshevik relatively early Intoxicated by their victory in the basic industries of Petrograd, the Petrograd Central Committee of the Bolsheviks had imagined earlier that the time had come to strike They underestimated the fact that at the same time the Mensheviks were still in control of the soviets, which in turn were divided into two sections, one for workers and one for soldiers, and embraced far wider strata of the masses than the shop committees Lenin and the Central Committee saw that it was insufficient to win only the shop committees at this stage of the movement; it was above all imperative to win the majority of the soviets Later, the Bolsheviks would seriously consider whether, in the light of the fact that the Executive Committee and the majority of the leadership of the soviets no longer represented the will of the people, it would not be wise to brush aside the soviets as instruments of insurrection and use other organs, such as the shop committees and the unions This question, however, did not come up in the "July Days" for the simple reason that the Bolsheviks were

not only a minority, but the soviets were entirely too weak in the countryside as a whole.

It is important to disabuse oneself of the idea that revolutionary elements are bound to the utilization of any given form or instrument under all circumstances. It is a question yet to be settled in the more industrialized countries, where the agrarian population and petty bourgeois mass are not so great, whether the instruments of insurrection and control will be soviets rather than trade union councils or shop committees Certainly the latter are more restricted bodies than are soviets, but, in countries where the proletariat decisively leads and is the overwhelming majority of the population, it may not be necessary to create soviets.

Even in Russia, once having won the shop committees and the mass of factory workers at the point of production, it could not be long before the soviets would be swung in line in the cities, from there the example would spread throughout the country But while the shop committees were the vanguard as compared to the soviets, they would have to pause in their move to conquer power until they had won their fellow travellers in the soviets to their side It should be borne in mind that, during the War, the soldiers' soviets were quartered within the cities and were armed In other times, the city would have been able to deal with the countryside at arms' length but, during the War, the peasantry, in the form of the mass of armed soldiers, were encamped right within the city and were the ones with the decisive voice While these soldiers' organizations eventually became an excellent liason between the workers and the peasantry to transfer and to spread the demands of the advanced proletarians throughout the countryside, and to compel the workers to reflect that they could not move to victory without firmly attaching the soldier and the peasantry to their side, for the time being they were a force that weighed down the workers The existence of this more conservative force contributed to the defeat during the "July Days," but helped to remind the workers that they must be sober and sure and engage in no adventures

If 1905 was a dress rehearsal for February 1917, then the "July Days" were a dress rehearsal for October During the course of this movement, the Bolsheviks found themselves face to face with the same problems relevant to taking power through an organized insurrection which they were to face later The July experiences were invaluable, not only to the masses, but to the Party planning the insurrection The mistakes made in the July trial were corrected in October That, too, accounts for the relatively very slight casualties in the October Revolution

From the broad historic point of view it seems that attempts on the style of the "July Days" are necessary experiences for all revolutions of a proletarian nature It is impossible for the masses to test their powers with-

out sometimes going beyond the proper limits. It is impossible for them to learn all the lessons without coming up against the solid walls of experience whereby categorical imperatives can be knocked into their heads. In other instances the semi-insurrections comparable to the "July Days" have been fatal to the revolution; in the Russian experience they were, on the contrary, but the necessary preliminary steps on the road to power. In the Russian Revolution there was a Bolshevik Party.

XXXIX. THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION (CONTINUED)

I

THE "July Days" and their aftermath reduced the Provisional Government to a shadow of authority; patently that government was a mere transition, a mere holdover while matters were being settled in the streets. In order to put down the July demonstration, the Executive Committee had been forced to call in the most reactionary troops, the officers of which were supporters of the monarchy and of the bourgeois Kadets. Repeatedly thereafter these officers reminded all and sundry of the fact that, in the days of peril, the Executive Committee of the Soviets, i.e., the socialists and other so-called laborites, had called on them, the Cossacks and monarchists, for protection.

The "July Days" had been provoked by the fact that the Kadet ministers in the Provisional Government had tendered their resignations. The only ones remaining at the head of the government were those who were at the head of the soviets. Thus also it would seem that the Bolsheviks had won their point and that the ten capitalist ministers had actually been removed in favor of a completely socialist government. But no! The socialists were to use all their influence to insure that the soviets and the socialists would not take power. They begged the Kadets to return, and, finally, they turned over their resignations to Kerensky, who thereupon formed another coalition government. This time the main Kadet forces were to stay outside the government to prepare their counter-revolutionary blow while the socialists to be retained were to be of a second-rate character, chief leaders who had tendered their resignations, preferring instead to keep their places in the Executive Committee of the Soviets where they could better stop the Bolsheviks.

This action of the socialists must be carefully noted as it becomes a regular part of their technique all over the world in similar cases. So far, never have they taken the power outright, even where the masses are willing to give it to them, but assume office only under such conditions whereby they are in coalition with the capitalists or monarchist reactionaries. Were they to take the power themselves, they would have to bear the full responsibility for the continuation of war, of unemployment, of

exploitation and misery; they would then become fully exposed, and their pseudo-Socialism would become laughable. Instead, they adopt another role. They must always be in a position where they can declare that they are still in the minority, that they are doing the best they can but the enemy prohibits their going farther, that they have no power to introduce socialism, etc. In the Russian Revolution under Kerensky they actually had the majority of the seats in the Provisional Government but, by filling it with second-rate characters, they hoped to give the impression that they were not responsible for the criminal actions of the Government of which they were a part.

Now that the masses had been defeated it was the turn of reaction to have its pleasant say. The Kerensky government and the socialists who had fought so diligently for the right of the monarchists to have freedom of speech and of press, now passed vicious legislation against the Bolsheviks, depriving them of their news organs, forcing them into semi-legality, and smashing their headquarters. The land committees of the peasants that were expropriating the landlord were attacked, corporal punishment was re-introduced into the army, and the soldiers' committees were dealt with by an iron hand.

To put down the Bolsheviks and the masses, the socialists had concentrated all power in the hands of Kerensky and the Provisional Government to which had been subordinated even the Executive Committee of the Soviets. In return, Kerensky, on his part, was to contact actively the reactionary generals at the front for the complete smashing of the soviets. The elections for the Constituent Assembly which still had not been called, and which had been announced for September, were now farther postponed. The leaders of the revolutionary forces, such as Trotsky, Lunacharsky, Krylenko, and others, were arrested, while Lenin went into hiding, as he had done in Czarist days. Throughout the country numerous congresses and conferences were called by monarchist and reactionary bourgeois forces to consolidate their ranks and to put their drive behind that organizer of defeats at the front, General Kornilov, their champion to crush the revolution in the rear. The soldiers who participated in the July demonstration were sent to the front as punishment—there they were to become indefatigable organizers against Kerensky and the Mensheviks—and the workers were partially disarmed. Kornilov, called on to put down the masses, made it plain that not long would he continue to operate under the orders of the Provisional Government. Thus, the conciliators and compromising socialists, having refused to give power to the soviets, were threatened now with being driven out of the Government as well. "In the first Coalition, formed on May 6, the Socialists had been in the minority, but they were in fact masters of the situation. In the ministry of July 24,

the Socialists were in a majority, but they were mere shadows of the Liberals." [1]

Although Petrograd was silenced momentarily, the revolutionary movement was to be heard in other quarters. In Moscow, despite the fact that the soviet itself forbade any demonstration on August 12, when the State was holding its most important national conference for a mobilization of its forces, there occurred under the call of the Bolsheviks a magnificent demonstration which paralyzed the entire city for the day Four hundred thousand workers went on strike, forecasting the coming October events However, this time the Bolsheviks, fearing a repetition of the "July Days," refused to mobilize the workers in the streets The masses, with marvelous discipline and solidarity, simply stayed away from work Now it was clear that Petrograd was not isolated and that everywhere the decks were being cleared for decisive action. The Moscow general strike reverberated throughout the country and similar one-day strikes were organized in many cities. This was a master stroke of the Bolsheviks, one demonstrating their ever growing power

It was now high time to take drastic action against the Bolsheviks and against the soviets as well General Kornilov, as Chief of Staff, carefully prepared to attack Petrograd In this he was supported by Kerensky who in turn had behind him the socialists All was not smooth, however, between Kerensky and Kornilov Kerensky wanted to set up a directorate to "save the country" which would leave the civil authorities in control and would later establish a parliament in favor of the bourgeoisie; Kornilov, in turn, after hanging the soviets, would be quite ready to hang Kerensky and reinstitute the monarchy, with or without constitutional limitations Each faction of the conspiracy distrusted and double-crossed the other.

In preparation for his coup, Kornilov stationed four trustworthy divisions of cavalry outside of Petrograd and prepared his secret organizations to aid them from within. At the same time, an army of provocateurs was trying to stir up the people into some sort of demonstrations, so as to give an excuse for Kornilov to get into action The Bolsheviks, on their part, were restraining the masses as much as possible, while preparing them for the inevitable civil war. Then Kerensky, at last discovering that his own head was in danger, wired Kornilov to turn over his command to his staff and come to Petrograd. Kornilov, forced into the open, on the twenty-eighth of August began the march against Petrograd. At the same time, the Right Wing ministers resigned from the government so as to

[1] L D Trotsky *History of the Russian Revolution* II, 126 127

demoralize the apparatus and free themselves from the responsibility of attacking Kornilov.

As the reactionary troops marched to destroy Petrograd there arose a new force, namely, the mass of workers. At a special joint session of the Executive Committees of both the workers-soldiers and the peasants' soviets there had been created a "Committee of Struggle against the Counter-Revolution," consisting of specially delegated representatives from the three soviet Parties, from both Executive Committees, from the trade union center, and from the Petrograd soviet. Under their pressure, the Kerensky government was compelled to end its wavering and prohibited from longer hindering the direct struggle with Kornilov.

The counter-revolutionary attempt of Kornilov was doomed to failure. With his program he could not rely upon a single detachment of the infantry, but solely upon the Cossacks and mountaineer cavalry troops. The General had no access to the *muzhik*, the peasant, just as he had none to the worker. Entirely removed from mass support, the Czarist officers were bound to make one blunder after another.

In Petrograd itself there was the greatest intensity of action. "Formally the liquidation of the conspiracy was in the hands of the government, and the Executive Committee co-operated. In reality, the struggle was carried on within totally different channels . . . the Committee of Defense, also called the Military Revolutionary Committee, was taking action on a vast scale." [1] This Committee was composed of the active workers in the soviets. At the moment of peril, the soviets were imbued with new life; the genuine revolutionists, especially the Bolsheviks, took the posts of danger and became the chief reliance in struggle. From now on everyone could see who actually best defended the revolution and who betrayed it.

"Under direct pressure from the Bolsheviks and the organization led by them, the Committee of Defense recognized the desirability of arming individual groups of workers for the defense of the workers' quarters, the shops, and factories. . . . The unarmed workers formed companies for trench-digging, sheet-metal fortification, barbed-wire fencing. . . . The giant Putilov factory became the center of resistance in the Peterhoff district. . . . The railroad workers tore up and barricaded the tracks in order to hold back Kornilov's army. War experiences came in handy. Measures were also taken to isolate the center of the conspiracy, Moghiliev, preventing movements both towards and away from headquarters. The postal and telegraph clerks began to hold up and send to the Committee telegrams and orders from headquarters or copies of them. . . . The printers' union arranged in a few hours for the issue of Monday's papers, so as to keep the population in touch with events, and at the same time

[1] The same, II, 228.

availed themselves of the most effective of all possible means of controlling the press." [1]

The Kornilovists within Petrograd were wiped out wherever found. Officers of reaction were killed in the street. The Kronstadt sailors moved in. The regiments within Petrograd fell in line. The troops of Kornilov now began to find themselves entirely surrounded, their moves disjointed, their ranks penetrated with agitators who told them the truth about the situation. Around these agitators was a steel ring of revolutionists. The vaunted trusted companies of Kornilov began to disintegrate and to dissolve. The counter-revolution was over.

As a reward, the brave Kerensky kept Trotsky and the revolutionary Bolsheviks in jail, while, on the other hand, he actually sent a telegram restoring Kornilov as supreme general in command of all the armies at the front! Eventually, under the pressure of the masses, Kornilov was arrested only to be released by Kerensky at the critical moment when it became necessary to fire openly upon the Bolshevik revolution.

The August counter-revolution was an inevitable counterpart to the "July Days." It had been relatively easy to put down the masses in July; would it not be just as easy to go a step farther and put an end to their pretensions in August? But the July demonstration had been put down under the pretense that the Bolsheviks were German agents working against both the soviets and the Provisional Government, that is, against the revolution. The Kornilovists did not realize that, although the government itself was a shell, the soviets and the Revolution were solid, and that when they marched to Petrograd not to defend the Revolution but to attack it, they would be shriveled and burnt to a cinder in the hot fires of the Revolution.

The August days were of incalculable importance. Their events cleared the atmosphere and proved invaluable as a rehearsal for the future. They exposed the government as the enemy of the people; they revealed the Bolsheviks as the best fighters; they demonstrated that no half-way measures could be effective. In order to win democracy the people would have to go beyond democracy, towards socialism. If power were not taken by the workers and the peasants, not even the Republic was safe. The Bolsheviks fought to defend Petrograd against Kornilov, not to preserve Kerensky, but to destroy in Kornilov the base of Kerensky. With the defeat of Kornilov, Kerensky stood alone, representing a mere stick of a government, ineffective even against his own removal.

Following the August days, the strength of the Bolsheviks grew by leaps and bounds. Prior to the July demonstration, the Bolsheviks had won

[1] The same, II, 230-231.

the majority of the proletarians in the important factories of the country, as was witnessed by the elections of the shop committees, but, at the same time, the Mensheviks had gained a victory in the soviets and the Social-Revolutionaries in the municipal elections in the Zemstvos and Dumas. Now the Bolsheviks began overwhelmingly to predominate in all the factories and within the more important garrison regiments. They also made the deepest inroads into the soviets and actually became the majority in the key soviets of the land In the Dumas and Zemstvos, the Bolsheviks rose to a considerable minority

As the Bolsheviks began to win the majority within the soviets, the Mensheviks and other compromisers withdrew into the Executive Committee of the Soviets and there held out as their last resort. Thus the so-called democrats, the socialists, not only had postponed repeatedly the convocation of a genuine National Assembly, but they began also to postpone the calling of the regular Soviet Congress, which would surely have removed them Steadily representing less and less, these "democrats" who had relied upon their provincial majorities until these backward layers had caught up with the capital, now were plotting to retain the power without any elections whatever.

As a counter to the advance of the Bolsheviks in the soviets, the socialists announced the convocation of a "Pre-Parliament," that is, a hand-selected assembly which was to advise the directorate of Kerensky and to take responsibility for his crimes until the regular Constituent Assembly should be convoked This would enable the "democrats" further to postpone the regular National Assembly and, at the same time, would allow them to parcel out the voting powers of each group as they themselves saw fit The Leninists, not without bitter struggle within their own ranks, however, decided to inaugurate a boycott against this hand picked Pre-Parliament and to come out boldly for the preparation for the seizure of power by the soviets These struggles were to lead to an actual split in the top ranks of the party on the eve of the insurrection of October 25, 1917

Immediately following Lenin's return, a deep change had manifested itself within the Bolshevik party as it orientated towards a Marxist and revolutionary position Lenin himself had been very careful not to go beyond the needs of the given movement, but proceeded step by step to advance the tactics of the party according to the unfolding of the revolution. He had laid down at first a program, not for the seizure of power by the proletariat nor for socialism, but for the assumption of power by soviets in which the soldiers and peasants were by far superior in numbers to the workers, with demands urging the end of the imperialist war, confiscation of the land by the peasants, and workers' control over production. Indeed, in many local centers, the workers' soviets already had

taken the ruling power into its hands, had disarmed the bourgeoisie, controlled production and distribution, and had seized the land through land committees.

At the All-Russian Conference of the Bolsheviks in the latter part of April, the first big fight had broken out between Lenin and the Right Wing, represented by Kamenev, Rykov, and others (including Stalin) on the question of moving the revolution forward The Right Wing took as its refuge the principle which Lenin himself had advanced, namely, the need of a democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants These people insisted that the dual power of Soviet and Provisional-Duma government mutually checking each other represented precisely this sort of a democratic-dictatorship Were the revolution to go forward, this would mean the establishment of an out and out Dictatorship of the Proletariat, which would be adventurism The Right Wing advocated instead a policy merely to control the Provisional Government, just as, previously, the same elements had wanted to make an alliance with the Mensheviks to drive the government to the Left The Right Wing also tended to believe that, now that the revolution was raging in Russia, it was proper to continue the War against the German Kaiser, since this would be another form of defeating imperialist war by revolution They simply desired the promise of the Provisional Government not to use for annexation of the conquered countries any victory it might win in war, but to fight for the freedom of all peoples

Against this line, Lenin argued that had he proposed indeed the immediate establishment of a proletarian dictatorship and socialism, the argument of skipping stages might be a correct one, but that all he was proposing actually was that the soviets take power, not to introduce socialism, but to fulfill certain democratic needs of the people—confiscation of land, peace, bread, etc These were the Jacobin demands of the petty bourgeoisie rather than the socialist demands of an advanced proletariat What was more, the very régime established after February had been a sort of dual rule of workers and peasants, that is, of socialists and private property claims The property elements were represented in the new Dumas, the new Zemstvos, and in the Provisional Government, where the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks controlled The proletariat was centered in the soviets Russia had not in fact passed from Czarism to socialism, but had entered the intermediate stage of democratic-dictatorship which the Bolsheviks had predicted in 1905.

Lenin did not imply, however, that this particular stage must be maintained permanently Nor did the advance toward the seizure of power by the soviets necessarily bring with it the end of the two-fold rule of workers and peasants It simply meant that, with the dissolution of the Provisional

Government and the Dumas, the peasantry would be divorced from the control of the bourgeoisie and would fall more under the control of the proletariat. It merely signified that the gains of the revolution could be secured and the danger of counter-revolution minimized. It still did not spell socialism.

As a matter of fact, Lenin never proposed that the Bolsheviks should issue the slogan: "Down with the Constituent Assembly," that is, "Down with Parliament and Up with the Soviets." On the contrary, it was the bourgeoisie that manifested deadly fear of a republican parliament. For that matter, not until after the days of August did even the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries announce that they really wanted a Republic rather than a Constitutional Monarchy with democratic rights and social reforms. The capitalists in the Provisional Government were strongly against a democratic Republic. This being so, it was natural for the soviets to overthrow the Provisional Government with the demand for a Constituent Assembly on their lips. However, once having taken power, the soviets would see that there was no need for a constituent assembly or a parliament of the western bourgeois variety. Later, the Constituent Assembly forcibly would be dispersed by the soviets as being unnecessary.

Thus, the mere fact that the policy of the Bolsheviks advocated the overthrow of the Provisional Government did not imply that they would abandon the slogan of "Constituent Assembly" as they advocated "All Power to the Soviets." In the latter slogan, all the Bolsheviks did was to say: Let the people take the power themselves and thus put an end to the little bourgeois clique's playing in the name of the revolution. "All Power to the Soviets" could be considered a slogan that would throw against the Provisional Government all the mass organizations established for the protection of the revolution. It did not follow necessarily that the soviets were to become the organs of State and government. It was left for the masses themselves to realize this point as the revolution advanced, although, of course, the whole policy of the Bolsheviks was to guide events in that direction.

In short, the advocacy of soviet power was not in order to establish a dictatorship but rather in order to retain the democracy, to maintain the gains of the revolution, to prevent the Germans from conquering the country, etc. When, in the April Days, the Petrograd Committee of the Bolsheviks tried to raise the slogan, "Down with the Provisional Government," they were sternly rebuked. Instead the demand was issued, "Down with Miliukov and the Right Kadets," just as later, in July, the demonstration call was "Down with the Ten Capitalist Ministers."

Soon after his arrival, Lenin had made the point that the Provisional Government could not as yet be called a counter-revolutionary régime.

It certainly was not counter-revolutionary from the point of view of the bourgeoisie, and it was premature to call it so from the standpoint of the proletarian and peasant revolution, since no one was sure whether the combined workers and peasants could go farther. That had to be shown step by step through the test of events and the support of the masses for the advanced slogans of the Bolsheviks. It was Lenin who had insisted that the motto must be: "caution, caution, caution." [1]

It is well to stress the fact that, as far as possible, the Bolsheviks kept carefully within the framework of the legitimate and the traditional. They had not formed the soviets, but simply had utilized them as superior forms of struggle. They did not call for a Dictatorship of the Proletariat, but only for an end to the intolerable dual power then extant in favor of a broader democracy. In each case, as they advanced against the Provisional Government, it was defensively in order to protect the gains the masses had already won. This was so when the government ordered a new war offensive, when Kerensky tried to move the revolutionary regiments out of Petrograd, and in similar cases. Indeed, Lenin, at one time after the July demonstration, when the Kadets had quit the government, had proposed that the socialists take over the Provisional Government and simply assure free speech and press, in which case the Bolsheviks would guarantee to employ entirely peaceful methods. The fact is, the socialists would not take over the power, even within the framework of the bourgeois provisional régime, just as they refused to give the soviets the power, but insisted that control be in the hands of the capitalists and the landlords.

During the Kornilov insurrection, the matter of support to the Provisional Government again became important to the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks decided to fight Kornilov, but not to support Kerensky. "In what, then, does our change of tactics following on the Kornilov rising consist? In this: that we modify the form of our struggle against Kerensky. Without diminishing the least bit in the world our hostility . . . without renouncing our intention to beat him, we declare that consideration must be given to the circumstances of the moment, that we shall not concern ourselves at the present with overthrowing Kerensky, that we shall now conduct the struggle against him in another way by emphasizing to the people (and it is the people who are engaged in fighting Kornilov) the weakness and vacillations of Kerensky." [2]

The Kornilov attempt at counter-revolution had brought the question of Kerensky's conspiracy with Kornilov and the vicious nature of the self-appointed Provisional Government sharply to the fore. It made all the

[1] V. I. Lenin: Vol. XX, Book I, p. 279.
[2] V. I. Lenin: *Preparing for Revolt*, pp. 10-11.

more necessary now the seizure of power by the soviets. Even at this stage, the Bolsheviks offered a compromise to the socialists, that the socialists take over the government and give full power to the soviets. Again the Bolsheviks promised that, should the soviets take power, even though under the leadership of the Mensheviks, the Bolsheviks would not plan insurrection, but would try to win the people to their cause peacefully and legally. For revolutionists, this, indeed, was a compromise, since such a government would remain one supporting capitalism, on the whole. Yet, as Lenin pointed out ". . . it is stupid to condemn oneself never 'to accept payment of a debt by installments.' But the duty of a truly revolutionary party is not to proclaim an impossible renunciation of every sort of compromise, but to know throughout all compromises, in so far as such are inevitable, how to remain faithful to its principles, to its class, to its revolutionary goal. . . ." [1]

When, however, the socialists refused any such compromise, the Bolsheviks, faced with the necessity of the seizure of power by the proletariat, actually began to consider whether, since the soviets still were dominated by the Right Wing, the revolution could not be organized outside of the soviets. After all, soviets were only one of a number of forms of struggle. There were the trade unions, the shop committees, and other bodies far closer to the proletariat. The soviets had this great value, that they were bodies that were the traditional symbol of the revolution and that embraced far wider strata of the people than the trade unions or factory groups.

The question was really whether the proletariat, by its bold action in solving the problems of the day, would not win the peasantry and middle elements to its side, even though the regular organs of these elements were opposed to the further development of the revolution. Precedent existed wherein the proletariat had carried on even against the soviets for example, when the soviets had opposed the prolongation of the strike movement for the eight-hour day and no one had paid much attention to this decision. Again, when the soviet had banned the general strike in Moscow after the "July Days," the strike had occurred just the same, with tremendous success. All this really meant that the proletariat as such would yield to no one when it came to specific actions affecting it and it alone. It was an entirely different question, however, whether the shop committees could win enough support for a revolution against the Provisional Government in opposition to the soviets themselves. It would be exceedingly hard to use the slogan, "All Power to the Soviets," when that very body declared the slogan premature and dangerous. The revolution would then have to take a somewhat different tack and, in doing so, undoubtedly would

[1] The same, p. 14.

alienate large groups of soldiers, thus resulting in a parlous situation, especially for the workers in a country as predominantly agrarian as Russia.

Fortunately, the question whether to push the revolution forward outside the soviets was soon solved by the tremendous development toward the Left within the soviets themselves, in favor of the Bolsheviks. From then on, as the Bolsheviks began to win majorities in Petrograd, Moscow, and other key centers, and would sooner or later win the majority in the soviets in every important city, the revolutionists could return safely to their slogan "All Power to the Soviets" But this time the slogan had an entirely different content, since power to the Soviets under the Bolshevik policy meant an enormously different thing than under the Mensheviks, who disbelieved in the rule of the workers Now the traditional slogan meant an actual new revolution, the smashing of the old bourgeois power, and the development of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

When the Pre-Parliament question was debated before the Bolsheviks, the issues became drawn even more sharply than before between Lenin and Trotsky, on the one hand, and the Right Wing of Kamenev, Rykov, Riazanov, and others Using the same argument that power to the Soviets and boycott of the Pre Parliament meant insurrection and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the Right Wing proposed instead that the Bolsheviks attend the Pre Parliament and participate constructively in the government actions This would mean, of course, further camouflaging the government, giving it extra authority, and allowing it to pose as revolutionary. It would also signify before the masses that the Bolsheviks had declared the time was not ripe for the soviets to take power by drastic action Behind all this argumentation lurked a Menshevik policy, the Right Wing dreaded the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks and the establishment of proletarian rule

However, just as the Kadets had removed themselves from the government immediately prior to the Kornilov attempt, so was it absolutely necessary that the Bolsheviks remove themselves from the empty machinery of the government now that they were preparing their own insurrection The Right Wingers among the Bolsheviks wanted still to "control" the government so as to "push" it toward the people, etc To win their point they put forth the subtle argument that the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants meant a dual government in which there should exist both soviets and parliament, a hybrid form of government intermediary between western bourgeois democracy and future socialism The Parliament was to be responsible to the soviets which were to have power, but the form of government must be kept as of old

Against this the Left Wing polemicized sharply The old machinery could not be used. It was necessary to smash the old bourgeois state and

to build a new one, one with machinery fit for the majority to use and not for a minority that wanted to deceive and cheat the people. Once the soviets took power, the whole parliamentary machinery would become entirely useless and must be discarded as part of the old debris of history. Thus the fight between Lenin and Trotsky on the one hand and the Right Wing Bolsheviks on the other hand was in reality the same fight under other forms as between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks.

Trounced in the councils of the Party, the Right Wing now began to spread its defeatism throughout the ranks Zinoviev refused to take an active part in the work Stalin sulked in his editorial offices and sabotaged the line of the Party by permitting the oppositional letters of Zinoviev and Kamenev to be published in the official paper, Pravda Stalin went so far as to offer his resignation as editor of the paper, just before the October days These Right Wingers with such men as Kalinin, Frunze, Rykov, Manuilsky, Tomsky, and others, were able to do considerable damage until the events of the October insurrection themselves put them straight.[1] Although some of them actually left the Party on the eve of the insurrection, they soon returned to the fold.[2]

Because of these serious vacillations at the top of the Bolshevik Party, Lenin strenuously insisted on pressing the date for the insurrection His slogans were Power to the soviets, peace for the people, all treaties to be published, no annexations; the right of self determination; examples to be made in the cases of Ukraine, Finland, Armenia, and other conquered nations The land was to be given to the peasants, workers' control was to be established over the factories, the banks and the most important branches of industry were to be nationalized, the counter revolutionary nests ruthlessly broken up and destroyed, and their presses taken away. Only if the soviets seized the power, Lenin warned, would the revolution proceed without bloodshed, otherwise bloody civil war was inevitable on the part of the reactionists To meet the Germans who were advancing farther and farther into the country, it was imperative to unleash the whole power of the people Only the revolutionary movement, not the Czarist generals, actually could defend the country For this reason, too, the greatest haste was needed.

[1] Stalin voted against the motion forbidding Kamenev to continue his 'strike breaking" activities by publishing anti insurrection articles Stalin also voted against Kamenev s resignation from the leading body of the Party Such was Stalin s brilliant role in the October insurrection!

[2] And there were some vacillators among the Bolsheviks On November 4 (17) a number of members of the Central Committee resigned because they considered the committee's refusal to form a government made up of all the parties represented in the soviets fatal to the Revolution Those who resigned were Rykov, Milioutin, Zinoviev, and Nogin A similar attitude was taken by a large number of the People s Commissars L Colesnikov *Struggles and Achievements of the Soviets*, pp 37 38

The first revolution in February was entirely spontaneous. The revolution urged by Lenin was to be planned in every principal point. For the second revolution called for not merely the overthrow of a past system, but for the establishment of an entirely new social order. The Bolsheviks wanted to avoid as much as possible the errors of Blanquism as embodied in the conspiratorial insurrection of a few. They were by far the most "democratic" of the parties. They waited until the time was so ripe that the overwhelming majority of the workers who composed the decisive part of the population had come over to their side.[1] Indeed, the fears of Lenin were that they were too "democratic," that they were waiting too long and, in the meantime, the opportunities for victory were slipping by.

Thus the planned insurrection of October, far from being the conspiratorial machinations of a tiny minority, was the deliberate action of a Party behind which stood such an overwhelming part of the toiling population that the insurrection went off like clockwork. There were no vast masses storming the bastilles in Petrograd as in the French Revolution. On every side there were millions held in reserve, disciplined, organized, and ready to go into action, but not called upon to do so. The government fell like rotten fruit from a tree.

2

Kerensky rushed to the front to gather up a few Cossack detachments, under General Krassnov, to retake Petrograd. But as with Kornilov, so with Kerensky and Krassnov. The troops were stopped by the railway workers' union. The Cossacks were surrounded on all sides by the forces of the proletariat and the revolutionary regiments, and soon melted away. Only in Moscow was there an uprising against the Bolsheviki by a few thousand military cadets and university students who made a last stand against the red regiments, but the affair was soon over.[2] The soviets and the Bolsheviks were in power throughout Russia.

With immense enthusiasm, the soviets now set about to solve the tremendous problems that had brought the revolution about. On the burning question of peace, an immediate proposal was wired to all warring peoples and governments to begin negotiations for a just peace. An armistice for three months was proposed. There were to be no annexations or indemnities. All secret treaties were to be annulled. The various belligerent governments responded to this open and honest plea for peace with murderous and cynical proposals of their own. The Entente powers looked

[1] Even in the elections to the Constituent Assembly in November, 1917, the Bolsheviks were able to get nine million votes or 25 per cent of the total throughout the country.

[2] The Bolsheviks had fifty thousand soldiers actively engaged in suppressing the revolt, while fifty thousand more were benevolently neutral. The "Gospodin" and student rebels had about ten thousand.

upon the declaration of the Russian Bolsheviks as out-and-out treachery to their cause and immediately began the secret mobilization of forces for the military destruction of the Red Army.

Only the German Imperial Government responded to the overtures of the Bolsheviks In December, 1917, peace parleys were opened up in the course of which there was revealed the type of peace that the Kaiser meant to impose upon the world were he victorious in the War. Boldly the representatives of German imperialism proposed to hack Russia to pieces and to seize immense areas for Germany. These proposals led to bitter resentment among the Russians and caused the ranks of the Bolshevik leadership to become divided into three factions On one side was the faction headed by Nicolai Bucharin, to whom the peace terms of the Germans were utterly preposterous It were better to go down with the Red Flag flying, he said, than to yield to such robber terms, especially when it was clear that now, with the entrance of America into the conflict, the German system was doomed Bucharin uttered the "Leftist" theory that, since the class war was international, it demanded unceasing war against the capitalists of the world with the result that no peace was ever possible In the heat of the polemic, Bucharin was able to win almost half of the Central Committee.

On the other side was the position of Lenin It was true that the terms proposed by General von Hoffmann were outrageous, but the Bolsheviks had promised peace, and the country could not stand a continuance of the War. The desertions from the front would only multiply, and the Bolsheviks would be overthrown Lenin threatened that, if his views were not adopted, he would split the Party and force the peace

The chief representative of the Bolsheviks at the Peace Conference at Brest Litovsk was Trotsky His position was between that of Bucharin and of Lenin. Instead of either immediate peace or eternal war with capitalism, Trotsky put forth the viewpoint that peace should be established in fact, but no treaty signed His slogan was, "Neither War nor Peace," his idea being that the continued invasion of Russia by Germany would compel the German soldiers to revolt and would thus initiate the world revolution With such a position, Trotsky could not sign the proposed treaty of the Germans, and he returned to Petrograd for further instructions. When he realized that matters were reaching a split with Lenin, he decided to abstain from voting on the question in order to allow Lenin to secure the majority of the Central Committee.[1] Rather be wrong with

[1] The vote on the signing of the Treaty in the Committee of the Bolsheviks was 7 for, 4 against, 4 abstentions, the final vote in the Soviet Congress was 724 for 276 against, with 206 abstentions

Lenin than right without him, thus precipitating a split in the Bolshevik party, was his position.

As a matter of fact, Lenin was correct in his insistence on peace The army broke down completely and allowed the Germans to make an unhindered advance within Russia so that, when the peace negotiators resumed their parleys, the terms of Germany were far more onerous By the Treaty of Brest Litovsk of March 3, 1918,[1] Russia lost the Baltic provinces, Poland, Ukraine, and part of Trans Caucasia, in all surrendering about one-third of her total population, and, besides, was saddled with a huge indemnity It was indeed a "Tilsit Peace" for Russia.

Lenin's principal idea, however, was to secure a necessary breathing space for the consolidation of power and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat As events later showed this was the only move possible to save the day for the Russian soviets The World War dragged on for almost another year and left European capitalism too exhausted to overthrow the Soviet régime A unique situation was thus created wherein world capitalism was so torn by conflict that it could not stop its own quarrels in order to put down the menace of communism This was another manifestation of the fact that the capitalist system was doomed to destruction by the new proletarian force

On the very first day of the Congress of the Soviets it was decreed that private ownership in land thenceforth was abolished Land no more could be bought, sold, leased, mortgaged, or alienated All the lands belonged to the nation The lands of the peasants were not to be confiscated, and some of the big estates were not to be divided, but turned over to the State, with live stock and implements carefully accounted for For the most part, however, there was to be an equalization of land, and the estates of the nobles were to be seized and partitioned among the peasants according to the number of "eaters" in the family and their capacity to work This last was the program of the Social-Revolutionaries which Lenin took over almost *in toto*

Here, with one fell stroke, the workers demonstrated that they were the closest friends and supporters of the peasants to the end All the parties had promised this victory to the peasants, but only the proletarian party of the Bolsheviks fulfilled it By this act, the soviets rallied the immense body of the peasantry to the revolution and were able to effectuate a temporary alliance with the Left Wing of the Social Revolutionaries to support the revolutionary program

From the very beginning, Lenin had refused to consider the agrarian problem as a simple one in which the workers' interests were seen as antagonistic to the property interests of the peasantry On the contrary,

[1] The dates from now on are given in the world calendar

he took pains to divide the peasantry into various categories, each one to be treated differently. At the bottom were the agricultural laborers, not a decisive part of the agrarians, but a considerable minority, intimately bound up with the mass of peasantry. These agricultural laborers were working the modern large-scale farms that had been established by imperialist capital in Russia. Obviously the agricultural proletariat was the closest to the city industrial worker, and Lenin repeatedly emphasized the necessity of organizing this stratum into regular industrial unions and tying them up directly with the others. The large farms upon which they worked were not to be broken up in the main, but were to be turned over to the State and run by the workers, thereby preserving the high technique that had prevailed before.

Next to the agricultural laborers were the semi-proletarians who worked in the city during the winter but returned to their farms in the spring and summer. These elements, too, were friendly, and could be won over to the side of the workers. It was similar with the great mass of desperately poor peasants. They were easily convinced by the actions of the proletariat that only the victory of the soviets could give them the land they so sorely needed, and could satisfy their cry for bread.

Besides these elements there were the strata of middle peasants and, above them, the kulaks. The middle peasants were a minority of the peasantry who were able to make a living by working their own property. The kulak was a farmer who worked his farm with hired laborers. Both of these sections looked enviously on the property of the large landlords. Lenin pointed out that the middle peasants could be neutralized by the policy of the proletariat to allow the land to be seized, and that the kulaks could be separated from the nobles for the same reason. And indeed, this is what actually happened. All sections of the peasantry united to attack the nobility. The result was that the immense majority were able to improve their standing so as to become middle independent peasants who owed their new wealth entirely to the actions of the soviets. The kulaks, who had feared the Bolsheviks, did not hesitate also to put their fingers in the pie and, indeed, invariably plucked out the biggest plums for themselves.

The result of the land decree completely isolated the nobility and Czarist aristocracy, and allowed the revolution to proceed violently throughout the countryside. It is no wonder that the counter-revolution initiated by these aristocratic elements had to attack all the agrarian strata indiscriminately, which in turn only further consolidated the mass of peasantry against them. This was well illustrated by the action of the "Volunteers," an army formed by Kornilov and Alexeiev that opened up civil war in South Russia, in November, 1917, and continued under Denikin and

Alexeiev from April, 1918, to September, 1918, under Denikin until March, 1920, and under Wrangel until September, 1920, when the last remnants were driven out of Russia. "Officers and men alike seemed in general to regard every one who was not in their force as a Bolshevik, and therefore as someone who might be killed or robbed with impunity. When the Army was in retreat, the country was laid waste." [1]

The land policy of the Bolsheviks was part of their general strategy to turn the revolution only gradually from the democratic-dictatorship stage toward the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The first objective was to annihilate the Czarist aristocracy, later to deal with the capitalist elements. Each blow given the Republic by the reactionary forces was regarded as an opportunity to drive the revolution farther ahead.

In the beginning, as we have seen, Lenin was quite willing to adopt practically the whole program of Social-Revolutionaries in dealing with the peasantry, in order to split that party and to win a section of it over to an alliance with the Bolsheviks. This was accomplished. On November 17, a formal agreement was made with the new Party, the Left Social-Revolutionaries, in which the latter party took certain seats in the cabinet and helped to line up even the kulaks behind the régime. To win the support of other elements, especially the Executive Committee of the Railroad Union, composed of Mensheviks and bitter opponents of the Bolsheviks, Lenin proposed a United Socialist Cabinet to include the representatives of other groupings.

Having cast their die with the anti-Bolsheviks, however, the Executive Committee refused to accept this offer of a joint cabinet. When Krassnov was sending his troops to Petrograd and the Moscow counter-revolt broke out, the Executive Committee ordered the railway workers not only to stop the troops of the counter-revolution, but also to refuse to transport the soldiers of the soviets. Such impudent activity in the name of "neutrality" in the fight between the soviets and reaction could not go unpunished. After the Moscow uprising was put down, Lenin stopped all parleys with the railway union "labor leaders." The last effort to work with the opportunist socialists came to an end.

This new development, however, did not occur without a new crisis being provoked in the party by the Right Wing Bolsheviks. "Rykov resigned his post of Commissar of the Interior and Kamenev gave up the chairmanship of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets." [2] The Leninists, however, drove relentlessly forward. The bourgeois papers were suppressed and a powerful secret police force, the Che-ka, was established;

[1] J. Mavor: *The Russian Revolution*, pp. 348-349.
[2] G. Vernadski: *The Russian Revolution* 1917-1931, p. 68.

the Kadets were proclaimed the enemies of the people; the Constituent Assembly was disbanded as unnecessary at its very first sitting, January 6, 1918.

The workers had been well taken care of. The bourgeois residences of the city were placed under the control of the soviets and the proletarians moved into the apartment houses of the wealthy. In all factories there was established a workers' control over production. The program of the winter of 1917-18 included the nationalization of the banks, and the repudiation of all debts. Commerce was also nationalized, and the co-operatives were developed as substitutes for private trading. Food was rationed on a class basis.

Many of these measures were provoked by the fact that, owing to the breakdown of economy because of exhaustion by war and the overthrow of Czarism, the country, by the spring of 1918, was on the verge of famine. On all sides the capitalist world was bringing up its heavy artillery to batter down the Soviet régime. After the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, the German army immediately moved into Ukrainia There an independent Ukrainian Rada, subservient to German imperialism, had been formed, which openly had declared its hostility to the Bolsheviks and, while Russia was starving, had moved food and grain supplies to Germany[1] This presented an intolerable situation, one which could be liquidated only by draconic measures and armed conflict

During the course of the War, three hundred thousand Czech soldiers had been captured by the Russians as war prisoners As the Czechs were Slavs and never had wanted to fight "Mother Russia," they were treated especially well and, under the Provisional Government, had been mobilized to be shipped out of the country to the Western Front to fight on French soil against the Germans. By agreement, March 26, 1918, it was decided that an army of these Czechs, some fifty thousand or more, was to be sent to Vladivostok where allied shipping was to convey them to France However, when the Czechs arrived at the Pacific port they found Japanese and British troops in possession of the city. Instead of being transported to France, the Czechs were re-armed, informed that their brothers were being slaughtered in Russia, and were ordered back by their leaders to seize the Trans-Siberian railroad. Under the influence of army officers headed by Kolchak and members of the Social-Revolutionaries, they turned back from Siberia to fight the Reds. Thus, while the Germans were helping the Ukrainian bourgeois fight Bolsheviks on the West, their so-called bitter enemies, the members of the Entente, were invading Russia on the East, both in a crusade against the Reds.

[1] The Germans took over 113,000 tons of foodstuffs See W H Chamberlin *The Russian Revolution* 1917 1921, I, 410

As in the French Revolution, so in the Russian, ruthless intervention coupled with the foisting of war upon a people bent on peace only rallied the masses still more strongly around the revolutionists and whipped the revolution to more severe measures. The requisitioning of food became absolutely necessary and the wealthy peasants, i e, the kulaks, were forced to surrender part of their surplus stock [1] The kulaks openly resisted, and civil war began on the countryside, the Bolsheviks forming Committees of the Poor in order to struggle against them

Up to now, the Bolsheviks had not nationalized the factories, nor attempted to establish the Dictatorship of the Proletariat nor to end exploitation They had formed alliances with other parties and had merely controlled and regulated the capitalist elements Now, however, they were forced to go farther On June 14, 1918, the soviets expelled the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries of the Right and Centre for their actions in aiding the enemy [2] In their attack against the kulak and their formation of the Poor Committees in the village they were moving towards the elimination of capitalism on the countryside On February 19, 1918, a Decree on Land Socialization was passed, providing that all persons engaged in agriculture were to be protected by social insurance The right to use land belonged respectively to the State, to public bodies, to agricultural communes, to co operatives, to village communities, and only lastly to individuals This decree was a body blow against the kulaks Naturally, the Left Social Revolutionaries would not tolerate all this They had been violently opposed also to the Brest Litovsk Treaty and were ready to break with the Bolsheviks on this question as well The Social Revolutionaries had always spoken in the name of the "people" and had called themselves both socialists and revolutionists, no sooner was capitalism attacked, however, than the Left Social Revolutionaries broke from the government alliance and declared war on the Leninists The split occurred in July, 1918, when the Left Social Revolutionaries, in order to compel the continuance of the war with Germany, assassinated the German Ambassador, Count von Mirbach

The Bolsheviks now were determined to go the whole route and complete the revolution as far as possible The Czar and his family were exterminated as a nest of counter-revolution Thus, only in the summer of 1918, in July, did the Bolsheviks terminate their democratic-dictatorship of the workers and peasants, marked by workers' control over production, their alliance with the Left Social-Revolutionaries, their alliance with the kulak against the noble, their granting all parties the right to the press

[1] For the decree confiscating grain and announcing war against the kulaks, see W H Chamberlin Work Cited, I, 509 appendix

[2] See W H Chamberlin, Work Cited, II, 50

and to assemblage and all classes of democracy equal vote. From now on their backs were to the wall. The open Dictatorship of the Proletariat was established, but in friendly alliance with the poor peasantry. The kulak was attacked, the factories were taken over and socialized, the minority of workers was given more votes and power than the vast majority of the peasantry, opposition parties were destroyed, civil war raged against the whole capitalist system.

At this point, the soviets were faced with a peasant war led by the kulaks, with civil war led by the capitalists and Czarist officials, politically aided by the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and with foreign intervention. Eastern Siberia and Western Ukrainia were occupied by foreign forces. An anti-Bolshevik government was being formed in the Urals by Kolchak, backed up by the Czechs. German troops were in Crimea and Trans-Caucasia. An anti-Bolshevik government was being formed in the North Caucasus supported by Cossacks and the officers of Kornilov. This was the situation in the summer of 1918.

It has been a popular illusion that the socialist revolution began in Russia with the October Revolution. As we have seen, this is indeed far from the truth. The soviets moved very slowly to this conclusion and did not end capitalist exploitation in the factories until the middle of 1918. The October Revolution itself was not bloody, and numerous intermediary groups went along with the Bolsheviks. It was only when the Russian capitalists were attacked that the real violence of the civil war began.

As Lenin himself put it, the revolution of the summer and autumn of 1918 was of far greater significance than that in October, 1917.[1] "The formation in the villages of the committees of the poor was the turning point, and showed that the working class of the towns, which united last November with all the peasants for the purpose of destroying the chief enemy of free, labouring and Socialist Russia—the landowners—had advanced from that problem to another, much more difficult, historically much higher, and really Socialistic."[2] "In other words, having liberated Russia from the yoke of the landowners, it has now proceeded to the creation of a Socialist commonwealth."[3]

Lenin knew very well that, in countries of small peasant proprietors, the transition to socialism was impossible without a whole series of gradual, preparatory stages. To him, the October revolution had been devoted mainly to the task of crushing the common enemy of the whole peasant class—the landowners—and thus it had retained its bourgeois setting, and

[1] See V. I. Lenin: "The Land Revolution in Russia," Speech, December 1918, pamphlet issued by the Independent Labour Party, London.

[2] The same, p. 7.

[3] The same, p. 8.

the revolution had been but half finished. By the summer of 1918 it was time to complete that revolution and turn it into a genuine socialist one.

In the struggle against capitalism and for socialism, Lenin tried hard to separate the capitalists of the city from their kulak representatives in the country. Whereas the Bolsheviks had taken over the property of the city factory owners, they did not decree the confiscation of the land of the kulak. They were willing to let him keep his land on the sole condition that he obey the corn monopoly and not enrich himself at the expense of others. This strategy of the Bolsheviks was entirely realistic. Large numbers of the better-situated peasants became partisans to the cause of the soviets, especially after their lands had been invaded by the Whites; when they were forced to choose between White and Red, they chose Red. In the long run, however, the kulak became the most embittered opponent to socialism and one of the most difficult problems the revolution had to face

3

We are now ready to ask ourselves the important question· Now that they had gone the whole length in establishing a socialistic régime resting on the proletariat, how could the communists of Russia have hoped to sustain themselves in their abolition of private property in a country peopled predominantly with peasants whose whole lives were based on private property? Were the Leninists really an anti-democratic party based on a small minority of the population like the Blanquists? Will the Russian revolution be but another Paris Commune and go down in blood as premature? What were the forces upon which Lenin relied? After all, it is one thing to overthrow Czarism, it is another to overthrow private property and capitalism; it is one thing to seize power, it is another thing to hold it.

In the first place, there was no thought of such a proposition as the possibility of building socialism in one country. The Bolsheviks of those days believed that the proletariat could take power in Russia, but that this could serve only as a stimulant and cause, compelling the workers of Europe to seize control, which in turn would help the Communists of Russia finally to overcome their difficulties. In December, 1918, Lenin said, "You know that our main hope, our chief security, is the proletariat of Western European and other advanced countries It is the great buttress of the world-revolution. We firmly believe in it, and the progress of the German Revolution shows us that we are justified." [1] At another time he declared, "The absolute truth is that without a revolution in Germany we will perish." [2] Again, "Our backwardness has thrust us forward and

[1] The same, p 16

[2] Speech March 7, 1918, given in L D Trotsky *The Draft Program of the Communist International*, p 14

we will perish if we will not be able to hold out until we meet with the mighty support of the insurrectionary workers of other countries." [1]

That Lenin understood the precarious position of Russian communism can be noted in his important speeches as late as 1921. At the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, in a speech delivered March 15, 1921, Lenin emphasized, regarding a revolution in an agrarian country, "The social revolution in such a country may meet with complete success only under two conditions. 1. It must be supported by the social revolution in one or more of the advanced countries. . . 2. There must be an understanding between the proletariat which is the executor of the dictatorship and holds the state power in its hands, and the majority of the population" [2] Soon after that, at the Third Congress of the Communist International on July 1921 he reiterated: "It was clear to us that without aid from the international worldwide revolution a victory of the proletarian revolution is impossible. Even before the revolution, and also after it, we thought that the revolution either immediately or at least very soon will come also in other countries, otherwise we will perish. Notwithstanding this conviction, we did our utmost to preserve the Soviet system under any circumstances and at all costs because we know that we are not working only for ourselves but also for the international revolution" [3]

Besides counting on the help of the proletarian revolution in the advanced European countries, Lenin depended on the workers' understanding how to work with and to win the friendship of the peasantry. To maintain an alliance with the peasantry meant that in effect the State could not be a proletarian State but a two-class state, one in which the proletariat was careful not to go too far in its socialization and which existed only on the sufferance of the peasantry. "The working classes must not be deceived. . . The small peasant has aims that are not the same as those of the workers.' [4] We are conducting a class struggle and our aim is to abolish classes, so long as there still exist two classes, those of peasants and workers, socialism cannot be realized and an irreconcilable struggle goes on incessantly" [5]

In Russia, the peasantry by itself was not able to accomplish its emancipation or even to overthrow Czarism. As an historic class, it had to follow either the proletariat or the bourgeoisie. At first it followed the bourgeoisie,

[1] Speech April 23 1918 the same, p 14

[2] Lenin's speech on The Tax in Kind This speech is also to be found in a slightly different translation in Speeches of V I Lenin, *Voices of Revolt* Vol VIII

[3] Quoted in L D Trotsky, work cited, pp 15 16

[4] V I Lenin Speech on "The Tax in Kind

[5] V I Lenin Speech at the Third All Russian Trade Union Congress, 1920 This speech can also be found in *Trade Unions in Soviet Russia* a collection of documents compiled by the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain

but that class did not and could not live up to its historic rôle It was the proletariat alone that was able to satisfy the basic needs of the peasantry and thus to cement an alliance with the countryside in the overthrow of the Provisional government and the establishment of the soviets Paradoxically, the peasantry did not vote for the Bolsheviks, who had their interests at heart[1] And yet the communists operated on the principle that the votes of such a class were not decisive, and took power regardless.

The reasons for the confidence of the Bolsheviks were that, although the towns made up but a minority of the population, they were more important than the countryside and dragged the latter behind them The question was not whether the city should lead, but rather which class of the city should lead the peasantry, the upper bourgeois crust, or the proletarians? Nor was it necessary to win the majority of the entire population in the cities What was imperative was to gain the decisive majority at the decisive places The big factories, the larger soviets, the trade unions as well as the army, for example, were more than half conquered by the Bolsheviks. To win the proletariat, a genuine Communist Party was necessary, of course "Without a complete and varied preparation of the proletariat by a revolutionary party accompanied by the expulsion and defeat of the opportunist elements, it is absurd to think of the dictatorship of the proletariat"[2]

Once the proletariat had been won, that was sufficient even in an agrarian country such as Russia The proletariat could be victorious without convincing the majority of the population, if that class, after taking power, satisfied the needs of the majority at the expense of the exploiters The masses of the petty bourgeoisie were constantly vacillating They needed the fact of the proletarian régime to enable them to compare which class was better, the proletariat or the bourgeoisie Thus it could be laid down as a social law that the proletariat could win the majority of the population in a peasant country only *after* it crushed the bourgeoisie, not before The peasantry needs the power of example, the Russian Revolution bore eloquent witness to that fact At first, only 10 per cent to 16 per cent were for Bolshevism, when they were given the land, all were for Bolshevism Later, in the period of War communism, almost all turned against Bolshevism Finally, when they felt the hand of Kolchak and other White Guardists, most of them became Bolshevist partisans again Thus, it required two years of acute civil war to teach the peasantry which side they must follow By no means is the question definitively solved even today

[1] The vast majority voted for the Social Revolutionaries in the November 1917 elections for the Constituent Assembly

[2] V I Lenin *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Elections for the Constituent Assembly* p 10

We have seen that the proletariat made firm allies of the peasants by giving them land, but, by that very act, the Bolsheviks only spread the base for private ownership and control of the means of production, land, still more firmly. Instead of the old differentiations on the countryside (the overwhelming mass of poor and destitute peasants on the bottom and the few agrarian capitalists on the top), the land distribution created a mass of peasant holdings mostly of medium size; that is, the muzhiks now had enough land to till to take care of themselves and their families.

At this point the conflict began to arise between workers moving towards socialism and peasants desirous of retaining their property. The proletariat of Russia found itself surrounded from without by a powerful hostile world of which it was but a relatively small part, economically speaking, while, within, it was but a small fraction of the population faced with an overwhelming mass of peasants, on the one side, and gangs of bureaucrats on the other. Whether the proletariat liked it or not, these classes were bound to resist the course of socialization and to strive for the return of capitalism. The middle peasant wanted to become a kulak and increase his holdings; the kulak wanted to increase the number of workers working for him and exploit them still further. All the peasants desired free trade and the right to sell their products as dear as they could and to buy manufactured materials as cheaply as possible.

To lead the peasantry toward socialism there was necessary the firm control of the proletariat. To secure this control, the election system was so set up that the minority of proletarians had as many votes and more influence than the peasants. Frankly, the workers gave themselves five times the voting power that the peasants received. The Bolsheviks realized very well, after the dictatorship of the proletariat was established, that the class struggle had not ceased by that initial act; on the contrary, peasant commodity economics was automatically establishing new capitalist relations. The only way to end this contradiction was to abolish classes, but the peasantry could be abolished only when some higher method of production than individual land working could be established; this in turn could be done only on the basis of the widespread application of machinery. The fight for socialism then was a fight for machinery and electrical power, a fight for increased productivity.

That Lenin recognized the situation can be seen by his remarks: "There is no doubt that the social revolution in a country where the overwhelming majority of the population consists of small farmers and producers may only be achieved by providing for a number of special transition measures that would be entirely unnecessary in countries in which the wage workers constitute the overwhelming majority in industry and agriculture."[1] "The

[1] V. I. Lenin: Speech, "The Tax in Kind."

application of tractors and machinery in agriculture on a large scale, the electrification of the whole country, would immediately produce a transformation of the thought of the small peasants." [1] "The situation is now this. either we must economically satisfy the medium peasants and consent to a freedom of commodity exchange or it will be impossible to maintain the power of the proletariat in Russia in view of the slowing down of the international revolution." By no means was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in a backward agrarian country to abolish private property immediately. As Lenin wrote, there was no Chinese wall between the bourgeois democratic revolution and the socialist one, and one could proceed gradually from one system to the other. Incidentally, it is to be remarked how the Leninists, who had argued for the insurrection and the sharp break with the past politically, also knew how to be gradualists in economics under given circumstances There was no unbridgeable gap between the worker and the land toiler, the peasant. After the Brest Litovsk Treaty, and until the proletarian revolution could spread, the chief task was to hold the fort.[2]

In order to attain increased production, machinery and electric power, Lenin was willing to make all sorts of economic concessions to capitalism. Thus, as far back as 1918, foreshadowing the days of the "New Economic Policy" in 1921, he pointed out that, should Russia develop a State capitalism, this would mark a great advance over what was actually existing, for even after the seizure of power by the workers, Russian economy was by no means homogeneous In the vast tundras of the North, in the taigas of Siberia, in the backward regions of Eurasia and elsewhere, a pre-capitalist patriarchal system of production still prevailed. To this had to be added the petty commodity production of the peasants now in possession of plots of land Then there were many small factories that could not well be taken over at once by the workers, there were also millions of petty shopkeepers and artisans All of these groups represented private property and a form of capitalist commodity production.

The big factories had been seized by the workers; thus there was also a socialistic form of production, but this section of Russian economy did not at all represent the main weight of production. The predominant form of economy was petty commodity production; the chief producers were small peasant proprietors The possession of big factories in certain cities of the land did not by any means mark the end of private property in the means of production In order to liquidate the peasantry and to win them over to socialism it was necessary for the country to have machinery and for the workers to show the peasants how they could increase their

[1] The same

[2] See, V I Lenin The Chief Task of our Times, article in *Izvestia*, May 30, 1918, reprinted pamphlet form, London

standards of living by supporting proletarian collectivism. If the workers could rapidly increase production and provide the peasantry with cheap and good commodities, if they could organize agrarian collectives and demonstrate how each member of the collective would improve his lot by joining his property with that of his neighbors, the alliance of the workers with the peasantry could be firmly cemented.

Now State capitalism was one form by which the workers could increase their production. State capitalism meant the running of State industries by means of capitalist loans or by means of partnership with big capitalists, through which the latter would ship machinery into Russia Or it could take the form of concessions by which the State owned and controlled the plants built by private capital and run for profit In all cases, the capitalists would be getting their profit temporarily, but the Russian workers would be producing commodities, increasing their technique, and tightening their friendship with the peasants.

For these reasons, with the first breathing space that the Bolsheviks received after putting down the initial revolts of Krassnov and of the Czarist Kadets in Moscow, Lenin was advocating the bringing in of foreign capital under guarantees and increasing the productivity of the country. Of course, under Lenin, this introduction of capitalism would have been carefully restricted and guarded. Economically, capitalism was to be allowed to function in certain key industries where it was needed to pre pare the way for its own destruction. Politically, capitalism was to have no control at all Unfortunately, all these plans for the exploitation of capital to bolster up the Dictatorship of the Proletariat came to an end with the gigantic civil war that burst forth throughout the country.

To sum up, it is necessary for us to emphasize that the October Revolution did not bring about immediate end of capitalism. On the contrary, all that it accomplished was the completion of the bourgeois democratic revolution; for that reason, the soviets were supported by the peasantry as a whole, including the capitalist kulak elements, the class divisions on the countryside then being only in embryo and still latent. "At first the Soviets represented the peasantry as a whole, and the result was that the mental backwardness of the poorer peasants placed the leadership in the hands of the village vultures, of the prosperous peasants, of the petty bourgeois intellectuals. This was the period of the predominance of the petty bourgeois Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, whom only fools or turncoats like Kautsky could regard as socialists." [1]

The Bolshevik revolution laid the basis for the attack against capitalism. At first the city capitalist was attacked; much later, during the course of

[1] V I Lenin *The Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky the Renegade,* pp 92-93 (1920, British Socialist Party edition)

the civil war, the attack began against the kulak. Not till November, 1918, did the proletarian revolution pass through the countryside, one year after its advent in the cities, and the kulaks were put down "If the Bolshevik proletariat in the capitals and large industrial centres had not been able to rally to its side the village poor against the peasant rich, this would have proved Russia's unripeness for the socialist revolution. The peasantry would then have remained an undivided whole, that is, under the economic, political, and moral leadership of the village vultures, of the rich and the bourgeoisie, and the revolution would not have passed beyond the bourgeois-democratic limits. . On the other hand, if the Bolshevik proletariat had attempted at once, in November, 1917, without waiting or without being able to *prepare* and to carry through the class cleavage in the village, to *decree* a civil war or the establishment of Socialism in the villages, had attempted to do without the temporary union with the peasants as a whole, had attempted to do without the necessary concession to the middle peasantry, it would have been a Blanquist distortion of Marxism, an attempt of the minority to impose its will upon the majority, a theoretical absurdity and a display of ignorance of the fact that a *common* peasant revolution is still a bourgeois revolution, and could not in a backward country be turned into a socialist one *without a whole series of transitions and successive stages*"[1] "With the peasantry to the end of the *bourgeois* democratic revolution, and with the poorest, the proletarian and semi-proletarian section of the peasantry to the *socialist* revolution—such has been the policy of the Bolsheviks and such is the only Marxist policy"[2]

4

From the very start, the Bolsheviks had enunciated as their program the self-determination of subject nationalities and had propagandized for the right of Poland, Finland, Armenia, and other countries to lead their independent existence Naturally, with the advent of the Bolshevik revolution, these countries became the scene of a virulent nationalism on the part of the capitalists of these countries who wanted to separate themselves from communistic Russia. Behind this nationalist movement in 1918 stood the German Imperial Army which thereby envisioned great gains for itself. No sooner had Finland declared itself independent than the bourgeoisie invited the Reich to send in troops to defeat the Finnish proletariat and to insure Finland for capitalism and for Germany Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Esthonia found themselves placed under German military governors. Especially important was German activity in the Ukraine.

Early in the negotiations for peace between the German General Staff

[1] The same, pp 96 97
[2] The same, p 103

and the Russian Government, the Ukrainian bourgeoisie had appeared, clamoring for independence. To secure this, they were willing to submit to any terms; one of the reasons for the final signing of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk was the fact that the Russian soviets were faced with the fact that the Germans had recognized the hastily organized Ukrainian Rada as a legitimate government and had signed a peace treaty with them. There was nothing further for the Russians to do but also to sign.[1] Ostensibly Ukrainia was now independent, but she immediately opened up war against the soviets. The result was that civil war began between the workers of Ukraine and the Ukrainian bourgeoisie, at the head of which stood the chief, Hetman Skoropadsky, and behind it the German army.

The Russian bourgeoisie, so eager to denounce Lenin as a German agent, soon began to intrigue for German help against the Bolsheviks. "The question of yielding to the Germans and crushing the communists with their help was eagerly discussed in connection with the plan of a monarchical restoration. The idea found favor among the Rights and was supported among the Kadets by P. Miliukov . . ."[2]

The Eastern part of the Ukraine, together with the northern Caucasus, had been the great homeland of the Cossacks of the Don and Kuban regions. The Cossacks had been given special privileges by the Czar. They had comfortable, tax-free farms, with horses and supplies granted them. In return, they had to serve the Czar at all times. When the Revolution broke out, these Cossacks returned to their farms. While they had not fought the people, the older elements at least were not at all in sympathy with communism and the soviets. To this region flocked the officers of the Czarist army, and reactionaries, and formed their White Guard Volunteer Army against Bolshevism. The Kuban district was headed by General Krassnov, the Don region by Hetman Kaledin assisted by Kornilov. Between these White Guardist forces and those of the Rada there was this difference, however. The Rada stood for an independent Ukraine, friendly to Germany; the Czarist officers stood for the return of old Russia and the subjugation not only of the communists but also of Ukrainian nationalism. Moreover, these officers had fought the Germans.

Thus the two reactionary armies were divided, and the soviet workers and peasants were able relatively easily to break the forces of the Rada, to drive Skoropadsky out of the country and into Germany and then defeat the troops of Kaledin and Kornilov, the latter being killed, the former committing suicide. Thus by April, 1918, it seemed that everywhere the

[1] Before signing, the Russians tried to get aid from London and Washington. Wilson sent a warm cablegram but the Liberal Lloyd George met the overtures with cold silence.

[2] Given in W. P. and Z. K. Coates: *Armed Intervention in Russia, 1918-1922*, p. 143. See also L. D. Trotsky: *The History of the Russian Revolution*, I, 273.

Bolsheviks would be able to triumph within the territory that was not openly taken from them by the Brest Treaty.

However, this idyllic picture was destined to be destroyed by the intervention of Russia's former allies in the war. In February and March of 1918, British soldiers were landed in the Murmansk region in the Arctic sea. They were joined by an American force. In June, 1918, the military compelled the local soviet to declare its independence from Moscow and, in August, the foreigners were in possession of the important city of Archangel.

So long as the World War was raging with all its fury in 1918, the Bolsheviks were able to meet and to overcome these comparatively puny blows of world capitalism. The situation changed entirely when the War was over. By January, 1919, the allied forces had stationed thirty thousand troops in the Murmansk district and were marching south, towards the center of Russia. On the West, the Finnish troops, with the aid first of the Germans and later of the victorious powers, were able to defeat the proletarian revolution there and to menace Russia in the Baltic. To the Baltic Sea, a strong British Naval force was sent that destroyed and sank the Russian fleet.[1] Further south, on the Western Front, three armies threatened the Russians.

First there was the German Imperial Army under Von der Goltz. Although the terms of the peace called for an immediate evacuation of the Baltic provinces which were to become independent countries, the Entente allowed the Germans to hold their advanced positions as a barrier to Bolshevism. Then there was the Russ-German White Guard Army of fifteen thousand under General Bermont, and finally another army under General Yudenitch. It had been hoped that the people of the Baltic provinces also would rally to the anti-Bolshevik crusade, but this hope was doomed. The Soviet Government had from the start declared its willingness to recognize an independent Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania, as it had an independent Finland. On the other hand, the capitalists of these small Baltic countries knew very well that, should the Bolsheviks fall, they would be swallowed up again by an imperialist Russia.

The steel ring around the Bolsheviks was tightened still more by events in the Ukraine. On the West, the bourgeois Ukrainian nationalist rebellion was carried on by Petlura; on the East, the forces of the Cossacks were being solidified under the leadership of Denikin. Both of these armies, especially the latter, were aided by enormous supplies as well as troops from the Versailles victors. The French were in possession of Odessa, and everywhere were taking the place of the Germans in mobilizing the counter-revolution.

[1] See W. P. and Z. K. Coates: *Armed Intervention in Russia, 1918-1922*, p. 189.

On the Eastern Front, the forces under Kolchak had reached considerable size. His foreign troops alone have been estimated to have contained fifty-five thousand Czecho-Slovaks, twelve thousand Poles, four thousand Serbs, four thousand Rumanians, two thousand Italians, sixteen hundred British, over seven hundred French, twenty-eight thousand Japanese later increased to seventy five thousand, seven thousand five hundred Americans and four thousand Canadians Like those of Denikin in the Southeast, these Siberian forces must have numbered at least half a million in all.

Added to this was the separation of Georgia from Russia by the Mensheviks, the seizure of the Batum Baku railway by twenty thousand British troops, and the destruction of the Russian naval forces in the Black Sea Later was to come the seizure of Bessarabia by Rumania and portions of White Russia by Poland

It must not be imagined that all the forces against the Bolsheviks were united among themselves Far from it In 1919, the Polish divisions under Pilsudski declared war against Petlura and seized Eastern Galicia, then claimed by Ukrainia, and a portion of Western Ukraine[1] Between Petlura and Denikin there was open hostility, since it was no secret that Denikin meant to restore Czarist control The French compelled the German army to quit the border provinces, as required under the terms of peace, and they themselves went in to organize the Polish army and the war against Russia On the eastern front, the Czechs soon became weary of being the tools for the White-Guardists and began to fight to return home Mutiny broke out among the American and British soldiers in Archangel and among the vessels of the French Black Sea Fleet In spite of the urgency of the moment, the capitalist classes were yet unable to unite their forces to overcome the common enemy

The most determined efforts were made in 1919 to crush the soviet régime On the East, the important city of Tobolsk was taken, in the South, the city of Orel, in the West, Yudenitch was marching to within eight miles of Petrograd In all, some sixteen armies were fighting at one time It was then that the Bolsheviks, like the Jacobins in the French Revolution and the Communards in 1871, rose to truly heroic heights They found their Carnot and Danton combined in Trotsky Under the leadership of Trotsky, the old worthless Czarist army was replaced by a powerful Red army, each regiment with its political commissars who carried out the revolutionary policy of the communists, inspired by the genius of Trotsky to whom Lenin had given literally *carte blanche* to go the limit

[1] This did not prevent Petlura, however, from marching with Pilsudski in common war against the Bolsheviks later on in 1920

Like Napoleon for the bourgeoisie, so Trotsky for the proletariat, became the representative of the cutting edge of a new international class rising to power. As his forces drove their way into the lines of other countries, it was impossible for him to become bound by considerations merely national in character. The military accomplishments of Trotsky were connected with his international revolutionary policies; in both cases he aroused the enmity of communists not so enlightened in outlook nor intransigeant in character.

When Zinoviev wanted to abandon Petrograd to the forces of Yudenitch, it was Trotsky who won over Lenin and mobilized the whole proletariat of that city for a counter-attack that defeated the enemy.[1] When Stalin insisted upon retaining military supplies intended for the whole army for his particular sector, it was Trotsky who opposed him with a bitterness that increased as the war progressed The military struggle between Stalin and Trotsky hinged on various issues The first was whether the main attack should be made against Kolchak or against Denikin; here it seemed as though Stalin was more far-sighted· The second issue hinged on what part of the South eastern front to attack. Here Trotsky countermanded the decision of Stalin (a tactical error which would have proved most costly to the Bolsheviks) to march against the Cossacks in their own territory, instead of marching against the forces of Denikin where the Cossacks would not have fought so strenuously This was not only a military blunder on the part of Stalin, but above all a profound political error, reflecting a false estimation of the peasantry of the region and of the Cossack forces

Particularly damaging was Stalin's part in the Polish war which was to come later Trotsky had advised against the Polish war but had yielded to Lenin in this matter In the course of this struggle, the Polish Army was pushed into Warsaw, before the gates of which was decided the mighty question whether Poland would turn Bolshevik and the Russian Revolution be physically connected with the German or whether the bourgeoisie would prevail. For his own reasons, Stalin disobeyed the orders of the General Staff led by Trotsky and marched in such a fashion from Lvov as to render his army unable to withstand the counter blows of the Poles, now under the direction of the brilliant French General Weygand. This, and the foolish march of Budenny's cavalry, made a disastrous defeat of the Russian Army inevitable, and the Bolsheviks had to withdraw.

If the Bolsheviks themselves could not thoroughly agree, the dissension was still more pronounced outside their ranks In the Ukraine, for example, there had been organized under the lead of the peasant anarchist, Nestor Makhno, a guerrilla army that proved valuable in fighting Petlura and the

[1] See L D Trotsky *My Life* p 424 and following

Ukrainian nationalists and yet would not subordinate its struggles to the welfare of the Russian Army as a whole; thus in turn it had to be fought by the Bolsheviks for trying to set up a dual régime. All over the country there were partisan armies of peasants sprung up to fight against the return of Czarism and reaction, but armies which would not become incorporated directly into the Red Army.

The reason for peasant hesitation and vacillation was not hard to find. Under the stress of gigantic capitalist pressure against them, the Bolsheviks had been forced to adopt draconic requisitions from the peasantry to sustain themselves. Production fell close to zero. Hunger and sickness gripped the land. All surplus goods were seized for military use. Private ownership was reduced to its narrowest possible limits. Compulsory labor was established for all. Money was abolished. An extreme centralization marked all production and distribution. This was the military communism established by Lenin. It was not much different in form from the expropriations carried on by the Jacobins in the critical days of the French Revolution, but there was this difference in fact: In the French Revolution, the requisitions were carried on by representatives of the peasantry; in the Russian Revolution, it was done in behalf of the cities, in the name of communism and of the abolition of private property in the means of production.

Naturally, the peasantry resisted this policy of the Bolsheviks. But no sooner did they open the gates to the White Guardists and reactionists than they had cause quickly to repent. "There were horrible murders committed, but they were not committed by the Bolsheviks as the world believes. I am well on the side of safety when I say that the anti-Bolsheviks killed one hundred people in Eastern Siberia, to every one killed by the Bolsheviks." [1] For the régime inaugurated under Denikin it is sufficient to report his treatment of the Jews, of whom it is estimated close to half a million perished! "There were pogroms that lasted a week; . . . In many populous Jewish communities there were no survivors left to bury the dead, and thousands of Jewish wounded and killed were eaten by dogs. . . ." [2]

With such a terrible rule of repression facing them, there was nothing for even the mass of middle peasants to do but to join forces with the Bolsheviks. Everywhere "green" armies, or partisan troops, sprang up that, like Makhno's forces in the Ukraine, rendered valuable service in harassing the reactionists in ferocious guerrilla warfare in which no quarter was given or asked. What the exact number of casualties was is exceedingly difficult to estimate, but they must have been at least equal to those suffered in the World War itself.

[1] Major-General Wm. S. Graves: *America's Siberian Adventure*, p. 108.

[2] W. P. and Z. K. Coates: *Armed Intervention in Russia, 1918-1922*, quoting from Dr. J. H. Hertz: *Decade of Woe and Hope*, p. 5.

In spite of unheard of difficulties, however, the Bolsheviks were able to survive, and, when the Poles, after their unceasing advance on the Western border of Russia, had marched to Minsk and had engaged in actions resulting in war, they were hurled back to the very gates of Warsaw and barely saved by the military genius of the French general staff. By 1920, victory was with the Leninists.

5

The termination of the Polish war left the country in a completely wrecked state economically. To the many millions of war dead and the breakdown of economy due to Czarist conduct there had been added the awful casualties and ruin of the most devastating civil war known in history. The foreign interventionists had been driven out and the White Guardists crushed, but at a cost that was destroying the entire nation.

The first to rebel were the peasants in the fall of 1920; unfortunately the needs of the hour were so great that the Bolsheviks did not heed the warning of these events and did not loosen their stringent requisition measures. Then there broke out the Kronstadt revolt among the sailors who had been the chief supporters of the Bolsheviks at critical moments of the Revolution. The Kronstadt rebellion of March 1, 1921 advanced demands that, on the surface, seemed mild but, in reality, challenged the fundamental measures of the Bolsheviks. These demands included the re-election of soviets by secret voting, free speech for anarchists and Left socialist parties, freedom of meetings for peasant associations, liberty for all socialist political prisoners, and the right of the peasants to have priority of lands over the State farms and communes.

Behind these demands inspired by misery lurked the anarchist propaganda for "Soviets without parties" and the termination of the Dictatorship. Expressing this thought, the Kronstadters actually called for a "Third Revolution." The Kronstadt revolt was put down with draconic thoroughness, but it served the purpose of reminding the leaders of the Russian Communist Party that it was time to change their policy of military communism which had stripped the peasantry and the petty owners completely bare. Above all it was necessary to increase production, or the entire country would perish.

As a transition measure to the rebuilding of Russian economy, Lenin proposed the abolition of military communism and the substitution of an agricultural tax. Up to now, the peasants had been paying no taxes; instead, all their surplus had been taken away, and trading had been abolished. Now limited trading again would be permitted. Lenin affirmed that the agricultural tax was a form of transition from the peculiar "military com-

munism" made necessary by extreme necessity, ruin and war, for the purpose of a proper socialist exchange of products.[1]

By March, 1921, Lenin was ready for the next big step, his New Economic Policy (called the "NEP" for short). Now would be brought in all the measures already worked out in 1918 for the enticing of capital back into the Soviet Union so as to build up its economy on a better basis. A moderate and cautious introduction of the policy of concessions was effected that was calculated to improve the state of industry and the condition of the peasantry. Just how far the concessions to capitalism could go had to be determined by the relation of forces, but it was clear that while capitalism could get economic concessions it could make little political headway. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat would be as rigidly enforced as ever.

The task of building up State capitalism side by side with a socialistic *régime* over the factories already seized was concretized by measures inviting merchants and traders into Russia, and the opening up of a free market The re introduction of free trade was the sole measure to rebuild the economy on the countryside and to stimulate peasant production, even though buying and selling on the open market was bound to lead to the formation of kulaks and new capitalist elements ("Nepmen") The government also began the policy of selling bonds on interest the funds to go for the purchase of machinery, etc In every way, the Soviet *régime* tried to induce wealthy capitalists to build plants in Russia for the State to work at a mutual profit

On the countryside, the development of co-operatives of small commodity producers was ardently pushed Lenin had no illusions about these co-operatives of producers, and openly declared that they inevitably would generate petty bourgeois relations, but at least these co operatives would simplify control over the capitalists and would increase the supply of goods Entirely different from the concessions to individual capitalists, the co operatives could also be a transition toward socialism The concessions were based on large machine industry and granted to a single capitalist or trust by a definite written document not easy to repeal Besides, transition from State capitalism to socialism was a transition from one form of large scale production to another It was otherwise with the co-operatives, which was based on small industry and took in many thousands of members on terms that easily could be changed The transition from co-operatives to socialism was the transition from petty industry to large-scale

[1] See V I Lenin Meaning of the Agricultural Tax, *Labour Monthly* Vol I, No 1, pp 18 24 (July, 1921) This article also appears in Lenin, Bucharin and Rutgers *The New Policies of Soviet Russia*

production, and thus would mark a great forward step in a backward country like Russia.

These changes came just in time to save the Bolshevik régime. Following the military intervention and economic blockade of Soviet Russia by the foreign powers, and owing to the complete breakdown of economy, Russia suffered a terrible famine in 1921-1922 that attained the unbelievable toll of five million deaths from starvation and disease. Added to the war dead and the losses in the civil war, this new and awful blow would have been sufficient to crush any other country and any other force than Russia and the Bolsheviks. By means of the new measures, however, the Russian Revolutionists did manage to survive A commercial treaty was effected with Great Britain in 1921, and, in 1922, the Treaty of Rapallo was signed with Germany. Affairs thenceforth were brought to a more normal state.

Thus there was prolonged a peculiar equilibrium in international affairs wherein a proletarian régime was able to exist for a number of years side by side with a capitalist world This mutual co existence has led to the illusion in some circles that the two parts could work together peacefully for an indefinite, protracted period What was rather the case was that neither side could for the moment overcome the other; thus both had to tolerate each other.

The shift to the New Economic Policy also brought great changes in the ranks of the advanced workers in the Communist Party. During the course of the civil war, the proletariat had been forced to take up arms and had become quite disused to industrial discipline In many cases the factories were destroyed or dismantled. In other cases, the workers had met interminably over every question of production, "democracy" being interpreted in such a manner that it spelled perpetual debating with nothing accomplished.

The drive to increase production implied the drive also for centralization and for strict responsibility Anarchistic tendencies had to be overcome, endless discussions terminated. Instead of responsibilities being scattered through large committees, now there was to be individual responsibility, with one chief director appointed for the factories. Lenin urged Hold meetings, but administer without the least hesitation, administer more firmly and severely than ever the capitalist did before. Otherwise you will not be able to conquer him" [1] There was to be no tolerance of sentimentality, dilettantism, or slacking. The three chief enemies were defined as communist conceit, illiteracy, and bribery.

The shifting of the front from the military arena to that of economics

[1] V I Lenin The New Economic Policy and the Tasks of Political Enlightenment," speech delivered October 1921 In *Labour Monthly*, Vol I, No 6, p 514 (Dec 1921.)

brought out most clearly the basic fact that the technical culture of Russia the was extremely low. To build factories required a large stratum of skilled workers and a trained general proletariat In Russia, however, this was lacking. It was easier for the Russian workers to win on the military front than it was for them to build up a socialistic economy. The management and direction of factories had to be vested in experts who were almost to a man old Czarist professionals, who hated the new régime, and who literally were forced to work by pistols placed at their heads

Under Trotsky in the Red Army also, thousands of old Czarist officers had been used for the proletarian cause, but always under the closest supervision of the political commissars at the head of which stood Trotsky and Lenin himself [1] The task of controlling chemical engineers and industrial experts was a more involved process, one far more difficult for the mass of workers to follow Since the number of trained skilled workers was in considerable in the light of the gigantic tasks before the nation, these experts were able to seize for themselves special privileges and positions and threatened to get out of the control of the workers It must also be remembered that the civil war had wrought havoc with the trade union movement generally The majority of the members had volunteered for the front, the unions had become depopulated This led to a certain bureaucracy and conservatism among the leadership that remained

The New Economic Policy also introduced individual responsibility in production Each worker was now to receive wages in proportion to the quantity and quality of his work, at once there became differentiated various layers among the workers The skilled layers separated themselves from the unskilled and inclined to dominate the posts in the unions Conditions thereupon tended to become as follows Experts and specialists in the shop took power into their own hands or were controlled by subservient committees of skilled and specially privileged workers, trade unions were dominated by bureaucrats interested in production rather than in international struggle, the soviets were controlled by intellectuals far removed from the interests of the masses All this is another way of reiterating the basic general truth that workers who seize power in a backward agrarian country cannot maintain their rule without aid from the workers of advanced countries Because of the lack of culture prevalent in such agrarian countries, bureaucracy is bound to flourish and gradually to dominate the scene Within the Communist Party a struggle was sure to arise

Under Lenin, so long as the world proletariat was advancing in a great revolutionary wave, the struggle could be confined within fraternal patterns. Later, the conflict became sharpened into an aspect of the class

[1] Between June 1918 and August 1920 nearly fifty thousand former Czarist officers were induced to serve in the Red Army.

struggle, and the Bolshevik Party was split. The first warnings of the struggle appeared immediately after the "NEP" in the guise of a "Workers Opposition."

The spokesmen of the Workers' Opposition denounced the new bureaucracy that was arising. They pointed out that the upper layers were arising at the expense of the general mass of labor; the trade unions were being subordinated to a state apparatus; the one-man management was creating a new bureaucracy in the factories; the initiative of the masses was being destroyed; new "NEPmen" and speculators were arising on all sides to restore capitalism. To the Workers' Opposition the cardinal point was: Who shall develop the creative powers in the sphere of economic reconstruction, the industrial unions or the soviet machine? [1] If the unions were not given full control, then they would atrophy, the soviets would become more and more subservient to the peasantry and lower middle classes, and the revolution would be in danger.

Soviet industry was administered by the following mechanism: The soviets had created a Supreme Council of National Economy to be in complete charge of soviet economy and to reconstruct and build up industry. This Council had under its control large numbers of bourgeois specialists, engineers, experts and pseudo-experts, to whom the factories were entrusted. Besides this economic set-up, there were the All-Russian Trade Unions in whose hands were the functions of negotiating with the directors placed in charge by the Supreme Council the questions of wages, hours, and working conditions. Third, there was the Labor Commissariat of the Soviet government that looked after the administration of soviet laws in regard to labor conditions in the factories, such as health, sanitation, etc.

The Workers' Opposition took the position that the direction of economy should be placed in the hands of the Russian unions, the Supreme Council to be retained, but as a subordinate agency to the unions. This would give a real class policy to economic reconstruction. As matters then stood, the Supreme Council was responsible to the soviets which in turn were heavily mixed with peasant and petty bourgeois elements. Besides, if the unions were not given the constructive task of building up economy, they would lose all vital functions and degenerate into mere propaganda clubs.

On this question a different attitude was taken by Trotsky, who wanted to bring the Russian trade unions directly into the State apparatus and thus place them in charge of economic reconstruction really as part of the Supreme Economic Council. Those administrative tendencies which had made Trotsky an excellent Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army here were stretched unduly into the field of trade union life as well.

[1] See A. Kolontay: *The Workers' Opposition in Russia*, pamphlet, p. 9.

Against all of these positions was the viewpoint of Lenin, which finally prevailed. The direction of the factories would be controlled by workers' committees and commissars elected by the unions and the workers in the shops. The unions also were to select the head of the Labor Commissariat, which would be virtually under their control. But the unions were not to be made part of the State apparatus; this connoted a dangerous tendency towards regimentation of the workers and would take the class struggle character away from the unions.

Had the Workers' Opposition prevailed, there would have been a tendency of the proletariat to separate itself too much from the peasantry, and of the unions to diverge from their soviet base. Whether this actually would have occurred is another question. It must be remembered that Lenin at one time considered pushing the revolution forward, not through the soviets, but through other workers' organizations. At any rate, the Bolshevik leaders wanted above all to increase production from the existing dangerously low levels. They wished to exert pressure upon the workers to increase production and to discipline them anew. Unless production rapidly augmented, all would be lost, and the Leninists would take no chances on further experimentation. It is another question whether the plan of the Workers' Opposition would have been appropriate after Soviet economy was well on its feet. But, by that time, such proposals had become politically impossible.

On the other hand, it was imperative to keep the unions entirely separate from the State apparatus which was growing steadily with an incubus of bureaucracy. The unions must be free to represent not the State as a whole, but only one class, the workers; in their negotiations with the State directors on hours and wages, this became clear. Above all the unions were to maintain the right to strike. If they were to become part of the State apparatus, as Trotsky proposed, this right to strike in fact would be destroyed; thus the unions as such would be given a mortal blow. It might appear strange that workers would want to strike against a State which theoretically was controlled by the working class but, as Lenin remarked, "Our State is not entirely a 'workers state'; we also have our peasants. Then our State is bureaucratic. The trade unions must defend the workers against the state bureaucracy." [1] In any given instance, a strike meant that the bureaucratic official in charge was really thwarting the will of the workers; the strike would be a scandalous and dramatic way of showing up the bureaucracy, focussing publicity on it.

However wrong the Workers' Opposition may have been, certainly it served a healthy purpose in bringing forward the tendencies which already were thwarting the rule of the workers. Lenin counted on the Party to

[1] Quoted by W. H. Chamberlin, work cited, II, 436.

check all such tendencies. The Workers' Opposition replied that the Party itself was being choked with all sorts of alien elements that had joined it only after the victory of Bolshevism was assured. And they called for the expulsion from the Party of all non-workers who had joined after 1919; in the future, all persons who were to be admitted first had to go to work in a factory and obtain first hand general labor experience. Lenin himself not much later was to issue stern warnings against the opportunists who had crept into the Bolshevik ranks and to threaten the expulsion of 99 per cent of the Mensheviks who had changed color and joined the Bolsheviks after the seizure of power.

The Workers' Opposition was correct in its stern strictures against the rise of bureaucracy in the Soviet Union. However, it failed to realize that the roots of bureaucracy lay in the backward condition of the country and in the failure of the world revolution to support the Soviet régime. Before his death, Lenin, too, railed at the symptoms of bureaucracy appearing around him. He noted the complete failure of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, headed by Stalin, to change that situation. He found Stalin himself engaged in placing his men by appointments at all key positions of the Party. Finally, in desperation, he tried to strike hard at the Stalinist Party bureaucracy, but the blow fell too late and, although he called for Stalin's removal from his post as Secretary of the Party, by that time Lenin was paralyzed and on his death bed. The task was left to Trotsky to handle. And Trotsky failed.

II. THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL UNDER LENIN

XL. THE POST-WAR REVOLUTIONARY WAVE

I

THE victory of the Bolsheviks in Soviet Russia made it inevitable and imperative that they build a new Communist International. From the first days of the World War in 1914, Lenin had declared that the Socialist International was dead and that it was the duty of the genuine revolutionists to split from that body and to create a new one. The road in this direction was not easy. For the five years following, the communist Left Wing remained but a small minority By 1919, however, a different situation presented itself. In the first place, the War and its aftermath had ground all reformist hopes to pieces, had disillusioned the masses, discredited the socialists, and driven the people to take action themselves. A great revolutionary wave spread throughout all Europe. In the countries formerly controlled by the Czar, such as Finland, Latvia, Poland, Georgia, and similar regions, upheavals were rife. In the defeated countries of Germany, Austria, and Hungary, the monarchist cliques were fleeing in terror. In Munich and Budapest the Red Flag of the Soviets flew boldly.

In the victorious countries also, immense struggles were breaking forth. In France, the number of recorded strikers in 1919 reached a total of over a million, one hundred thousand; in 1920 it climbed close to one million five hundred thousand[1] The chaos of events caused the French working class to react so violently that both the trade union and socialist movements were split from top to bottom. The majority at the Socialist Party conference in Tours, December, 1920, formed the Communist Party and joined the Third International This Left Wing took with it practically the entire Socialist Party machinery, two-thirds of the membership, and the daily newspaper *l'Humanité* The communists were able also to win the majority of the trade unions and to organize their own "Unitarian" center.

In England, the workers increasingly demonstrated their solidarity in stormy strike struggles cutting across all craft and industrial union lines. In these strikes, the workers began to raise not merely economic but political demands, such as the withdrawal of troops from Russia, sympathy for the soviets, the nationalization of the coal, iron, railways, electrical, and other key industries. The sharp resolution of the Trade Union Congress in 1920 denouncing the British intervention in Russia helped considerably in

[1] See D J Saposs *The Labor Movement in Post War France*, pp 163 164

the decision of the government to withdraw the British troops from the Murmansk region of Russia, just as the revolutionary demonstrations of the French workers led to the withdrawal of the French troops from Odessa and the French fleet from the Black Sea.

As far away as America, general strikes occurred in Seattle, Washington, and in Winnipeg, Canada. In Argentina, the repression of the 1919 general strike resulted in five hundred killed and fifteen hundred wounded. In the United States, large-scale strikes occurred in steel, railroad, coal, textile, and other industries, the number of strikers mounting to several millions, an unprecedented total.

The position of the Leninists had followed the Marxist dictum "Workers of the World Unite" and, from the beginning, Lenin had been astute enough to see that the revolution begun in Russia would have to be carried on internationally to a finish. In the opinion of the Bolsheviks, the War had created a situation whereby revolution was ripe throughout the world. To accomplish this revolution, it was necessary to organize the communists in other countries and to wipe out the fateful influence of the socialists in the labor movement. The revolutionary movement was spreading so violently that the bourgeoisie in several countries had yielded full power to socialist opportunists. Elsewhere the socialists were considered to be the decisive factor preventing the working class from taking power. The attitude of the Socialist Parties towards Soviet Russia already had been negative and critical and, in some places, distinctly hostile. If the Leninists were to take advantage of the revolutionary wave spreading throughout Europe, they had to destroy completely the influence of the Second International. Furthermore, the events of the day had already caused splits in the ranks of the socialists. Various ultra Left groups were putting forth their programs which, while apparently criticizing the Leninist point of view supposedly from the Left, could result, in the long run, only in strengthening organizations inimical to the communists.

The creation of a Third International was also necessary if the communists in other countries were to learn the lessons of Bolshevism and make it an international reality. Revolutions were convulsing the peoples of Europe, yet, nowhere, save in Russia, were the workers able to hold the fort. This could be attributed either to objective difficulties, to subjective defects, or to both. A Communist International could, at least, minimize the blunders of its adherents.

Even from the Russian nationalist point of view, it was imperative to reconstruct the Communist International with its center in Moscow. The victorious powers, by 1919, had concentrated on the task of destroying the soviets by means of interventionary armies. It was highly important to paralyze these at their source. The internationalism of the Bolsheviks, there-

fore, had a real identity with the national interests of Russia, not only from the point of view of Lenin, that only the World Revolution could save the proletarian victory in Russia, but also from the nationalist penchant of using the World Revolution as a subservient agency for Russian ends.

The task of forming a new International was immensely lightened for the communists by the fact that they had at their disposal the incalculable resources of a huge country of over one hundred sixty million people. Coupled with the misery and poverty of the masses driving them to communism, there existed also the powerful attractive force of a strong well-knit Communist Party under Lenin, that had actually seized and held power, and taken over the factories. In the light of this conjuncture of forces, it is no wonder that the Socialist International, which had from the start embraced a considerable number of revolutionists, should have broken up into large fragments moving towards communism.

The testing and proving of the Bolshevik Party had been a long drawn out process in Russia, lasting almost twenty years. It had taken five years to call even the first International Communist Conference. It might be presumed that the creation of an International of Bolshevik calibre would have required as long a time as Lenin needed to form his own section. If, therefore, we see the Communist International flourish with extraordinary success from the very start, it is not only because of the ripe objective conditions, but also because most of those who styled themselves communists were sailing under false colors. To a considerable degree, the Third International exaggerated its strength so as to gloss over the extreme difficulty of the tasks which the Bolsheviks had placed before themselves.

Later, when world capitalism had become temporarily stabilized, it was seen that the gains of the communists were partly pseudo-victories, that the new recruits who called themselves communists were really new types of Left Wing socialists. In 1919, large sections of Centrist elements, who really had little in common with the vigorous and ruthless training of the Bolsheviks, were swept off their feet by the current of revolution and flowed on towards the communist movement. So great was the influx of new members that the powerful Bolshevik party was not able to digest its international material and to remake it into communist tissue.

Several results accrued from the situation. In the first place, the Communist International was made responsible for actions by its newly acquired adherents; this discredited it, since these new disciples, although recognized as such, were not really communists. In the second place, the moment reaction began to stiffen, these chameleons broke away from the movement to which they adhered. Thus, the process of transforming socialist Centrists into effective cadres for the Communist International was to prove exceedingly fitful and up-hill. Scarcely had the Leninists begun to build the

International than it began to appear to be but a specious illusion. The Communist International could not maintain its Leninist level.

It was quite natural for the labor movement of the countries formerly ruled by Czarism to go towards extremism and to follow the path laid down by the Russians. Czarism had laid a heavy hand upon its subject nationalities, and now its policy of russification was to find its antithesis in the influence of Russian Bolshevism. This was true for Finland, as it was to be for Latvia, Lithuania, Ukrainia, and elsewhere.

As far back as 1905 the Finnish movement had synchronized itself with the Russian. A Red Guard had been organized and soviets established. Revolution was the order of the day. Even after 1905, the Russian rulers were forced to make concessions to Finland. So hostile was the general population in Finland to the military that, all during the War, the General Staff did not dare to enlist soldiers in that country.[1]

In the summer of 1916, the Finnish Labor Party actually gained the majority of the antiquated Landtag which the Czar had permitted to function in Finland. The agitation for independence was now intensified, and around the Labor Party various nationalist-liberal constellations were formed to push the question of political freedom. A Finnish militia was organized.

Simultaneously with the overthrow of the Czar, revolution broke out in Finland. The nationalists now withdrew from their connections with the Labor Party and, frightened by the growing revolutionism of the masses, mobilized their peasant forces in the elections of October 1, 1917, for a new Landtag. As a result, the Labor Party lost its majority, acquiring but ninety-two seats out of two hundred.

On its part, the Finnish Labor Party was caught surprised by the rapid turn of events. As Russia went Bolshevik, the advanced Finnish workers who had been in the forefront, demanding the independence of Finland, were forced to change their propaganda to favor solidarity with the soviets. Naturally, the transition period was bound to be one of confusion, resulting in the workers' loss of support by the peasants who were still captivated by nationalist-democratic slogans.

It will be recalled that Russian soviets had sprung up spontaneously in the demand for bread and peace. But, as we have noted, Finland was not directly dragged into the War. Her forces were not conscripted; on the contrary, war prosperity manifested itself in numerous quarters. The pressure of the War on Finland showed itself in the large numbers of soldiers billeted there, in the heavy taxation, and in dislocation of trade. All these matters the middle classes believed could be solved by independence.

[1] See H. Soderhjelm: *The Red Insurrection in Finland in 1918*, p. 12.

Furthermore, for the bourgeoisie, the independence of Finland would be the first step in destroying Bolshevism.

The moment the Bolshevik revolution succeeded, the Finnish Landtag declared its complete independence. This declaration was met by a general strike of the Finnish proletariat on November thirteenth. As Finland had always been kept disarmed by Russia, and as numerous soviet troops still remained on Finnish territory, the bourgeoisie was not able to suppress the strike or to disarm the Red Guard.

However, the Finnish communists did not take this occasion to overthrow the Landtag. The Labor Party permitted the Landtag to resume sessions and mobilize its forces under Svinhufvud. Only on January 27, 1918, did the Finnish proletariat go into action to establish their dictatorship. They easily took control of all the important centers of South Finland, driving the Whites into the tundras of the north.

By this time, Russia was being forced into the Brest Litovsk Peace, the result of which was the freeing of the hands of the German imperialists to destroy Bolshevism outside of Russia proper. The Finnish bourgeoisie hastened to invite the German army into the country, and by May, 1918, the communist forces were routed and the White Terror began, not to end until thirty thousand workers had perished for their support of sovietism.

In the course of the Finnish revolt, the need of an international center must have become impressed indelibly upon the Russian communists, if only to prevent the many serious amateur mistakes being made in the name of communism. This lesson was to be emphasized in the events of Hungary and Germany.

In Finland, the communists did not know how to win the peasantry to their side. They did not take advantage of their early opportunities to take over the factories and to smash the capitalists entrenched in the Landtag. They were still cherishing too many legalistic and parliamentary fetiches. They paid for their amateurishness with their lives.

2

Even before the final debacle at the front, a revolutionary explosion had been maturing in Hungary. A strong pacifist policy was being pursued by the group led by the Radical philanthropist, Karolyi. Count Michael Karolyi had belonged to the extreme Left Wing of the "Party of 1848" which had advocated Kossuth's dream of a free democratic federation of Serbs, Hungarians, Rumanians, and other nationalities of Central-Eastern Europe. The Karolyists had found the Party of 1848, however, too mild for their views, and had split to form their own organization. Since, under the reactionary election laws of Hungary, social-democratic workers found it

extremely difficult to elect delegates to Parliament, the Karolyi Party was really the only opposition in that body and, as such, it gathered the hopes of the people around it

Already, in 1918, anti-militarist agitation had become pronounced throughout the country A military mutiny had to be suppressed in Pecs. In June, a strike was called in the machine works of the State railway system and developed into a general strike in Budapest. From this time on, the workers began to form Workmen's Councils, no doubt inspired by the example of the Russian Revolution.

With the collapse of the Bulgarian front, in October, and the realization by the Hungarians that the War was lost, matters rapidly came to a head. On October twenty-fifth the old parliament was superseded by a National Council headed by Karolyi. A portion of the Budapest police joined the movement, troops refused obedience to their superiors and formed Soldiers' Councils. The revolutionists seized the General Post Office, the telegraph and telephone centers, the railways, and the military buildings, All without any resistance from the aristocratic régime, which was in a state of collapse The King fled the country

This unique situation calls for some explanation The fact is the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy never had been anything but a warden in an immense prison of the peoples of Central Europe. The reactionary régime had held on by brute terror, by its policy of divide and conquer, and by its support from Germany Now history was taking its revenge, the blows of the War had shattered this bastile The Czechs, the Serbs, the Rumanians, were all in active battle against it. Coming on top of this, the revolt of the Hungarians was too much There was a complete collapse of the power of the ruling class; the old State crashed into pieces

"On the signing of the Armistice, the Minister of War had stated that it would take three years to demobilize the army, and to return the troops to their ordinary civil occupations As a matter of fact, the army demobilized itself, without waiting for the order of the Minister of War, in exactly three days!" [1]

At this critical moment, Count Karolyi undertook to hold the fort for capitalism That he was not feared by the rulers was evidenced by the fact that the King of Hungary himself entrusted Karolyi with the task of forming a new cabinet, and Karolyi's "revolutionary" National Council actually took the old oath to the King before assuming office. But the Karolyi Radicals were astute enough to realize that unusual measures, including the full support of the working class led by the social-democrats, were necessary. On November sixteenth, 1818, a Republic was proclaimed and the Social-Democratic Party was invited to join the government.

[1] E Ashmead Bartlett *The Tragedy of Central Europe*, pp 46 47

This radical procedure was not unwelcome to the former rulers. The War was now over. The question was to secure the best peace terms possible. The die-hard military clique felt that the pacifist, naïve Karolyi was a far better face behind which to hide than the old, worn out masks. Many in Hungary had followed Kossuth's ideals for an independent Hungary and a free Danubian Federation. Now that the program of Karolyi actually was being advocated by such as Woodrow Wilson there was none better to meet the Versailles victors than the Count.

Hungary was to be partitioned. Perhaps the Hungarian socialists could stop this process or could keep the Serbs, Czechs, and other former subject nations closer to Hungary than would otherwise be the case. Now that coercion had failed, perhaps cajolery covered with socialist phrases of "brotherhood" might be of influence. Undoubtedly these considerations played an important part in the events, and Karolyi, instead of being a traitor to Hungarian nationalism, was in reality an aristocratic patriot trying to save his class by unaccustomed methods. If he opened the way for communism, it was because nothing could have prevented the course of events from flowing in that direction. Where Karolyi failed was in underestimating the ability of Paris to judge the servility of the socialists and their pretensions.

The far-sighted policy of Karolyi tremendously appealed to the social-democrats, who were highly flattered by the invitation to form a Cabinet. A debate now arose among them whether they should take the entire government or should limit themselves to a coalition with the bourgeoisie. The vacillating and amateurish character of the Hungarian socialist representatives of the workers was seen in the progress of this debate.

A Workers' Council meeting was called for January 14, 1919, wherein one of the leaders, Garbai, proposed that there be formed a purely socialist government. To his own surprise, the proposition was carried, whereupon he at once begged leave to withdraw it as premature; another proposal, by Kunfi, was put forth for a coalition with the capitalists, but with the proviso that the socialists be in the majority. This motion also was passed, but there was such a considerable minority opposed to this outright class collaboration, especially among the metal workers, that proceedings were temporarily suspended until the resistance of the metal workers was overcome, when another vote was taken on Kunfi's policy. Only five voted against; these alone represented the communist tendency.[1]

The disappointment of the masses in the decision of the socialists began to manifest itself in a strong Left Wing that urged another revolution. This movement was greatly accelerated by the arrival of Bela Kun from Russia

[1] See A. Kaas and F. de Lazarovics: *Bolshevism in Hungary*, p. 62.

on January 19, 1919. Now an active fight began between the socialist and communist groups which rapidly led to a decision.

The fact is that the radical rule of Karolyi, despite the unconditional support given him by the socialists, was totally unable to solve the elemental problems facing the country. It was incapable of resurrecting any discipline among the returned soldiers, many of whom still retained their arms and who could find no work anywhere. The vast latifundia on the countryside were still controlled by the former owners. The borders were being steadily invaded on all sides by Serb, Czech, and Rumanian military forces, despite the Armistice. The hungry people were demanding the lowering of prices. The workers were seizing the factories. Production was rapidly falling.

"The immediate cause of the October revolution was the gradually returning tide from the disintegrating fronts and the accumulation of great masses of people in Budapest. The soldiers and students and munition workers were the true leaven of the revolution. It was in the first instance a military and national revolution, not until much later did it become a social revolution, then socialist, finally communist." [1]

The Karolyi government already had learned to its sorrow that flirting with the socialists would not mitigate the harsh terms of the victors in Paris. Steadily the pressure was increased to dismember Hungary. The climax came with the arrogant note from Colonel Vyx to the effect that new political frontiers would be established around Hungary. This was the last straw for the pacifist Karolyi régime. Understanding now that Hungary would have to fight for its borders, and realizing that his régime could rally no one, Karolyi resigned on March 21, 1919, with the remarkable statement: "Ordered production cannot be guaranteed unless the proletariat takes the power into its own hands. . . . I lay down my office one hand over the power to the proletariat of Hungary." [2] Thus Karolyi gracefully withdrew from all difficulties and retained his reputation for unsullied delicacy in slumming among the poor.

In all his tactics, Count Karolyi lent a close ear to the events in Europe, whereby the socialists were becoming a great force to be propitiated and utilized. In his proposal for a socialist cabinet, Karolyi was not following Kerensky so much as events in Germany. The Versailles victors had proved willing to deal with a socialist régime in Germany and in Austria and to back up socialistic groups in Czecho-Slovakia and Poland. Karolyi hoped perhaps they also would befriend the radical-socialist coalition in Hungary.

When this policy failed, Karolyi had to resign. War against Hungary's old enemies could be carried on by only one force, the proletariat, and

[1] O. Jászi: *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary*, p. 29.
[2] A. Kaas and F. de Lazarovics: work cited, pp. 86-87.

by new slogans and new leaders. Let the proletariat take power; such action could lead only to a head-on collision with the Entente. Further dismemberment of Hungary would become the communists' fault. If the new government won important victories, it would end the destruction of Hungary. Thus Hungarian nationalism egged on the communists.

With the resignation of the government, Bela Kun, who had been arrested after an abortive attempt to seize control in February, was now released. He marched from jail to become overnight the factual head of the new régime. The Socialist Party which had expelled the communists now fused with them and, on the twenty-third of March, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat was announced. Hungarian nationalism immediately was appeased with a statement by Kun that now a mighty proletarian army would be created to fight the Vyx vote and to crush both the Rumanian Boyars and the Czech bourgeoisie.

It is now necessary to pause to compare the Hungarian Revolution with the Russian. It is true that fundamentally the same pattern appears. The anachronistic monarchy gave rise to a Liberal provisional government which became a radical socialist republic that turned towards communism. In both countries, the masses, as returned soldiers, were armed; in both they had to face intervention and, although the peasantry predominated, the proletariat took the lead. Nevertheless there were enormous differences between the two revolutions.

The first great difference was the fact that the Russian Revolution had started from the desire of the masses for peace. Theirs was an immense country, vast and inaccessible to invasion for the most part. To secure peace, the people had to overthrow not only the Czar, but Kerensky and the socialists. In Hungary, peace had been obtained, but a disastrous peace. Now the ruling classes wanted to dodge the consequence of their crimes. That is to say, in Russia the masses had to fight every inch of the way before the old régime was discredited and overthrown. In Hungary, on the other hand, military disaster from without forced the breakdown of the old State and the abdication of the rulers. The new administration was handed office on a silver platter. Very few remembered the old adage: "Beware of the Greeks even when they bear gifts."

Thus in Hungary everyone appeared more radical than he really was. No one had to hew out a given place for himself, but rather fell into it by default. No group was tested or proved its worth in bitter large-scale fighting. In Russia, the bourgeois Kadets had hung on like leeches before resigning and letting Kerensky and the socialists have undisputed power. In Hungary, on the contrary, the Revolution started from this very point.

In Russia, Kerensky was exposed as a traitor before he was driven from the scene; Karolyi bowed himself out with the plaudits of the socialists.

In Russia, for many years the Bolshevik Party had prepared itself for its seizure of power. In Hungary, there had been no communists during the War. Bela Kun was converted to the faith as a Hungarian prisoner of war in Russia; his chief supporters at first were soldiers who similarly had witnessed the revolution in the land of the soviets. Thus the Hungarian Communist Party was born hastily and in the midst of the very events which were to carry it to power. It was not rooted in the country. Ninety-five per cent of the leadership were Jews.[1] This alone was to prove fatal, for these Jews knew nothing about dealing with the peasantry, and alienated the middle classes which might have been won over.

Added to the lack of experience of the communists was the great dilution of their ranks by all sorts of careerist and social-democratic elements. We have noted that the social-democrats literally found it possible one day to work with the bourgeois radicals and the next day to fuse with the communists. Hasty fusion with socialists in all cases is a highly dangerous symptom, since it means that the ranks of the communists are corroded with alien elements that will prove untrustworthy in battle. In Russia, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks were speaking to each other at opposite ends of their rifles; in Hungary in the People's Commissariats, on the other hand, communists and socialists were equally represented.

The March Revolution introduced entirely new principles from the October one. "The state independence of Hungary, universal suffrage for legislature and administration, a democratic peoples' alliance with the neighbouring states, the partition of the *latifundia* and a social policy following the example of the most highly developed independent states—in a word, the sovereignty of the industrious masses of peasants and town workers in the state, under the guidance of the genuinely creative intelligentsia—these were the fundamental principles of the October Revolution." [2]

In March, the Hungarians copied almost everything from their illustrious Russian predecessors. With the initiation of the Dictatorship, Church and State were separated. All power was taken by the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils. Food cards were introduced without which no food could be obtained. These cards were given only to producers and to members of the trade unions. All private shops were closed, and the State assumed the monopoly over trade.

[1] The prominence of the Jews in the communist movement of Central and Eastern Europe helps to account for the bitter anti-semitism prevalent there among the reactionaries. No wonder the Viennese Hitler would stress the menace of the Jew.

[2] O. Jászi: *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary*, p. 36.

The first task of the communists was to insure the hegemony of the proletarians and city poor. Private houses were abolished, and the wealthy quarters of the city were turned over to the proletariat, all producers being treated equally in the number of rooms and the kind of house they received. An extremely rapid nationalization of factories took place, so that, on April 18, it was declared that over one thousand concerns had been socialized, whereas in a whole year in Russia only 513 firms had been so occupied. This mechanical socialization affected not merely the big plants, whatever few there were in Hungary, but also the small factories employing only a few workers. Together with the drastic closing down of the small shops, the mechanical socialization tended to alienate the petty bourgeoisie of the city from the workers.

Hungary had not had the same industrial development as Russia. Here there were not the immense modern works that had been constructed under Czarism. Had the Hungarian communists not socialized the smaller shops, it would have meant that a large number of the factory workers of Hungary would not be controlling directly the means of production. On the other hand, socialization could take place only with a great amount of friction with the lower middle classes, resulting in great difficulty on the part of the State to control the productive processes. When factories are large and the unions solidly built, a discipline among the workers is effected both by the process of production itself and by the class struggle. In small shops, however, the tendency to looseness, to individualist and anarchistic habits, is far more prevalent. In the case of Hungary, the proletariat could not go beyond its training and environment in these petty shops. With the establishment of the Dictatorship, at once discipline and control were loosened, never to be regained. At a time when production of goods was sorely needed, not only for the Red Army but in order to supply the peasantry so as to win their friendship, the workers allowed production to fall heavily everywhere.

The difficulties here encountered are only extra proof of the fact that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat can be sustained in a backward agrarian country only against the greatest obstacles and with the greatest heroism on the part of the proletariat. The loose control by the communist leaders, even over their own members in Hungary, bore witness to the fact that time and long experience are needed before a revolutionary party can be built up properly to handle the tremendous task of running a revolution.

The possibility of resuming production even at capitalist levels was sadly diminished by the fact that Hungary was not living under normal conditions. There were large armies at all her frontiers. A complete blockade was to be established around Red Hungary; the proletariat naturally could not continue production when raw materials were lacking. Hungary was

not Russia She was more intimately dependent upon intercourse with the other countries of Europe around her and, lacking that, her factories were bound to deteriorate, production to drop All this meant that Soviet Hungary had to rise or fall, not on the economic but on the military battle front.

The establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in a backward agrarian country depends above all on the relationship set up between the workers and the peasants. It was here that the Jewish Commissars of the Communist Party of Hungary fell down Unlike the situation in Russia, agricultural production in Hungary had been carried on not so much on small peasant holdings as on large latifundia worked by armies of agricultural laborers and owned by powerful aristocrats In Russia, the question had been relatively simple, a matter of partitioning the estates among the poor peasants, in Hungary, this problem was to be one of sharp dispute The Karolyists were in favor of partitioning these estates among the peasants and the agricultural laborers But this was not the policy that Bela Kun adopted The communist leadership decided not to divide the modern estates among the peasantry and not to insist on the formation of cooperatives for the collective use of the machinery, instead, they decided to socialize the property, paying greatly increased wages to the agricultural proletarians Nor did the communists make any distinction between the type of large estates, between those cultivated extensively or intensively

Had the agrarian question been handled with discrimination and due preparation, had some concessions been made to the peasants by partitioning some estates so as to give the toilers on the land a stake in the revolution and induce them to defend the new order with their lives, the policy of Bela Kun might not have been so disastrous Not only was the whole question handled in a most slipshod manner, but the debates around the question showed so much contempt for the average peasant that the agrarians on the countryside could not but feel that the communists would deal with them as enemies as soon as they got the chance "Béla Kun himself, in the session of the Soviet on June 21, let loose a flood of demagogic denunciation of the small farmers and called on the agricultural labourers to make an end of them!" [1]

It is true that the Hungarian communists decreed that the land tax should be dispensed with in favor of peasants' cultivating pieces of land under one hundred acres But coupled with this decision was another one to curtail commodity markets on the countryside by setting up a central control of farm prices which would limit the income the farmer received for his products Despite all measures, the peasantry became increasingly hostile to the city communists Anti-semitism became virulent and wide-

[1] O Jászi work cited, p 127

spread, and the stage was set for the return of the aristocracy, supported by the peasantry of the country.

However, none of these defects necessarily would have had fatal consequences had the communists been able to show results on the military field. From the first they had rallied much of the entire population around themselves by promises that they would fight for the independence of Hungary against the rapacious demands of the powers at Paris. Here was really the sole way out for the communists, and it seemed at first that they appreciated the fact that a war against foreign capitalist powers could do for them what it did for the Russian Sovietists, and for the French Jacobins of 1793. The country would be consolidated. The unemployed soldiers would be harnessed to the dictatorship. In the name of war-needs, the State could proceed far more drastically than otherwise to take control of all production and distribution. The nationalism of the peasantry would have supported the struggle without question.

But far more than all this, unless the Hungarian working class broke through the capitalist wall around it and reached the German proletariat, fusing both movements, unless the Hungarian proletariat showed itself to be the liberator of all the oppressed peoples of Central Europe and, with their aid, blasted its way to connect itself with the Russians, it was bound to be cut down and defeated. Not a moment should have been lost. The whole country should have been mobilized for a proletarian crusade, especially when all were outraged by the fact that their country was being invaded on three fronts and the Armistice violated by the enemy.

As we have said, it seemed at first that the communists understood this. When in the last days of May, 1919, the Czech army began its campaign, the Hungarian Red Army marched against it and scored decisive victories. Soon the Red Army was close to Pressburg and was about to take the city. Slovakia was overrun and a Soviet Slovakia proclaimed. Now the allied powers in Paris became thoroughly alarmed. Should Pressburg fall, the whole capitalist structure of Bohemia might collapse. It was necessary to press for time; this the Parisian masters did by wiring Kun that, if he called off his attack, they would consent to deal with his government.

Here a fatal mistake was made. Had Bela Kun been really a Leninist, or had the leadership of the Communist Party been in the hands of native Hungarians rather than of elements who, even in their own minds, believed themselves alien to the people and lacking the nation's confidence, the march on Pressburg never would have been stopped. But at heart Bela Kun and his associates were opportunists. Instinctively they shrank from enlarging the struggle, from making communism an issue throughout Central Europe. Believing that the allied victors actually would treat with his Red

Government, Kun moved his troops away. From now on the case of the Hungarian Soviets was doomed. The army lost its crusading morale and disintegrated. The French diplomats soon exchanged their promises for generals who were instructed to go the limit in destroying the Hungarian régime.

"The fatal mistake of a proletarian republic which had turned its face eastward to Moscow was to come to terms with Paris. No government could endure that tried to serve two masters; Paris quickly discovered this and set about to crush the Soviets." [1]

This monumental blunder on the part of Bela Kun could have accrued only from the fact that there was as yet no real Communist Party in Hungary. Bela Kun here exposed himself not as an internationalist revolutionist but as a national socialist who believed it possible to attain socialism in one country alone; one who put faith in the mercy of the bourgeoisie and believed their promises to refrain from destroying the communists. The Hungarian soviets had been erected before the humanitarian "democrats" who had won the World War had demonstrated what havoc their interventionary armies could do in Russia.

The abandonment of the campaign to form soviets outside of Hungary and to connect his movement with that of the workers elsewhere went hand in hand with Bela Kun's opportunist alliance with the reformist socialists. To Kun, evidently, a long period was not necessary before socialists could be turned into communists. Any phrase of adherence could accomplish the transformation. We have already commented on his failure to break sufficiently with the socialist opportunists within Hungary. Now we are to observe the results of his international policy of friendliness to the socialist Vienna government.

With the end of the War and the flight of the Austrian Emperor, the opportunist and Centrist socialists of Vienna had taken over the country, as similar groups had done in Germany. In Austria, however, the socialists ever had been more to the Left, more Marxian, than the German variety. This was due to their relative poverty, for one thing, and to the instability and ruthless methods of their ruling class. Now that the Red Flag was waving both to the Right of them in Bavaria and to the Left in Hungary, the Austrian socialists couched their speeches in still more revolutionary phraseology; at the same time they made deals with foreign capitalism to save Austria as much as possible for the bourgeoisie. In these diluted socialists, Bela Kun evidently had the utmost faith. Nowhere was an attempt made to overthrow this pseudo-socialist Austrian régime from the Hungarian side, and to call on the Austrian workers to aid the Hungarians to do this job. Instead of solidarizing himself with the German

[1] M. W. Graham: *New Governments of Central Europe*, p. 236.

Spartacists who were actually moving against these socialists, Bela Kun objectively joined up with the Viennese bureaucrats.

So great was his trust in them that he used Vienna as his financial base of operations and transferred there much of the gold of Hungary. This trust was to be betrayed. When a shipment of 135 million crowns was made from Hungary to Vienna by the Party functionary in charge, the money was seized by the White Guards in Vienna who had learned of the proposed shipment; thus a severe blow was given to the proletarian régime. That Bela Kun could have shipped such sums out of the country into hostile territory where White Guards could be protected speaks volumes for the type of "Lenin" leading Hungary.

If Hungary had its mock Lenin, it was to have its mock Trotsky in the person of Jacob Pogany (Schwartz) who became Commissar over the Army overnight and headed the military until a battalion of soldiers marched to the soviets and demanded an end to his intolerable régime and his removal from the Army. The communists hastened to comply, and Schwartz was given the post of Commissar of Foreign Affairs instead, his chief worry being how to flee the country in time when communism collapsed (something he managed to do very nicely).[1]

The retreat from Pressburg brought about the collapse of the Slovakian Soviet Republic and the determined advance of the French and Rumanian armies from the South. Knowing now the calibre of their communist leaders and thoroughly demoralized, the Hungarian army lost heart and broke before the enemy. As Bela Kun and others hastily took flight, the Rumanians invested Budapest and began a systematic looting of the country.[2]

Before the invaders had left, there had been established a ferocious White Guard régime under Admiral Horthy, in August, 1919, that proceeded to mop up the Reds. This patriot was willing to sign treaties that would strip Hungary bare of vast territories peopled with Hungarians; he was ready to enter into the most friendly relations with the enemies of his people. His undying enmity was reserved for the Jews and communists who, he declared, had despoiled the country. For a long time a White Terror raged, impelling even the anti-communist Oskar Jászi to declare: "This raging of the White Terror makes one of the darkest pages of Hungarian history. . . ." [3] It has been estimated about thirty thousand Soviet sympathizers perished. This speaks eloquently, not only for Horthy, but also for the soft and opportunist character of the Kun régime.

But the Hungarian scene also permitted some farce. As the communist

[1] Later in 1923, Schwartz was to command the American communists under the name of John Pepper.

[2] For a statement of the outrageous conduct of the Rumanian troops under French direction see Maj. Gen. H. H. Brandholdz: *An Undiplomatic Diary.*

[3] O. Jászi: work cited, p. 160.

leaders departed, the social-democrats reappeared and, under the leadership of Peidle, took control of the city of Budapest, hoping to appease the Rumanians and the French so that they would not invade Budapest and thus would permit it to become another Vienna. This naive plan rudely came to an end amidst the raucous laughter of the soldiery.

Eventually the French were to pay heavily for the reinstitution of the White Guard régime under Horthy Hungary became the only defeated imperialist power wherein the old aristocracy was allowed to rule The Horthy régime soon became a center of intrigue for the return of all the old privileged classes. Hungary was to prove an excellent spring-board for Italian ambitions on the Danube, for the restoration of the Hapsburgs, and for alliance with German fascism But it was by now nothing new for the French "democrats" to prefer the return of their old enemies to the rule of the Reds.

3

Beyond question, the most important country of all Europe was Germany. It had been expected that, should Germany be defeated, revolution would surely follow, and the Kaiser would be forced to abdicate It was not generally believed that the revolution would go any farther than the formation of a democratic republic that would curb he war desires of the German upper classes, and temporarily render German imperialism harmless While in the main this is what actually occurred, the German events gave the capitalists anxiety for a long period of time

When the War first began, the German masses were by no means as unanimously in favor of the conflict as has been generally pictured At the start, in 1914, when the social-democrats held their parliamentary caucus on the question of voting for war credits, fourteen deputies voted against although they finally decided to bow to the majority opinion in the Reichstag Only one abstained from voting in Parliament By December, 1914, the number opposed to the War Budget had reached seventeen, and Liebknecht openly cast his ballot against his Party In the vote on war finances in March, 1915, thirty deputies left the hall and two voted against The Left Wing was now becoming a force with which to reckon Karl Liebknecht was imprisoned.

As the War continued, the fight became sharper between the Right Wing that favored the support of the War, the Centre, led by Kautsky, Haase, Bernstein, and others, who refused to support the War but who did not believe in revolution, and the Left By 1916, the Left Wing was ready to form its own group, called the Spartacus Union, headed by Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Clara Zetkin, and Franz Mehring With them was Richard Mueller, the leader of the powerful metal workers union

All through 1916, wild strikes occurred, culminating in a mass strike, political in its inception and purpose. Rosa Luxemburg was arrested, but the movement steadily gained momentum. In 1917, discontent was so rife in Berlin, Saxony, and Thuringia that the government made every effort to clean out the revolutionary elements from the factories and to send them to the trenches. Large numbers of troops on the Russian front were becoming strongly infected with the virus of Bolshevism and could no longer be trusted. Moreover, the young men conscripted from the factories were proving extremely unwilling to fight.

With the severe defeats suffered by the German Imperial Army in 1918, the forces hostile to the ruling class intensified their activity. A great munition strike prevailed in Germany in 1918, in spite of the efforts of the socialist leaders to put it down. In July, a mutiny broke out among the sailors which the Imperial government found itself powerless to suppress. Later, when, in fact, all was over on the Western Front, the German Admiralty decided to send out all its ships in one last fight. At this point the sailors openly revolted, and some officers were shot. Of the four infantry companies sent against the sailors on November 4, 1918, to put down the revolt, three joined the rebels and one was disarmed. The revolt now rapidly spread to Hamburg and affected the entire civil population. At this juncture, the socialist Scheidemann took control of the revolt in order to stifle it and prevent it from going farther.[1]

The German military staff had believed that, at the very worst, the Entente could never enter Germany proper, that the mass of people would fight to the end in a defensive war. Now, however, the Junkers found that their real enemy was within the gates, and that the revolutionary movement was growing by leaps and bounds. For the militarists to continue to fight to the end would mean proletarian revolution. In panic, they decided to end the War while the forces of control were still capable of dealing with the revolutionary workers. Quickly the Majority Socialists were given the power to form a government, and royalty fled the realm.

In dealing with this flight of the Kaiser and his family from Germany, it has been stated openly that "There was no internal reason why either should have fled."[2] The Spartacists were absolutely unprepared for civil war; the Independents had conceived of the revolution as a completely bloodless and political affair; the Majority Socialists were still in control of large sections of the people. Probably the most decisive argument that weighed with the General Staff when they gave permission to their chief

[1] At a later date Scheidemann was to bring a court action alleging libel against one who had declared he had fomented strikes and encouraged rebellion. He was to prove overwhelmingly that he headed the strike movements only to behead them.

[2] H. G. Daniels: *The Rise of the German Republic*, p. 42.

to depart was the fact that the masses of the victorious countries had raised the slogan "Hang the Kaiser" and the hatred for the war abroad had been concentrated upon the person of the chief Junker representative. The army chieftains must have felt that far easier terms could be secured from the conquerors should the Kaiser be relegated from the picture and the people be put forward. This was quite in line with Wilson's propaganda, and the German military machine hoped much from Wilson and America.

In the meantime, events were proceeding more rapidly in Bavaria. On November 7, in Munich, Auer and Kurt Eisner addressed vast crowds, calling for the end of the War and the abdication of the Kaiser. While the other demands raised were mild, the whole tone of the demonstration constituted a serious threat to the authorities. Arsenals were raided and political prisoners were set free. The barracks were stormed and the people obtained arms. As the Bavarian Royalty fled, Kurt Eisner signed the decree as First President of the Bavarian Soviet, in which Bavaria was declared a Free State.

These were brave words, but the good socialists of Munich were by no means prepared to go Bolshevik. There had been no formation of soviets spontaneously among the people; the title Soviet Bavaria was really but a name. To Kurt Eisner, no doubt, sovietism meant merely a system that would lead to a federation of parliamentary republics of Germany and Austria in a socialized world of peace and plenty. Naïvely, Eisner allowed elections for a Constituent Assembly to be called, and believed it unnecessary to form a Red Guard for action.

Kurt Eisner's *politik* was doomed to quick disaster. When the returns of the Constituent Assembly were made it was found that of the 280 seats, the socialists won only 65, and the out-and-out bourgeois parties 115. On February 20, 1919, Kurt Eisner was murdered, and the "Left" Socialist Auer was shot down while making a speech eulogizing him, and seriously wounded. Now, of course, the masses began to realize their "honeymoon" foolishness; by this time, however, they were forced to face the power of the new Majority Socialist régime in Germany, and were overcome.

The events in Bavaria were concurrent with stirring action throughout Germany. On November 9, 1918, a huge general strike had been called for the overthrow of the régime. The masses, however, discovered that they were entirely leaderless so far as effective plans were concerned. Everywhere the majority socialists obtained control of the movement to direct it into safe channels. Millions were returning from the front, sporadic seizures of the factories were occurring, everywhere Workmens' Councils were being formed on the style of the Russian Soviets, but nowhere was there sufficient direction or national planning of the movement.

The Majority Socialists, to whom the government had been entrusted, did their utmost to take advantage of the breathing spell offered to them. The Russian Revolution had not occurred in vain for them, and they were able to understand the value of time far better than the revolutionary elements. Hoping to cover up their real activity with phrases borrowed from the Russians, the Majority Socialists, from the first days of the revolution, named their provisional government, a "Council of People's Commissars," thus giving the impression that the German revolution would follow the same path as the Russian. In Russia, the Council of People's Commissars had been erected only as the result of the Bolshevik revolution, and was an expression of soviets which had overturned parliamentarism. In Germany, on the other hand, the Council of Peoples Commissars was an opportunist socialist mechanism for stalling for time until the forces of reaction could be gathered to compel the convocation of a bourgeois parliament and the dissolution of the real soviets which had been organized.

While this attempted deception of the Majority Socialists did not fool the mass of workers, it was well received by the Independent Socialists who played directly into the hands of the Scheidemanns and Noskes and who protected these worthies with a revolutionary alliance. Without waiting for any vote, the two parties, the Majority Socialist and the Independent Socialist met together and decided to form a joint Provisional Government Committee, made up of three from each Party. The Spartacists were to be excluded entirely. Thus these "democrats," in the name of democracy, proved entirely willing to foist a governing body of six men upon sixty-five million people. It must be said that if the Independent Socialists worked hand in glove with the social-patriots in fact, they did try to distinguish themselves from the Scheidemanns in words. And, in this, Scheidemann was very willing to accommodate them so long as he and his group could gain the precious time needed to reorganize the forces of repression.

Hence, when the Independent Socialist Party insisted that Germany be turned into a Socialist Republic with the entire executive, legislative, and judicial powers of governing in the hands of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, the Kaiser socialists were quite willing to concur . . . provided that the National Assembly to be called later would agree to its own dissolution. On the question of giving all power to the Councils, the Majority Socialists declared they were not against . . . provided it did not mean the Dictatorship of the Proletariat so as to exclude the bourgeoisie. The main points of the final agreement read ". . . that only Social-Democrats should be members of the Cabinet, and that they were to function as People's Commissaries upon a footing of complete equality. . . . Political power was to rest in the hands of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils, of which a congress representing the whole Reich was to be summoned without delay.

The question of a Constituent Assembly they agreed to regard as not urgent . . ." [1]

In the meantime, Karl Liebknecht, released from jail, had organized a Council Congress for December 16. Soldiers called on by the government to disperse the people refused to fire on the crowds and, instead, organized their soldier soviets. But, when the socialist "Commissars" came to them with their arguments, the soldiers' soviets were won over, and carried out the orders to break up the demonstrations of the people. In Prussia, however, the soviets decreed the dissolution of the Lower House of the Prussian Diet and the abolition of the House of Lords, a decree which was obeyed. It was in the generally vague declaration of these soviets calling for rapid socialization of the means of production, but taking no measures to realize this, that the full impotency of the soviets was felt. The urgent need for a revolutionary party became evident.

An attempt was made to fill this need by a Convention called by the Spartacists for December 30, in Berlin. At this convention the Spartacists came out for various extreme measures to pave the way for a proletarian revolution. These measures included: disarming of the police, officers, bourgeois soldiers, and all members of the ruling class; seizure of all arms depots; arming of the proletariat, and the formation of a standing Red Guard against the counter-revolution; abolition of military discipline, and the adoption of the principle of the election and the recall of officers and the removal of all officers and cadets from the Councils; formation of revolutionary tribunals; confiscation of all food, and the introduction of a card rationing system; the establishment of a unified German Socialist Republic with all power to the Councils. With these demands went others calling for the institution of the six-hour day, the confiscation of all dynastic property and incomes, the annulment of all State debts, the confiscation of property over a certain amount, and the expropriation of large estates and industries. It was plain that the Spartacus Union was moving towards insurrection.[1]

The struggle in Germany now condensed itself on the question: "Should the National Assembly be convened in special elections or should power be taken over by the workmen through Soviets?" The Provisional Government had filled in a temporary Cabinet made up almost entirely of former Kaiser officers. The Independent Socialists, although advocating in words that power should go to the Councils or Soviets, yet allowed the Right Wing to proceed in calling a National Assembly. The big question was: "What will the Congress of Council delegates itself decide? Will it take the power or, will it surrender to the general parliament?" The matter was fatefully decided when the Council Congress decided to vote against the

[1] Daniels, work cited, p. 53.
[2] See R. H. Lutz: *The German Revolution, 1918-1919*, pp. 92-93.

Spartacus policy (even though at the last moment the Independent Socialist Party delegates added their voice to the Spartacists), and to allow the convocation of the National Assembly. This was precisely the opportunity for which the bourgeoisie had been praying during the revolutionary events.

What were the considerations that swayed the workers' representatives so that they should deliberately decide to abnegate the power they held in their grasp? In the first place, there was the fact that the Majority Socialists controlled the vast trade union apparatus which by no means had broken down after the armistice. On the contrary, millions of new workers now flocked into the ranks of the unions, while, at the same time, events had proceeded so rapidly that there had been no opportunity to remove the old officials and to install new, trained men, more in harmony with the will of the workers. Thus it can be said that there was a great divergence between the desires of the rank and file of the unions and the apparatus men.

Now, when the elections were held for delegates from the Workers' Councils, everywhere the trade union opportunist leaders put themselves forward; in few localities were the new members and awakened workers able to put forward other and better lists. Thus, as in Russia, in the beginning of the 1917 Revolution, so, in Germany, the delegates elected to the Soviet Congress were in the main not those closest to the masses. Furthermore, events were moving at such a tempo, carrying the masses to the Left, that very often delegates who were truly typical at the period of the elections, by the time the Congress met were so no longer. Generally speaking, not the poorest layers of the working population were elected, but the better elements, those long connected with the trade union apparatus and bound to it.

It must be recalled that the German Social-Democratic Party was the most powerful organization in the Second International, with great prestige and understanding of its rôle. For many decades it had propagandized the proletariat with the theory of gradual development of social-democracy and the need for *Ordnung und Diziplin*. And what was more important, the so-called revolutionists, who were now appealing to the workers to break from the Majority Socialists, only recently had accomplished the break themselves. Far different from Lenin, who had organized his Bolshevik faction seventeen years before the revolutionary events that were to give him power, the Spartacist socialists had always been ardent believers in unity. Only under the long pressure of the War had a small section of them broken away from their former comrades to organize a Left group, and even they were a considerable distance away from true Bolshevik hardness. As for the Independent Socialists, at the very moment of the Congress they were

co-operating with the Majority Socialists, having organized a joint provisional government with them which excluded the Spartacists. Thus, if even the so-called "Left" that called for all power to the soviets was so weak and conciliatory, the workers felt that they could not risk their lives under such leadership.

Nothing speaks more eloquently for the unpreparedness and amateurishness of the Spartacists than the fact that the Council Congress was held, not after, but before the Convention of their Party. Their failure to act promptly resulted in the situation whereby, when the Congress convened, the Spartacists had achieved neither national mobilization nor an adequately firm policy. To the workers it testified to the fact that the Spartacists were dragging belatedly behind the events, neither anticipating nor controlling them.

There was no doubt that, had the Council Congress decided to take over power, the soviet delegates would have been faced immediately with civil war and with all the horrors of the Russian experience, an experience which many of them felt the Germans were too civilized to repeat. This impression that Germany could not follow the footsteps of Russia gained weight by the close connection of the Majority Socialists with the employers, and, by the ease with which concessions were gained in every strike called. Then too, there was the pressure of the victorious Entente to consider. "Meanwhile a plain hint had been received from the American government that unless law and order were preserved, American troops would march into the country." [1]

However, the basic reason for the decision of the delegates of the Council Congress to renounce State power lay in the fact that the German working class was over-balanced by too thick an upper stratum that had been bribed by imperialism. This layer was war-weary and wanted peace; it opposed profiteers and yearned for the return of the "good old days" before the War. Pre-war German imperialism had known well how to share with the mass of skilled workers in the factories the super-profits that came from its winning of markets and its seizure of colonies. These German workers considered the War merely as a temporary interruption in the enjoyment of their reforms which they believed permanent. They had no conception that the world was entering a new era in which the German State would be in a position not to grant reforms but only to take them away. It was this basic economic condition that also accounted for the failure of the Germans sooner to build a truly Bolshevik Party, for the weakness of their Left Wing, and for the apathy of sections of the workers. The German masses did not yet realize what the defeat in the War would really mean for them.

None the less, the decision of the Council Congress to permit the con-

[1] Daniels, work cited, p. 57.

vocation of the National Assembly on February 16, 1919, caused an immediate split in the ranks of the delegates. The Left Wing broke away, on the ground that the Congress had committed suicide, and repeated its determination to take power. Now, however, backed by the decision of the Congress, the Majority Socialists felt that they had a free hand to act drastically against the Left, and began to issue orders to shoot down the revolutionary elements. Such unheard-of action in turn called forth protests from the well-meaning Independent Socialists, who resigned from the Provisional Government. Thereupon the Majority Socialists, seeing that the time really had come for a decision, seized the empty posts and filled them with their own men, reducing the number, however to five. The Majority Socialists evidently knew their duty to God and Country, and determinedly prepared to perform it.

Now the bewildered Centrist Independents, deserted and driven by events towards the Spartacists, convened their own Congress. Here another split occurred; the Right Wing kept the name Independent Socialist, and planned to continue to work in every critical moment with the Majority Socialists; the center of the Independents formed the Revolutionary Vanguard, while the Left Wing broke away to join the Spartacists outright, and form the Communist Labor Party-Spartacus Union, later to become the United Communist Party, after further fusions. From now on, the battle raged bitterly between the Majority Socialists for capitalism and the Spartacists for the proletarian revolution.

On January 5, 1919, the masses were called out on the streets of Berlin by the Spartacists and two hundred thousand armed men responded in a truly magnificent demonstration. Never had Germany felt the power of its workingmen stronger than at this moment. The sole factor missing was the revolutionary party. "The masses stood from early morning till nine o'clock in the cold and fog. Somewhere or other the leaders sat and deliberated. . . . They deliberated and deliberated and deliberated." [1] "Had the Spartacans possessed able military leaders and abandoned their speechmaking for fighting, they could have easily overthrown the Socialist government in the Wilhelmstrasse and established the Soviet system in Berlin." [2]

The Spartacists talked; the Right Wing knew well how to act The socialist Noske volunteered for the job of organizing a new guard to put down the workers. Everywhere the government troops, under the direction of their old Junker officers acting under socialist orders, threw themselves furiously against the strikers who had taken to the streets. Fierce fighting occurred. Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were taken prisoner and

[1] H. G. Daniels: work cited, pp. 78-79.
[2] R. H. Lutz: work cited, p. 95.

murdered on the way to jail. A thousand times over the Majority Socialists demonstrated that they deserved the great trust that the bourgeoisie had put in them. The January insurrection was put down with much loss of life.

A deep wave of discontent with the Socialist Party's actions now manifested itself throughout the country. In the ensuing elections for the National Assembly, many of the workers refused to vote, believing such parliamentary action futile. On the other hand, the property owners were anxious to put down the rule of labor generally. Thus, at the elections, the Majority Socialists obtained only 163 deputies and the Independents 22 out of a total of 393. This result was not entirely displeasing to the Majority Socialists, since they could now always declare that the majority of the people of Germany did not want socialism and, until a change of heart be shown by the nation, it would be impossible to take over the factories.

The murders of Liebknecht in Germany and of Kurt Eisner in Bavaria inflamed the masses to new outbursts. In Bavaria, as in Germany generally, the Majority Socialists tried to gain time by trying to form with the Independents a government giving the impression that socialism soon would be inaugurated. However, the communists quickly rallied to the attack and took over the control of Munich. The Majority Socialists were driven into the countryside where they rallied the peasantry to attack the workers of the city. In this they were reinforced by military aid from Prussia and Wurtemberg, sent by Scheidemann and Noske.

For nearly a month the Reds ruled Munich. A Dictatorship of the Proletariat was established with Levine, Axelrod, and Levien at the head, supported by such intellectuals as Ernst Toller and Erich Muhsam. A Red Army was formed to defend the Bavarian Soviet Republic, and a general strike was declared to paralyze the bourgeois forces. But the communists eventually were not able to hold the fort and, with the full force of Noske's troops against them, the soviets succumbed.

The Bavarian beacon seemed to operate as a signal for the remainder of Germany. During the interim from January to March, the Spartacists steadily had increased their strength in the Councils so that, by the end of that time, they had secured control over the Workmens' Councils in Berlin and the support of the soldiers groups. On March 3, 1919, a new proletarian uprising was attempted in Berlin. Strikes and outbursts occurred everywhere. The installation of a Dictatorship of the Proletariat also was attempted in Saxony.

But by now the Majority Socialists were ready to go to any extreme to defeat the movement. "To inflame the people against the communists, Noske falsely accused them of a general massacre of prisoners at the Lichtenberg Police Station and therefore ordered them to be exterminated." [1]

[1] R. H. Lutz: work cited, p. 128.

Noske issued his notorious illegal order to shoot at sight all workmen found armed. The Prussian Junkers in charge of the loyal troops responded with zeal, and nearly twelve hundred were killed during the fighting.

Uprisings broke out all over Germany, in Koenigsberg, Breslau, Upper Silesia, Hamburg, Emden, Rhineland, Westphalia, and Thuringia, but, by a mixed policy of stern force and prompt concessions in secondary matters, the uprisings were all put down, as were the general strikes in Magdeburg, in the Ruhr, and elsewhere.

The defeat of the German Communists accrued not because the proletarians were inadequately armed or did not know how to fight. Indeed, as a result of the demobilization of the German Army and the break-up of discipline, the Berlin proletariat was better armed than it ever had been. Rather, "The failure of the March rebellion was due to a lack of leaders, discipline, and co-ordination of plans." [1]

One of the most important errors of the German Communists was their failure to understand how to utilize the soldiers. Unlike the situations in Russia or in Hungary, there had been no complete breakdown of order among the soldiers. The returning soldiers were kept in barracks at State expense, since there was no opportunity for them to secure work, and disorder reigned throughout the country. This gave the Socialist Government the opportunity to separate these soldiers from the regular workers, and to use them as a force to suppress strikes and demonstrations.

Of course, a large number of the soldiers had been proletarians; these went over to the side of their brethren. But there were enough left who were hungry and miserable enough to do anything, who were part of the upper classes, or who were bewildered and did not understand their own interests. Such elements could be used to put down the insurrections.

In Russia, the officers had been dechevroned, and even in Italy it had been dangerous for officers to appear with decorations, epaulets, or other officer insignia. This was not the case in Germany. In many cases, the officers actually were part of the Soldiers' Soviets, paralyzing all activity.

One of the main tasks of the revolutionary workers should have been to drive a deep wedge between the officers and the soldiers, to make it impossible for the officers to appear openly on the streets, to create a reign of terror against them. This, however, should have been only part of the general task of complete disorganization of the former Kaiser's army. The soldiers who had returned from the front should have been sent at once to the factories and work shops whence they had come before their conscription. In this way, they would have been returned to the fold of the working class and not kept separated from the proletariat under the influence of their old officers. At the same time, the workers in the factories would have

[1] R. H. Lutz: work cited, p. 129.

rallied around these returned soldiers who would have formed the basis for a genuine Red Army or Red Guard.

As it was, the soldiers were paid by the State and felt indebted to the Socialist Government. The workers should have seen to it that the factories which had formerly employed these soldiers laid aside funds for their upkeep; thus the soldiers would have been attached to their former brothers and would have become their foremost defense fighters. Had such a policy been pursued from the earliest days, there would have been built up a force that would have given a far better account of itself in the field than was actually done when large masses were put down by the skeleton army under the control of the government.

The fact is, that just as the German workers paid little consideration to the needs of the German peasantry, so never did they fight adequately for the interests of the soldiers; the Communists never carried out a policy that would lead to the speedy incorporation of the veterans into the ranks of the toilers and would give them a place in the new social order.

As in Russia, where Kerensky had called in the Cossacks and the Czarist officers to put down the proletarian movement in the "July Days," so, in Germany, the Junker officers, having saved temporarily the socialist régime, now believed it time to show who was master of the social order. Now that peace was a definite reality, it was possible for the old Kaiserthum to raise its head again. On March 10, 1920, army officers presented to President Ebert a four-point program, demanding new elections, presidential selection by a plebiscite, a cabinet of "experts," and no further disbanding of the troops. When the Ebert-Bauer government answered this ultimatum with a warrant for the arrest of Kapp, the leader of the officers, the forces of reaction moved on Berlin and took the city on March 13. With the flight of the Socialist Government, the workers undertook to conduct a general strike that paralyzed all the activity of the monarchists, so that Kapp was forced to withdraw from the city, and acknowledge his helplessness. By March 20, the strike was called off, having demonstrated that the return of the old order now absolutely was impossible.

The treatment accorded the Kapp counter-revolutionists was in marked contrast to the brutal terror against the Spartacists. "No serious steps were taken against the majority of the Kappists, as it was feared that this would merely lead to further bitterness. Only a few sub-prefects were dismissed and their posts filled by Socialists. Nor was any attempt made to get rid of the reactionary officers of the Reichswehr, and the talk about democratising the army was seen to be futile when it was realized that the officers' corps felt strong enough to oppose interference. Later on, in the following August, an amnesty law was passed for the benefit of all but the actual instigators.

On the other hand, a great deal of summary justice was meted out to those who had opposed the Kappists . . . For them there was no amnesty." [1]

The efficacy of the general strike against reaction and the utter discrediting of the Majority Socialists, with their close collaboration with the bourgeoisie, now induced the workers to make another effort to seize the power of the government. The Kapp *putsch* was followed by the Communist venture. The Reds tried to seize the Ruhr. Here again was illustrated the power and readiness of the workers to struggle, and the utter incompetency of the revolutionists to prepare adequately or to control their forces. "Not even the Communists were under the control of their leaders. The whole Ruhr coal district was in the hands of the workers. But the movement was wild, had run beyond its leaders. Plans were ill calculated and pre-doomed to failure." [2]

It was not only that the workers not yet had achieved a trained Communist Party, or that they had to face the combined forces of their bourgeoisie and Socialist lackeys, but the revolt in the Ruhr was bound to bring the army of French imperialism on the side of their enemies to crush the revolt. On April 4, 1921, the French troops occupied Frankfort, Darmstadt, Homburg, Hanau, and Duisburg, and materially aided the German government to put down the workers' revolt.

Even then the workers put up a strong battle. Revolts broke out in the Dusseldorf district, East Prussia, Silesia, Saxony, and elsewhere. In Leipsig and Halle, the communists actually took control and established the rule of the workers. In the course of the recapture of these cities, hundreds of workers were killed by government forces. Only toward the end of May, 1921, did the Socialist President, Ebert, feel it safe enough to void the state of siege that he had declared as existing in these regions. Like 1919, 1921 showed a wild upheaval that was not strong enough to carry the workers to power. In almost all cases, the outburst had been due to the spontaneous hatred and misery of the people, and the United Communist Party found itself behind the actual events.

The fact is, the Communist forces were now divided into two principal divisions. One group was organized in the Communist Labor Party made up of revolutionary workers impatient for the struggle, of disbelievers in parliamentarism or in any co-operation with the old conservative unions. This group made mistakes of impulsiveness and lack of preparation, but contained excellent material. On the other side there were the Socialist centrist elements that had steadily gravitated to communism, who termed themselves Communists but who in reality never really had broken from their old opportunist and conciliationist habits. This group, called the

[1] H G Daniels: work cited, p 145.
[2] E Luehr: *The New German Republic*, p. 219.

United Communist Party, and recognized by the Communist International as its official section was guilty of concentrating too much on the parliamentary struggle and of being backward in the actual street battles. In almost all the forthcoming struggles we shall find that the German Communist Party suffered greatly from this Right Wing danger, from bureaucracy and parliamentarism.

In Hungary, the chief force that destroyed the Dictatorship of the Proletariat was the peasantry, allied to foreign intervention. So was it also in Finland. In Germany, the only force that could stop the workers' taking the power was the working class itself. In this country the skilled workers separated themselves from the mass of unskilled and rallied to the Socialist Party, which destroyed the proletarian uprisings. But if the process of transforming peasants into workers or socialists is a slow one, the process of changing privileged workers into unprivileged is not so slow. Soon enough the German State became unable to support the social reforms demanded by the reformist socialists as the price of their saving the bourgeois republic. The socialists were brutally expelled by the fascists; millions of skilled workers and petty proprietors suffered the full weight of the defeat of the War with its spoliation of the country and its indemnities and reparations, they experienced the burden and chaos of inflation and even the concentration camps of fascism before they were prepared to break from their past to stand united for proletarian revolution. By this time, too, the unskilled masses no longer remained in their power.

One more revolutionary effort was yet to be made before the workers gave up their insurrectionary attempts for the time being. By 1923 the full effect of the war defeats had made itself felt in Germany. The terms of the Treaty of Versailles had stripped the country. Germany was on the verge of being dismembered. Pushing its ruthless plans in this direction, French imperialism, on the argument that the coal payments had not been made on January 11, 1923, invaded the Ruhr. There was no adequate German force capable of meeting the French Army of invasion except the armed might of the people themselves, but the socialists did not dare call upon the people to resist the foreign invader for fear that this would be precisely the move that would lead to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

It will be recalled that, in all other countries where the workers took power and had gone to the extreme of forming a proletarian dictatorship, the country had been invaded by foreign powers. The pressure of national war had added its weight to the stress of class struggle within. Germany, on the other hand, had had no foreign invasion; the Junkers, frightened at the temper of the people, had been astute enough to yield beforehand. Furthermore, a real defense of the Fatherland could have been undertaken only by the people themselves, led by the proletariat, and nothing could have

stopped the victory of the workers then. Now, however, the Ruhr was invaded and lay in danger of being taken away from Germany. Had the struggle been pursued by military means it would have meant the end of the reformist socialists who constantly posed as being pacifists except in dealing with their own workers, when plenty of blood was spilled. It was necessary, therefore, that the socialist government take to other measures; hence began the policy of passive resistance. While this policy harassed the French, it was carried out only at great cost to German economy and by arousing the initiative of the people.

Unable to stand the combined strain of being looted, of indemnities, reparations, invasion, loss of territories, and civil war, German economy in 1923 broke down. All debts were cancelled by the speedy mechanism of inflation when, in September of that year, a newspaper cost billions of marks, and when the workers were paid several times a day, their wives standing by to rush to the stores before their paper money wages should become utterly worthless.

The wild chaos and complete cessation of trade, the widespread suffering and misery of the people, simultaneous with the most riotous orgies of the speculators and trust capitalists who were benefiting enormously by the events, were bound to lead to violent outbursts. Here again the working class was to pay heavily for the amateurishness and opportunism of its parties. In Saxony, the communists and socialists united to take power, but, instead of using the opportunity offered by their parliamentary majority to arm the workers and really smash the old machinery in favor of Workers' Councils, they dickered and dallied in the parliament until the favorable moment had gone by, and it was too late to revolt. Other cities of Germany had been awaiting the signal from Saxony; when that was not forthcoming, their movement became isolated and easily crushed.

The failure of the communists to take advantage of the revolutionary situation brewing in Germany in 1923 was their last chance to act before capitalism could recover its strength. The year 1923 can be said to mark in almost all the countries of Europe the last of the great revolutionary wave that began in 1918-1919. From then on, for about eight years, in Europe, there was a partial and temporary stabilization of capitalism. The year 1923 also coincides with the stabilization of the Soviet régime in Russia. The end of the acute revolutionary epoch was dramatized by the death of Lenin and the great struggle in the ranks of the communists between the internationalists headed by Trotsky and the Russian leadership headed by Stalin. This marks a new period in proletarian history.

XLI. THE FIRST FOUR CONGRESSES

I

ON the background of this gigantic world revolutionary wave which was putting flesh and blood on the nemesis of communism which had been haunting Europe for three-quarters of a century and, spreading from Ireland to India, was affecting imperialist and colonial countries throughout the world, the First Congress of the Communist International was called At that moment, the Russian Bolsheviks were exceedingly hard pressed by the interventionary wars, nevertheless, they felt they could not postpone the Congress any longer The World War was over The opportunist socialists had already issued their call for the reconstitution of the Second International for February, 1919 It was time to act

During the war, the socialist movement had progressed steadily to the Left In France there had been formed a "Committee for the Resumption of International Relations" which was gradually being reinforced by Centrist elements headed by Longuet This Committee also began to press forward for a full international congress of the socialists of all countries to be called despite hostilities By 1916, the Right Wing, which was opposed to meeting with the Germans, was barely able to muster a majority In June of that year, three French socialist deputies refused to vote for the war credits and, toward the end of the year, thirty six deputies agreed to present in the Chamber interpellations on the War

In Great Britain, the British Socialist Party (organized in 1911 from the former Social Democratic Party which in turn had been the offspring of Hyndman's Social Democratic Federation in 1908), was split into two sections, the minority going with Hyndman to form a chauvinistic National Socialist Party and the majority swinging with MacLean to struggle against the War

By 1916, in Germany, the Spartacus group was fully organized as separate both from the Majority Socialists and from the Independents In January, 1917, the Independents also organized themselves as a distinct Party outside of the Majority Socialists, and took a stand against the War The Serbian socialists from the start had refused to support their government, as had the Marxists in Bulgaria and Rumania. In Italy, the Socialist Party had taken a militant stand against the War. Indeed, before the War

broke out, in 1914, the Socialist Party had led a general strike movement embracing two million workers. In Russia, both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks theoretically were against the War and refused to concur with the International Secretariat of the Second International in its sabotage of international congresses during the war period.

Left tendencies were naturally strong in the neutral countries not actually engaged in the hostilities, but suffering from the reactions of the War. In Sweden, the young socialists early came out against the War and for the proletarian revolution. In Denmark and Norway, also, the youth were extreme in their anti-militarist position. When the first International Conference of Socialist Youth Organizations was held in April, 1915, representatives were present from Germany, Holland, Russia, Bulgaria, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Switzerland.

Those parties that opposed the slaughter and favored international solidarity immediately began to bestir themselves to organize internationally. At first their ranks were weak and confused. At the international Women's conference held in Berne, March, 1915, the predominant tone was one of pacifism rather than militant struggle. A conflict arose between Krupskaya, Bolshevik delegate, and Clara Zetkin of the German group, on the question of breaking sharply with the International Bureau of the opportunists. From the earliest days of the War, Lenin had advocated the formation of a new international, but the Bolsheviks then were in a small minority. Most of the delegates who came from Germany, France, England, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, Russia, Poland, and Hungary were not able to adopt so early this extreme point of view. A similar situation prevailed in the aforementioned Youth conference and at the first Zimmerwald conference of the Socialist Parties.

The situation had changed a good deal by 1916, however, when those Socialist Parties which opposed the War and condemned the sabotage of the regular bureau came together in April at Kienthal. At this conference forty-three delegates arrived from Germany, France, Italy, Russia, Poland, Switzerland, Serbia, Portugal, Austria, and England. By now, the Left Wing, which called for a complete break with the International Secretariat and the formation of a new international, could count twelve delegates (three each from Russia, Germany, Poland, and Switzerland) and seven more moving in their direction. To the Bolsheviks, the anti-war formulations had a pacifistic color, but they were still a small minority on the question of turning the imperialist war into civil war.

At this point the International Secretariat began to make some effort to counteract the influence of the Zimmerwald-Kienthal group. It called a conference of socialists from neutral countries, but this was a distinct failure. When it tried to call an inter-Allied conference, Russian, British, and

Italian socialists fought against it as being no international meeting at all. As the socialists swung to the Left, the governments commenced to bear down upon the revolutionary wing. Rakovsky, Trotsky, Friedrich Adler, Liebknecht, Luxemburg, Zetkin, Mehring, MacLean, Hoglund, and many others found themselves behind prison bars.

The advent of the momentous Russian Revolution soon changed the entire situation. At once the extreme Russian groups began to win great prestige, and the Bolsheviks took the leadership of the Left wing in the Zimmerwald grouping, which as a whole was swinging to the Left. The International Bureau essayed to counter this drift by calling an International Congress of all parties in Stockholm, but this did not materialize, in spite of the support of the Petrograd soviets which endorsed the idea. Among the Bolsheviks, only such Right Wingers as Nogin and Kamenev agreed to the Party's attendance at Stockholm. The Spartacists, too, spurned the invitation.

Among the Zimmerwaldians, however, confusion arose. The International Socialist Commission established at Zimmerwald to convoke a third Congress in May, 1917, put off its call from month to month, hoping that the Stockholm conference would materialize. Finally, the Zimmerwald meeting was held in September, 1917, and, although the parties of the Entente could not be present, as they could not reach Stockholm because of refusal of their governments to grant them passports, it was decided that the meeting should act decisively for all. At this conference the Bolsheviks scored heavy victories over the vacillating Centrists.

It had been the position of Lenin, with the outbreak of the Russian Revolution, that the Bolsheviks should no longer bother with the Centrist groupings to be found in the Zimmerwald Union, but should come out boldly for the new International and should organize it. He wanted to send delegates to the 1917 meeting only to secure information. Against this plan Zinoviev posed the argument that the Bolsheviks should send delegates in order to come to some agreement with the Spartacus Bund and that, after cementing an alliance with Liebknecht and the Left, they should openly break with the Centrist opportunists at the conference. In the Party conference, Lenin was defeated, and Zinoviev's position prevailed. At the Zimmerwald meeting, under the pressure of the Bolshevik delegates, resolutions were passed against the Stockholm conference and in sympathy with Trotsky, now in jail under the Menshevik Kerensky régime in Russia. A Manifesto was adopted which called for an international general strike for peace and socialism.

Soon after the last Conference of the Zimmerwald Union adjourned, the Independent Socialist Party of Germany rushed a special delegate to Stockholm, general headquarters of the Zimmerwaldians, to beg for a post-

ponement of the printing of the Manifesto on the ground that it would cause the Party to go underground in Germany, thus ruining the Socialists. The disgust that this action caused among the Bolsheviks only intensified their determination to end once and for all the farce of unity with the Centrists. Once the great October Revolution became an accomplished fact, and the Bolsheviks took power in Russia, they decided to call the Third International themselves, and not to use the machinery of the Zimmerwald Union. At the first Congress of the Third International, the Zimmerwald Union was formally dissolved with a statement that its task was accomplished.

The victory of the Russian revolutionists and the great chaos in the train of the World War helped to accelerate the splits in the ranks of the socialists and to swing the Left Wing rapidly towards communism. "Shortly after the Armistice, the Allies took steps to isolate the Bolsheviks in order to prevent the virus of Bolshevism from infecting the proletariat of the Allied countries. A steady stream of Bolshevik propaganda was flowing at this time through the Soviet embassies of Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries for distribution in France, England, and the United States." [1]

The invitations to the First Congress of the Third International were sent out by Soviet wireless in January, the written invitations not being received until after the Conference, and were signed by the Communist Parties of those countries which had been affected directly by the Russian Revolution as well as by the communists of German-Austria, the Balkan Revolutionary Socialist Federation, and by one delegate acting on his own initiative for the American Socialist Labor Party. The basis of representation was to be wide enough to include several types of trade unions, such as the American Industrial Workers of the World and the British Shop Steward organization, but the invitations were issued only to those groups that were in agreement with the announced program. This program called for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the smashing of the old state, the arming of the workers, and the disarming of the bourgeoisie. It announced as the function of the Dictatorship the ushering in of socialism. Finally, the call openly declared its purpose to smash the Right Wing of the socialists, to break away the socialist workers from their Centrist leaders, and to win over the revolutionary elements to the new Communist International. The program took pains to stress that "The interests of the movement in each country are to be subordinated to the general interests of the revolution from an international point of view." [2]

In spite of the haste in which it was called and the great difficulties

[1] M. Fainsod: *International Socialism and the World War*, p. 182.
[2] The same, p. 205.

entailed in reaching Moscow at the time, the First Congress of the Comintern held in Moscow March 2-6, 1919, was attended by groups representing nineteen different countries. Advisory delegates came from many other lands. Zinoviev was made Chairman, Angelica Balabanova, Secretary. This Congress accomplished one major object: the working out of a Communist Manifesto that would give a program of action to communists in all countries and lay the basis for a regular working Congress the following year.

The Manifesto adopted started off with placing the blame for the World War on the shoulders of the capitalists, and stressed the need for the Proletarian Dictatorship to prohibit repetitions of such catastrophes. The document went on to point out that the Versailles Treaty could solve none of the vexatious problems of nationalities, that the independence of the petty states in Europe was completely illusory, since they were bound to become mere puppets of this or that superior imperialist power. Only the spread of the proletarian revolution could guarantee equal rights to all the peoples, as well as insure the liberation of the colonies.

Throughout the world at that time the question of democracy or dictatorship was agitating the labor and revolutionary movements. At the 1919 Berne Convention of the reconstituted Second International, this had been the chief subject of discussion, outside of the attempt to fix the responsibility for the War. Although the majority of this Congress had come out for democracy as against the type of dictatorship prevalent in Russia, a strong minority headed by Longuet and Adler stood firm in demanding a hands-off-Soviet-Russia policy, at least so far as negative criticism was concerned.

Understanding this situation, the Manifesto stressed the fact that communists also stood for liberty and democracy, but democracy for the toilers. Soviets were declared to be the best instrument to assure democracy, just as they were the best instrument to achieve the proletarian revolution. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat was the highest form of democracy yet worked out by humanity since the beginning of civilization.

The theses presented to the First Congress by Lenin averred: "14. Proletarian dictatorship is like the dictatorship of other classes in that it arises from the necessity of suppressing the armed resistance of the class that loses its political supremacy. The fundamental difference between proletarian dictatorship and that of other classes . . . is simply that the two last named dictatorships were a forcible suppression of the resistance of the majority of the population, the working masses, whereas proletarian dictatorship is a forcible suppression of the resistance of the exploiters . . . Hence it follows that proletarian dictatorship must inevitably bring with it not only a change in the forms and institutions of democracy, generally speaking, but also precisely such a change as will bring a hitherto undreamt of

extension in *practice* of the use made of democracy by those who have been oppressed by capitalism, i.e., the working classes.

"And, in fact, those forms of proletarian dictatorship already worked out in practice—e.g., the Soviet Power in Russia, the Raete system in Germany, the Shop Steward's Committees, and similar Soviet institutions in other countries, all signify, and *in practice* realise for the working classes—i.e., for the enormous majority of the population—the practical possibility of democratic liberty and privileges to an extent never before known, even approximately, in the best democratic bourgeois republics." [1]

As a final point, the Manifesto called the Second International completely bankrupt. The Third International was to be not an International of words but an International of deeds. The communists were proud to stem directly from the old revolutionaries, from Baboeuf and the First International, and to carry forward the great traditions of Marx.

Owing to the dire straits of the Russians at the time and the urgent need of the delegates to return home and begin to work, the Congress did not last long. The seeds of the Manifesto, however, began to bear fruit in 1919-1920. In Italy, the Socialist Party decided by executive vote to join the Third International, as did the Norwegian Party. The Bulgarian "Narrows" renamed themselves "Communist Party" and affiliated, as did also the Dutch "Tribune" group headed by Roland Holst and Anton Pannekoek. The Hungarian Communist Party in 1919 united with the Socialist Party and declared in favor of the Third International. In Greece the socialists declared their adherence. In Sweden, the Left Socialist Party signified its intention to join the British Socialist Party likewise.

At the same time, under the pressure of events, minorities were springing up in all the Socialist Parties demanding a communist position and forcing their parties either to abandon the Second International or to adhere to the Third. In France, the split was growing steadily; in 1919, a plurality came out for the position of trying to fuse both the Second and the Third Internationals, a minority favored the Second, and a still smaller minority favored the Third. The following year, the majority of the French Socialist Party swung over to the Third International at the Congress of Tours, even such avowed Centrists as Longuet stating their willingness to join. This placed before the Leninists a genuine problem of how to keep out those who were Centrists and who yet thought their place was with the Comintern.

The situation in Germany was more complicated. The Independent Socialist Party advocated a fusion of both the Second and the Third International, and seceded from the Second. The Spartacus group adhered to

[1] Lenin's theses are given in R. W. Postgate: *The Bolshevik Theory*, Appendix III, pp. 211-212.

the Third International, although its delegate had spoken at the First Congress against its immediate formation. To the Left of the Spartacus group were two other groups that also had been members of the Zimmerwald "Left." There was the group of Bremen Left Radicals headed by Paul Froelich and the International Socialist group of Germany led by Julian Borchart. The Liebknecht Spartacists had been more conservative than these other two. We have already noted the conflict between the Bolsheviks and the Spartacists at the Women's International Conference at Berne, at the First Congress, and elsewhere. The fact is that the Spartacus group was still close to the old socialists. They did not break thoroughly with the old Party and did not unite with the other Left groups, preferring to stay closer to the Independent Socialist Party. The result of this policy was that, on the one hand, eventually large numbers of the Independent Socialist Party broke away from that organization and joined with the Spartacists to form the United Communist Party. On the other hand, the influx of these older socialist types eventually led to the formation of serious Right Wing deviations that were to prevent the German communists from reaching the level of the Russian Bolsheviks.

In America, the Socialist Party split. A majority of the membership went with the Third International but found themselves out of the Party. The minority, who retained the name, "Socialist Party," also voted to affiliate with the Third International, but with such reservations as would have emasculated the program of the communists and would have transformed the Third International into another Centrist grouping.

The Swiss Socialist Party at first had voted to join the Third International, but later reconsidered the matter and finally voted down the proposition. The Austrian Social-Democratic Party opposed both the Second and the Third Internationals. In the Spanish Socialist Party, a bare majority advocated purification of the Second and unity with the Third, while an extremely strong minority clamored for outright affiliation with the Third. The Scotch Independent Labor Party voted to adhere to the Third.

Certain trade unions also decided to affiliate with the Communist International. The Spanish C.N.T. was one, the Italian Syndicalist Union, another, and the I.W.W. retained a friendly attitude. The French trade union movement split, the Syndicalist forces joining hands with the communists to win the majority of the unions and forming the Unitarian Confederation. This development was to give the Comintern several problems concerning the relationship of communism to syndicalism and of the Third International to the Red Trade Unions. As with the problem of Centrism, so with these; they would be left to the Second Congress for solution.

The Third International was the product of a world in which capitalism was disintegrating and revolution was rampant; but what was not sufficiently appreciated was the fact that world capitalism was breaking down not so much in the most developed countries but rather in its weakest links. The world revolution, hence, had not broken out according to some scheme, first in Germany and last in Russia, but first in the agricultural countries where the proletariat, whether skilled or unskilled, had been a victim of the cruel super-exploitation which was the lot of all the toilers in such countries. Thus, if considerable numbers of the Bolsheviks were made up of skilled workers, this had no great deleterious effect upon the revolutionary ardor of the masses, since, under conditions such as existed in Russia, as in Asia and other colonial and agrarian regions, even the skilled layers would be moved to revolutionary action.

The situation was quite different, however, once the movement was developed in the Western industrial countries, where the skilled workers long had been bribed by the privileges of imperialism. There the material conditions of the skilled were not such as would induce these workers to understand or to follow the ruthless rigorous policies of Bolshevism. Or even if the skilled worker were suffering from the post-war conditions, psychologically he was still living in the past, with the illusion that the good old times presently would return. A new generation might have to grow up, protracted crises might have to create worse conditions, and vast new machinery might have to be introduced rendering skill forever useless, before countries with a heavy layer of skilled workers might be ready for proletarian revolt. Even where the proletarian of such a country did see the handwriting of revolution on the wall, often he did not react in time.

Thus, in the Communist International, the working men in the colonial countries, such as China, or in the countries where oppression was very heavy, were able to move towards Leninism; elsewhere the process took longer than was originally anticipated. The workers who espoused Leninism theoretically should have been mostly unskilled industrial workers, able to take care of themselves and to articulate their needs. Unfortunately, this was not always the case. The first to reach the Third International were frequently intellectual elements and skilled workers who had been rendered desperate by the post-war economic and political disarrangements. If considerable bodies of the unskilled entered, they generally followed in the train of the other elements who had been coached in the organizations of the Second International or elsewhere, and who could not, without the greatest struggle, understand the essence of revolutionary communism.

Thus, we might say, the Third International was a sort of half-way point between the best that the Second International could produce and the future International, which alone really could solve the important world

problems of revolution. The Third International was the product of the time when imperialism was breaking, but when the weakest links of capitalism comprised not the important but rather the unimportant countries of the world. Whenever the time is reached that the revolution finds its field of action, not in an agrarian Russia or a colonial China, but in an industrial England, Germany, or the United States, then the International will become entirely different from the one created by Lenin with the material at hand. The Third International only began the real awakening of the basic layers of the unskilled proletarians in industrial countries. The final International will see precisely these layers take the leading role and dominate all the others.

The inadequacy of the Third International, the fact that its heart was not of Western industrial Europe but rather of agrarian semi-Asiatic Russia, showed itself in the losing fight that would be made within its own ranks to take the Western parties that came to the Comintern and really Bolshevize them. No sooner was the process started than the International began in fact to break up. This was a sign that the world proletariat would have to go through some further training before being ready for the final struggle.

However, all this was to become manifest later; at the time of the First Congress, there was no thought of this. It fervently was believed that the revolution would be successful throughout all of Western Europe, that the former revolutionary socialists would be transformed more or less easily into revolutionary communists. From the very beginning, the Communist International became a scene of splits and fusions which continued year in and year out, with this difference, however: in the splits of the early days, various groups broken from divers political tendencies came towards communism. To reach communism they had to find a common ground with other communist elements. However, these split-off groups were not hardened and experienced enough to meet the oncoming events. Before they could become Bolshevized, capitalism had taken them in hand and revealed them in their true colors as Left Centrists. New splits began in all the parties of the Comintern. These last splits were in the main not of leftward moving groups going towards Leninism, but frightened people who had discovered what Leninism really meant and who wanted to retreat before it was too late.

In spite of these historic defects, the International legitimately started out with great prospects. The leaders of the Bolsheviks could count two factors promising much in their favor: first, the unprecedented power at their disposal, and second, the unique objective situation in which they found themselves.

That the Russian Revolution had put into the hands of the communists

an unprecedented power which the other Internationals had never possessed was of the highest importance. The Russian workers actually had seized the power of a vast stretch of the globe inhabited by over one hundred and sixty-five million people and controlling untold natural resources and wealth. The communists now had the opportunity to use this power in the Soviet Union, both economic and military, in order at given moments to change the whole history of the world in favor of communism.

The favorable objective position of the communists can be appreciated best by contrasting their environment with that before the War. Prior to the War, neither revolutionary situations nor actual revolutions could have been created by the activity of the Socialist revolutionary Parties throughout the world. No matter how well or how tirelessly these Parties worked, the bourgeoisie was too strong, the level of activity of the masses, generally speaking, too low for the revolutionary Parties in and of themselves to change much the objective scene. Basically, the revolutionary situations had to develop by themselves, from the objective contradictions in capitalist society. Thus the role of the Socialist Parties had to be a more or less quiescent one, in which the activity was mainly that of day-to-day propaganda and organization rather than of the planning of insurrection.

However, when, during, and after the War, these objective contradictions caused revolutionary situations to arise, by that time the subjective factor, namely the revolutionary Party, had become so powerful as to be able to mature revolutionary situations in a number of countries into actual revolutions. In other words, before the War, conditions in most countries were not revolutionary, and no action of political revolutionists could make them so. After the War, in many countries, so weak had imperialism become, so near was the situation to a revolutionary one that the action of a strong revolutionary organization with a correct policy could be the very factor to precipitate a crisis; or, if the situation was already revolutionary then the proper action of a strong party of the proletariat could cause it to mature into an actual outburst of insurrection; or, finally, once the revolution had started, the very presence of such a Party might mean the difference between success and failure of the revolution. These were the qualitative changes that had taken place in world politics.

During the first revolutionary post-war wave, there was a possibility for the advanced proletariat with the correct policy in many countries to disintegrate the capitalist armies, to ruin the prestige of the ruling classes, to expose the petty bourgeoisie, and to activize the masses to a high degree. For the first time in history, the communists had to some degree the ability to pick their time and place of battle, and to prepare their forces accordingly in advance. The Communist Party in one country or another could have been the decisive force, both in stimulating the exploited and

oppressed masses with the understanding of the impossibility of living in the old way, and in helping to make the ruling class unable to govern as of old. Since the War, the old power and might of the ruling classes had been irretrievably broken. Further the experience of 1918 to 1923 weighed heavily on the memory of the ruling class, for they had been unable to govern in many countries during that period. Finally, the Soviet Union, with its tremendous economic and political weight, could have thrown its forces at times so as to help break the economic and political power of different sections of the international bourgeoisie at critical moments.

From this it followed that the task of the hour was the creation of that sort of tested Party which Leninism implied. The Third International, therefore, saw as its chief task not so much to transform the objective circumstances, which were revolutionary enough, but to change the subjective factor, the lack of will and science in the working class as manifested in the lack of a genuine Party. Just here, however, a certain uneven development was to play havoc with the Third International. The contradictions of world capitalism were to create revolutionary situations faster than they could create Parties capable of solving the problems favorably for the workers. The building up of the Party, or subjective element, was slower than the creating of revolutionary situations due to the breakdown of society. To put it another way, the rate of breakdown of the old social order was faster than the rate of building up the elements of the new; thus break-downs occurred without the proper facilities being present to reconstruct on a new basis. Politics was lagging behind economics: economically the world was ready for collective socialized ownership of the means of production and distribution, but politically men's ingenuity had found no means as yet of bringing this about and of releasing the productive forces.

The situation was further complicated by the fact that there was an uneven development politically among the different sections of the working class. For the Russians, for example, the creation of the Party was relatively easy, just as the conquest of power for them was comparatively simple. But for the Western industrial workers, the creation of a real Communist Party is extraordinarily difficult, as difficult in proportion as the accomplishment of the revolution itself. If, later, we shall find the Russian Bolshevik Party breaking down, this will be a sign that in Russia the workers are able to win power smoothly enough but find it infinitely harder to grow into socialism. In the West, however, once the party is built and workers have taken power, there can be no such degeneration, but the speedy smashing of capitalism. The Russian Bolsheviks were able to solve the problems in genuine communist fashion temporarily, and for a long time they strove to mold the other Parties to their liking, but in the

end not only were to fail, but, in their failure, they themselves were to sink back to the level of the Centrist Europeans.

To materialists, this sort of situation can come as no surprise. Always they have postulated the fact that mind limps after matter, that material changes develop for some time before psychological reverberations become attuned to the new interplay of forces. Just as it is the material forces that decide and mold the minds of men, however, so, in the long run, the political understanding of the proletariat will catch up with the new events.

Not only did Russia need the world revolution to rescue it, but Russia could also succor the world revolution if the forces were utilized properly. The world revolution had in Russia its greatest reservoir of strength and power, which could become decisive in any engagement. Naturally, all this presumed that Russia was directed by communist forces with a genuine revolutionary policy. The recognition of the qualitative changes that had taken place in world politics should have been the cornerstone of the strategy of the Communist International. But should the leading groups in Russia no longer maintain a revolutionary attitude, should they succumb to capitalist pressure and embrace nationalism, abandoning the world revolution for their own presumed safety, then it might well result that the enormous weight and power in the hands of the now degenerate Communist Party would be used not to further evolution, but to destroy it, not to build world soviets, but to prevent them. The Russian Revolution could become a great force to prevent and to crush the world revolution. This in turn would lead to the collapse of the Russian revolution and would force the proletarians to begin all over again, although from a higher plane.

2

The Manifesto of the First Congress clearly had striven to mark off the Communist International from the socialists, but a great deal of confusion still existed. All sorts of socialist centrists were demanding admission, adapting themselves to the revolutionary currents of the times and to the fact that Soviet Russia had been able to break the steel ring of capitalist intervention around her. One of the chief tasks of the Second Congress which met in Moscow in August 1920 was the organizational one of eliminating those who were really not communists and of giving definite form to the Comintern. The principal polemics and resolutions, therefore, pertained to the questions of conditions of admission to the International and of parliamentarism and democracy. There was also a problem of what to do with the syndicalistic unions that had joined in the First Congress. This would give rise to a thorough discussion on the trade union question and on the approach to the masses.

In its statutes, the Congress of the Comintern declared: "The aim of the Communist International is to organize armed struggle for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie and the establishment of an international Soviet republic as a transition to the complete abolition of the capitalist state. The Communist International considers the Dictatorship of the Proletariat an essential means for the liberation of humanity from the horrors of capitalism and regards the Soviet form of government as the historic necessary form of this dictatorship. . . . The Communist International breaks once and for all with the traditions of the Second International which, in reality, only recognized the white race. The task of the Communist International is to emancipate the workers of the *whole world.*" [1]

The Congress then set seriously to work to deal with the problem of centrist applications for membership. It affirmed that one of the chief duties of the communists was intransigeant war against opportunism and centrism. "No communist must forget the lessons of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. The Hungarian communists paid dearly for their unity with the so-called social-democrats of the Left." [2] In order to keep out such pseudo-communists, the Congress worked out twenty-one conditions to be put to every party desirous of affiliation. The following conditions were included.

The propaganda of the Party must be thoroughly communist. The press must be edited by reliable communists and must be controlled by the central executive. Special attention must be given to the detailed and particular denunciation of the reformists. All reformists in the Party must be removed from any post they may have, and communists must replace them. Since the class struggle in almost every country of Europe and America was declared to be reaching the threshold of civil war, all Parties must do illegal work. Especially important was steady and persistent work in the armed forces of the capitalist governments.

Systematic work also must be conducted in agricultural districts, especially among agricultural laborers. On every side social pacifism must be fought. All centrist leaders, many of them at the head of the Parties asking for admission, must be expelled. All Communist Parties worthy of the name must carry on a fight for colonial independence, the first duty in this struggle devolving upon the workers of the imperialist countries whose capitalists were the oppressors of the given colonies.

The conditions also demanded that revolutionary fractions be formed in all the reactionary trade unions and other mass organizations of the workers. A bitter struggle must be launched against the Yellow Trade Union International. In the Party, iron discipline must prevail on the basis

[1] *Theses of the Communist International, Second Congress*, p. 4.
[2] The same, p. 8.

of the principles of democratic centralism. "The chief principle of the latter is the elective nature of the lowest unit, the absolute authority of all the decisions of higher units upon the one immediately beneath and a strong party central organization whose decrees are binding between party conventions." [1]

Every effort must be made to cleanse petty bourgeois elements from the ranks of the Party. Special attention must be given to the character and work of the parliamentary groups which have great tendencies to commit acts of collaboration with the capitalist enemy and to carry on their work only in parliamentary debates. All parties would have to change their names, to take the name Communist Party of their respective country. Each must draw up a communist program for submission to the Executive of the Communist International. They must pledge themselves to give aid to the Soviet Republic in every possible manner.

The resolutions of the Communist International were to be binding upon all the Parties. On the other hand, the Communist International was to be bound to regard the national peculiarities of each country in its various decisions. However, an end was to be made to the platonic internationalism of the Second International, where the center was hardly more than a post office box and where international discipline and solidarity never had existed. The Comintern was to be really a world Communist Party, and the same discipline and close co-operation would exist internationally as had existed in Russia.

Each party desirous of affiliation to the Comintern was required to publish all the documents of the Congresses and Executive. It was to call a Congress within four months after full discussion of the conditions. Two-thirds of the executive committee was to be made up of revolutionary workers who had called for affiliation to the Comintern before the application for admission actually was made. All the leading members of the Party who were opposed to the conditions were to be expelled from the Party. In this way, the Communist International undertook to guarantee that its composition would be thoroughly communist in character.

The Second Congress took note of two mistaken tendencies in its own ranks. The first was a tendency to become conciliatory to the centrist socialists who were posing as being "almost" communists. This was the chief danger and had to be ruthlessly fought. The second danger was "Leftism," which consisted of super-revolutionary phrases, refusal to work in parliaments, refusal to work in reactionary unions, refusal to build a strong disciplined party leading the masses, etc. This "Leftist" danger, however, was not the main one, and the Comintern, after declaring that it

[1] *Theses presented to the Second Congress of the Communist International*, pp. 13-14.

considered the anti-parliamentarism of the Communist Labor Party of Germany, the Swiss party, the Dutch party, the I.W.W., and the Shop Steward movement misguided and wrong, nevertheless urged them to affiliate on the ground that the question of parliamentarism was after all not decisive, since all of them believed in direct revolutionary action as the main method of work of revolutionary workers.

The question of the communists' relation to parliamentary activity came in for a great deal of discussion at the Second Congress, for various reasons. In the first place, in their break with their old socialist past, many of the new parties had to learn the rudimentary lessons of revolutionary work in bourgeois parliaments. In the second place, some former socialists, in extreme reaction to the opportunists, had begun to deny the efficacy of parliamentary action at all. These in combination with former anarchists and syndicalists caused a heated polemic to arise. An elaborate thesis was worked out on this subject.

The Second Congress pointed out that at the time of the First International, socialists had looked on parliamentarism as a method of using bourgeois parliaments for the purpose of agitation. They had not hoped for any effective results from their parliamentary work, outside of propaganda. Under the Second International, conditions had changed and many social reform measures had been obtained through parliamentary action which gave the illusion that the capitalist State eventually could be turned into a workers' State by such action alone. But in the present era, marked by the instability of parliaments, such tactics were out of the question. "Parliament at present can in no way serve as the arena of a struggle for reform, or for improving the lot of the working people, as it was at certain periods of the preceding epoch." [1] The center of gravity of all revolutionary work would have to be outside of the parliament.

The thesis declared that parliamentarism is the rule of the bourgeoisie and cannot be a form of communist society nor can it be a form marking the transition from capitalism to workers' rule. "Parliamentarism cannot be a form of proletarian government during the transition period between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and that of the proletariat. At the moment when the accentuated class struggle turns into civil war, the proletariat must inevitably form its state organization as a fighting organization which cannot contain any representatives of the former ruling classes. All fictions of the 'national will' are harmful to the proletariat at that time. . . . The only form of proletarian dictatorship is a Republic of Soviets." [2]

[1] *Theses of the Communist International, Second Congress,* "The Communist Party and Parliamentarism," p. 2.

[2] The same, p. 3.

Since bourgeois parliaments must be smashed in favor of soviets, parliamentary activity could be only of a sort to destroy parliaments from within. The capitalist parliament could not be ignored, since its destruction was part of the political struggle for the seizure of power. The fundamental method of destroying the capitalist State was that of mass action, but it was not incorrect to try to utilize all legal and bourgeois democratic positions to accomplish the same end. Work in the capitalist parliaments was precisely such legal work as could be engaged in favorably. Where a communist was elected to parliament, he could use the platform to put forth revolutionary propaganda to expose the chicanery and fraud of capitalist democracy and to provide a center for the ideological unification of the masses, as Karl Liebknecht had done by his parliamentary work during the War. Parliamentary activity was also a good way to reach the backward strata of the masses who retained illusions about capitalist democracy.

Of course, electoral campaigns were not to be carried on with the view to securing the maximum number of votes, but rather to launch issues and to use parliamentary positions to push forward the mass work. Where communists were in the majority in local government bodies, their duty was to carry on revolutionary opposition against the central government, to arm the masses in their district, to aid them economically in every possible way, to expose capitalist democracy, and to develop revolutionary propaganda. In some cases they were to substitute workers' councils, or soviets, for the municipal administration to which they had been elected.

Sometimes it might be necessary to boycott a parliament. The Bolsheviks themselves had done this to the Bulygin Duma of 1905, and afterwards. But this was not because of any general principles to this effect, but rather because of concrete circumstances whereby the mass movement could be furthered best by open denunciation of the type of parliament for which they were asked to vote. However, to substitute for this concrete policy some general principle borrowed from anarchism as to the impossibility of doing revolutionary work in parliament was childish extremism that failed to take real situations into consideration. The whole question ought to be considered of relatively secondary importance, moreover, and no splits should occur on this question alone. Here was a question on which communists could agree to disagree and yet remain within the framework of one Communist Party, as strict as that might be.

Because of the danger of opportunism in parliamentary work, the Second Congress put forth detailed instructions on revolutionary parliamentarism. The candidates for office in election campaigns must be reliable men, carefully selected. They were to be always under the direct control of the center of the Party and ready to resign at all times. Careerists and adventurers ruthlessly must be eliminated, and every opportunity given to

place actual workmen in parliament. The parliamentary deputy had to combine legal with illegal work, and the Party must never permit a division of labor to occur where some leaders would have the legal posts and be perfectly safe, while others did the dangerous illegal tasks that would place them in jail or perhaps worse. On the contrary, the deputy had to head all labor demonstrations of importance and must expose himself in dangerous situations, so that all workers would see that the communists did not make parliamentary activity their chief work, that it was subordinate to the tasks of mass action.

The communist deputy must not consider himself a "legislator" separate and apart from the people. His function was not to bolster up capitalism or to worry how to make bills correspond to the law of the land. He must be ready to be used in all sorts of work, before factory gates, in the countryside, etc. In parliament he had to consider himself an outpost of the proletariat inside the camp of the enemy. He was to speak plainly so that workers could understand him. Not expert lawyers calling themselves communists, but plain workers should take the floor of parliament and speak their minds, denouncing the reformists and challenging capitalism.[1]

The problem of the relation between parliaments and soviets also came up for solution since, on the one hand, some of those against any parliamentary action were for setting up soviets immediately, at all times; on the other hand, there were those who believed some sort of combined form might be possible. The Second Congress then went into the question as to when and under what conditions soviets of workers deputies should be formed.

The Communist International declared it was foolish to build paper soviets under stable capitalist conditions. This was being tried by American communists and had to be stopped. On the other hand, only traitors could conceive of soviets' being formed peacefully, and working hand in hand with parliaments. "Soviets without a revolution are impossible. Soviets without a proletarian revolution inevitably become a parody of Soviets. The authentic soviets of the masses are the historical elaborated forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat." [2]

Before soviets could be formed properly, the following conditions had to appear on the social horizon: First, there must be a great revolutionary impulse among the workers and peasants. Second, there must be such an

[1] How different these rules were from the practice of the reformists can be seen when we find, for example, that even the Labour Party of Great Britain, supposedly based upon the trade unions, had only 13 workers direct from the trades out of its 142 members elected to Parliament in the elections of 1922. (See W. P. Maddox: *Foreign Relations in British Labour Politics*, p. 20.)

[2] *Theses of the Communist International, Second Congress*, "When and Under What Conditions Soviets of Workers Deputies Should Be Formed," p. 12.

acute political and economic crisis that the power is beginning to slip out of the hands of the government. Third, it must be a time when the masses are plainly and seriously considering a struggle for power. In short, only at the beginning of a movement that was patently a deep revolutionary one inevitably culminating in a clash for power should soviets be built, for soviets were precisely organs adapted to the conquest of power in such circumstances.

The Russian Revolution had greatly stirred up the colonial peoples, especially of Asia. Already the first Congress of the Comintern had issued an appeal to the colonial peoples and subject nationalities. Even before then, Lenin had declared: "Victorious Socialism must necessarily realise complete democracy, and, consequently, it must not only achieve complete equality of nations, but also realise the right to self-determination of the oppressed nations, that is the right to free political separation." [1]

In the midst of the War, when the question of oppressed nations was on the lips of every democrat, Lenin had enunciated the position of the revolutionary socialists on this important matter. The proletariat would have to distinguish between oppressed and oppressor nations and fight now for the freedom of national minorities and colonies, not postponing the solution of this question until after socialism had arrived. The situation in France over the Dreyfuss affair showed how closely civil war could be bound up with the national question. On the other hand, the socialists of the oppressed countries had to adopt a class line and to unite with the workers elsewhere and not succumb to nationalism. They had to remember that often the struggle for national independence can be used by imperialist powers for their own purpose.

It should be borne in mind that the goal of socialism was not the division of humanity into petty states and individual nations, each one eking out a miserable existence, but rather the fusion of nations. None the less, "Just as humanity can only arrive at the destruction of classes through a transitional period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, so also humanity can only arrive at the inevitable fusion of nations through a transitional period of complete freedom of all oppressed nationalities, that is, their freedom of separation." [2]

Three types of countries had to be distinguished in relation to the question of national self-determination. In the imperialist countries, the workers had to fight against their bourgeoisie and in behalf of the colonial and nationally oppressed groups. In such countries as the Balkans and the

[1] V. I. Lenin: "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" in *Labour Monthly*, Vol. X, No. 2, p. 421 (July 1928).

[2] The same, p. 425.

Austro Hungarian and Russian empires, the bourgeois democratic revolutions must be intimately connected with the national liberation question. In the colonies and semi-colonies, the socialists would have to support in the most decisive fashion the revolutionary elements of the bourgeois-democratic national emancipatory movements in their countries, and assist them in rebellion and, if need be, in revolutionary war, against the oppressing imperialist powers.

By the time of the Second Congress, the communists were able to develop these Leninist ideas further The Comintern went to great lengths to expose the program of the League of Nations and to declare that the Balkanization of Europe that was being effected was no solution whatever to the national question, but was bound to bring further wars and to make the petty countries, set up at Versailles, the vortex of international intrigue and diplomatic pretexts for war.

The Second Congress also had before it the experiments that had been undertaken in Soviet Russia, it emphasized that the Russian Revolution had demonstrated how valuable the federation idea was as a transition to fusion of all nationalities The Soviet was establishing a federation of republics which was able to solve both the problem of international solidarity and that of national development and freedom The Congress further declared "Petty bourgeois internationalism means the mere recognition of the rights of national equality and preserves intact national egotism Proletarian internationalism, on the other hand, demands (1) the subordination of the interests of the proletarian struggle in one country to the interests of that struggle on an international scale, (2) the capability and the readiness on the part of any one nation which has gained a victory over the bourgeoisie, of making the greatest national sacrifices for the overthrow of international capitalism"[1]

In dealing with the liberation movements in the colonial and semi colonial countries, Lenin was careful to point out that not every such movement would the proletariat have to support, but only those bourgeois movements for liberation which were really revolutionary, which were not opposed to the communists' enlightening and organizing the peasantry and the great masses for revolutionary purposes. When this was not possible, communists must counter these movements, such as, for example, was represented by Pan Islamism or Pan-Asia.[2]

Naturally, the question would have to arise whether the colonial movements for freedom would result in the formation of capitalist régimes in

[1] *Theses of the Communist International Second Congress* "Theses on National and Colonial Questions," p 10

[2] See V I Lenin "Speech on the Colonial Question in *Communist Review*, Vol I, No 2, pp 87 91 (Feb, 1929)

the backward colonial countries, or whether these nations could skip capitalism and go directly to communism. The answer of the Leninists was that, not only was the formation of peasant soviets possible and applicable to countries in a pre-capitalist stage of society, but that by no means was capitalism inevitable in such lands; colonies could move directly to socialism if the proletarians of the advanced countries were in a position to aid them.

3

As we have already remarked, a number of trade unions had decided to join the Third International at the First Congress, but the relations to the trade union movement, particularly its revolutionary sections, had to be definitely cleared up. The arrival in Russia of British, Italian, and other trade union delegates for the purpose of studying conditions in that country in 1920 served as a starting point for negotiations for the creation of a new and revolutionary trade union center. Many Italians already had joined the Third International, while in England, too, there was a considerable shifting taking place to the Left. Not only was there the Shop Steward movement, but there had been formed the famous Triple Alliance of the railroad, miners, and transport workers for mutual support and mutual action; it was these militant groups that had sent a delegation to Russia for investigation and report.

Thus, on the tenth of June, 1920, there was possible a conference between the representatives of the British Trade Unions (Williams and Purcell), those from the Italian Federation of Labor, including its metal and agricultural sections (D'Aragona, Bianchi, Colombina, and Dugoni), and the spokesmen of the Russian trade unions (Tomsky, Losovsky, Tsiperovitch, and Schmidt), together with the delegate of the Comintern (Zinoviev).[1] It soon was discovered that differences existed among them on several questions, namely, on the relations between the future trade union center and the Third International, on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, and on the relations to the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions, reformist international trade union center. However, all three groups found it possible to agree that a new revolutionary trade union center should be formed, that an international congress of Left trade unions should be convoked, and that a committee should be set up to work closely with the Third International.

In July of the same year there were also present in Moscow representatives of the Italian, Spanish, Bulgarian, Jugo-Slav, and French trade unions, British Shop Steward committees, the syndicalists and labor unions of

[1] See A. Losovsky: *The International Council of Trade and Industrial Unions*, p. 28 and following.

Germany, the I.W.W. of America and of Australia. New discussions were held with them, and here differences arose on further points involving not only the relation to the Third International and the question of the proletarian dictatorship, but also the general question of the relation of politics to economics and of the necessity for a political party for the proletariat. Together with this, there were other issues raised concerning the proletarian government and the soviet system and the matter of splitting off from or conquering the mass unions These problems touched the very foundations of the trade union movement

On the question of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the Italians were willing to agree to its necessity, but would not ask the unions to take a stand on it The German syndicalists would not consider dictatorship in any form. The American and English representatives were not averse to a dictatorship, not through a party, however, but only through the industrial unions Finally, the syndicalists agreed on a resolution which called for "(1) Recognition of revolutionary class struggle as a fundamental principle (2) The violent overthrow of the State and capitalism by adopting the dictatorship of proletarian organization as a temporary and transitional measure for the attainment of Communism' [1] The other representatives concurred with the Russians' resolution, which was along Leninist lines

On the relation of politics to economics, the German and the American delegates were opposed to all 'politics,' by which they meant primarily parliamentarism; the British Shop Steward delegates did not go so far The Russians, and with them the others, even the Spanish delegate, Pestaña, stood not only for the intimate connection of union with party, but for the subordinate position of the unions to the party However, Pestaña did point out that in Spain such a relation could not arise, since the unions were strong and the political party weak Pestaña therefore opposed the subordination of the unions to the party in Spain. Neither the British nor the Americans were opposed to co operating with the Communist Parties; only the German syndicalists were in deadly opposition

At this conference, the syndicalists also expressed their antagonism to the formation of a proletarian state They declared they were against all States, although they had stood for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat They were also opposed to soviets On this latter point the Russians pointed out that the question of the exact form of organization to supplant the bourgeois parliament would have to be decided concretely in each country, and by no means were soviets to be considered the sole and universal formula to the exclusion, for example, of industrial councils

It was on the question of direct affiliation to the Third International that the Leninists received a formal defeat The original plan of the Third

[1] Losovsky, work cited, p 31

International had been to form a trade union section directly connected and subordinated to it, as one of its departments. On this, all the delegates except the Bulgarians opposed the Russians. Finally, it was decided to form an independent body, but to maintain reciprocal representation between the two internationals.

The subject that raised most discussion was that of the tactics of the communist revolutionary elements within the trade union movement in connection with the old mass unions. The question was: Should the old unions be split or captured? Both the Germans and the Americans favored splitting from the reformist unions and forming new ones to destroy the old. The communists, however, advocated not the destruction but the conquest of the trade unions. On this question, the communists refused to make any compromise, since it meant the life and death of the new international, and a split occurred with the elimination of the out-and-out syndicalists.

In the end, the representatives of the principal unions from Russia, Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, and Jugo-Slavia, and of important minorities from France and Georgia, signed a declaration calling for the formation of a new revolutionary trade union center that would help abolish the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and would set up the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. It condemned the tactics of the advanced revolutionary elements in leaving the existing unions. Finally, it set up a committee to function as the International Council of Trade Unions, to act in agreement with the Third International, and to prepare for a forthcoming international congress.

Since to the groups actually present there were to be added the whole of the trade union movements in Esthonia, Norway, and Finland, and the revolutionary unions of Germany, Austria, Ireland, Holland, and some in Canada and America, the new trade union center presented a promising future. The next year was held the congress that organized the Red International of Labor Unions. So long as the communists maintained an international policy, they had some chance of keeping their trade union organization alive; the moment they degenerated to Russian nationalism, they would lose most of their adherents.

The disagreements which had shown themselves in the trade union conferences, in the course of which the Leninists had lost the communistic syndicalist elements, found a sharp echo within the ranks of the Communist International itself. As usual, it was the Germans who gave the Bolsheviks their chief theoretical battles; but this time the German "Communists," only recently emancipated from Kautskyianism and rank opportunism, were to attack from the Left, although with arguments that strangely resembled those in the books of Kautsky. In a special brochure,

Lenin was forced to take issue with the German Communist Labor Party, with the Dutch Leftists, and with similar tendencies to be found in an especially ludicrous form in the United States.

The Communist Labor Party of Germany took up the Centrist cry of Rosa Luxemburg that the Leninists had created a Party attached to but over the masses. There existed under Lenin not the dictatorship of the masses but the dictatorship of the leaders, not the dictatorship of the class but of the Party. This was also the opinion of Kautsky. In his tractate, Lenin had to call attention to the fact that the slogan "Down with Leaders" was nonsense, that the statement that political parties were no longer necessary was the acme of absurdity. The negation of the Party and of Party discipline was equivalent to disarming the proletariat, to capitulating to petty bourgeois lack of organization which must end every proletarian revolutionary movement. To reject the Party meant to attempt to jump from capitalism to the final stage of communism and to deny the long hard process of struggle during which the bourgeoisie must be crushed by the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

The second question which the Leftists raised concerned work in the reactionary trade unions In a large number of countries, the "revolutionists" had decided that they no longer could sit in the same room with the traitors who led the workers' movement. Having just broken from the Socialist Party, these elements never had learned how to do revolutionary work among backward workers; now that they were faced with this task, they concealed their ineptness by leaving the scene and abandoning the workers to the bureaucrats, all the while shouting about the purity of their revolutionism. In Germany, indeed, the people who so left the trade unions were often genuine, impatient revolutionists, but this was not so in other countries where weaklings posing as communists, unable to prove their worth in given situations, took to flight

On this question the Second Congress had categorically avowed "All voluntary withdrawals from the industrial movement, every artificial attempt to organize special unions without being compelled thereto by the exceptional acts of violence on the part of the trade union bureaucracy . . . represents a great danger to the communist movement." [1] In his polemic against the childish "Leftists," Lenin stressed the point that it was silly to wait until all the trade unionists became revolutionists before the revolution would be ripe, and that a certain conservatism in the trade unions was always to be found. This existed even under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. To believe that the unions should be treated as though they were political revolutionary organizations and that no worker should be allowed

[1] *Theses of the Communist International, Second Congress,* "Theses on the Trade Union Movement," p 11

to join unless he subscribed to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat or that, in turn, no communist could join a union unless that body had affirmed its adherence to such a principle was a crime. Even under the soviets, to try to make communist bodies out of trade union organizations was "like trying to make a four-year-old girl a mother. At best, it would be a silly joke, a foolish trick—at its worst, an abuse of, and sordid crime against, nature." [1]

"A greater lack of sense and more harm to the Revolution than this attitude of the left revolutionists cannot be imagined. Why, if we in Russia, after two and one-half years of incredible victories over the Russian bourgeois and the Entente, had demanded that entrance into the Trade Unions must be conditional upon the 'acceptance of the dictatorship,' we should have committed a stupid act, impaired our influence over the masses and helped the Mensheviki. For the whole of the communist problem is to be able to *convince* the backward, to *work in their midst* and *not to set up a barrier* between us and them, a barrier of pedantic childishly 'left' slogans." [2]

This viewpoint also was emphasized in the theses and resolutions adopted at the Third Congress of the Comintern. At the same time, the theory that the unions were to be neutral in the class struggle was declared to be fallacious, the correct view being that every protracted struggle of the unions was bound to have great political reverberations, just as every political decision of social importance was bound to affect the unions. The Russian revolution had been full of the harmful effects of such "neutrality" as exemplified by the attempt of the railroad workers' union executive to be "neutral" in the fight between Kerensky and the Bolsheviks. However, all this did not mean the communists could not work in the reactionary unions, but rather that, since the action of the unions could have such fateful effect, this was all the more reason to work within them to move them in the right direction.

Also, it was possible that splits would occur, no matter what the communists did, since the trade union bureaucrats would expel all those who were a menace to them. However, the communists were to work so carefully that, when they were expelled, large numbers of workers would go with them, and thus the basis for a powerful union could be laid that would free the workers from the agents of the employers in the unions. The communists were to go into the reactionary unions, not with abstract propaganda for communism or with artificial issues, but with practical concrete questions that the workers would recognize as beneficial to them.

The issues that communists were to force prominently in the unions

[1] V. I. Lenin: *"Left" Communism, an Infantile Disorder* (Toiler edition), p. 31.
[2] The same, pp. 35-36.

were the struggles for better conditions, industrial unionism, amalgamation of various unions facing the same employers and meeting the same conditions, democracy within the unions, militant action in strikes, determined effort to organize the unorganized, and similar matters At the same time, the communists had to strive for solidarity of the workers, leading to the general strike and to workers' control over production, and also had to push political issues such as the struggle against war, against reaction, in behalf of Soviet Russia, and for a workers' government in their respective countries The unions were to work closely with the Communist Party

Then, too, there was the task of organizing the unorganized workers, a task which properly belonged to the communists, especially in periods of violence and upheaval In the course of this work it might happen that entire unions would be controlled by communists, thus the question of the relation between the Party and the unions became a vital one

The Third Congress of the Comintern reiterated the Leninist position that "The Party must learn how to influence the unions without attempting to keep them in leading strings' [1] The communists must exercise no choking control but rather lead through ability, teaching the workers in the unions the lessons of revolution by leading them in the sort of direct action to which the union was accustomed "Under 'direct action' we mean all forms of direct pressure of the workers upon the employers and the state boycott, strike, street demonstrations, seizure of the factories, armed uprisings and other revolutionary activity, which tend to unite the working class in the fight for Socialism" [2]

The attitude of the Left communists at the Second Congress in refusing to work in reactionary organizations did not confine itself to the trade unions, but was enunciated as a general principle The German Leftist declared the revolution was at hand, that the only thing needed was independence of action and the masses would follow This was essentially a *putschist,* and Blanquist point of view They completely underestimated the need for preparation for the insurrection and the rôle of the Party in that preparation They substituted their subjective wishes for the political reality and constituted a most dangerous factor in the German movement at that time. To the German Leftists, evidently, everything would be settled immediately at the barricades There was no need for dull, routine, day to-day, practical work

It must be confessed that this attitude of the German Leftists of the Communist Labor Party variety sprang from deep sources and should have served as a warning to the Comintern of the dangerous Right Wing

[1] *Theses of the Third Congress of the Communist International* p 137
[2] The same, p 143

tendencies that their official Party, the United Communist Party, a fusion of Spartacists and Independent Socialists, was displaying. Indeed, Lenin recognized that very point and made every effort to retain the Communist Labor Party within the ranks of the Comintern and to persuade them eventually to fuse with the Communist Party. But the errors of the Leftists were too far-reaching to permit such fusion. The Communist Labor Party, after launching an open attack against the Russian Revolution, itself deteriorated steadily in an anarchistic and syndicalistic direction.

The German Leftists at least were rooted in the German scene and numbered several hundred thousand members and supporters in the early days. Similarly was it with the situation in Italy, where the Leftists had raised the sharpest struggle against the fatal error of the communists in not separating themselves soon enough from the Right Wing and Centrists. But in other countries, Leftism took on a ludicrous coloring indeed and showed that the communists of these nations were simply part of the lunatic fringe rather than deeply rooted in the social life of their nations. In spite of all their screaming for the revolution, without making the slightest serious preparations for it, they showed themselves to be not parties of a class but circles of intellectuals copying the worst aspects of the intellectualism of a handful of workingmen. In many places this became the popular impression of communists. Lenin fought these phrase-mongers with especial vigor. The whole aspect of the Second Congress was one in which the Bolsheviks were trying to force the communists of the world to root themselves in the class relations of their country and to appeal to the masses. This was to be emphasized greatly in the Third Congress; organizational guarantees to insure it were to be taken.

In the course of their general argument, the Leftists had opened fire against participation in bourgeois parliaments by revolutionists. Lenin had to call them to task and to plead that they view the situation more realistically. Questions of participation in parliament were questions of tactics. The Bolsheviks at times had participated in and, at other times, had boycotted parliament. But what the Leftists had to realize was that the European revolution was going to prove a far more difficult job than had been the case in Russia. Certain specific conditions which had existed in Russia were not present in Western Europe, and a repetition of those factors was not probable. These special conditions were the possibility of connecting the Soviet revolution with the end of the War, the possibility of making use of the deadly struggle of two sets of world plunderers who could not unite against the soviets in time, the possibility of withstanding civil war because of the gigantic extent of the country, the poor means of communication, the lack of food supply, and, finally, the existence of a broad bourgeois revolutionary peasant movement.

In short, the European revolution was not a single act, but a long process with many a zig-zag curve. The idea that communists would advance in a single straight line always upward and forward was nonsense. The forefront fighters of the proletariat would have to be prepared to make many retreats and many compromises, compromises not in the sense of abandoning principles as the opportunists were doing, but in the sense of utilizing compromise but temporarily, only to push forward the revolution later, which were the tactics of the Leninists Under such circumstances, the ability cleverly to maneuver was absolutely essential. Above all, communists had to be realists if they were to accomplish the task of world revolution.

Wrote the Master "It is not at all difficult to be a good Revolutionist once the Revolution has broken out—when all and everyone joins the Revolution from mere enthusiasm, because it is the fashion, sometimes even from considerations of personal gain It costs the proletariat labor, great labor and I may say excruciating pains, after the victory to rid itself of these pseudo-Revolutionists. But it is far more difficult, and yet more valuable, to know how to be a Revolutionist, even when conditions are yet lacking for direct, general, truly mass and truly Revolutionary action; to be able to defend the interests of the Revolution by propaganda, agitation and organization, in non-Revolutionary institutions and oftentimes in downright reactionary surroundings, among masses incapable of immediately understanding the necessity for Revolutionary methods To be able to find, to sense, to determine the concrete plan of still incomplete Revolutionary methods and measures, leading the masses to the real, decisive, final, great Revolutionary struggle—this is the chief problem of modern Communism in Western Europe and America" [1]

4

From the time of the Second Congress to his death, Lenin bent all his energies to building solid and capable revolutionary parties throughout the world The First Congress had worked out the general principles; the Second Congress had given form to the organization, excluding the worst Centrist elements, the Third Congress was to set to work actually to create an army for revolutionary work Lenin made no attempt to conceal the fact that his international army was woefully weak, and, with the Third Congress, we find the utmost attention paid to the thorough reorganization of the Parties Only through such reorganization could the resolutions on mass work really be put into effect. The Theses on Organization, therefore, are really the heart of the work of the Third Congress.

[1] V I Lenin *Left' Communism, an Infantile Disorder* p 78

The Third Congress of the Comintern met from June 22 to July 12, 1921, in Moscow. By this time, the world revolutionary wave had subsided somewhat, with the defeat of the movement in Germany and the introduction of the New Economic Policy in Russia. The post-war crisis of 1920 had ended, and European capitalism was reviving. The first question that arose in the minds of the delegates was whether this revival signified the falseness of the whole theory of the Communist International to the effect that the present was an era of wars and revolutions. Would capitalism be restored? Was revolution to be postponed indefinitely? Could Soviet Russia endure? Already, in practically every country, pessimism was entering into the ranks of the newly formed Communist Parties, and many Centrist elements were deserting what they considered a lost cause. In Germany, Levi was expelled,[1] and later Brandler; in France, Froissard, and later Souvarine and Treint; in Italy, Turati, and later Serrati. In practically every country there arose deep schisms and factional struggles.

The Third Congress carefully analyzed the situation and pointed out that, although the proletariat was losing some of its too easily won positions, and had experienced some temporary setbacks, nevertheless, it was "an undoubted mark of our time that the curve of capitalist evolution proceeds, through temporary rises, constantly downwards, while the curve of revolution proceeds through some vacillations constantly upwards"[2] All this but reaffirmed the conclusion that the basic task before the communists was to try in a revolutionary manner to win the majority of the workers to their side. The most vigorous struggle must be launched against the Centrists, not only outside the Comintern's ranks and now crystallized in the new Vienna Union of Socialist-Centrist Parties, but against every Centrist tendency within. "The character of the transition period makes it imperative for all Communist Parties to be thoroughly prepared for the struggle Each separate struggle may lead to the struggle for power. Preparedness can only be achieved by giving to the entire Party agitation the character of a vehement attack against capitalist society."[3]

The Comintern meeting then set itself to discuss the Leninist Theses on Organization. The Theses declared that, while no absolutely infallible form of organization existed, forms changing with the needs of the times, yet general principles holding true for all capitalist countries were possible. Everywhere the Communist Party was to consider itself the vanguard of the working class and must affirm the necessity of leadership and close association to the masses. Organic unity within the Party could be attained

[1] Lenin's attitude towards Levi is given in his "Letter to the German Communist Party" (1921) printed in *Labour Monthly*, Vol I, No 4, p 349 (Oct, 1921)

[2] *Theses of Third Congress of the Communist International*, p 32

[3] The same, p 54

only through the principle of democratic centralism. "Democratic centralism in the Communist Party organization must be a real synthesis, a fusion of centralism and proletarian democracy. This fusion can be achieved only on the basis of constant common activity, constant common struggle of the entire party organization. Centralization in the Communist Party organization does not mean a formal and mechanical centralization, but a centralization of communist activity, that is to say the formation of a strong leadership, ready for war and at the same time capable of adaptability" [1]

The Congress went on to point out that the Communist Parties were still under bourgeois influence, that within them was to be found a division of labor between the members and the functionaries, in which the latter were turning into bureaucrats substituting formal democracy for the living association of common endeavor, while the members were relegated to passive positions This dualism had to be fought by any means

Mere adoption of communist programs was not enough "Regular participation on the part of most of the members in the daily work of the Party is lacking even today in the lawful Communist Parties That is the chief fault of these parties, forming the basis of constant insecurity in their development. . The art of Communist organization lies in the ability of making use of each and every one for the proletarian class struggle, of distributing the Party work amongst all the Party members, and of constantly attracting through its members ever wider masses of the proletariat to the revolutionary movement further it must hold the direction of the whole movement in its hand not by virtue of its might but by its authority, energy, greater experience, greater all round knowledge and capabilities A Communist Party must strive to have only really active members, and to demand from every rank and file party worker that he should place his whole strength and time, in so far as he can himself dispose of it, under existing conditions, at the disposal of his Party and devote his best forces to these services' [2]

With the social-democrats, the Party was an instrument primarily for election campaigns It was composed of large branches organized on a residential territorial basis and engaged mainly in educational activity The Communist Parties, on the other hand, would have to be entirely remodeled on a nuclei and fraction basis Wherever there were gathered together three or more communists, there should be organized a nucleus based either on a given shop or a given industrial or territorial area Hence there were to be three forms of nuclei the shop nucleus, the street nucleus, and the transition nucleus based on several factories in a given industrial area.

[1] *Theses of Third Congress* p 77
[2] The same, pp 78 79

The nuclei were to be small; thus they easily could function illegally. The smallness of the unit lent itself to the training of every member and to the checking up of all work. Thus could be established that flexibility and mutual confidence that only common living associative effort could produce. The leadership should come from the best material, the ones who best could perform the concrete dangerous jobs under the communist policy, the ones tested and refreshed in the struggle.

The most important nuclei were the shop nuclei in a given factory, plant, works, or industrial unit. Their function was to make every factory a communist stronghold and to carry out all the political activity possible among the workers of the given place. One of the chief tasks of the nucleus was the building up of a shop committee for struggle for better conditions at the point of production and eventually for workers' control over the factories. They were to concentrate their efforts also to unionize the shop and to initiate a militant policy in the union thus formed. But the shop nucleus was not to confine itself to trade union or economic questions. Above all, it must be a political unit of a revolutionary party; it must issue a paper if possible; it must distribute political leaflets and lead the workers in all sorts of demonstrations to expose and overthrow the State.

The street nuclei were not as important as the shop nuclei, although they too had considerable tasks to perform. One of their main duties was concentration on the factories in their given neighborhoods in an effort to form nuclei in every plant and productive unit within their jurisdiction. They also were to assist the shop nuclei in such matters as the distribution of the shop paper, which could not be done by the members working in the factory itself. The street nuclei also should help to organize the transition unit in a given industrial area, which unit was to include a number of similar shops not yet providing their own shop nuclei.

Besides, the street unit had the job of organizing struggles in the workers' quarters, the mobilization of the women in the fight against the high cost of living or against war, the creation of tenants' leagues for the reduction of rents, the work among the capitalist-led organizations in workers' neighborhoods, the carrying on of open air meetings and of various demonstrations. Of great importance, too, was the work of the street unit in regard to unemployment. Naturally, the workers in the shop nuclei could not take the lead here and, as the unemployment crisis grew worse at different times, the street nuclei had to take charge.

The reorganization of the old parties on the new nuclei basis meant a veritable revolution in the lives of the communists. It signified that the Party no longer was to be an opportunist organization with loose control and with simple educational and parliamentary functions. The Party was

to be engaged in tireless, day-to-day, practical tasks in preparation for the winning of the masses for the seizure of power. All members now were to be active and trained for leadership in the various departments of work that opened up. The Communist International was to be Bolshevized. No Party with such a method of operation could fail to carry on a revolutionary policy; no revolutionary party could carry on its multitudinous and variegated tasks without such a structure.

The work of the Communist Parties also was to be systematized into a definite division of labor. A number of departments and committees were to carry on special work. The principal fields of activity were placed in the hands of departments which had representatives in every district, section, and unit of the Party. Such departments were the agitation and propaganda departments, the women's work department, the Negro work department, the trade union work department, the organization department; in various localities, other departments were added according to the nature of the work. Besides these, there were committees on anti-militarist work, on work among the co-operatives, on work among the various groups of foreign-speaking workers in a given country, on anti-imperialist work in behalf of the colonies, on work among the youth, in the clubs, and in other associations of the working class and other strata of the population.

The communists had the duty of penetrating into all associations of the working class, wherever they could do work and carry on revolutionary activity. Where such organizations did not exist, the communists were to try to create them on a broad basis, with a given concrete program of struggle. Thus, the Party would be a central ganglion connecting a myriad of organizations with a uniform policy and co-ordinating all phases of the battle against the capitalist State. The leaders of such a Party, naturally, had to be tested elements with a wide and varied experience, capable of effective performance in any branch of the service.

Within the broad organizations of the working class, the communists were to come together and organize a fraction to be composed solely of these revolutionists for special work in the given organization. Fractions did not have the power of nuclei, which were the basic political units of the Party where dues were collected, tasks assigned, elections held, and general control exercised. The fractions had the special purpose of working out concrete tasks in a given specific field, of determining and carrying forth a revolutionary policy in all the mass organizations with which they were connected. Thus, there were trade union fractions, club fractions, co-operative fractions, etc., which were the levers which moved the big wheels of the mass organizations in turn to stir the entire class into action at given moments.

When operating properly, the Communist Party would embrace several important social functions. First, it would serve as the general scientific staff of the working class, made up of advanced class-conscious theoreticians, working in different fields of activity, but capable of comprehending the problem of their class as a whole and of connecting their particular activity with the basic needs of the international proletariat. Second, the Party, embracing as it should the active members of the proletariat and the most courageous elements, represented the vanguard of the class; that is, it was made up of troops eager for the battle and the first to take the most dangerous posts in the fight. Third, the Party, when properly formed and functioning, was the driving force in the ranks of the workers, moving them in the proper direction and stiffening up their ranks in struggle. This was the ideal of the Third International under Lenin.

The aforementioned plan of organization was worked out in detail, and instructions were drawn up for each department. One of the main tasks was that of agitation and propaganda. The Socialist Parties had stressed propaganda rather than agitation, the Communists were to emphasize the latter.[1] Communism would not arise from book-reading, it would arrive only through the bitter experiences of the mass of workers unable to read much and dependent on life itself to teach them. Instead of mulling over abstract treatises on the value of socialism, therefore, the communist had to occupy himself above all with the concrete problems of the proletariat and, through these problems, propound to the workers the general theory.

Under the Socialist Party, the press generally had been uncontrolled, sometimes the official organ being the private property of a few. Such a situation was intolerable among communists. Not only ownership but the whole character of the paper must be changed. "Our papers must not serve for the satisfaction of the desire for sensation or as a pastime for the general public. They must not yield to the criticism of the petty bourgeois writers or journalist virtuosos in the striving to become 'respectable.' "[2]

The editorial staff no longer was to be composed exclusively of intellectuals who had never been engaged in actual struggle and who made writing their profession. The paper above all was to be administered and written by the active workers at the scene of struggle.

This was in line with the general theory of the Leninists, that there was to be no bourgeois division of brain and brawn in the communist ranks. While no distinction was made between communist intellectuals and communist workers, yet the intellectual was to be proletarianized and the pro-

[1] The difference between the two has been explained as follows: propaganda is the dissemination of the general scientific views of communism to a few; agitation is the stimulation of the masses to action on given concrete points.

[2] *Theses of the Communist International, Third Congress*, p. 101.

letarian intellectualized. The intellectual had to learn by doing, through performing concrete tasks, both the dull and routine and the dangerous ones; he had to show his mettle before he could rise towards leadership. The workers who had accomplished these tasks should be taken out of the factories and, wherever possible, out of the work shops, and made into general leaders of the Party.

Of very great importance was the anti-militarist struggle which the opportunist socialists had never carried on. Nuclei had to be formed within the armed forces of the State, but by no means must the anti-militarist agitation be of a pacifist nature, since such agitation only assisted the bourgeoisie in its efforts to disarm the proletariat. "Intensive agitation must therefore be directed not against the military training of the youth and workers, but against the militaristic régime, and the domination of the officers. Every possibility of providing the workers with weapons should most eagerly be taken advantage of." [1]

In regard to work among the State forces, the Third Congress called attention to the fact that the lawful parties were not preparing sufficiently for illegal work, for the time when democracy would come to an end, and they would be driven underground. The lawful parties, for example, had done little in the matter of combating secret service men in their ranks. The Leninists favored harsh treatment of spies and *agents provocateurs* found in their ranks. This was not a variation of anarchist individual terror, but mere self-defense.

The Third Congress considered fully the need for organization of both the women and the youth. In regard to the women it declared: "The Third Congress of the Communist International maintains that the conquest of power by the proletariat, as well as the achievement of Communism in those countries where the capitalist State has already been overthrown, can be realized only with the active participation of the wide masses of the proletarian and semi-proletarian women." [2] By 1920, an International Secretariat for work among women had been started, not because the communists believed in special organizations for women, but because of special conditions affecting them and of the necessity for special methods of work. The thesis declared:

"Being earnestly opposed to the separate organization of women into all sorts of parties, unions, or any other special women's organizations, the Third Congress, nevertheless, believes that in view of: (a) the present conditions of subjection prevailing not only in the bourgeois-capitalist countries, but also in countries under the Soviet system, undergoing transi-

[1] *Theses of Third Congress*, pp. 91-92.
[2] The same, p. 156.

tion from capitalism to communism; (b) the great inertness and political ignorance of the masses of women, due to the fact that they have been for centuries barred from social life and to age-long slavery to the family, and (c) the special functions imposed upon women by nature—childbirth, and the peculiarities attached to this, calling for the protection of her strength and health in the interests of the entire community, the Third Congress therefore considers it necessary to find special methods of work among the women of the Communist Parties and establishes a standard of special apparatus within the Communist Parties for the realization of this work." [1]

Similarly, the Communist International gave full consideration to the organization of the youth. From the start it had valued the youth organizations which had been among the first to break from the old Socialist Parties, to fight the War, and to take a revolutionary stand. There was this difference between the special apparatus for working out methods for work among women and work among the youth: the women's work was but a department of the Comintern; the youth work was made into a special organization with its own heads and own political functions. Not that the youth organizations were young people's parties, rivals to the Communist Parties. On the contrary, the Young Communist Leagues were subordinate politically to the Communist Parties, but they were not to be subordinated organizationally.

This latter was an extremely wise policy, not only because of the special problems of the young, but because it gave a guarantee to the youth that they would not be swamped by older elements, that they would have the opportunity to work out problems for themselves, that they could use the flexibility and adaptability and independence of youth to the best advantage to themselves and to the working class as a whole.

Sending delegates to the Comintern and abiding by its decisions, the Young Communist International nevertheless was to be of a broader nature than the regular Parties. It was not to be limited to professional revolutionaries, but rather was to develop a full program, including sports, social activities, and so forth, that would appeal to youth. It would be responsible for carrying out tasks especially pertaining to youth. It was to undertake educational work among the small children, who were to be organized into Pioneer associations. Above all, it had serious responsibilities towards anti-militarist work which was left to a considerable extent in its hands. It was to take an important position in physical defense work and in all fighting and demonstrations of such a character.

All this rendered the Young Communist Leagues entirely different from the Socialist Leagues of the day, which were made up mostly of students,

[1] The same, pp. 162-163.

carrying on no real economic struggles for the youth, entrenched in no factory or point of production, neglecting all serious anti-militarist work, and concentrating entirely on education of an academic character. The Third Congress stressed that "The fundamental difference between the Young Communist organizations and the young centrist and social-democratic organizations lies in their participation in all political problems; in the work and construction of Communist Parties, and in the active participation in revolutionary struggle." [1]

One further important question the Comintern considered, the question of internal struggles and factional fighting. The Third Congress declared that the way to win the confidence of the membership and to secure discipline was not to crush all differences of opinion that might arise on various questions, but to allow full discussion in the Party where such questions arose within the general framework of the Party Program. In line with this, the Third Congress affirmed: "In order to study the general and political situation and to gain a clear idea of the state of affairs in the Party it is necessary to have various localities represented on the Central Committee whenever decisions are to be passed affecting the life of the entire Party. For the same reason, differences of opinion regarding tactics should not be suppressed by the Central Committee if they are of a serious nature. On the contrary, these opinions should get representation upon the Central Committee." [2] This policy reiterated the belief of Lenin that objective events are constantly changing, thereby forcing new decisions. Where the Party is new and weak, factions are often inevitable.[3] That the factions do not result in splits may be because the Party is doing important work, and each member feels a certain responsibility not to break off this work without grave reasons. In the case of a new Party in the formative stages, splits are generally disastrous, and all sides tend to avoid them unless they believe there is absolutely no other possibility of changing the wrong line of the organization.

Even in older and more tested organizations, factions are inevitable because of the lack of unity among all layers of the working class, and because of the influence of other classes upon sections of the Party. So long as the factions have a difference of policy within the general framework of communism, these differences can be tolerated and adjusted in the course of struggle. As we have seen, the Comintern provided that minority groups should be represented even in the leading executive body of the Party, the Central Committee which had full power of control between conventions. The theory of the monolithic party, in the sense of the rejection

[1] *Theses of Third Congress*, p. 186.
[2] The same, p. 108.
[3] See above, p. 832 and following.

of all toleration of differences of opinion, had not been introduced. The follow-the-leader idea was to arise later, in the period of degeneration of the Comintern.

5

Lenin's Theses on Organization came as a bomb shell upon the Parties affiliated with the Comintern. Although they had joined the Communist International, they were only just weaned from socialist centrist tendencies. Now they found that before they could really understand the Leninist method of work, they would have to re-organize their ranks completely. The re-organization stripped bare all the revolutionary phraseology of the so-called communists and exposed them as having had really no preparation for revolutionary struggle

Naturally, the various Parties resisted these Theses. The resolutions of the Third Congress were adopted unanimously and then systematically sabotaged At the Fourth Congress, the instructions were repeated. At the Fifth Congress, in 1924, it was reluctantly admitted that in practice the re-organization "has hitherto not been pushed with sufficient energy." [1]

At the Fourth Congress, held in 1922, Lenin, in one of the last speeches he was ever to make, undertook to estimate the situation as follows. "At the Third Congress of 1921 we adopted a resolution concerning the organizatory upbuilding of the Communist Parties, and concerning the method and the substance of their work It was a good resolution. . . Everything in the resolution has remained a dead letter. . . . Foreigners . . . first of all have to learn how to understand all that we have written about the organization and upbuilding of the Communist Parties which they have subscribed to without reading and without understanding it. You foreign comrades must make this your first duty. This resolution must be carried into effect" [2]

At the Fifth Congress, in 1924, also it had to be mournfully declared that "The Period between the Fourth and Fifth congresses of the Communist International has shown that the opportunist tendencies in the Communist movement are stronger than could have been expected. A number of the sections of the Comintern had grown out of the very heart of the Second International and had brought with them unsuppressed remnants of Social-Democratic traditions. Right deviations can acquire a

[1] Theses and Resolutions Adopted by the Fifth World Congress of the Comintern, printed in the *Communist International* Dec 1924 Jan 1925, No 7, p 60

[2] *Fourth Congress of the Communist International*, pp 118 119

In the report made by Zinoviev for the Executive Committee of the Comintern and printed in the volume cited above, there is pictured the full situation in the various affiliated bodies at the time, from which it can be seen how far away the various so-called Communist Parties were from Leninism

dangerous character, as our Communist parties become mass organizations." [1]

As a matter of fact, so vigorously did the Parties sabotage the resolution on re-organization that, before it could become effective, large splits had occurred in almost every country. Its execution at the very best was a haphazard and fitful process, in the course of which many of the Parties shrank to a small percentage of their former bloated membership. In the end, it was given up in fact. The failure to accomplish the re-organization of the Party was only part of the general failure of the Communist Parties, outside of the Russian, to attain the level of Leninism that had been reached in the course of the Russian Revolution.

Among the worst was the situation in the American Communist Party. With a membership entirely out of touch with the mass of workers of the country, with internal factional fighting rendering the organization futile, with nineteen foreign federations striving for power and setting up as their leader any puppet who could speak English, the American Communist Party was the greatest possible antithesis to the kind of Bolshevik Party the Leninists meant to create. Thus, when degeneration struck the center of the Comintern, it found decay already present in the American groups. However, we leave this matter here to treat it *in extenso* later.

The complete failure to re organize the *quondam* Socialist Parties into genuine Bolshevik organizations was an ominous sign that these so called Communist Parties were Socialist reformist Parties at heart, essentially unchanged. This manifested itself clearly in the functioning of these Parties in mass work. The time had now come when the Communist Parties had to apply themselves to the task of winning workers and proving their worth.

Already the Third Congress had laid down detailed instructions on how to realize the slogan "To the Masses" The next Congress, held in November-December, 1922, developed this idea of mass work still further. The Fourth Congress, commemorating as it did Five Years of the victorious Russian Revolution, started its proceedings with the statement that "The Fourth World Congress reminds the proletarians of all countries that the proletarian revolution can never be completely victorious within one single country, but that it must win the victory internationally, as the world revolution." [2]

The stability of the Russian Dictatorship depended upon the increased power of the world communist movement To attain this increased power, these Parties had seriously to address themselves to winning over the

[1] Theses and Resolutions Adopted by the Fifth World Congress of the Comintern, work cited, p 23

[2] *Resolutions and Theses of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International*, p 22.

masses. One of the best ways to accomplish this was through the tactics of the united front. The question of the united front, therefore, was the chief one to disturb the Fourth Congress of the Comintern.

A united front may be defined as the coming together of various organizations for the purpose of combining their forces for common struggle on a concrete issue or set of issues. For communists, the united front is not a mere maneuver, but an absolute necessity for the working class. Without a united front the workers cannot resist the employers' attacks. The workers divided cannot win and, if the communists are to lead the workers in their struggles, they must know how to unite them on the specific issues of the day. These issues form the common denominator which binds together all the divergent groups

Naturally, within the united front, the Communist Organization maintained its entire independence and right to criticize Otherwise the revolutionary organization would be giving up its right to work out a revolution ary policy The fact that other organizations differed on essential questions with the communists posed before the latter a difficult problem On the one hand it was necessary to create united fronts with the broadest possible basis, on the other hand it was imperative for the communists to unmask the various other agencies within the united front, to expose their shortcomings and their limitations, and to destroy their influence Thus, the communists had before them a dual task, namely, to unite the workers and, at the same time, to win them away from organizations with a non revolutionary policy There was the task of mobilizing the broadest strata of the working class, there was also the task of revolutionizing them The problem was dialectically to connect these two tasks so that instead of being antithetical they became part of one whole

That the united front implied the divided rear was a truism; while the different organizations that came together were willing to agree on a common struggle for a concrete point, they often disagreed on methods and on aims Were the groups really alike they would have come together not in a united front, where they touched each other at one given point, but in a complete fusion Thus the united front was not a compact of uncritical friends, but rather an alliance in which the communists watched their allies as they would their enemies, one in which the communists had no illusions concerning their more or less temporary fellow travellers

In all united fronts lay the danger that the communist elements would form not only a united front but a united front and rear, in which they would become the rear and be used by their allies as coolies for aims against the working class For this reason it was absolutely necessary to secure that kind of united front that would avoid all secret diplomatic

maneuvers and would place the issues squarely before the masses. The united front should not be a parliamentary bloc but should be one of actual physical struggle. The united front should not be a round table discussion with leaders only. "United front tactics from above alone is the method that the Communist International categorically and resolutely repudiates." [1]

Nor should the united front be formed with indefinite general aims; it must be definite, concrete, and limited in time and subject matter. It should be pointed out, however, that the united front for specific daily demands also could lead directly to the struggle for the State. This had happened in Russia where the soviets represented a united front body of various organizations for the seizure of power. Thus, the united front could lead to the formation of a workers' government.

In working out rules whereby communists could prevent their becoming the tail of reformists, the Fourth Congress declared: "The most important thing in the tactics of the United Front is and remains the agitational and organizational unification of the working masses themselves. The real success of the United Front tactics is to come from 'below,' from the depth of the working masses themselves. At the same time, the Communists should not decline, under given circumstances, to negotiate with the leaders of the workers' parties in opposition to us. But the masses must be constantly and completely kept informed of the course of these negotiations." [2]

The united front was not only a method of uniting masses for struggle, but a means of reaching workers otherwise unattainable. This was particularly true in such countries as the United States where the communists were isolated from the masses and were weak. Nor was the united front merely to be employed as tactics where the communists were uninfluential. The history of the Bolshevik Party showed that they made united fronts even on the day of the conquest of power.

The united front indeed offered an excellent arena for the communists to engage in a life-and-death, hand-to-hand, close struggle with opportunists and centrists of all shades, since, in the united front movement, all sections were faced with the same tasks, and the masses could see clearly which group, in a given situation, evolved the correct analysis, who was the real fighter and who was not. The united front in communist theory was a struggle of tooth-and-claw, without which the masses could not be torn from their false leaders.

Moreover, the united front tactic was a method by which the character of the communists was rounded out, their ability tested, their revolutionary science put to the proof. Only through the most intimate contact with the

[1] *Theses and Resolutions of the Fifth Congress of the Communist International*, p. 26.
[2] *Resolutions and Theses of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International*, p. 31.

opportunists and centrists of all kinds could the communist thoroughly understand all the relations of forces in the ranks of the workers.

That the communists were not afraid to confer with their worst enemies in the interests of the working class was seen in April, 1922, when there gathered together the representatives of the Second, Third, and Vienna Union ("Two-and-a-half") Internationals. The meeting had been called by the Vienna Union. The delegates from the Third International proposed that the agenda confine itself to the following concrete points. 1. defense against the capitalist offensive; 2. struggle against reaction; 3. preparation of the fight against new imperialist wars; 4 assistance in the reconstruction of the Russian Soviet Republic; 5. the Treaty of Versailles and the reconstruction of the devastated regions.[1]

Evidently the Second International had not come for such a purpose Before it would agree to a united front with the communists, the latter would have to satisfy three conditions First, the communists must release the political prisoners in Russia; second, they must free Georgia; third, they must abandon their nuclei tactics and independence of action. Here we see a classic situation of the sabotage of the opportunists of the Second International to the united front. It was obvious that should the debates embrace the conditions presented by the Second International, a united front would be impossible, for the communists would retort (as they did) that the socialists had shot them down by the thousands and had turned over the workers of the world to the capitalists. The communists had come with no conditions, they had not tried to bring before the conference the crimes of the opportunist socialists; all they asked was that the groups should unite in common action on concrete questions so that the capitalists of the world should be defeated.

In regard to the history of Georgia under the Mensheviks, Radek, the delegate from the Third International, made an interesting exposé of the entire situation He read a declaration from the Menshevik Foreign Minister of Georgia at the time, Gegetchkori, to General Alexiev, at a Conference with the representatives of the White armies of the South, in which the socialist had proudly declared, "We have suppressed the Bolsheviks in our country, we have given shelter to your White officers"[2] Also, on the invitation of this socialist Georgian government claiming independence, arrived the German troops, under General von Kress, who were greeted with bursts of enthusiasm by the socialists When the Germans were forced to withdraw, the Georgians admitted the British, under General Thomson, who installed their army at Batoum Radek then read from the book

[1] See *The Second and Third Internationals and the Vienna Union*, Official Report, p 18
[2] The same, p 69

written by the Menshevik Dschugeli, which had affirmed: "At the command of General Thomson the Social-Democratic Party and the Government were to pull down the red flag from the Government House."

Radek concludes with the point that, in the period when the Georgian Mensheviks, such as Tseretelli and Jordania, were supporting Kerensky, they never had proposed the independence of Georgia; the moment the Bolsheviks gained control, the others immediately allied themselves with the bourgeoisie of their country to break away. Jordania, indeed, had declared in a speech: "We cannot remain neutral, and if we have to choose between Eastern fanaticism and Western civilization, we decide in favor of Western civilization." [1]

The fact of the matter is that the opportunists and Centrists came to this International Conference, not in order to find means of struggling against the new capitalist offensive, but to struggle against alleged Russian imperialism. Unless the communists would relinquish their principles, there could be no united front. This was the import of their declarations And, in fact, no united front was obtained Soon thereafter the Vienna Union fused with the Second International to form the Labor and Socialist International It now became plain that even to bring about the united front, the most rigorous struggle against the opportunists would have to be made on all sides The slogan of the unity of the workers in concrete questions would become an excellent method to expose the deliberate lack of unity of the workers under the reformists

However, one important united front was established. The aforementioned Conference had agreed to try to bring the Amsterdam Trade Union International Center and the Red International together for joint discussions. When this second Conference was held, it was found that, while the general leadership was opposed to united actions with the Russians, the British trade union movement was willing to participate This was due to several factors In the first place, the British officials were not as yet afraid of the small and timid Communist Party of Great Britain It was otherwise on the continent itself Secondly, Britain already had begun commercial relations with Russia, and the trade union leaders, following their masters, saw no reason why labor should not now permit the same relations Accordingly there was formed an Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee "The driving force in this campaign were the British trade unionists and Socialists who saw in the Russian market a chance for the revival of British industry and who were worried by economic depression and by the specter of big strikes ahead" [2] Nothing constructive came out of the work of this Anglo-Russian Trade Union Unity Committee and, after the

[1] The same, pp 69 70
[2] L Lorwin, *Labor and Internationalism*, p 322

British General Strike of 1926, it passed out of existence, giving place to violent polemics within the communist's ranks.

The Fourth Congress of the Comintern analyzed five varieties of workers' governments. First, there was the Liberal Workers Government, such as existed in Australia and was likely to be formed in Great Britain in the near future. Second, there was the Social-Democratic Workers Government, such as had been formed in Germany. Third, the possibility existed of a Workers and Peasants Government in the Balkans. Fourth, there was a Workers' Government in which communists participated, such as existed when both Bolsheviks and Left Social-Revolutionaries held cabinet seats after the October Revolution. Finally, there was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat which the Communist Party alone could embody.

The Congress went on to declare: "The first two types are not revolutionary workers' governments, but a disguised coalition between the bourgeoisie and the anti-revolutionary groups. Such workers' governments are tolerated, at critical moments, by the weakened bourgeoisie, in order to dupe the workers as to the true class character of the State, or with the aid of the corrupt leaders to divert the revolutionary onslaught of the proletariat, and to gain time.

"The communists cannot take part in such governments. On the contrary, they must ruthlessly expose their true character to the masses. In this period of capitalist decline, when the main task is to win the majority of the proletarians for the proletarian revolution, such governments may serve as a means to precipitate the destruction of bourgeois power." [1]

The application of this policy was to be seen clearly in England when, before the Labour Party took power, the communists supported that Party against the Liberals and Conservatives, even though the Labour Party would have nothing to do with Communist Party affiliation and was even expelling communist individuals to be found in its ranks. But when the Labour Party took office and the first Labour Government was formed, the Communist Party openly broke from the Labourites, to concentrate their attack upon this government as a form of collaboration with the employers.

If we now review the history and work of the first four Congresses of the Communist International, we see the Leninists desperately striving to take advantage of the first great revolutionary wave to spread the revolution. This was for them a categorical imperative, if the Russian Socialist Soviet Republic were to survive. We find, however, that there was a deep abyss between the Russian Party and other Parties which were groping their way to communism. The Western Communist Parties were unable

[1] *Resolutions and Theses of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International*, p. 33.

to redress their ranks in a revolutionary manner soon enough to take advantage of the many opportunities weakened capitalism offered to them.

As the first revolutionary wave came to an end in Western Europe by 1923, these immature communists begin to succumb to the capitalist pressure around them. This pressure, moreover, affected not merely the outside Communist Parties, but the Russian as well, especially after the death of Lenin. As the Russians controlled the Communist International, this only intensified the collapse of that body, since there could be no adequate resistance from the other semi-communist organizations. The fact is, a stable Communist International is impossible unless the advanced workers in the important industrial countries of the world are ready for communism.

III. STALINISM

XLII. THE SWING TO THE RIGHT

I

SEVERAL periods can be said to mark the post-War revolutionary political development of Europe. The first period extended from 1919 to 1921; the second from March, 1921, to October, 1923; the third from 1923 to 1928; the fourth from 1928 to 1933; and the fifth from 1933 to the present In this chapter of our work we shall confine ourselves mainly to the third period,[1] 1923 to 1928

Immediately after the War, the revolutionary mass movement developed to the point where it was strong enough physically to overthrow capitalism, but was unable so to do for lack of a mature revolutionary party. Nor had the proletariat had sufficient time during the actions themselves to forge the proper party By March, 1921, when the German Communist Party attempted an insurrection, the wave was declining This flare-up was defeated by the failure of this party adequately to prepare and by the absence, therefore, of certain important prerequisites for a successful revolution.

At this point it could hardly be said that the Comintern itself had failed in its duty; it was simply a question of the extreme difficulty of building an adequate Communist International that could fulfill its historic mission all over the world Indeed, Lenin was among the first to realize the new situation; he pointed out that the Communist Parties were ready neither politically nor organizationally for the conquest of power. It was necessary to win the masses in day to day struggles Here Lenin attacked the Leftists who remained living in the past, who had not appreciated the changing conditions demanding new tasks These Leftists would consider no retreat, no compromise; they wanted unceasing, continual attacks Such a way was the way to ruin [2]

In the summer of 1923, however, a new revolutionary situation developed in Germany. The internal position of Germany, especially in connection with the collapse of the government's tactics of passive resistance, was catastrophic. Yet the German Communist Party took no advantage of the opportunities. As was admitted some time after the event "If in May, 1924,

[1] Compare L D Trotsky *The Strategy of the World Revolution* p 12 and following

[2] At the Third and Fourth Congresses Bucharin fought against the policy of the united front and similar transitional tactics

during the stabilization of the mark and a certain consolidation of the bourgeoisie, after the passage of the middle class and the petty bourgeoisie to the nationalists, after a deep party crisis and after a heavy defeat of the proletariat, if, after all this, the communists are able to rally three million seven hundred thousand votes to themselves, then it is clear that in October, 1923, during the unprecedented economic crisis, during the complete disintegration of the middle classes, during a frightful disorder in the ranks of the social democracy consequent upon the sharp contradictions among the bourgeoisie itself and an unprecedented mood of struggle of the proletarian masses in the industrial centers the Communist Party had the majority of the population on its side, could and should have fought, and had all the chances for success." [1]

It so happened that, by this time, the Executive Committee of the Comintern was reasonably well organized, and the whole German situation had been considered prior to the events of October. A group within the Executive Committee, headed by Trotsky,[2] demanded that the German Party be forewarned and instructed to prepare itself for the oncoming revolutionary crisis. With the failure of the revolutionary situation to materialize and the consequent defeat of the German revolution (which indeed was the final mighty blow of the bourgeoisie in the course of its stabilization), a new political period opened up marked, however, not merely by the improvement of the position of capitalism, but by the fact that the Executive Committee of the Comintern itself was exposed as a blunderer responsible for the disasters.

From now on, this was to be the typical situation: The Comintern would dictate a policy leading only to catastrophe and when the true situation should be revealed, the top leadership would begin to find scapegoats for its errors and to expel the national leaders for the crime of following the International. In the case of Germany in 1923, the Comintern at once proceeded to the removal of Brandler and Thalheimer, who, indeed, had committed many serious blunders of an opportunist character, but who, in all their actions, had been in harmony with the leadership of the Comintern.

Such a situation was bound to have a doubly deleterious effect upon the Communist International. In the first place, the illusion was increased that the Executive Committee was infallible, that it never made mistakes, but rather that all the errors were due to people who perversely refused to follow the instructions given by the center. In the second place by this method all possibility of correction was removed, and the national sections were thrown into interminable confusion. Such a policy was divorced from that of Lenin, who consistently had followed the line as stated by him:

[1] L. D. Trotsky, work cited, pp. 17-18, quoting from *Pravda*, May 25, 1924.
[2] Lenin was fatally ill.

"The attitude of a political party toward its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest criteria of the seriousness of the party, and of how it fulfills in practice its obligations toward its class and toward the laboring masses. To admit a mistake openly, to disclose its reasons, to analyze the surroundings which created it, to study attentively the means of correcting it—these are the signs of a serious party; this means the performance of its duties; this means educating and training the class, and subsequently, the masses." [1]

What was ominously pregnant with possibilities for the future was that now there was organized in the very top leadership of the Comintern a critical group, led by Trotsky, which declared that the errors in Germany were due to the policies adopted by the general leadership, and that these errors were so costly that the Comintern leadership must be removed as an opportunist and centrist one. From now on, a titanic struggle was to occur on all fronts between these two sections of the communist movement.

Defending itself against the Trotskyist charge that it had capitulated in Germany without striking a blow and thus definitely had retarded the movement for some time to come, the Executive Committee adopted the theory that the events of October, 1923, were only episodic, that the revolution had not been averted but was still possible in Germany and elsewhere. To compensate for the Executive's Right Wing errors in Germany, abortive attempts to take power were made in Bulgaria and in Esthonia, but, on every front, the Communists signally were defeated. By the time of the Fifth Congress of the Communist International, the chairman, Zinoviev,[2] was ready to admit that "The chief thing that strikes the eye when reviewing the present international political situation, is the beginning of the democratic-pacifist period." [3] But even here the Comintern made a doubly false analysis.

In the first place, the Fifth Congress believed that the reason why capitalist countries were entering upon a democratic-pacifist era with the Labour Party in control in England, the Left Bloc in France, the Weimar coalition in Germany, and similar situations elsewhere, was because the situation was rapidly becoming a revolutionary one, and this was the capitalist method of forestalling revolution. The Fifth Congress declared: "The objective meaning of the present unique democratic-pacifist period is that the bourgeoisie can no longer rule according to its old methods. This period reflects the instability of the capitalist structure, its decline, which is beginning to develop in a descending curve." [4]

[1] V. I. Lenin: *"Left" Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, p. 39.

[2] Zinoviev's real name was Applebaum, Trotsky's was Bronstein and Stalin's Djugeshvili.

[3] "Theses and Resolutions of the Fifth World Congress of the Comintern," printed in *The Communist International*, Dec. 1924-Jan. 1925, No. 7, p. 11.

[4] The same, p. 18.

Certainly the capitalist class would never have permitted the socialists to rule Germany and Austria and the Labourites to govern England were it not for the fact that capitalism was bankrupt and could continue to function only with the consent of the workers themselves. But what the Congress failed to realize was that this situation accrued, not because the workers were advancing to the barricades, and Socialist rule represented a sort of international Kerensky régime to that goal, but that the workers were in full retreat after the blunders committed by the communist revolutionists in various countries.

In the second place, afterward, when the leaders of the Comintern had been put right by events and had reviewed the situation more realistically, their conclusion that this was a democratic-pacifist period was held too rigidly and mechanically. They failed, therefore, to see that, even in the period of retreat, there was a law of uneven development in which sections of the world's toilers would be advancing to the revolution, not retreating. Thus the outbreak of the British General Strike found the Executive Committee thoroughly unprepared. Thus, too, the historic Chinese revolutionary movement of 1925-1927 would see the Comintern stifle the revolution at its birth.

The combination of errors committed by the Fifth Congress of the Comintern in interpreting the victory of the socialists in the government as a sign of a forthcoming revolutionary wave, coupled with the later belief that the socialist-pacifist era was to be of prolonged duration, gave a plausible pretext for various immature Communist Parties to abandon their class base and to make all sorts of agreements with non-revolutionary elements. Fundamentally, this was a reflection of the increased pressure of world capitalism upon the ranks of the proletariat. Had this fact been recognized, the Communist International would have been able to survive the period of partial and temporary stabilization of capitalism. But the very weakening of the revolutionary caliber of the advanced workers prevented their recognizing their weaknesses, and so they plunged into one disastrous venture after another.

The first crime committed was in relation to the trade union reformists of Great Britain. We have already noted that the British trade union leaders had broken from their Amsterdam comrades to advocate the unity of the Russian unions with those of the rest of the world. From this date there had been organized the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Unity Committee, which immediately had begun to exert great influence among the workers all over the world for the unity of all forces of labor in action. Soon the Communist International heads were idealizing this united front and

dreaming that communism would arrive in Britain not so much through the weak Communist Party as through the Anglo-Russian Committee.

"The Anglo-Russian Committee was regarded not as a purely episodic bloc of leaders that inevitably would have to be and demonstratively would be broken at the first serious test, in order to compromise the General Council. No, not only Stalin, Bucharin, Tomsky, and others, but also Zinoviev saw in it a long lasting 'friendship,' an instrument for the systematic revolutionization of the English working masses, and if not the gate, at least the threshold over which the revolution of the English proletariat would stride. The farther it went, the more the Anglo-Russian Committee became transformed from an episodic understanding into an inviolable principle standing above the real class struggle. That became obvious at the time of the general strike." [1]

In the course of this alliance with the Trade Union Council of Great Britain, the communists violated all the resolutions adopted at their Congresses. Fulsome adulation was poured on the heads of the British leaders, and a Minority Movement was built in the Trade Unions which was placed wholly at the disposal of the Left members of the General Council.

Then came the great British General Strike of 1926, whereby the falseness of the communists' attitude clearly was revealed. British economy had been slowly but steadily deteriorating after the War, and the British workers had been moving consistently to the Left. With the repeated breakdown of the "Triple Alliance," a burning desire had been created in the British workmen to force a show-down with the employers. At first, labor had taken to parliamentary means and had voted overwhelmingly for the Labour Party, placing that Party in office in 1924, only to be disappointed in its achievements and its short duration. In 1926, however, there came the opportunity for which the workers had been waiting. The miners had received new wage cuts of 10 per cent, and they appealed to all the trade unionists of Great Britain to support them in their struggle. The General Council was now forced to call a General Strike; immediately five million men responded in the most magnificent demonstration of its kind in industrial Europe.

Ostensibly, the General Strike was in sympathy with the miners and had merely economic aims; in reality, the strike shook the British Empire to its very foundations and, in the short time of its existence, cost the employers close to one billion dollars. Although the General Council, frightened by the revolutionary situation it had provoked, did its best to call out as few workers as possible and to dilute their militancy, the General Strike marked an immense step for the British worker. It meant that he no longer relied solely upon parliamentary measures, but took to direct

[1] L. D. Trotsky: *The Strategy of the World Revolution*, p. 50.

action to satisfy his demands. This in turn implied a diminution of the prestige of the Labour Party methods and a warning to the employers that British Labor could be as revolutionary as any. From this time on, British capitalists began to form their Maintenance Men and the beginnings of their fascist corps. From this time on, too, the illusions of democracy among the trade unionists rapidly diminished and, for the first time in their history, a resolution was passed at their Trade Union Congress sympathizing with the aspirations of the colonial peoples under the iron heel of British Imperialism and calling for the independence of India. At last the British worker was becoming international in outlook and revolutionary in attitude.[1]

The development of the trade union movement to an openly revolutionary position threw the opportunist and centrist leaders back to the arms of the capitalist reaction. Frantically the Trade Union General Council made overtures to the employers and soon, like a bolt from the blue, came the order for the cessation of the General Strike Up to that time, the solidarity had been magnificent, and more and more workers had expected to be called out Now all were commanded to return to work, and the miners were left to fight the battle alone

Needless to say, at this moment the retention of the friendship bloc of the Russians with the General Council was playing directly into the hands of the strike breakers.[2] "The All Russian Central Council of Trade Unions should have declared openly to the English mine workers' union and the whole English working class that the mine workers' strike could seriously count upon success only if by its stubbornness, its tenacity and its impetus it could prepare the way for a *new outbreak of the general strike.* That could have been achieved, however, only by an open and direct struggle against the General Council, that agency of the government and the mining employers The struggle to convert the economic strike into a political strike signified, therefore, an intense political and organizational war against the General Council. The first step to such a war had to be the break with the Anglo-Russian Committee which had become a reactionary obstacle, a chain on the feet of the working class"[3]

Thus the fact that the Russian communist unions were working hand in glove with the British General Council was immensely useful to the latter in breaking the strike while retaining the confidence of the mass of

[1] For an interesting account of the General Strike and its lessons, see John Pepper the *British General Strike and the General Betrayal* pamphlet

[2] As late as April, 1927, at the meeting of the Anglo Russian Unity Committee in Berlin, the Russian trade union leaders proclaimed the "hearty accord" and unanimity of the Committee The Russian Communists also pledged themselves to non interference in the affairs of the General Council

[3] L D Trotsky, work cited, p 52

workers. Later, when their services no longer were necessary, the Russians were to be dismissed by the General Council as similarly they would be dismissed by the British workers. The Communist Party, which had had a chance to become an important factor in the life of the British workers, shrank to an insignificant sect.[1]

2

Not only on the trade union front did the Comintern display class capitulation, but also on the political field, in reference to the Labor Party question and to the peasant question.

As far back as the Second Congress of the Communist International, Lenin had urged the British Communist Party to support the Labour Party candidates against the liberals and conservatives, and to try to join that Party as an affiliated section. To understand this decision of the Third International, one must appreciate the concrete situation existing in England at the time. In the first place, the British communists were fractious and divorced from the masses. It was necessary for them to connect with the trade unions. In the second place, the Labour Party at that time was really not a party at all, but rather an amorphous grouping made up of federated bodies, each element able to retain its independence and its platform. Thus to the trade unions were affiliated the Fabians, the Independent Labour Party, the British Socialist Party, and others. In 1917, the Labour Party decided also to admit individuals who could join locals for that purpose. The Labour Party had no great discipline, and no definitive program except one of such a minimum nature that all labor groups could agree upon it. Thus the Leninists were in favor of using the Labour Party as a bridge over which the masses could cross in their own way on the road to communism. Although the Labour Party had rejected the affiliation of the Communist Party of Great Britain and had even begun the expulsion of communist individuals from the Party, they still permitted communists in their ranks if they were delegated by their respective trade unions; this permitted the communists some opportunity to work and to make contacts.

Added to these considerations of a communist character were also hidden nationalist reasons which prompted the Russians to urge the British communists into the Labour Party. These reasons were intimated much later in a speech by Bucharin, who declared: "If I remember rightly, we had at that time the Russo-Polish war and practically all trade union leaders sup-

[1] In 1926 the British Communist Party rapidly grew to 12,000 members with a circulation of its paper of 120,000. See O. Piatnitsky: *The Organization of a World Party*, pamphlet, p. 22.

ported the country of proletarian dictatorship."[1] Thus, because the British trade union reformists were for the moment antagonistic to the Polish War against Russia, fearful as they were that this would mean the spread of communism all over Europe with resulting new world wars, to compel the British Communist Party to make peace with the Labour Party officials and no longer to fight them was considered sufficient. Here we see in germination the method later to become universal by which nationalist Russians would attempt to use the world revolution solely for their own immediate benefit.

Even in the early days the Leninists had pointed out that joining the Labor Party as a group could be only tentative tactics, possible only because the Labor Party had not crystallized as yet into a regular party, but was only an integrated series of united fronts on questions detailed in its platform. In 1920, Lenin had written: "At the present moment there is a tendency of the opportunist leaders to make the Labour Party a real party with local organizations and a programme. They aim to create a large opportunist party which is to retard the revolutionary development of the masses. Were this tendency to succeed, the Labour Party would never afford the Socialist organizations which form part of it the right to an individual Communist policy, nor to the propagation of the revolutionary struggle. It would bind their freedom of action hand and foot. It is thus evident that no kind of organization seeking to carry out a Communist policy could possibly belong to the Labour Party. It would then become necessary after a most energetic struggle against this tendency to leave the Labour Party. . . ."[2]

What was experimental, tentative, and concrete under Lenin soon became mechanical, general, and permanent in the period of communist backsliding following the Fourth Congress. In the United States, the communists were ordered to join or form Labor Parties; in the Far East were forced to enter into "Workers' and Peasants'" parties. In all cases, the revolutionists had to give up their insurrectionary banner and to capitulate to alien class elements. The contradictions that arose from these tendencies gave rise to keen factional fighting among the communists, especially in America.

As a result of the 1920-1921 industrial depression in the United States, the progressive elements in the trade union movement, headed by the machinists' organization which had grown greatly during the War, and supported by the Socialist Party, had initiated a Conference for Progressive Political Action which went on record for the formation of a Labor

[1] See *Communist Policy in Great Britain*, pamphlet, 1928, p. 50.

[2] *The Communist International Answers the I. L. P.*, p. 26. The title is also *Moscow's Reply to the I. L. P.*

Party. The industrial recession of 1924 greatly stimulated Labor Party sentiment, and the communists rightly analyzed this movement as marking a forward step in American life in that, for the first time, labor would be divorced politically from the two open capitalist parties which had monopolized the scene for so long. They correctly divined that this would accelerate sharply the class consciousness of the average American worker and trade unionist, and they reached the conclusion that the Labor Party movement should be supported.

There were several other factors in the political scene in the United States which rendered that decision timely. In the first place, the communists had suffered sharp persecution right after the War and only recently had decided to come above ground and to conduct legal work. Its underground period had induced a wild ultra-Leftism which had to be eradicated in mass work. Thus the decision to participate in the building of a Labor Party was conceived to be a healthy antidote for the communists, as indeed it might have been, had there been proper direction given.

All other important countries had large parties representing the independent labor movement Only in America was such a party lacking. The Labor Party would put an end to this exceptional circumstance, as it would terminate the period of individualism in American life Thus it would become a bridge, far more necessary than in Britain, where class lines always had been recognized, for the masses to cross over to communism. Indeed, to some, it appeared to be an inevitable bridge, one with which the American workers by no means could disperse Here was the infallible formula by which the workers could become communized in America

The American communists failed to realize sufficiently certain key differences between the situation in the United States and that in Britain. In the first place, the decision of the British communists to work in the Labor Party was induced by the fact that in Britain there already existed a strong and powerful Labor Party which had only to exert its strength to take power It was necessary to expose the limitations and inadequacies of that Party The best method was to help it get power, soon thereafter the workers would become disillusioned. In America, on the other hand, it was not a question of a Labor Party's actual existence, but of the organization of such a party wherein the communists were to set themselves to work to build up a reformist organization which could only betray the masses

To conceal this situation, the communists blinded themselves with the belief that the Labor Party could become truly revolutionary and would not necessarily have to take on a reformist and opportunist character. Thus in fact, as in the case of the Anglo-Russian Committee, so with regard to the American Labor Party, the Comintern cast doubt on the value of a

genuine vanguard party, and threw out implications that the revolution could proceed via other channels, or specifically, that the communists could capture the Labor Party movement for the revolution and transform it into a revolutionary weapon.

The communists failed also to see that, whereas the British Labour Party had been born in the pre-war period and had represented a genuine movement to the Left and a real awakening of the British toilers, the American Labor Party was being built by socialists who had represented the Right Wing of their Party, and by trade union officials who had done their best to stifle the militancy of the workers in the great strike waves of 1919-1921. Whereas the British Labour Party had been an earnest expression of the progressive development of the workers, the Conference for Progressive Political Action, in attempting to form a Labor Party was mainly a movement to channelize the discontent of the workers into safe directions. Thus, when, in 1924, the movement was on the verge of taking the shape of a permanent party, the leaders decided to endorse LaFollette and to turn it into a political mechanism for the career of a petty bourgeois leader. Although five million votes were collected, truly a remarkable feat, no Labor Party resulted, and the movement collapsed.

The communists, however, who, under the influence of the Comintern representative, Pepper, had come to believe that without the trick of the Labor Party, the "bridge" game could not be won, did everything possible to penetrate the reformist party. They were willing to endorse LaFollette. More than that, one section, headed by Cannon and Hathaway, even proposed that the Labor Party movement be broadened to include the farmers, that it was possible for the agrarian West to take the lead.

Thus there were heaped, one upon the other, a whole series of errors. Error number one consisted in the belief that a Labor Party was inevitable and necessary in American life. Error number two lay in the attempt to mix workers and farmers together into one party. Error number three was inherent in the illusion that under some circumstances the farmers would take the revolutionary lead over the workers. Error number four was revealed in the substitution of parliamentary activity and deals with the reformists for actual revolutionary conduct. Error number five was made when the communists tried to form their own Federated Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota.

This last adventure was replete with comedy. Against the Conference for Progressive Political Action, the communists suddenly called a dual conference wherein was to be formulated the "true" party of the masses. This was the class-mass-revolutionary Federated Farmer-Labor Party. What was really organized was a paper conference in which the communists captured themselves and proceeded to put up dummy candidates to run against

LaFollette and Wheeler. Thus the Communist Party tried to approach the workers through a maneuver, but the whole plan was so ridiculous that the candidates were withdrawn soon after, much to their chagrin and discomfiture. Pepper was recalled from America. The communists had exposed themselves as crude maneuvrists rather than as class fighters.

The theory of mixing workers and farmers into one indiscriminate organization had been turned into a general line by the Communist International after the Fifth Congress of 1924. They had actually formed a Peasants International [1] to which had been invited the party of agrarian capitalists of Yugo-Slavia led by Raditch. Later, Raditch was to repay the communists by capitulating to reactionary Belgrade. The Comintern developed a systematic idealization of the peasantry and the kulak. This was to be seen within Russia and it was to be noticed in the Balkans as well as in the United States. But its most harmful manifestations were to be reserved for China.[2]

[1] Headed by the Pole, Dombal

[2] Lack of space forbids us to treat of India.

XLIII. THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

I

IN 1925 there erupted in China an immense revolutionary volcano that for two years belched its lava in gigantic floods which swept all before them. The Comintern was elated. The Chinese Communist Party grew in influence, and two of its members became Ministers in the new Nationalist Government. On April 5, 1927, Stalin spoke highly of Chiang Kai-shek, praising this general of the Kuomintang as a fine revolutionary fighter, and exchanging portraits with him. A week later, rivers of blood began to flow. By the winter of that year, the very flower of the revolution had been wiped out and, with the help of Chiang Kai-shek and others of the Kuomintang, about one hundred thousand Chinese communists and workers had been executed in unprecedented massacres. Never had there been such favorable prospects for Communism in China; never was such monumental criminality displayed by the Communist International. If the beheading of the Chinese Revolution did not mean the complete end of the Comintern as a revolutionary force it was solely because the action in China was not yet decisive for the proletariat all over the world. There had yet to come the disastrous events in Germany, culminating in the victory of Hitler, before the conclusion that the Communist International was spent as a revolutionary force would begin to be accepted in wide circles of advanced workers.

The modern revolutionary history of China can be said to have started in the year 1894, a year marked by the humiliating defeat of the Chinese Imperial Government by the Japanese. The Boxer War of 1900 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904 also served greatly to awaken the Chinese people and to crystallize a political crisis in that country. In this period, too, began the open seizure of China and the policy of partitioning the country into spheres of influence monopolized by the great imperialist powers of the world. Taiwan was occupied by Japan in 1895, Kiaochow by Germany in 1898, Weihaiwei by England, and Port Arthur by Russia in the same year. In 1895, Japan forced China to recognize the independence of Korea, which formally was annexed to Japan in 1910. Furthermore, the imperialist Powers forced China to pay huge indemnities and extorted from her all sorts of special privileges and concessions, including the control of the customs.

Here we must note several important differences between the situations in India and in China. In India, control was vested in one imperialist overlord, England, which was interested in the spread of capitalism under its monopoly and for its benefit To maintain its rule, Britain had to support the princes in power, thus uniting them behind her, to disarm the general population as far as possible, to break down the provincial barriers, and to institute free trade With her powerful navy, Britain prevented all invasions and maintained order In China, the situation was just the opposite. The whole Chinese scene was marked by the ruthless rivalry of the imperialist powers in China, one against the other, a rivalry constantly upsetting its internal system and rendering chaos perpetual

World capitalism had to smash down the barriers erected in its path by the old Chinese dynasty Imperialism thus had to work for the overthrow of the old régime and for the weakening of the aristocratic clique around it Imperialism in China stood not for unification, as was the case in India, but for the partition of the country and the setting up of various military dictators who were armed by the imperialists to serve their purposes. In short, the invasion of capitalism in China meant constant turmoil, unceasing strife and warfare The splitting up of China into provinces under separate control also gave the foreign merchants, who were free of taxation and special tolls, a great advantage over the native merchant or nascent manufacturer

In India the National Congress arose in order to complete the national development and to give the native bourgeoisie more power At the start, no group wanted to dissociate itself entirely from England or to lose England's armed protection In China, on the other hand, from the very beginning, the fight was a conflict against imperialist division of the country Nationalism in India to a considerable extent could exist with loyalty to British control, nationalism in China would have to take on a revolutionary violent character from the outset Here are in brief some of the differences that distinguish a colony from a semi colony

After the defeat of the Chinese Imperial Government by Japan, a few leading scholars petitioned the Government for reforms Their basic principles were the teachings of Confucius, and their plan to save China was to adapt the applied science and practical arts of the West to the need of the country These elements created a Reform Party which was beginning to receive some favor from the Emperor when the latter was deposed and imprisoned, the Empress Dowager was put on the throne, and the reformers had to flee the country, some being killed It now became very clear that the salvation of the country lay in the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty.

In 1894, Sun Yat sen organized his society, the Shing Chung Hwei,

ostensibly to unite patriotic Chinamen to cultivate the arts of wealth and of power for the purpose of reviving China and securing her unity; the real and secret aim was the overthrow of the government. Naturally the group that most ardently would support such a move at this time was the overseas Chinese merchants who were in a position to contrast the plight of their country with the capitalist prosperity of the West, and who wanted to modernize the social régime of China in their favor. In 1895 Dr. Sun tried to make an attack upon Canton, but failed. In 1900, another futile effort was made The movement was at a stalemate when the great Russian Revolution of 1905 occurred, causing a change in the situation. In 1905, the Shing Chung Hwei was reorganized, at a great Tokyo conference, and the name Tung Ming Hwei (Revolutionary Alliance) was adopted.

"Several remarks may be made regarding the career of the Shing Chung Hwei, which lasted a full decade and ended in 1905 with the conference in Tokyo Firstly, this Society was the embryo from which the Kuomintang had sprung up This was the first organized body for the purpose of revolution in China Second, the Society derived its financial support mainly from the overseas Chinese merchants, who identified themselves from the very beginning with the revolution and were Dr Sun's warm supporters throughout his life time Thirdly, a large number of Chinese students abroad had joined the Society, who were the directing intellectual force of the party. Fourthly, we may say that the work done at this time was more of a preparatory propaganda nature It did no real harm to the Government The people were very gradually won over to its cause Revolutionary literature was smuggled into China and was rapidly circulated The party was out for the overthrow of the Manchu Government, not as an end in itself, but as a means to stop the foreign invasion in order to save China These men were out for the unconditional overthrow of the Government, which was regarded as the obstacle to China's salvation." [1]

At the Tokyo Conference of the re-organized party, the following six articles were adopted as its program 1 to overthrow the present wicked government, 2. to establish a republican form of government; 3. to maintain the peace of the world, 4 to nationalize the land, 5 to promote friendship between the peoples of China and Japan; 6 to ask the other countries to support the work of reform From this program it can be seen that the organization was put on an entirely different basis than previously, and that a much broader appeal was being made to include strata of the petty bourgeoisie, liberal students, peasants, and others. At this time many

[1] T C Wu *The Kuomintang and the Future of the Chinese Revolution* p 25 The author's name is also spelled T C Woo

military students joined Dr. Sun and began their work within the Imperial Army to undermine it for the cause.

In 1911 there occurred the successful uprising of the army in Wuchang. Rotten to the core, the Manchu dynasty collapsed. A revolutionary government was established at the temporary capital in Nanking and a Provisional Constitution was framed in the style of Western republics. Dr. Sun was made the Provisional President.

"In the words of Dr. Sun, two things were achieved by the revolution of 1911; 'First, it effaced the shame of more than two hundred and sixty years' standing, rendering races in China equal, and abolishing once for all the aspect of inter-racial friction and exploitation; second, it wiped out the trace of monarchy, which was more than four thousand years old, thus making democracy to begin from now.'"[1]

The parliamentary régime set up after the revolution of 1911, however, did not affect the mass of the people. The elections were participated in by only a handful and, within the party, the Right Wing, which refused to allow any self government in cities and provinces, dominated the party. In protest, Sun resigned his presidency and permitted Yuan Shih-kai to become President in 1912, while he himself became concerned in a program of economic nationalism in which he envisaged a great growth of national railways throughout the country, with the help of foreign capital In a short time, Yuan Shih-kai completed his own coup d'état, dissolved the National Congress, drove out the members of the Kuomintang, and overthrew the Provisional Constitution The emperor had been overthrown, but the old Mandarins were still in power

The 1911 revolution was the Chinese variation of 1848 and was bound to fail as a permanent régime On the one hand were the imperialists doing their best to cause dissension among the military generals of the party, now arming one and then the other, and causing each to strive to control the presidency On the other hand there was no party offering to solve the basic economic problems of the masses In the early part of the same year, the Kuomintang had been formed out of the Revolutionary Alliance and its base had been still further broadened. Now there were not only the liberal bourgeoisie, the intellectuals, broad sections of the city petty bourgeoisie, and the home workers but, at the same time, permanent connections were being sought with the working class and peasantry. No wonder the older bourgeois elements separated from the Left Wing and precipitated a schism in the party. In 1914 the Kuomintang was re-organized as the Revolutionary Party of China and, while the Mandarins and militarists were fighting in the North, Sun and his followers went down to Canton in the autumn of 1917 and set up a government there.

[1] The same, p 28

During all this period there had taken place a steadily accentuated development of modern capitalism in China, a development which increased its tempo at a feverish pace during the War and afterwards. A native Chinese industrialist and capitalist class was arising of no mean importance. In 1925 this group controlled 60 per cent of the capital invested in the coal industry, 20 per cent in the iron, 67 per cent in the textile, 70 per cent in the match, 25 per cent in the sugar, 58 per cent in the railroad, 26 per cent in river and sea transport, and similar percentages in other industries. Twenty-seven Chinese banks had a capital of two hundred and fifty million Chinese dollars. Besides this, the trading capital of the native bourgeoisie also amounted to a large sum.[1] It is interesting to compare this with the Russian situation prior to 1905. Then only 21 per cent of the total capital in Russia was indigenous, the rest being foreign; thus the Chinese percentage was much greater than the Russian had been, while, at the same time, the foreign investment in China appreciably was greater than the Russian, which stood at about one and one-fourth billion dollars.

As in Russia, so in China the factories that were being built were of the most modern design, huge plants that often embraced thousands of workers within each unit. By 1927 there were almost five million wage workers, including three million industrial workers employed in the mines, on the railroads, in textile and silk factories, in large iron mills, and similar works. These workers were exploited in truly horrible fashion, their condition being impossible for the average European to appreciate. The excessive toil of the Chinese working class, the super-exploitation of China by world imperialism, made it inevitable that once the workers got into action they should adopt revolutionary politics. From the very beginning the Chinese workers were affected, not by reformist socialists, but by revolutionary communists. This tendency was greatly strengthened after the 1917 Russian Revolution.

The vast population of over four hundred million in China, however, was composed not of modern factory workers and artisans who could be allied to them, but of peasants. 85 per cent of the population was agrarian, of which the overwhelming number was desperately poor, loaded to the breaking point by the exactions of the military governors, the rents of the landlords, and the interest payments to the usurers. Sometimes the peasant had to hand over one-half of his produce in rent. "The poverty of the Chinese peasant is not a comparative term, but is a condition where in some provinces one uses all his efforts to produce something that is not sufficient to support the mere existence of life." [2]

[1] See "Theses of Zinoviev" given as an appendix in L. D. Trotsky: *Problems of the Chinese Revolution*, p. 322.

[2] T. C. Wu: work cited, p. 185.

The distribution of land in the countryside was stated to be as follows: "63 per cent of the peasantry consists of poor peasants who do not possess more than two hectares of land and are exploited and enslaved by the large landowners and the kulaks. This 63 per cent of poor peasants possesses only one-fourth of all the cultivated land. 5 per cent of the rich kulaks and large landowners has 30 per cent of the total cultivated land; 10 per cent owns 20 per cent of the landed property; the middle-peasants—20 per cent of the total—have 26 per cent of the cultivated land in their hands." [1]

As in India, so far more in China the rise of capitalism in the country induced large numbers of students and industrialists, as well as the smaller capitalist elements, to struggle against the burdens of imperialism to which had been added the shame and ignominy of the destruction of national unity. In India there was a powerful central government; in China there had existed a decrepit monarchy which had given way to the futile rule of the Mandarins and their generals. It would be relatively easy to reform the régime were the imperialists to keep their hands off; therefore the struggle of these elements for their development had to lead to sharp anti-imperialist clashes. Only the wealthy sections of the Chinese, who were government functionaries or who were engaged as part of the *comporadore* class of traders and agents of foreign capital in China, were on the side of the imperialists. The rest found it easy to join the forces of revolution. This became all the more true in proportion as the people became unanimous in the need for a new régime. The nascent capitalist class of China and its theoreticians had no fear of the lower orders, since the wealthy never had experienced such revolts and could not properly estimate the effect of modern capitalism upon the toiling population, especially the proletariat.

In the midst of these processes there burst with full force upon all Asia the proletarian revolution in Russia and the victory of the Bolsheviks. Dr. Sun Yat-sen immediately sent a congratulatory telegram to Lenin and, as the revolution proceeded in Russia he could not help but contrast it with his attempts in China. He recognized that the Chinese party had not based itself enough upon the people; it had relied upon mercenary armies instead of building up its own; the whole technique would have to be reorganized. Dr. Sun began to visualize as the most powerful force in the regeneration of China no longer the old student groups and overseas merchants, but the mass of people whose problems had to be satisfied. He began to develop more clearly his formulation of the basic three principles of the Kuomintang, namely, nationalism, democracy, and security of livelihood for the people, including State capitalism.

[1] Theses of Zinoviev, work cited, pp. 323-324.

It was now the turn of the Bolsheviks to show their hand. In July, 1919, the Soviet Government issued a "manifesto to the Chinese people" in which it offered to return all territory wrongfully taken from China by the Russian Imperial Government, to restore to China the control of the Chinese Eastern Railway, to renounce its claims to any share in the Boxer indemnity, to give up the rights of extra-territoriality enjoyed by Russians on Chinese soil, and to abandon all other special privileges inconsistent with the equality of nations.

In 1921, a revolution occurring in Outer Mongolia resulted in the formation of a Soviet Republic, which, however, was not affiliated directly to the Soviet Union but remained merely on a fraternal basis. This was a sign that Russia did not want to swallow the countries of Asia, but sincerely desired to make them friends. In 1922, Joffe was sent as the Russian representative to China; there he met Dr. Sun and, after a conference, both issued a joint statement of accord. "This statement affirmed in the first place that Dr. Sun believed that neither communism nor the soviet political system could be successfully introduced into China, because in his opinion the conditions for their successful establishment did not exist in China. In this belief Joffe concurred, declaring that China's first task was to establish its national independence." [1]

Here, evidently, was the basis for an alliance between the Russian Bolsheviks and the Chinese social-revolutionaries and liberals. From the point of view of Russian nationalism, it was necessary to have both a strong and a friendly China; from the point of view of the international revolution, the Second Congress had already declared that the colonial world was ready for revolution, that the theory of permanent revolution could be applied, and the colonies, with the aid of the world proletariat, could form their soviets and move directly to socialism. Neither Lenin nor Sun Yat-sen were fooled by their mutual alliance; each understood the other, each hoped to use the other.

Although he met considerable resistance in his Russian policy and in his new attitude toward the communists and toward labor, Sun Yat-sen, in the historic Congress of the party in 1924, where the party was finally re-organized and renamed the Kuomintang of China, was able to win his point of view. To aid him there was the fact, first, that Russia of all the countries, voluntarily had made enormous concessions to Chinese nationalism and equality; and second, that imperialism had grown so strong that only a people's movement could overthrow it. To build such a movement, the Chinese could well learn from the Russians. Always Western labor had been sympathetic to the Chinese revolutionary forces, and this was now the time to get in closer touch with it.

[1] A. N. Holcombe: *The Chinese Revolution*, p. 160.

Just as the Russians were willing to use the capitalist for their purposes and even to initiate temporarily a form of State capitalism, making concessions to the enemy in order to learn economically from him, so the Chinese petty bourgeoisie conceived it possible to make concessions to the communists if the latter would teach it the art of revolution, while it remained loyal to the aims of Chinese nationalism. "The Russians have been so successful in their revolutionary methods and tactics that someone has ironically remarked that the Russians are as unequalled in civil warfare as the French are in international warfare. The Russian leaders are experts in revolution, so to speak. They are the masters of the revolutionary art. They put their experience at the disposal of the Kuomintang. They did everything they could to help the Kuomintang to improve revolutionary methods."[1]

To replace Joffe in 1923 there arrived Karakhan, who sent Borodin to Canton to help work with Sun Yat-sen.[2] Borodin immediately undertook to reconstruct the Kuomintang on a disciplined basis in order to make it an efficient instrument for carrying on a struggle. In fact, he operated as though he did not understand the difference between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party. Having learned all the tricks possible from Borodin, the Nationalists were to use them later in killing the communists and in chasing Borodin out of the country.

Borodin insisted "that there be a definite body of party principles, unity of party organization, and strict party discipline." Locals of the party were organized and put on a sound footing for action for the first time. "At the same time a political training institute was established in which party organizers and propagandists could be instructed in the technique of their professions . . . Borodin helped to establish also a military training institute, the Whampoa Academy, where German and Russian officers, and Chinese who had visited Russia, taught the elements of the art of war and reproduced the discipline of the Red Army."[3]

It was under Borodin's influence that the party was called together in 1924 and entirely re-organized. Here it was resolved that a definite platform and constitution be given to the new Kuomintang, and here were elaborated the three principles of Sun Yat-sen. Thanks to the influence of the Russian Revolution, the Chinese nationalist movement received an immense impetus. It was at this conference, too, that it was decided to take communists into the party. This leads us to consider the important

[1] T. C. Wu: work cited, p. 134.

[2] Borodin, it seems, was born with the name Grusenberg which he changed to Berg when he was operating a business school in Chicago. It became Borodin later. Before serving in China he had been sent on missions to Mexico and Turkey and witnessed the nationalist revolutionary movements there.

[3] A. N. Holcombe: *The Chinese Revolution*, p. 163.

question concerning the relation of the labor and communist movement to the Kuomintang.

2

In the world revolutionary wave following the War the Chinese labor movement got off to a firm start. In 1920 there were some strikes on the railways, but it was only in 1922 that the First National Labor Conference met in Canton. Some two hundred unions from twelve cities and representing a membership on paper of from three to four hundred thousand workers came together and bound themselves into a federation. Among them communists were active, the Communist Party really dating from the railway strike in 1920. Following the conference, the railway workers attempted organization in North China. A strike broke out on the Peking-Hankow line and was suppressed with great brutality, many of the leaders being executed. A strike of seamen at Hongkong was more successful and resulted in the recognition of the Seamen's Union; from this dates a new era in the history of Chinese labor.

The Soviet Union was not unaware of the possibilities of revolution in Asia and formed in Moscow a Communist University for the Toilers of the Orient, in order to train party organizers and propagandists for Asiatic service. In 1925, the growing interest at Moscow in the Chinese Revolution resulted in the organization of a special training school for Chinese revolutionists, the Sun Yat-sen University, with Karl Radek at the head. At its period of greatest prosperity there were nearly one thousand students in attendance.

Before the arrival of Borodin, the Communist Party slowly had been gathering its forces and eking out an independent existence. With the new tendencies manifest in the Communist International, however, Borodin had a free hand to apply his theories that the revolution could come about not through the Communist Party but through the Kuomintang. Borodin accepted seriously the program of the Kuomintang of 1924 that it was going to fight imperialism, militarism, and feudalism, and believed that Sun Yat-sen's three principles could include not only State capitalism but State socialism, on the road to communism. Thus it was his policy that the Communist Party should relinquish its independent existence and become part of the Kuomintang.

Originally, the communists under Lenin had set out to make a united front with Sun Yat-sen, both sides understanding their eventual incompatibility, but both willing temporarily to work together. With the new line extolling workers' and peasants' parties, however, working subserviently with officials of the British General Council, and idealizing the peasantry, the stage was all set for the incorporation of the communists into the

Kuomintang. At the 1924 Kuomintang conference the communists were permitted to join the organization, but only as obedient individuals. "It is true that Dr. Sun consented to admit the communists into the Kuomintang as individuals, but not as a unit. So, speaking of it as the 'alliance of the two parties' is a misinterpretation of the facts by the communists." [1]

Thus we start the strange history of the Chinese upheaval of 1925-27 with the fact that the communists, instead of forming a limited united front with the Chinese nationalists, actually fused with them and became part of them. It might be said that this was the instruction given to the British Communist Party regarding the Labour Party of that country, and that this also should have been the procedure of the communists in regard to the Indian National Congress. Nevertheless, the situations of these two latter countries were entirely different from the Chinese. The resolutions of the Comintern specifically had declared that by all means must the independence of the revolutionary party be preserved. If the communists attempted to join the Labor Party, this was solely because there was no discipline in the Labor Party, no definite program, but rather it was a loose federated mass made up of various tendencies, each allowed to express its own point of view. In regard to the Indian Congress, the same situation prevailed; it was a federated body with its various tendencies allowed full play. But this was not the case with the Kuomintang after 1924, and, strange to say, it was the Communist International representative Borodin himself who insisted that program, discipline, and form be instituted within the old Revolutionary Party of the Nationalists.

The program of the Kuomintang was now very clear. It rejected the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and firmly advocated the national collaboration of all classes for the benefit of the native capitalists. The Right Wing indeed wanted merely to have a political revolution; the Left Wing wished for a social revolution; both desired capitalism in city and country. The Kuomintang leaders proposed State capitalism, not because they were socialistic, but simply because the grand projects which they contemplated for the modernization of the country called for such an outlay of capital as could be raised or controlled only by the State. As the Nationalists began to understand the vastness of their aims and the difficulty of accomplishing them, the officials realized that they needed the support of the workers and peasants; thus, after 1924, the Kuomintang did not prevent the organization of trade unions or peasant unions, and, as a matter of fact, later, frequently it was the workers that helped the Kuomintang to survive, calling strikes to prevent its enemies from prevailing, demoralizing the

[1] Chen Tsung-hsi, Wang An-tsiang and Want I-ting: *General Chiang Kai-shek, Builder of New China*, pp. 96-97.

hostile forces with propaganda, and, in similar ways, building up the power of the Kuomintang.

The rising Chinese labor movement was all the more ready to do this work, since now the communists were inside the Kuomintang and were idealizing that organization, making it almost communist in character. The Kuomintang therefore gained greatly from posing as a semi-communist organization, utilizing to the full the heroism and devotion of the communists. The Kuomintang was officially recognized as a party sympathetic to the Communist International; its delegates sat at the Seventh Plenary Session of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, in the autumn of 1926. Thus, in spite of all the theses of Leninism, in spite of all the lessons of the many revolutions since 1917, the Communist Party fused with the party of opportunists controlled by capitalists and militarists. The only one on the Political Committee of the Bolsheviks to vote, as far back as 1923, against the communists' joining was Leon Trotsky.

However, this was not the first time that the national movement in colonies had made use of communists. "The national movement in Turkey, led by Kemal Pasha, for a long time had an indubitably revolutionary character, and thoroughly deserved to be called a national revolutionary movement. It was directed against the old feudal régime in the country, against the Sultanate, as well as against imperialism, primarily against British imperialism. This movement swept along with it a tremendous mass of the peasants and to a certain degree, the Turkish working class. The Kemalist Party *of that time* resembled *to a certain extent,* the Kuo Min Tang of today. (But it must not be forgotten for a single moment that the working class in Turkey was, of course, far weaker than in China.) The Kemalist Party had its 'council of People's Commissars,' it stressed its solidarity with Soviet Russia, etc., etc. In a telegram from Kemal Pasha to Chicherin, dated November 29, 1920, it says literally: 'I am deeply convinced that on the day that the toilers of the West, on the one side, and the oppressed peoples of Asia and Africa, on the other, will understand that international capital uses them for mutual destruction and enslavement, solely for the benefit of their masters, on the day when the consciousness of the crimes of colonial policy will imbue the hearts of the toiling masses of the world—*then the power of the bourgeoisie will be at an end!*' This did not prevent the same Kemal from cutting the throats of the communist leaders some time later, from driving the labor movement into illegality, from reducing agrarian reform to a minimum, and, in his domestic policy, from following a road to the bourgeoisie and the rich peasants." [1]

For this reason Lenin and the Second Congress had pointed out that

[1] Theses of Zinoviev, work cited, pp. 316-317.

the communists could not support every bourgeois democratic movement in colonial countries, since some were revolutionary and some were not. It was permissible to work with the national liberation colonial movement only where it allowed communists to educate and to organize the masses of the exploited in a revolutionary sense. This is precisely what the Komintang refused to permit the communists to do.

However, definite relations between the Kuomintang and the communists were by no means settled, and the correctness of joining the Kuomintang was still being debated when a sudden explosion shook the country. In Shanghai there occurred a textile strike which ended in a massacre of the workers by foreign troops led by the British. This was followed by another massacre of Chinese at Canton, also by the English. Tremendous resentment burst forth at once throughout the country. The so-called central government was paralyzed by a new outbreak of fighting among the northern militarists. At the same time, the bourgeoisie was discontented with the way the Washington Conference in 1922 had handled the question of extra territoriality and special privileges to imperialism, and with its refusal of any satisfaction to China Thus to the strikes of the workers was added the political determination of the nationalists to strike hard for the unification of China and for the accomplishment of the aims of the Kuomintang.

In Canton, the Kuomintang, having re-organized its party, immediately began the reconstitution of the army and, instead of using mercenary troops, opened up the Whampoa Academy for the training of officers under Russian influence At the head of the Academy was Chiang Kai shek who had played a subordinate rôle so long as Dr. Sun Yat-sen was alive, but who, at the death in the early part of 1925 of the founder of the movement, stepped forth as the leader of the militarist wing of the party. The significance of the change to Chiang Kai shek was not clear in the beginning, since at the time he favored the continuation of Dr Sun's policy towards the communists, his rôle became increasingly clear as the movement developed

In the course of the Leftward swing of the Kuomintang, and the development of its new "Model Army," there occurred in Canton several attempts to re-install the old reactionary régime The Canton bourgeoisie through its organization, the Paper Tigers, staged an attempt to overthrow the Kuomintang police and to establish its own The workers responded to the battle immediately and, with their aid, Chiang Kai-shek was able to defeat these elements. Similarly, when mercenary soldiers attempted to challenge the rule of the Kuomintang in Canton, again the people moved to isolate the reaction and again the new "Model Army" was overwhelm-

ingly victorious. While careful to gather for himself all the prestige possible from these victories, Chiang Kai-shek was made to feel the necessity of the people's movement aiding his small military forces before he could take Shanghai and Pekin. For this he needed the aid of the communists.

Within the Kuomintang, although the mass of members incorporated were, in the main, elements who could be won by the communists, it was the Right Wing allied with the military generals who were in control of the Party. This Right Wing laid down the rules for the government of the region over which it controlled. Although Dr. Sun Yat-sen also had worked out a provisional constitution calling for a constitutional democracy, the Right Wing decided there would be no democratic rule, but a Party dictatorship. On the surface, it might seem as though this new situation resembled the one in Russia, but there was this mighty difference: in China there existed at this time no soviets. The Kuomintang had locals which theoretically controlled the executive, and the theme of the party leaders was that the party dictatorship was infinitely better than military dictatorship. Indeed, they repeated that this political dictatorship was quite in line with the basic principles of Sun Yat-sen, since he himself had worked out three stages of rule, military rule until the enemy was crushed, political tutelage of the party until the masses were ready for democracy, and then full democracy. None the less, the fact remained that the locals met very seldom, had no control over the executive, and that the executive itself was in the hands of the military.

Thus if any distinction could be drawn between the budding militarists of the South and the hardened reactionary elements of the North it was that the Southern nascent military leaders were more flexible, were learning from history, were using the communists and the people for their own benefit, and understood that their military dictatorship was far more secure when buttressed by a Party. The Southern militarists were alert enough to try to represent a class as a whole, the Chinese bourgeoisie; they understood the need of collective effort and national control as superior to individual rule.

In any case, the communists who joined the Kuomintang were now compromised by a system of government set up by that party which, far from favoring soviets, was opposed even to ordinary democracy. "Such a political system clearly had nothing to do with democracy. No such claim was made for it by the Nationalist leaders." [1] And it was this party that was allowed a delegate to the sessions of the Executive Committee of the Comintern!

The British outrages had occasioned a mighty mass movement that was to prove irresistible. A four months' strike was waged in Shanghai and,

[1] A. N. Holcombe: work cited, p. 184.

in Canton, a boycott of British goods was begun which for a year and a half completely paralyzed the port of Hongkong. The cry went up for the termination of foreign imperialism in China and the downfall of the militarists who were its agents. But behind these slogans went other demands of the people, of the peasants, and of the workmen for their own interests. On all sides unions of laborers and peasant unions began to be formed. A large number began to join the Kuomintang. What is more significant, they joined the communist wing, causing one of the leaders of the Kuomintang to write: "The rise of any political party in history cannot be compared with the rapid rise of the Chinese Communist Party. The rapidity with which it developed was unparalleled. Of course, the Kuomintang has contributed to its growth by working hand in hand with it for several years, but that is not the main reason for its growth. The main reason for its growth must be looked for in the political and economic conditions of the country." [1]

"It is interesting to note the type of men and women that were drawn into the Chinese Communist Party. At first, only students came in, led by some intellectuals. . . . Later in the stages of the development, workmen began to come in. . . . Peasants also joined but in very small numbers. The main strength of the Chinese Communist Party consists of students, who are its leaders, and the workmen who are the rank-and-file of the party and who also furnished a number of leaders. . . . One may safely say that all the great labour strikes in Shanghai and elsewhere are directed in one way or another by this party, for it is the party of labour." [2] Soon the Communist Party had a membership of fifty thousand, with thirty thousand in the Young Communist League, out of the total of three hundred thousand in the entire Kuomintang.

If, in the beginning, there had been some confusion whether the communists should form their own independent organization, there could have been no difference of opinion among Leninists by the time the masses were stirring in their own right, when one and one-half million men were organizing in labor unions, and peasants were taking up arms in their own behalf, particularly when the Kuomintang itself was controlled by military generals and was pursuing a scandalous policy.

So long as the disturbances occurred in territories not controlled by the Kuomintang the Right Wing benevolently appraised the outbreaks of the workers and peasants; as soon as the Kuomintang seized control, strikes were ruthlessly put down, workers and peasants were disarmed, and the bourgeoisie was allowed to organize its own armed forces to suppress the

[1] T. C. Wu: work cited, p. 148.
[2] The same, p. 140.

workers. Yet all this time the Communists not only did not break from the Kuomintang militarists, but actually carried out the orders of these men.

In July, 1925, the test between the Right Wing and the Left came in the elections to control the party in Canton. Owing to the great mass movement at the time, the Left won a sweeping victory. At once the Right Wing met separately and put forward the following demands: 1. to expel the Communists; 2. to end the Political Bureau of the Party and to give power to the Military staff; 3. to dismiss Borodin and his Russian military advisers; 4. to move the seat of the Central Executive Committee to Shanghai. Although this group was defeated nationally because of the revolutionary events, the great stride forward of the Nationalists and the need of the militarists for popular support in their contemplated Northern expedition to seize the capital of the country, it had become clearly evident that the two groups were reaching an irreconcilable conflict.

However, in spite of even these provocations, the communists held firm to their policy of remaining inside the Kuomintang. Wang Ching-wei, member of the Left Kuomintang, who wanted both sides to remain temporarily within the Kuomintang, now tried to be peacemaker and urged that disputes concerning the compatibility of the ultimate aims of the nationalists and the communists could safely be postponed until the attainment of their more immediate objects. "Both Communists and nationalists were practical revolutionists, he argued, and could work well together for the equality of China among the nations. That was enough for the time being. And Borodin supported his argument by publicly discountenancing all purely Communistic propaganda." [1] At this juncture there arrived a telegram from Moscow sent by Hu-Han-min, Kuomintang delegate, to the effect that the Third International had agreed that China was not ripe for communism, that the economic and social conditions of the country made a successful revolution of the Russian type impossible. The communists agreed to help the Chinese nationalists on their own terms.[2]

But now the Right Wing was to assert itself more boldly. Chiang Kai-shek, having made himself generalissimo of the nationalist armies, suddenly swept down upon Canton in March, 1926, at the head of his most trusted recruits, shot a number of workers, and arrested several prominent revolutionists whom he charged with communist proclivities and a conspiracy against the nationalist Government. At the same time, he pursued those in the armed forces whom he considered disloyal and completely

[1] A. N. Holcombe: work cited, p. 194.
[2] The same, 195-196.

routed them. Thus, from now on the army was to be solidly in control of the Right Wing and militarists, while Canton suffered a severe setback.

Still no break occurred between the communists and the Right Wing. On the contrary, the Communist International refused to allow any item of the events in Canton to appear in any of its papers, so that none of the parties outside of China knew of the upheaval Furthermore, although by now the character of the armed forces of the Kuomintang was becoming perfectly plain, no effort whatsoever was made to win them over to the side of the communists Before starting on its northern expedition, the Right Wing was ready to drive its victory still farther

A special plenary session of the Central Executive Committee was held in May, 1926, which laid down the following rules concerning the Communist Party 1 They were not to criticize the principles of Sun Yat sen but were to abide by them implicitly 2 The Communist Party must hand over its complete membership list to the Kuomintang (in order that the generals could massacre them later on) 3 Communists could not control more than one third of the higher executive committees 4 They could not serve as heads of departments in the central party organization 5 Without authorization from the party, no member of the Kuomintang could call any meeting in its name to discuss party affairs 6 Without the authorization from the highest body in the party, no member of the Kuomintang was allowed to be a member of any other political organ ization or to engage in any other political activity 7 If the Communist Party wanted to send instructions to its members in the Kuomintang, such instructions first had to be submitted to a joint committee of which the majority was non communist, for approval 8 No member of the Kuomintang could join the Communist Party before tendering his resignation and, once a member had resigned, he could not rejoin the Kuomintang 9 All those who violated the rules were to be punished [1]

Thus the activities of the Communist Party fatally were curtailed Not only were the communists prevented from forming soviets, from advocating the arming of the people and the disarming of the bourgeoisie, not only were they forced to subscribe to all the capitalist principles of Sun Yat senism, but they themselves were destined to be consumed entirely by the Chinese dragons of the military They could not issue any publica tions (they never had an official organ), they could not form a faction to fight against the line of the Kuomintang, they could not criticize the leadership of the Right Wing to any effective degree, they could not work within the nationalist army; in short, all that was permitted them was to become the coolies for the bourgeois nationalists. They were the rear of the united front. It was precisely after these stringent terms had been

[1] See T C Wu work cited, pp 176 177

laid down for the communists that the Communist International hailed the Kuomintang as a friendly and revolutionary party, and seated its delegates in Moscow with consultative voices.

It must not be forgotten for a moment that every important action of the Chinese communists either was ordered by the Communist International itself, now headed by Stalin and Bucharin, or was supervised and approved by them. So inexperienced were the Chinese communists that, with the utmost naïveté, they accepted all advice from the Russians implicitly, and carried out their instructions to the letter. The Chinese Revolution was directed, not by the Chinese, but by the Russian leaders of the Communist International. Inside the leadership of the International a great struggle raged on the Chinese question now, since, besides the Trotsky faction, there had also been formed the Zinoviev faction, which had united with Trotsky on the question of China, to demand the formation of soviets, the arming of the workers, nationalization of landed property and railroads, the eight-hour day for the workers, a whole series of labor laws, the agrarian revolution with all its implications, including the confiscation of wealthy estates and the partition of the land among the poor peasantry, confiscation of Chinese shops and factories, large and medium, leading to the confiscation also of foreign factories or an agreement with some of the foreign owners to buy them out, nationalization of the banks, creation of a regular and genuine Red Army, emancipation of women, abolition of the remnants of feudalism, disarming of the counter-revolutionary forces, abolition of rent payments or immediate drastic reductions, suppression of illegal taxes and collections, the driving out of rural gentry from their strongholds, and the wiping out of the usurious parasites.

These were demands that only soviets could enforce, and the mere raising of these demands would mean eliminating the power of the Right Wing of the Kuomintang and winning the Kuomintang to the side of the communists. It must be borne in mind constantly that in this great revolutionary period in China the masses were organizing in their own right and were taking action themselves. It was their action that was creating the easy victories for the Kuomintang, and not the sham battles of the Chiang Kai-shek forces. Hence, had the communists issued this program they would have increased their power enormously and would have become superior to the entire Kuomintang. The rôles of the two would have been reversed. This is another way of saying that in China there was no class besides the proletariat that could really ally itself with the overwhelming mass of poor peasantry to accomplish the titanic task of ridding China of foreign imperialists and to move to the solution of the great economic problems of that unfortunate country.

The better to stifle the opposition that was growing mightily against the policies of Stalin and Bucharin, the official apparatus decided to call no Congress of the International throughout the entire period of the Chinese Revolution. Under Lenin it had been decided to hold International Congresses every year; under Zinoviev at Lenin's death this had been changed to once every two years at the latest; now four solid years were to go by, from 1924 to 1928, before a Congress would be held, and the next Congress would not be held until seven years later, in 1935. The apparatus had to arrange that there be no discussions, that reports and speeches be suppressed, that a reign of terror be instituted in the Party, and that the leaders of the opposition be arrested, exiled and shot, before a Congress could be considered safe.

3

In their guidance of the Chinese Communists, the Stalin-Bucharin factions in control of the Comintern violated every fundamental principle of Leninism. First, they declared that China was not ready for communism or for soviets, despite the theses of the Second Congress on the colonial question and the history of Russia itself, which had experienced a general capitalist development similar to that of China. Then the Comintern leadership affirmed that, in colonial and semi-colonial countries, the workers could form an alliance with the revolutionary native bourgeois elements fighting imperialism and thus create a bloc of four classes, the workers, the peasants, the lower middle class, and the industrial capitalists, against the *comporadores*, the militarists, the feudalists, and the imperialists. This was the theory of Stalinism.

In vain the Opposition pointed out that always the tactics of the Marxists and Leninists from 1848 on had been to form independent organizations of the working class, even where that class could co-operate with bourgeois revolutionary sections for the moment. It was inevitable that at a certain moment the nationalist capitalists of China would break from the working class and fight the latter, and the workers had to have their own organizations for defense. In vain it was urged that, while the workers could form a close alliance with the peasantry, the communists must try to keep both these classes separated from the bourgeoisie.

Furthermore, what was being created was not a bloc at all. There was no united front of independent organizations for a temporary concrete objective, which is the true meaning of a bloc. On the contrary, "The Chinese Communist Party, in this whole period, had not been *in alliance* with the revolutionary petty bourgeois section of the Kuomintang, but

in subordination to the whole Kuomintang, led in reality by the bourgeoisie which had the army and the power in its hands."[1]

In defense of their position, the Comintern leaders attacked the whole theory of permanent revolution laid down by Marx and so brilliantly followed through by Lenin. They maintained that, since China could have only a bourgeois revolution, it was necessary for the bourgeoisie to take the lead. To maintain otherwise was denounced as Trotskyism and the skipping of necessary stages of social and political development. But it was Lenin's genius to have seen that, because the revolution would start as a bourgeois democratic one, the workers and peasants should keep their forces separate from the bourgeoisie so as to be able to push the revolution forward at the proper time, establish the dictatorship of the workers and poor peasants, and make the revolution permanent.

To gloss their errors, the Russian leadership began to idealize the Right Wing of the Kuomintang and to paint the military generals behind Chiang Kai-shek as revolutionists. Moreover, when reports arrived from China from the leaders of the Communist Party, Chen Du-siu and Tang Ping-shan, to the effect that "We followed a too pacific policy," "We sacrificed the interests of the workers and peasants in practice," these reports were not allowed to be printed, and were not revealed even to the members of the Central Executive, an unprecedented bureaucratic action.

To defend the "bloc," the apparatus had to declare that the generals did not really control the Kuomintang, but were obedient to the Left. Only a short month before the terrible events in Shanghai which we shall describe later, an editorial in the communist *Pravda* denounced the opposition for declaring that the bourgeoisie stood at the head of the Kuomintang and were preparing treason. "Only on April 5, that is, a week before the *coup d'état* of Chiang Kai-shek, Stalin rejected Radek's opinion in a meeting of Moscow functionaries and declared again that Chiang Kai-shek is submitting to discipline, that the admonitions are baseless, that we will use the Chinese bourgeoisie and then toss it away like a squeezed-out lemon."[2] This speech by Stalin was ordered suppressed by the spokesman himself.

The Comintern apparatus defended itself from attacks of the opposition by affirming that Trotsky and the others were too impatient, that they were making mistakes in tempo, that of course the Right Wing would break away and the communists eventually would have to fight the Kuomintang, but this was neither the time nor the occasion. They suppressed the reports that showed that the Communist Party was limping far behind the events. They forgot that soviets were to be formed, not

[1] L. D. Trotsky: *Problems of the Chinese Revolution*, p. 41.
[2] The same, p. 91.

suddenly, but at the very beginning of a movement that was developing into revolution.

The official Russian apparatus also undertook to defend the Kuomintang as a sort of unique combination of party and soviet, thereby trying to substantiate the argument that it was unnecessary to build soviets. As a matter of fact, the Kuomintang not only stood against soviets, it had rejected ordinary parliamentary democracy, just as the leaders suppressed all democracy within the party itself. But to compare the Kuomintang with soviets was truly a malicious interpretation of history. In Russia, out of a population of one hundred and sixty-five million, the soviets contained literally tens of millions in their ranks; in China, out of a population of over four hundred million, the Kuomintang had about three hundred thousand members. To maintain that this small Chinese group was equivalent to soviets was to fail completely to understand what are soviets, and what was indeed the rôle of the Kuomintang. However, what was lacking with the Russian leaders was not so much understanding as international class loyalty.

In the meantime, while these debates were being conducted, Chiang Kai-shek began his great Northern expedition. Everywhere the enemy, although far superior in numbers, equipment and training, either fled at the approach of the nationalists, or were demoralized by propaganda of the communists, or paralyzed by vast strikes and guerrilla warfare in their rear and all around them. To facilitate this action of the masses, the Second Congress of the Kuomintang in 1926 had worked out demands of a social reform character for the peasantry and for the workers. This inspired the masses to fight most heroically, so that often the nationalist armies conquered their opponents without a shot, and their expedition took on the appearance of a great parade. However, no sooner were the nationalist generals in control than there began again the shooting of workers, compulsory arbitration, the disarming of the people, and the arming of the industrialists, already noted. The Labor Code was forgotten, the agrarian reforms postponed. None the less the movement grew mightily. The number of organized workers grew to the enormous total of three million. In one province alone, Honan, it was recorded that thirty million peasants had joined the peasants' union. The generals, having used the masses as long as they could, determined to settle accounts as soon as possible.

This reckoning was made all the more imperative by the fact that now the nationalists had reached the Yang-tze valley and had taken the key cities of Hankow and Wuchang, which contained a proletariat second only to Shanghai and more important than that of Canton. These workers had

joined the Left Wing and the communist forces, and now it seemed that the masses were getting out of control. The national leadership of the Kuomintang was now in the hands of the Left nationalists headed by such as Wang-Ching-wei, Sun-fo, Madame Sun Yat-sen, T. C. Wu, and others who wanted to retain the collaboration of the communists. The Communist Party ardently believed that the Kuomintang could be won over as a body for communism. "At no time had the relations between the Nationalist and Communist Parties seemed more intimate and cordial than in the early spring of 1927." [1] Two communists became Ministers in the new Nationalist Government which had its seat at Hankow.

At the Communist Party conference held in Hankow at the time, the Left Kuomintang leaders like Wang-Ching-wei were invited, and the Party tried its best to identify its program with that of these Lefts. At the conference the Comintern representative, Roy, of Indian fame, declared: "The Communist Party is going to work with the Kuomintang, not only to share responsibility, but also to share power. In this stage of the revolution, therefore, it is very necessary that our conceptions of the revolution be made mutually clear. The task which the Communist International has put before the Communist Party of China is not the struggle for the immediate realization of socialism. . . . The Kuomintang is a revolutionary organization . . . because it struggles against imperialism." [2]

The generals, however, had different plans. In the course of their triumphant march northward they had incorporated into their ranks large numbers of soldiery and officers of their former mercenary enemies. Thus the Right Wing had swelled considerably with careerist and reactionary elements. It had been decided by the Kuomintang that the army should take Pekin and should establish a national government. The army generals, however, decided to violate these decisions and to march on Shanghai instead. On the surface it looked as though Chiang Kai-shek was going to attack the heart of imperialism and make open war against it; in reality, the militarists were marching to unite with imperialism in order to shoot down the people. This could be seen by their demand that the party move its headquarters from the Wu-Han district, with its center at Hankow, and transfer it to Nanking, which the army controlled. As the Left Wing refused to comply, the generals now acted entirely upon their own initiative. Thus the communists both at Wu-Han and at Shanghai had ample notice that the militarists intended to break. Still nothing was done to warn the people; while the militarists were preparing to strike, the Left Kuomintang leaders were parleying with the communists and politically disarming them before the slaughter.

[1] A. N. Holcombe: work cited, p. 210.
[2] Speech quoted in A. N. Holcombe: work cited, p. 210.

The march on Shanghai was met with tremendous enthusiasm of the masses who believed that the real struggle against imperialism would begin now, with the defeat of the northern military puppets. Long before the army could reach Shanghai, a huge general strike broke out which took control of the city; for twenty-one days there ruled the so-called People's Government in which the communists had a majority. At this point we turn for a report of the situation to Chitarov, one of the leading young communists of Russia who had been sent as a representative to China and who reported at the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, December 11, 1927.[1]

Chitarov states: "We can therefore say that for twenty-one days Shanghai had a Communist Government. This Communist Government, however, revealed a complete inactivity in spite of the fact that the overturn by Chiang Kai-shek was expected any day.

"The Communist Government, in the first place, did not begin to work for a long time under the excuse that, on the one hand, the bourgeois part of the government did not want to get to work, sabotaging it, and, on the other hand, because the Wuhan government did not approve of the composition of the Shanghai government. Of the activity of this government three decrees are known and one of them, by the way, speaks of the preparation of a triumphal reception to Chiang Kai-shek, who was expected to arrive in Shanghai.

"In Shanghai, at this time, the relations between the army and the workers became acute. It is known for instance that the army[2] deliberately drove the workers into slaughter. The army for a period of several days stood at the gates of Shanghai and did not want to enter the city because they knew that the workers were battling against the Shantungese and they wanted the workers to be bled in this struggle. They expected to enter later. Afterward the army did enter Shanghai. But among these troops there was one division that sympathized with the workers—the First Division of the Canton army. The commander, Say-O, was in disfavor with Chiang Kai-shek, who knew about his sympathies for the mass movement, because this Say-O himself came from the ranks. He was at first the commander of a company and later commanded a division.

"Say-O came to the comrades in Shanghai and told them that there was a military overthrow in preparation, that Chiang Kai-shek had summoned him to headquarters, had given him an unusually cold reception and that he, Say-O, would not go there any longer because he fears a trap. Chiang Kai-shek proposed to Say-O to get out of the city with his division and to go to the front; and he, Say-O proposed to the Central Committee

[1] This report is given in L. D. Trotsky: work cited, pp. 274-276.

[2] Chitarov here means Chiang Kai-shek's officers.

of the Communist Party to agree that he should not submit to Chiang Kai-shek's order. He was ready to remain in Shanghai and fight together with the Shanghai workers against the military overthrow that was in preparation. To all this, our responsible leaders of the Chinese Communist Party, Tchen Du-siu included, declared that they know about the overturn being prepared, but that they do not want a premature conflict with Chiang Kai-shek. The First Division was let out of Shanghai, the city was occupied by the Second Division of Bai-Sung Gee and, two days later, the Shanghai workers were massacred."

The reply of the official apparatus to this most damning report from one of its own members was to order the narrative deleted from the minutes! For even now the official policy was to remain with the Kuomintang; even now no soviets were to be organized; even now the way was prepared for a repetition in Wu-Han of what had happened in Shanghai. The murder of thousands of workers took place in April; in May, Stalin was declaring, when it was as yet by no means too late to remedy matters, that to enter into struggle would mean victory to the enemy. To give up a revolutionary situation without even a fight, a characteristic of Stalin's policy first dramatized in Shanghai, was to find a gigantic elaboration later in Germany in 1933.

At this time, Trotsky, still permitted to speak, summed up matters as follows: "We continued to maintain the bloc with the bourgeoisie at a time when the working masses were driving towards independent struggle. We attempted to utilize the experience of the 'Rights' and became playthings in their hands. We carried on an ostrich policy in the press, by suppressing and concealing from our own party the first *coup d'état* by Chiang Kai-shek in March, 1926, the shooting of workers and peasants, and in general all the facts that marked the counter-revolutionary character of the Kuomintang leadership. We neglected to look after the independence of our own party. We founded no newspaper for it. 'We sacrificed the interests of the workers and the peasants in practise' (Tang Ping-shan). We did not take a single serious step to win over the soldiers. We allowed the Chiang Kai-shek band to establish a 'military dictatorship of the Center,' that is, a dictatorship of the bourgeois counter-revolution. On the very eve of the *coup d'état* we blew the trumpets for Chiang Kai-shek. We declared that he had 'submitted to discipline,' and that we had succeeded 'by a skilful tactical maneuver, in forestalling an abrupt turn to the Right that threatened the Chinese revolution.' (Raskolnikov's foreword to the pamphlet by Tang Ping-shan.) We remained behind the events all along the line." [1]

[1] L. D. Trotsky: work cited, pp. 45-46.

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The victory of the Right Wing in Shanghai, however, compelled the communist leadership somewhat to change their line. Even the Central Committee of the Kuomintang, controlled by the Wang Ching-wei's, had issued a tearful apology to the workers and had declared "It only remains for us to regret that we did not act when there was still time." The Political Bureau called together the Eighth Plenary Session of the Comintern, in May, 1927, to consider the situation.[1] Although the Political Bureau had not even read the Theses of Stalin, these Theses were advanced in its name for discussion. Only now did Stalin issue the statement that the policy of isolating the Right should be replaced by a policy of struggle. Only now did Stalin advocate the arming of the workers and the peasants, although he still maintained that it was wrong to attempt the formation of soviets. How it was possible simultaneously to arm the people and yet prevent soviets the Russian revolutionists, least of all, would be able to tell. At this Plenary Session, Stalin again defended the bloc for four classes and forbade the communists to split from the Left Kuomintang.

But now the policy of the International leadership was meeting with stern resistance from important sections of the Chinese communists themselves. The workers were beginning to take matters into their own hands. At Wu-Han they inflicted decisive defeats to the militarists. At that time "In every action of any importance, nearly two-thirds of those who participated were killed. The severity of the campaign, and the heroism displayed by the troops will always be remembered in the history of the Party."[2] The masses broke through the foreign concession granted to England and took possession of it in spite of the fact that the navies of the imperialist powers of the entire world had gathered in the waters of the Yang-tze, ready to unite against the revolution. Eventually England had to relinquish this concession, the first important direct Chinese victory against world imperialism.

After the coup of Chiang Kai-shek at Shanghai there had been objectively established a sort of dual power, the Left being gathered in Wu-Han. Now it would seem certain the Russian experiences would be evaluated and the independence of the Communist Party secured so that it could organize soviets and arm the masses. Yet precisely the same policy was carried out in Wu-Han with Wang-Ching-wei and the generals Tang-San-chi and Feng that was carried out with the Right Wing and Chiang Kai-shek! The Comintern repeated "We will not give up the Kuomintang

[1] The whole plenary session was censored and very little of the reports got out to the communist membership.

[2] T. C. Wu: work cited, p. 233.

banner." The Central Committee of the Communist Party ordered the workers to render increasing obedience to the Kuomintang and insisted that the trade unions arrest no one, not even counter-revolutionaries, but must always apply to the authorities when they consider an arrest necessary. According to the Communist Party, the Left Kuomintang represented not a Kerensky régime which had to be overthrown, but a democratic-dictatorship of the workers and peasants growing into socialism!

Instead of immediately breaking with the bourgeoisie in the Kuomintang, the communist officialdom ordered the building up of the Kuomintang; instead of forming soviets when there was still time, Stalin declared "It is clear that whoever calls at present for the immediate creation of soviets of workers' deputies in this Wu-Han district, is attempting to jump over the Kuomintang phase of the Chinese revolution and he risks putting the Chinese revolution in a most difficult position." [1] Instead of taking the offensive against the Right Wing, the communists ordered a retreat which included the subordination of all the trade unions, the peasant unions and other revolutionary organizations to the Kuomintang, the rejection of independent action on the part of the toilers, the voluntary disarming of the workers, and the crushing of the people.

In his report, Chitarov described the behavior of the communists in Wu-Han. "You know that there were two Communist ministers in the Government. Afterwards, they stopped coming around to the ministries altogether, failed to appear themselves, and put in their places a hundred functionaries. During the activity of these ministers, not a single law was promulgated which would ease the position of the workers and peasants. This reprehensible activity was wound up with a still more reprehensible, shameful end. These ministers declared that one of them is ill and the other wishes to go abroad, etc., and therefore asked to be released. They did not resign with a political declaration in which they would have declared: 'You are counter-revolutionists, you are traitors, you are betrayers —we will no longer go along with you.' No. They declared that one is allegedly ill. In addition, *Tang Ping Shan* wrote that *he cannot cope with the magnitude of the peasant movement,* therefore he asked that his release be granted. Can a greater disgrace be imagined? A Communist minister declares that he cannot cope with the peasant movement. Then who can? It is clear, the military, and nobody else. This was an open legalization of the rigorous suppression of the peasant movement, undertaken by the Wuhan government." [2]

This part of the report also was suppressed, for it was clear that the communist ministers only were following the line of the top leadership

[1] L. D. Trotsky: work cited, quoting from Stalin's speech delivered May 24, 1927, p. 284.
[2] L. D. Trotsky: work cited, pp. 286-287.

to curb the peasant movement and prevent soviets from being formed. Even Chitarov was bound to report that the local communists were not at fault. "To my deep conviction (I have seen many sections of the Comintern), there isn't another such section so devoted to the cause of Communism, so courageous in its fight for our cause as are the Chinese Communists." [1]

The criminal policy carried out in Wu Han now brought its retribution. The generals Tang and Feng also moved against the communists, and the Left Kuomintang element now deserted the proletarians. Chitarov reported the overturn in Wu-Han which took place May 21-22, 1927: "The overturn took place under simply unbelievable circumstances. In Changsha the army consisted of one thousand seven hundred soldiers, and the peasants made up a majority of the armed detachments gathered around Changsha to the number of twenty thousand. In spite of this, the military command succeeded in seizing power, in shooting all the active peasants, in dispersing all revolutionary organizations, and in establishing its dictatorship only because of the cowardly, irresolute, conciliatory policy of the leaders in Changsha and Wuhan. When the peasants learned of the overturn in Changsha, they began to prepare themselves, to gather around Changsha in order to undertake a march on it This march was set for May 21 The peasants started to draw up their detachments in increasing numbers toward Changsha. It was clear that they would seize the city without great effort But at this point *a letter arrived from the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in which Tchen Du-Siu wrote that they should presumably avoid an open conflict and transfer the question to Wuhan*. On the basis of this letter, the District Committee dispatched to the peasant detachments an order to retreat, not to advance any further; but this order failed to reach two detachments. Two peasant detachments advanced on Wuhan and were annihilated by the soldiers." [2]

Although tens of thousands had been sacrificed in Shanghai and more tens of thousands at Wu-Han, there was still the third great city to be heard from, Canton, where the communists and workers had not yet been defeated and executed. In a short time, however, the Stalinist leadership was to correct this defect also and to provide a third blood bath for the workers The terrible drama of the Chinese Revolution had yet one more chapter to unfold.

The workers by now had been severely defeated in the North. The whole movement should have been reorganized, the Party prepared for

[1] Given in L D Trotsky work cited, p 291
[2] Given in L D Trotsky work cited, pp. 289 290

the new events. In a period of retreat the slogan raised should have been one demanding a Constituent Assembly and the application of social reforms; on that basis, soviets could be organized at the proper time. It was necessary to entrench, to redress the ranks, to work among the soldiery, and to prepare for the future events

The contrary was done. Suddenly, in August, 1927, a special conference of the Chinese Communist Party was called which denounced the old leadership which had all too faithfully followed the line of the Comintern. Preparations for an immediate insurrection were ordered. Thus soviets, which had not been organized when the revolutionary wave was moving forward, were decreed in a period of retreat and depression. The communist leadership refused to acknowledge that the period was one of retreat; they refused to consider the consequences of the fact that all this time they had done no work whatever within the armies of the Kuomintang but, on the contrary, had hailed them as revolutionary and had forbade their own members under any circumstances to disorganize the armed ranks.

Having ordered soviets, the Communists now burst forth with a totally unprepared insurrection in Canton in December, 1927. Suddenly it was announced that soviets had taken over the city, but these soviets were organized so hastily that nobody knew anything about them. Soviets usually have been spontaneously organized bodies springing from the depths of the people and having around them the vast majority of toilers whose expression they are. The soviets in Canton, however, were not even elected bodies Soviets not elected! Was any worse parody of Soviets ever perpetrated? The soviets were communist-appointed bodies totally divorced from the people and formed artificially when the revolution already decisively was defeated The net result was a new massacre of the people in Canton that definitely crushed the last remnants of the revolution

But even then the Communist International would not admit the facts As late as February, 1928, Pravda wrote: "The Chinese Communist Party is heading towards an armed insurrection. The whole situation in China speaks for the fact that this is the correct course"[1] Although the best revolutionists had been slaughtered by the tens of thousands, the official apparatus, attempting to conceal their crimes, still was declaring that the attack would be pursued, that the revolution was in progress. At last the Chinese representatives had to inform the center in Moscow that the Canton defeat had marked the end of the first stage of the Chinese Revolution, and that a definite depression was occurring in the labor movement. As the report of the international delegates to China declared. "The responsi-

[1] See L D Trotsky work cited, p 294

bility for all this lies equally with the Right wing of the leadership and the representative of the E.C.C I. (Executive Committee, Comintern)."[1]

In the Chinese Revolution of 1925-1927, the Russian Bolshevik Party played a rôle scandalously worse than that of the Mensheviks in the Russian Revolution of 1905. The Mensheviks at least never had opposed the strikes of the workmen They never had resisted the formation of soviets, nor of revolutionary parties independent of and critical of the capitalist class. They never had decided not to build up their own press. They never had declared that the workers could take power through any party other than the Marxist Party Through this comparison we can guage to what depths the degeneration of the Communist International had sunk.[2]

It is impossible to believe that the leaders of the Comintern were ignorant of the lessons of the Russian Revolution or of the teachings of Marxism We can explain the policies of these functionaries only as a result of a deliberate conscious policy That policy was expressed in the formula "Socialism in One Country." The capitulation to Chinese nationalism could be made only because, under the pressure of international capitalism, the Russian leaders already had permitted full play to Russian nationalism and had abandoned the world revolution

Nationalism and internationalism dialectically were interwoven in the Chinese revolution The fact that nationalism had conquered the Russian Party meant that the great resources of the soviets were used not for the furthering of the world revolution but for distinctly nationalist purposes The victory of the toilers in China was bound to lead directly and immediately to united armed intervention on the part of all of the imperialist powers whose vast naval might constantly was displayed in the Chinese ports and on the rivers This would have led to a new war in which the soviet would have been involved But the theory of the Stalinists required that they be let alone to build socialism in one country Their motto could be expressed "We have made our revolution, let the others worry about making theirs"

If the Stalinists had refused to interfere in China and had confined their efforts to Russian nationalism, resulting events might not have been so disastrous But the Russians controlled the whole Communist International and instructed the Communist Parties all over the world. The theory of Socialism in One Country had to be adopted not only by the Russians but also by communists everywhere Thus the nationalism of Stalin was inflated into an international policy and directly and fatally affected the Chinese revolution As we have seen, it was the Russians who directed from

[1] Report of Nassonov, Fokine and Albrecht given in L D Trotsky work cited, p 430
[2] Compare A Weisbord *For a New Communist International!* pamphlet, p 8

first to last every important measure of the Chinese communists and led them to a terrible defeat.

In this way the communists used the glorious prestige of the Russian Revolution to destroy the Chinese Revolution; they utilized the soviets of Russia to prevent the formation of the soviets in China; they employed the victories of the Russian Red Army to stop the formation of the Chinese Red Army; the Comintern did its best to stifle the creation of a genuine Communist Party of China. Hence the Communist Party leaders became veritable lackeys of the Chinese reactionaries and of the foreign imperialists. The fact is, the unification and emancipation of China was too big a task for the Chinese workers alone to carry out; they needed international aid. But the only international aid forthcoming was such as to destroy their revolution.

From now on it should have become increasingly evident that the Communist International as a revolutionary force was absolutely worthless. But there was a decided lag between the facts of the case and the consciousness, appreciation, and widespread dissemination of these facts. As we have seen, the reports systematically were suppressed by the Stalinist machine. Immediately after the Chinese Revolution was terminated, the Russian oppositionists in possession of the facts were exiled and severely persecuted. Only years later were the facts published. This was the manner by which communist officialdom tried to postpone the inevitable reckoning of history. Thanks to its method of suppression and its crushing of the opposition, the Comintern would be exposed only much later, by the events of Germany in 1933. Then the crisis which had affected the Chinese communist movement would become universal. A call for a Fourth International would be made and it would be seen that China had been only a colonial dress rehearsal for the crimes in Germany leading to the victory of fascism in the most important industrial country of Europe.

The Chinese Revolution had been beheaded, but the virility of that body of people was too great for the huge torso of the Chinese toilers not to begin to produce new heads. Although in the cities the workers took to strike movements of an economic nature and the Communist Party rapidly disintegrated, the new Nationalist Government of Chiang Kai-shek was too weak to control the entire country. In the North, the military chieftains began a new struggle for power, each one supported by some particular foreign imperialism. The imperialists refused to give up any of the concessions and special privileges they had wrested from China. The Kuomintang rapidly shriveled to a mere apparatus and an army, just another group of military bandits.

Deep in the interior of China, a new peasant movement developed, led

by the Chinese Communist Party. This movement showed that by no means was the revolution over, but rather that there existed simply a lull preceding a new revolutionary wave to rise when the Chinese proletariat should have recovered from its terrible loss of life. To the surprise of the imperialists, this peasant movement, instead of diminishing steadily, began to grow until peasant soviets covered a vast territory and controlled seventy-five million people. A number of campaigns of Chiang Kai-shek came to nothing; in four months of one year it was reported that the soviet armies had captured nearly one hundred and fifty thousand rifles, fourteen hundred heavy and light machine guns, one hundred heavy and light cannon, six airplanes, twenty radio sets, and other material, and that the force now numbered three hundred fifty thousand effectives.[1]

Here was a cancer eating the very heart of the Chinese militarists. The people now were acting in their own behalf. The old pacifist precepts of Confucius which had derided the soldier were giving way to entirely new ideals. Under the soviets it is true there was no Socialism, no confiscation of the means of production, no abolition of capitalism. On the contrary, a sort of Jacobin equalitarianism was the most extreme tendency that could be said to prevail. A land law was carried out which helped the mass of poor peasants; a labor code was adopted to carry out social reform; the army, workers and the poor agrarians were exempted from taxation. There was no nationalization of industries, but there existed some form of workers' control over production, and the confiscation of all property of those capitalists who practiced sabotage.

The Communist International leadership was not content, however, with stating the facts and preparing for new uprisings later on. They had to affirm that this signified that a new Chinese revolution was in progress, that the army was a real Red Army, and that the soviets were introducing socialism so that, in China, it would not be the proletariat of the big cities that would free the peasantry, but rather the peasantry who would march to the cities, blow down the walls, and free the proletariat. The effect of this policy was to withdraw the attention of the Chinese communists from the city and to throw them into military adventures on the countryside.

Foreign imperialists had recognized clearly the menace of this unceasing civil war. Since the Nationalist Government could not put down the people, it was time for the big powers to act. The only one really free to act was Japan and, soon after the defeat of the attempt of the Northern militarist Chang Tso-lin to seize the Chinese Eastern Railway, Japanese troops marched into the country, seizing the whole northern area. Chiang Kai-shek made no real effort to oppose the Japanese, hoping that they

[1] See *Laws of the Chinese Soviet Republic*, p. 8.

would co-operate with him to destroy the communists within China and their source of inspiration in Russia.

This invasion of North China, Manchuria, and Mongolia by Japan greatly has revived the revolutionary movement in China. The masses understand that the only way to fight Japan is to overthrow the Chiang Kai-shek régime and take over power themselves. This was demonstrated by the heroism of the workers in the Chapei district of Shanghai and the soldiers of the nineteenth Route Army of Canton at Woosung when Japan attacked these regions. Now is the time for the Leninists to combine the struggle against their internal enemies with the struggle to free China from Japanese and other aggression. At this moment the slogan demanding the convocation of a Constituent Assembly to consider the questions of war against Japan and of social reform for the masses can be a fine lever for the creation of soviets and the revival of the whole revolutionary movement on a higher level.

Regardless of the momentary trend of affairs, war against Japan by China is inevitable. Such a war will stir up all of Asia and, if coupled with the defense of Russia against foreign invasion, will be bound to end forever the disastrous theory of Socialism in One Country and lead the revolution to a new world plane.

XLIV. SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

I

THE defeats of the Italian and German proletariats, accentuated by the events in Britain and China, left Soviet Russia isolated. The Communist International under Lenin had hoped that an international revolution would support the proletarian revolution in Russia. The international revolution, however, apparently was not immediate. The Russian working class found itself surrounded externally by a hostile capitalist world with which it had to deal, and internally with a vast peasantry composing the overwhelming majority of the population. The thin red line of Bolsheviks would now have an exceedingly hard time to hold the fort.

The difficulty necessarily was aggravated when the New Economic Policy was introduced. The NEP itself was a sign that a certain retreat was inevitable and that, to survive, the Russians had to make concessions to world capitalism. Under Lenin, the retreat was mainly an economic one. Foreign capital was sought, free trade was established, and domestic capitalism to a considerable extent was revived, but politically the proletariat kept firm control, so that capitalist competition served merely to stimulate the productivity of the country and to consolidate the hold of the working class dictatorship.

But eventually politics follows economics; the economic retreat under Lenin was to become a political retreat under Stalin. The NEP had accelerated production greatly, it was true, but it also greatly had increased the importance of the capitalist elements of economy. These capitalists could not overthrow the proletarian régime directly, but they could transform its apparatus and undermine the workers' rule.

Technically, the Russian workers had been extremely backward. Far more than in industrial countries, they had to rely upon the specialists and the engineers of the Czar for the reconstitution of national economy. These specialists and intellectuals could be made to serve the proletariat only at a price, only by special privileges, higher salaries, certain control in the factories, etc. Furthermore, the need for such experts was so great that a moiety of the skilled workers and communist functionaries could be moved into this stratum of society relatively easily. Once ensconced in their exceptional positions, such workers tended to become bureaucrats and, with

their special posts, could well become the connecting link between the old Czarist specialists and the trade unions, co-operatives, and soviets. Simultaneously within the mass institutions a certain stratification was taking place. The trade unions no longer were engaged in a bitter day-to-day struggle against national capitalism. Not the capitalist, but the trade union official had the last say in the question of hiring and firing and negotiated the matter of hours and wages and working conditions. These trade union officials also obtained for themselves the salaries and privileges of the intellectual elements, and gradually separated themselves from the mass of workers. This deviation was still more sharply delineated in the soviets, where the very nature of the government organs compelled them to admit large numbers of former white-collar workers, bookkeepers, accountants, office clerks, and specialists of one sort or another.

Theoretically, the Communist Party, being composed of the most advanced and courageous elements, should have been in a position to correct the growth of bureaucracy. However, since these bureaucrats temporarily were exceedingly necessary, a mass dismissal of them would have disorganized the whole plan for reconstruction. After the exhaustive World War, civil war, and famine periods, above all more production was imperative, and the Communist Party was forced to make many concessions to these functionaries in order to keep the economic machine going. But what was far more important, within the Communist Party itself bureaucracy was undergoing a mushroom growth. The stress of leading the world revolution could not be placed forever upon the Russian working class. If the Russians were not relieved by other sections of the world proletariat, they were bound to grow tired and to crack under the strain. This weariness of the Communist Party leaders was manifest in their disinterest in the world revolution, which had been disappointing in its delay, and in emphasis on national problems. The fact that world capitalism had not been able to overthrow the Soviet Union gave them a certain security which induced an attitude of rest and repose. They turned away from permanent revolution to economic problems of construction in which the class struggle no longer was felt directly to the same degree as before.

It should be borne in mind, too, that the victory of the Russian communists had given to the leadership enormous power and had attracted to this Party all sorts of careerists and adventurers who bowed down to the apparatus precisely in proportion as they hoped themselves to inherit this power for their own advantage. Had the Bolsheviks engaged in ruthless civil war internationally so as to be able constantly to test and to refresh their Party, such elements could have been minimized or even eliminated, but the animadversion from the world revolution denied the Russians the opportunity to prove all their new recruits. On the other hand, these

new members, especially those who previously had been with the Social-Revolutionaries or the Mensheviks and who had entered into the Bolshevik Party by the thousands, were able to carry their old nationalist baggage with them and to accentuate the tendencies to nationalism and bureaucracy already growing among the Communists. Thus the isolation of the Russian proletariat and the failure of the world revolution to materialize in other countries led to a sort of vicious circle or, rather, to a downward spiral in which party degeneration and growing bureaucracy mutually aided each other.

To sum up the forces alien to the proletariat within the country: there were the *kulaks* on the countryside who still hired laborers; the middle peasants who wanted more land, high prices for goods, and free trade; the foreign capitalists and their agents in the cities; the merchants and traders who believed in free trade; and the small property elements who bought government bonds and wanted to live on their incomes. There were also the specialists, the intellectuals, and the bureaucratic functionaries.

The bureaucratic functionaries could be divided into several categories. Closest to the capitalist class were the old Czarist officials, specialists, experts, and engineers of all sorts. These worked in the factories and in the soviets. They supposedly were controlled by designated representatives of the workers and the peasants, but frequently these deputies found themselves closer to the specialists than to the workers; they soon formed a second layer of bureaucrats entrenched in the co-operatives, in the trade unions, and in the Soviets. Both of these two layers of functionaries tried desperately to enter the Communist Party and added their weight to the third element which controlled the Party and the International.

The situation was well expressed by the figures of the Communist Party given out for January 1, 1927. Out of approximately 1,200,000 members of the Communist Party at that time, only about one-third, or 430,000, were workers actually occupied in industry and transport; at the same time, the Party contained 462,000 officials, half of whom were formerly workers, and 303,000 peasants, of whom more than half were now governmental officials.

In the latter part of his life, Lenin began to recognize the seriousness of this situation. "In his speech at the last Party Congress he attended, Lenin said: 'Here we have lived a year, with the state in our hands, and under the New Economic Policy has it operated our way? No. We don't like to acknowledge this, but it hasn't. And how has it operated? The machine isn't going where we guide it, but where some illegal, or lawless, or God-knows-whence-derived speculators or private capitalistic businessmen, either the one or the other, are guiding it. A machine doesn't always travel just

exactly the way, and it often travels just exactly not the way, that the man imagines who sits at the wheel.' "[1]

Under the given conditions of a victorious proletarian revolution in a backward agrarian country, the capitalist classes and their agents within could not hope for a direct coup d'etat for the restoration of capitalism. Just as no class could have overthrown Czarism and established the power of the Soviets other than the proletariat, so was there no other class that could challenge the existing rule. Instead of a head-on collision with the proletarian party and the class, therefore, the growth of capitalism would have to take the form of steady trituration of that party, its slow corrosion and degeneration Such degeneration had been known many times before in history. The *kulak*, the *Nepman*, the specialist and the bureaucrat represented the Thermidorean elements within Russia that were working for the restoration of capitalism.

Furthermore, if capitalism was to get a foothold in the Bolshevik Party it had to do so stealthily, not by open argument, certainly so long as Lenin was alive, but by secret organizational maneuvers Those in the top layers of the Bolshevik Party who would capitulate the soonest would be naturally the officials who had never been abroad or subject to the direct influence of international experience, who were not the foremost intellectual leaders but rather those who had in their hands the power of appointments, removals and general organizational supervision

In this respect the person who nearest represented the ideal was Stalin. Intellectually a mediocrity who had never played a theoretical rôle in the party but who *per contra* was a man of "action" and strong will, strongly influenced by reformism, having come from Georgia, (a territory that had always yielded a large per cent of social reformists due to the general backwardness of the country) and more than once clashed with the internationalism of Lenin,[2] Stalin, who had been given the post of organizational secretary of the party, was precisely the man in exactly the position to accomplish the change. The illness of Lenin gave Stalin the needed opportunity and he steadily began to increase his influence by placing his men secretly in the important positions of the party What was more, Stalin was at the head of the "Workers' and Peasants' Inspection," an institution intended to eradicate bureaucracy in the State organization, and, in that position, he had been able greatly to consolidate his hold. We already have noted Stalin's vacillations during the revolution and his intrigue during the civil war leading directly to the loss of the Polish campaign

[1] Given in L D Trotsky *The Real Situation in Russia*, p 23

[2] See the letters of Lenin on Stalin given in L D Trotsky work cited, pp 293 and following

Now Stalin was to plot to drive Lenin himself from the leader's position.[1] His intrigue would culminate in the arrest, exile, and execution of all the old leading partners of Lenin. In 1937, Stalin would be supreme.

Already, in the early part of 1923, Lenin had taken steps for Stalin's removal. At that time he proposed a complete reorganization of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and, in March, 1923, from his sick bed, Lenin dictated a letter to Stalin breaking off all comradely relations with him.[2] But Lenin was now mortally ill and, when his proposal was brought to the Political Bureau by Trotsky at Lenin's request, Stalin, Bucharin, and others not only were hostile but actually proposed not to print the resolution in the press. Intrigue went so far, indeed, that "In view of the insistent demand of Lenin that the article should be shown him in print, Comrade Kuibishev, afterwards the head of the Rabkrin, proposed that one special number of *Pravda* should be printed with Lenin's article and shown to him, while the article itself should be concealed from the party."[3]

Such circumstances as these induced Lenin to write his "Testament" to the Bolsheviks in which, having traced the instability of the Russian State to the fact that it rested not only upon the proletariat but also upon the peasantry, and having declared that, under such circumstances, a split in the Party was quite possible, and after having characterized the defects of both Stalin and of Trotsky, he stated: "Stalin is too rude and this fault, entirely supportable in relations among us Communists, becomes insupportable in the office of General Secretary. Therefore, I propose to the comrades to find a way to remove Stalin from that position and appoint to it another man who in all respects differs from Stalin only in superiority —namely, more patient, more loyal, more polite and more attentive to comrades, less capricious, and so on."[4]

The death of Lenin brought to light the terrific struggle within the Communist Party that had been brewing during his illness. While understanding well enough the two-class foundation of the Russian State, neither Lenin nor Trotsky had appreciated sufficiently the practical implications of this duality to the Communist Party; both failed to see soon enough that

[1] "In 1926 N. K. Krupskaya, who along with Zinoviev and Kamenev then adhered to the Left Opposition, said, 'Were Lenin alive, he would most assuredly be in a G. P. U. prison.'" L. D. Trotsky: *The Kirov Assassination*, p. 24.

[2] "Finally, the last letter which Lenin ever wrote in his life—or rather dictated—was a letter to Stalin breaking off all comradely relations with him. . . . The existence of the letter was confirmed in the stenographic copy of the testimony of M. I. Ulianova." (Lenin's sister.) L. D. Trotsky: work cited, p. 308.

[3] The same, pp. 301-302.

[4] Given in L. D. Trotsky: work cited, pp. 322-323. Also see Stalin's recognition of Lenin's letter in International Press Correspondence, Vol. VII, No. 64, p. 1428. (November 17, 1927.)

the class struggle would be waged within the ranks of the Bolsheviks themselves. Thus, they realized too late that, during the entire period beginning with the New Economic Policy, the antiproletarian forces had been obtaining a firm foothold in the Party and, through Stalin, were working for its control. The struggle of the classes had gone on secretly for some time; in 1924 it burst into the open.

In Russia, the battle of the classes could find its expression in no other way than through formulations within the Communist Party. Both sides would be composed of sincere and tested communists of long standing and yet, ironically enough, it was only through such communists that capitalism could have an opportunity to express itself. In other words, only when capitalist pressure could reach the Communist Party could capitalist ideology come out in the open. Whatever class controlled the Party would be in a position to dictate terms. That this situation was not examined concretely enough by Lenin and by Trotsky could be seen from their permitting Stalin to act in the key, although at the time subordinate, post of organizational Secretary.

The struggle began on the question of bureaucracy in the Party and in the soviets, but behind this struggle loomed the wider and more basic interests of the proletariat. At the end of 1922, while Lenin was ill, the Central Committee already had adopted a resolution which would have meant the end of the State monopoly of foreign trade, and thus would have opened the doors wide to world capitalism, and transformed Russia sooner or later into an agrarian region at the mercy of industrial imperialism. Only through the monopoly of foreign trade could Russia begin rapid industrial reconstruction and supply for herself the sinews of war that adequately could defend her. Had Russia become simply part of the capitalist world division of labor, then her factories would have been rendered idle by the more efficient production of the West and, while the peasantry would have benefited from cheaper goods, the proletarian power would have been liquidated. Thanks to the energy of Lenin and of Trotsky, this measure of the Central Committee was defeated.

Significant too, was the fact that Trotsky was able to convince Lenin of the necessity for an independent State Planning Commission (The Gosplan) that should devise a national plan of industrialization which in turn would supply the material basis for the growing and continuous power of the proletariat. The struggle that arose between Stalin and Trotsky was precisely over the deep questions of the building-up of Russian economy. These questions had to do with the relations of the proletariat to the peasantry, of industry to agriculture, with the relations between light and heavy industry, with the relations of Russia to the rest of the world.

The crushing defeat that the soviets had given to the counter-revolution

and to foreign intervention had allowed the Russians a breathing space in which to concentrate upon building up a new economy from the ruins of the old. The victory of the proletariat, which ultimately would lead to a far better system of production than capitalism had developed, nevertheless had been consolidated only after the country was in utter ruin. It was necessary to obtain more products. The workers were demanding bread, the peasants were crying for shoes, clothing, finished goods. If the grain were seized from the peasants without any commensurate return, the alliance between the workers and their agrarian supporters would be broken, and a new civil war would result. On the other hand, the proletariat could not produce goods cheaply, when all the chief factories were in a ruined condition. Above all, it was necessary to throw all possible resources of the country into building up the industries.

Such a course, however, strenuously was resisted by the peasantry who knew that any building-up of industry would have to come from capital reserves obtained by selling peasant products on the open markets. The peasants would have preferred to have given up the monopoly of foreign trade and to have obtained cheap products directly from abroad. Thus the struggle opening up for the industrialization of Russia involved the question of the relation of the workers to the peasants.

From the beginning, the Central Committee, deprived of Lenin's aid, tended to make great concessions to the peasantry. The most efficient producers were the *kulaks* and, in order to hold up their output as an example before the middle peasants, favors had to be granted to the wealthier group. Every effort was made by the Central Executive to show the peasants that the workers did not mean to behave unsympathetically to their problems. The communist leaders began to talk of building socialism at a snail's pace; they raised the motto to the peasantry of "Enrich yourselves," and adopted the slogan "Face to the village." Bucharin believed that even the *kulak* would be able to grow into socialism.

Such a solution, however, only could aggravate the problem. The fact that taxation was so light on the *kulak* meant that very little surplus could be accumulated to throw into industry. With the growth of production on the countryside, the lack of finished goods in the city presented an ever greater contrast, and the peasants began to rebel at the lack of finished commodities under which they were suffering. But, more than that, the workers too were beginning to complain.

The opposition under Trotsky had urged the industrialization of the country in the speediest possible manner commensurate with the task of maintaining the alliance with the mass of peasantry. First of all they had enunciated the idea of the need for a national plan carefully regulating the amounts to be thrown into heavy industry for the manufacture of means of

production and machinery, and the amounts to be thrown into light industry producing the means of consumption that would satisfy directly the needs of the masses. Trotsky pointed out that, hand in hand with the growth of economy, there would have to go the improved condition of the working class, which was also one of the productive forces, indeed the main productive force to be considered.

The Central Committee attacked these proposals as part of Trotsky's tendencies to ignore the peasantry on the ground that his plan would lead to a break of the alliance between the workers and the peasants. The opposition was denounced as a group of super-industrialists who would ruin the Soviet Union. The Central Committee declared that to undertake such industrialization would mean that taxes would become so heavy on the peasantry that it would revolt under the leadership of the *kulak*.

It became clear enough, however, that behind the policy of the Central Committee actually were gathered all the *kulak* elements, the Nepmen and capitalist agents who feared the growth of industrialization as strengthening the hand of the proletariat in soviet economy. The workers themselves began to take a hand in the debate. If Russia was not industrialized rapidly, then there would be no economic basis for the sustaining of the proper kind of Red Army that adequately could defend the isolated Soviet Union. Without industrialization, it would be impossible for prices ever to become cheap without the breakdown of the monopoly of foreign trade, a step which the workers meant to resist to the end.

The platform of the opposition was worked out in this period. It pointed out that the whole taxation policy of the Soviet Union was becoming distorted in favor of the *kulak*, with the result that the poorer agrarians were bearing the burden and slowly bowing under it. In spite of the equilitarian confiscation of the land, 34 per cent of the poorest peasantry earned only 18 per cent of the total income, while 7 per cent of the top layers earned also 18 per cent. The taxation policy of the country was not taking into account this growing differentation, was not taxing the *kulak* sufficiently.

Furthermore, because of free trade and the great dearth of goods, the disparity between wholesale and retail prices was enormous, leading to the wildest speculation on the part of the *Nepmen* and *kulaks*. On the other hand, real wages were not rising commensurately with the increased production, while the intensity of labor was becoming greater. Housing conditions were appalling, scarcely any funds being thrown into this phase of economy.

Concatinated with this lack of improvement in the workers' standards went the fact that the trade unions were becoming reduced to mere shells. "In the staff of the elective executive organs of ten industrial unions, the percentage of workers from the shops and non-party militant workers is

extremely small (12 to 13 per cent). The immense majority of the delegates to the trade-union conferences are people entirely disassociated from industry."[1] The opposition demanded that an end be made to these intolerable sacrifices on the part of the proletariat, and that the workers' conditions immediately be improved. It also demanded a reform of the trade unions, cleaning out the bureaucrats and drawing into greater participation the non-party members. "At every trade-union congress (including the all-union congress) and in all the elective organs of the trade unions (including the All-Russian Council of Trade Unions) there must be a majority of workers directly engaged in industry. The percentage of non-party workers in these organs must be raised to at least one-third."[2] Moreover, the opposition incurred the deadly hatred of the trade union functionaries by proposing that "at regular intervals, a certain number of the officials of the trade-union apparatus must be drafted for industrial work."[3]

The agrarian program of the opposition contained far-reaching changes. It proposed that the State aid, with credits and machinery, only the village poor to whom would be allied the middle peasants. These two sections, together with the agricultural laborers, would comprise the heart of agrarian collective enterprise. A maximum sum should be appropriated for the creation of the soviet and collective farms.

The Central Committee finally, in 1926, had adopted a Five-Year Plan which had called for a rate of from 4 per cent to 9 per cent annual increase in production. This was far from enough, according to the opposition. "The gigantic advantage involved in the nationalization of the land, the means of production, the banks, and the centralized organs of administration—that is, the advantages derived from the socialist revolution—find almost no expression in the five-year plan."[4] As a matter of fact, when the Committee began to put its Plan into operation, it had to revise it upward several times, so far had it diverged from the capacity of the toilers to achieve.

Finally, in the economic section of its program, the opposition considered the problem of resources for the rapid upbuilding of industrial economy of the Soviet Union, called for a far heavier tax upon the *kulak* and *Nepman* and for a strict régime of economy, including the dismissal of a considerable part of the army of bureaucrats. Every effort was to be made to increase the export of agricultural goods and the import of machinery and finished articles, and to obtain credits abroad. Finally, the gov-

[1] L. D. Trotsky: work cited, p. 51 giving *Pravda*, July 23, 1927 for authority.
[2] The same, p. 57.
[3] The same, p. 57.
[4] The same, p. 80.

ernment should terminate the sale of vodka in order to raise the material and spiritual resources of the country.

2

The views of the opposition split the Bolshevik Party into three distinct groups. To the Left was the faction of Trotsky to which soon adhered Zinoviev and Kamenev, representing the most important centers of Leningrad and of Moscow, although at the start they had fought the opposition. To the extreme Right were the communists representing the trade union officialdom and specialists, led by Bucharin, Tomsky, Rykov, and others. Between these two, representing the communist officialdom in the Party itself were the Stalinists, at the head of the Party apparatus, swinging from Right to Left as they were pushed now by one class and now by the other.

At first, the Stalin faction worked hand in glove with the Right Wing of Bucharin and united with it to defeat the Left. Only by defeating the Left could the apparatus itself live and grow. The communist apparatus was in a peculiar position. On the one hand, it was tiring of incessant revolution and was rapidly turning from the struggle, thus turning away from the position of the proletariat towards that of alien groups; on the other hand, it was functioning in a country where the proletarians had taken the power and, in a sense, was a prisoner of the revolution which had given it power.

In order to defeat the proletarian policy of the Left opposition, Stalin was forced to take steps leading to the complete crushing of the Communist Party, nationally and internationally. For four years, from 1924 to 1928, no Congress of the International was held. Instead there were substituted periodic meetings of the top functionaries only. The theory was advanced that the Communist Party had to be a monolithic organization, of one piece, that no factional discussion could be tolerated. This was interpreted to mean that any criticism of the apparatus now was impossible, and, in order to enforce its decrees, all discussion was broken up in the most brutal manner; into the Party for the first time entered rowdyism. Secret soviet police began to sit in at the Party meetings themselves to make the arrests. Local secretaries were appointed from the top. Whole units and sections were dissolved. Thousands of Party members were arrested and sent to jail for Trotskyism. Others actually were condemned and put to death. Trotsky, himself, together with other leaders, was exiled to Siberia and then deported.

The mechanism which the apparatus used to control the Party was both internal and external. The following tricks were resorted to within the Party: 1. The drives. 2. The purges. 3. The frame-up. 4. The abolition

of democracy. We shall discuss briefly these various features of Communist degeneration.

Just prior to the death of Lenin, when the struggle against Trotsky began, the apparatus had immediate need of drawing in as many henchmen as necessary in order to swing the votes. The leaders inaugurated what they called the "Lenin Drive," which was supposed to draw hundreds of thousands of workers into the Party to replace the loss of Lenin and to strengthen the Party. Of this drive, Walter Duranty wrote: "Not long before Christmas it was announced that the Thirteenth Party Conference had decided that one hundred thousand 'workers from the bench' should be invited to join the Party without delay. The inference was obvious that this new membership, which amounted to nearly 20 per cent of the total strength of the Party at that time, would be hand-picked by the Secretariat, through its subordinate personnel in Moscow and the provinces. When it subsequently became known that the new members would have a right to vote for delegates to the next Party Congress (in May, 1924), the full import of the maneuver became clear; the Secretariat had boldly added 20 per cent of the total electorate to its own supporters in what bid fair to be an evenly divided contest. Several years later a veteran communist told me he thought this to have been the turning point in the struggle between Stalin and Trotsky. 'Prior to that,' he said, 'the odds were in Trotsky's favor.'" [1]

Thus, the Party, instead of being strengthened, was filled with persons who had not professed communism during the stern period of the civil war, but who were trying to benefit, now that the Bolsheviks were in power. How well the apparatus succeeded can be seen from the following figures. "Following the death of Lenin, on January 21, 1924, the Party increased its membership from 440,000 to 741,000 in 1924, or a growth of 63.6 per cent. By 1925, there was a further increase of 39.7 per cent, and, in 1926, of 12.3 per cent." [2] "In 1926, however, over 85 per cent had entered since 1924. This means that they had not suffered for the party and their convictions under the Czar's régime." [3] At the same time, the membership of the Youth League jumped from 500,700 in 1924 to 1,140,706 in 1925, and to 2,051,950 in 1926.

Simultaneously with the drives went the purges. It would be announced that the Party contained too many careerist and untested elements; these the apparatus would proceed to eradicate. Naturally, the brunt of the expulsions and suspensions that took place in wholesale fashion was borne by those in opposition to the center. Thus, by means of this double process of

[1] See W. Duranty: *I Write as I Please*, pp. 215-216.
[2] J. Davis: *Contemporary Social Movements*, p. 300.
[3] The same, p. 300.

purges and drives, the Stalinist apparatus was creating an entirely new Communist Party made up of brand new material, the only stable element of which was the bureaucracy itself. Now, more than ever, the membership was not to be trusted in the eyes of the officials, because it was new and untried; now, more than ever, all the decisions of the Party were in the hands of the functionaries whose head was Stalin.

But all these measures still were not sufficient to drive out the Left opposition whose leaders had won enormous prestige in the trying days when communism had been forced to fight for its life in Russia. To discredit its enemies, Stalinism invented the peculiar Russian form of frame-up to which has been given the name of "Amalgam." This process consisted of obtaining a notorious White-Guard or anti-communist agent and planting him among the oppositionists where his presence could prove that the opposition was a counter-revolutionary group plotting against the proletariat in the Soviet Union. Without this method, the apparatus never could have succeeded in removing such men as Trotsky from the Party.[1] With this excuse, too, the *OGPU* agents began to sit in on all discussions of the Party, making criminal arrests of those who were suspected of being oppositionists.

These methods could succeed only when coupled with a complete denial of loyal inner party democracy. The opposition was not permitted to take the floor at factory nuclei meetings; their views were not allowed to appear in the press; Congresses were postponed until the opposition should be driven out and the elections made safe. When the opposition advanced its views in Party circles by means of a mimeograph, the Party center raided, and declared to the world that the opposition was conducting underground work through illegal printing presses, that it was plotting a counter-revolution. The final act came during an outdoor celebration, when thousands of workers had flocked to the platform where Trotsky and Zinoviev appeared, and cheered them. The Party was informed that now the opposition had taken to the streets; the whole faction brutally was dispersed. Trotsky was thrown out of the Party and finally deported from the country.

By the actions of the Stalinist functionaries, not only the Communist Party was destroyed as a democratic instrument to express the will of the proletariat, but with the destruction of the Party naturally went the destruction of the unions, the co-operatives, and finally the soviets. The victory of the bureaucracy of the Party over the members meant an even greater victory of the bureaucracy over the mass organizations. The unions became

[1] For an account of how the *OGPU* (secret police) planted White-Guard agents who were in its pay, in the meetings of the oppositionists, see L. D. Trotsky: *The Real Situation in Russia*, Introduction by Max Eastman.

transformed from agencies representing the interests of the workers in the shop to agencies to speed up production under the direction of the mass of petty officials and experts, who pocketed a good portion of the collective produce for themselves. The unions became increasingly incorporated into the State apparatus itself, until finally the process was completed, and the workers were in fact forbidden to strike, on pain of being considered traitors to the cause and being arrested for sedition.

The co-operatives which were far more liable to be controlled by functionaries and petty officials suffered a similar fate, even more completely. They became no longer the real representative of the mass of consumers, but rather thoroughly were corroded with elements close to the capitalist tradespeople. The soviets also became a mere shell of their former selves. Meetings were but slightly attended, and the mass of work was left to the few officials who controlled the body. The ominously reactionary atmosphere could be seen in the diminution of the number of non-Party persons drawn into work, and in the falling off of such elements as the women, who were demonstrating by their absence that the Party was making no appeal to the broadest layers of the population.

Despite these processes, however, the economic development of the country to pre-War levels had compelled the proletariat to take up the question of State planning and of the proper relations to the peasantry. The adoption of the Five-Year Plan and its execution at an ever accelerated tempo was forced by the workers themselves. The Stalinist apparatus now was compelled to make concessions to the workers who, having gone through three revolutions and taken power, still knew how to make their will felt and how to whip the alien classes into line. A struggle opened up between the Right Wing, headed by Bucharin, and the Stalinists. The year 1928 that saw the inauguration of the Five-Year Plan also witnessed the Bucharin, Tomsky, Rykov group driven out of influence in the Party and threatened with the same treatment that was given the Trotsky-Zinoviev bloc. Matters, however, did not go too far. Neither faction felt it could survive as yet without the other. The Stalinists could not lose the support of the mass of officials and experts represented by the Right Wing, behind whom stood also the *kulak* and the *Nepman*. On the other hand, the Bucharin group felt that if they remained in the Party they might retain the final word in molding the policy in their direction.

Besides, both Bucharin and Stalin understood that the fight with the opposition by no means was over. With the operation of the Five-Year Plan, new difficulties were bound to arise which might cause the working class to rebel. These would be provoked not merely by the immensity of the task and its unprecedented character, but by the nature of the methods

of the bureaucracy. In the course of its victory by the crushing of proletarian democracy within the Soviet Union, the bureaucracy had destroyed the delicate social barometers and instruments by which the working class could check up on all the multifarious results of the operations of the Plan. The ways were reduced through which any deleterious effects could be detected and the necessary adjustments made. Bureaucratic guesswork took the place of collective co-operation of the masses. The result was an extremely zig-zag execution of the Five-Year Plan. Having just abandoned the catch phrase, "Socialism at a snail's pace," the Stalinists now could declare they would attain complete socialism in Russia by the end of the Five-Year Plan or, at most, of two Five-Year Plans. The Five-Year Plan would be completed in four years and even less. Such a reckless application of the Plan greatly threatened the relations of the workers to the peasants, since the latter were paying for the construction.

Instead of working out a careful balance between the light and the heavy industry, Stalin threw all the surplus goods possible into heavy industry. This led to a shortage of consumable goods such as clothing and shoes, and the result was a deep grumbling from the peasantry, and the breaking of the firm alliance between the city and the country. The peasant was taxed to the breaking point. He saw himself deprived of his stock and his produce, and receiving nothing in return but a "Plan." He began to sabotage, to kill his stock and eat it himself. Before this move could be checked, in 1932 approximately half of all the live-stock in Russia had been destroyed! The peasant refused to till the soil. Hunger began to invade the cities.

Instead of proceeding at a steady, sure pace, Stalin had put the country on a war basis with the slogan of "The Five-Year Plan in Four Years." The workers were forced to work harder than ever. All the bureaucrats began to try for "records." Quality did not count, only quantity. Shoes and clothing unfit for use were produced A dreadful waste prevailed in all factories. No control was placed over the bureaucrats, who were soon in alliance with groups of saboteurs all over the country. Thus, the workers not only worked harder, but the products they received in return for their labor were shoddy. Instead of the Five-Year Plan with its increase of production actually benefiting the workers, the working class was pushed down lower than before. The result was that the workers also began to sabotage. They refused to work. They began to move from factory to factory with the hope that the next place would prove better than the last. Thus the factories became handicapped by a terrific turnover of labor, and so great was the passenger congestion on the railroads that freight movements were hindered and sometimes stopped by it. Now the Stalinist bureaucracy was forced to take drastic steps against the workers to suppress their dis-

content. Measures were enacted to prevent their moving around freely. A rigid passport system was introduced.

An equally rash and unbalanced policy was carried out in agriculture. The peasants, instead of being induced through persuasion and example to enter the co-operatives were driven to join by force, many against their will. The plan of the opposition had been for a judicious and careful use of machinery given to the village poor and middle peasants who would be organized in collectives. In this way the *kulaks* could be met in economic competition and eventually beaten and liquidated. But the Russians had but few tractors and, furthermore, the officials were opposed to the line of organizing the poor and middle peasant against the *kulak*. What actually took place, therefore, was the hasty formation of co-operatives, not on a machine basis, but by the simple joining of lands. In these co-operatives, the *kulak*, instead of being liquidated, was driven to join; once in the co-operative, he soon took a leading position.

There were elements of danger in such a situation. The producers' co-operative, in and of itself, is not a Socialist enterprise but, in the case of peasants, can become simply a pooling of resources, similar to the formation of a joint stock company. The co-operative does not lead inevitably to the abolition of private property, but may lead also to the consolidation of that property. The hasty formation of the co-operatives organized the peasants hitherto unorganized, and strengthened their resistance to the workers, thus putting a strong weapon in the hands of the capitalistic groups.

Where the co-operative was organized along the lines of machine production, the State and the workers in the factories, through their control of the machinery, ultimately could lay down certain lines which the co-operative had to follow. But where, as in the immense majority of cases, the co-operative was formed simply by a pooling of land, then the rich peasant, who contributed far more land and material than the poorer elements and the landless, was bound to have considerable say in the workings of the co-operative. This might not be the case were the *kulak* isolated, but it must not be forgotten that the most numerous group in the Russian countryside was the middle peasant, and most of these envied the *kulaks* and wanted to attain their level of work and living. A firm and correct policy on the part of the workers would have won the middle peasant to the cause of socialism; a policy that pampered the *kulak* or gave him decisive economic leadership in the co-operative, inevitably drove the mass of middle peasants to his side.

The harsh measures which the State fuctionaries undertook to drive the peasants into the co-operative thus not only placed the *kulak* inside and tended to obliterate class distinction in the countryside, but at the same

time, also allowed the *kulak* to take the lead within the entire collective. The *kulak*, instead of being isolated, now had his army organized for him. Soon whole collectives began to sabotage the plans of the government. This was one of the principal reasons for the terrible dearth of food in the Ukraine and Northern Caucasus in the winter of 1932-1933, which has been estimated to have cost over two million lives. The rich steppes became barren. Weeds grew everywhere. Actual civil war did not break out, but wholesale migrations from the rich land of the South took place.

To top the entire process, the State officials decided upon the ominous policy of inflation which, with one sweep, by raising all the prices of necessities, took away most of the advantages which had been promised the workers from increased production. Thus the boasted advance in real wages was but nominal and, although the seven-hour day had been inaugurated, the worker found that he had to work overtime steadily in order to make both ends meet. The artificially stimulated rise in prices of finished goods in the same way deprived the peasants of the reward of their labor.

3

Despite all the mistakes made by the apparatus, Russia took a remarkably great step forward economically during the course of the Five-Year Plan. The achievements made proved conclusively the great advantage of a socialistic régime over private capitalism. Immense plants began to spring up all over the land, and Russia rapidly was becoming transformed into a great industrial country. To speed up the process, the State adopted the policy of importing large numbers of foreign specialists to train the Russians in the use of their new machinery and technique. The relation of Russia to the outside world had changed considerably since the NEP. At that time, the State had been anxious to have foreigners build factories in Russia and invest their capital there. Now foreign capital was not asked to enter. Merely with the aid of foreign specialists, the Russians now could create their own factories and attempt to run them.

The opposition had believed that the adoption of the Five-Year Plan would strengthen considerably the hands of the proletariat, since numerically the workers would increase, and the rôles of the city and of industry would be more preponderant than ever. With this growth of the proletariat, it was believed that the control of the bureaucrat would be diminished and that the Left Wing would be able to drive back the Right and put the Party on a correct line. However, while this might be the ultimate case, it was by no means the result of the Five-Year Plan. It is true that peasants were drawn into the ranks of the working class and became strengthened in socialist ideology. But it is also true that the standards of the masses did

not improve. What was most important, the ranks of the specialists, of the functionaries, of the white-collar workers, of the skilled workers, of the bureaucrats, of the State officials, increased far more than ever in proportion to the increase in the proletariat. Thus the industrialization of Russia by no means proceeded concurrently with the increased power of the rank-and-file worker, but, on the contrary, diminished his political capacity still more and put even greater power in the hands of the experts and of the professional elements of all sorts. Moreover, the economic advance of the Workers' State in Russia did not counterbalance the political defeats of the revolutionary workers internationally, but rather was accelerating those defeats.

The rise of the all-powerful bureaucracy within the Soviet Union led to serious political readjustments within Russia. In the days of Lenin, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat had taken the direct form whereby the proletariat was in actual control of the State apparatus and ruled through its own members. This situation was now changing. There still existed a Dictatorship of the Proletariat, in the sense that no other class had taken from the proletariat the ownership of the means of production. The direct control of the workers over the State, however, now was missing. The machinery of government was being run, not by the workers themselves, but by an officialdom no longer controlled directly by the workers.

None the less, this officialdom was not completely a free agent. It could not dispose of the fate of the country as it chose. Like every other State officialdom, it had to represent the interests of the economically dominant class which in Russia still remained the workers. The decisive aspect of the economy of the Soviet Union steadily has remained the fact that the industries are socialized, and that private ownership of the means of production is not a dominant factor in the economic life of the country. There is no class within Russia capable of taking the factories away from the workers. Thus the Russian Revolution has set a pattern of economic relations which no bureaucracy within Russia is capable of breaking down completely.

It is true, there has been a growth of capitalist forces within Russia. As we have pointed out, many of the collectives are no better than joint stock companies wherein the partners co-operate to produce goods more efficiently within the framework of commodity production. In the cities also private traders still flourish. In the sphere of finance, the issuance of government bonds has created a class of *rentiers,* or coupon-clippers, who live from their dividends. Within the industries, the bureaucracy draws to itself an exceptionally large and undue portion of the total product and thus robs the other groups. But all these factors are not comparable to the fact that the industries and means of production on the whole are social-

ized. No great bourgeoisie exists, but rather remnants of the old capitalist class and would-be agents of the new capitalist class which may be germinating. As yet, the number of people who are coupon-clippers is relatively insignificant. The amount of money borrowed by the government at interest rates when compared with the capital wealth of the country is trifling. The number of factories given over to concessionaries or worked for royalties is practically nil.

Despite the bureaucratic management of the means of production, the socialization of industry in Russia is entirely different from the nationalization of industry taking place in capitalist countries. In such countries, the nationalization of industries would be, not against the interests of the former owners, but on their behalf, to guarantee them their dividends regularly. The capitalist is not deprived of his property; on the contrary, he receives full security for it, and the State simply runs the industry on his behalf in its own way. The former owners draw vast incomes and use these to open up new industries and avenues of trade, in order to augment their accumulation. None of this is the case in the Soviet Union.

It cannot be said that the bureaucracy itself collectively makes up the real owners of the factories in the Soviet Union. The bureaucrats are simply the managers, not the owners, of industry. They may be receiving a higher salary than they should, they may be dreaming of a reconstituted capitalist Russia, they may be the germs of the new bourgeoisie, but they make no pretense of owning the particular factory to which they may be attached, or any section of the industry as a whole. State officials are not a class in and of themselves, but only the agents of a class.

We have seen as a rule of history that no ruling class has lost its economic power without a struggle amounting to civil war and revolution. Unless it were to be maintained that the workers never took the power over the industries in Russia, and that, from the beginning, Soviet Russia was a capitalist State (which argument would have absolutely no substantiation in fact and would make inexplicable the bitter civil war, intervention, blockade, and universal hostility by the capitalists to that country), then we can safely say that in Russia also the workers will not lose basic control over the industries without a civil war. Such a civil war has not taken place as yet. The Russian workers will protect their socialized industries with their lives.

Thus we have the following situation in Russia. On the one hand, the Workers' State still exists, but in a different form than in the days of Lenin, in a form where the workers dictate their will, not directly, but indirectly, through a bureaucracy which in form has established its own dictatorship. Naturally, once the workers have lost direct control of the instruments of the government, once the workers' Party, their unions, their

co-operatives, and their soviets have been destroyed as creative factors, and only the bureaucracy occupies the position of the historically active force, it is plain that the Workers' State is in a sick condition.

The mere fact that the historic initiative no longer is contained within the masses but in the bureaucracy means that the revolution is in the greatest danger. All that is necessary for the capitalist world in launching its attack is to assassinate a half dozen key leaders, and the country will be thrown into confusion and chaos. Furthermore, just as the bureaucracy itself could not carry on a sure and steady policy in the Five-Year Plan, so will it be impossible for such a group efficiently to conduct a great war of defense. Systematic blunders and a mountain of dead will be the results.

It is possible that, should fascism launch a vigorous and sustained attack against the Soviet Union, large numbers of the bureaucracy will be glad to open the gates to fascism and to help to rebuild capitalism in Russia. Nationalist groups also will arise, peasant and *Nepman* elements that will protest against fighting fascism, that will call for peace and capitulation of Bolshevism. Given a devastating and prolonged war, the bureaucracy, too, will break down. Soviet economy will tend to crack and the *smitchka* (alliance) between workers and peasants will be destroyed.

But this will not be the only result of such a war. Up to now, the Russian workers have tolerated Stalinism in order not to weaken the Russian dictatorship in front of the enemy, in order not to provoke a war. But once war shall have been declared, there will be no limits within which the proletariat can be restrained. The workers will raise again the revolutionary banner and will impose the most ruthless terror upon any capitalist element that attempts to hinder the progress of the revolutionary war. In this process, the Stalinist bureaucracy itself will be wiped out. A new Communist Party, a new soviet system, a new trade union movement, will shake off the bureaucratic parasitism.

We must bear in mind the important fact that, since the workers have not yet lost the power, a new civil war will not be necessary in order to oust the bureaucrats from their positions. Vigorous police action alone will suffice. If, in time of war, the workings of the bureaucracy endanger the life of the Soviet Union, as they must, the mere sending of a few regiments to the Kremlin will in all likelihood mean the end of the present régime. Whether the events are precipitated during war time by a move from the Right, or whether the Left removes Stalin and provokes a counter-action, it is almost inevitable that foreign intervention should coincide with a rejuvenation of the workers' power and position.

The peculiar situation that has prevailed in the Soviet Union since the period of the NEP has led several of the communist groups in opposition

to Stalinism to go somewhat astray. The German communist group, the Lenin Bund, headed by Urbahns, took the position that Russia was neither a Workers' State nor a Capitalist State, but something in between, and unique. This also apparently is the position of the Italian Left Communist Faction led by Bordigha. But such a theoretical position leading to the conclusion that there could be a State without a dominant class violates all the fundamental precepts of Marxism. According to them, the State would be above classes and living its own life independent of them. Whatever the surface indications, the Revolution had definitely settled the question that the factories belonged to the producers.

Another view was put forth to the effect that the Communist Party was crushed completely and thus there was no Party at all in the Soviet Union. This would lead to the position that there could be a Workers' State carrying forward a Five-Year Plan without a Workers' Party. It is hardly possible to conceive of a proletarian dictatorship or even of a bourgeois democracy without any party whatever, since every class that comes to power must express and realize its interests through a political party. It is possible to have a democratic state with many parties. It is further possible, at certain periods, that no one party will be dominant, but that there will be temporarily a complete equilibrium of classes and of parties. Such a situation is likely to give rise to a personal dictatorship, to Bonapartism. The real situation in the Soviet Union was that there existed two parties, both included within the frame of the Communist Party. On the one hand there was the bureaucracy constituting the apparatus of the Communist Party; and on the other hand, there were the discontented elements of the working class, rallying to the views of the opposition and forming their own centers of resistance.

The Trotsky opposition has committed a different error. It has declared that "Thermidor" has been completed in Russia and the Stalinist rule constitutes a Bonapartist régime. With this theory, Trotsky can play only into the hands of the enemies of the Soviet Union. Trotsky attempts to prove his point by a play of words which is untenable in serious political analyses. In political science the term "Thermidor," based upon the fall of Robespierre in the French Revolution in the month of Thermidor, has come to mean the moment when the revolutionary forces are stopped by counter-revolutionary elements. In his article on the subject,[1] Trotsky wrote: "In the internal controversies of the Russian and the international Opposition we conditionally understood by Thermidor, the first stage of the bourgeois counter-revolution, aimed against the social basis of the workers' State. . . . The overturn of the Ninth Thermidor did not liqui-

[1] See *The New International*, periodical of the defunct Communist League of America and of the now defunct "Workers Party," Vol. II, No. 4, pp. 118, 119 (July, 1935).

date the basic conquests of the bourgeois revolution; but it did transfer the power into the hands of the more moderate and conservative Jacobins, the better-to-do elements of the bourgeois society. . . . The smashing of the Left opposition implied in the most direct and immediate sense the transfer of power from the hands of the revolutionary vanguard into the hands of the more conservative elements among the bureaucracy and the upper crust of the working class. The year 1924—that was the beginning of the Soviet Thermidor." In another place he declared: "In both cases the bureaucracy raised itself upon the backs of the plebeian democracy which had assured the victory for the new régime. The Jacobin clubs were strangled gradually. The revolutionists of 1793 died on the battlefields; they became diplomats and generals, they fell under the blows of repression . . . or went underground. Subsequently, other Jacobins successfully transformed themselves into Napoleon's prefects."

Thus Trotsky's modern views on the subject might be summed up as follows: First, the term, Thermidor, strictly speaking, does not mean the victory of counter-revolution, but means a reactionary manner of maintaining the revolution. This is the essence of Stalinism, and, therefore, the victory of Stalin over the forces led by Trotsky is the completion of Thermidor in the soviets. Second, analogically, Trotsky stands for Robespierre, and the Left opposition and resembles the genuine Jacobin revolutionaries. Robespierre was the leader of the French Revolution as Trotsky (with Lenin) was the leader of the Russian Revolution; the Jacobins were the leading party in the French Revolution, and the Bolshevik-Leninists of the Left opposition were the Jacobins of the Russian Revolution.

This whole analysis, however, is incorrect. Previously we have elaborated the rôle of Robespierre in the French Revolution and shown how he himself helped to put an end to the Leftward drift of the masses. Trotsky here puts himself indeed in an unenviable position as the executioner of the masses, which rôle Robespierre played just before his downfall. Strictly speaking, the real "Thermidor" of the French Revolution occurred prior to the execution of Robespierre, namely in the crushing of the Paris Commune and the executions of Hébert, Clootz, Chaumette, and their associates by Robespierre. If we may pursue the analogy, it is not Trotsky who represents the Russian Robespierre, but Stalin who has done to the Left opposition what Robespierre did to Hébert. Moreover, the fall of Stalin, when pushed from the Right, will coincide with the fall of the Russian Soviet Republic, whereas the fall of Trotsky had no such immediate significance.

Trotsky makes a similar mistake about the Jacobins. We can say of the Jacobins, as we said of Robespierre, that they were compelled to follow the masses up to a certain point, and thus agreed to take the leadership,

but they had no desire to carry the revolution too far. The rôle of the Jacobins was to see that the revolution did not go beyond a bourgeois framework, hence they yielded to the pressure of the masses only in order to control and later to behead them when they threatened to go beyond capitalism. To call the Jacobins the revolutionary vanguard is to forget the Commune and the revolutionary masses whom the Jacobin clubs detested. It is to tell but half the truth, since the Jacobins were not merely the revolutionary vanguard of capitalism against the aristocracy—the Jacobins, under pressure, were forced to act at times even against the capitalists themselves—but they were also the counter-revolutionary vanguard of capitalism against the poor of the Commune, and they helped to pave the way for Bonaparte.

This rôle of the Jacobins generally has been overlooked by the numerous historians who have trembled at the mere thought of the Terror. However, in a certain sense, the prevailing faulty analysis of the position of the Jacobins has a certain justification, since their revolutionary rôle was far more important than their counter-revolutionary one. In being the instrument, often against their own will, to carry forward the bourgeois revolution so far and so ruthlessly against the old aristocratic régime, the Jacobins were fulfilling a necessary historical task. On the other hand, in crushing the plebeian communistic efforts, they were putting down a premature outburst, an abortive attempt to anticipate history.

Turning now to the Russian Revolution we can say that there, too, the revolution has not been completed. It has yet to be made international in scope. The individual proprietor giving birth to new capitalist forces by no means has been eliminated. However, and what is of the utmost importance for our comparison, the Russian Revolution has gone far beyond the stage of the French Revolution, and has reached the point where, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, the proletariat has actually taken over the power. It is true that, under Stalin, a portion of the Bolsheviks have turned into petty bourgeois revolutionaries of the Jacobin type and have stopped the revolution from going forward, but these people cannot restore capitalism.

Thermidor does not mean, as Trotsky says, merely the transfer of power into the hands of conservatives from the hands of the radicals, but means a transfer of class basis, and the substitution of one class instead of another. Prior to Thermidor there existed the momentary domination of the Paris Commune marching to communism and anarchism. After that date, the people are crushed. Prior to the fall of Robespierre, the ultimate beneficiaries of the revolution were not firmly at the helm; after that moment, they took open and direct control. Such a situation as yet has not been established in the Soviet Union. Thermidor in terms of Russia

would mean that the working class had been decisively defeated and capitalism was re-established.

Even conceding the most to Trotsky's analysis, we would have to say that, in the French Revolution, before Thermidor, there was an essentially bourgeois revolution conducted against the will of that class which ultimately became the very beneficiary, while, after Thermidor, the bourgeoisie itself controlled the revolution. Thermidor appears as the point where the Jacobins ceased to be susceptible to the pressure of the proletarian and plebeian Commune, and went over to the bourgeoisie entirely. It was the "moment" when the bourgeois revolution which had been carried on against the wishes of the bourgeoisie and without their leadership, would now be carried on in a thoroughly bourgeois manner and under their direct leadership. It meant the decisive victory of the class that wished to keep the revolution bourgeois and to prevent the proletariat and plebeian mass from making their own revolution.

Even so, just the opposite prevails in the Russian case. If we were to pursue Trotsky's analogy we would have to say that before 1924—the Russian Thermidor—the interests of the proletariat were being carried out by the Bolsheviks against its will and that, after 1924, the proletariat itself, the class whose interests were being subserved by the revolution, actually took over the reins. This of course is the very opposite of the truth and of what Trotsky himself means to say, for it was precisely before 1924, under Lenin, that the workers themselves had the power, while after 1924, their will was expressed for them by a bureaucracy.

To say with Trotsky that Thermidor means reaction, operating on the social foundation of the revolution, is to declare that the Paris Commune could have carried out the bourgeois revolution better than the Jacobins or better than Napoleon. From the historical standpoint, the later victory of Napoleon was not reactionary at all, but rather the only way in which the French Revolution could progress all over Europe. Napoleon was reactionary only in relation to the masses, but in those days the historic initiative of the masses was relatively secondary to that of the bourgeoisie. Had the Paris Commune taken the power, for example, it is impossible to imagine that they would have swept the *ancien régime* out of Europe, as did Napoleon.

In his article Trotsky declares that, not only has Thermidor been completed in Russia, but that Stalinism spells Bonapartism. Thus, we are given to understand now that we can have one Bonapartism in a framework of capitalism and another Bonapartism in a framework of a Workers' State. This, of course, confuses the character of the Workers' State with that of the capitalist State and assumes that, in spite of the enormous differences between them, the same social phenomena can prevail and can

be designated in the same way. Such an attitude loses all sense of historic distinction. Trotsky here overlooks the class content of the term "Bonapartism" which hitherto always has been applied to governmental and class relations only in a capitalist state. Has it ever been heard that Bonapartists call themselves communists, raise as their goal the formation of a co-operative commonwealth, call for the abolition of private property, issue the scientific works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and others, and perform the work the Stalinists have done?

The fact that Stalin does these things shows that we have to deal here not with a capitalist but with a workers' organism; with a Party, formerly communist, which has now become Centrist, based upon the privileges accorded to the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union. In proportion as this bureaucracy is stable, in proportion is the pseudo-communist Centrism of the Stalinists lasting. Stalinist degeneration, then, is not a form of Bonapartism, but of Centrism. Should Stalin be overthrown by some strong man representing the *kulak* elements, then indeed we might speak of Bonapartism. The declaration that Stalinism is Bonapartism carries the implication that Russia is a capitalist State, and that the workers must wage a new civil war there in order to drive out the Stalinists.

4

The struggle of the Left Wing of the communists against the official leadership took the form of a struggle against the theory of Socialism in One Country which had been brought forward by Stalin in 1924 and was developed in the Communist Program issued by the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International in 1928.

In the beginning, the theory of Socialism in One Country was merely a negative reaction to the fact that the workers had succeeded in moving towards socialism in only one country. For the officialdom it was a form of whistling in the dark, a method of keeping up spirits during difficult moments. With the accentuation of reactionary tendencies, however, the theory of Socialism in One Country began to take on nationalistic accretions, and strongly to retard international solidarity. If Russia in her isolation was able, not merely to hold her own, but to become completely self-sufficient and to build up a socialist paradise in a capitalist world, then Russia's interest in the international revolution was bound to become platonic and humanitarian and to lose the poignancy of self-interest.

The struggle for socialism for the Russians was reducing itself to a mere economic problem. The protracted equilibrium which had tolerated a Soviet Union in a capitalist environment had begun also to engender illusions that the soviets could coexist peacefully for an indefinite period

with the rest of the world. All that was needed was for the soviets to leave other nations alone; they would return the compliment. International relations now assumed the form of seeking trade relations with capitalist nations. In line with this policy, the entire diplomacy of the Soviet Union was reconstructed. In the days of Lenin, who was the leader both of the Russian State and of the Third International, revolutionary communism and Russian diplomacy went hand in hand. Joffe, Karakhan, Litvinoff, Trotsky, all were primarily propagandists for the world revolution in their relationship with the diplomats of other countries. This was bound up with the belief that the welfare of Russia was dependent upon the development of the world revolution.

Under Stalin, and with the influence of the theory of Socialism in One Country, the Russian State became divorced from the International. No sooner had Lenin died and Trotsky been reduced to secondary influence than the capitalist countries began to recognize Russia and to enter into commercial relations with her. All of them stipulated that Russia must not engage in revolutionary propaganda, and increasingly it was borne home to Russian officialdom that they could do business better were they to become entirely divorced from the Third International. Accordingly, the diplomats now sent out by the Soviet no longer were eminent revolutionists, but rather keen businessmen with an eye to bargains and a love for bourgeois tastes.

The theory of Socialism in One Country also brought in its train the idea that nothing must be done by the Russians to jeopardize their chances for building socialism. Socialism in Russia was the bird in the hand, international revolution was the bird in the bush. If Russia could build up socialism, it could inspire all the world to emulate that country's example. Thus the Russians abandoned the conception of revolution as a result of misery to take up the idealistic theory that people will revolt because of some utopia realized elsewhere. Marxism had taught that revolutions are made, not by the intellect, but by emotions and passions aroused by hunger and need. Stalinism began to teach that the world revolution could be attained simply by showing the world a perfect picture of the ideal.

The theory of Socialism in One Country also implied that the rest of the world would allow Russia to build socialism in that country. Thus the capitalist world was not so vicious after all and, if Russia behaved herself, she could manage to divide the capitalist forces, make business deals with some, and secure their aid. Essentially this was a theory of class collaboration because, in trying to obtain economic favors from world capitalism, the Russians would be forced to refuse to help the workers abroad in their struggle against their employers. This in turn would

strengthen the power of the employers and increase their demands upon the Soviet Union.

The utopia of Socialism in One Country had appeared before in Russia in the ranks of the Narodniki and the social revolutionaries. These latter had believed that the Russians did not need international solidarity to obtain social justice On the contrary, the Russian soul, through the institution of the *Mir,* had shown the whole western world how to live collectively, how to wipe out the individualism of capitalism The victorious Stalinist functionaries apparently were reverting to a modification of these nationalist and racial theories Bolsheviks alone had succeeded; the rest of the world had failed Did this not show the exceptional character of the Russians? Was there anything that the Russians could not do? More and more the Russian functionaries began to regard foreign communists with contempt, especially the dependence of the international communist forces on the subsidies sent them from Russia.

Socialism could be built in one country alone as a task of mere economic construction only if Russia did not have to depend upon other countries for material resources, but had all the necessaries at its disposal. The Soviet provincial officials actually believed that they were not part of a world division of labor which division was bound to increase commensurately with the restoration of Russian economy The self-sufficiency of any country, of course, can be achieved only on a very low plane of economy, when the society is in the hunting or fishing stage, or in a primitive state of agrarian life But to imagine that socialism, which is a stage of social development higher than capitalism, does not need the division of labor which capitalism itself has set up, but can dispense with the resources of the rest of the world, was greatly to exaggerate the forces within the Soviet Union and to reverse the real relations existing This was a type of nationalist megalomania possible for a camel driver from Tashkent or a Djugeshvili from the sheep hills of Georgia, who had come to Moscow and been impressed by its size but who had never seen the outside world, but impossible for a western industrial worker to conceive Socialism without an increased world planning and world division of labor never could be anticipated by an English or a German revolutionist It was for the Russians to develop this theory to ludicrous lengths

The idea that Russia could gain far more from capitalist intercourse than from the world revolution was bound to affect the whole international movement The various Communist Parties also began to make nationalist arrangements. This was seen first in China and then in Germany It was to culminate in the Franco-Soviet pact and in the alliance of the American communists with the Roosevelt Administration Naturally, this meant the end of the International as a world revolutionary force.

The belief that Russia, unaided, could build socialism within her own borders naturally led to an idealization of the peasant countries. It meant that socialism would come first, not from the industrial West, but from the Asiatic East, and that Russia, the most backward industrial country, would be permitted to catch up with and later to surpass the rest of the world. All that was necessary, evidently, was the proper relations with the peasantry.

At first, during the difficult days of 1924, when the memory of Lenin was still fresh, the idea of socialism's being built in one country was not conceived as immediate but rather gradually. With the success of the Five-Year Plan, however, socialism was due to arrive within a very short time.

The Stalinists did not deny that socialism meant the liquidation of classes, not only of the *kulak* but of the peasantry as a whole. Socialism also meant the termination of the discrepancies between city and country. It meant a system of society wherein a far higher system of production was obtained than in any capitalist country. It meant the withering away of the State and the absence of prisons, police, armies. It meant the disappearance of the gap between hand and brain labor, and the elimination of the bureaucrat and the monopoly of specialists. But the Stalinists actually affirmed that all classes would be liquidated by the Second Five-Year Plan ending in 1937 or thereabouts Just as the *kulak* was liquidated by sending him into the collective, however, so the peasantry was liquidated by the fiction that all those working in collective farms were now the same as agricultural laborers Thus were hidden the fundamental differences between the country and the city while, at the same time, the basis was created for the end of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The myth that no more classes existed in Russia would be used to wipe out the special power of the proletariat.

Socialism in One Country was to be created by inducing the rest of the world to let Russia alone politically. Thus peace was essential. From now on, Russia was to take a decided pacifist tone and, in the peace conferences, to propose complete disarmament as the sole way to prevent war Lenin's dictum that universal disarmament was the negation of the principle of the class struggle, since the only way that the slaves could emancipate themselves was by militant use of arms, was forgotten.

Whereas Litvinoff in his disarmament proposals called for general and total disarmament as the only infallible solution of the war problem,[1] Lenin, on the contrary, had affirmed. "An oppressed class which does not strive to learn to handle weapons, to possess weapons, would only deserve that it should be treated as slaves. We may not forget, without becoming

[1] Speech at the Geneva Disarmament Conference, 1932

converted into bourgeois pacifists or opportunists, that we are living in a class society and that there is not and cannot be any way out from that except by class struggle and the overthrow of the power of the ruling class. . . . And in the face of such a fact, the proposal is made to revolutionary social-democrats [1] that they put forward the 'demand' for 'disarmament'! This is equivalent to complete surrender of the point of view of the class struggle, renunciation of all thought of revolution. Our slogan must be: arming of the proletariat in order to conquer, to expropriate and to disarm the bourgeoisie. This is the sole possible tactics for a revolutionary class, tactics arising from the whole *objective development* of capitalist militarism and prescribed by this development." [2]

And in another place, Lenin stresses, "To put 'disarmament' as a point in the program means to say in general we are against the use of weapons. In this there is not a particle of Marxism any more than if we said: 'We are against the use of force.' . . . The Kautskian preaching of disarmament, addressed directly to the present governments of the big imperialist powers, is the most vulgar opportunism and bourgeois pacifism, serving in fact—in spite of the 'good intentions' of the sweet-spoken Kautsky—to draw the workers away from the revolutionary struggle. For by such preaching the idea is instilled into the workers that the present bourgeois governments of the imperialist powers are not enmeshed by the thousands of threads of finance-capital and by scores of hundreds of corresponding secret treaties among themselves."

"Thus the chief defect of the demand for disarmament is exactly that it evades all the concrete questions of revolutions. Or do the supporters of disarmament stand for a completely new view of an unarmed revolution? . . . Disarmament is precisely a flight from nasty reality but not at all a struggle against it."

At the disarmament conferences, of course, Litvinoff presented not only his ideal of total disarmament but his practical plan of disarmament, a plan which failed to include the disarmament of the State's police force, including the troops in the colonial countries, but did incorporate the disarmament of independent colonial countries, such as China. Litvinoff was willing to tolerate the retention of small arms, the instruments with which the State meets the demonstrations of the proletariat. In their practical aspects, the proposals of Litvinoff differed little from the American proposals submitted by President Hoover.

As a matter of fact, Stalinist degeneration had placed the policies of the communists in such a light that the distinction between capitalism and communism was blurred. Capitalist leaders also brought forth plans for

[1] Read Communists.

[2] Lenin's speech is printed in *The Communist*, Vol. XI, No. 3, p. 273. (March, 1932.)

national socialism, or socialism in their country alone; they issued periodically practical proposals for the disarmament of all their enemies; they argued on the necessity and possibility of self sufficiency and the liquidation of all classes within the country under the control of the State This was, indeed, the ideology of the fascists, who learned much from the new tactics in Russia

In a military sense, too, the pacifistic theories of the Russian diplomats wrought enormous damage upon the defense of the Soviet Union Those theories compelled Stalin to declare that he was not concerned with what was occurring in the countries around him; Russia would worry only about its own physical borders. Thus the militarist and fascist enemies of Russia, such as Germany on the West and Japan on the East, were given ample opportunity to prepare their forces and to win important bases for attack Japan has now consolidated her position on an immense front on the border of Siberia, Germany has been placed in a position where she can secure complete united action of all the Eastern European countries against Russia Stalinism abandoned the foremost revolutionary principle that the best defense for a revolution is an offense Russian misleadership has given to the superior forces of the enemy the opportunity of choosing both the time and the place for the future battle

In this period the capitalist world began to praise the statesmanship of Stalin Russia was invited to participate in the League of Nations and, to the surprise of the old communists who knew Lenin's views on that subject, the Soviet Union accepted and, when joining that family of nations, pledged loyally to co-operate Similarly, the Soviet Union signed the Kellogg Peace Pact which also brought it into confraternity with the capitalist world Thus, in every country the Communist Parties controlled by the Russians were forced to change their attitude towards the League of Nations and to hail it as an instrument of peace and the way out for a bleeding world Everywhere the Communist International became the mere diplomatic auxiliary for the foreign policy of the Soviet Union Thus, under Lenin, Soviet diplomacy was united to the Communist International under the banner of world revolution, under Stalin, a new unity of the two was achieved, but this time Russian nationalism led and the Communist International withered away

Under such circumstances, the struggle for Socialism in One Country became a struggle against socialism in more than one country Since the whole Communist International was now reduced to serving the aims of one country and was turning its back to the world revolution, it is clear that revolutions could occur in other countries only by a struggle against the Communist Parties Should a revolution break out in other countries, the proletariat of those lands would have to call for a revision of the pro-

gram and policies of the Soviet Union It would mean the end of Stalinism and the end of the leadership of the Russians Against this development the Russian nationalists would have to fight The Western revolutionists would have to form their own grouping– the Fourth International.

Under the theory of Socialism in One Country, the Communist International changed from an international organization to an appendage of a national organism, the program moved from "Workers of he World Unite" to "Defend the Soviet Union" Militant struggle turned to pacifism, the goal of a better world division of labor was transformed to a plan for national self-sufficiency, the workers gave way to the peasants as the leaders of the world revolution, the West yielded to the East; class struggle surrendered to class collaboration, "destructive" politics gave place to "constructive" economics, within all the Parties, the members retreated in favor of the bureaucratic officials who appointed their supporters regardless of the expressed wish of the membership, communism became populism Socialism in One Country finally made socialism simply ridiculous

XLV. ISOLATION AND COLLAPSE

I

THE Sixth World Congress of the Communist International finally was convened in 1928. By that time, the revolutionary movement as manifested in the General Strike in England and the Revolution in China had received signal defeats. In the United States, for the next year and a half, capitalist production reached new peaks, breaking all records. Regardless of this situation, the Sixth Congress laid down a line based on the following concepts: First, the world was on the eve of a new revolutionary wave. This would usher in the third period of post-War history, the first having ended in 1923, the second in 1928. Secondly, in view of the coming struggle for power, communists must consider socialist and other workers' reformist groups as their chief enemies to be destroyed at all costs. The socialists were really social-fascists, that is a wing of fascism, and by no means could united fronts be made with them or with the reformists in the trade unions. Third, the communists no longer were to work within the reactionary trade unions, but everywhere were to form their own trade union centers. The Congress also adopted a new Communist Program which justified the idea of Socialism in One Country.

The policies of the Sixth Congress wrought enormous damage upon communist forces throughout the world. At first sight it might appear that all the Right Wing errors of the four years since the Fifth World Congress were being corrected. In reality, all the Leftist blunders against which Lenin had polemicized here were repeated in the crassest form, so that the Congress achieved not an antidote for past mistakes, but a multiplication of all the Right Wing blunders by new Leftist ones.

Particularly fatal was this course to the German movement. Following the line of the "Stalintern," the German communists fell headlong into a bottomless abyss. Before the next Congress of the International could be called, the great German Communist Party no longer existed. Although the political storm troops of Hitler were composed mainly of students, youth, declassed petty bourgeois, and slum proletarians who in no way should have been a match for the well-organized and trained workmen, yet these sections were able overwhelmingly to defeat the strongest working class in Europe and to crush it mercilessly. The whole world watched with amazement as the powerful German Communist Party with two

hundred and fifty thousand members, with a defense group of half a million, and with voting support of six million, give up its cause without even a fight. To lose in an open conflict not necessarily would have constituted disgrace, but the German communists capitulated without engaging the enemy in a single battle. The loss of the Chinese Revolution had not been decisive, after all, for world affairs; the loss of the German Revolution penetrated the very heart and soul of the international proletarian forces.

Although the German revolutionary movement was destroyed precisely because it adhered so loyally and closely to the line of the Stalintern, that body in return did no more than print the bare news of the events. When Hitler threatened to take power, no emergency congress was called to discuss the drastic change in the situation, nor was a special congress convoked afterward to clarify the lessons of this terrible defeat and to work out a new policy. All during the critical days in Germany, before, during, and after the advent of Hitler to power, there took place merely a perfunctory gathering of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in which it was affirmed that no mistakes had been made, either in Germany or in Moscow. From now on, the Left opposition groups took the stand that the Third International was dead as a revolutionary force and could play only a counter-revolutionary rôle. The German defeat seemed to demonstrate that the Russians were so engrossed with their own national problems that they concerned themselves very little with what took place ouside their own country. As for the other Parties of the Third International, they did not dare to raise their voices in protest to the killing of the German Revolution.

But the German Communist Party was destroyed not only because the Third International failed to act, but also as a result of its fatal decisions at the Sixth Congress. In the name of Leninism, all the wisdom of Lenin quietly had been discarded. Incalculable harm was done the German movement by the declaration that the Socialist Party was but a branch of fascism and in reality the chief enemy of the workers. That the actions of the socialist leadership more than once had destroyed the Revolution in Germany was, without doubt, correct. But at this time, it was not the socialists who were representing reaction, but the rapidly growing Fascist Party which murderously attacked both communists and socialists. When the socialists were killed by fascist raids, the communists refused to help, on the ground that it was simply a case of two reactionary forces killing off each other. When the communists received the same treatment, the socialists also abstained from coming to their assistance. This division of the workers immeasurably hastened the advance of the fascists to power.

As a matter of fact, the Socialist Party never could have been considered correctly as a wing of fascism. The Socialist Party might be the agent through which capitalism retained power, but it was, after all, a party

composed in the main of workers bearing the traditions of Marxism and espousing the cause of the proletariat. Objectively, its rôle was to demoralize the proletariat from within by basing its program on social reform rather than on social revolution. The fascists, however, as we have already seen, were of entirely different stock, and came into power because it was possible no longer for the capitalists to sustain social reform. Indeed, the very fact that fascism was arising and socialism was being dismissed by economically dominant classes was a sign that now more than ever both socialists and communists could be united in struggle.

Now that the concessions which had been invaluable no longer were forthcoming, the socialists were in an entirely different position. At worst, many of them might be willing to fight for their old jobs, their old reforms and privileges, and to join hands with whomever they could on these issues, at best, some socialists might be moved by the new situation to act in a revolutionary manner. Certainly the socialists no longer were in any position to refuse to make united fronts with other sections of the labor movement The onrush of fascism, thrusting aside social reform, dragged the socialist bureaucracy out of its old entrenched positions and diminished its influence over its members

It was at this very juncture, when the possibilities for a united front were greater than they had been for some time, that the Communist Parties decided to change their tack and to wipe out all united fronts with socialist organizations No longer would the pure communists sit with the socialist traitors The Stalinists declared the only united front they would make would be the united front "from below" That is, in trying to win the socialist worker for united action, they would not appeal to him through his organization, permitting him to elect whatever representative he pleased, instead the Communist Party now decided to dictate to the socialist worker what delegate he must elect and what policy he must choose Thus, to form the united front, the socialist worker had to break the discipline of his own organization This, of course, most of them refused to do, especially in Germany, where traditions of discipline and organized action were so strong No longer did the communist consider it his duty patiently and painstakingly to convince his socialist fellow-workers of the proper policy to be pursued, but now a policy of threats and bureaucratic ultimatums were issued. The Stalinist might succeed in this action in backward Russia, where he had control of all jobs; he could not succeed in Germany The result was that no united front at all was obtainable.

Such a situation also played into the hands of the old die-hard socialist officials who for many years had sabotaged the united front with the revolutionary forces, in order to form a united front with the capitalists against the communists Thus the new policy of the Third International became

the chief means to prevent the Leftward-moving socialist workers from actually breaking the bonds of their Party and attaining united revolutionary action Nowhere was this more apparent than in Germany prior to the victory of Hitler.

The Third International functionaries tried to justify their rupture of the united front policy by alleging that, in a period of revolutionary upswing, such as characterized the "third period," united fronts with reformists were vital to the revolution They closed their eyes to the fact that Lenin had made united fronts with similar reformist parties in the Russian Revolution, up to and including the moment of seizure of power. Indeed, the soviets themselves were united front bodies so that, far from denying the value of the united front in acute revolutionary situations, the Russian experience proved that the united front was invariably the best instrument for seizing power, and that the united front itself, in the form of soviets, became transformed into an organ of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat for the maintenance of power and the establishment of the socialistic régime If the united front under given circumstances leads to the soviet, conversely genuine soviets can not be formed without the united front Can it be that the Germans believed they could skip this stage and create soviets without the united front? The 1927 Canton adventure should have shown them the lethal character of such a course The fact is, the German communist leaders did not believe the time was ripe for soviets How natural then was their sabotage of the united front!

The decision that the Socialist Party was to be treated as a wing of fascism meant also that communists were duty bound to destroy the Socialist Party physically, as they had boasted they would the Fascist Thus, the socialist workers often found themselves attacked on two fronts, their meetings were broken up by hooligans, and they were forced to defend themselves not only from the side of the reactionaries but from the side of the communists

The situation was aggravated by the new decisions of the Sixth Congress in regard to the organized trade union movement. Hitherto it had been the policy of the communists to work within the established trade unions. Now it was decided wherever possible to split the old unions and to form new revolutionary ones In Germany, above all, this policy proved disastrous In 1929, the reformist trade unions counted about eight million members. Communist members and sympathizers in these unions amounted to no more than about three hundred thousand Yet the Reds decided to withdraw their forces from these reformist unions and to form their own Red Trade Union Center This action of course split the trade union movement wide open. Not only did it cement the power of the reformists over the workers who remained in the unions, but it entirely isolated the com-

munists from the mass of members, and transformed them from an active force to an isolated sect. The paper unions formed by the Stalinists were helpless to prevent the employers from launching their attacks and, because of the split in the ranks of labor, the workers lost battle after battle. No wonder, when the communists decided at the eleventh hour and fifty-ninth minute to call a general strike to prevent Hitler's rise to power, nobody responded! The Communist Party always could declare that it was provoked into splits by expulsions and other actions against it by the reformist officials; the fact remained that communists were only too willing to accept this gage of battle, forgetting that these officials were playing the game of the employers, whereas their own duty was to unite the workers in struggle.

In line with their designation of the Socialist Party as a social-fascist group, the Stalinists had to declare that all the parties to the Right of the socialists were thereby fascist Thus, simple republicans and democrats became transformed over night into fascists and, if the united front could not be made with the Socialist Party and the unions, certainly it could not be made with these other groups. Furthermore, this sort of analysis meant that the democratic parliamentary régime was to be considered no better than a fascist administration This failure to distinguish between various forms of capitalist States had also dire effects.

In Germany, the communists at different periods denounced as fascist Hindenburg, von Papen, von Schleicher, and others who had held office under the Weimar Republic But, under these administrators, the right to vote freely had existed, certain social reforms were still granted, there was still the right to speak, to organize, and to strike. Evidently, if this was fascism, fascism was not so terrible as painted. Thus, in effect, the communists glossed over the real meaning of fascism and thereby helped to pave the way for the victory of Hitler.

Furthermore, if the existent régime was fascist, this could imply only that the fascists already were in the saddle and that it was futile to struggle to keep them out of power In this way, the Stalinist theory further paralyzed the people's fight against fascism. Just as by its theory of social-fascism, Stalinism had decided that masses of organized workers already had been won to the cause of fascism, so, by its confused identification of democracy and fascism, it denounced every supporter of the Weimar Republic as a Hitler sympathizer, thus driving him towards the Nazis. Instead of comprehending that the mass of people were hostile to fascism and that the workers were ready to fight to the end against Hitler, German Stalinism was busy proving that the mass of people already were fascist. A timely psychological interpretation of the Stalinists' attitude would have exposed this sort of theory as the reflection of their intention to run away

from the fight. To spread the belief that the democrats all were in favor of fascism was to popularize the idea that all those not communists were in league against communism. This was the conception of one reactionary mass against which Marx had polemicized as far back as 1875, when the Gotha program was adopted by the German social-democrats. Instead of seeking to drive wedges among the ruling class elements in order to disunite them and, above all, of trying to win over the petty bourgeoisie, the Stalinists made it as easy as possible for the fascists to unite the people against the revolutionists.

Furthermore, by their false analysis, the Stalinists showed that they had failed to understand the essence of capitalist democracy. They went to great lengths to prove, for example, that each time the policeman's club descended upon the head of some unfortunate striker, this was a fascist act, and the State was thereby fascist. Hence, they concealed from the people the simple fact that wherever policemen flourish, even in the most democratic or social-democratic states, they use their clubs and guns against those who challenge capitalism in any form whatsoever. Democracy does not mean the absence of terror, but merely a particular form of it.

Since to the Stalinists the democratic parliamentary republic had become identical with fascism, it was now possible to unite with fascists to overthrow parliament. Thus, when the Nazis in Prussia in 1930 brought forth the proposition to issue a referendum on the question whether the Landtag should be abolished, the communists voted for this fascist measure, uniting with the Hitlerites against socialists and democrats. The Stalinists, of course, declared they were not in favor of the fascist dictatorship, but advocated the smashing of parliament and the installation of Soviets.

Yet it must be remarked that, if this was truly the aim of the communists, they certainly did not prepare for its realization. Assuming that the referendum really had been passed and the Landtag dissolved, then the communists should have been preparing feverishly for insurrection, so as to allow the soviets to take power. Indeed, soviets already should have been formed. But nothing of the sort was done, nor could have been done in the light of the objective circumstances. The Communist Party of Germany was dreaming neither of insurrection nor of building soviets. By engaging in this demonstrative referendum without the slightest preparations for revolution, the communists showed that they believed soviets could be established either suddenly, by Party decree, as in Canton, or through the parliamentary measure of the referendum, or that they were indifferent whether the fascists took power or not. Certainly, had the referendum gone through, it would not have been soviets that would have been established, but rather a reactionary institution much closer to Hitler's desire.

In this period, communist collaboration with the fascists, both in theory and in practice, gradually was worked into a system. The communists, for example, began to raise as their chief slogan "Down with the Versailles Treaty." From the very beginning, the Comintern had been against this robber treaty, but Lenin distinctly had advised the German communists not to make this their principal demand, since it would play into the hands of the imperialists of Germany. For communists to make such a demand the center of their campaign meant to arouse the most intense national feeling at precisely the time when the Nazis were making such feeling their principal objective. Thus the line between communists and Nazis tended to become blurred, especially when the National Socialists also thunderously were denouncing capitalism The masses were now being instructed that their chief enemies were not the German employers but the foreign oppressor, who must be overthrown. This whole orientation added grist to the mill, not of the communists, but of the fascists. In the ranks of the German communists, the Stalinist policy of Russian nationalism was bearing fruit in German nationalism. Nationalism could have been avoided by the German communists if, instead of declaiming against the Versailles Treaty, they had pointed out that Germany was suffering because she was not intimately related to the other peoples of Europe, but torn asunder from Europe by capitalism Not the isolation of Germany, but her intimate relation with Russia and her other neighbors, through a Soviet United States of Europe, could have been demanded as the way out of the crisis

German nationalism was farther advanced by the Stalinists when they changed their slogans from the call to the proletarian revolution to an appeal for a *Volks Revolution,* or "People's Revolution." This was indeed aping the fascists, who had made this their shibboleth from the very beginning, in contradistinction to the Communist Party, which had formerly urged the international proletarian dictatorship. In Germany, more than elsewhere, such a vague idea of a "People's Revolution" was entirely inadequate, since it was in Germany, of all the industrial countries of the West, that the proletarian revolution was the ripest, that it had been most discussed theoretically, and attempted practically. It meant an admission that the proletarian revolution was not really in order, that it was not the workers who must rule, but the heterogeneous people. In this wise, the Stalinists made it plain they had no great faith in the proletariat's running the revolution, that the proletariat was too narrow a class. But if the communists had no faith in the firmness and ability of the workers to rule, why should the petty bourgeoisie have such faith? Lack of confidence in the proletariat was precisely the decisive factor in moving the petty bour-

geoisie completely over to the side of fascism; in creating this lack of faith, the Stalinists did their part very well.

Thus the logic of their actions impelled Communist Party members objectively to support the Nazis and to fight the socialists and liberal-democrats. Instead of a united front being made against fascism, there was being created in fact the united front against the Weimar Republic and the social reformists and democrats. For this reason, in spite of the growing revolutionary situation, the communists could break away but few workers from the Socialist Party, so that, to the very end, the social-democrats were able to retain their adherents and their eight million votes.

Coupled with their attacks on the socialists, the communist officials made all sorts of boasts of what they would do were Hitler actually to get into power. They declared that his rule would not last more than a couple of weeks, that such rule would compel the formation of a united front from below of all the workers, to sweep him out. One of the Stalinist leaders declared: "If they, the Nazis, once come into power, the united front of the proletariat will be established and sweep everything away. . . . They will come to grief more speedily than any other government." [1]

Indeed, the communist officials actually voiced the opinion that it would not be too harmful for the Nazis actually to take power, since this would be the best way to expose the demagogy of the fascists and thus destroy them. The fascists would not be able to live up to their multifarious promises; they would fall of their own weight. With such a platform, the communists gave the impression that the installation of fascism was not to be fought too hard. On their side, by no means were the Nazis opposed to finding new arguments why they should get into power. They understood far better than the communists that it would be infinitely more difficult to dislodge the Nazis after they were entrenched in office and had the armed forces of the State at their disposal.

None the less, as the situation grew more and more revolutionary, in 1932 the communists became the beneficiaries of an immense sweep toward the Left on the part of the masses. The communist vote, which had been about four million at peak, now surged upward to six million. In the most important industrial sections of Germany, Berlin, Hamburg, Bremen, Saxony, and the Ruhr, the German Communist Party had an absolute majority of the working class.[2] These workers, feeling a battle impending,

[1] Speech of Remmele in the Reichstag, given in "Rote Fahne," Oct. 16, 1931. Compare L. D. Trotsky: *What Next?* p. 60.

[2] The fact that six million followed the German Communist Party politically and only three hundred thousand or so in the trade unions should have served as an ominous warning. These figures meant that the workers did not trust the Communist leadership in the day-to-day struggle although they still had faith in the Comintern and Russia as a revolutionary force.

construed the attitude of the Communist Party to mean that they would fight before Hitler would get into power. They had no inkling that the communist officials later were to declare that there was no revolutionary situation in Germany, and that the advent of Hitler was inevitable.

According to all the theories upon which the Communist International was founded, the revolutionary forces in Germany should have been able to prevent the victory of fascism. The world was then in the throes of a deep economic and political crisis acutely affecting the whole of Europe, in the course of which the communist forces had grown considerably. Had the Comintern lived up to its early internationalist conception of the revolution, had it recognized the gravity of the situation, it could have mobilized its parties in Poland, in Czecho-Slovakia, in France, and in the other bordering countries, to help the Germans. It could have made every effort to form united fronts with other working class organizations throughout Europe which would have declared that, should Hitler take power, it would mean international struggle. To back up this threat, the Red Army should have been mobilized immediately on the Western frontiers of Russia. This would have been the Soviet Union's method of demonstrating that it not only called on the workers of other countries to defend the workers' Fatherland, but that it felt bound to help the revolution throughout the world as well.

Such a policy was impossible for Stalinism. The Russian leaders running the Third International had turned away from the world revolution. They had adopted the program that the Soviet Union did not rest upon the support which the international working class could give, but relied solely upon its internal strength, its Red Army and its factories, upon the deals that it could make with foreign capitalist diplomats. The Russian bureaucrats failed to realize that, by allowing the German and European working class movements to be destroyed, the attack against the Soviet by capitalist Europe led by fascist Germany would become inevitable, since there would then be no force within those capitalist countries able to stave off the war. They failed to see that the destruction of the German proletarian organizations was a decisive step toward the destruction of the Soviet Union itself. Not by posing the national interests of the Soviet Union against those of the world revolution, but only by throwing the weight of the soviets themselves behind the drive for world communism at the decisive time and place, could Russia herself be safe.

The mobilization of the Red Army, far from provoking war, might have been the very factor temporarily to prevent it, had the German fascists in this way been defeated and the pacifist social-democratic régimes retained the power in Central Europe. The real question was not whether Russia should mobilize her Red Army—this would have to occur sooner

or later—but whether 1932 was the right moment for Russia to act. But time already has shown how correct such a move would have been. In 1932, Japan had not as yet seized the whole of Manchuria and fortified her positions all along the Siberian border. In 1932, Hitler was not yet Chancellor, and there was no reconstituted German Army. The Red Army would have had a far easier task to prevent Hitler's getting into power than to stop him from launching war after he had become dictator precisely on a program of war and militarism.

After all, the German workers had a difficult task to carry out a revolution alone Up to now, at least in the West, proletarian revolutions had been concomitant with war Only in China and Spain had it been demonstrated that in the present era revolution did not have to depend upon the outbreak of war The situation in 1932 was far more difficult in a way than the one the Russians had had to face in 1917 In that period the world was divided and could not unite to crush the communists The Russian workers and peasants were armed. Russia was inaccessible to a considerable extent and far from being surrounded on all sides by a ring of enemy countries In 1919, when the soviets had to defend their victory, they were favored by the fact that capitalist Europe was exhausted and torn by internal revolution Fundamentally, Russia had been saved by the activities of the world proletariat In Germany in 1932, on the contrary, not only were the workers disarmed, but all the European capitalists were armed to the teeth, united and ready to attack a German proletarian revolution

Under such circumstances, the German workers needed some assurance that, should they begin their revolt, they would receive substantial international aid They understood well that, should they take to civil war, it would mean foreign intervention, with the possibilities of world revolution The question was, in case of intervention, would the Red Army be ready to help the embattled German proletariat? Furthermore, was the Communist International prepared to initiate the world revolution and to throw all the forces of the Soviet Union behind it?

The answer that the German workers received was clear The Stalinists were interested solely in building up socialism in their own country. They were unwilling to halt the Five Year Plan in order to help the German workers The German revolution would be a bothersome disturbance of all the utopian plans of the Russian bureaucrats, busy putting forth pacifist plans at disarmament conferences Such a policy was in line with the Stalinist strategy never to take the military offensive, but to give the enemy the full advantage of choosing the time and place of battle In short, there was to be no world mobilization on behalf of the German workers

Such a reply was bound to discourage the German working class Had the Red Army been mobilized and plans prepared for revolt, the German

bourgeoisie would have been compelled to consider seriously the feasibility of supporting Hitler to the end. At the same time, the demonstrated determination of the communists to bring on the revolution in Germany, should Hitler attempt to take power, would have rallied large masses of German middle class elements and workers who had moved away from the cause of the proletariat precisely because of the vacillating, negative policy of the advanced workers' organizations. Furthermore, the foreign capitalist rulers would have felt the ground stirring under them and would have mobilized all their forces to prevent the victory of German fascism.

The Stalinists being what they were, the terrible debâcle of 1933 resulted. The destruction of the German organizations inevitably was followed by the crushing of the workers' movement throughout all of Central Europe, thus removing the chief brake to intervention against the Soviet Union. From this time on, world imperialism became far more arrogant to the Soviets Japan advanced with seven league boots in the East, Germany sprang forward as the spearhead of the attack in the West. Under Stalinism, the Soviet Union had now become isolated and forced to defend itself against the whole world.

In a meeting of the high functionaries of the Stalintern, after the German disaster, the infallible leadership attempted to prove conclusively that no other course of action had been possible. In brief, thousands of communists had been killed, tens of thousands had been jailed, hundreds of thousands had fled the country, fascism had become victorious throughout Central Europe, the most important proletarian outposts had been surrendered without a shot being fired, and all that Stalinism could declare was that events had gone along "as predicted"; it had been inevitable that Hitler was to take power!

In Italy, while Lenin was alive the workers fought fascism, although those engaged in industry and trade represented but six and one-half million compared to ten and one-half million agrarians; in Germany, under Stalinism, the workers did not fight fascism, although there were eighteen and one-half million engaged in industry and trade compared to ten million agrarians, and although the communists controlled the decisive sections of the country. With a Party and a following not much stronger than the Germans, in a backward country two and a half times the size of Germany, Lenin boldly had fought for power. The Germans under Stalin, although having behind them the best theoretical and practical training, did not even make a fight for it.

In "proof" of their point that Hitler's victory was inevitable, the Stalinists gave voluminous evidence to show the treachery of the social-democrats in that they had refused to follow the lead of the revolutionary Stalinists. But these bankrupt Stalinists could not stop there; they had also

to attempt to show that the German people did not want to fight, and that no revolutionary situation existed in Germany. The Comintern, however, lived on hopes and affirmed that, while there had been no revolutionary situation as yet, there would soon be one, and the communists must prepare for a revolution.

How empty was this analysis could be seen by the events that occurred in Germany later. The blood purge of the Nazis, by which Hitler finally separated himself from his former socialistic comrades, the plebiscite in the Saar, the Austrian revolt, the French revolutionary ferment, the rearmament of Germany, and the open declarations against the Soviet Union, all found Germany silent as the grave, so far as organized demonstrations of communists or workers were concerned. Measured by the barometers of these events, it was plain that the Third International was now completely dead in Germany.

2

The defeat of the proletariat in the decisive portions of Europe in turn only drove the Russian leaders still farther to the Right. In proportion, as they could rely less and less on the international working class organizations for active support, the Russian diplomats turned to intrigue and to alliance with the world capitalists. With the advent of fascism in Germany, Russia became a member of the League of Nations precisely at a time when that happy family itself was no longer an instrument effective to prevent German imperialism from declaring war, and when it functioned merely as a variation of the old pre-War set-ups to maintain the imperialist balance of power and the status quo. It was impossible for Russia to become part of the League of Nations, to enter its machinery and to assume responsibility without adding her weight to the great incubus of oppression already bearing down upon hundreds of millions of colonial slaves. It was not enough that Russia had entered a defunct organization effective only as a war machine and anti-colonial force; it was now necessary to idealize the whole set-up and to build theories on France and England as real forces for peace.

The military aspect of Russia's entrance into the League of Nations was soon seen in the creation of the Franco-Soviet Pact in May 15, 1935, in which both France and Russia pledged mutually to assist each other in case of invasion by another country. Prior to this time, Russia had made non-aggression pacts with her capitalist neighbors in which each pledged not to invade the territory of the other. This was the first time that Stalin had dared to gamble with the Russian workers' lives to the extent of promising to aid some capitalist country if invaded by another imperialist rival. He declared in a signed statement that he understood and fully approved the national defense policy of France in keeping her armed forces

at a level required for security. This statement was supported the next day by an article appearing in the official Soviet newspaper, "Izvestia," which affirmed: "Until a system of collective security including countries governed by elements endangering peace has been firmly established, France and the U.S.S.R. will maintain their armaments at a level guaranteeing their safety. This, it is true, a heavy burden for both countries. But to weaken these forces now would be to strengthen the hopes of the opponents of peace and to subject other peoples to the risk of having to pay dearly for negligence in preparing their defenses."

The arguments of the sovietists were identical with those which the French militarists had adopted in the various disarmament conferences to prove why France should not follow the line of the Versailles Treaty and either disarm or allow Germany to arm. In these conferences, Litvinoff had challenged the French thesis, advocating disarmament; now France suddenly became a great force for peace, and her army had to be supported.

In their pact with the French capitalists, the Stalinists involved themselves in the whole metaphysical question, when is a country the aggressor and when is it on the defensive? During the World War, the opportunist Socialists had banged their heads in vain against the wall of that problem, all the socialists maintaining that "their" country was the one attacked. The Germans proved this fact by referring to the Russian invasion, the French by pointing at Germany, the English by parading Belgium, the Russians by stressing the invasion of Serbia, the country of their "fellow-Slavs," by Austria, and so on. As a matter of fact, regardless of the form that the world conflict happened to take at any particular moment, the War was the result of the mutual rivalry and aggressions of all the imperialist powers whom the socialists were defending. It became a highly dubious question whether any country was solely on the defense. Now, thirty years later, the Red bureaucrats of Russia again raise the problem of "mutual defense" as though it were a cud for the proletariat to chew upon indefinitely, to their own destruction. Who will undertake to say what is "offense" and what is "defense" in the jungle world of imperialism? For example, if Germany tries to recover Alsace-Lorraine, will that constitute an act of defense or of offense? To the Germans it is simply regaining possession of a piece of German territory which wrongfully had been seized.

To take up the question of defense and offense is to presume that there is an abstract law of international morals, something eternal and holy which all nations must obey. The truth is, a country can be weakened and overthrown without a territorial invasion, so that there can be aggression without invasion just as conversely, there can be invasion without aggression. Suppose that a country that desires to make war on France first attacks

an ally of France whom the latter is pledged to defend? Could not France maintain that this fight for her ally is really a measure of self-defense, that if her ally is beaten in advance she is bound to be defeated later? Let us suppose that Czecho-Slovakia is invaded by Germany, would not France interpret this as an attack upon her interests preliminary to an attack upon her territory? Would she not be able legitimately to call upon Russia for support? And if Russia counts on France to help her, will not Russia be bound to engage in war against Germany for the preservation of Franco-Czecho-Slovakian friendship?

At the same time as the Franco-Soviet Pact was signed there was forged another alliance between Czecho-Slovakia and the Soviets engaging to perform the same obligations. This is even more scandalous, since every one knows that only the greatest act of violence tore the three and a half million Germans of Bohemia from their brethren in Germany and put them in an independent rival state. Thus, if these three and a half million Germans want to be free from an alien yoke and to join their blood brethren in Germany, Russia is now pledged to interfere to the point of war in order to separate the German people.

Furthermore, if the Riff tribes rebel in Africa and the Syrians in the Near East, if the Indo-Chinese fight in Annam, if the Sudanese rise up and the great colonial empire of France is threatened, then the French generals can reckon on the fact that Stalin fully approves the large standing army of French imperialism and cannot afford to have that military force weakened or its prestige diminished in the slightest. In the colonial countries it now becomes the duty of the communists to prove why the French colonial army is better than others, why by no means must colonial revolts embarrass this force Since France stands for peace and for true national defense, it is thoroughly improper for any colonial people to demand their freedom from such a force and to risk war with it.

As in the case of Russia's entering the League of Nations, it was not enough for the Stalinists to sign the Pact, it was necessary for the Communist International to idealize it and to "prove" that there was nothing class collaborationist about it. Later they would call a special world congress of the Third International to perform this sleight-of-hand. In the meantime, Stalin gave notice to all the Communist Parties that French militarism was now to be supported. Only a short time previously, the Soviet Union leaders had been working overtime to prove that France was the arch enemy of Russia, had been organizing a White Guard Army of one hundred thousand in Paris for intervention at the proper time. The murders of Voikoff and Vorovsky, Soviet diplomats abroad, had been laid directly at the door of French capitalism. Concurrently, the German workers were being informed that Germany was Russia's best friend and

that Russia would have to fight side by side with the Reichswehr, were France to invade Germany. The Germans were told to concentrate their attack upon the Versailles Treaty and the League of Nations, its offspring.

Unfortunately for the Soviet Union, history has proved that it is always its best friend who turns traitor, but the lesson is never learned, and always there are new friends. This was the case first with Chiang Kai-shek and later with Wang Ching-wei in China; this was the case with Germany in the West Accordingly, no sooner had Russia won France as a new friend than French fascism made startling advances, and signs appeared on every side that it would be victorious eventually. Thus, evidently, the best friends of Russia are those countries which are so weak that they need Russia's support until they can reorganize their economy along fascist lines But at the moment. at any rate, France has suddenly blossomed out as the bosom friend of the Soviets, for whom the latter is ready to give the life of all its citizens.

We have already shown the nationalist behavior of the Stalinists in Germany in directing their principal attacks against the Versailles Treaty rather than against the German capitalist class Under the new line, the Russians were protecting the League of Nations and status quo which previously they had denounced This time they were playing into the hands of the French nationalists as before they had played into the hands of the German To the German workers, the chief enemy was pointed out as the French; to the French workers, the chief enemy became the Germans. In 1932, the Russian Army could not lift its finger to declare its solidarity with the German workers; in 1935 it could pledge to sacrifice all for the French capitalists When the German workers were on the verge of civil war, the Stalinists were filled with pacifist phrases and disarmament proposals When, however, the militarists were in the saddle and called for reinforcements, the Stalinists stood ready with arms in their hands to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for decadent French capital

Most important of all is the fact that the French communists are forced to abandon all thought of revolutionary activity Since the French Army is to be supported at its maximum efficiency, it becomes necessary to recruit for that army and to end all anti militarist work; it is also necessary to put down strikes in all munition, metal, and other factories that might be useful in war time Furthermore, since strikes would weaken the army, the French Communist Party must assure the French capitalist class that, in consideration for the support that Russia is to receive, the French workers will not attack their employers, but must unite the whole nation behind the pact. Further than that, if the army is to be supported to the maximum, it is necessary to support the militarist clique at the head of

the army. There is no question that this military clique understands full well the advantage in war that Germany has derived from its dictatorial reorganization under Hitler. These French militarists, for their own self-protection if for no other reason, are compelled also to move towards the same dictatorial centralization of forces. Thus, since the fascists support a strong army, and since the army officers must move towards fascism as a political mechanism for the efficient conduct of war, Stalinism has objectively given support to those very forces which must bring fascism to victory in France.

The Franco-Soviet Pact came at a time when the French employers were facing a difficult situation, both within and without. They were in desperate need of Soviet support to bolster up their position. Externally, they feared the power of Germany, and wanted the guarantee of the strong Red Army behind French interests. At the same time, in the light of the coming war, they needed some cause, some heroic symbol, by which to induce the French anti-militarist workers to fight. In the World War, the shibboleth was "to make the world safe for democracy." Now the slogan: "Defend the Soviet Union" will be the bait to encourage French workers to shoot down their German brothers.

The feelings of the German militant workers, drinking the dregs of reaction to the last drop in the concentration camps under Hitler, can be imagined. Now they are told that, as sympathizers of the Communist International, it is their duty to support the army of France against Germany. This becomes a powerful argument in the hands of Hitler to disillusion the German workers, showing how they always have been made the dupes of Russian nationalism. As Stalinism develops its new French nationalist orientation, it must drive the workers deeper and deeper into the grip of German nationalism, thus helping to prepare for the new world war. It must make the German workers hate the Soviet Republic as a sham to cover a new Russian imperialism. Stalinism has done everything possible to convince the German workers that the Soviet Union should not be defended, but rather overthrown.

The French employers need the Soviet alliance for another internal reason. In Germany, although both socialists and communists were split and urging the members of the opposing group to break discipline and to join the other, none the less, so great was the influence of discipline and organization upon the German working class that, as we have seen, practically no one left his organization to enter the other. The socialists and communists both maintained their membership practically intact to the last. In France, however, the situation is entirely different. There organizational discipline is not so highly valued; on the contrary, the masses have a tradition of taking matters into their own hands. Here it

is socially necessary, if capitalism is to stave off the revolution, to bring both socialists and communists together, for, even when both parties act jointly, there is no safeguard that the workers will follow their leaders and be directed into safe channels. The Franco-Soviet pact became an immensely powerful instrument to bring the Russian nationalist communists and the French nationalist socialists together. From then on they began loyally to co-operate with one another and to join their forces to keep the proletariat enchained to the chariot wheels of French capitalism.

It must not be imagined that French capitalism will shed one drop of blood for the Soviet Union's Dictatorship of the Proletariat. On the contrary, at every decisive moment, French imperialism will use the Pact as a lever to batter down that Dictatorship. France wants not a risky proletarian ally that may usher in the world revolution once war begins, but a safe partner, one that can be trusted to fight according to capitalist rules. Accordingly, France bends every effort to support the Stalinist bureaucracy and to put down the proletariat within the Soviet Union.

The danger of Russia's new orientation to the workers of the world was fully seen in the Italian-Ethiopian conflict that broke in 1935. The Italian adventure was an important blow, upsetting the status quo so carefully preserved by the League of Nations. Unlike Japan's attack on Manchuria, it was a blow which fell heavily, not upon the Soviet Union, but upon British imperialism, although in both cases it was directly an attack upon the colonial peoples and indirectly upon the proletariat generally.

Moreover, Ethiopia, in her struggles against Italian fascism, was thrust forward as a political factor capable of changing the entire situation of Europe. First of all, had Italian fascism been defeated, it would have meant in all probability the eruption of the proletarian revolution in Italy which, in turn, would have upset completely the political equilibrium in Europe. Secondly, there was always the possibility of the Ethiopian war's starting a conflagration that would rage throughout Africa and all the colonial countries, thereby also involving the leading imperialist nations. These were the two great axes that should have determined the strategy of the communists.

Ethiopia's battle could have become a rallying point for the awakening of Africa. After all, Italy's attack was but the last of a series of aggressive moves that had been visited upon the hapless Africans, completing what England, France, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, and others had begun. From the communist point of view, the struggle against Italian imperialism could not be limited to Mussolini's defeat, but inevitably had to be carried forward by the other oppressed sections of Africa until all imperialisms were driven out of that continent. The possibility of the whole of Africa's be-

coming aroused was one aspect of the war that greatly worried French and British imperialism.

The Italo-Ethiopian conflict demonstrated the fact that even the darkest continent was ripe to play an important historic rôle and was becoming a decisive factor in world affairs. At a time when the advanced European workers of Italy and Germany had not been able to answer fascism with blows, it was the benighted Negroes of East Africa who dared to take up the challenge and in effect took their post as the vanguard in the struggle against fascism.

The Communist International, of course, should have done its best to widen and deepen the struggle of the African masses. Its policy should have been to set in motion the colonial masses of Egypt, of the Sudan, of Morocco, of South Africa, as well as those in the Near East whose interests were vitally affected. That these peoples were ripe for such action could be seen by the riots that broke out in Egypt, the insurrections in French and Spanish Morocco, and the great Arabian movement against British imperialism. However, these developments were inspired not by the Communist International but were instigated by fascist intrigue in the employ of Italian imperialism as a counter to the pressure of Great Britain.

The Communist International and Russia were too engrossed in following the lead of Great Britain and the League of Nations to undertake to spread the colonial revolt. Besides, Russia was pledged by the Franco-Soviet pact and by her adherence to the League of Nations to a hands-off policy. Russia would have a good deal to say about Italian aggression, but nothing about the fact that France and England were carrying out precisely the same colonial policy that Italy was attempting to pursue. In denouncing Italy's efforts to obtain a place in the sun, Russia would forget that it was not Italy but precisely Russia's newly-found friends, France and England, who were the chief imperialist powers. This, however, did not prevent Russia from selling oil to Italy during the conflict or from refusing to help, either with materials or credits, the people of Ethiopia battling for their independence.

Italian imperialism had now trod heavily upon the toes of the master of the colonial world, Great Britain. At once the League of Nations was convened to consider the grave crisis. When seizure was made of Fiume by Italy, of Vilna by Poland, of Memel by Lithuania, and of Bessarabia by Rumania, there had been no such outcry. When China was attacked by Japan and partially dismenbered, there was no resistance. When Great Britain seized Egypt and vast colonial mandates, no whisper of protest was heard from the League. But once the sacred rights of the British Empire were infringed, heaven and earth were to be moved to protect this great uplifter of mankind and foremost representative of the White Man's

Burden. Great Britain proposed that drastic sanctions be adopted against Italy by all the countries of the world. Aggressively pushing the idea, even to the extent of military sanctions, was no other than Soviet Russia and the Communist International.

Sanctions is a term meaning law enforcement, in this case the law being the Covenant of the League of Nations. There has never been a genuine body of international law, for the very reason that there has been no international state or government capable of enforcing such law. Up to now, international sanction has had one meaning—military conflict leading to war. Thus communist Russia, which had stood for the breaking of all capitalist laws, now brought forth the theory that there exists an international law that all countries must obey under penalty of being attacked by the whole world. Moreover, the international law to be defended was precisely the international law of world imperialism. Just as the lives of the Russian soldiers were to be offered in defense of French capitalism, so were they to be sacrificed for British imperialism.

Of course, the sanctions advocated by the League of Nations had nothing to do with Ethiopian independence, but rather with the Covenant of the League. This was clearly seen by the fact that both Great Britain and France were ready to come to an agreement with Italy for the dismemberment of Ethiopia and its transformation into spheres of influence. A treaty had already been prepared to this effect without serious protest from Russia. The only difficulty was that Italy decided to seize the whole country for herself, thereby violating "international law."

In her demand for sanctions, Russia was even more aggressive than Great Britain. The latter country restricted itself temporarily to economic sanctions; Russia openly declared her willingness to go the limit. What was the motive behind her aggressiveness? Was it in order to stimulate war in the West so as to insure the weakening of any European united front against her, just as it is the policy of England and France to turn the coming war, if possible, into a struggle between Germany and Russia, with France and England free to enjoy the profits? Regardless of this speculation, it is a fact that at once the Communist Parties of Great Britain and France began to insist on military sanctions. But such a course could mean only a strengthening of the British navy and the French army. In this wise, these communists who only yesterday were building Leagues against War and Fascism and advocating peace, overnight were turned into protagonists of a policy which, carried out, must have led to world war. In all countries, nationalism and militarism, with their fascist counterpart, took marked strides forward.

3

Comparing her entrance into the League of Nations, Russia was able also to enter into more friendly relations with the United States and to obtain recognition from that arch-capitalist country. Recognition was agreeable to the Americans since Russia no longer appeared a Red menace and could now become useful. The United States needed a friend in the Far East to oppose Japanese aggression and its menace to the Open Door Policy. Furthermore, if war were to break out soon, American capitalism wanted to be in a position where it could sell ammunition freely to both sides. There were other weighty internal reasons as well that led President Roosevelt to recognize Russia. The pressure of the crisis compelled him to demonstrate that he was doing all he could to open up new markets. His dictatorial tendencies and schemes of planned economy fitted in well with the recognition of countries that had put similar policies into operation. Finally, he needed the support of the liberals and of sections of the labor movement that had favored such a policy.

In order to appease the conservative forces in American life, however, it was necessary to convince them that Russia was entirely safe for capitalism and becoming increasingly so. Roosevelt therefore insisted that Soviet Russia outstrip all precedent in the way of guaranteeing that no revolutionary propaganda would be spread abroad. Hitherto Russia had consented to agreements that the officials of the Russian State would not propagandize for the overthrow of governments willing to sign treaties with Russia, but had never offered to control the Communist International, a supposedly independent body. Stalinism, however, now was ready to end the fiction of Comintern independence of Russian national policies and openly to announce its liquidation.

Point Four of the document recognizing Russia therefore declared that Russia was "not to permit the formation or residence in its territory of any organization or group and to prevent the activity on its territory of any organization or group, or of the representatives or officials of any organization or group which has as an aim the overthrow or the preparation for the overthrow of, or bringing about by force of a change in the political or social order of the whole or any part of the United States, its territories or possessions."

It is well to analyze this truly astounding document. Russia here guarantees not only what her own agents will not do but what she will let any body of people do on Russian soil. As the document reads, no group of refugees or any body of men whatever can now gather on Russian soil, six thousand miles away from the United States, and hold a congress which will discuss the inevitability of a social change by force in the United

States. The United States not only is controlling acts in its own country, it is controlling the actions of private people in Russia itself. This document sounded the death knell of the Communist International; from then on it was plain that the Comintern factually would be dissolved so far as America was concerned. A short time later it was decided, at the Seventh Congress of the Third International, that each of the Communist Parties would now be independent in the various countries and no longer would receive instructions from Moscow on national problems.

The conditions incident to American recognition of Russia, however, are stricter than the laws of the United States governing its own subjects. In the United States it has been permissible for a soap box orator to call for the overthrow of the American social system. He could not urge the overthrow of the government, but he could demand the abolition of capitalism and the profit system, even by violence. The pact signed with Litvinoff by Roosevelt, however, specifies that no one in Russia shall be allowed to do what can be done in America, namely, no one in Russia can advocate the overthrow not only of the American government, but even of the social system of capitalism prevailing in the United States. Russia is to put an end not only to the conclusions of politics but to the finding of economics and philosophy as well.

Nor is this yet all. Point Four of the recognition terms declares that Russia shall allow no one to advocate the overthrow by force of the social order in any territory or possession of the United States. Thus, specifically, the communists of Cuba are to be ordered by Russia to end all anti-American propaganda and all denunciation of American imperialism. Nor must it be imagined that these are mere platonic guarantees.

The first illustration of the deadly menace of the treaty was to be seen in the activity of the Communist Party in Cuba. There in 1933 a powerful revolution had broken out against the Machado administration which was threatening to develop into a Soviet régime imbodying the confiscation of American property. Roosevelt needed the communists to put down the revolution and to control it. For this the bait of Russian recognition was offered. At once Cuban communists changed their whole approach to American imperialism. Again the interests of Russian nationalism triumphed over the international revolution.

The situation in Cuba can be briefly stated. Under Machado, an open military dictatorship had been established, in the style of the worst Chicago gangsters, which already had taken the lives of over twenty-five hundred people. Behind the Machado régime stood the power of Wall Street. Since the Spanish-American War, the imperialist government of the United States never really had relinquished its prize plum. By articles II and III

of the Platt Amendment, the government to be established was forbidden to contract a public debt over the amount it could meet with ordinary revenues. Also, the United States was allowed to intervene for the "preservation of Cuban independence, maintenance of government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty." This of course meant that the United States government could intervene with its military forces whenever the masses made any attempt to end the rule of capitalism and vicious landlordism which controlled the lives of the people.

In fact, since 1898 the United States literally had controlled the island by means of its armed forces. The first time the army was in occupation from 1898 to 1902; the second time, after the liberal revolution had occurred against President Palma, the United States intervened with its army from 1905 to 1909. Then, during the World War, General Crowder was sent to control the country. Only after the War was the military control removed. In 1924, Machado became President.

The 1929 crisis seriously affected Cuba and its chief industry, sugar. Imports and exports fell more than 80 per cent. Cuba was loaded with external debts greater in proportion than any other country in Latin America. In order to bolster up the shaky Machado régime, however, a new loan of fifty million dollars was made in 1930 by the Chase National Bank. Increasingly the puppet government had to resort to the most brutal terror. This action alienated the entire population of the island, so that even the students revolted, employing the social-revolutionary and anarchist methods of bomb throwing and assassination. To suppress them, the high schools and the university had to be closed.

Added to this was the situation confronting Cuban labor. The United States Consul to Cuba reported [1] that within a year and a half wages had fallen 40 per cent, that complete chaos existed in the country, the agricultural laborers in many cases receiving no wages at all, but merely orders on the commissary department. Wage-earners who two years ago were earning from forty to sixty cents a day now received ten cents a day (five cents in cash). The working hours were from sun up to sun down. According to the Consular report "Wages paid in 1932 are reported to have been the lowest since the days of slavery in Cuba."

Under such circumstances, not even the power of American imperialism and the highly trained special army of Machado could prevent the revolution. With lightning speed the revolution opened up with student strikes and demonstrations and led to a general strike of all labor. Machado was overthrown; De Cespedes was ousted, and the liberal Grau San Martin was set up as provisional president. But the workers were in no mood for half way measures. Immense union organizations were built over night;

[1] See *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 35, No. 6, p. 1403 (Dec. 1932).

the union halls were armed with guns seized in the revolution. The workers advanced the boldest demands for improving their conditions. There was no one to gainsay them. In the countryside the agrarian workers were seizing the large estates and appropriating the foodstuffs for their own use. The Cuban Revolution reached the position of a dual power existing within the country. The provisional government régime that did not dare call for elections, in spite of its democratic pretensions, no longer could control the situation and had to look to the trade union centers, where the real power resided. The army had become demoralized and was under the leadership of the sergeants. The danger was that the sergeants would give way to the soldiers and the revolution be completed.

The tasks of the Cuban proletariat and communists were crystal clear, namely, to begin the formation of soviets or workers' councils to fight for power, to arm the people, to further demoralize the army through fraternization and bringing forward the interests of the soldiers, to confiscate the land for the agrarians, to establish a workers' control over production. Of course, none of these things could be accomplished without incurring American intervention. Americans controlled practically the entire property of the island. The question of the relation of the communists to the American government became, therefore, of vital importance. At this juncture, Roosevelt recognized Russia, and the communists declared they would not permit anyone to advocate by force the change of social system in any territory or possession of the United States. Litvinoff was to make his first payment to Roosevelt in Cuba.

Comrade Sanini stated the policy of the Cuban Stalinists: ". . . the Communist Party of Cuba is striving to do everything possible to avert intervention and to create the greatest possible forces for resistance to it, if it nevertheless take place. But this is only possible by means of concessions to the imperialism of the U. S. A., at the price of which the Cuban toiling masses, under the leadership of the Communist Party, will try to buy off intervention. It is precisely with this aim . . . the C. P. Cuba tries to direct the chief blow of the revolutionary masses above all against the local Cuban ruling classes. . . . It is precisely with this aim . . . that the Communist Party of Cuba considers it inadvisable for the workers to seize the American enterprises. . . . Precisely with this aim . . . the Communist Party of Cuba considers it inadvisable to force ahead the seizure of plantations belonging to American capital, and fights above all for considerable reductions of the rent of this land. . . . Precisely with this aim . . . the Communist Party of Cuba considers it advisable for the workers' and peasants' government, if it should be formed, to enter into negotiations with the government of the U. S. A. on the conditions of nationaliza-

tion of big foreign property. . . . i.e., it allows the possibility of buying out this property. With the same aim the Communist Party of Cuba allows the possibility of retaining American ownership to some extent in the form of concessions . . . the imperialism of the U. S. A. would obviously like to avoid armed intervention in Cuba. This is shown plainly enough if only by the statement of Roosevelt to the ambassadors of the countries of South and Caribbean America. . . ." [1]

This decision found affirmation in the inspired article of a representative of the Communist Party of the United States who declared: "The Communist Party . . . will offer to deal with Yankee imperialism on the basis of concessions to avoid armed intervention in the event of the success of the workers' and peasants' régime." [2]

The treacherous conduct of Stalinism here was illustrated with obvious bluntness. It was necessary above all to come to an agreement with Roosevelt. He was now a friend of Russia. But to come to this agreement and to prevent the threat of intervention it also was necessary to end the Cuban revolution. The masses had to be diverted from the line of confiscation of American property. But American property in Cuba comprised practically all of Cuba that was of worth. Thus, in effect, the masses were told by the so-called communists that they must not take over the means of production of Cuba. More than that, they were told that the American government was to be informed that American property would be protected, that the real enemy was not American imperialism—which could be bought off—but the Cuban capitalists. The Cuban capitalists, however, were, in the main, only the agents of American capitalists. It was ridiculous to attack the agent and to ignore the principal. The Cuban ruling class was the puppet of American imperialism. What the Cuban communists proposed, nevertheless, was that the people should stage a political show, but not a social revolution. To this effect, the Cuban Communist Party offered itself as the willing tool of American imperialism.[3]

In China the communists were told to attack above all Japanese imperialism, that the Chinese bourgeoisie could be won over to a revolutionary united front with that sort of policy. In Cuba, on the contrary, the communists were informed they must attack not imperialism but the Cuban capitalists, although those local capitalists had no power and influence of any importance whatsoever. In the one case, Japan was Russia's enemy;

[1] See, *The Communist*, Vol. XII, No. 12, p. 1228 (Dec. 1933). *The Communist* is the official organ of the Communist Party of the U. S. The parts eliminated are too long to give in full.

[2] Harry Gannes in the *New Masses*, p. 16 (Jan. 9, 1934).

[3] Note that the Communist Party did not talk of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, but of some vague Workers' and Peasants' Government although the number of "peasants" in Cuba is a relatively very small portion of the total toiling population.

in the other, Roosevelt was now considered Russia's friend. In each case, the movement was to be sacrificed for Russia's temporary interests.

But the statement of Sanini went much farther than that. Not only must the masses refrain from seizing American property, that is, refrain from taking over the means of production in Cuba, but the Cuban communists must fight "above all" for considerable reductions of the rent of this land to American planters. Thus the Cuban Communist Party became an agent to reduce the rent of American capitalists! But if American property was to be held inviolate, then what was the purpose of any revolution at all? With the maintenance of the power of American imperialism in Cuba puppets could be shuffled, but not one single important step for the solution of the great problems which had led the Cuban masses to venture their lives in revolution could be taken. Wages could not be raised, and neither social security nor political freedom obtained so long as imperialism controlled the island.

With their brazen counter-revolutionary program, the Cuban Stalinists did not hesitate to declare that American imperialism was opposed to intervention; they accepted at its face value the speech of Roosevelt to that effect made to a group of diplomats whose entire stock in trade was intrigue and trickery. Ever since the Spanish-American war, Cuban independence had been a myth. Now, according to the Stalinists, American imperialism suddenly was to take another course; this was evidenced in a general formal speech by Roosevelt, not to Cuban workers, but to ambassadors of Latin America!

The Cuban section of the Third International affirmed that Cuba would buy off American imperialism! Here was repeated the old argument of the opportunist socialists that they could buy out capitalism peacefully and gradually, and that the Marxist theories were false to the core. But, practically speaking, what funds, what wealth had the poor Cuban people with which to buy off American imperialism? Certainly if the Cubans were not to take over the wealth of the island held in the hands of the Americans, they would have not only no funds to buy off American imperialism, but no money to pay the interest on the huge debt accruing. Even if the attempt were made to buy off, it would mean that the Cuban masses would be in effect selling themselves to America in perpetuity in order to make the money payments. Finally, from a Marxist point of view, it was childish to believe that American imperialism would allow itself to be bought off and to lose control over such a colonial market as Cuba.

Thus the American and Cuban communists came out openly as the aides of Roosevelt to stop the Cuban Revolution, the only place where their aid was of decisive importance to the United States at the time. This new policy was effective in checking temporarily the revolutionary move-

ment. With this, the reactionaries of Cuba took heart and attempted a counter stroke. The masses again advanced and dealt a crushing blow to the former officers of the army who attempted the new coup. But as the masses moved to the Left, the ruling groups united to prevent its going too far. The San Martin government gave way to the Hevia government which almost immediately disappeared to make way for Mendieta, Cuba's "strong man" who would restore order.[1] Thanks to the aid of the Communist Party, the revolution again temporarily was halted and the masses demoralized and confused.

The second effect of the recognition of Russia by Roosevelt was the striking transformation of the Communist Party of the United States. Before the full effects of the Russian recognition policy had become felt, the position of the Communist Party towards Roosevelt and the New Deal had been expressed to the effect that the New Deal "is a sharper turn of the capitalist dictatorship in the United States to war and fascism."[2] Even as late as the Eighth Convention of the Communist Party, the National Industrial Recovery Act (N.I.R.A.) was interpreted as being a strike-breaking move in a trend towards fascism. The resolution of that convention stated: "The Roosevelt government is, however, moving in the direction of the incorporation of the company unions within the A. F. of L., the conversion of the existing A. F. of L. unions into company unions regulated by the government, the outlawing of all class unions, as part of the drive for the fascization of the government and the trade unions."[3]

Once Roosevelt had become Russia's friend, however, a complete change of attitude took place. The independent unions and other organizations controlled by Stalinists which threatened to cause the administration embarrassment were liquidated. Whereas, in the days of Hoover, there had occurred periodic marches to Washington, hunger marches, farmers' marches, bonus marches, and what-not, now no big militant demonstrations were staged at the capitol of the country. The recognition of Russia had been hailed as a great force for peace, as an act that would give many jobs to the workers.[4] Now that Roosevelt had accomplished this recognition, it was difficult to attack him except for not going far enough.

Thus Roosevelt, instead of being a representative of the class enemy, became a sort of friend of communism. This attitude was to culminate in the

[1] Mendieta has now been impeached and deposed by the army run by Batista and an even more reactionary régime installed.

[2] A. Bittleman: "The New Deal and the Old Deal." *The Communist*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, p. 881. (January 1934.)

[3] The Resolution is given in *The Communist*, Vol. XIII, No. 5, p. 461. (May 1934.)

[4] See, for example, Earl Browder: *"Out of a Job,"* pamphlet, where he makes the argument that unemployment would be considerably lessened were Russia recognized.

presidential campaign of 1936, when Roosevelt stood for re-election. The attitude of the Communist Party suddenly became one by which it was no longer Roosevelt who was representing fascism, but Landon, and that at all costs Landon must be defeated, even though the campaign of the communists against Landon was to result in votes for Roosevelt. In the trade unions, certain communists became spokesmen for the Roosevelt Administration and did their best to mobilize labor behind his campaign. This was especially true of those communists who were officials of unions affiliated to the Labor Non-Partisan Committee and the American Labor Party of New York, both of which endorsed the candidacy of Roosevelt. It was no accident that the communist candidate suddenly could be considered respectable enough to be permitted to present his viewpoint over the radio on national hook-ups from which revolutionary speeches are barred.[1] Browder himself has gone to great lengths to declare that it is slander to imply that his organization advocates violence and the overthrow of the American government by force. The Communist Party now stands for democracy as against fascism, for peace as against violence.

[1] Or that Browder could break bread with Roosevelt, Landon, Hearst, Du Pont, Rockefeller and similar characters at the annual banquet of the Washington Gridiron Club.

XLVI. ISOLATION AND COLLAPSE (CONTINUED)

I

HAVING faced the world communist movement with a mass of accomplished facts, in 1935 the Russian leaders finally convened the Seventh World Congress. In the days of Lenin, the Comintern had met annually; under Stalin it did not meet for seven years, from 1928 to 1935. During that time there had occurred the Peasants' War and soviets in China, the Spanish and Cuban revolutions, the rise of fascism in Europe and its victory in Germany, Austria, and Central Europe, the adventure of Japan in Manchuria and China, the Italo-Ethiopian conflict as a prelude to a world war, the accomplishments and failures of the Five-Year Plan in Russia, and the change of front in American social and political life, not to speak of the development of the deepest economic crisis that the world had ever seen, bringing in its wake untold misery and revolutionary possibilities. None of these questions had been discussed by a gathering of Communist Parties assembled in International Congress.

The Seventh Congress was entirely perfunctory and rubber stamped. It met only for three weeks. The deadly unanimity was striking. The Congress failed to touch on the perspectives of the crisis; it made no analysis of the reasons for the obvious failure of the Stalinist Parties throughout the world. All it could do was to approve actions already past. Such questions as the Franco-Soviet pact were not even discussed.

The Seventh Congress not only completely wiped out the decisions of the Sixth Congress of 1928—although in each particular case the Executive Committee held itself up as an infallible revolutionary center—but actually prepared for the dissolution of the International as a workers' force. This liquidatory policy could be seen in every phase of its work. The Congress stated plainly that no longer was the proletarian revolution involved, but merely the struggle against fascism; the fight was not of workers against capitalists, but of bourgeois democracy against fascism; it was the duty of communists to support democracy not only at home but abroad. "Today the proletariat in most capitalist countries are not confronted with the alternative of bourgeois democracy or proletarian democracy; they are confronted with the alternative of bourgeois democracy or fascism." [1]

The head of the International plainly declared that all the key problems

[1] D. Z. Manuilsky: *The Work of the Seventh Congress*, p. 19.

of the proletarian movement of the world, all its tactical maneuvers revolved around the central axis, the reinforcement of the Soviet Union as the base of the world proletarian revolution.[1] The main policy of the world proletariat in case of war was not the defeat of its own capitalist class, as Lenin would have had it. This task had now become secondary to another. "Today the *defense of the U.S.S.R.* determines the main line of policy of the world proletariat in relation to war." [2] Nothing could be clearer.

The unprecedented decisions of the Seventh Congress may be summed up as follows: First, communists were to unite with democratic capitalists to form People's Fronts against fascism. In pursuit of this aim, communists could join People's Fronts governments and help build up capitalist armies for the defense of democracy. Second, in foreign policies, the Stalinists in time of war must support the democratic countries against the fascist countries. Third, in regard to the situation within the ranks of labor, the communist unions were to liquidate and to join the reformist unions under any conditions. The Red International of Labor Unions thus would disappear. Fourth, the Communist Parties themselves must form close united fronts with the Socialist Parties in such a way as to pave the way for organic unity later, even though this would mean that the Communist International in certain countries would have no official section. In order better to accomplish this last task, each party was to be given organizational independence.

The People's Front was a universal extension of the policy that had proved so disastrous in China, the policy of servile unity with elements of the capitalist class, sections that posed as democratic and liberal. In the People's Fronts there were three factors, the communists, the socialists, and the bourgeois radicals. Of course this alliance could be maintained only if the communists were to agree not to jeopardize the interests of those capitalists who were part of the People's Front. Evidently it was called "people's" front because capitalists were admitted. The handful of capitalists gave it the character of belonging to the entire people beyond a doubt.

The bourgeois radicals, of course would not participate in a movement that permitted strikes in their plants; they could not favor the reduction of the democratic army and navy, nor could they look on passively while Reds carried on anti-militarist propaganda in the ranks of the armed forces. These capitalist radicals could not permit themselves to become part of a movement that caused pain to democracy by staging riots, demonstrations, and other manifestations of a dangerous character. By forming such an alliance, the communists bound themselves to collaborate with the employers of the country, which they called democratic. Thus the communists

[1] See the same, p. 15.
[2] The same, p. 23.

decided to pursue a policy of rewarding friends and punishing enemies, some of the capitalists being good and some bad (the good capitalists being none other than those who had signed pacts with Russia). Such a policy must lead to the intensification of nationalism and militarism in all the countries and, eventually, to the victory of fascism itself.

Of course it was understood clearly in communist circles that those countries which could still afford democracy were those which were the most prosperous, where the employers were most secure. The democratic countries were those, in the main, which had suffered least from the War, which had the largest colonial empires, which, in short, formed the reservoir of world capitalism. In this way the Communist Parties of the world rallied to the defense of the most secure sections of the capitalist class, apparently believing that these capitalists would risk their fortunes eventually on behalf of the Workers' State in the Soviet Union.

If bourgeois democracy was to be defended with the lives of the workers, then, the workers must not overthrow the capitalist State. If the democratic capitalists were good revolutionary fighters against reaction, then it was possible to persuade them of the justice of the workers' cause, at least to such an extent that civil war between democratic capitalists and revolutionary proletarians would become out of the question. In democratic countries the revolution was postponed. Democratic capitalism in an era of imperialism was still able to play a progressive rôle, according to the Stalinists, and the difference between bourgeois democracy and fascism was not a difference in degree and form of capitalist rule but a fundamental difference in kind. This is to abandon materialism for idealism; it is to assume that the struggles of the different layers of capitalists against each other are superior to their joint struggles against the workers as one class against another.

Incidentally, within the democratic countries themselves, Fascism rapidly was growing, although naturally the turn to fascism did not affect all sections of the capitalist classes with the same speed and directness. The heavy trustified industry was the first to turn to fascism; the light, competitive, older capitalist layers retained their democratic tendencies longer. But precisely these latter elements no longer exerted the decisive weight in capitalist affairs, but yielded to the trusts. Hence, within the democratic countries, on these secondary capitalists, who possessed little independent force in critical moments, the Stalinists had to rely; these relatively petty elements are the ones who, the Stalinists believed would stand firm for the proletariat. Nothing could better illustrate the petty bourgeois character of the Third International today.

Furthermore, the Stalinists went much farther than the mere formation of a People's Front; and they also declared their willingness to become part

of a People's Front Government and, like MacDonald for the Labour Party of Great Britain, take the responsibility and leadership of the criminal actions of the capitalist State. The Seventh Congress reviewed the situation in various countries throughout the world and came to the following specific conclusions: In Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Belgium, where the socialists were in the government, the communists were to support the socialists and the State. In Czecho-Slovakia, the communists must become more patriotic and nationalist. "The biggest mistake of the Czecho-Slovak communists is their insufficient consideration for the national feelings of the masses in their struggle against the Fascist Home Front." [1] In England, the Communists were to work for the Labour Party and for a Labour Government. Whereas, in the days of Lenin the entrance of communists into the Labor Party was in order to fight the reformists more effectively, with the understanding that, if the Labor Party won the elections, the communists would break from it and attack it as a capitalist agency, today communists are to be the vanguard agitating for such a Labor Party capitalist government. In Rumania, Poland, Jugo-Slavia, and similar countries the Communists were to include in their People's Front the reactionary peasants' parties headed by the big capitalist agrarians. Inasmuch as these countries are predominantly agrarian, this policy internally meant a united front with the agrarian capitalists objectively to prevent the organization of the revolutionary agricultural workers. In Mexico the Communist Party was to support President Cardenas against Calles; in Cuba, they were to unite with the forces of Grau San Martin.

As for China, "I declare from this world platform that the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the Soviet Government of China are prepared to form a government of all who are unwilling to be colonial slaves, on the basis of a universally acceptable program for armed resistance against Japan regardless of divergent opinions on other important problems." [2] So the Chinese Communist Party no longer was to fight all imperialism, since French, British, and American were now considered friendly and democratic, but only Japanese imperialism. Again the Chinese Communist Party called for a bloc of four classes, not to win communism but merely for a struggle against Japan.[3]

As we have seen above, this whole program of idealization of democracy was intimately connected with the war program of Russia. Having dropped their disarmament proposals, the Stalinists turned to the slogan of making the world safe for democracy and were taking the place of Wil-

[1] Report of speech of Koehler, *Daily Worker*, August 13, 1935.

[2] Speech of Wan Min, reported *Daily Worker*, August 10, 1935.

[3] Recent newspaper accounts seem to indicate that again the Communist Party of China is willing to join hands with Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang.

sonian liberalism of 1917. The workers of the world were called upon unhesitatingly to defend the democratic countries against the fascist countries and to urge that their government declare war in defense of democracy. Thus the People's Front became merely a transition to the National Front or *Union Sacrée* in which the French and other workers during the War joined hands with their capitalists for the unified execution of war aims and policies.

The most developed form of the People's Front has been established in France. From the capitalist point of view, several considerations prompted a section of them, members of the Radical Socialist Party, to join. First, there was the danger of German fascism and the need of national unity to resist German invasion. Second, there was the Franco-Soviet pact and the need of proletarian support for this arrangement. Third, the French working class was moving dangerously to the Left, and it was thought possible to curb them by joining forces with them.

From the workers point of view, one lesson had been ingrained from the German defeat, and that was the fatal outcome of splitting ranks, the crying need for unity in the struggle. To the genuine revolutionists, in spite of the fact that the People's Front meant a powerfully co-ordinated bureaucracy to curb the masses, it also enabled the workers to establish a far more fraternal connection with each other than before, mutually to exchange ideas, and to break down old barriers. Through the People's Front, the masses strengthened their power to act more than the united bureaucracy could increase its force to restrain the struggle.

Ever since the February, 1934, riots in which the situation was rapidly mounting to revolution, the masses had united their forces in street fighting, in spite of the bureaucracies of both the socialists and the communists. In a vast general strike of over four million workers they had demonstrated their tremendous power and revolutionary energy and had compelled the officials of both Parties to come together. From that time on there had been formed, not a united front between these two Parties, but rather what was called a Common Front. The difference between the two was that, in a united front each organization would send delegates to a conference limited to a specific subject, time, and place. Each organization would have the right to act independently and to criticize the other factors of the united front. In the Common Front, the membership of both Parties would meet jointly; the leadership of both organizations would agree not to criticize each other, but to support each other before the working class. This, of course, was all to the advantage of the reformists who had always been willing to unite with the communists if the latter would give up their attempts to agitate for the revolution and to discredit them. The Common

Front, then, meant a blurring of all organizational distinctions and the laying of the basis for a fusion of socialists and Stalinists into one centrist reformist organization.[1]

In this way the Communist Party forged a double set of chains around the revolutionary element. First was the Common Front wherein the revolutionists were in effect fused with the reformists in an organization in which the reformists took the lead and worked out the principal features of the common policy without criticism from the other side. Second, there was the People's Front wherein the entire working class was bound to the support of French nationalism in the coming war.

That the stage has been set for a renewal of the *Union Sacrée* can be seen from the following quotations from leaders of the Communist Party of France. "If the workers, to take Marx's words, have no fatherland, they, the internationalists, have something to defend from now on, it is the cultural inheritance of France, it is the spiritual wealth accumulated through all that her artists, her artisans, her workers and thinkers have produced."[2] Thus the workers are to fight for the defense of the French spirit. And again: "Here, I shall answer a question which has been put to me: in such a war launched by Hitler against the U.S.S.R. would you apply the slogan: transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war? . . . No, because in such a war, it is not a question of an imperialist war, a war between imperialists, it is a question of a war against the Soviet Union."[3]

How far matters have advanced can be seen by comparing the Seventh Congress, wherein it had been declared that the French communists were to vote against military credits and military measures of the bourgeoisie,[4] with the statement "Long Live the Republican Army" made on armistice day of that year.[5] By May, 1936, the communists had decided under certain conditions to vote for all military appropriations. "So far, the vote for military appropriations indisputably meant the support of militarist ends. We do not know if tomorrow the situation will not be such that the vote for military credits can have a different meaning. . . . In any case, anxious as we are to assure the freedom and independence of our country, while we are fighting the domestic Hitlerites, we could not be indifferent to the threats which the foreign Hitlerites are bringing to bear on our country."[6] And another leader affirmed: "The vote for the budget under the conditions of a collaboration with other parties, even though we are not taking part in the ministry, is a political question which can only be solved within the

[1] In Spain the Communist Party of Catalonia has fused with the Socialist Party.
[2] Speech of Vaillant-Couturier given in *L'Humanité*, April 13, 1935.
[3] Speech of M. Thorez of May 17, 1935, given in *L'Humanité* of May 24, 1935.
[4] Compare S. Z. Manuilsky: *The Work of the Seventh Congress*, p. 27.
[5] See *L'Humanité* of November 12, 1935.
[6] Speech of M. Duclos given in *L'Humanité*, May 11, 1936.

frame of a general domestic and foreign policy of France. If the changes we pointed out take place, the communists could be brought to vote for the budget." [1]

The liquidation of the independent position of the Communist Party in the Common Front naturally went hand in hand with the liquidation of the French Red Trade Union Center. Ever since the 1928 "Third Period" frenzy, the independent unions controlled by the communists had been reduced to mere shells, and, with the end of the German unions, the Red International was on the verge of dissolution as an international body. In France the Unitarian Confederation of Labor, which at one time had had the majority of the organized workers behind it, had fallen far behind the opportunist regular Confederation. Now, in the name of suddenly discovered unity, the Red Unions of France disbanded. The Stalinist unions agreed to the conditions imposed upon them by the opportunists; they condemned all fractional work inside the reformist federation, agreed to support all decisions of the League of Nations in the economic field, and, finally, ratified the utopian plan for peaceful reformation of society into socialism.

During the events of February, 1934, when France was on the brink of civil war, the Communist Party, still living in the "Third Period" had marched in a separate demonstration demanding the downfall of parliament, just as the fascists were demanding it At the same time the socialists were defending Parliament and the republic. The Prussian Landtag experiment of 1930 was to be repeated in Paris But this time the Stalinists did not reckon with the initiative of the masses, who flocked into the streets and joined forces against the fascist menace. The Common Front was the result of this joint action of the workers themselves, but the Front had the purpose of stifling rather than stimulating the civil war. A great strike broke out in the arsenals of Toulon, Brest, and elsewhere, which could easily have assumed a revolutionary character But the united forces of the socialists and communists, with their specious arguments that strikes in the armed forces of the state would play into the hands of Hitler, not only prevented the strike from spreading but compelled its speedy termination. The strike was a sign, however, that the workers could no longer be restrained by the old methods; new methods must be tried. The French government was turned over to the People's Front in 1936. The socialist Leon Blum became Premier, and bourgeois radicals were given the most important posts in the Cabinet, the ministries of the State, of War, and similar posts. The communists, while supporting the government, decided not to be part of it for the time being. The fact that the government is now a People's Front does not mean, however, that the great army of functionaries or the

[1] Speech of M Thorez *'L'Humanité*, May 11, 1936

powerful body of reactionary officers in the army has been affected in the slightest. So far as the State apparatus is concerned, there has been simply another change in administration.

But if the socialist-communist combination did not act in a revolutionary manner, repeatedly affirming that the task was no longer a struggle for socialism but only a struggle against fascism, the workers themselves took matters again into their own hands. As soon as it was certain that the People's Front Government had been elected, a tremendous strike wave burst forth throughout the country which developed in such a way as to show that France was on the verge of revolution. Instead of marching out of the factories into their meeting halls, the workers decided to remain in the factories and to drive the employers and their henchmen out until their demands for a 15 per cent increase in wages, a forty-hour week, and other improvements were won. The masses did not wait for the socialists and communists to act in parliament; they decided to force the hands of these parliamentarians by direct action. The socialist Blum government faced a dilemma; it was impossible for the incoming People's Front régime to make its début by the use of soldiers against the workers.

The stay-in strikes in France were manifestations that the workers were getting ready to establish workers' control over production. The shop committees that were formed were signs of a growing unity for struggle on the part of the proletariat. That the workers could stage such a strike peacefully was due to the fact that soldiers could not be used against them. Had there been fighting, the masses would have been forced to quit the factories for action in the streets. This, however, would have led to barricade fighting and the re-entrance into the factories, this time not as workers but as masters.

The parties to the People's Front did their best to terminate the strike movement. The Communist Press asserted no revolutionary situation existed in France and there could be none; Thorez, the head of the Party, declared the workers must know when to end strikes as well as when to begin them. But if the Blum régime could not send the workers back to work without their having won their demands, it knew how to make the victory valueless after the strike was over. This it did by taking the initiative to devaluate the franc. Automatically prices would rise far higher than the wages had increased, leaving the workers with a reduced standard of living and lower real wages. For a long time all the bourgeois parties had evaded the problem of inflation, fearing the unpopularity of such a move in a country of small investors whose savings already had been liquidated 80 per cent by the stabilization of the franc at four cents instead of twenty after the War. It remained to the People's Front régime to put over this

measure which reduced the position of the masses of workers and petty bourgeoisie to the point of desperation.

In its foreign policy, the People's Front régime outshone itself in enforcing strict neutrality in the Spanish Rebellion at a time when the fascist countries of Europe were aiding the fascist-monarchist rebels with all the means at their command. Had any other government been in power it would have been extremely difficult to have restrained the French workers from aiding their Spanish comrades under the circumstances. The People's Front régime proved invaluable in this respect.

The People's Front government can be only a transition régime, either to the victory of the proletariat or of fascism.[1] However, for the proletariat to win, it is necessary for them to create an entirely new party. They have a chance to do so by breaking out in open, prolonged rebellion for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. It is probable, however, that the masses will be unable to hurdle all the barriers placed in their way, and that neither communism nor the People's Front, but reaction, will be at the helm when the next war breaks out.

In Spain the People's Front established in 1936 rapidly crumbled in the fires of the fascist-monarchist rebellion. Under pressure of the masses, the socialist Cabellero, supported by the Stalinists, had to take the helm. The activities of these government leaders consisted not merely in defending bourgeois democracy from the attacks of the reactionaries but, above all, in preventing the masses from carrying on the revolution to the end and establishing a socialistic rule, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

2

The collapse of the Third International meant of course a collapse of the Communist Party within Russia, a collapse marked by the insistent demand for the abolition of the Dictatorship, the termination of the soviets and the institution instead of pure democracy. This latter move culminated in the new Russian Constitution. In this counterposing of pure democracy to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the Russians adopted in fact the arguments of the socialists. They entirely ignored the Marxist solutions to the questions whether any State could exist that was not the dictatorship of a class, whether democracy also was not a form of dictatorship, or whether the dictatorship of the proletariat could exist without democracy. Forgotten was the claim that the soviets had made possible the greatest democracy that had ever existed since the beginning of the class struggle.

We already have taken the occasion to point out that dictatorship and democracy are not necessarily antithetical, but that indeed democracy is a type of State through which the dictatorship of a class is expressed. Further,

[1] A similar conclusion prevails for the People's Front government in Spain.

even dictatorship as a form or State may be so closely connected with a democratic mechanism that a Bonaparte and a Hitler may use the plebiscite to come into power. Just as a capitalist State may have different forms varying from open dictatorship, with or without democratic trappings, to broad democracy, and still remain the expression of capitalist class dictatorship, similarly, the working class may dictate its will through a worker's State which may also assume different forms. These may include the democratic-dictatorship of workers and peasants, the dictatorship of the workers in alliance with the poorest peasantry, or the dictatorship of a bureaucracy still following the interests of the proletariat. So long, however, as the social produce of the working class returns to that class, so long as there does not exist private ownership of the means of production, private profits, and so on, there remains a Workers State and, in that sense, a Dictatorship of the Proletariat.[1]

We have also pointed out that a ruling class may dictate its will, not directly through members of its own class, but through members of another and even hostile class For example, there is no question but that Germany in 1914 was a capitalist State, i e, expressed the interests of the capitalists. Yet the capitalists themselves had little power in the government. The dictatorship of capital was expressed through the apparatus of the Junker aristocracy headed by the Kaiser. So it is today in Japan On the other hand, in Germany after the War, capitalism was saved by the socialists, supposedly enemies of the employers and representatives of the proletarians.

This paradox may also be found where the working class rules The proletariat can rule directly through its own open dictatorship, where the workers alone can vote (or where they have the decisive vote) and man the state apparatus—Case I, or it can rule through an alliance with other classes, such as the peasantry and other petty bourgeois elements not capable of ruling either themselves or the proletariat and who are content to allow the working class to lead in their mutual interests—Case II; or it can rule through a bureaucracy which still carries out the will of the working class—Case III Infinite varieties and combinations of these three categories can be concretely realized

In the first case, the direct open dictatorship of the proletariat, we have the widest development of the democracy of the workers, where the proletariat dictates its will directly and unrestrictedly through the members of its own class in power.

In the second case, we have a limitation of the democracy of the workers where they are a minority of the population in a backward country Here the workers restrict their interests in favor of the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry, and dictate their will only through the permission of the small

[1] See introduction

property holders. This mutual alliance of the workers and peasantry may take the form either of a democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants, in which these two elements crush all other sections of the population, refusing to permit them to vote or to express their interests, or it may take the form of a broad extension of democracy in which all layers of the population, generals, landlords, capitalists, and so forth, are allowed to vote, although it is the interests of the broad masses that are actually carried out for the moment. In this later event we have a popular democracy, not a democratic dictatorship.

In the third case, the workers' State or the workers' and peasants' State is expressed and carried out through the dictatorship of the bureaucracy. We can say, if we will, that the dictatorship of the proletariat is being administered by a dictatorship of the bureaucracy. But in all cases, whether the proletariat rules immediately and directly, or even indirectly, through the mediation of this or that group, so long as the forms of property created by the October Revolution are not overthrown, the proletariat remains the ruling class and the State is still a Workers State

The Russian Revolution evolved a number of State forms. In the period from February, 1917 to October, 1917, there existed a capitalist State managed by a provisional government that ruled with the passive permission of the masses organized in soviets The bourgeoisie dominated through the Social Revolutionary and Menshevik Parties The capitalist State was forced to express itself through a broad democracy

In the second period of the Russian Revolution, from October, 1917 to the autumn of 1918, the capitalist State, that is the dictatorship of the capitalist class, expressed through a broad democracy and through a dual power, gave way to a dictatorship of the proletarians who, however, for the moment limited themselves to carrying out not only their own interests but also the interests of small property holders, especially the peasantry. As Trotsky put it, "Not only up to the Brest-Litovsk Peace, but even up to autumn of 1918, the social content of the revolution was restricted to a petty-bourgeois agrarian overturn and workers' control over production. This means that the revolution in its actions had not yet passed the boundaries of bourgeois society. During this first period, soldiers' soviets ruled side by side with workers' soviets, and often elbowed them aside. Only toward the autumn of 1918, did the petty-bourgeois soldier-agrarian elemental wave recede a little to its shores, and the workers went forward with the nationalization of the means of production. Only from this time can one speak of the inception of a real dictatorship of the proletariat."[1] Thus in the second period, we had a form of the democratic-dictatorship carried out under the leadership of the proletariat itself.

[1] L D Trotsky. *The Soviet Union and the Fourth International*, pamphlet, pp. 9-10.

The third period of the Russian Revolution was the stage from 1918 to 1921, when the New Economic Policy was introduced. In this period there existed the outright dictatorship of the proletariat in alliance with the poor peasantry. Industry was nationalized, the *kulak* and the capitalist were attacked. Broad democracy no longer prevailed; the proletariat took to itself as many votes as it needed to gain full control of the State; the peasants were subordinated to the proletariat; peasant democracy was restricted, proletarian democracy expanded to the maximum. This was the period of stern civil war and war communism. The Communist Party here rose to heroic heights.

The fourth stage was ushered in with the New Economic Policy of Lenin and lasted to 1924. This period witnessed certain concessions made to capitalism and the political growth of a bureaucracy.

The fifth phase lasted from 1924 to 1933 and was marked by the gradual strangulation of the democracy of the proletariat. The rule of the workers was carried out through the uncontrolled bureaucracy. Up to then the peasants still had no equal power with the proletariat and the capitalists had not dared to raise their heads politically.

The next period, delineated by the victory of fascism in Central Europe and the destruction of the communist and revolutionary working class organizations there, witnessed great changes. The bureaucracy in pursuit of its own aims had to weaken the exclusive monopoly of the workers and to extend the democracy of the peasant property holders. Their secret aim was to form a united front of the bureaucracy and peasant against the proletariat if necessary in critical moments. The peasantry itself could not form its own party to defeat the proletariat of Russia. The bureaucracy by itself could not restore capitalism. However, if a juncture could be effected between both groups they might yet be able to dominate at decisive moments.

Thus in 1935 the vote was given to the peasants equally with the workers. Simultaneously the *kulaks,* now thoroughly entrenched in the collectives, were informed they also could return to vote in the soviets. The Stalinists defended their course on the ground that so secure was the socialist State of Russia and so close were they to the liquidation of all classes that they no longer had to fear the *kulak,* despite the danger of war and the rise of fascism outside of Russia. The further argument was made that the peasant on the collective was now a worker just like the agricultural laborer on the State farms. With these Left arguments that classes no longer existed, that there was no danger from the *kulak,* that democracy must be made broader, etc., the dictatorship of the proletariat was weakened by extension of democracy to alien classes, notably the peasantry. From then on, since the Soviet Union is overwhelmingly peasant, if the workers

wanted to vote a socialistic policy they would have to do so with the consent of the peasantry. However, this as yet was not an insuperable difficulty since, for a long time, the peasantry had been taught to follow the proletariat, and the instrument of collaboration between the two classes was still the soviet mechanism of class war for socialism.

To make it easier for the peasantry and other alien classes to separate themselves from the influence of the proletariat, the secret ballot was introduced, and complete freedom was promised for groups to put forward their own candidates. But even this was not sufficient. It was necessary to revise the constitution and to wipe out the soviets. The end of 1936 witnessed the adoption of an entirely different constitutional set-up than before.

As a prelude to the adoption of this Constitution the Stalinist apparatus conducted a reign of terror against the old revolutionary fighters, the Bolsheviks of Lenin's day. We have already analyzed the methods by which the internationalist wing of the Comintern was destroyed. But there were large numbers of old fighters who were still closely attached to the Party. There was the old Bolshevik secret police, the *OGPU*, there was the Society of Old Bolsheviks who had gone through the revolution as communists, and similar bodies. It was necessary to liquidate these. The *OGPU* was dissolved and a new body organized in its place; the Society of Old Bolsheviks was disbanded. The old time fighters were steadily driven out from all the auxiliary organizations outside the Party itself.

Naturally, reactionary social changes also were effected. The army was gradually reorganized. Instead of short term service for the masses, instead of the rifle's being tied firmly to the shoulder of the worker, the guns were removed from the barracks of the factories, the military training of the ordinary worker decreased, the professional army rose in numbers, the old Czarist ranks were re-introduced within the army, and a large corps of officers, whose permanent career was the military one, was formed.

The Soviet coins dropped the word "For World Revolution"; Christmas trees were set up for children; the Society for Militant Atheism gave up its activist agitation. The educational system abandoned its experimental work with vast numbers of children and returned to the beaten track of bourgeois educational methods. There was even talk that the history text books were too prosaic and did not give the *ancien régime* sufficient credit, that these revolutionary text books must be revised.

Reactionary tendencies invaded the life of the home as well. Divorce became more difficult. The motto "sanctity of the home" was revived. The youth were "put in their place"; they were to interfere less with politics and to play a greater part in home building. Fashion styles were introduced with a great flourish, and fashion parades were held. American jazz, cos-

metics, and bourgeois ideals were introduced, together with American machinery and American experts. By itself, each of these items was not important; collectively, they indicated definitely which way the wind was blowing.

On the basis of this steady trend away from the October revolution, the Stalinist apparatus resorted to open executions of the former revolutionary members of the Party. The assassination of Kirov gave the pretext for a regular Stalinist Bartholomew's Night. At first the press despatches declared that the assassination of this leader of the Communist Party was the act of a White-Guard Ring. But soon it was announced that Nicoleiev, the assassin, had been a Zinovievist in 1926, whereupon wholesale arrests were made of persons who had been active revolutionists all their lives and who had even played a glorious rôle in October. A hasty secret trial was given to some of the alleged conspirators; one hundred and seventeen were executed. Many of those executed had absolutely nothing to do with the particular ring that may have been involved in the killing of Kirov. Indeed, some of them, like Lazar Shatzkin, who was one of the founders of the Young Communist International, had been arrested for expressing opinions against Stalinism and were in jail long before the assassination had been planned. It was simply a case of the Stalinists' using the assassination of Kirov as a pretext to wipe out their dangerous political opponents. It was the old amalgam method.

Although Zinoviev and Kamenev were arrested immediately after the events in February, 1935, they were released on the ground, as the T.A.S.S. (Soviet Union Telegraphic Agency) despatch admitted, that they really had no connection with the affair.[1] At this time Trotsky himself was not mentioned as being in touch with any band of terrorists within the Soviet Union, and the official indictment did not contain the names of Zinoviev and Kamenev.

In the true amalgam method made famous by Stalinism, the prosecution then alleged that Nicoleiev and his band of former Party members were in touch with the consul of a foreign country who had given the terrorists some money and had demanded that they give him a letter to Trotsky. The consul was not named, nor was any attempt made to prove that Trotsky was part of this alleged scheme. Instead, it was proved that the secret police knew of the proposed assassination before it occurred and yet had done nothing. The question was raised whether the police was not involved in the job itself, as it had been involved in the former White-Guard episode in connection with the former Left Opposition.

A year and a half later, however, the apparatus struck again and arrested the former partners of Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and others,

[1] Compare L. D. Trotsky: *The Kirov Assassination*, p. 7.

and executed them.[1] At the same time Trotsky was denounced as the real leader of the gang of terrorists who wanted to restore capitalism in Russia in the form of fascism and who were acting as agents of Hitler's secret police. There was no evidence given in the second trial except the confessions of those indicted and shot. However, it is absolutely impossible to believe that men who had embraced Bolshevism for thirty years could have resorted to the method of individual terror, have adopted the aim of the restoration of capitalism, and to this end have become agents of German fascism. Such conclusions are as fantastic as the charges of the Entente that Lenin was a German agent of the Kaiser, sent to destroy Russia.

It was not enough that the Left was destroyed; Bucharin, Tomsky, Rykov, and others were named as having been in the plot. Tomsky suddenly "committed suicide"; others were removed from their posts and faced indictments. It was clear that the Stalinists were aiming at the complete extermination of the Old Guard. Stalin was now fulfilling his Robespierrean rôle.[2]

The reasons for these wholesale executions of old members of the Party are not hard to find. There was first the necessity of establishing the new Constitution; the reign of terror operated to crush all opposition. Second, the demands of the Franco-Soviet pact and similar alliances with world capitalism made it imperative that the firebrands be wiped out in Russia and the country made "safe for democracy." Third, there was the fact that the Spanish and French revolutionary forces were moving rapidly to the Left, adopting an internationalist point of view in which the enemies of Stalinism, such as Trotsky and even Zinoviev, became symbols of the world revolution.

The Russian leaders had to give guarantees that, if war should start, the Red Army would be entirely controlled and would not turn into a revolutionary army. It was in the imminent period of war, when the strain on the bureaucracy was the greatest, and the workers were armed and fighting for their lives, that Trotsky, Zinoviev, and similar agitators could play a most dangerous rôle in Russia. The wholesale executions of the world leaders of Leninism left Stalin absolutely alone. The killings signified that the heroic period of the bureaucracy was coming to a close and that the enlightened absolutism of the Stalinist variety had exhausted its internal resources. Henceforth, only two things were permissible: to glorify the Great Leader, the Beloved Chief, and to prove that every opponent of Stalinism was promoting fascism as its paid agent.

[1] According to the *New York Times'* full report of October 21, 1936, they were dragged through the toilet or wash house and killed under most shocking conditions.

[2] Apparently another "trial" will soon be held involving Radek and others.

The new Constitution of the Soviet Union is the culmination of the process to destroy the Dictatorship of the Proletariat from within. It is now declared that so far has socialism advanced in the Soviet Union that there is no longer any need for soviets, but that forms of pure democracy will replace the instruments of the class struggle. These phrases are meant to cover the fact that, in effect, the Constitution enormously extends the democracy of classes alien to the proletariat and limits the power of the working class.

To the Marxist-Leninist, a "Free People's State" is an irreconcilable contradiction. Under no State can the people as a whole be free. "One can only speak of *class* democracy (one may remark in passing that 'pure democracy' is not only an ignorant phrase showing lack of understanding both of the struggle of classes and of the nature of the State, but also a hollow phrase, since in communist society democracy will gradually become a habit and finally *wither away* but never will be 'pure democracy')."[1] If democracy be extended for the peasantry so that it can overwhelm the proletariat, then democracy is really restricted for the proletariat. Democracy must always have a class basis and a class objective.

That the new Constitution was really expressing the interests of a new class hostile to the proletariat and not a general classlessness can be seen by the provisions of the document itself. The Constitution provides for two houses to replace the former single body, the Soviet Congress. Despite the claims of pure democracy made by the Stalinists, all history shows that popular revolutions are led by single chambered bodies, and only when the people's revolution is definitely checked is the double chamber reconstituted. Furthermore, the two-house system is the inevitable expression of the class struggle between two or more classes.

In English history, we find that the two houses of the English parliament were based on estates, that is, on classes. During the course of the English Civil Wars, the rising class found it had no use for the double chamber, and so, in 1649, the Second Chamber was abolished under the pressure of the plebeian forces of the rebellion. When Cromwell had stopped the revolution from going too far, the ruling Puritan elements which Cromwell represented tried their best to reinstitute a double chamber. The most reactionary portion of Cromwell's forces pressed for the formation of a select senate to be formed entirely of appointees of the Protector.[2]

When the English House of Lords was reinstituted after the Restoration, it was a new body which recognized the fact that the House of Commons really represented the people. Gradually the power was taken

[1] V. I. Lenin: *The Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky the Renegade*, p. 23. Compare also K. Marx: *The Gotha Program* on this point.

[2] See J. A. R. Marriott: *Second Chambers* (first edition), p. 40.

away from the Upper House. Today the House of Lords has lost most of its legislative functions, has little control of money bills, and can only delay, but not permanently thwart, the will of the House of Commons.

In the French Revolution, no sooner had the people triumphed than they abolished the two-house system introduced by the Liberal bourgeoisie, and formed a single chamber Convention which reflected the will of the masses more closely. It was argued even by petty bourgeois democrats that the two-chamber system was entirely reactionary. Only when the petty bourgeois Jacobins were put down after the Paris Commune, were the two houses restored. But even when the Second House was firmly re-established under the Third Republic, it did not have the same power as the House of Deputies which alone had the right to initiate money bills.

In the American Revolution there was formed a Continental Congress of one chamber which lasted all during the time the revolution was in progress. Only when the fighting was over and the rebellious will of the people had to be thwarted was the Constitution formulated providing for a second chamber, with division of powers of government, an arrangement which allowed the minority of wealth to control. But even in the United States, the Senate did not acquire equal power. Finance bills must originate in the House of Representatives, although the Senate may amend these bills. The Lower House controls the all-important purse strings. So well known is the conservative character of the Upper House that everywhere liberals and radicals long have been urging the abolition of the Upper House so that the Legislature as a whole can get closer to the people. "The conclusions to which these arguments lead is that the danger that the popular House will seriously misrepresent those on whom it depends for election, is not great enough to justify a Second Chamber which adds to the cumbersomeness of the Constitution." [1]

But now the Stalinists in Russia, in the name of pure democracy and classlessness, introduce the two chambered parliamentary system with such accompaniments that it becomes less democratic than even the parliamentary system in capitalist countries. In the United States, there is now a direct election of Senators and in France an indirect election on a population basis. In Russia, the Upper House or Council of Nationalities is not elected at all but selected by the Supreme Councils of the National Republics connected with the Soviet Union.[2] And what is equally important, this Upper House has equal power with the Lower House elected by the people. In reality, the Upper House will be more than equal in

[1] H. B. Lees-Smith: *Second Chambers in Theory and Practice*, p. 44.

[2] We learn, as this book goes to press, that this provision has been changed. Under pressure of the masses, Stalinism has graciously consented to have the Upper House also elected.

the every day workings of the State apparatus. The situation now created in Russia finds no parallel in capitalist democratic countries; the nearest comparison being the Bundesrath under the Kaiser.

The two-chambered parliamentary system now introduced in the Soviet Union makes an end to the entire soviet system. Far from being an expression of classlessness, it is a recognition that classes do exist and that certain classes are clamoring to overwhelm the proletariat. Were this not the case, why should it be necessary to change the soviet system? It would be possible to retain the soviets and yet to give everyone the vote. As Lenin declared: "As I have pointed out already, the disfranchisement of the bourgeoisie does not constitute a necessary element of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Nor did the Bolsheviks in Russia, when putting forward the demand for such a Dictatorship, long before the November revolution, say anything in advance about the disfranchisement of the exploiters. This particular element of the Dictatorship was not born according to a plan conceived by some party but grew up spontaneously in the course of the fight." [1]

The fact of the matter is, however, that within the soviets the peasants could not be separated from the workers and united firmly with the bureaucracy. An entirely new framework of the State was necessary. The Upper House established, composed almost entirely of bureaucrats and peasants, will have the decisive voice in the selection of the Presidium that governs between meetings and in the functioning of the apparatus.

The great powers given to the Council of Nationalities and the fact that it was proposed to have it selected by the various Supreme Councils of the Republics make it necessary to look more closely into its composition. The deputies of this Upper House are apportioned not according to population but according to the formal status of the republic. Each Union Republic is entitled to ten delegates, each Autonomous Republic five, and each Autonomous Province, two. Thus the great Ukraine obtains only fifteen delegates, while little Azerbaijan has seventeen. Important White Russia gets ten, but the camel drivers of Tajikistan are entitled to twelve and Georgia is favored with twenty-two. Furthermore, to insure that the backward regions will predominate over the proletarian ones in this Upper House, three relatively unimportant regions, Kazakhistan, Kirghizistan, and Tajikistan, were raised into the dignity of full Republics so as to increase their voting power accordingly. More than that, even though Russia, White Russia, and Ukrainia have been given only one hundred thirty-two delegates out of two hundred forty-eight,[2] the votes of these

[1] V. I. Lenin: work cited, p. 58.

[2] Before the war the upper houses of England, France and Germany had more delegates

regions are so apportioned that the industrialized regions obtain only a very small percentage of the total number allotted to these republics.

Lenin had always stressed the superiority of soviets as a form of democracy for the workers and peasants. It was Stalin who had refused to break with the Pre-parliament of the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries, it will be recalled. Under Lenin, the soviets were to embrace the widest strata of the toilers, initiating them into the intricacies of the State preparatory to the withering away of the State. The soviet delegates were elected frequently, and there was easy recall. Every effort was made to wipe out specialists and bureaucracy. Under the new Constitution, the Supreme Council and the Presidium elected by the Council will hold office for four years unless dissolved because both houses cannot agree. Even the lowest State organs in the villages will now retain office for two years. The Supreme Court, not elected by the people, but selected by the Supreme Council, keeps office for five years, as do the territorial courts. The People's Courts are elected by secret ballot for three years. The Prosecutor of the U.S.S.R., who appoints all other prosecutors for five-year terms, himself is appointed by the Supreme Council for seven years.

Thus the soviets have been buried formally by Stalinism. They were killed when the right to strike was taken from the unions, when the secret police drove out the internationalist wing of communists from the meetings, when the bureaucracy took uncontrolled power into its own hands. Now the corpse formally is interred. A new parliamentarism arises. Instead of Lenin's ideal of the humblest scrubwoman's taking part in the government, there is now a parliamentary régime of professionals, of political experts.

In formally destroying the soviets, Stalinism has destroyed the traditional instrument which the masses used to get into power. Now the State apparatus and elections of functionaries will have nothing to do with the stirring days of 1917. The peasants no longer will be confined by the traditions and framework of the revolution to follow the proletariat. Here we can see patently that Stalinism is prepared to show world capitalism that Russia will be safe in the coming war and that the permanent revolution will be buried once and for all. Strictly speaking, it is no longer possible for the workers to declare they must defend the Soviet Union, since the soviets themselves are now no more. And if the workers are to take back political power there will have to be raised again the slogan: "All Power to the Soviets." Just as this battle-cry meant the end of the Kerenskys and the centrists of 1917, so will it spell *finis* for the Stalinist bureaucracy as well.

singly than the one proposed for Russia, although the population of the latter country is greater than all the other three combined.

The new Constitution marks a complete capitulation to capitalism in admitting that parliaments are more democratic than soviets. Evidently, Russia is not only Americanizing herself industrially, but aping America politically, except for this difference, that Stalinism takes on not the most progressive features of capitalist democracy but its most outworn characteristics.

We fittingly conclude by pointing out the method of amending the Constitution that Russia has now adopted. In the United States, the Constitution can be amended, if need be, by the people themselves, if conventions are held in three-quarters of the States or if two-thirds of the State Legislatures act. In Russia, under the new democratic Constitution, there is no way for the people themselves to amend the Constitution. The only way amendments can be carried is by a two-thirds vote of both houses —and one of the houses was proposed to be not even elective!

This new Constitution marks the final great step in the preparation of the counter-revolution from within. The next step will have to coincide with the fascist and militarist attacks from without.

3

The collapse of the Third International and the rise of fascism have produced a unique phenomenon in the ranks of the revolutionary movement, namely, the rise and dominance of centrism. Heretofore, centrism had been a secondary development subordinate to open reformism; now it has become the principal aspect of the movement.

"Speaking formally and descriptively, Centrism is composed of all those trends within the proletariat and on its periphery which are distributed between reformism and Marxism and which most often represent various stages of evolution from reformism to Marxism—and vice-versa. Both Marxism and reformism have a solid social support underlying them. Marxism expresses the historical interests of the proletariat. Reformism speaks for the privileged position of proletarian bureaucracy and aristocracy within the capitalist State. Centrism, as we have known it in the past, did not have and could not have an independent social foundation. Different layers of the proletariat develop in the revolutionary direction in different ways and at different times. In periods of prolonged industrial uplift or in the periods of political ebb-tide, after defeats, different layers of the proletariat shift politically from left to right, clashing with other layers who are just beginning to evolve to the Left. Different groups are delayed on separate stages of their evolution; they find their temporary leaders and they create their programs and organizations. Small wonder then that such a diversity of trends is embraced in the comprehension of 'Centrism'!

Depending upon their origin, their social composition, and the direction of their evolution, different groupings may be engaged in the most savage warfare with one another, without losing thereby their character of being a variety of Centrism." [1]

The victory of fascism had made reform impossible. Those workers' organizations such as the Socialist Parties which had been based on reform were now smashed to pieces. The Second International was broken up. Some groups capitulated to fascism, adopting a theory that the new social order would come through fascism; others began to fight against fascism and for the restoration of their old reforms. Had there been a great revolutionary movement based upon the unskilled masses of the industrialized world, these former bribed workers and skilled sections would have followed it. But in the absence of such a movement to carry them in its wake, all that the Socialist Parties of reformist workers could do was to mouth militant phrases against fascism and to talk of the necessity of fighting physically against the fascist menace. Thus these Socialist Parties, especially after the Austrian events of 1934, began to drop their ideas of the peaceful and gradual transformation of capitalism into socialism and to advocate militant struggle. Such Parties began to take on the appearance of being revolutionary and could be designated as socialist-centrist groups.

At the same time, with the degeneration of the Third International, the communists also moved from Marxism and came closer to the socialists, forming another variety of centrism. The basis of the communist centrism was the peculiar equilibrium in which the Workers' State of the Soviet Union had to compromise with the capitalist world, leading to the situation whereby a bureaucracy of several million, trained in communism and traditionally bound to the revolution, was yet adopting nationalist and reformist measures. So long as this situation could endure, so long could the centrism of the Third International have a stable basis and plenty of funds for support. Thus both from the Right side and from the Left, centrism became the dominant characteristic of the movement.

Naturally, efforts were now made for the fusion of these groups into one body. Some of the Socialist Parties formally broke from the Second International and joined the modern variety of the Vienna Union, known as the London Bureau; others retained their formal affiliation to the Socialist International although also affiliating to this Bureau. Some communist groups which had broken from the Third International also adhered to this Bureau, as did certain Trotskyist elements who were in favor of the Fourth International.

Thus, within the London Bureau and without, there were efforts made to coalesce forces. Some advocated the unity of the Second and Third

[1] L. D. Trotsky: *What Next?* pp. 117-118.

Internationals; others urged the fusion of the Socialist and Communist Parties within certain countries, still others wanted all the groups to come together into a new International which in effect would be but another Vienna Union on a larger scale; a fourth opinion insisted all must join the London Bureau, nor was there any lack of adherents for a policy of all joining the Second International to reform it, or of all becoming members of the Third.

Only a small internationalist group denounced both socialists and communists of the Third International as bankrupt and demanded the formation of a Fourth International, completely breaking from the old ones, with especially sharp struggles against every variety of centrism.

The characteristics of centrism have been well summed up as follows: "(a) In the sphere of theory, centrism is imprecise and eclectic. It shelters itself as much as possible from obligations in the matter of theory and is inclined (in words) to give preference to 'revolutionary practice' over theory; without understanding that only Marxist theory can give to practice a revolutionary direction.

"(b) In the sphere of ideology, centrism leads a parasitic existence: against revolutionary Marxists it repeats the old Menshevik arguments (those of Martov, Axelrod, and Plekanhov) generally without re-valuing them: on the other hand it borrows its principal arguments against the 'rights' from the Marxists, that is, above all, from the Bolshevik-Leninists, suppressing, however, the point of the criticisms, subtracting the practical conclusions and so robbing criticism of all object.

"(c) Centrism voluntarily proclaims its hostility to reformism but it is silent about centrism: more than that it thinks the very idea of centrism 'obscure,' 'arbitrary,' etc.: in other words centrism dislikes being called *centrism*.

"(d) The centrist never sure of his position and his methods, regards with detestation the revolutionary principle: state that which is; he inclines to substituting, in the place of political principles, personal combinations and petty organizational diplomacy.

"(e) The centrist always remains in spiritual dependence upon right groupings, is induced to court the goodwill of the most moderate, to keep silent about their opportunist faults and to regild their actions before the workers.

"(f) It is not a rare thing for the centrist to hide his own hybrid nature by calling out about the dangers of 'sectarianism'; but by sectarianism he understands not a passivity of abstract propaganda (as is the way with the Bordiguists) but the anxious care for principle, the clarity of position, political consistency, definiteness in organization.

"(g) Between the opportunist and the Marxists, the centrist occupies a

position which is, up to a certain point, analogous to that occupied by the petty bourgeoisie between the capitalist and the proletariat; he courts the approbation of the first and despises the second.

"(h) On the international field, the centrist distinguishes himself, if not by his blindness, at least by his shortsightedness. He does not understand that one cannot build in the present period a national revolutionary party save as part of an international party; in the choice of his international allies the centrist is even less particular than in his own country.

"(i) The centrist sees as outstanding in the policy of the C.I. (Communist International) only the 'ultra left' deviation; the adventurism, the putchism, and is in absolute ignorance of the opportunist right zig-zags. (Kuomintang, Anglo-Russian Committee, pacifist foreign policy, anti-fascist bloc, etc.)

"(j) The centrist swears by the policy of the united front as he empties it of its revolutionary content and transforms it from a tactical method into a highest principle.

"(k) The centrist gladly appeals to pathetic moral lessons to hide his ideological emptiness, but he does not understand that revolutionary morals can rest only on the ground of revolutionary doctrine and revolutionary policy.

"(l) Under the pressure of circumstances, the eclectic centrist is capable of accepting even extreme conclusions but only to repudiate them later in deed. Recognizing the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, he leaves plenty of room for opportunist interpreters: proclaiming the need for a fourth international, he works for the creation of the two-and-a-half international." [1]

The Left Opposition to the centrists had come principally from the Trotskyists. Ever since 1928, when he had been exiled and then deported to Turkey, Trotsky had made efforts to organize his forces internationally. However, even Trotsky and the groups mobilized by him proved inadequate to withstand the strain, and ultimately capitulated to centrism.

Although sharply critical of Stalinist methods, Trotsky made no effort to build his international grouping upon the principal of democratic centralism. While he denounced Stalin's refusal to call international congresses, Trotsky himself repeatedly rejected the demand for an international congress of those adhering to the Left Opposition, wherein a collective program and responsibility could be worked out. The adherents of Trotsky followed his innumerable essays and articles, but they could work out little for themselves. If ever there was a one-man movement, it was the Left Opposition built up by Trotsky after 1928.

[1] Leon Trotsky: "Two Articles on Centrism," *Class Struggle*, Vol. IV, No. 8, pp. 9-10 (August 1934).

In this way, the Left Opposition never was prepared to stand the strain of serious struggle. It could be negative and critical, but could do very little constructive work. It could rally to itself Jewish students from various countries, but could not build up an international proletarian movement. Wherever strong groups did rally to Trotsky's point of view, sooner or later they were bound to break organizational relations with him; repeatedly Trotsky had to denounce those with whom he had worked the closest as "intriguants," "disloyal phrasemongers," etc. In short, when it came to questions of organization, Trotsky showed clearly he was no Lenin.

Unable to stand on its own feet, the Left Opposition soon collapsed. Under the direct guidance of Trotsky, the Left Opposition groups entered the Socialist Parties. In France, this was done with the argument that the Left Opposition group was so weak and small that it could not do independent work. In the United States, the group was told that the Socialist Party was shaky and vacillating, while the Trotskyists were mature and strong and could easily capture the organization for their point of view. In either case, the conclusion was the same, liquidation of an independent press, forms of organization, leadership, and policy, and entrance into the Socialist Parties. The only factor that could have possibly changed the correlation of forces within the labor movement and built a new international, gave up the ghost.

To promote his new policy, Trotsky declared that the French situation was exceptional and that it was not impossible for the French Socialist Party to have a new Tours Congress. Thus he apparently believed that the Socialist Party suddenly could be reformed and become genuinely communist. To understand how much of a utopian conception this amounted to, we may pause to compare 1934 with the days when the Third International was formed. Under Lenin, it took five years for the Comintern to be organized, although aided by the experiences of war and revolution. Even then, most of the socialists could not qualify for the Communist International, and those that did sooner or later fell back to centrism.

But, in 1934, both objective and subjective conditions made it much harder to change Socialist Parties into genuine revolutionary organizations. There was neither war nor revolution, but fascism; there was neither a Lenin nor a great revolutionary Communist Party anywhere. Besides, the history of the movement itself must not be forgotten. The formation of the Comintern and the mutual struggles between the Socialist and the Communist Parties under Lenin periodically had eradicated the best revolutionary elements from the Socialist Parties. All that remained of the Socialist organization in many countries was a petty bourgeois shell. If workers followed the Socialist Party it was not in order to obtain socialism,

but rather to secure social reform. To imagine that now the Socialist Parties could be conquered for revolutionary struggle was sheer idealism.

Afterwards, when it became plain that the French Socialist Party was as hopeless as a revolutionary force as any other socialist group, the Trotskyists implied that they had entered the Socialist Party in order to get close to the masses and later to be able to split with a large number of followers, instead of remaining the small sect that they were. They failed to realize that, if they followed a correct policy, revolutionary events in France would soon enough give them a proletarian audience The Trotskyists did not want to believe that their entrance into the Socialist Party was really a short cut by which they were trying to dodge the hard and arduous tasks of revolutionary mass work and that, precisely because they had done little mass work, they would be totally unable to win over the best working class elements, either in or around the Socialist Party. All that the Trotskyists could do was further to cover up the policies of the reformists with their own phrases.

It is true that Lenin had urged the British communists to join the Labour Party, but that was precisely because the Labour Party was no real party at the time, but an integrated series of united fronts on the planks of its platform Moreover, the Communist Party was to retain its independence But the Trotskyists joined the socialists without the right to publish their own paper and to present their views to the workers If they do present their policies, they must at the same time work to build up the Socialist Party, the majority of whose members are actively working against the realization of those policies.

In short, it is not enough to advocate abstractly correct ideas, but the organizational means must also be found to move the workers in the right direction But the Trotskyist minority has placed itself within the discipline and framework of the Socialist Party to which they must repeatedly pledge their loyalty, thereby making it impossible for them to undertake any independent action or to help the workers along a revolutionary path

Thus, in France, the Trotskyists simply aided the cause of Leon Blum. In Belgium they became part of a Socialist Party in office, giving loyal service to the King Everywhere they gave up the opportunity to act in a revolutionary manner in the light of the great events now stirring Western Europe.

The collapse of Trotsky's International Secretariat marked the end of the last grouping of importance that could have ended the centrist deformation of the revolutionary movement Looked at objectively, this collapse meant that a whole generation of communists had either been killed or had burnt itself out. It meant also that within Europe there was now no

force able to prevent fascism and world war. The work would now have to be passed on to a new generation working in other countries.

From a broad historical viewpoint it may be stated that, even though the communist revolutionary movement temporarily has resulted only in centrism, this is a great advance from the stage before the War. Then, in spite of Marxist teachings, all that the working class could reach was the limited level of the skilled workers and the ideas of the reformist Second International. At least the working class of the world has now arrived at the plane of centrism. In the further development of the twentieth century, when the colonial peoples also rise to their full stature and when the unskilled workers in the industrial countries begin to take the leadership and swing the skilled workers behind them, the working class then will be able to move from centrism to genuine communism.

If the degeneration of all the forces of communism that showed such promise after the Russian Revolution is now proving that Europe is in the process of being burned out as a great historic factor leading the world, this only means that the proletariat of America will be called upon to take the lead. We do not agree with those European communists of recent date who believe that because Europe is passing up her leading rôle in world history, the end of the world has come and we must revert to barbarism.[1]

On the contrary, the set-back of proletarian communism is only another illustration of the law of the uneven development of capitalism, and an indication that the proletarian revolution must operate, not as a process of a day, but as an action covering a generation or more, and that the course of the struggle is not in a straight line, but in a zig-zag direction which, however, is always approaching nearer to ultimate victory.

[1] We refer to such as John Strachey who can write "The essential use, then, of Marx's economic discoveries is to enable us to see the alternatives which face us. And these alternatives are, as he himself expressed it, barbarism or communism" (See J Strachey *The Nature of Capitalist Crisis*, p 389)

Marx never placed such alternatives before the workers, but constantly maintained that the victory of the proletariat was inevitable, or to put it another way, that the increasing contradictions of capitalism and the growing burdens upon the people would compel the proletariat sooner or later to overthrow their masters and unleash the productive forces which now stifle humanity

XLVII. COMMUNISM IN THE UNITED STATES

I

THE first definite crystallization of a Communist Party in the United States occurred in 1919 when the Left Wing split away from the Socialist Party.[1] Within socialist ranks, the Left Wing had first appeared in 1905, supporting the launching of the I.W.W. against the policy of the Right Wing, which favored the officials of the American Federation of Labor. Again, the Left Wing loomed large in 1912 when it fought against the adoption of Article II, Section 6 of the Socialist Party Constitution, expelling anyone who favored sabotage. In 1917 it compelled a strong resolution to be drafted against the War. Finally, it rallied to the support of the Soviet régime in Russia, and struggled for the adherence of the Socialist Party to the Communist International.

The Left Wing was not without its own publications. In the winter of 1917-1918 was started the *Class Struggle*, a magazine printed in New York City, the editors of which were Eugene Victor Debs and Ludwig Lore. It was among the first papers in America to publish the works of Lenin and Trotsky on the Russian Revolution. At about the same time, the Socialist Propaganda League began to issue the *New International*, also printed in New York City, with Louis C. Fraina [2] as editor and J. S. Rutgers as associate editor. It was published monthly in five-cent newspaper form, and also printed articles by Lenin and Trotsky. A third periodical was the *Revolutionary Age*, the official organ of the Boston Local of the Socialist Party, edited by Louis C. Fraina and Eamon MacAlpine, and having a long list of contributing editors, including John Reed and Scott Nearing.

We must not consider this Left Wing as having a completely continuous life or the same composition in the whole period from 1905 to 1919. The old fighters were Americans rooted among the masses and leading their struggles. By 1919, on the contrary, the revolutionary group was almost entirely foreign-born, with a few American intellectuals giving the movement an American face. Quite different from the old Left Wing

[1] Much of this chapter is based on personal knowledge or contact rather than on material to be found in libraries. It is possible that some minor details concerning the early communist organizations may be inaccurate.

[2] Now known as Lewis Corey.

leaders, such as Haywood and Debs, the new leading lights like Hourwich, Cohen, Fraina, Lovestone,[1] Bedacht, and others had had nothing to do with the real life of the American proletariat. Haywood went to Russia; Larkin returned to Ireland; Debs was in the Atlanta penitentiary. Of the recognized revolutionary fighters in the Socialist Party, but a few were active factors in the 1919 Left Wing, the most prominent being Charles E. Ruthenberg, Benjamin Gitlow, and Joseph Caldwell.

To this Left Wing of the Socialist Party there were added other tendencies which the World War and Russian Revolution had pushed towards communism. The mixture of these various heterogeneous groupings strongly militated against a stable Communist Party's being organized that would really become rooted in the American working class. Each group brought with it its own baggage from the past and insisted that it and it alone represented the kernel of true communism in the United States.

The second group to make up the communist forces was a number of disappointed American Federation of Labor organizers headed by William Z. Foster, Jack Johnstone, William F. Dunne, and others. The case of Foster is typical of these leaders. Before the War, Foster was a member of the I.W.W. but found the I.W.W. too conservative, and espoused the theoretical doctrines of French syndicalism. During the War, Foster changed his allegiance and became an ardent patriot and one of the chief helpers of Gompers. He did his bit by selling Liberty Bonds like the other social chauvinists. So far to the Right did he swing that even the Interchurch Report on the Steel Strike of 1919 had to declare that it was the A. F. of L. policies that helped to break that strike and that Foster was one of the principal agents responsible for the bad tactics carried out. We cull the following gems from this report:

"Racial differences among steel workers and an immigrant tendency toward industrial unionism, which was combatted by the strike leadership, contributed to the disunity of the strikers."[2] "Mr. Foster 'harmoniously' combatted the natural tendencies of sections of the rank and file towards industrial unionism."[3]

"It is possible that the workers throughout the whole steel industry might much more easily have been organized on a radical appeal. But the Strike Committee were opposed in principle to any such appeal. After the first three months of the strike, when the nerves of strikers and leaders were worn by the struggle, Mr. Foster was constantly complaining of fighting the 'radicals,' meaning those who wanted to have a general strike

[1] Né Jacob Liebstein.
[2] Interchurch World Movement: *Report on the Steel Strike of 1919*, p. 16.
[3] The same, p. 35.

called or the whole strike called off in order to be called on again and again and again."[1]

"Not one new development of major importance was discovered in this strike. That is, in the light of industrial history, there was nothing in the strike which deserves to be called industrially new, or revolutionary." "It was an old-fashioned strike, preceded by a slightly new mechanical quirk in organizing. It ran on rather unusually old-fashioned lines, especially in comparison with such upheavals as the coal strike, the printers' strike, the clothing strikes of recent years, and the recent aims of railroad labor organizations. The steel strike had old style methods and aims. . . . By the end of the year it was evident that the strikers were getting an old-fashioned licking."[2]

"We found: (a) That the strike was regularly conducted in orthodox fashion according to the A. F. of L. rules and principles. (b) That while radicals sympathized with the strikers, as was natural, they were effectually debarred by the strike leaders and that, far from having influence in it, they often denounced and opposed those who conducted the strike."[3]

After the failure of the Steel Strike, Foster, greatly disappointed, viciously struck back at the workmen for having lost the battle. He wrote at the time "Nowhere is there a more deplorable and contemptible spectacle than that presented by unorganized workmen. . . . They are worse than cowards and parasites; they are traitors—traitors to the working class and themselves. They bite the hand that feeds them. . . . The worst enemy of labor is not the employer but the unorganized workingmen. . . . Out of their colossal ignorance and stupidity are forged fetters for the whole working class. Were it not for their treason, the exploiters would be helpless. . . . The unorganized are the real enemy of labor; the true obstacle to liberty."[4]

Foster had had great dreams of being the head of a vast labor movement. With the general swing of the labor movement to the left, taking with it considerable sections of organized workers and their local leaders, Foster, after a visit to Russia, decided to enter the Communist Party. To the skilled workers, Foster posed as a theorist; to the college-boy and foreign-born intellectual leaders of the Left Wing he posed as a plain worker. In reality he was neither. He was merely a representative of the bewildered skilled worker, blindly groping his way. Yet he was an American, knowing the American labor movement and having many contacts. Thus he was made welcome and, within a year, this A. F. of L. organizer,

[1] The same, p. 39.
[2] The same, p. 40.
[3] The same, p. 247.
[4] W. Z. Foster: *Trade Unionism—The Road to Freedom*, pp. 26-28.

thoroughly untested and unrevolutionary, became the Chairman of the Communist Party.

Not only Foster entered the ranks of the communists at the time, but a whole group of trade unionists whom he had rallied round his Trade Union Educational League. What induced this group to join the Communist Party? The post-War deflation, the smashing of many A. F. of L. unions, the drastic cuts in wages, the levelling of the skilled workers more and more to the plane of the unskilled, the international revolutionary wave after the War, such factors drove the skilled workers more to the left and brought some of them, followed by these leaders, into the communist camp. Nor must it by any means be overlooked that they joined only after the Red International of Labor Unions had been formed and the American movement had become heavily subsidized by the center at Moscow. These trade unionists joined the communists not during the severe days of the Red Raids of 1919, but only after the main danger had subsided and the coffers were full.

Added to these two groups was a certain small number of former anarchists, New York Greenwich Village habitués, free-thinking Bohemians, pianists, artists, writers, and such who, seeking the new and unconventional, were attracted to the Russian Revolution. This group published a monthly magazine known as *The Masses* which later became the *Liberator* and still later was changed to the *New Masses*. Typical of this group was the editor of *The Masses*, Max Eastman, whose political history we trace for the edification of the reader.

Mr. Eastman has been poet, politician, and philosopher. Before the War, he occupied the position of Secretary of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage. At that time he was simply a bourgeois liberal, as the American flag proudly flying on the cover of his first pamphlet [1] and the statements in his *Value of the Vote* amply testified. In his poetry, written during the War, Max Eastman specialized in such items as "To the Little Bed at Night," "To a Virgin," "To a Prostitute," and such delicacies.[2]

In the midst of this artistic playfulness, the War took its grim toll; the time for gamboling was over. The government of the United States began to take notice of the magazine, *The Masses*, which was expressing itself rather freely upon the terrible blood bath engulfing the world. The police reminded themselves that Eastman had written "I like to meddle and tinker. . . . I belong to that disreputable class damned by Tacitus . . . as 'desiring revolution for its own sake,'" [3] and began to call this meddler to a halt. Articles had appeared in *The Masses* by John Reed and others

[1] *Women Suffrage and Sentiment.*
[2] See his *Child of the Amazons*, also his *Kinds of Love.*
[3] M. Eastman: *Journalism versus Art*, p. 110.

which the government felt were impeding the conduct of the war. Max Eastman was arrested.

Eastman emerged from his first and only test a liberal capitulator.[1] He told the jury that there was no attempt on his part to obstruct recruiting or enlistment or to promote mutiny or refusal of duty in the army. He emphasized his solidarity with such socialists as Albert Thomas, Minister of Munitions in the French Cabinet, Arthur Henderson, Emile Vendervelde, and other socialists actively conducting the War for their respective governments. Passionately he declaimed: "We never desired the defeat of this country or its failure in the War at any time. We never—most of us—even desired a separate peace." "Although I was not *for* the war, I was not for our *withdrawing* from the War. . . . I was not for the *defeat* of this country." When asked whether he, as editor, was responsible for the articles appearing in his magazine, he declared, "Our policy was to do as we pleased."

After the trial, Eastman took little active part in the revolutionary movement, went back to poetry, wrote a book on humor and, after taking the side of Trotsky against Stalin, finally published a book against Marx [2] in which he came out for Hume, for Bertrand Russell, for Seligman, for Einstein, for Bakunin, for Bernstein, for John Dewey, and for the Technocrats (of the Left Wing).

So long as the communist movement was immature, the intellectuals coming from the student section of the propertied classes, played a leading rôle. However, as the movement grew, these elements, in the natural course of events, were pushed in the background. Some of the intellectuals became proletarianized, some workers became intellectualized, and jointly hammered out a revolutionary theory for the masses. In America, however, the revolutionary movement has experienced a great paucity of genuine revolutionary intellectuals. Outside of Daniel De Leon, there is hardly an intellectual leader of the movement whose works are original or can endure even a few months after they have been written. All this, of course, is part of the difficulty of forming a genuine Communist Party in the United States. For, after all, viewed socially, it is the Party itself that serves the function of a social intellectual. The very fact that there had existed a stunted Communist Party has stimulated the rise of all sorts of pretenders who pose as communist intellectuals.

Much later, when the crisis of 1929 was in its deepest throes, and when the success of the Soviet Union had begun to make an impression, new layers of intellectuals gathered round the American Communist Party.

[1] See *"Max Eastman's Address to the Jury in the Second Masses Trial—In Defence of the Socialist Position and the Right of Free Speech."*

[2] *Marx and Lenin: the Science of Revolution.*

The old group, headed by Eastman, Floyd Dell, and others, had been more or less idealistic enthusiasts, impressed by the Russian Revolution. Some of them had money. They were filled with a spirit for the masses. Later, it is true, they began to lose this idealism and to capitalize as much as possible on the movement. The "Modern Monthly" group represented this decadence wherein freedom to them meant heavy stress on sex expression.[1]

The new intellectuals clinging to the Communist Party since the present depression, however, who have been busy forming John Reed Clubs, Pen and Hammer Societies, and the like, are of a different sort. They are hungrier than the old type, and thus far more serious. The old group were anti-organization men; the new style are top-sergeant martinets: the old group stressed their intellectual independence; the new variety hangs upon the words of the Party bureaucracy. They are broken intellectuals, party hacks who refuse the duty of dangerous concrete work among the masses and substitute for it the obedience of the cadet with his fingers on the seam of his trousers. These layers are forming a thick crust around the Communist Party today.

About them Trotsky has aptly written in one of his articles: "These groups, sufficiently variegated in their composition, busy themselves on the one side with the fringes of the bourgeoisie, on the other with fringes of the proletariat, and offer no guarantee whatever as to their own future. From the standpoint of time, their radicalism is chiefly directed toward the past. From the standpoint of space, it is directly proportional to the square of the distance from the scene of action. In relation to their own country, these bold boys always were and always will be infinitely more cautious and evasive than in relation to other countries . . . especially those in the East. The essence of these people from the Left Wing of the bourgeois Bohemia is that they are capable of defending the revolution only after it is accomplished and has demonstrated its permanence."

With such an agglomeration of heterogeneous groups, it was very natural that the communist movement from the very beginning should have been rent with factions and splits. The isolation of the movement from the American workers, the many foreign-language federations, the lack of proletarian membership, and the low political ideological level of both membership and leadership—these defects were bound to insure a hectic life for the communists. This does not mean that the splits did not occur around important issues. The history of the working class movement shows

[1] One of the steady contributors to the *Modern Monthly* was S. D. Schmalhausen who never tired of expressing his belief that "The psychology of the orgasm is an undeveloped theme deserving profoundest consideration on the part of psychoanalysts."

Schmalhausen's aim was to edit books about the "revolt of the virgins." See his *Our Neurotic Age*—Symposium.

that a constant struggle is necessary before a genuine Communist Party can emerge, and this struggle is internal as well as external. The factions and splits inside the communist movement serve to mark its stages of development.

The first big battle came even before the communists had organized separately and while they were still a Left Wing of the Socialist Party. The Left Wing in 1919 had grown so strong that it threatened to win the entire Socialist Party membership for the Bolsheviks. At once the Left Wingers were met by wholesale expulsions. The entire state memberships of Massachusetts and of Michigan found themselves suddenly outside the official Socialist Party. The first question was, then, what was to be done? One group in Michigan believed it was necessary to form a new party, a Communist Party, at once; they issued a call for a National Convention to be held in the fall of 1919.

During the summer, however, a convention of Left Wing elements was held in New York City. There the fight waxed hot as to whether they should split from the Socialist Party, or whether those expelled should try to get back into the Socialist Party. These and similar questions agitated and split the Left Wing Convention; one section of the Convention declared it would organize a Communist Party forthwith in September; the other section declared it would return to the Socialist Party Convention in Chicago and fight to win the Socialist Party membership for its position.

The first of September came and, in Chicago, the Communist Party of the United States was formed. Just prior to the first session of this communist Convention, the National Convention of the Socialist Party was held. The Left Wingers who were trying to re-enter the Socialist Party and to protest their expulsion were met at the door by police, who ejected them from the hall. This group at once held a Convention of its own and baptized themselves the Communist Labor Party. Thus the Communist movement began its existence with two sections, each of which began a violent polemic against the other.

Both Communist Party and Communist Labor Party were far removed from American life. Their invectives against each other were sharp in proportion as their phrases covered their lack of actions. For almost a year, a costly fight was waged over such questions as, when workers are mobilized, is it a case of mass action or action of the masses? Soon after the first Communist Party Convention, one of the groups, the Michigan group, broke away and formed another party—the Proletarian Party, and thus there were three.

The literature of these early communist groupings for the most part continued former Left Wing publications. The Communist Labor Party took over the *Class Struggle* as its theoretical organ, with Carney and

Weinstein as editors. It also published *Communist Labor*. When the Communist Labor Party went into hiding, the *Class Struggle* disappeared, although the other paper continued publication. In Ohio, the Communist Labor Party was able to obtain control of a weekly socialist paper, the *Ohio Socialist* and, under the editorship of Wagenknecht and Allison, published it as a legal paper, known as *The Toiler*, later changed to the *Voice of Labor*.

The Communist Party founded its official organ *The Communist*, combining a weekly paper of that name which had begun to appear a short time before in New York as the official organ of the Left Wing Section of the National Council of the Socialist Party (editor, John Reed) with the *Revolutionary Age* of Boston. *The Communist* was published in Chicago with L. C. Fraina and I. E. Ferguson as editors. When, later, the communist movement became illegal, J. J. Ballam became editor, one of a long series. This paper endured until 1921, when again the movement appeared above ground. During the existence of the Communist Party, there was printed also a weekly agitational paper called the *Workers Challenge*, and there was issued as its legal organ another weekly paper called *The Toiler*.

Both the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party were gravely ill with what Lenin had called the "infantile sickness of 'Leftism.'" They were opposed to work in the trade unions and to parliamentarism; they advocated the precipitate formation of soviets (by leaflets) and the immediate transformation of every large strike into armed insurrection. In their exaggerated actions, the communists of this country were reflecting the revolutionary events abroad without knowing how to win the confidence of the workers at home, and were making a parody of communism. The growth of the communist movement could come about only if the Party understood thoroughly American conditions and the relation of these conditions to the international situation. However, the Communist Party was not destined to have that normal growth.

Inside of the Socialist Party there had been organized many foreign-language-speaking federations composed of immigrants who had but recently come to America. With the fall of Czarism, thousands of Russians, Jews, Ukrainians, Finns, and others, mostly of those who had suffered under the Czar, joined the movement in the United States, not because of the battles that were being fought here, but generally as a reaction to the world-shaking events in Europe. When the split came in the Socialist Party, most of these foreign-language-speaking federations became communist and soon were controlling the new-born communist movement. Of the estimated fifty-five thousand members in the Communist Parties of the time, only about one thousand five hundred were rated as English-speaking, and many of them were Americanized Jews.

These foreign federations that now dominated the movement knew that they could not possibly attract the American masses themselves; they therefore tried hard to present an American face, and pushed forward any intellectual who could speak American. Such intellectuals were placed at the front of the Party, by no means would the foreign federations allow them to control it. Behind the scenes stood the bureaus of the federations which dictated the terms upon which their language groups would vote for this or that intellectual leader. On their part, the intellectuals were glad to take the easy way to leadership and to make those compromises which were acceptable to the foreign federations in order to win the votes Indeed, only such compromisers had any chance whatever of becoming leaders of the party. Instead of entering into the serious work of winning the great mass of unskilled workers such as the poorest sections of the foreign-born, the Negroes, the poor whites of the South, and so forth, the American nominal leaders agreed not to disturb the Party and to allow the foreign-language federations to continue their isolated nationalist lives and yet remain the base of the movement.

Thus, it was not until 1924 that the slightest beginning was made in the reorganization of the Party on a shop nuclei basis, and only in 1926 did the communist movement undertake such independent action as leading strikes and organizing the unorganized In this period, the foreign-born advanced worker had a great rôle to play in giving to America a communist theory, but the American worker had to pay a considerable price for this education. The result was that, up to the very present, there has been no genuine Communist Party organized Before the communist movement outgrew its periods of infancy and of immaturity, already the world communist movement was in decline and degeneration Thus the Americans had to suffer from a multiplication of evils, the faults of childishness and the sins of senility

Only the Proletarian Party group emphasized the evils of foreign-language federation control. But they, on the other hand, tended to the belief that what was needed was more abstract education, since the revolution was far away. The foreign-born failed to realize that America was not on the immediate verge of the proletarian insurrection; the American skilled worker group failed sufficiently to connect America with world affairs and to understand the intimate relation of this country to the proletarian revolution abroad. Thus the Proletarian Party could be nothing but a sterile sect, eking out an existence of which the chief activity was publication of its monthly organ *The Proletarian,* which it continues to this day.

The Leftist exaggerations of the Communist Party and of the Communist Labor Party were made plausible by the terror which was soon

launched against the entire movement. In 1919-1920 there took place the Red Raids, instigated by Attorney General Palmer, which had the effect of driving these two organizations underground. Thousands were now being arrested and deported. A general campaign of terrorism was launched by the Klu Klux Klan, the American Legion, and similar elements, and above all by the United States Government. The blows of reaction, however, did not destroy the communist forces. On the contrary, in this period the chaff began to separate itself from the wheat; the membership rapidly dwindled, but those who remained were loyal. Under the blows of reaction, and upon the insistence of the Communist International, the Communist Parties were compelled to join forces; they formed the United Communist Party in 1921.

The Party at that time was organized in small groups, meeting secretly, each under the direction of a captain. In spite of the vigilance of the police, leaflets calling upon the workers to seize arms and to overturn the government were widely distributed. An intense study of Lenin's work, *"Left" Communism,* was carried on by these circles; soon its influence made itself felt. The United Communist Party began to place itself on the track of Leninism.

By this time the world revolutionary wave had somewhat subsided, the great strike period in America was closing, the employers were no longer so frightened, and the United States was making an effort to return to normal. A new issue now began to divide the communists. Many felt that being in hiding removed them from the American working class. They therefore began to agitate for a legal party. This position was encouraged by the Comintern. Soon they did form a legal organization—first the American Labor Alliance, later, in 1921, the Workers Party of America. All this did not occur, however, until another split had taken place.

Some of the undergrounders refused to liquidate their organization. They felt that the period of legality would be but temporary; thus they formed their own organization, the United Toilers. This little group also had its organ, the *Workers Challenge* edited by Siskind, Lifschitz, and Ballam. Not long afterwards, the United Toilers itself split, most of the members joining the Workers Party. The United Toilers, despite its sectarianism, did stress a factor that American communists were later prone to overlook, namely, that even in America, the communists must prepare for the time when they will again be driven into hiding.

Simultaneously with these events, the communists were winning more recruits from other sources. Within the Socialist Party a new split had occurred in the Jewish [1] and Finnish Socialist Federations. So long as the outcome of the civil war in Russia had been in doubt, these people had

[1] A leading light of the Jewish Federation group was M. Olgin.

stood on the fence; now that the soviets were victorious, they could afford to affiliate. These groups, together with the Workers Council group of New York, joined the Workers Party. It was about this time, too, that the Trade Union Educational League group also adhered to the Workers Party.

The Workers Council had issued a bi-weekly paper called the *Workers Council*, edited by J. Louis Engdahl, William Kruse, and Alexander Trachtenberg. With the formation of the Workers Party, a *Weekly Worker* was issued which later combined with the *Workers Council* and *The Toiler*. Engdahl was the first editor of the *Weekly Worker*. In January, 1924, the *Weekly Worker* became the *Daily Worker*.

2

With the formation of the Workers Party and the liquidation of the underground organization, the communist movement entered into an entirely different phase of its activity. Up to now the work had been mostly propaganda; the works of Lenin were being translated, and the broad distinctions between communism and socialism had to be made clear. Even the artist group had some justification for its leading participation in the movement at a time when all that existed was discussion. To some extent a sectarian life was inevitable in the beginning. But by 1922 it had become plain that the communist movement could not remain a debating society. The big strikes then occurring showed unmistakably the gap between the working class and the communists.

Characteristically, the leaders who yesterday were so Left and revolutionary now swung far to the Right. Perhaps this process was accelerated by the government's raid on the Bridgeman, Michigan, Convention, when the whole leadership was arrested at a secret meeting in the woods. No doubt the influx of the new recruits also helped to make the Party reformist. At any rate, as far back as 1922, the Workers Party had taken to election campaigns in which its demands included one upon the government that the capitalist also obey the law.[1] But no matter how many times the Workers Party, to Americanize itself, quoted the Declaration of Independence and contrasted it with reality, the membership reports still showed that, in 1922, of the 12,400 members, only 318 were in English branches, and in 1923, of the 15,200 members, only 1,200 were in the English Federation.[2]

Prior to this time, the communist leaders had opposed work in the A. F. of L. At first they had called for the absolute abandonment of the unions and the formation of soviets. Then they had concentrated their

[1] See *Program and Constitution, Workers Party of America*, December, 1921, p. 12.
[2] See *The Second Year of the Workers Party of America*, pp. 29-30.

work in the I. W. W. and other revolutionary unions. Now they enunciated their policy as based mainly upon work within the American Federation of Labor. The new tactics adopted, of those boring from within, were carried out in a particularly opportunist manner in which all sorts of maneuvers were accomplished with those heads of the union movement who would consent to work at all with the communists. At this point no effort was made to organize the unorganized workers; the work was limited to the skilled workers already in the unions. The chief battle-cry was "Amalgamation or Annihilation."

In the parliamentary field, also, the leaders of the communist forces who yesterday had denounced all electioneering were ready to make the most intricate deals with the Farmer-Labor parties then being organized and to coquette with LaFollette. The collapse of the Labor Party movement in 1924-1925 brought about a serious crisis within the Workers Party which almost caused a split in the ranks. The Foster group, which was opposed to those communists who advocated a Labor Party, was pushed aside by the Communist International, which declared that this faction was less politically correct and loyal than the faction headed by Ruthenberg. Both factions equally were ridden with opportunism. The Foster group's withdrawal from the Labor Party fight was part of its general tendency to shrink from the struggle, and of its belief that American capitalism was so strong as temporarily to prevent the workers from reaching even the Labor Party level. On the Ruthenberg side, already there were appearing tendencies yearning to substitute a Labor Party for a revolutionary communist organization. Lenin was dead and the whole Comintern was moving rapidly to the Right; in this drift both factions shared in their own way.

In the struggle between the two factions, the Ruthenberg-Lovestone group was favored by the fact that it had been the longest in the movement and was more experienced in and familiar with political maneuvering. Their intellectuals were more facile in the use of the communist phraseology and could pose as the theoreticians of the Party. But most important, this group was the first to support the Comintern officials against Trotsky, and thus was considered more dependable.

After the 1925 Convention of the Workers Party, the factional fight became more bitter than ever, and gradually the Foster group was pushed to the wall. One of the sub-groups headed by James P. Cannon, in desperation at being steadily driven out of the leadership, took the leap of going with Trotsky; this group was expelled from the Party in 1928 and formed the Communist League of America. Despite the fact that Cannon soon afterward wanted to quit the hard struggle for Trotsky's views, he was kept in line by his own National Committee, and his group eked out

an existence until 1934, when they fused with the A. J. Muste group, the former Conference for Progressive Labor Action, to form the Workers Party of America, which speedily liquidated into the Socialist Party.

As for the Foster group, it had been reduced to such a small minority that Foster himself capitulated when the battle opened on the Five-Year Plan in Russia and when Stalin began his swing to isolation. Lovestone, however, unfortunately had been too friendly with the Right Wing[1] at the time when the Foster group members in Moscow were indorsing Stalin. With the 1929 Convention came the order from Moscow that, although Lovestone controlled the overwhelming majority of the delegates to the Convention, he was to be removed from office as an opportunist, and Foster was to become executive secretary. The members of the Party were to have nothing to do with this upheaval except to obey and to understand. The Lovestone group now carried on a thoroughly unprincipled fight. They declared they had never supported Bucharin, but always had hailed Stalin as the real leader. While Lovestone mobilized his forces and went to fight it out in Moscow, his own lieutenants at home began to desert him. When he was expelled to form his own "Communist Party U. S. A. (Majority Group)" the most he could muster were a few hundred adherents.

Stalin, in his inimitable way, described this unprincipled fight as follows: "What are the main defects in the practice of the leaders of the majority (Lovestone) and the minority (Foster)?

"First, that in their day to day work they, and particularly the leaders of the majority, are guided by motives of unprincipled factionalism and place the interests of their faction higher than the interests of the Party.

"Secondly, that both groups and particularly the leaders of the majority are so infected with the disease of factionalism that they base their relations with the C. I. not on the principle of confidence but on a policy of rotten diplomacy, a policy of diplomatic intrigue."

Here was a frank opinion of Russian officialdom on the revolutionary idealism, honesty, integrity, and courage of the entire American leadership. Many of the leaders abroad at the time, though they themselves might be tarred with the same stick, nevertheless shared this contempt for the type of communists which America had developed.

From the very beginning, the communist movement in the United States was faced with severe obstacles, both objective and subjective. Among the objective difficulties we may place the fact that America was the result of a double play of forces, each militating against communism. On the one hand, due to the frontier, free land, and lack of class relationships

[1] C. E. Ruthenberg died in 1927 and Jay Lovestone then became the leader of the party.

in large sections of the country for considerable periods, the domination of capitalism was retarded. It was not retarded, as in Europe, by the forces of reaction and of feudalism; it was retarded by the fact that, so vast were the continental dimensions of the United States, capitalism could not maintain the rapid pace with which new territory was opening up. Such a situation meant that, in large areas of the country, there was no exploitation of man by man; each worked for himself and garnered the fruits of his toil.

On the other hand, there was the additional fact that capitalism in this country had a relatively unhindered development. America furnished the "purest" example of capitalism. Before the War, the exceptional opportunities for advancement had led to a large petty bourgeoisie and to comparatively better conditions for the proletariat. At the same time, American prosperity brought to these shores a vast wave of immigration which temporarily resulted in disunity in the workers' ranks and a checking of the growth of class consciousness and solidarity. After the War there occurred a shift of the world's economic center of gravity in favor of the United States. The result was a huge growth of American imperialism, with the creation of parasitic *rentier* classes, and the corruption of a section of the upper layers of the working class.

The subjective difficulties militating against the growth of a genuinely native powerful communist movement were inherent in the ranks of the communists themselves. The Communist Party had been formed from various tendencies; there was not sufficient pressure from the ruling class for each group to purge itself of its past and to reach the level of revolutionary struggle. Those who had come from the Socialist Party were filled with parliamentarism, legalism, a shrinking from direct action, pacifism, nationalism, democratic illusions, a contempt for agrarian, colonial, anti-military and Negro work, and with the traditions of a loosely organized party. The A. F. of L. group retained its tendencies to bureaucracy, class collaboration theories, and practices, orientation to skilled workers only, and a contempt for the unorganized and impoverished masses. The former anarchist elements carried with them some of their individualism and adventurism; the syndicalists who became communists had their own ideas of the relations between party and union, a scorn of parliamentary work, a biased attitude towards other layers of the oppressed population outside of those working on the point of production, and a contempt for leadership.

To all these obstacles had to be added the special ones that arose from the poor social composition of the communist movement. For the first five years, the Party remained divided into foreign-language federations entirely isolated from the American proletariat, each immigrant sect leading its own separate nationalist existence. Even after these federations formally

were liquidated in 1925, it was still difficult for the foreign-speaking members to reach the American proletariat. Had the Communist Party from the beginning engaged in serious struggles in this country, this composition could have been changed and the divisions obliterated. As it was, it was only during a few years from 1926 on that the Party undertook leadership of strikes and of unemployed demonstrations, etc. All these factors, coupled with the errors of the American and Comintern leadership, prevented the communists of this country from ever forming a revolutionary organization of any importance.

The Communist Party of the United States never developed into a really scientific theoretical center. The leaders have developed no worth-while scientific literature. Nor have they proved to be profound students of Marx. They have taken upon themselves no initiative in translating the works of Marx, such as his *History of the Theories of Surplus Value,* which are still unavailable in the English language. Nor have they translated the majority of the works of Lenin, whom they are supposed to follow closely. There are no broad cadres of seriously trained communist theoretical leaders, even today.

In practice, too, the Communist Party never became a vanguard organization. It never put serious tests to those applying for membership. The leaders themselves were never tested in struggle before reaching thir posts and, as a result, the functionary staff has always been rotten with careerism, factionalism, subsidy corruption, and bureaucracy.

3

The new turn of the Communist Party in 1929[1] operated in a most disastrous fashion to isolate the communists. In 1925, the membership had stood at about twelve thousand and had risen slowly to about twenty-four thousand in 1928; by 1932 this had fallen to little more than six thousand. The effects of the new policy were felt particularly in the trade union field.

The convention held in 1925 had passed a platonic resolution on the question of the organization of the unorganized. "The main tasks of the Party in the trade unions are: . . . The organization of the unorganized by strengthening of the existing organizations, the creation of new unions in industries where none exist, the building of ship committees and the utilization of the shop nuclei as points for inaugurating campaigns to organize the unorganized."[2] Very little was accomplished, however, until permission was given a small handful of communists to go into the textile industry for that purpose. The result was the Passaic Strike of 1926 which

[1] The name of the party had been changed in 1928 to the Workers (Communist) Party and in 1929 to the Communist Party of the United States.

[2] Workers (Communist) Party of America: *The Fourth National Convention,* p. 101.

gave the communists a flying start in mass action. The Passaic Strike showed that the communists were not only propagandists but agitators, that they not only could theorize but could organize in an extremely difficult field, that they were practical organizers who could undertake tasks from which the old labor leaders had shrunk. The Passaic Strike helped to change the entire orientation of the Communist Party at the time, inspiring the Party to move into mass work and to attempt to become rooted in the factories and in the industries of the country.

This great change was not accomplished without bitter internal fighting. The Foster group maintained that to organize the unorganized, as was done in Passaic, was dual unionism. All unions which the Communists formed had to apply for entrance into the A. F. of L. immediately, even though the A. F. of L. in turn expelled the communist leaders as a condition of admission.[1] By no means must the communists form independent national union bodies in unorganized fields. Another faction declared that it was dangerous for communists to lead strikes, since the employers would offer so much resistance that the strikes invariably would be lost and the workers thus hate the communists.[2] A third group was willing to permit the local communists to continue their work, though not to engage in such work themselves.

The successful experience of the Passaic Strike prompted the communists everywhere to strive for leadership in strike action. In the needle trades in New York City, among the miners, and above all in the textile industry, the communists became active in strike struggles. Here was a good beginning towards the Bolshevization of the Party and the rooting of the organization among the unskilled workers. After the textile strike in New Bedford in 1928, the National Textile Workers Union was formed, with Albert Weisbord as national secretary, and plans at once were laid for entrance into the South. This was done through the loyal work of Fred Beal, Vera Buch, and others who risked their lives in the organization of the textile workers of the South and the conduct of the strikes in Gastonia, North Carolina, and elsewhere. With the Gastonia affair, the Communist Party began to strike fear into the hearts of the Southern employers as a genuine force. During this period the Communist Party came closest to being built as a revolutionary organization on a solid basis.[3]

[1] The Communist Party leadership terminated the Passaic Strike in a disgraceful fashion, all the principal leaders of the Party voting that the independent union formed enter the A. F. of L., despite the fact that the communist union leaders were to be expelled. Only two members of the committee voted against, of whom the author is one. In less than two years, the union of twelve thousand members was reduced to less than one hundred, and finally disappeared.

[2] This was the opinion of Cannon, Dunne, and their associates.

[3] The Gastonia Strike ended with the death of the chief of police who had tried illegally to invade the union premises with a gang of hoodlums, and with the trial of the

The turn of 1929, however, killed all prospects of rooting the party in struggle in the United States. The representative of Moscow stated at the time: "The South has received considerable discussion during the course of the Convention. We have made a new discovery and found a strange country which we must devote very much attention to." [1] Nevertheless, in the course of the factional fight that opened up and the new line of isolation,[2] nothing was done about the South. In a short while, a good portion of the work that had been achieved was completely nullified.

Now a stifling bureaucracy was placed over the new unions that had been formed by the Communist Party, killing all initiative and enterprise. All those who did not agree with the Stalinist line were isolated and ousted, not only from the Party—that went without saying—but even from all the unions under the Party's control. In short, the new unions became only vulgarized editions of the Communist Party and failed thereby to remain even unions.

The decisions of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in 1928, which had declared the world was entering a Third Period wherein the workers would be in revolutionary upsurge, found the American communist officials in full-throated accord, since they had won their posts and had ousted the Lovestone group only by complete agreement with the Stalinist leadership. From now on, American democracy was considered equivalent to fascism; the American Federation of Labor was a company union fascist organization; the Socialist Party was a social-fascist body; no united fronts could be made except from below; entrance into the American Federation of Labor was permitted only in order to destroy that body. Everywhere the communists attempted to form their own unions, even though they had but a handful of members and the majority of the workers were organized in other organizations. Heavily subsidized as they were, and thus dependent for their livelihood, not upon the membership they could win in America but upon close adherence to the line of Stalin, the new bureaucracy outdid itself in multiplying its inherent opportunism with all the crimes of Leftist sectarianism. In the end, all their new unions were destroyed, even those in fields where the good work done in the past had

principal union organizers for murder. Beal and six others were sentenced up to twenty years in a dramatic trial that focused the attention of the whole labor movement on the dire conditions of the Southern workers. The convicted decided to jump bail, and they fled to the Soviet Union. In the Hearst press, Beal later described his bitter disappointment in Russia.

[1] *Report of the Fifth National Convention of the Young Communist League of U. S. A.*, p. 30. (1929.)

[2] In the course of their struggle against the Party bureaucracy, A. Weisbord and V. Buch were ousted from the Party. They formed, in 1931, the small group called the Communist League of Struggle, which fraternally adhered to the International Left Opposition until Trotsky's capitulation to the socialists. It is still in existence, with headquarters in Chicago.

given the communists some influence among the workers. Thus the Third Period really paved the way for the Fourth Period of collapse.

At this point it would be well to give a number of statements by the communist leaders themselves to show the policy which they then adopted. First, we hear William Z. Foster, the leader of the Party at the time. "The policy of the Social-Democracy is basically that of Fascism. . . . Thus in the period of the decline of capitalism, Social-Reformism becomes social-fascism." [1] Then we turn to Jack Johnstone, at that time head of the trade union department of the Communist Party. Said this worthy: "There are two trade union centers in the U. S. A., the T. U. U. L. (Trade Union Unity League), the revolutionary trade union center, the A. F. L., the company union center." [2]

The American Federation of Labor's being considered nothing but a fascist company union organization, it was necessary to work within it only to destroy it. "With two Trade Union Centers, the company union center—A. F. of L.—and the revolutionary trade union center—the Trade Union Unity League—there are many diversified problems. In this situation our most important task is to broaden the base of the revolutionary unions among the millions of unorganized workers, and to strengthen the revolutionary minorities within the ranks of the A. F. of L. and company unions and then to liquidate these organizations by winning over the members to the program of the T. U. U. L. and into membership." [3] This point of view was developed with various embellishments by a host of writers scribbling for the communist press at the time.

Following the Seventh World Congress of the Stalintern in June, 1935, the Communist Party of the United States held its national convention in 1936 in which it completely reversed its past policies. Naturally, the leaders steadfastly refused to admit that they ever had been wrong. They had been infallible before, they were infallible now. Only the objective circumstances had changed, compelling a new tactical line to be followed. Before, in 1928, when no crisis existed, the Stalinists had believed that the revolution was about to break out all over the world. Now that the crisis had lasted for seven full years and had reached unheard of proportions, it was time to postpone the proletarian revolution and to make the principal fight one for democracy against fascism. There could be no real analysis as to how fascism was becoming victorious, since the Stalinists always had been proven correct in their policies. The 1936 convention knew only that it was time to retreat.

[1] W. Z. Foster: *Toward Soviet America*, p. 177.
[2] J. Johnstone: "Issues in the Needle Trades Convention" in *Daily Worker*, June 3, 1930.
[3] J. Johnstone: Strike Strategy, No. 7, in *Daily Worker*, September 8, 1930.

How far to the Right the Communist Party has moved in recent months can be seen by comparing the declarations of the Roosevelt Administration with the policies of the Communist Party. In the field of unemployment, Roosevelt has averred that the State is not the best of employers, and that the healthiest thing to do is to try to place the workers back into regular industry. This should have given the opportunity for the communists to have demanded that the factories be opened to the unemployed and the warehouses to the hungry. But all the Communist Party insisted on was that the Works Projects be made permanent. Roosevelt had intimated that, while the projects might be valuable, they could not be substitutes for regular employment. To the Communist Party, however, the projects were evidently good enough; there should be more of them, and the workers should become State pensioners for life. Thus it was Roosevelt who indirectly hinted that the workers should turn their attention to the main forces of production, while the Communist Party would direct the energies of the workers away from the factories which they had built to some highway or park or relatively secondary work where the unemployed do not compete with capitalism. It seems evident that such a policy never can induce the workers to strive to take over factories, or to overthrow the capitalist government. Such a line, on the contrary, induces a passive support of the régime which doles out relief and W. P. A. jobs.

To continue the comparison, when the Italo-Ethiopian conflict was at its height, Miss Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor, called for a general strike to stop all exports to Italy from the United States; the Communist Party did not go so far. And while Roosevelt was strenuously talking of the need of peace and of keeping America out of the embroilments of Europe, the Communist International was demanding military sanctions.

Again, Mr. Roosevelt has taken pains to popularize the term "revolution." His supporters have made it plain that they consider the Constitution obsolete. The Communist Party, however, has raised the cry "Back to 1776 and to the spirit of our forefathers." The American Revolution, the American Constitution, American democracy now find no more ardent supporters than the Stalinists. The friends of the Administration have talked of the need of a new social order and of better planning; Governor Earle of Pennsylvania in a recent debate went so far as to affirm that it was necessary to abolish wage-slavery in the United States. The Communist Party, however, now states that the matter of wage-slavery and the new social order is not indicated for the present, that the struggle for the full revolutionary program must be postponed; today, it is merely the question of democracy versus fascism. Plainly the Left Wing democrats are now to a considerable extent more revolutionary in their phraseology than the Right Wing Stalinists.

In its 1936 election platform, the Communist Party decided to make the main issue "Put America back to work," [1] a motto which every reactionary capitalist in the United States would be glad to indorse. It stated that the principal object was the defeat of Landon, even though votes thereby were increased for Roosevelt. It definitely committed itself to the theory of the "lesser evil," a theory by which some capitalists are to be supported in preference to others, in the hope of staving off fascism in democratic countries, a theory, too, by which the communists guarantee in advance that they will not take the road of revolution.

How much the Communist Party idealized the capitalist State could be seen in their support of the Lundeen-Frazier Bill for Unemployment Insurance which they called the Workers-Unemployment Insurance Bill. In the original Bill (H.R.7598), it had been provided that the insurance should be administered ". . . through unemployment insurance commissions composed of the rank and file members of workers' and farmers' organizations." That is to say, the Secretary of Labor would have been given the authority to go into every workers' organization for the purpose of supervising the elections to these insurance commissions to the end that only rank and file members be elected. Should any officer or leader of any union be elected, the Secretary of Labor would have had to disqualify him. Thus, through the Lundeen Bill, the Communist Party actually wanted the United States Government to intervene in the labor movement to guarantee that labor officials be disbarred from participation. (At this time, the Communist Party was still calling for the smashing of the American Federation of Labor and the united front from below.)

The revised Lundeen Bill (H.R.2728) has removed that obnoxious provision but still provides "Such unemployment insurance shall be administered and controlled and the minimum compensation shall be adjusted by workers and farmers under rules and regulations which shall be prescribed by the Secretary of Labor in conformity with the purposes and provisions of this Act, through unemployment insurance commissions directly elected by members of workers' and farmers' organizations." [2]

As the bill now stands, the workers are to become intimately harnessed to the State administration,[3] instead of being thrown against the capitalist State. Under the bill, the representatives and detectives of the Department of Labor would have the power to check up to see whether the organizations are truly representative of workers and farmers. All the members,

[1] Incidentally, this slogan was lifted bodily from President Roosevelt's book, *On Our Way*, p. 98.

[2] Note that the relation of farmers to workers is not worked out, and farmers' representatives might have equal or even larger share of the administration.

[3] Compare with the views of John L. Lewis as to the trade union.

undoubtedly, would have to be registered and the books be open to the Department of Labor. This Department also would have under the Act the duty of determining whether the commissions were directly elected, and thus could demand to be present at the elections in all workers' organizations. The workers' commissions in their functioning would be directly tied up with the State and be made responsible for the State's actions. This is not the program of communism; this is precisely the program of Fascism.[1]

Since its last Convention, the Communist Party has made increasing efforts to unite with the Socialist Party, which but recently split, sloughing off its extreme Right Wing. Further, the Communist Party is now bending every effort to build a Labor Party, a Farmer-Labor Party and even a People's Party. It has gone so far as to support the Non-Partisan Labor Committee, made up of trade union officials, which indorsed Roosevelt as President and the banker Lehman for Governor of New York State, and to criticize the Socialist Party for not doing likewise.

In the trade union field, the Communist Party now tries its hardest to ingratiate itself with the officialdom. It had been affirmed formerly that John L. Lewis deserved to rank "as one of the most powerful and reactionary leaders in the history of the Miners' Union." [2] "Lewis' régime is a curse to the miners. . . . Lewis has betrayed the miners in every district." [3] Now Lewis has suddenly become the progressive whom the communists follow uncritically. The Communist Party today has given up all idea of independent organization of the unorganized.

The rapid sudden turns of the American Communist Party would be unfathomable were we to lose sight of the key fact that the leaders of the American Communist Party serve solely the interests of Russian nationalism and soviet diplomacy. At each turn they have expelled most of their old members out of the Party and taken in new ones, a matter of secondary importance to them so long as they are supported from the top and not from the bottom. In 1928, when they began to clean out the Party, they had twenty-four thousand members. By 1932 the total had fallen to six thousand members. With the new line they have been able to increase their membership so that they claim in 1936 close to fifty thousand members and are making a drive for one hundred thousand members. Thus the

[1] That the Communists in America have not been averse to having the police register their members and sympathizers can be seen from the fact that they register no protest to the demands of the U S Postal authorities for the names and addresses of all the subscribers of their papers in order to obtain the second class mailing privileges. Thus the United States Government undoubtedly has a full and complete list of all the Reds in this country so as to facilitate the next Red Raids when the time comes.

[2] W. Z. Foster: *Misleaders of Labor*, p. 132.

[3] The same, p. 133.

overwhelming majority of the members are entirely new. Only the bureaucracy remains stable and secure; the others do not matter.

Very little attention is now given to shop nuclei. The fractions in the unions no longer have much function, since the line is to support the trade union bureaucracy. The membership need not be tested, since it does not count and does not run the Party. Policy is decided before conventions, and not during the sessions which only rubber stamp the views of the top leadership. In a recent speech, Earl Browder, present head of the Party, affirmed that the workers need not be afraid to join the communists, since their home life will no longer be interfered with. The Young Communist League has practically dissolved as a communist organization. The breakdown of Leninist organization coincides with the collapse of communist policy.

Thus, in America, we have the strange fact that, before conditions will permit a genuine Communist Party to be built up, already the movement is decayed and hopelessly reformist, according to the standards of Lenin. To the forces within America that bred an immaturity have been added the forces of degeneration abroad which have led to collapse. The breakdown of the movement in Europe has helped to make infinitely more difficult the rise of America as a world revolutionary force.

IV. THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

XLVIII. THE STRATEGY OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

I

THE stirring events in France and Spain have done positively what the collapse of the Third International affirmed negatively; namely, they have brought forth the urgent need for a new, a Fourth International. It is inconceivable that the workers in Spain or in any other Western European country can take power under the banner of "Socialism in One Country." Nor would they be willing to sacrifice their welfare for the transient diplomatic ends of Russia. In self-preservation, they will have to extend their struggle internationally. Unless the fascist forces are powerful enough to crush the present movement—and, in that case, a new world war would be the result—the ferment in Spain and France must result in a new international organization more truly representative of communism.

Such an international will have to work out a real strategy for the world revolution. Today, what the workers of the world lack is not so much a program of socialism or a knowledge of how to fight the day-to-day tactical battles, as a strategy of action that will link up the tactics to the program and help to realize the goal in the quickest possible time. In military terms, we have to deal not so much with problems of the deployment of troops as with questions of logistics and strategics.

The general program of communism has become reasonably well known to large numbers of conscious workers. The theories of Marx and Engels regarding dialectical and historical materialism, value, surplus value, the accumulation of capital, and, finally, the class struggle, and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, all have become the common property of the advanced representatives of the proletariat the world over. Furthermore, these programmatic views of the founders of scientific socialism, especially adapted to the period of the nineteenth-century competitive capitalism, found their supplementation in the work of Lenin, who carried forward the work to meet the new conditions of the twentieth century era of monopoly capitalism. In economics, Lenin elaborated the theory of super-profits which involved the relation of imperialist to colonial countries, the uneven development of capitalism, and the antagonisms between the skilled and the unskilled workers, and between the working class and the peasantry.

The theory of super-profits elucidated the workings of the permanent revolution. In politics, Lenin contributed the analysis of the era of imperialism, with its wars and revolutions.

Lenin's work marked a great turning point in scientific socialism, since it brought the workers face to face with the actual achievement on a large scale of a Dictatorship of the Proletariat in alliance with the poor peasantry in one country alone. There had then to be developed the scientific principles of the relation of such a country to the rest of the capitalist world, as well as of the internal social laws of such a country. The study of the concrete working of this proletarian dictatorship, the examination of its effects upon world capitalism, especially with the advent of fascism, all such analyses must be made part of the communist program of today and must be embraced within the general principles of scientific socialism.

Leon Trotsky, more than anyone else up to the time of the victory of fascism and the collapse of the Third International, contributed to an advancement of understanding of these problems and made the best critique of the Third International. Trotsky, however, has not been able to form the Fourth International. This task will have to be completed by others who have obtained their experience in the struggles of the masses since the time of the Russian Revolution.

The communist programs as they have been laid out by Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky also have had to consider in general outline the social laws of the coming socialist society. This phase of the program became richly concreatized with the advent of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the Soviet Union.

The program of communism generally had little to do with the laws governing the actual mobilization of the masses and the rules of revolutionary struggle. The program merely represented the end, the goal, the objective of the movement but hardly dealt with the means, the instruments, the actual process by which the aim was to be attained. Such laws are in the realm of strategy, tactics, and organization, rather than part of the program. Strategy, as distinct from program, takes into intimate account and presupposes an organization of men and a platform of action. If the program represents the general principles of socialism and the objective to be achieved, strategy and tactics represent the totality of the rules of practice by which this program is to be realized.

Of course, there is a great difference between strategy and tactics. Tactical questions are those that have to do with problems pertaining to the mobilization, deployment, and maneuvering of men on any single part of the battle front. They have to do with day-to-day, relatively petty, problems. Strategy on the other hand, includes the general principles underlying the whole system or series of tactical operations. Strategy is the thread

that ties up the tactical questions and holds them together along some definite, purposeful line. Without strategy, there is no alignment of the battle front, there is no co-ordination of the various fields of battle, there is no general direction given to the struggle. Strategy has to do with the attaining of the victory in the least possible time and with the smallest amount of energy. It deals with the orientation and general direction of the line of march, and is not concerned with the mass of details necessary to keep the entire force in that direction. Strategy has to do with collation of material, with evaluation and estimation of the relative importance of various actions.

In short, the principles of strategy lie somewhat between the rules of tactics and the standards and norms of the program. Strategy ties up the every day practice with a purpose and, on the other hand, is able to realize the generalities of the program in life. It is concerned both with the practical matters of every day affairs and with the strategic objective striven for; strategy co-ordinates both and is the temporal link that connects the present with the future.

Tactics are the means by which the strategical aim is attained, just as strategy is the means by which the program is realized. To the soldiers who are digging into a shell hole in order to hold a hill, the strategical aim of keeping the hill is the highest goal of their endeavor. To the general, who has a clearer picture of the relation of each tactical part to the strategical whole, the holding of the hill is but a means to the end of smashing the enemy and winning the programmatic objective. Tactics, therefore, represent secondary actions, maneuvers, methods. The system of strategy works out the primary means by which the programmatic ends may be reached.

This does not at all mean that tactics is unimportant or less vital than strategy or program, in accomplishing the mission of the proletariat. On the contrary, program alone, that is, a general body of ideas, can accomplish nothing unless there is an army imbued with the ambition to make this program a reality. Such an army functions only according to the rules of tactics and strategy. To imagine that the program will be realized of itself, and that all that is necessary is to state the desirability of the goal, is pure idealism. Behind every right is the might necessary to establish it as a right.

Also, within the realm of practice, it is not true that tactics is unimportant, or that questions of tactics are but secondary matters. Unless the tactics are appropriate, unless the proper means are used realistically, the whole strategy is doomed to failure. Very often differences in tactics reveal differences in strategy and in program as well. Again, people willing to accept the phrases of the program may secretly give them different interpretations, which differences come out, not in the debates on the program,

but only in the course of the concrete actions to realize the programs. Then the differences first appear as differences in tactics, when in reality, behind these differences on small questions, there are revealed truly gigantic disagreements that place the contestant parties on opposite sides of the barricades.

Amateurs in the revolutionary movement often express an opinion as follows: disagreements on matters of tactics are always secondary disagreements and do not lead to splits in the movement; splits are justified only when the disagreements are programmatic. This is a typical student formulation, having nothing to do with the real revolutionary movement. Outside of the fact that all differences, even in tactics, if pursued long enough, must become differences in direction and in purpose, that is differences in strategy and program, it is, of course, ridiculous to assume that the only time men can disobey their orders is when they have abstract differences concerning the kind of society they want to build or in the general principles of their movement.

The true situation is not that tactics are secondary to strategy or that differences on tactics are picayune and must not cause too great dissensions in the ranks of the revolutionary proletariat, but rather that the workers must fight about every question, whether program, strategy, or tactics, which is really vital and which can lead to defeat or to victory. Splits not only can occur but must occur on questions of tactics and organization, wherever such questions involve the life and death of the whole movement at the given moment.

Let us pause to give various illustrations of this general principle just enunciated. In the revolutionary movement it can be said that, ordinarily, tactics would include the following type of questions:

1. Types of demonstrations—Should the demonstrations be indoors or outdoors? What should be its size, character, and tone? What should be the slogans, etc.? These matters pertain to tactics, and yet they can be absolutely vital to the welfare of the movement at any given time.

2. Questions of dates—What should be the date for a given strike or insurrection? It might seem that the matter of date is such a trifling circumstance in relation to the vast problems of socialism that comrades could well disagree with certain dates set for action and still remain comrades. And yet, behind the question of dates might stand the whole welfare and future of the revolution itself. Those merely opposing a given date might be postponing the day until it becomes too late for victory and leads to a terrible blood bath for the workers. Here, again, behind the question of the trifling matter of date might be a whole analysis of the situation of the world and the relation of forces. Certainly it might be correct for splits to occur in a revolutionary party on the question of setting the date for

the insurrection, just as, under some circumstances, splits could occur in unions on the question of setting the date for a strike.

3. Demands—A third matter of tactics is the question of what demands to bring forward in the interests of the workers and toilers. The formulation of these demands truly belongs in the domain of tactics, and yet how many times movements have failed completely because of unrealistic demands which in turn exposed the false strategy and orientation of the entire movement.

Just as splits can occur on questions of tactics, so can they occur on questions of organization as well. For the problem of organization is only another method of presenting problems of program, strategy, and tactics. The organization must be the instrument to accomplish the goal set, and those who build organizational structures obviously unfit to accomplish the goal have in reality changed the goal and the aim of the movement.

The program of communism was enunciated before there existed a great body of proletarians in every important country of Europe and America. Naturally, in the days of the beginnings of the movement, the question of program played the most important part. The Communist League of Karl Marx has gone down in history primarily because of the Marxist program enunciated by that organization.

This is not to say that strategy did not exist, even in those early days. On the contrary, the Communist League participated actively in all the revolutionary events of 1848, undertook to organize unions, and, as an organization of action, had to deal with problems of strategy, tactics, and organization, as well as with the general questions of program.

The strategy of the Communist League was not so much concerned, however, with the question of the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as it was with the question of the overthrow of the *ancien régime* and the clearing of the decks for action for the proletariat later. It was not a matter of defeating the enemies of the workers, the bourgeoisie, so much as defeating the enemy of their enemies, the feudalists. The strategy of the Communist League was the strategy of how the proletarian forces could work with the democratic forces of capitalism to overthrow the old order, winning as many concessions for the workers as possible, casting off the illusions among the proletarians, and preparing them and strengthening them for future struggles for socialism.

The strategy of the Communist League was primarily one of permanent revolution, that is, how to start the revolution forward and to keep it moving at the most rapid tempo until the victory of the proletariat, when the revolution should come to an end and become permanent. Together with this strategy went all the principles of how to work with those going

along the same road as the proletariat up to the time when the *quondam* allies would break apart and face each other as mortal enemies.

The strategy of the Communist League, carried forward later by the First International, then, involved the following questions:

1. The matter of overthrowing reaction, the old order, the absolute monarchies and the feudalistic landlords, especially entrenched in Prussia, Austria, and Russia. Here is the key to understanding the Marxists' reactions to the Crimean War, to the American Civil War, to the Revolutions of 1848, and similar events.

2. The question of pushing the bourgeois republic forward to the adoption of the utmost democratic forms and social reforms which would allow the proletariat free play to organize and to mobilize its strength and to develop generally.

3. The question of alliances of the proletariat with the peasantry and other masses of toilers against the ruling groups of the country. With this went the problem of the separation of the petty bourgeoisie from the bourgeois rulers, the problems of the united front with petty bourgeois elements to win them towards favorable action with the working class.

Although, even from the earliest days, the Marxists insisted on combining theory with practice and uniting their program to whatever actions of the day promised to realize it even in part, nevertheless, the Communist League is known not so much for its practical action as for its theoretical achievements in advancing scientific socialism. The immature modern proletariat then was groping about trying to find its way.

A similar situation existed with the First International organized later, in 1864. The First International, too, is known by its programmatic contributions, by its propaganda rather than by its practice, even though it did enter into revolutionary events. Indeed, the bourgeoisie made the First International responsible for the actions of the Paris Commune. But the action of the First International was spasmodic and ephemeral. What was lasting, what was the most important part of the First International's life, was the programmatic line of action that it laid down for the workers for all time to come in the struggle against capital.

By the time of the foundation of the Second International, in 1889, the situation had changed. The grandiose plans and schemes had given way to prosaic day-to-day interests. The labor movement was growing up and becoming realistic and practical. It was winning various concessions for the skilled and bribed imperialistic workers from the bosses, and was quite content to avoid the abstract questions of revolution and to pay attention to the immediate bread and butter problems of the day.

The Second International was interested neither in the program of socialism nor in the strategy of revolution, but concentrated almost entirely

in its real life upon the tactics of the moment. Viewing the period in question (1889-1914) from the broad historical perspective, we can say truly that the Second International in reality lived up to what the workers could have achieved and no more. The workers could win reform; they were too weak to accomplish the revolution. The task then was to organize, to form mass organizations, teaching the workers the rudiments of discipline and organizational solidarity.

The mass organizations of the proletariat could be erected then only on the most primitive base, and on questions of immediate practical interest. This was the period of trade union building, of co-operative formations, of all sorts of associative effort among the workers to ameliorate their lot concretely. It was not the period of revolutionary activity of the masses throughout the important industrial countries of Europe and America.

Not that the Second International did not carry on abstract discussions on the program of socialism and did not help to disseminate in its own fashion the revolutionary views of Marx and Engels. But it did not understand these revolutionary views which it was so diligently disseminating and, in real life, it betrayed them again and again. Program entirely was divorced from tactics, theory from practice. While, abstractly, these people called themselves socialists, they believed that socialism was far away, and that many hundreds of years of education would be necessary, perhaps, before the world would be ready for the new social order.

Separating their practical activity from their general socialist program as they did, the members of the Second International became either crass opportunists and narrow and provincial organizers living only from moment to moment, or they became Leftist sectarians, immersed in a world of words and abstract ideas of Marxist terms. All that one side could see was the matter of a few cents an hour increase for a small number of workers; all for which the other could call was the unconditional surrender of capitalism, otherwise they would not participate. As the practice of both sides became non-revolutionary, their program became eclectic, vague, ambiguous, loose, and non-revolutionary as well. One may sum up the matter with the statement that the First International was an International of Program; the Second International was an International of Tactics.

With the Third International we find at last a definite effort made to link up the day-to-day life of the masses and their immediate problems with the general program of socialism. By 1919, the world proletariat was faced with entirely different problems. It was now a period of action, not of molecular tiny action for a small handful of the workers in a few exceptional countries, but molar action of large bodies. Capitalism definitely

was on the decline, bringing in its wake mighty convulsions that shook all the nations of the world, throwing them into one crisis after another.

Now that action was indicated, and the workers must fight or perish, now that there was no other way out of the concrete practical dilemmas facing the masses except revolution and the overthrow of capitalism, there developed a strategy of revolution. Under the guidance of Lenin, the gap between theory and practice began to close, tactics and program became tightly connected. It would be totally wrong to say, as, for example, Max Eastman does [1] that Marx was the theoretician and Lenin the practitioner, or rather that Marx was the abstruse dialectician and Lenin the great revolutionary technician or engineer. Marx and Engels also engaged in the action of their time, but their time did not permit much steady revolutionary street action, and they were confined to working out the general laws of socialism and spreading the propaganda of their science. On the other hand, Lenin contributed much to political science, but his life, to a very considerable extent, was overwhelmed with the practical activity of the revolutionary movements. As Lenin wrote in his *State and Revolution:* "It is more pleasant and more useful to go through the 'experience of a revolution' than to write about it." [2]

If the Second International could be said to have had a strategy at all, then in fact it was a strategy of no independent strategy, that is to say it was a strategy of following the bourgeoisie and working for democratic and social reforms. The strategy of the Second International consisted in being the tail end of the bourgeois Liberals and to carry out their wishes in the ranks of the proletariat.

The strategy of the Third International, in an era of wars and revolutions, was an entirely different one; it was a strategy of making a definite bid for power. To turn imperialist war into civil war, to organize instruments of struggle of the masses, such as soviets, by which workers and peasants could unite for the conquest of power under the leadership of the industrial workers, to connect the revolutionary movement with the colonial uprisings and agrarian problems of the oppressed sections of the countryside, to conduct an organized uprising and insurrection, and to defend the revolution on the battlefield of world counter-revolutionary intervention, these were the contributions of Leninism in the field of strategy.

Among the many strategical problems confronting the Fourth International for solution, including the theory of the permanent revolution, the united front, the attitude towards the Soviet Union, the policy on the war danger, and others, we shall take up here in detail merely the follow-

[1] See his *Marx and Lenin: The Science of Revolution.*

[2] Postscript to *State and Revolution.*

ing: 1. Workers' control over production; 2. Direct action; 3. Strategy of insurrection, and 4. Arming of the proletariat.

2

The Fourth International will have to make the most careful study of the question of workers' control over production. Under some circumstances, where there is no revolutionary situation, and the capitalist order is relatively stable, the slogan "Workers' Control over Production" may be used in an opportunist and reformist sense, providing a theoretical basis for all sorts of schemes of collaboration with the employers. Communists must beware that revolutionary phrases do not in fact cover up counter-revolutionary policies.

Even fascists have formed their organizations with the specious plea that they are going to give the workers some control over industry. Very often company unions are built by employers with the slogan that they believe in industrial democracy and the right of the workers to have a say in the business. Again, it is possible for labor leaders, like Sydney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, demagogically to declare that "the industry has responsibility to the workers" only in order to work out some joint action with the manufacturers' association or to help the employers "put order" into the industry by collaborating with them in the introduction of machinery, in speed-up and rationalization plans, etc. Most often, the idea that the workers should control their jobs is used by the trade union bureaucrats to obtain the check-off system, whereby the dues to the union are taken out of the wage envelopes by the employers and handed over to the union officials. On the surface, it seems that this measure compels the capitalist to work for the union; in reality it results in the employers' and union officials' working hand in hand, while the union members have little to say about finances. Also, the idea of workers' control can be interpreted to mean that the union bureaucracy should control the right to hire and to fire.

Similarly, the term "Workers' Control" has been abused by the functionaries of the opportunist labor parties. When a labor party secures government offices, at once the officials begin to explain to the workers in industry that strikes would embarrass the labor government, and that the workers are really controlling the factories and industries through their parliamentary labor party. The elections of the labor party are run on the assumption that labor party victories would mean workers' control over the resources of the nation. As a matter of fact, everywhere we see these labor parties defending capitalism and preventing the workers from moving towards socialism through genuine workers' control.

An interesting variation of the labor party use of the term "Workers'

Control" is the phrase "Industrial Democracy." In the United States, the Railroad Brotherhoods in 1921 indorsed the Plumb Plan of operation of the railroads, which plan had as its features the nationalization of the railroads, with full compensation, and their operation by a board composed of workers, management, and government. This class-collaboration scheme was called "Industrial Democracy" or "Workers' Control over Production." A similar proposal was made by John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers after the War in reference to the coal mines. Behind the phrases that sounded as though labor was advancing its interests was the attempt of the union officials to link up the unions with the government in order to speed up production and to prevent strikes.

It can be seen from the very terms that the idea of workers' taking control over industrial production does not mean that they dispossess the owners and take over the property themselves. This is far from the case. The employer still owns the factory; he is still nominally the possessor and the proprietor. Only he now loses the right to close down the plant, the right to hire and to fire workers as he pleases, the right to dictate the working conditions. In his plant there is now elected a committee of workers that goes over his books, limits his profits, sets up its own control, prevents sabotage or lock-down of the works. Naturally, then, we have a situation of dual power that can be only temporary.

No employer is going to allow the intolerable situation of workers taking control of his factory without putting up a battle. On the other hand, the invasion of his plant by the workers means that they are preparing to establish their own ownership and rule, shortly, and that the control is only a stepping stone on the way. Thus, when properly used, the slogan "Workers' Control over Production" is adopted by the proletariat, on the one hand, when the capitalists are losing control of the situation or have provoked the masses into action without having the strength to stop them, and on the other hand, when the workers are ready to establish the dictatorship and to take full possession but are not as yet able to do so.

Every revolution has this sort of transition period and, since the factual situation is inevitable, it is necessary for revolutionists to examine it from all points of view. A revolutionary organization cannot issue the slogan "Workers' Control over Production" if it is meant to be carried out during periods of capitalist stability, when it can only imply wholesale collaboration of the workers with the employers, in which the workers consider the production problems of the capitalists and introduce measures to increase the latter's profits. A Communist Party can issue the demand for workers' control only in periods which are becoming revolutionary, when the masses are in action, and the demand of workers' control will unleash

the energy of the toilers still farther, will bring matters to a head-on collision, and will impel the proletariat to take the necessary steps for the conquest of power.

The socialists have the idea that the workers must be trained, not in destructive operations, but in constructive work, and part of that constructive work is to learn how to manage and to operate the factories so that, when socialism comes, the working class already will be trained by the bourgeoisie so that everything will work smoothly without a hitch. The revolutionist, on the other hand, understands very well that the slogan "Workers' Control" can be used only in a revolutionary situation, when the destructive factors of social evolution are reaching their highest level, when the employer is trying to lock out the workers and to throw them out on the street, so that pitched battles with the military can be provoked, and the workers either can be shot down or starved into submission. "Workers' Control over Production" is used in a period when such control will not be accomplished by more production, but by more revolutionary activity of all sorts. It is to be accomplished, not in order to teach the workers management, but in order to build up the fighting forces, and to realize the objectives of the revolutionary movement.

It is paradoxical, but true, that "Workers' Control" is introduced precisely at a time when all social control is being lost; when society is in chaos, when civil war is imminent. Herein lies also the difference between "Workers' Control" and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Under the Dictatorship, there is internal cohesion, order, discipline, there is a party with acknowledged authority; the capitalists are out of the factories, completely ousted, and the workers are running their own affairs. Under the transition régime of workers' control, on the other hand, everything is sporadic, confused, haphazard. The actions are not planned or controlled; there can be no centralized planned economy, no real utilization of the national resources. It is fantastic to imagine that under such circumstances production can be increased.

It is true that the workers undertake to control the plants under the pressure of the lock-outs and sabotage of the capitalists and the need for continued production. But it is also true that, once they take over the factories, even though ownership nominally is retained by the capitalists, they will have to fight to maintain their control and must enter into the destructive aspects of civil war.

In Hungary, in 1919, and in Italy, in 1921, the workers took over the factories and ran them themselves, but they soon found out that they had to confront the world subdivision of labor; their raw materials ran out, they had to get into communication with the outside capitalist world that refused to aid them in any way. Thus, the workers' control must have

an extremely limited character until the proletariat is able to conquer not only the power in its own State, but to extend the proletarian revolution, in most cases, beyond the bounderies of one nation.

An important question to be discussed is: what is the relation of workers' control to the political movement and to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat? In Russia there was no intensive workers' control until the proletariat took over power through the soviets, and then they went through the process of workers' control for almost a year before they decided to go the whole way and to socialize industry outright. Thus, in Russia, workers' control went hand in hand with the period of the democratic-dictatorship of the workers and peasants expressed through the soviets. Only by taking over political power was the workers' control made effective by the workers

In Germany, the workers attempted to institute a workers' control over production in 1918-1919 through their factory Councils, but they did not seize power. The socialists in the government were holding the power, not for the workers, but for the bourgeoisie and, at the first opportunity, crushed the workers. In the interim, while they were stalling for time, the socialists established futile "Commissions on Socialization" to study the question and to report back to parliament On their part, instead of taking over the industries, the Workers Councils waited for the Socialist Party to nationalize the industries.

Workers' control, as such, has absolutely nothing to do with the nationalization of industries The socialists like to substitute one for the other. They are generally opposed to workers' councils or soviets in the factories. The reformists would like the workers to trust to the socialist politicians to bring the factories under workers' influence Workers' control, to the socialists and opportunists of all stripes, means simply workers' participation in a government that controls the industries and runs them

Nothing could be farther from the correct policy than this. If the workers wait for no government, if they take the factories themselves and run them, these actions alone will be guarantees that the government will begin to correspond to the needs of the workers, and not vice versa In Germany, the workers waited for the government to act; the result was, they could not control industry at all. On the other hand, workers' control should be the economic phase of the movement of the proletariat, the political aspect of which is the conquest of power.

In and of itself, nationalization of industry means simply State capitalism [1] The workers have no control whatsoever. This is true, even when

[1] There is a school of socialists which calls nationalization of industries "State Socialism" If the capitalist system remains, nationalization is a form of State capitalism Under socialism,

a labor party or a socialist party is in the government. The government is still a government over the workers and in favor of the bourgeoisie in all these cases. Where the workers take over control of the factories, they must strive to take over power and thus not so much to nationalize the factories as to socialize them. In this way, the proletariat can legalize its factual control and can go farther and dispossess the capitalists.

In Italy, the masses took control over the factories, but could not take political control. In the end, they lost the economic control as well. In Germany, they waited to take political control before they took economic control. They lost both. In Russia, the movement for workers' control went concomitant with the movement for power, and each buttressed the other. It was successful. However, it is well to point out that, if workers' control over the factories goes hand in hand with the movement for Dictatorship of the Proletariat, as we have remarked before, by no means are they identical. Workers' control has existed without proletarian dictatorship (though not for long) and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat can exist without direct workers' control. This we have seen in the discussion of the present situation in Russia.

Matters of wages, hours, and working conditions generally are fought for by unions, craft, trade, and industrial. Workers' control over production can be managed generally only by shop committees, workers' councils, or such bodies that sometimes cut across craft and even industrial lines. Wherever the workers' councils or committees have been set up, they have been conceived, not as dual organizations to the industrial unions, but rather as organs for sharper forms of struggle, for the taking over of the factories. Of late, however, the industrial union is being created on the basis of the shop council itself, and thus both forms are combined. In the past, however, the industrial union has been the instrument for fighting economic battles, the workers' councils for workers' control, and the Soviets for the conquest of power.

In Spain, at the present time, the syndicalists in control of the National Confederation of Labor have refused to turn over the factories to the control of the State or soviets, even though the State may be run by soviets, and the soviets run by the workers. Here, the arguments of the Workers Opposition in Russia of 1922 are being realized, and the unions themselves are undertaking to run production, to centralize it, and to work out any plan that will have to be made. The workers refuse to lose control over their factories directly, even though the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is being established. Whether this duality between the trade unions and the

the State withers away. The only form of State Socialism known is the transition régime of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

soviets which take in the broader masses of toilers, including the agricultural laborers and the peasantry, will remain practical, is yet to be seen.

3

The problem of direct action is another matter of strategy which must engross the attention of the Fourth International. The present period offers a different background than ever before for a consideration of this problem. Previously, it was warmly debated whether there was not a better way than physical action in the streets for a solution of the contradictions facing the masses. The liberal era offered the method of mutual tolerance, of rational discussion, culminating in parliamentarism. Today, these solutions are plainly inadequate. The contradictions of capitalism have made the system one of violence and brutal action in every phase of life. One must be prepared at every turn to back up one's opinions with one's life. The question whether to participate in parliament has faded in importance in the light of the fact that parliament is now fast becoming a lost and forgotten institution.

Incidentally, the present age reminds intellectuals that the best method of pedagogy is the one in which practice is the teacher. Today, opinions literally must be fought for. This means that the days of hyperbolic polemics are over. Opinions will be restricted to those which are important, and over which the protagonist is deadly in earnest. This alone will spell the death knell of the dilettante intellectual from *Hobohemia* or *Sexopathia* who has inhabited the fringe of the proletarian movement. Fascism has a way of driving the chatterbox out of the movement and of allowing only those who are sincere to remain. This is another guarantee that the proletarian movement will be placed on the tracks of direct action. Action and theory will tend to become more united within the revolutionary movement; democracy and free speech will be for the doers only.

Direct action in the past has taken either economic or political forms, of a reformistic or revolutionary character. Heretofore there has been ample room between the rehearsal and the final act of the drama, between the period of preparation and the actual insurrection. The present period, however, is distinguished by the fact that the struggle for reform in many instances leads directly and immediately to the struggle for power. Under fascism, even the reform demonstration is not permitted, and one takes his life in his hands when proposing even the most moderate improvements for the masses. Since every action of the masses becomes fraught with such serious consequences, the organization of these actions must be studied carefully in every instance.

If the present epoch is one of direct action, it is another sign that the

revolutionary movement must shift farther from the idea that the gyration of the representative or of the delegate can be substituted for the action of the mass itself. Direct action places before every participant the full consequences of his activity. He himself must fight out all the doubtful questions that besiege him before entering into the battle. In representative action, the masses remain passive; the field is open for bureaucracy. In direct action, the masses themselves live; the representative is merely the leader, and that leader is best who knows how to train others for leadership. In a period of direct action, the units of the revolutionary party must be small, and each member must be capable of standing on his own feet. Responsibility and capability become tested and developed.

Direct action of an economic, secondary nature may occur in the industries, among the unemployed and among the mass of consumers. With the producers, it takes the form of strikes which, in the present period, tend to lose their simple economic character, even where the strikes have purely economic aims, and to take on important political consequences. In Germany today, any large strike would be bound to have violent political repercussions. The very *raison d'être* of fascism is its ability to crush all organization and united action of the working class. The mere fact of a united strike under fascism would be a complete challenge to the entire régime, no matter what the aims of the strike. Under fascism, every strike quickly would have to turn into insurrection. For that reason, the workers are slow to strike, knowing well the consequences of their actions.

In all countries, of course, it is the strategy of the communists to widen and to deepen every physical demonstration of the workers, to raise its political level, to connect the strike with the issue of workers' power. Where the strike becomes a general strike, there the question of power becomes a pressing one on the immediate order of the day.

The question of strike intimately is connected with the active boycott as a weapon of direct action. The boycott can transform a local action to a widespread general struggle, tying up both consumers and producers, and uniting the working class as a whole. Connected with the boycott is the question of mass retaliation for injuries and mass sabotage. Revenge is not an inconsequential motive here, and the communists will not generally restrain the spontaneity of the mass, even though spontaneity is not enough for victory.

If it is true that we live in an anti-reform period, then every struggle for reform must meet the sternest resistance. Thus, even the organization of new trade unions embodying layers of unskilled workers will meet the fiercest opposition. For this reason, we can predict that the American Federation of Labor, with its liberal hesitating policies, never will be able to organize the mass of Negroes, or the unskilled workers in the South.

Those who go out to win reforms today must be made of the hard fiber of revolutionists. It is not peaceful persuasion that will accomplish the job, at a time when capitalism is on the down-grade, but only hard struggle. The organization of the unorganized and the building up of unions for struggle, more and more belong to the revolutionary elements. Only the revolutionist can be even a successful reformist.

In the unemployed field the genuine revolutionary communist will tend to make the unemployed organization rely entirely upon direct action to improve conditions. Adequate unemployment insurance is impossible today, when the armies of unemployed are so enormous. The unemployed, therefore, must be taught to help themselves. Communists and unemployed will not spend much time in legislatures, petitioning, but rather will mobilize their forces in militant demonstrations and will concentrate their attention on the places where food is stored, where fuel and clothing may be obtained. Whole neighborhoods can be aroused over the question of evictions in order to make every eviction as costly as possible for the landlords. The general idea is that the wealthy must find it more costly to make conditions worse than to maintain them to remain as they are.

Today, direct action can be not only a weapon to remedy conditions, but a preventative force. The proletariat, knowing the menace of fascism, physically can annihilate the fascist movement at the very start. After all, in some countries the organized labor movement is well entrenched. If it knows that the days of liberalism are numbered and must give way to fascist violence, then it will be forewarned enough to make it impossible for the fascist forces to appear in workers' quarters.

The strategy of the communists in this period must be to make the demonstrations as brutal and as powerful as possible. In every case where the workers have been defeated, sentimentality and liberal illusions have played far too great a part. The more firm and positive the action, the better the demonstration.

In the United States, the question of the fight against lynchings of the Negro, the labor organizer, and the poor white toiler, furnishes a good illustration of the correct method. The communist will not bewail the institution of lynching, but will try to use that institution against the instigators of lynching. The slogan "Lynch the lynchers of the Negroes and poor toilers" will mark the adoption of American methods to terminate the slaughter of innocent workers. As part of this policy, everywhere the Negroes should be induced to organize white and black physical defense bodies to protect the poor masses and to build up the power of the lowest strata of the population.

Direct action logically leads to insurrection. The strike, the boycott, the demonstration, all have this as their ultimate objective and goal.

4

On the road to insurrection for every class striving for power lies the problem of disarming the rulers and of arming their own cohorts. This question is not peculiar to the proletariat alone, and it is interesting to note how the bourgeoisie solved the problem of the disarming of the *ancien régime* and of the arming of its own forces. Generally speaking, the nascent capitalist class accomplished its task, first by winning over the biggest baron or prince to its side, and making him supreme through its monetary and material support. The reliance of the military upon gunpowder, cannon, and manufactured instruments naturally gave the advantage to the manufacturers of these articles or to those with the money to purchase them. As the capitalists' enemies, the feudal lords and knights, became reduced in power, they gradually disarmed; their old retainers were disbanded, they themselves becoming bedroom courtiers, knights of the bath or of the garter.

The next task of the bourgeoisie was to take command of the apparatus of the State, and, in particular, of certain key sections of the armed forces. Generally, the capitalists managed to obtain important posts, such as Ministers of Finance, so that at critical moments in the struggle they could entirely disorganize their opponent in power. Then, too, they managed in Britain to control the vital forces of the navy. In America, they trained themselves through the French and Indian wars. Everywhere they endeavored to influence certain corps of the army, especially the artillery department, where the needed engineers and scientists were located. If the cavalry often belonged to the royalists, the artillery frequently followed the capitalists. Once the bourgeoisie found themselves with fetters unbound or in control of the State, they quickly formed their own special forces, such as the Garde Mobile in France. Sometimes they used these special forces to crack the regular army of the old régime and to win it over to their cause.

The proletariat has had a more difficult time than the bourgeoisie in disarming the forces of the State and in arming itself. Let us remember that the bourgeoisie seized power in most cases long after it had become the dominating factor in production; hence it had money and other material means at its disposal. The proletariat, on the other hand, must seize power in order to make certain its possession of the means of production; it must make the struggle for power as a dispossessed, oppressed class. Hence the weapons it needs—unless it is armed by the bourgeoisie for war purposes—must be taken from the bourgeoisie by force. This arming of itself is an inevitable process, and the Fourth International will have to take cognizance of the tasks to be performed. First of all there is

the fact that proletarian revolutions today do not need to wait for world wars to break out. They can mature, as China, Cuba, and Spain have shown, even where there is no war to throw all antagonisms into sharp relief.

In considering the armed forces of the State, many distinctions must be drawn. First, it must be determined whether the army is a mercenary volunteer one or a conscript army. Naturally the approach will be different and the possibilities for work vary in each case. Then there are the questions pertaining to each branch of the service. In general, it will be found that the artillery and aviation corps will be firmly under the control of the capitalists, the cavalry in charge of the agrarian element, and the infantry made up of both workers and farmers or peasants. Each branch of the armed forces will offer special problems. This does not mean that the proletariat will not be able to get a foothold in all these divisions. In the aviation corps, for example, much depends upon the aviation mechanic who is closely bound to the working class and who can be unionized and induced to strike in solidarity with his brethren. As the armed forces become increasingly motorized and mechanized, the number of plain workmen attached to the army increases. The proletariat enters into the heart of even the most mercenary armed force today.

Then there are the other divisions of the armed forces, such special, super-loyal groups as the United States Marines, who act as police over the army and navy, such groups as the National Guard or State militia, which are in between the regular army and the police and which offer diverse problems. In the United States, these groups are often filled with working class and farmer elements who are sympathetic to strikers. The National Guard and State Militia, however, are intended to be particularly loyal to the bourgeoisie and to be used for internal work, against the enemy at home. Therefore, the effort to crack this particular body of men becomes especially important to revolutionists in ordinary times of strike, or where insurrection is not yet imminent enough to warrant the use of the regular army. In the European countries, special Mobile Guards, or National Guards, are formed for this sole purpose of domestic action.

Besides this group, some countries have special nationalized and centralized police forces, like the French gendarmerie, who are highly paid and removed from the local influence of the people. Further down the line there are the specialized and permanent forces of the police, such as the "Industrial squads," the detective force, etc. In all countries, a sharp line has been drawn between the regular army and the police, the proletariat abandoning all hope of winning the police over to their side, but concentrating instead upon the regular soldiers, with whom they have a better chance. In America there is still another division, the posse of the sheriff.

This is made up of citizens, most often of citizens completely controlled by the capitalists.

Around the armed forces are to be found large numbers of proletarians who are part of the civilian population needed to sustain the soldiers. As a general rule, the advance of capitalism increasingly has intertwined the army with industry, and while war has become the greatest industry of modern times, tending completely to subordinate all other branches to itself, simultaneously the military machine has been forced to rely increasingly upon the factories and the productive processes of the country. Thus strikes, boycotts, sabotage, can become increasingly powerful weapons to demoralize and crack the armed forces by removing material support from them at critical moments. But beyond that, there are the armories and arsenals filled with weapons, which these workers can take over at the right time. This is highly important, since to control the armory or arsenal means to secure the means of arming the masses directly and to remove the guns and other armament from the regular forces of the State. Besides these depots, there are the camps and cantonments of all sorts which have large numbers of workmen attached to them, workmen who, if properly organized and directed, could do inestimable damage in winning the soldiery to the cause of the revolution. Finally, of course, there is the method of direct and indirect fraternization between the members of the army and the ordinary working population. Wherever these soldiers go in the cities, during recreation periods or otherwise, they are bound to come in contact with the mass of people and to become infected with the prevailing social views.

Extremely important, and often furnishing an invaluable link in reaching the military ranks, are the social-military reserves which the capitalist State is forced to maintain. These reserves are of various sorts; conscripts who are liable to be called back to the colors, officers who are on call, veteran organizations, military training groups, and such bodies as in America are represented by the Reserve Officers Training Corps, the Citizens Military Training Camps, the various rifle clubs authorized by the government, military schools, and similar institutions.

The attitude of the communist must change according to the specific character and purpose of each body. As much as possible, these social organizations should be utilized to penetrate both into the regular armed forces and into the ranks of the lines next in reserve.

Part of the strategy of the disarming of the bourgeoisie is the dissolution of the capitalist armies in times of war. The line of Lenin was the defeatist line, that is, the policy whereby the communists worked for the defeat of their own ruling class and did their best to win the workers and conscripts in the army to their cause by denouncing the war and organizing

mutinies to subdue the officers and transform imperialist war to civil war. Of course, the communists have to work differently than the agents of foreign governments at war with one another. Not every form of defeatism is revolutionary defeatism; the mere fact that the troops are defeated does not necessarily mean a strengthening of the workers' forces. In times of war, capitalists always try to make the communists into *agents provocateurs* or spies for the enemy ruling class; this is a great danger that must be avoided. The defeatism of the Leninist takes the form of accentuating the class struggle in all its ramifications; by no means can it take the form of consciously favoring the capitalist class of the hostile country.[1] Naturally, these precautions do not hold so far as contacting the workers of the other belligerent countries are concerned, and every effort must be made at fraternization with the workers and soldiers of the opposing armies, so as to break down capitalist and imperialist divisions.

The defeatism of the proletariat cannot take only the form of strikes at home and of mutinies in the army, but also must make use of the pacifistic tendencies in the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie. Pacifism can be used to demoralize the ranks of the supporters of the capitalist class just as it is normally used to demoralize the ranks of the workers. The militant sections of the advanced workers certainly cannot ignore the traditions and sentiments of pacifism which a large number of the petty bourgeoisie hold as their own, but must learn how to use these feelings for a revolutionary purpose. After all, it is not generally the working class that declares wars, but the rulers, and the opposition of pacifism can assume a sincere note that will allow the pacifists to work in alliance with the revolutionists. This was seen in the conference of Zimmerwald, and elsewhere, in the early period of the War.

The bourgeoisie internationally also can become disarmed by divisions in its ranks as well as by exhaustion. Where the workers actually are in charge of a State faced with the possibility of a capitalist united front against it, it is perfectly proper for that workers' State to try to prevent the consolidation of the hostile capitalist world. It has the duty of making alliances that will split up the opposing forces as much as possible. Furthermore, if the war must break out, it would be better for it to break out in the capitalist world than against the country which temporarily is controlled by the workers. But there must be no illusions that the capitalist classes of the world also do not appreciate this danger and will not ultimately unite their forces against the country won by the workers. What is wrong with the Franco-Soviet pact is not that the Soviet Union has tried

[1] This was the form taken by the ill-fated Irish Rebellion of 1916.

In many places the bourgeoisie has co-operated with the ruling classes of opposing countries, but this cannot be the policy of the working class.

to make alliances with capitalist countries, but rather that, in order to make that alliance, it has sacrificed the interests of the world revolution, preventing the French Revolution from breaking out, and thus further isolating the Soviet Union itself.

Where colonial countries like Morocco, under Abd-El-Krim, and Ethiopia, under Haile Selassie, revolt against imperialism, it is the duty of the communists to support the colonial forces in revolt, even where there is no possibility of introducing communism in those countries. The storming of the main fortress of capitalism in Europe and America can be accomplished only by making use of the vast guerrilla fighting that breaks out in colonial countries, from Asia to Latin America. Colonial warfare, if it does nothing else, at least weakens the forces of imperialism, and permits the workers better to attack in the industrial countries.

Hand in hand with the question of disarming the borgeoisie goes the problem of the arming of the class that is coming to power, the proletariat. The general tendency of capitalism is to arm the entire people and to mobilize it for war. It is clear that an oppressed class that has never used arms cannot conquer power. Therefore, the strategy of the communists must be to train as many of the working class population as possible in fighting and in the use of arms. As in the slogan, "Lynch the lynchers of the Negroes and of poor toilers," it is not the action of fighting that is condemned, but the direction that the fighting takes. In the case of the armed forces, what the communists try to do is to turn the army against its own officers and to throw the armed people against the bourgeois state.

In the nineteenth century, when many States maintained standing armies of mercenary soldiers, the Marxist predicted that, following the French Revolution, the inevitable tendency would be for universal military training and conscription; to this change they were opposed. Today, however, the attitude of the communists towards universal military training cannot be confined to generalities, but must be entirely concrete and specific. The world can be divided into three principal sections, in this respect.

In Europe, where universal military training has existed for a long time, where the devastating World War brought home the meaning of revolution to the entire population, and where the mass of workers have been in the trenches and already know the use of arms, here the communists no longer can support the demand for universal military training, although not necessarily must they be in opposition to it. The demand in Europe today must be for a People's or for a Workers' Militia. Especially appropriate is this in countries where the "People's Front" rules. It can be demonstrated that, only when the entire people are armed is peace assured, as evidenced by the fact that the first country to stop fighting in

the World War was precisely that country that dissolved its regular army and armed the people—Russia

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries, however, an entirely different situation prevails In such cases as China, India, Nicaragua, or the Philippines, the imperialists rule through mercenary armies separate and apart from the people In such countries the demand for universal military training would arouse the masses to the highest pitch of enthusiasm and would fill the rulers with dread One of the great signs of hope in China today is the fact that the old traditions of Confucius, which looked askance at military training, are rapidly disappearing. If the incessant fighting in China has accomplished nothing else, it has at least been a great training school for the masses to learn the use of arms This is the beginning of the end for imperialism.

In such countries as the United States, Canada, Australia, and similar regions where the masses are not trained in the use of arms and have never had conscription for any length of time, universal military training can serve a decidedly useful purpose for the communists In such countries then, it is the duty of the communists not to oppose universal military training, but rather to favor it, although they may not always be in the position openly to demand it, since traditions of pacifism in a given country might make the general labor movement misinterpret this demand Yet there is no other way in which to arm the masses In this category of countries, the time is not ripe to raise the slogan, "Workers' Militia" It is significant that in the United States the ruling class itself is not in a hurry to introduce universal military training

In the United States, the communists will have to take a clear position in regard to the special militarist groups, such as the Reserve Officers Training Corps, the Citizens Military Training Camps, the National Guard, and so forth In regard to the first, the communists have advanced steady opposition, since this body is for the training only of bourgeois cadres All work that communists do within this body is work to destroy and nullify its activity In regard to the Citizens Military Training Camps, a different position might be taken. On the one hand, these camps embrace wide numbers of workers and train them in the use of arms On the other hand, the workers are partially selected and given a thorough bourgeois patriotic training that puts them in an entirely different environment than a universally conscripted army would engender Under such circumstances, it would seem that the communists cannot oppose nor raise the cry of boycott of the C M T C.'s, nor yet can they advocate such selected camps, but rather must work within them to raise the political level of their members and to win them for communism.

In regard to the National Guard, the workers must do everything in

their power to break up and to destroy this specialized armed force of the bourgeoisie whose purpose is strike-breaking and the smashing of workers' demonstrations. This does not, however, preclude work within this guard, slogans to favor the rank and file against the officers, agitation for the election of officers, and similar measures.

Wherever other bodies exist, such as the Citizens Conservation Corps, the Boy Scouts, and various sports and drill societies, the action of the communists depends upon the composition and the function of the group. Where the group is thoroughly selected and under careful bourgeois guidance, but made up of plain working class elements, there the policy will be similar to that of the C.M.T.C. On the other hand, as much as possible the workers must build up their own sports and drill clubs, their own defense corps. This is the best answer that labor can make to the Ku Klux Klan, the Black Legion, or similar organizations potentially of great menace to the labor movement in the United States.

The arming of the proletariat has now reached a new stage in the world's history, with the conquest of power by the workers of one part of the world. For the first time, the workers have a vast army and incalculable resources at their disposal. Within the Soviet Union, everything that is done to strengthen the armed might of the people strengthens the entire working class. What is wrong with Stalinism is that it has disarmed the people by replacing their creative will by the initiative and power of a bureaucracy. Stalinism cannot defend the Soviet Union adequately and, in the course of the coming war, when this becomes known, the proletariat soon enough will be forced to take action to remove the bureaucracy and to reinstitute its direct rule.

However, so long as the Soviet Union remains a Workers State, then every advance that it wins in the form of recognition or credits and supplies from a capitalist world goes to strengthen the world proletariat, provided, of course, the price is not so great that the workers lose more than they gain. And it is precisely the crime of Stalinism that it pays much more than it gets in return; the advantage to the Soviet Union is counterbalanced by the defeat of the world revolution which the policies of the leaders help to bring about.

The Soviet Union cannot be neutral in any war of a major character that should break out. Even should the capitalists not drag Russia into the war, it would be the duty of the Soviet Union at critical moments to throw the vast weight of its economic and military forces into the struggle, but only in such a way as to further the emancipation of the workers of the belligerent countries and to spread the world revolution. It would be criminal for the Soviet Union to take sides in any war so as to help one

set of capitalists against the other. This is exactly what Stalinism intends to do. In this event, the Russian official will have to reckon with the soldiers and workers in his own country, who also will have something to say, and who, once the war breaks out, will be in a better position to speak to the bureaucracy.

On the other hand, the proletariat of the world cannot be neutral in any war against the Soviet Union. It is not only a matter of aiding the Soviet Union, and cannot be done by proving to the capitalists of other countries how much they will gain by aiding the Soviet Union. Aid to the Soviet Union can be given only by the workers of other countries' overthrowing their capitalists and then bringing the full force of their Workers State to help in the conflict. Stalinism, however, would have the workers serve the interests of the capitalists by inducing the rulers to take the side of the Soviet Union as a perfectly safe one for capitalism. This policy would spell the doom of both the working class movement of that country and of the Soviet Union as a Workers State as well.

It is also a question of struggling against any capitalist country at war with Soviet Russia. The workers of the countries at war with Russia of course have to follow the line of revolutionary defeatism, fraternization with the Russian forces, and insurrection at home. The workers of the still neutral countries have another task; they have the task of mobilizing their nation for war against the enemies of the Workers State, since a war against a country warring against the Workers State is historically a progressive war. War credits to the Workers State, complete embargo of materials and trade to the opposing capitalist countries, active proletarian demonstrations, are only part of the preliminary tasks of the proletariat in this connection throughout the world.

In almost all cases, the capitalists of the neutral countries will oppose any declaration of war against the capitalist opponents of Soviet Russia. But it may happen that, under given conditions, the capitalists of a particular country may find themselves impelled or compelled to declare war against an active enemy of the Soviet Union. For example, it might be that the United States would have to declare war against Japan while the latter was fighting Russia. Or, it might be that, Germany and Japan being on the verge of crushing Russia and yet having about exhausted their strength in the process, France and England might intervene to prevent the victors from taking advantage of their victory. Yet even in these cases, it cannot mean the surcease of the civil war at home, in the given industrial capitalist countries mentioned.

Naturally, if the imperialisms of America, England, and France enter on the side of Russia, it can only be with their own imperialist and capitalist aims in view—namely to increase their power and to add their

pressure to the forces tending to change the Russian régime into a capitalist one. Thus, if the war is to be conducted on behalf of Russia against world imperialism, it becomes imperative to remove the imperialist government at home that is feigning to be amicable to the cause of Russia and to place instead a truly friendly régime—a workers' régime, that will do everywhere what the workers have attempted to do in Russia.

Thus the line of the Fourth International on this question can be summed up as follows:[1] Under no circumstances, whether the workers are for or against the war itself, can they postpone for one moment the struggle against Wall Street and the other capitalist governments that enter the war for their own imperialist purposes and would use the working class as their cannon fodder.

Where the war occurs between imperialist countries only, for instance, where democratic United States is fighting another imperialist nation, the main revolutionary tasks of the American workers will be (a) to organize strikes and physical demonstrations of every sort for the termination of the war, the strikes to culminate in general strikes and struggles of a nature that will paralyze entirely the capitalist system; (b) to organize mutinies and rebellions in the armed forces of the capitalist state to fraternize with the workers and soldiers of the belligerent country and to transform imperialist war to civil war; (c) to organize struggles against conscription and mobilization for the imperialist war; (d) to organize armed labor defense corps against the fascist or vigilante groups that would terrify the working class into submission.

Where America is fighting a war historically progressive, as where it is supporting the Soviet Union (still a Workers State today, despite Stalinism), against such a country as Japan, here the tasks of the revolutionary forces are different. They will include: (a) the abolition of the standing or conscript army, and the arming of the entire people into a huge Workers' Militia or Army, with its own control and elected officers; (b) the seizure of the factories under the control of the workers, the complete abolition of the profits of the capitalist class of the country, the entire industrial machinery of the country to be put at the disposal of the toilers and the Workers' Militia and Army formed; (c) the organization of soviets as the best form for the mobilization of the whole people for the carrying out of the war and to insure that the war will be an anti-imperialist war in which the workers will smash capitalism throughout the world; (d) proletarian support for this war, but only when the war is under its own control; never does it co-operate with the bourgeoisie. Relentless struggle

[1] Compare A. Weisbord: "What Will I Do When America Goes to War?" *Modern Monthly* magazine, Vol. IX, No. 5. (September, 1935.)

against the bourgeoisie, whether this struggle interferes with the war or not, must be waged.

In short, where America is conducting a war on the side of the Soviet Union, a war which is historically progressive, in spite of the aims of the American capitalists, here it is the duty of the workers not to oppose the war as such, but to fight the method of conducting the war. The workers must take control of the war and make it really their own. Through strikes and physical demonstrations of every sort, the working class must compel the turning over of the war to the proletariat so as to make it a war for socialism and for the abolition of the capitalist system throughout the world. In other words, the class struggle is in every case paramount.

5

The strategy of the Fourth International will have to deal extensively with the question of the strategy of insurrection. And for this it will have to make a thorough examination of all the revolutions that have taken place, from the time of the Peasants Wars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to the present. So far as modern times are concerned, there will have to be a distinction made between various stages of the movement. There is first the period before the revolutionary situation has arisen and when the fight is one for preparation of the struggle through the battle for secondary reforms. Secondly, there is the phase just prior to the actual insurrection, where the situation has become revolutionary and the proletarian vanguard is thoroughly prepared and organized for the seizure of power Finally, there is the moment of insurrection itself.

That every social revolution will have to culminate in a period of actual insurrection is now commonplace among advanced workers. That this insurrection must not just "happen" haphazardly, but can be planned by the vanguard, is also a truism since the days of Lenin. What is no sufficiently recognized, however, is the decisive character of the subjective factor, the Party, in the present period, and the possibilities of the communists themselves changing the level of development from one plane to another. Especially will this be true in highly industrialized regions, where the very organization of the working class even for reforms may lead at once to the question of power. While it is hard to start the revolution in those countries, once the situation is ripe, the revolutionary movement can run with tremendous speed and directness through all its phases.

The periods through which a people's revolution generally has travelled in modern times are mainly the spontaneous outburst, the "honeymoon" stage, the "July Days," the counter-revolt, the further revolutionary advance leading to the victory of the proletariat, the period of civil war, and then

retreat. Together with this is the study of the mutual relationship of limited democracy, broad democracy, democratic-dictatorship, and Dictatorship of the Proletariat, both direct and indirect. The evolution of the Party from the sectarian stage, to the mass stage, to the heroic period, and to degeneration via the route of Thermidor, the Directorate, the Consulate, and Bonapartism, all must be given careful study.

Revolutions have their own evolution and laws of development, but these laws are laws of social explosions. The revolutionary movement often goes far beyond the point where it can maintain itself; it then is driven backward far beyond the point necessary. Thus it is only as a resultant of the most violent swings in first one direction and then the other that the revolution finally comes to rest at the spot commensurate with the relationship of social forces at the time. It is necessary to study not only the law of the zig-zag, but also the laws by which the zig-zags become exaggerated and extreme. The laws of revolutions contain also within themselves the laws regulating the tempo and form of mutation movements, of sympodial developments.

Having studied the laws of social action and reaction, both in their exaggerated and normal aspects, within the general movement known as revolution, the revolutionists then can be prepared to take up the various instruments which they can use to test out in what moment of the social revolution they find themselves. Here we find ourselves not in the realm of social statics but of social dynamics, and the ordinary instruments and barometers are not sufficient. The communists can use the barometer of parliamentary elections in these periods, the amount of votes being a rough indication of the stage of the movement; or he can use the method of direct actions on a secondary scale. In all cases, his demands must be timed to meet the actual situation. But these mechanical instruments are not sufficient. The Communist Party must use far more delicate dials. It must be intimately bound up with the toilers, so that there is a constant transfusion of blood between the two. It must make use of those fine, electrical devices which can measure the temper, the feelings, the electrical irradiation of the masses from moment to moment. This can be done only by a Party that truly springs from the bowels of the class striving for power and that represents its very soul. Feelings, passions, moods, psychological irradiations of the mass, the Party so must be attuned to them by intimate personal contact with the people that it can sway the masses through the mechanism of politics to usher in revolutionary results. A bureaucracy in the party is fatal to such machinery of adjustment. If it is capable of understanding the rough laws of gravitation, it can never understand the laws of electro-dynamics.

The Fourth International will have to make a scientific study of the

proper organs of insurrection. There is no parliament which can become an effective revolutionary medium of the mass struggle, as Spain shows today, and as the French, English, and American Revolutions showed long ago. The modifications that parliament undergoes during the struggle, and its limitation as an effective organ of proletarian struggle, has to be understood in all its aspects. Then there are the economic bodies of the workers, the shop committees, the trade union councils and similar groups. Finally, there are the soviets, either in the shape developed by the Russian Revolution or in some modified form. Concrete circumstances may demand specific adaptations of the organs of insurrection.

In regard to the insurrection itself, there is always to be considered the dictum of Marx that insurrection is an art, the essence of which lies in the audacious offensive and the determination to carry through to the end what is once started. Since the Party will have to form its Military-Insurrectionary Committee, the experiences of such committees as have been formed in the past thoroughly must be digested. The question of the element of surprise in the seizure of key places, such as radio stations, means of communication and transportation, public places, stores of arms, factories, and so forth, becomes part of the problem. Hand in hand with this problem is the one of the organization of the armed forces responsible for the insurrection.

Insurrectionary strategy will have to take into account the lessons of barricade fighting of the past, the Paris Commune, the 1905 experience, the fighting in Vienna, in 1934, and similar occasions. In such a country as the United States, for example, where there are over twenty-five million automobiles, the question of barricading streets becomes of special importance, since these automobiles can make mobile and easily constructed barricades even for the broadest highways. It is no longer necessary to rip up the streets or to throw down furniture from the houses to form barricades in such a country.

Finally, it must be considered that the insurrection is not the culmination of the social revolution, but its true beginning. While the workers may seize power, they will have to hold it against desperate resistance. Insurrection is followed by civil war. The Fourth International must draw the military technical lessons from the civil wars fought by the proletariat in the past. The question of the value of airplanes, small arms, cannon, tanks, mines, grenades and gas, in relation both to guerrilla warfare of the peasantry dispersed over a large territory and to masses of workers congested in large cities, must play an important rôle in this respect.

From all this, it can be seen what an entirely different body the Fourth International must be, compared with its predecessors. It will be a body which will recognize that the peaceful period of capitalism is over, that

riots, bloodshed, violence, insurrection, revolution, war, civil war, comprise the normal atmosphere in which we must live and in which we must work. It will also recognize that there has been a tremendous gap between the general theoretical knowledge of the workers and the strategy of what is to be done to make communism a reality. The Fourth International will concentrate entirely upon the strategy of the world revolution.

XLIX. COMMUNISM AND AMERICA

I

CONCOMITANT with the breakdown of the Third International has been the disintegration of Europe as, historically, the foremost creative force. With the shift of the general center of gravity to the United States, the question arises whether America is destined to receive the revolutionary banner from the hands of Europe and carry it forward. The question of whether America can lead the proletarian revolution now becomes of more than theoretical importance.

Were the United States to take the mantle of revolutionary leadership from Europe, it would not be the first time that the revolutionary center has shifted from one country to another. In the early nineteenth century, the heart of the revolutionary proletariat was in England; in the middle of that century the center moved to France; later it shifted to Germany, where it remained till the World War, after which it fell to the Russians to lead the way. Incidentally, in each case of change, the revolutionary organizations in the abandoned center, bound in part by nationalist ideology, refused to face the facts and protested the shift. The French, with the glorious history of the Paris Commune behind them, could not reconcile themselves to the leadership of the Germans; the Germans never fully admitted the loss of their leadership to the Russians; the Russians will not easily embrace the idea that the hub of revolution can shift from Moscow to New York or Chicago. Yet the First International was led by the French, the Second by the Germans, the Third by the Russians; it may well be—should the European working class find itself unable to defeat fascism—that the Fourth International will be led by the Americans.

The German leadership at the head of the Second International stressed the point that the socialist revolution must be led ultimately by the proletarians in the most important industrial countries of the world. Culture depended upon technique and, since Gemany before the War had the most advanced technique, the German workers had the highest culture, and therefore were bound to take leadership of the revolutionary movement. This was their reply to the French, who always had mocked the parliamentary opportunism of their Teutonic neighbors; with these Marxist arguments, the Kaiser's agents were able to rally the socialist workers to the War.

The victory of the Bolsheviks in the Soviet Union disclosed the fact that the proletariat revolution must not inevitably strike first in the most advanced countries, but, following the law of uneven development, could break out in an agrarian and semi-colonial country as well. Under Lenin, the communists never envisioned the agrarian country as leading the way forever or, having achieved socialist rule for itself, as defeating the combined capitalist world. As Leninism gave way to Stalinism, however, the impression deepened that not the industrial countries were to lead the way for the world revolution—the workers of those countries were too well bribed by imperialism—but the agrarian countries like Hungary, Bavaria, China, and Russia. Just as the Germans had covered their nationalism with Marxist phrases to the effect that the industrial country must lead, so the Russians began to use the phrases of Leninism to prove that the leadership must fall to agrarian nations.

The true situation can best be gathered by a synthesis of the following sets of circumstances. First of all, the entire world as a whole is ripe for the end of capitalism and the victory of the proletarian revolution. Second, the struggles in the agrarian countries, while important and inevitable, are yet indecisive in the struggle for power the world over. The toilers in the backward countries may start the struggle and can carry on protracted guerrilla fighting, but they cannot by themselves overthrow world capitalism. This can be done only when the heavy battalions of the proletariat in the industrial countries are brought into action.

The third factor is that the proletarian movement in Europe is showing an incapacity further to lead the world. It may well be that the enormous weight of America is too heavy for the workers of Europe to remove from their necks. Europe today, broadly generalizing, stands to the United States as the small industry of the nineteenth century stands to the large trust of the twentieth. It is not the workers of scattered discrete industry of an antiquated nature that can assume the leadership for any length of time, but only the masses mobilized in the most modern heavy industries. These last are no longer to be found primarily or mainly in Europe. The shift of the world's economic center of gravity eventually must mean a shift of the revolutionary center of gravity. Fundamentally, the Germans were right in their insistence on the importance of the proletariat in the industrial countries, although they were fatally in error in believing that the workers of the agrarian countries could not initiate the world battle and win its first victories. The Germans proved too simple, too mechanical, too provincially European.

Marx himself had posed the problem eighty years before, when he wrote: "The difficult question for us is this: On the Continent the revolution is imminent and will also immediately assume a socialist character.

Is it not bound to be crushed in this little corner, considering that in a far greater territory the movement of bourgeois society is still on the ascendant?" [1]

It is of course too early as yet to state whether fascism will be victorious in Western Europe, and the world united for the downfall of the Soviet Union. Such an eventuality, however, is quite within the range of possibility. This would simply mean that European capitalism, supported and overwhelmed by the capitalist reserves of the Western Hemisphere, proved too powerful for the proletariat at this time. But just as it is impossible to eradicate the working class and exploitation under capitalism, so is it impossible to extirpate communism and the class struggle. In the event of the victory of fascism in Europe, the arena would then be shifted to the more decisive portions of the world, and first of all to the United States. In that case, from the capitalist point of view, it will become the destiny of American capitalism to organize the world, just as Germany tried to organize Europe. From the proletarian point of view, it will then be the mission of the American workers to organize the Fourth International on a true world and internationalist basis. If Europe, including its proletariat, is broken up by the power of America and rendered helpless, American capitalism itself will be made powerless in turn by the forces engendered within itself, namely, the proletariat.

After all is said and done, the working class of the United States is no mean one. In numbers it is gigantic, equalled by no country in the world. Nor in quality is it deficient. Ever since the Civil War, the workers of the United States have demonstrated repeatedly their genius for direct action and impetuous struggle. In the United States May Day was born; in New York City the First International had its headquarters for a time. A country that begins its independence with revolution, that ushers its proletariat into existence by a civil war, that compels violence to become part of the very breath of life of the class struggle—such a country is well prepared for revolutionary outbursts of its proletariat.

The struggles of the workers of the United States up to the present have been mainly of an economic character. But economics is becoming politics. The old individualism is giving way to collectivism; there is becoming apparent in the United States a tenseness of relationships, a restiveness of the masses that proves that the workers have great potentialities for radicalization, and that sudden and violent political fluctuations are quite possible in this, the strongest capitalist country in the world, the bulwark of world reaction.

It is true, the superior technique of American imperialism imparts to the worker a superior culture, but this culture, too, has an uneven develop-

[1] Marx-Engels: *Correspondence*, No. 42, p. 118.

ment. The American workman is unsurpassed in his general knowledge of physical and natural science, but he remains far more backward in social science. The question is, how long can social science lag behind physical science?

Of one thing we may be sure. Once the American workers are put on the road of social science, it will not be long before they pursue that science to the end, wringing from it all the revolutionary conclusions possible. Up to now, American workers have taken to the study of gasoline engines, machinery, and similar mechanical objects, because this was the way to advance. Now, however, that they are being dispossessed from the process of production, now that the army of unemployed hungering for relief can at times become larger than those actually at work, now that definite class formations are emerging, the study of mechanics and of natural objects will give way to a study of the modes of operation and of the rôle of the State. Then it will be not unnatural to expect that, just as the American proletariat caught up with and surpassed the Europeans in natural science, so will it in the social sciences. Furthermore, in no country in the world is there such a close reaction time between theory and practice as in America. Now that class formations openly are appearing in American life, it cannot be long before class struggle theories will be the property of the American masses; when this happens, the whole Western Hemisphere will glow in the crucible of the social revolution.

The problem of communizing America is in part the problem of americanizing communism. To the average American, communism always has been considered a foreign product. The theoretical and practical leaders of the movement, such as Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Nikolai Lenin, Leon Trotsky, and such, all were Europeans who knew America only from afar. In this country, the Marxist parties were composed mostly of foreign-born elements, dominated in the beginning by Germans, later by Jews and Russian nationals. The ideas of these parties and their expressions seemed utterly alien to this country.

Of course, the real barrier to the assimilation of the communist movement with the social life of this country which prevented its indigenous development lay in the fact that the economic and social evolution of the United States had not as yet warranted the open formation of classes engaged in active civil war. A number of keen European observers, such as Graf von Keyserling, have ventured the opinion that America would never adopt Marxian socialism because the country itself was a substitute for it.[1]

[1] This theme of Americanism as a substitute for socialism is also developed in Leon Samson's book, *Toward a United Front.*

Certainly America is unique, although not in the Herbert Hoover sense that America is outside the pale of capitalist development and that the laws of the class struggle prevailing in Europe would not be generated here, not in the sense that its exceptional development has removed it from the general decline of capitalism throughout the world; America is unique simply in the sense that all concrete truth is unique. America is an illustration of the law of combined development which compels history never exactly to repeat itself, but to enunciate eternally the basic law of individuality in nature.

We already have stressed the peculiar character of American development. It would be well, however, to summarize some of the factors at this point, so as to provide a background for the solution of the problem of americanizing communism. In the first place, America was a new world. To many it was an escape from the old social order, from the old economic machine, from the old State. Here one could turn over a new leaf. One could build utopias. There was no limit to the possibilities of expansion. Here one could stress the individual as against class, State, nation, race. Secondly, America seemed to turn the economic laws of Europe backward. Here every man could aim to be a king in his own little domain, and there was plenty for all. Thirdly, there were no important feudal classes with special privileges to hamper the development of capitalism. If the propertyless could obtain a little property, and the petty bourgeoisie could become bourgeois, the bourgeoisie could become absolute masters of the situation. Fourthly, wealth was to be attained without devastating wars. Class struggles apparently were not needed in order to win ease and security. In America, all classes seemed to dissolve into one—the small property owners and the direct producers. As fast as upper and lower classes were precipitated in one part of the country, the vast and rapid expansion of the land created new fluid conditions and broke up anew all rigid formations. The domination of big capital was delayed by the speed of expansion. Of course, classes existed from the very beginning, but it was the private owner of the means of production who tended to become the universal element forming the mother class, from whose ranks there was later to be differentiated both capitalist and laborer.

Throughout the entire nineteenth-century history of our country, generally speaking, it was the petty bourgeoisie who dominated the ideology of the country and, under the impact of big capital, carried forward the nation's development. Not as in England, where every "middle body" aped his superior, in America, every capitalist tried to appear as a man of the people, the people of course being the petty owners of the means of production. Whatever democracy existed in the United States was the democracy of private property, extended to the little property owner in

an environment where many could easily become property owners and enter the charmed circle. In all this period, the propertyless proletariat never took the initiative in making history in the United States. As a matter of fact, it has yet to take this initiative as a class.

The problem of americanizing communism always has been a difficult one for communist leaders; up to now, this question has not been solved, nor even adequately posed. The traditional approach has been the one in which the communist praises the Fathers of the country and declares that communism will carry on the work of the American Revolution, the American Constitution, and the deeds of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and others. The trouble with this approach is that it leads to a complete falsification of American history and to an idealization of the bourgeois leaders of the country.

An interesting exhibit of this type of approach to America is to be found in Lenin's *Letter to the American Workers*. In this letter, Lenin affirmed that the American Revolution was one of the few great and really revolutionary wars of the people against feudal subjection. Lenin, the European, did not know that the American Revolution was not a people's revolution at all (from the point of view of how much of a "people's" character it had, we would place the American Revolution somewhere between the Turkish Revolution of Kemal Pasha and the English Civil Wars), that there was no substantial extension of democracy to embrace the masses of people after the Revolution, that the American Constitution was more the product of counter-revolution than revolution, that those who led the Revolutionary forces were the enemies of the common people, that America was not fighting feudalism, since England least of all represented the feudal system at the time, that the American Revolution was not in the main a glorious revolution for ideals, but a sordid fight for control over the resources and wealth of the New World.

Lenin's limited understanding of American history can be seen in his expressed view that compares "the colonial slavery of America by the English robbers" with the colonial slavery of British imperialism in India and Asia. In such a comparison, a whole series of historical errors is committed. In India, the British imperialists can keep their control only by supporting the Nabobs, Rajahs, and all the trappings of old India at the expense of the conquered masses whom they drove deeper than ever into misery. Just the opposite occurred in the New World. North America had to be colonized by capitalist elements and English subjects themselves. The American colonists robbed the indigenes. They established the most widespread system of slavery and indentured servitude, and most ruthlessly exploited men, materials, and soil. Not a feudal system was preserved, but a great development of capitalist private property was inaugurated.

It was because the American exploiters would not share the wealth with the British imperialists in what the latter considered the proper proportions that the two groups fought it out. Taking Lenin's view that the American Revolution was the revolt of colonial slaves, it would be hard to explain the fact that after these so-called slaves won their revolt, the real slaves, the Negroes, redemptioners, and indentured servants, increased in number. Lenin in fact here entirely ignored the Negro's point of view. Certainly the American Negro had no interest in the American Revolution.

This piece of writing by Lenin is an illustration that the very best of European revolutionists were and are provincially limited by their ignorance of America. Lenin was the foremost leader of the world proletariat simply because he was the leader of the European section, and Europe was then leading the world. Today such a limited horizon is fatal.

There is a sophisticated example of this type of vulgar approach to the question of americanizing communism in the pamphlet by B. D. Wolfe: *Our Heritage from 1776*. Wolfe writes: "One of the earliest articles of Lenin, written in 1897, concerns itself with this very question. It is entitled: 'What Inheritance Do We Reject?' It disputes step by step with the populists the inheritance from past bourgeois revolutionaries. 'We are definitely more consistent and truer guardians of the inheritance than the Narodniki (populists),' he declares, and then adds . . . 'To keep the inheritance by no means signifies that one must limit himself to what he has inherited.' This article by the youthful Lenin was a definite declaration that the Russian working class was coming of age and claiming the inheritance that the Decembrists, the 'Enlighteners' and the earlier generation of Populists had left to it.

"Judged by this test, the American working class is still immature—still infantile leftist. It does not claim its heritage. It does not dispute with the bourgeoisie and particularly the petty bourgeoisie (the 'Back to 1776'ers') for its share of the inheritance of the first American Revolution. . . ."[1]

Now what were the ingredients of the Russian situation? 1. The Decabrist revolt had been directed by a group of the lower nobility and army officers against the tyranny of the Czar. The revolt failed, but it marked the beginning of the demand for the Europeanization of Russia, following upon the Napoleonic wars. 2. The revolt was continued in the middle of the nineteenth century by Russian students and intellectuals who wanted to bring European enlightenment into Russia. These students of

[1] To Wolfe the average American worker is "Leftist" while the Russian working class was already reaching maturity by 1897. Such romantic opinions go well with his general point of view. This line of Wolfe is now followed by the Communist Party to which Communism has now become twentieth century Americanism, and which has issued pamphlets praising the Founding Fathers, Abraham Lincoln and other patriotic heroes.

advanced ideas were harassed and persecuted by Czarism in a thousand ways, and showed a high level of courage and devotion. The movement failed, and Czarist reaction prevailed. 3. Following the Crimean War, Russian absolutism was forced to free the serfs in 1861 and to develop capitalism. There then arose a populist movement composed of students and elements of the petty bourgeoisie who went to the people, tried to educate the peasant, and, through their terrorist arm, conducted a truly heroic war against Czarism. The movement failed, thousands were persecuted, exiled, imprisoned, killed by Czarism. These three early movements already had entered into the traditions of all liberation movements at the time when the proletariat began to arise and to speak in its own name.

In all of this, the following is to be carefully noted: First, there was in each case a struggle against the same power, Czarism, which up to the victory of the Russian proletariat was still the persecuter and murderer of the people. That is to say, the enemy of the previous movements was the enemy of the proletariat at the time that Lenin was writing. This, of course, is not the case in the United States. The American workers' enemy is not identical with the enemy of the leaders of the American Revolution.

Second, the leaders of the movements prior to those of 1905 and 1917 had failed. In many cases they had paid for their failure with their lives and had demonstrated that the classes they represented could not overthrow the oppressors of the Russian people, only the proletariat could accomplish this task. They had turned over the banner of revolution to the newly rising working class; this class continued the work they had begun, but could not complete it. The exact opposite was the case in the American Revolution.

Lenin could praise the "Enlighteners" and the nihilists because, in a backward agrarian country, the revolution against Czarism had to start as a democratic agrarian revolution, to be pushed on and completed by the proletariat only as the revolution itself unfolded. The revolution in the United States need not undergo the tortuous phases that occurred in Russia. There the leaders of the early revolts against Czarism never exposed themselves to the masses, never had the power or the opportunity to oppress and to grind down the revolutionary forces of the people. In America, the contrary was the case. From the very beginning, the leaders of the American Revolution, the Founding Fathers, became the bitter enemies of the people. The leaders of the American Revolution actually won the power, brazenly and arrogantly seizing the fruits of the Revolution for themselves, and refusing to grant the lower orders, who had made up the bulk of the fighting force, the slightest amelioration of their conditions. In other words, the enemies of the American proletariat are the very bourgeois who led the American Revolution.

Third, in Russia, the leaders of the previous movements, especially the terrorist Narodniki, were *social* revolutionists; they tried to organize the masses of peasants under their own banner with their own demands, and to launch them in violent struggle against the old absolutist order. On the contrary, the leaders of the American Revolution never went to the people; they did their utmost to prevent the Revolution from being a people's revolution; they entered the Revolution for their own selfish ends and emerged from it enormously richer and more powerful. What they were interested in was not a social revolution, but a political change in government.

We do not deny that the American Revolution was a progressive act, objectively unleashing the forces of production and of capitalist development. The American Revolution began an act in the drama which the proletarian revolution shall complete and finish. To speak of the progressive character of the American Revolution is a good approach in reaching the middle class. But this approach is not suitable for the American workers.

The communists cannot enter into rivalry with the bourgeoisie on the question: Whose is the Fourth of July? Whose is the American Flag? Whose country is it? Whose Constitution is it? etc., etc. In this sort of rivalry, the bourgeoisie must emerge on the top; the workers will be fighting within the framework of capitalist ideology and tradition; the petty bourgeoisie will be confused and lost. Nationalism will be rampant. All sorts of illusions about reforming the Constitution by making amendments will be thickly spread throughout the workers' ranks, demoralizing them, preventing them from taking the historic initiative in their own manner and breaking from the capitalist parties that have traditionally used this lure. The whole line of Wolfe plays into the hands of the American varieties of budding fascism.

Can it be that the American workers have, therefore, no tradition of revolution, no insurrectionary heritage from the past? Far from it. The proletariat carries forward the insurrectionary traditions of Bacon's rebellion, Leisler's rebellion, Dorr's rebellion, the fierce struggles in the Southern States between the planters and the poor whites, and, most important of the time, Shay's rebellion. All of them, especially the last, were rebellions of the poor plebeian toiling masses against the wealthy monopolists arising in the country. Here is a rich heritage of political struggle that the American proletariat never can forget.

The American proletariat has the heritage of the underground railway of the days prior to the Civil War, of the left abolitionist movement, culminating in John Brown's raid. The American proletariat has the memorable tradition of the insurrection against conscription under Lincoln. Then there are, too, the traditions of May Day, of the First International,

whose seat was in New York City, of the many violent strike struggles which in ferocity resembled small insurrections by themselves. The workers of this country can well carry forward the traditions of street action which always have characterized the toilers of this country. Lynching is not for the bourgeoisie alone. It is a tradition of the American people for dealing with crooks and bandits and outlaws and murderers as well.

Most important of all the insurrectionary traditions which the American proletariat must cherish as its most precious heritage are the wonderful insurrectionary attempts on the part of the Negro slaves in this country. The war of the Seminoles (really an insurrection by Negroes as well), the insurrectionary movements of Turner, Cato, Vesey, and a thousand others whose names have been buried by the bourgeoisie—these mark high lights in the struggles of the terribly oppressed toilers of this country. Throwing aside the illusions of the opportunists, we see the Negro as the great insurrectionist, the foremost fighter for the liberation of the toiling masses of this country. The history of the proletariat in this country has its origin in the history of Negro slavery. The insurrections of the Negro slaves are the finest traditions of the American working class.

2

There is another and better approach to the question of americanizing communists than has been elaborated up to now by the working class organizations. This is to study the elements of americanism and to see where socialism and americanism intertwine and work into each other. However, even this method, far superior to the traditional, and one which has not been comprehended by working class leaders, only raises the problems without adequately solving them. The attempt to achieve socialism *through* americanism may bring some valuable results but is insufficient and, at bottom, is defective in mobilizing the workers for international revolution. The fact of the matter is that a Marxist understanding of the soul and spirit of American life, of its character and peculiar interests has not been attempted by communist theoreticians.

Socialism and americanism are not so far apart as one might think at first sight. For communism begins where capitalism ends, and America has been the highest developed capitalist country. It is true that we cannot evolve peacefully into communism from capitalism, that a sharp break from the past is necessary, a break that takes the form of civil war and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. However, it is also true that within the womb of capitalism there matures the basis for communism; communism does not destroy everything that has gone before it, but takes over the best achievements that capitalism has been able to develop, and uses them for its own purposes.

The fact that americanism and socialism may have certain aspects in common does not at all mean that americanism cannot be the root ideology for American fascism. We can be sure that a native American fascist movement would be bound to use "americanism" for its own purposes, and that the class conscious American workers would be nationalist fools were they to go into competition with the fascists or bourgeois nationalists of any stripe as to which class the ideology of "100 per cent Americanism" belongs. On the other hand, however, this does not mean that the communists stand for the extirpation of any given nationality, nor that they cannot use national traditions for their own purposes; it does not mean that communists cannot point out exactly in what places americanism and socialism converge and how some of the best ideals of americanism can be realized only under socialism. While this is not the best approach to the American proletariat, it is a fruitful approach to the American nationalist petty bourgeoisie, because, in the guise of showing him americanism through socialism, such a policy really proceeds to make socialists out of Americans.

Americanism means direct action. Traditionally, the American proceeded directly and with his own physical forces to obtain control of the means of production for himself. He did not rely upon representatives, delegates, politicians, or legal action, but upon his own strength and will. This initiative also led the American to lynching and to taking justice into his own hands. This partly accounts for the high crime rate in the United States and for the instinctive rebelliousness to authority that is part of every American's make-up.

This penchant for direct action can be utilized mightily by the revolutionary proletarian forces, as the I.W.W. already have shown. With these traditions at his disposal, the communist easily can appeal over the heads of the legalists and the parliamentarians for direct action of the masses for the seizure of food by the hungry, for the taking over of the land by the farmers and of the factories by the workers. With such a background, the communist need have no fear of such a slogan as "Lynch the lynchers of the Negroes and poor toilers."

It is thoroughly American to preach the inevitability of violent struggle; the communist, in this respect, is only "going native" with a vengeance. In no country in the world are so many foremen's jaws punched by irate workers who have been fired or who, disgruntled, have quit. Nor is the concept of revolution un-American. President Roosevelt is using the word to ingratiate his New Deal with the American people. A country that began its independent life with a successful revolution, one that has embodied its Right of Revolution into its very Constitution, one that saw

its bloody Civil War, such a country certainly has plenty of American traditions for the pursuit of the proletarian revolution.

Americanism never has been a quiet, soothing program. For the American, everything is in motion and flux. Change and the necessity for change have become a permanent part of this man's thinking. Always bigger and better, always something new, always facing new worlds to conquer, this is a typical American attitude that has been often remarked upon by the bourgeois European content with the status quo and the comfort that it brings. The restless energy that is the American's forces him also into an empirical attitude that has been emphasized in the American philosophy of pragmatism. It will not require much persuasion, however, to change pragmatism to materialism, once the class struggle sharpens.

Another important aspect of Americanism is the concept of classlessness. In this connection, even the individualist traditions of America can be harnessed to the proletarian revolution. All this regimentation, disciplining, and forced labor that is taking place under the dominance of trust and monopoly capital with the help of the State is something of that Europeanism from which the American has tried hard to escape. It is now the communist who can show that the social ownership of the means of production means the greatest development of individuality and individual liberty possible; thus communism is in this respect, too, a continuation of the old liberty of the individual for which America has become known.

With the American, individualism had been intimately linked up with individual private ownership of the means of production by the direct producer. Now it is the force of capitalism, of Wall Street imperialism, that is depriving the direct producer of his means of production; it is communism that will allow each individual to regain control over the gigantic means of production now at his disposal. Similarly, it is communism that again spells plenty and wealth for each individual. All to be owners and each owner to have plenty can come about only when capitalism has been abolished.

The concept of individual property was never divorced in this country from the concept of labor. For a long time in the history of this country the term "labor" meant the farmer and the petty owner. No one attained property except through labor; it was the one and only high road to success. In Europe, riches could be gained by conquest, by wars, by pillage. Here it was to be gained by husbandry, by pioneering, by hard work. No true American shrank from hard work, and to the worker in those days belonged the fruits of his toil. Now this is exactly the goal of the proletarian revolution. The idealization of labor, the union of labor with the products of labor, these truly American ideas are also the aims of the communists and can be realized only through communism.

The American was not afraid to pioneer in new directions, to risk his life for the discovery of the natural elements that surrounded him. With the same spirit he was willing to pioneer in social life. The history of the Mormons is an excellent example of this spirit. With the same pioneering appeal, with the same call for social experimentation, the revolutionary elements can approach the discontented and rebellious native American nationalist-minded person for the creation of communism.

This is all the more true since the American always has conceived his rôle as bringing order out of chaos, as an organizing rôle. Indeed, America has become the great international organizer. Here has been the land of rationalization and of audacious continental planning. This stress on science, on statistics and planning generally, is another aspect of "americanism that communism may well claim as its own. Communism brings purposeful planning and scientific control of social forces to the highest level ever attained by man.

The true American never has lived merely to eat, never has produced merely to consume. On the contrary, precisely in this respect young and virile American society has differed from effete Europe. Here we have consumed to produce. Work was a holy cause to which every man was attached; to be separated from his work, his farm, his factory, his occupation meant to the American, at least during the nineteenth century, to be divorced from life. The process of production, the process of making gain, rather than the consumption of the gain actually obtained, lured the American and held him fast. Now it is the communist who develops this idea of living for a cause, for production, but the communist's production is not of profit, but of a new social order wherein the forces of nature become increasingly controlled. Again there is the emphasis on science and on control of productive forces; again there is the contempt for those who do not labor and who parasitically merely consume; again there is the call for the struggle against nature that energized the American pioneer and made his hard and bitter life seem sweet and rich. The communist today carries forward the idea that the struggle of one human against another should be ended, that the struggle for the development of the productive forces should be pushed to its highest point.

The American scientist and engineer needs space for his planning and development of science. He has been accustomed to working with continents. He could not be confined within the narrow limits of the average small country of Europe. He will become enthusiastic over the idea of planning for the whole world, of harnessing all the continents together into a mighty purposeful plan of all humanity.

Here we touch upon another important aspect of americanism, one which also touches on communist doctrine, its internationalism, or rather,

its super-nationalism. The American is nationalistic, but note, first, that his country is as big as a continent, a large slice of the world; such a nationalist embraces much territory, as much as the European internationalist would were he to embrace all Europe. Second, America always has been the great melting pot wherein all nationalities could come together and fuse. Thus, America has symbolized the amalgamation of all races into one family; it has stood for a policy of inclusion rather than exclusion. Here we can well bear in mind Benjamin Franklin's statement that he hoped the day would soon dawn when every nation would be represented with a star in the field of blue that marked the flag of the United States. The United States was conceived as the first brotherhood of nations, a sort of bourgeois Soviet Union, with unlimited possibilities for expansion.

Following such an approach, the communists can remove the obstacles in the way of defeating the capitalist propaganda that communism is a foreign product. With a mature and clever technique, a genuine revolutionary party would be able to demonstrate that communism is a true child of American life.

Finally, there is the pacifism of America. The American, in his rapid expansion over the continent of North America and elsewhere in the world, never has met with real resistance necessitating the sort of wars to the death that has characterized the older civilizations of Europe and Asia. The wars against the Indians and the Mexicans, the American Revolution and Spanish-American War, did not consume much of the energies of the growing nation; America entered the World War too late for the devastating consequences of that war to be deeply felt by all. The fact that America never has been defeated has given a sort of super-confidence and boastfulness to the American that enables him to believe that he will be able to accomplish that which other nations have failed to do. At the same time, it has bred in the American a lack of training for war, no desire for war. This would be a most natural result in the most bourgeoisified country, but this result has been intensified by the fact that the country up to recently had not engaged in major national wars. When America did enter the World War it was to make it a "last war."

The natural pacifism of the American may well be utilized by the communist who can point out that only communism can end perpetual warfare on this earth, that the only "war to end war" possible is the class war against the war-mongering capitalists.

Here then are some of the intersecting points at which Americans can be said to cross communism and which the communist may utilize to his advantage in his process of americanizing communism, so as to communize America. By no means do we want to give the impression that this

enumeration is exhaustive. But what must be pointed out again, what must be emphatically underlined is that this whole technique of *socialism through americanism* has its very serious limitations and defects. The true communist must guard against falling into the errors of the Browders and others who try to ingratiate themselves among Americans by idealizing American nationalism, by pampering the petty bourgeoisie, by bringing nationalist ideology into the ranks of the proletariat. Such a nationalist policy in France led the French Communist Party to adopt the French Revolution of 1789 as its own and to march, on July fourteenth last, with the tri-color at the head of its processions. On the contrary, the communists must do all in their power to show the limitations and defects of Americanism, to point out wherein it must fall down before the superior weapons of criticism that internationalist communism has to offer. The technique of communism through americanism has some value in reaching petty-bourgeois elements, but it is a technique very inferior to other methods of reaching the native American proletariat.

3

There are certain problems unique to American life which no other proletariat has to solve in the same manner or in the same degree. These the communists sooner or later must begin to consider.

First and foremost is the Negro question. No other capitalist country of any importance faces this complicated and difficult question in exactly the manner of America. Yet there is no more genuine American than the Negro, and the failure to give this matter its proper due, the failure to work out a Marxist line for the thirteen million Negroes in the United States, is the best sort of proof that the communist movement is yet immature and unrooted in American life.

Negro life, Negro history, Negro problems practically have been ignored or deliberately buried by the American bourgeoisie. The communist movement must bring to life the true history of the American Negro, must live in the closest communion with Negro society, must become part of the very heart of the struggles of the Negroes for their emancipation. Here is an acid test of whether the communist party is becoming americanized.

A genuine communist organization must demand that its members live with the Negro people and intermingle their activities with those of the oppressed Negro masses in every possible way. An American Communist Party that numbered more Negroes than whites would be far better than a party with more foreign-born than natives in its midst. We shall be able to judge the communism of an organization, indeed, precisely by the yardstick of how many Negroes are in its ranks, how many have been developed as militant fighters.

The status of the Negro people in the United States most accurately may be described as a national minority. While they never have been in possession of any section of this country, yet they all have a common home land, Africa, a common tradition, slavery and persecution, and, to a certain extent, a culture of their own which binds them together as a homogeneous group. There is, furthermore, one section of the United States, and a large section, indeed, as great as any European country outside Russia, namely the Black Belt in the South, in which the Negroes are a majority.

The Negro people have the right to govern themselves independently and to set themselves up as a separate nation, taking over part of the country for that purpose, if they want to. This is the right of self-determination, and it must be one of the principal slogans for Negro liberation.

From the working class point of view, it is not because the Negroes are entitled to any given part of the United States that the workers are willing to fight for the right of the Negroes to have a separate territory and republic of their own, if they so desire, but because this is the best way to prove to the national minority composed of Negroes that the working class fights for their liberation and against the oppressive policy of the white ruling class. Every national minority is entitled to territory where it can build up a republic of its own and determine its own destiny, regardless of whether it possesses any given piece of land as its own or not.

Self-determination for the Negroes is not an end in itself. If a Negro State were to be established with a colored capitalist class grinding down the masses of Negroes, this would not provide a solution. Or, if the Negroes managed to set up a Workers' State in some part of the country, how long could such a State endure in a capitalist country? It could live peacefully only if the rest of the country embraced sovietism. The fight for self-determination is therefore only one of the steps to the goal. Such a fight would rally the colored people together, would instill in them confidence in themselves, and would win respect for their struggle among other sections of the population. It would greatly encourage the struggle of the Negroes in Africa, the West Indies, and elsewhere, where they actually comprise a majority.

In the Black Belt, where the slogan of self-determination would be carried out, the class struggle would be sharpened in such a manner as to weaken capitalism. If the Negro masses decide that there should be a separate Negro Republic in the Black Belt, the Negro workers and poor farmers accordingly must fight that this Republic become a Soviet Republic in order to confiscate the land of the big planters in favor of the poor tillers of the soil and to insure workers' control over the government and industries. Without such additional slogans, the cry for a separate republic

for the Negroes would have no real meaning; there would be no means by which to put it into effect without the struggles of the workers, both white and black. The power of the bourgeois landlords must be broken before there can be self-determination. The slogan "self-determination" would cut straight through the classes in the South, lining up the white planters on the one hand and the oppressed Negroes on the other.

Self-determination for the Negroes does not mean communism; it is only part of the struggle of the Negroes for equality, and completes this struggle. But, as the capitalists cannot grant real democracy, so capitalism never can grant the right of the Negroes to determine for themselves whether they want to remain a national minority within the United States or whether they want to set up a republic of their own, in the Black Belt or anywhere else, wherein they can control their own destiny. Whether the Negro people want to form a separate Negro Republic for themselves in the South is not for the white people, either workers or capitalists, to decide, but for the Negroes themselves. While the choice is up to the Negro masses, nevertheless, the working class of this country, and especially the communist section, must fight with every bit of its power to support the choice of the Negro people.

Another unique problem that must be resolved in this country is the relationship of the proletariat to the middle classes. In no country in the world have the middle classes played such an overwhelmingly predominant rôle in the history of the country. All the other classes have emerged from this basic class, the petty bourgeoisie. This class has had the initiative and the chief importance in the political life in this country. Up to now the proletariat, politically, has been inarticulate.

However, there is another side to this matter. It is true that nowhere has the proletariat become so bourgeoisified as in this country; and nowhere has the line between middle class and working class been so thin as it is here, in the sense that in this country the proletariat has received training that ordinarily only members of the middle class would receive elsewhere. Thus, the gap between the workers and the middle class intellectuals is far more reduced in the United States than, let us say, it was in Russia under the Czars.

In the technically backward agrarian countries of Europe, where illiteracy prevailed, there was a certain recognition of the importance of the *intelligentsia* by all groups in society. The *intelligentsia* was naturally accorded leadership, even in working class struggles. The problem in the United States is entirely different, however, since nowhere else is the cultural level of the workers so high and their independence from the *intelligentsia* so possible. Thus the paradox exists in this country, that,

while the working class so far never has displayed great historical initiative, it is capable of accomplishing the greatest deeds when it has been pressed to do so and has gained the necessary confidence in itself.

All of this not only has its tactical and strategic implications, but its organizational significance as well. A communist group that would americanize itself must understand the American fusion of theory with practice, must place the strictest limits upon purposeless talking within the organization, must see that the intellectuals that come into the movement are given the same sort of training that American engineers and professional men traditionally have received, namely, the training of starting from the bottom and working up.

It is evidence of the prevailing foreignism that exists in the present revolutionary organizations that all of them treat their intellectuals as special, privileged characters, that a regular division has been created between the brain and the brawn. The intellectuals, of course, being the brain, train themselves for jobs as editors, writers, etc., while the workers, the brawn, carry on one struggle after another for the organization, but never are brought into the general leadership. Such special privileges can find their justification far more readily in the caste-ridden society of Europe than in the social life of the United States. To intellectualize the proletarian and to proletarianize the intellectual, this double process easily can find its way into the practice of the American working-class movements.

Linked up with this process is the fact that the bourgeoisie itself has arisen from the same petty-bourgeois class as the proletariat. Thus the wealthy do not enjoy the same standing and prestige in this country as in Europe, where wealth is definitely intermarried with the aristocracy and carries with it immense social standing.

Given the transformation from classlessness to open class formation now taking place in American society, the correct method of approach must be to use those traditional slogans and actions to which the American people have become accustomed and which, at the same time, can move them forward to take their place in the struggle against capital. Everything must be done to stimulate the tendency to direct action, the willingness of the American to take matters directly into his own hands and to solve problems in the open. Precisely at this time would it be incorrect to develop parliamentary illusions concerning the formation of a Farmer-Labor Party in order to tear the workers from the bourgeoisie and to place them on the road to the struggle for power. It is not via parliamentary action and electioneering that the struggle for power will take place in this country. Contrary to the propaganda spread by the liberals, the socialists, and the Stalinists, there is little tradition of parliamentarism among the mass of

proletarians in America. In fact, the best way to place the workers under the control of the capitalists would be to place their activities on a parliamentary basis. This does not mean, of course, that communists, under certain circumstances, cannot engage in election campaigns, but the relative insignificance of these campaigns must be set forth clearly in the present transitional period.

Now what are the forms of direct action to which the masses of Americans are accustomed? They are the strike, the boycott, the lynching. In the past, none of these threatened the State nor showed the formation of class against class. The task of the communists is to take such a legal and traditional weapon as the strike and to make of it a weapon that can change the struggle of the workers from the defense to an offense against the entire system. This can be done in the present critical situation in which the country and the workers find themselves by the communists' raising the slogan of the "General Strike." Certainly the conditions of the workers call emphatically for such drastic action as the general strike. Certainly the masses of workers are ready to listen to such a call. They will not be hesitant, for the general strike appears as merely a variation of a traditional weapon which they have always used, although, when it is in the form of a general strike, the strike changes its character from a reformist to a revolutionary weapon.

It is unwise to attempt to base communist strategy in reaching the American unemployed on lengthy explanations that the capitalist system is at fault. Of course, the Marxist laws of the workings of capitalism should be explained thoroughly. But, in the present period, matters can be simplified by showing the workers that unemployment is similar to an employers' lock-out of the workers from the factories, a situation with which they are familiar. Thus the problem of solving unemployment is a problem of smashing the lock-out of the employers against the workers from factories which the latter have produced. And the answer to the lock-out is the demand that the factories be opened to the unemployed and the warehouses opened to the hungry.

The present period, then, is pre-eminently one in which the slogan "General Strike for adequate unemployment insurance and to open the factories to the unemployed and the warehouses to the hungry" can be raised with maximum effect. Such a slogan will begin to raise the question of workers' control over production and the end of capitalism, or production for profit. The "General Strike" is a slogan that more than anything else today can be used to line up the workers against the capitalists and the State, and to make them class conscious.

A rapid growth of the State is taking place at the present time, as part of the transition towards the open formation of classes. This growth of the

State has placed squarely before the communists the question: What shall be our attitude towards this extension, especially in such matters as unemployment projects to provide work relief? The Stalinists and, with them, the socialists have developed the following line: 1. We want work on State jobs. 2. The projects by the State are, on the whole, good and constructive ones. We demand that the State continue these projects permanently so long as there are unemployed to take care of. 3. We are not particular if either the unskilled or the professionals do not get the prevailing rate of pay . . . so long as we are put back to work.

Such a policy is wholly at variance with the American tradition of looking away from the State (a tradition totally unlike that of the Germans). This State orientation of the reformists and centrists will help only to pave the way for fascism. The workers must advocate collectivism, but not capitalist collectivism. It is not their job to build up the State apparatus for the capitalist class and to demand to become permanent hangers on of the State, through project work-relief jobs or other ignominious occupations.

The communist is in fact negating his own principles when he demands any jobs under capitalism, since all work under the present system can tend only to weaken the proletariat and to strengthen the bourgeoisie and with it, the capitalist State. We can understand a communist's demanding unemployment insurance, as a method for the workers to receive again a portion of what they have produced and to which they may feel themselves entitled. But to demand a job is for the wage-slave to demand a perpetuation of his slavery. To demand a permanent extension of the project system is to make the workers live as hangers-on of the State. Actually, the A. F. of L. stated the traditional American worker's position more nearly than the socialists or Stalinists, when it declared the workers are not charity cases to be rehabilitated, when it demanded regular pay for work on the projects.

Another excellent slogan for the transition period between American classlessness and open class struggle is the cry: "Lynch the Lynchers of the Negroes and Poor Toilers!" The ordinary European, such as the German, would look with horror on such a slogan as one leading to anarchism, to disorder and to chaos. The German wants *"Ordnung und Diziplin,"* even when he is a communist. But it is time the communists broke from the Germanification of the movement and learned to speak American.

Lynching is something for every American communist to understand and not to scold. It has its roots in the democratic traditions of the country. It is the action of the mass itself which takes the law directly into its own hands. It shows a contempt for the regular legal process. It is something in which millions of Southerners and Westerners have taken part. It is

precisely in this period, when the masses are discontented, that we must tell them to look, not to the State or to the regular police or the courts or the law, for remedies, but to look only to themselves, to take matters into their own hands. In such a period communists must point out, not that the process of vengeance or of direct action of the masses in the street has been incorrect, but that the lynching has generally been in the wrong direction, that the masses must stop the lynching of the poor toilers and of the Negroes and must take action upon their real enemies, the wealthy employers and financiers.

It may be objected that the victim of the lynching is an individual and not a system. But the lynching of a judge who forecloses mortgages or of a ruthless capitalist may well lead to such clashes with law and order as to bring home to the masses the necessity of smashing the entire capitalist State machinery and taking over the power directly themselves. At any rate, the communists must come to the American workers, not with patented stock European formulae, but with the methods and customs which are native to the country and which are indeed their own. Originally, in the West, lynching developed because of the absence of a State apparatus and as a means by which the settler defended his own against bandits. But what was originally a classless instrument now easily can take on a class character and become part of precisely that sort of technique which will train the American workers to take to the streets on the way to power.

In this period, too, when the workers are in a transitional state, having not completely lost their old individualism of the nineteenth century nor quite taken on the European ideology of the class struggle, the process of maturing the American workers must be accelerated by the organization of the unorganized. It must be realized that the old liberal methods are out-moded, that only revolutionary methods will enable the workers to build militant industrial unions of any sort. In this period fascist germs appear, so that the period from classlessness to classfulness seems to be a period also bridging liberalism and fascism. Yet for the workers it must become a transition period from liberalism to the struggle for power. In this period, the American worker does not need to repeat all the parliamentary and opportunist errors of the worker of Europe. He need not go through the "Comedy of Errors" of the socialists and Stalinists. He is ready to follow the communists if they can show that they understand his problems and can perform the task of organization.

The organization of the unorganized, the building up of independent militant industrial unions, this is the transitional task of the moment in preparation for the storming of the bastille and the seizing of power. And he who does not engage to do the one will never be able to accomplish the other. The present period must be one of dress rehearsals for the future.

Let us sum up then: the strategy of the genuine communists in America in the present period will be:

1. To develop the direct action of the masses through raising the slogans: "General Strike," "Lynch the Lynchers of the Negroes and Poor Toilers," "Open the Factories to the Unemployed and the Warehouses to the Hungry," "Workers' Control over Production."

2. To build up the revolutionary mass organizations of the proletariat, particularly their independent militant industrial unions and mass defense groups.

3. To utilize every form possible by which to move the workers from the old liberal classless ideology to the communist ideology of class struggle.

4. To conduct a vigorous struggle against all the out-worn forms of European socialism or communism, the lack of initiative of the Germans, the lack of organization of the French, the idealization of the peasantry of the Russians, the parliamentarism of the English, and so forth.

Here, then, is a program which a truly American communist movement will not hesitate to adopt when the American proletariat has come of age and is ready to take its rightful place in the world struggle for power.

The victory of communism spells the end of all further conquest of power. Once the working class has established its firm control, the whole system of politics, of the rule of one individual over another, will disappear forever. The conquest of power, with all its laws, will be no more.

FINIS

INDEX

Abd El Krim, 1145
Abolition of Slavery, 130, 135, 137 40, 228
Abraham Lincoln (A J Beveridge), 137
Absolute Monarchy, 30, 48, 84 n, 84 5, 90, 200, 735, aided by capitalists, 32
Abyssinian War, 581
Action Française, see *Ligue de l Action Française*
"*Action Libérale Populaire*" 558
Adams, John, 58, 71 75, 145
Adler, Friedrich, 952, 934
Administration, definition of, 16
Adowa, defeat of Italy at, 581
Address and Provisional Rules of the International Workingmen's Association (K Marx), 398
Address to the Communist League (*March 1050*) (K Marx), 219
Address to Working Classes (R Owen), 670
Africa, 299 507, 581, 1063 4
Age of Reason (Thomas Paine), 95
Agricultural Administration Act, 715
Alaska, 712
Albania, 580
Albrecht, 1013 n
Alcott, Louise, 386 n
Alexander II, 411, 783
Alexeiev, General, 874 5, 869
Alien Acts, 75
All American Technological Society, 524
Allemane, 409
Allemanists, 298 9, 410
Allison 1107
'All Power to the Soviets, 844, 848, 866, 868 9, 1092
All Russian Conference, 848
All Russian Council of Trade Unions, 980, 1025
All Russian Trade Unions, 895
Alsace Lorraine, 401, 465, 607, 634
Amalgamated Clothing Workers, 287 n, 317, 1133
"Amalgamation or Annihilation," 318, 1111
amalgams, 1028, 1087
America and the Americans (P Collier), 189
America Conquers Britain (L Denny), 496
America Faces the Future (C A Beard), 700
American Doctrine of Judicial Supremacy (C G Haines), 77
American Engineering Society, 525
American Experiment (M J Bonn), 81, 189, 753
American Fascistic Association and Order of Black Shirts, 684
American Federation of Labor (A F of L), 262, 275 ff, 289, 302, 313, 315-9, 322-4, 329, 333, 414, 442, 456 7, 477, 479, 538, 571 3, 705, 814, 1072, 1100, 1103, 1110 1, 1115 7, 1139, membership, 274 n, 283, 286, 290, struggle for eight hour day, 276 7; structure, 278, 317, class collaboration, 278, 282, 286 7, 316, Jim Crowism, 278, political activity, 279 80, 283, 322, bureaucracy, 282 3, 288, anti Socialist, 276, 279, 283, 322, strike policy, 278, 282, 286, racketeering and gangsterism in, 287 8, craftunionism, 288, 324, anti Communist, 288, industrial unionism, 290 2, 316 7, role in I F T U, 433-4
American Federation of Labor (L L Lorwin), 275, 279, 280, 288, 289, 570
American Historical Review, 52
Americanism, 353 ff, 1157 n, 1164 6
American Journal of Psychology, 156
American Labor Alliance, 1109
American Labor Movement (S Gompers), 275, 278, 282, 284
American Labor Party (New York), 1073
American Labor Union, 279, 314
American Legion, 685 6, 1109
American Party ("Know Nothing Party'), 718
American Philosophy of Equality (T V Smith), 52
American Political Ideas (C E Merriam), 188
American railway strike, 275, 278, 281, 419
American Railway Union, 415
American Revolution, 28, 41, 49, 51 83, 95, 99, 113, 115, 121, 122 n, 134, 140, 157, 227, 273, 381, 1090, 1159 60 1161 2, 1167, causes of, 62 3 French aid to, 65, 87, role of Congress, 65 size and treatment of armies in, 65, role of Negroes, 65 6, class character of, 66 ff
American Rhythm (Mary Austin), 734
America Set Free (H A Keyserling), 638
America's Siberian Adventure (Major General Wm S Graves) 890
Ami du Peuple, 667
Amsterdam, 30, 33, 433
Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions, 970, 949
Anabaptists, 36, 38 n, German, 36 n, 150, 205, 540 2, 736 7, English, 738, *see also* English Civil Wars
Anarchism, 19 20, 84, 103, 164, 171, 201 2, 205 66, 312, 362, Liberal, 205 36, 241 2, Communist, 205, 213, 232 3, 236, 239 66, 299, English 205-8, 214, 239, German, 208-12, 217, 239 40; French, 213 ff, 219-20, 239 ff, 258, 296 7, 299 300, 422, American, 225-36, 239, 260-3, Collectivist, 239 52, mass base of, 239-41, rises in backward

countries, 239, 241-2; Italian, 241, 243-5, 259, 265, 422; Spanish, 241, 243-5, 258, 265-6; Balkan, 241; Latin-American, 241, 259; Indian, 241; Chinese, 241; Portuguese, 243; views on Capitalism of, 247-8; theory of classes; 250, 256; decline of, 253 ff; repudiates Commune, 254; attitude towards State, 245, 247-8; opposes political party of workers, 256; attitude towards unions, 258; opposes proletarian dictatorship, 263-5, gives rise to Syndicalism, 295; *see also* Bakunin, Kropotkin, Libertarianism, Mutualism
Anarchism (Zenker), 249, 255
Anarchism and Other Essays (Emma Goldman), 229
"Anarchistic Socialism," 233-4
Anarchist International, 254, 262, 402
Anarchist Morality (Kropotkin), 258
Anarcho-Syndicalism, 205, 233, 241, 250, 259, 312, 331-2, 441; French, 299 ff; concept of union as party, 300; sabotage policy, 300; general strike policy, 300, strike theories, 302, theory of general political strike, 303-5, Spanish, 308 10, 422; opposes proletarian dictatorship, 328, "Berlin" International of, 332
Ancient Society (Lewis Morgan), 734
Anderson, 753
André, Serge, 663
Andrews, Stephen Pearl, 226
Anglican Church, 41 n, 87 n
Anglo-Russian Trade Union Unity Committee, 479, 970, 978-81, 1096
Anschluss, 620, 634
anti-Semitism, 910 n; Austrian, 613; German, 613-4, 616, 633-4, 639, 642-3, 645, 649, English, 637, 669; French, 661; American, 683-5, 688, 698; Russian, 890; Hungarian, 912-3, 915
Anti-Trust Acts, 700
Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans (Mrs. Child), 139
Appeal of one half the Human Race, Women (W. Thompson), 389
Applied Sociology (L. F. Ward), 190
Aquinas, St. Thomas, 43, 45, 540
Arabia, 1064
Aragona, D', 949
"Arbeit und Brot," 617
arbitration: United States, 182, 273, 290-1; Fascist, 577
Archangel, 888
Argentina, 498: general strike in, 902
Armed Intervention in Russia (W. P. and Z. K. Coates), 886, 887, 890
Armée Nouvelle (J. Jaurès), 464
Armenia, 851, 870, 885
Arthuys, 663
Articles of Confederation, 72
Artisans and Machinery (Gaskell), 110
Asia, 160, 166 n, 299, 491, 493, 498-501, 507, 630, 937, 947
Asquith, 176
assignats, 104, 738
Asturias insurrection, 309-10
Atheism, 38, 39 n, 96 n, 103; Anarchist, 245, 250
Athenian City State, 16 n
Atlantic Ocean, 25, 98, 200, 541
Atomists, 348
Auer, 918
Augustine, 644
Austerlitz, 112
Austin, John, 125
Australia, 166 n, 497, 950, 1146
Australian ballot, 188
Austria, 98, 107, 112, 151, 157, 162-3, 260, 400, 458-9, 469, 475, 553, 556, 627, 634, 640, 654-9, 748, 851, 901, 914-5; proletariat of, 242, condition of, 499, 654; rise of Fascism in, 499, 577, 654-61, 675-6, 1074, revolutionary movement, 574; revolution of 1848, 748, trade unions, 951; 1934 events in, 1094; *see also* Socialism, Bonapartism, anti Semitism
Austrian Netherlands, 86 n, 107; *see also* Belgium
Austro-Hungarian Empire, 400, 607, 654, 906
autarchy, 621 ff, 669, 700, 715
Autobiography (J. S. Mill), 177
Autumn (H. Thoreau), 227
Avanguardia, 599
Avanti, 583
Avignon, 31, 85
Axelrod, 795, 924, 1095
Azerbaijan, 1091

Babœuf, 103, 243, 378, 394, 426, 738-42, 744, 757 8, 776, 935, leads communist uprising, 107, is program, 740
Babylonian Captivity, 31, 85
Bacon, Francis, 43, 45 n, 52
Bacon's rebellion, 1162
Baden, 404, 752
Bai Sung Gee, 1008
Bakunin, 242 ff, 250, 254, 258 61, 263 n, 401-3, 410 1, 460, 758, 762, 1104; in First International, 243, 250, 401-2; his Russian bias, 243; atheism of, 245-6; Engel's analysis of, 247
Bakuninism, 248-9, 296, 302, 309
Balabanova, Angelica, 934
Balfour, 176
Balilla, 599
Balkan Revolutionary Socialist Federation, 933
Balkans (Balkan States), 469, 627; proletariat of, 241-2; Anarchism in, 241; Marxist strategy in, 459, War position of Socialists in, 466
Ball, John, 735
Ballam, J. J., 1107, 1109
Baltic, 29, 624, 628, 837, 887
Baltic Provinces, 467, 634, 873, 887
Baltimore, Lord, 52, 53 n
Barbès, 742, 760
Barcelona, 259 n, 306; Commune, 253
Barras, 738; Directorate of, 107

Bashkirs, 160
Batavian Republic, 111
Batista, 1072 n
Batoum, 969
Batum-Baku railway, 888
Bauer, 744
Bavaria, 553, 618-9, 640, 657; communist uprising in, 474-5, 654, 914; Soviet, 918, 924; Constituent Assembly, 918
Bax, E. Belfort, 408
Beal, Fred, 1115
Beard, Charles A., 699-700
Beard, Charles and Mary, 69
Beast of Property (J. Most), 260, 261
Bebel, August, 402 n, 406, 407 n, 426, 464-5, 466 n, 471 n; patriotism, 464
Bedacht, 1101
Beginnings of Marxian Socialism in France (S. Bernstein), 577
Belgium, 105, 107, 399-400, 454, 470, 478; general strikes in, 306, 327
Bellamy, Edward, 698
Bellers, John, 37, 38 n
Benbow, William, 272
Benezet, 61
Bentham, Jeremiah, 45 n, 121, 125-6, 127 n, 154, 164, 206-8, 257, 389, 547
Berberet, 297-8
Berger, Victor, 456
Bergson, Henri, 180, 183, 357-8, 584, 665
Berkman, Alexander, 261, 263 n
Berlin, 159, 474, 613, 640, 748, 751, 755, 917, 1054; socialist government in, 619; uprisings, 923-4; Kapp putsch in, 926-7
"Berlin" International, 332
Bermont, General, 887
Berne, 467, 477-8, 931
Bernstein, Eduard, 306, 380, 421 ff, 440, 801, 1104; revises Marx, 422 ff; idealizes petty-bourgeoisie, 423; defends liberalism, 424; patriotism, 426, 916
Beslay, 772
Bessarabia, 888, 1064
Beyond Good and Evil (F. W. Nietzsche), 652
Bezukov monastery, 817
Bianchi, 949
Birmingham School, 176
Bismarck, 174, 397, 401, 405, 454, 469-70, 553-5, 585, 765, 767, 773, 789; declares Socialism illegal, 407
Bismarck and State Socialism (W. H. Dawson), 555
Black Hundreds, 814, 824
Black Legion, 685, 1147
Black Reconstruction (W. E. B. Dubois), 139, 141
Black Sea, 160, 818, 888, 902
Black Shirts, *see* American Fascistic Association and Order of Black Shirts, Fascism, Fascists
Blackstone, 45-6, 49 n
Blanc, Louis, 87 n, 165, 171, 215, 220, 434, 686, 703, 757, 759-60, 768
Blanqui, Auguste, 243, 249, 426, 742, 757-61, 764-7, 776; putsch of 1839, 759; nationalism, 761
Blanquism, 296, 400, 411, 472, 568, 584, 871
Blanquists, 251, 401, 409-10, 760-2, 769; 771; nationalism, 761; communist putsch of, 764
Bloch, J., 438 n
Blok, 838
Blue-shirts, 662
Blum, Léon, 661, 1098
Boccaccio, 24
Bodin, Jean, 546
Bohemia, 150, 243, 404, 460, 556, 748-9, 913, 1060
Bolivia, 496
Bologna, 589; insurrection, 581
Bolshevik Theory (R. W. Postgate), 935
Bolsheviks, 263-5, 412, 428-9, 451, 467, 470, 776 ff, 784, 968; differences with Mensheviks, 428, 784, 793 ff, 824-8, 830; oppose War, 466; dominate soviets, 470, 864, 869; role in 1905 Revolution, 805 ff, 819-21, 822-5; their theory of democratic-dictatorship of the workers and peasants, 472, 806 ff, 865, 869, Congress of 1905, 811; role in 1917 Revolution, 836, 840, 842 ff; win trade unions, 854, 856; persecuted by Kerensky, 856; call general strike in Moscow, 861; 868; boycott Pre-Parliament, 864, 869-70; establish dictatorship of proletariat, 878; program for self-determination of nationalities, 885, *see also* Social Democratic Labor Party, Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin
Bolshevism, Fascism and Democracy (F. Nitti), 578, 583
Bolshevism at a Deadlock (K. Kautsky), 473
Bolshevism in Hungary (A. Kaas and F. de Lazarovics), 907, 908
Bolte, 403 n
Bomba, King, 749
Bonapartism, 16, 108-11, 178, 676; German, 619, 673; Austrian, 655, 673; French, 673; English, 673; American, 673, 713-5; intermediate stage to fascism, 673; technique of, 674, Soviet, 1036-40
Bonapartism (H. A. L. Fisher), 105
Boncour, 662
Bonomi, 587, 673
Borchart, Julian, 936
Bordeaux, 766
Bordigha, 1036
Bordiguists, 1095
Born, 404
Borodin (Grusenberg, Berg), 993-4 1000
Boston Magazine, 71
Boulanger, 470
Bourbonism, 111, 381
bourgeoisie, 113-5, 169, 201-2, 213-4, 220, 373; turns to fascism, 202; democratic, 459
Bourgeois Revolution (G. Plechanov), 104
Bourses du Travail (Labor Exchanges), 297
Boxer War (1900), 986
Bracton's Note Book, 33
Brandler, 957, 976

Brantıng, 478
Bray, John Francis, 389, 391-2
Brazil, 496, 498
Breshko Breshkovskaia, 845
Breslau uprising, 925
Brest Litovsk, 872-3, 1084; Peace Treaty of, 873, 876-7, 886
Brest regiment, 818
Brest strike, 1080
Brewers Union, 317
Briand, 300, 584, 630, 662; breaks strike, 300
Bright, John, 126-7, 135, 174-6, 216, 279
Brisbane, 383, 386
Brissot, 87 n
British Co-operative Movement (H. W. Laidler), 451
British Fascists, 669
British General Strike and the General Betrayal (John Pepper), 980
British Grand Lodge, 101 n
British Trade and Industry, Past and Future (G D. H. Cole), 668
British Union of Fascists (Blackshirts), 669-70
Brook Farm Colony, 386
"Brotherhood of Labor," 404
Brousse, Paul, 254, 297, 409
Broussists, 297-8, 410
Browder, 1073, 1121, 1168
Brown, Captain John, 140, 228; raid, 1162
Brown Decades (J. Mumford), 726
Brown Shirts, *see* National Socialist German Workers Party
Bruening, 619, 664, 673, 674 n
Bryan, William Jennings, 188
Buch, Vera, 330, 1115, 1116 n
Bucharin, Nicolai, 872, 979, 971 2, 1002-3, 1021, 1026, 1029, 1088, 1112, opposes united fronts, 975 n
Buckle, 174
Budapest, 433, 901, 915-6
Budenny, 889
Buick Motor Company, 524
Bulgaria, 574, 977; trade unions, 949, 951
Bulletin No. 588 (U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics), 487
Bulletin No. 6 (U. S. Food Administration), 518
"Bull Moose," 708
Bulygin Duma, 812 n, 820, 945
Buonarotti, 394, 741
Burke, A, 70 n
Burke, Edmund, 95, 120-2, 206 n, 207
Burke (J. Morley), 121 n
Burns, J, 408
Butler, Major General Smedley D., 685

Caballero, 1082
Cabet, 386, 742
Cade, Jack, 735
Cadiz, 259 n
Cairnes, 135
Caldwell, Joseph, 1101
Calles, 1077
Calvin, 30-1, 151, 541-2
Calvinism, 30-1, 33
Camelots du Roi, 660-1
Cameron, 141
Campagna, Province of, 601
Campo, peace of, 107
Canada, 86, 497, 1146; trade unions, 319, 951; role of A. F. of L. in, 434; debt to United States, 494 n
Cannon, James P, 984, 1111-2, 1115 n
Canton, 993-4, 997, 1000-1, 1005; Sun Yat-sen's government, 989; English massacre at, 997; boycotts British goods, 999; Soviet, 1012; nineteenth Route Army, 1016
Capital (Karl Marx), 83, 161, 260, 344, 363, 365, 489, 784; summary of, 365-72; approved by First International, 400
Capital Goods Fallacy (Coyle), 522
Capitalism, 15, 156, 183, 185, 199, 205, 213, 220-1, 239-40, 245-6, 253, 259, 270, 303, 329, 352, 354, 362, 375, 378, 380, 420, 432, 440, 477-8, 503, 540-2, 547, 622, 873; early alliances, 28, 33, French, 84 ff, 107-11, 161, 169, 215-6, 239, 303, American, 133, 135-6, 169, 261, 272, 312, 340 n, 343, 699, 726, 1113, German, 149-51, 161, 208, 605; Polish, 159; Italian, 161-2, 265, 601-2, English, 161, 169 70, 172, 177, 206, 216, 272, 338, 497 8, 540, 666, world, 214, 303, 465, 485 ff; money base of, 221-2; Anarchist views of, 247 8; Russian, 248, 428, 776 ff, 883-4; imperialist era of, 253, 476 7, 808, *see also* Imperialism; State, 292, 342, 431, 556, 653-4, 576, 601-2, 609, 697, 702, 708 9, 726, 883, 892, 1136 n; law of uneven development of, 300, 491, 808, 978, 1155; contradictions of, 337 ff, 364, 443, 462, 480, 485 ff, 507, 533-4, 573, 625, 940, 1099 n, law of falling rate of profit, 339, 370-1, augments pauperism, 339, 344; controls means of production, 223, 339, ruins petty-bourgeoisie, 339-40, 420, internationalizes markets, 340; monopoly, 340 1, competition under, 341, 391, cyclical crises of, 342, 344 5, 370, 423, 485 ff, Marx's analysis of, 365 ff; decline of, 461, 567 ff, 808; post-War, 478 9, 1083; chronic crisis of, 485 ff; stabilization of, 486, 493, 929; Japanese, 499-502; destructiveness of, 504-22; role of colonies under, 506-7; waste under, 507, 522 ff, 695-7; role of war under, 516-8, criminality, 526 ff, role of religion, 827; role of science, 827, *see also* imperialism
Capitalism and Its Culture (J Davis), 525
Capone, Al, 184, 525
Carbonari, 163, 742, 753-4, 757
Cardenas, President, 1077
Carl Schurz Report, 144
Carlson, General, 52
Carlyle, Thomas, 129 n, 174, 177, 382, 547-9, 562, 585 n, 586, 671; idealized feudalism, 547; forerunner of Fascism, 548
Carlyle and Mill (E. Neff), 547, 548
Carney, 1106
Carnot, 107, 888

cartels, 340-1, 423, 493, 495, 506, 534; defined, 341 n; Italian, 601; German, 605-6, 608-9.
Cartels, Combines and Trusts in Post-War Germany (R. K. Michels), 606
Carthegena, Commune of 1873 in, 249, 253
Case for Compulsory Military Service (G. G. Coulton), 141, 463, 464
Castelar, Don Emelio, 397
Castelnau, General, 662
Catherine the Second, 157
Catholic Centrist Party (Germany), 558, 619-20, 641
Catholic Church, 25-8, 30-1, 34, 44, 85 n, 101 n, 165, 200-1, 349, 437, 552 ff, 734, 736-7; material basis of, 26-7; capitalist alliance with, 28; French, 85; Italian, 542-3, 592; anti-Liberalism, 552; American, 558 n; English, 31, 560-1; German, 639-42
Catholic Socialism (F. Nitti), 552, 553, 556
Cato, 1163
Caution and Warning to Great Britain, etc. (A. Benezet), 61
Cavaignac, General, 758 n
Cavaignac, Godefrey, 758
Cavour, 397
Central America, 493; anarchism in, 20
Centrism, 437, 447, 467, 471-2, 474 ff, 569, 582-3, 589, 608, 1093-9; in pre-War Socialist movement, 420 ff; Trotsky, 428-9, 1096-9; hostility to Soviet Union of, 473-4; in Third International, 932, 935, 938, 941-2, 957, 1040
Cespedes, De, 1068
Chaikovsky, 845
Challenge to Defeat (W. H. Hale), 638
Chamberlain, H. S., 632-4, 637, 644
Chambord, Count de, 558
Champs de Mars, 97 n
Changsha, *coup d'état* of Left Kuomintang in, 1011
Chang Tso-lin, 1015
Channing, William Henry, 386 n
Chapci, 756, 1016
Charlemagne, 109
Charles I, 39, 43, 548
Charles X, 112
Charles Sumner (G. H. Haynes), 138
Charter of Labor (Italy), 596
Chartism, 170-3, 210, 214, 272, 337, 393-4, 547, 549-50, 749; demands of, 170-1, 405
Chartism (T. Carlyle), 548
Chart No. 239 (National Industrial Conference Board), 491
Chase National Bank Loan to Cuba, 1068
Chastellux, 65
Chaumette, 103, 1037
Cheidze, 845
Che-ka, 875
Chen Du-siu, 1004, 1008, 1011
Cheney, O. H., 341
Chernov, 845
Chiang Kai-shek, 997-1002, 1004-9, 1014-6, 1061, 1077 n; massacres workers, 986; Canton *coup d'état*, 1000-1, 1008; Shanghai *coup d'état*, 1004, 1008; Northern Expedition, 1005-7; campaigns against peasant soviets, 1015; does not resist Japan, 1015-6
Chicago, 80 n, 132, 261-2, 277, 413, 530-1
Chicago City Council Commission on Crime, Report of, 530
Chicago Riots (H. M. Hyndman), 414
Chicago Weekly, 145
Chicherin, 996
Chief Tasks of Our Time (V. I. Lenin), 883
Child of the Amazons (M. Eastman), 1103
Chile, 496
China, 166 n, 198, 426, 493, 496, 937, 989, 1056, 1064; proletariat of, 241-2, 990, 1002-3, 1005; Anarchism in, 241; world imperialism in, 498, 501-2, 986-7, 990, 1014-6, 1074, 1146; anti-Japanese boycott, 500; revolutionary movement, 501-2, 574, 631; *see also* Chinese Revolution; Nationalist Government, 986, 1006-7, 1014; industrialization, 990; peasantry, 990-1, 1002-3; peasant unions, 995, 1005, 1010; trade unions, 994-5, 999, 1010; Wu-Han government, 1006-10; peasant soviets, 1015, 1074
Chinese Eastern Railway, 992, 1015
Chinese Revolution, 978, 986-1016, 1047-8; of 1911, 989
Chinese Revolution (A. N. Holcombe), 992, 993, 998, 1000, 1006
Chinese Turkestan, 502
Chingarov, 780
Chitarov, 1007, 1010
Christian, Mr., 685
Christian Socialism in England (A. V. Woodward), 550
Christian Socialist Party (Austria), 613
Christian Social Union, 550
Christiana, 433
Cisalpine Republic, 111
City-Manager plan, 709-12
City of Boston Document No. 66, 394
Civil War (United States), 57, 59, 75, 77, 127, 129, 133, 135, 139 ff, 186, 228, 230, 243, 261, 273, 413, 485, 724, 1130; role of petty-bourgeoisie, 114; strikes during, 143; position of Marx on, 459
Clark, Dr., 394
Classical School, 182, 347, 366, 372
Class Struggle, 613, 650, 684, 1096, 1100, 1106
Class Struggles in France (Karl Marx), 216, 749, 750, 755
Clausewitz, General von, 516
Clay, Henry, 136
Clemenceau, 587
Clemenceau (H. M. Hyndman), 454
Clootz, 104, 741, 1037
Cobbett, William, 124
Cobden, 126-7, 216, 279
Code de la Nature ou le Veritable Esprit de Ses Loix (Morelly), 739
Code Napoléon, 111, 158
Coeur d'Alene strike, 275 n

Cohen, 1101
Coke, 33 n
Cole, G. D. H., 562, 666-8
Coleridge, 174, 549
Collected Works (T. Hobbes), 544
(V. I. Lenin), 791, 792, 793, 794, 848, 850, 867
College of Electors, 72
Colombina, 949
Colonial Period (E. B. Andrews), 52
Colonies and Dependencies (H. M. Hyndman), 442
Colorado, 314
Columbia University, role in World War of, 520-1
Comintern, *see* Third International
"Comité Révolutionaire Central," 409 n
Commentaries of the Laws of England (Wm. Blackstone), 45 n, 49 n, 120 n
Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles the First (B. Disraeli), 548
Commentary on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (N. K. Smith), 153
Commercial Policy in the French Revolution (F. L. Nussbaum), 111
Commission plan, 709-42
Committee of Vigilantes, 765
Committees of Correspondence, 67, 753-4
Committees of Public Safety (Committees of Safety and Public Welfare), 102, 103 n, 157, 769, 772; regulations against workers, 738
Commonwealth, 39, 99
Commonwealth of Oceana (Harrington), 39
Communism, 19-20, 84, 103-4, 106-7, 164, 169, 171, 177, 180, 196, 202, 210, 214, 216-7, 222, 232-5, 241, 243, 249, 347, 353, 374, 376, 378 80, 437, 459, 592, 733 ff; use of Liberal slogans in, 198 9; Marxian (*see* Marxism); primitive, 733-4, in Middle Ages, 734-8; fore-runners of proletarian, 738 ff, program of, 1126; *see also* First International, Third International, Communist League, Bolsheviks
Communism and the Alternative (A. J. Penty), 561, 562
Communism in Central Europe in the Time of the Reformation (K. Kautsky), 735
Communist, 1044, 1070, 1072, 1107
Communist International, *see* Third International
Communist International, 977
Communist International Answers the I. L. P., 982
Communist Labor, 1107
Communist Labor Educational Union, 396
Communist Labor Party (Germany), 927, 952, 954-5; anti-parliamentarianism, 944
Communist Labor Party (United States), 1106-9
Communist Labor Party-Spartacus Union, 923
Communist League, 214, 217, 262, 378, 396, 403, 419, 745-6, 748, 752, 1129-30; strategy of permanent revolution, 1129
Communist League of America, 1036 n, 1111
Communist League of Struggle, 613 n, 1116 n
Communist Manifesto (Marx and Engels), 373, 374, 378, 396, 397, 407, 440; analysis of, 745-7
Communist Party and Parliamentarism, 944
Communist Party (Belgium), 1077
(Bulgaria), 935
(Catalonia), fuses with Socialist Party, 1079 n
(China), 994 ff, 1070; enters Kuomintang, 994, 996; growth of, 999; subordinated to Kuomintang, 1000-1, 1003; participates in government, 1096, 1010; seizes power in Shanghai, 1007; sets up Soviet in Canton, 1012; disintegration of, 1014; calls for struggle against Japan, 1077; policy of "bloc of four classes," 1073
(Cuba), 1067-72; program, 1069-70; tool of American imperialism, 1070-1
(Czecho-Slovakia), patriotism of, 1077
(Denmark), must support government, 1077
(France), 901, 1061-2; subservience to French imperialism, 661, 664, 1079; demands sanctions against Italy, 1065; Common Front with Socialist Party, 1078-9, votes war budgets, 1079; checks strikes, 1081; nationalism, 1079, 1168
(Germany), 319, 321, 608, 612, 614, 629, 923, 927-8, 936, 955, 1047-58, 1061; 1921 insurrection of, 975, failure in 1923, 976-7; destroyed, 1047-8; policy of united front "from below," 1049 ff; attacks Socialists, 1050, 1054; supports fascists, 1052-4; *see also* Spartacists, Communist Labor Party, Communist Labor Party-Spartacus Union
(Great Britain), 318, 970-1, 979, 981, 995, demands sanctions, 1065; must support Labor Party, 1077
(Holland), 935
(Hungary), 910; inexperience, 910; opportunism, 910; agrarian policy, 910, 912 3; military policy, 913-4; joins Third International, 935
(Italy), 265, 589-90
(Jugo-Slavia), 1077
(Mexico), supports Cardenas, 1077
(Norway), must support government, 1077
(Poland), 1077
(Rumania), 1077
(Russia), 307, 377, 574, 893, 903, 1027, 1036; Tenth Congress (1921), 880; Workers Opposition in, 895-7; Fifteenth Congress (1927), 1007; role in Chinese Revolution, 1013; bureaucratization, 1018, composition of, 1019
(Spain), supports Caballero, 1082
(Sweden), must support government, 1077
(United States), 291, 330, 691, 725, 966, 968, 1102-3, 1114; subservience to Soviet diplomacy of, 686; unemployment program, 704-7, 1072 n, 1118; builds paper soviets, 945; advocates Labor Party, 982-5, 1120; allies with Roosevelt, 1042, 1070-3,

Communist Party (United States)—*Cont.* 1119; subservience to American imperialism, 1070-1; composition of, 1100 ff, 1113-4, Third Period policies, 1116-7; *see also* Workers Party of America, Workers (Communist) Party
Communist Party U. S. A. (Majority Group), 1112
Communist Policy in Great Britain, 982
Communist Review, 948
Communist University for the Toilers of the Orient, 994
Communist Workers Educational Society, 744
Communist Youth League (Russia), 1027
company unions, 285, 316, 342, 573, 579, 595, 722, 1072
Complete Works (Abraham Lincoln), 136, 137, 138
(F. W. Nietzsche), 635, 636, 637, 652
(R W Emerson), 128, 129, 131
comporadores, 991, 1003
Comte and Mill (T. Whittaker), 181
Comte, Auguste, 177 83, 190, 358, 377 n, 382, 665, 744
Comte, Mill and Spencer (J Watson), 180
Concept of Equality in the Writings of Rousseau, Bentham, and Kant (Williams), 154
Concord School, 129, 131, 386
Condition of the Workingclass in England in 1844 (Friedrich Engels), 122
Confédération Général du Travail (C G T), 299, 308
Confederation of Labor (Italy), 582
Conference for Progressive Labor Action, 982 4, 1112
Confessions of Frederick the Great, 514, 640, 644
Confucius, 987, 1015, 1146
Congress for Progressive Political Action, 286
Congress of Seville, 259 n
Conquest—America's Painless Imperialism (J Carter), 722
Conquest of Bread (Kropotkin), 258
Consequences of the War to Great Britain (F W Hirst), 513
Conservative Party, 175-6
Considerant, 256 n
Considerations on the Order of Cincinnatus (Mirabeau), 70
Constantinople, 851
Constituent Assembly, 569, 804, 812, 819, 860, 864, 866, 871 n, 881 n; disbanded by Bolsheviks, 876
Constitution of the United States, 72 ff, 81, 130, 138, 145, 713-4, 722
Constitutional Convention, 68, 69 n, 71, 74, 77
Consulate, 107 10, 557
Contemporary American Thought (P T. Homan), 695
Contemporary Social Movements (J. Davis), 378, 1027
Continental Army, 65-7
Continental Congress, 67, 69, 71, 80, 1090
Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (Karl Marx), 49, 353, 363
Convention, 95, 99, 103-4, 106, 111, 240, 1090
co-operatives, 164, 171, 220, 222, 224, 241, 257, 269, 272-3, 295-6, 310, 378, 384, 386, 388-90, 400, 406, 424-5, 451, 551, 554, 570, 598, 611, 655-6, 761, 876-7, 892, 1019, 1028-9, 1035, 1043
Copernicus, 24
Corday, Charlotte, 102
Corey, Lewis (Louis C Fraina), 1100-1, 1107
Corn Laws, 173, 175
Cornwallis, 112 n
Correspondence of Marx and Engels, 158, 160, 224, 248, 347, 402, 403, 405, 407, 412, 434, 438, 439, 441, 462, 465, 466, 471, 730, 1156
Corsican A Diary of Napoleon's Life in His Own Words (R M Johnston, ed), 110
Cost of the War to Russia (A. F Meyendorff), 835
Coty, François, 662
Coughlin, Father, 683, 687 90, 701, 706, 728
Counter Reformation, 28
Country Church in the New World Order (E S de Brunner), 520
craft unionism, 279, 290, 299 300, 308
Creative Evolution (H Bergson), 358
Creel, George, 519
Creuzot, 772
Crimea, German intervention in, 878
Crimean War, 127, 165, 243, 248, 459, 461 n, 777, 779, 1130
Criminal Statistics in Iowa (C N Burrows), 529
Criminal Syndicalist laws, 201, 327, 331, 430, 722
Critique of Practical Reason (I Kant), 153, 154
Critique of Pure Reason (I Kant), 152
Croatia, 460, 580
Croix de Feu, 663-4
Cromwell, Oliver 32, 36, 38 n, 39 ff, 51 2, 65, 90, 95 n, 547, 671, 1089
Cromwell and Communism (E Bernstein), 36
Cromwell's Army (C H Firth), 32
Crowder, General, 1068
Crusaders for Economic Liberty, 685
Crusades, 27, 200
Crusoe, Robinson, 64
Cuba, 136, 493, 496, 707, wages, 1068, general strike, 1068, trade unions, 1068-9
Cuban Revolution, 574, 1067-72
Cuno, Theodore, 247
Currency Question (J Gray), 389
Current History, 603, 604
Czecho Slovakia, 460, 628, 634; isolation of, 629, opposes Hapsburg restoration, 657

dahabiya, 347
Daily Worker, 1077, 1110, 1117
Dalmatia, 580
Dan, 845, 858
Dana, C A , 386 n

D'Annunzio, 580
Dante, 24
Danton, 95, 98, 101 n, 102-5, 109, 752, 888
Danton (R. Madelin), 102
Danubian Federation, 907
Darmstadt, 927
Darwin, 183-4
Daudet, Léon, 661-2
Dawes plan, 608, 611
Deak, 397
Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787 (J Madison), 69
Debs, Eugene Victor, 314, 415, 458, 1100-1
Decade of Woe and Hope (Dr J H Hertz), 890
Declaration from the Poor Oppressed People of England, 37
Declaration of Independence, 63, 68, 79, 80, 82, 134
Declaration of Independence (C Becker), 63, 79
Declaration of Rights of Man (G Jellinek), 81
Declaration of the Rights of Man, 96 7, 105, 209
Decline of American Capitalism (L Corey), 340
Decline of the Chartist Movement (P W Slosson), 123, 173, 393, 394, 395, 397, 752
Decline of the I W W (J S Gambs), 316, 326, 330
Decline of the West (O Spengler), 638
"Defence of the Realms Act," 195
"Defend the Soviet Union," 1046, 1062, 1075
Deism, 38, 41, 87, 103, 179 723
Dekabrists, 165, 411, 1160
DeLeon, Daniel, 314-5 323, 414, 435, 437, 442, 444-5, 464, 471, 1104
Dell, Floyd, 1105
Democracy, 15 6, 55 ff, 68, 181, 548
Democracy in America (A de Tocqueville), 78, 81
Democracy in Crisis (H. J Laski), 174
Democratic Party (Germany), 405
Democratic Party (United States), 193, 284, 291, 322, 717
Democritus, 348
Denikin, 874 5, 887 90
Denmark, 478, trade unions, 400
Descartes, 25, 30
Determinism, 179 n
Deutsch, 845
Development of Syndicalism in America (L Levine), 314
Dewey, John, 156 n, 358 9, 362, 517, 700-1, 1104
dialectical materialism, 154, 156 n, 183, 347, 350 3, 399, 437, 584
dictatorship, state forms of, 15 6
dictatorship of the proletariat, 15 6, 199, 215-6, 234, 256, 260, 264, 307, 319, 328, 347, 353, 360, 362, 373, 423-5, 445, 467, 480, 518, 831, 1082-3, 1091, 1126, 1129, 1135; a transitional regime, 374; initiates Socialism, 379-80; opposed by Second International, 471, 477-8; democratic rights under, 569, 1082-3; role of party under, 594; Third International and, 933, 942
Dictatorship of the Proletariat (K. Kautsky), 472
Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Elections for the Constituent Assembly (V. I. Lenin), 881
Digger Movement in the Days of the Commonwealth (L. H. Berens), 37
Diggers (True Levellers), 37 ff, 66, 738
Direct and Indirect Cost of the Great World War (E L. Bogart), 513
Directory, 106-7
Disappearance of the Small Landowner (A Johnson), 123
Discourse on the Arts and Sciences (J. J Rousseau), 93
Discourse on the Origin of Inequality (J J. Rousseau), 92
Discourses (Machiavelli), 1544
Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius (Machiavelli), 543
Disraeli, 81, 115, 547
Documentary History of American Industrial Society (John R Commons and Associates), 62
Doehnhardt, Marie, 209
Dollfuss, 654-5, 658 9, 673
Dombal, 985 n
Dominicans, 27
Don't Tread on Me (Wood, Coleman and Hays), 182
Dopolavoro, 599 600
Dorfman, J, 703 n
Dorr s rebellion, 1162
Douglas, 138
Douglass, Frederick, 139 n, 140 n
Draft Program of the Communist International (L D Trotsky), 879, 880
Dred Scott Case, 136, 138, 140
Dresden, 243, 404, 752, 755
Dreyfuss case, 661, 947
Dschugeli, 970
Duclos, M, 1079
Dugoni, 949
Dunne, William F, 1101
Du Pont, 1073 n
Du Principe Fédératif (P J Proudhon), 761
Duranty, Walter, 1027
Dusseldorf uprising, 927
Dwyer, Mary, 228

Earle, Governor, 1118
Early Greek Philosophy & Other Essays (F. W. Nietzsche), 636
Eastman, Max, 689, 1028, 1103-5
Easton, 52
Ebert, President, 926-7
Ecce Homo (F. W. Nietzsche), 637
Echo, 824
Economic and Social History of New England (Weeden), 53

Economic Foundations of Fascism (P. Einzig), 596
Economic Interpretation of History (F. Seligman), 359
Economic Interpretation of the Constitution (C. A. Beard), 72
Economic Origins of Jeffersonian Democracy (C. A. Beard), 130
Economics of Anarchy (D. D. Lum), 225
Economics of Rearmament (P. Einzig), 504, 506
Economists, 441-2, 787 ff
Economy of Abundance (S. Chase), 524, 525
Edward VIII, 498
Effects of the Great War Upon Agriculture (P. H. Hibbard), 518
Efficient Remedy for the Distress of Nations (J. Gray), 389
Ego and Its Own (M. Stirner), 209
Egypt, 1064
Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (Karl Marx), 361, 404, 733, 763
Einstein, 1004
Eisenach, 406
Eisner, Kurt, 918, 924
Ekaterinoslav, 812
Eleatics, 348
Elizabeth, Queen, 35, 527, 540
Elks, 753
Emancipation of Labor group, 793
Emancipation Proclamation, 142
Emden uprising, 925
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 128 n, 129, 131, 386 n
Émile or Education (J. J. Rousseau), 93
Encyclopedists, 87 n, 88, 93, 101, 165
Endicott, 52
End Poverty in California (Epic), 701-3
Engdahl, J. Louis, 1110
Engels, Friedrich, 19, 160, 183, 214, 217 n 247, 260 n, 276, 347, 365, 377-80, 393, 396, 402, 404, 407 n, 411, 412 n, 422, 424, 426, 434, 438-40, 441 n, 453, 458 ff, 469, 471, 489, 730, 733-4, 744-5, 752, 754-5, 758, 764, 776, 1040, 1125-6, 1131-2, 1157
Enghien, Duc d', 112
Engineers and the Price System (T. Veblen), 694
England, *see* Great Britain
English Civil Wars, 23-50, 51, 64, 66, 86, 94-5, 105, 121, 201, 205, 544, 738, 1089; religious character, 30; class character, 32; parties and sects, 38 n
English Democratic Ideas in the Seventeenth Century (G. P. Gooch), 38
"Enlighteners," 785, 1161
Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding (D. Hume), 119
Enquiry Concerning Political Justice (William Godwin), 206, 207
Enragés, 103, 205, 222, 243
Entente, 457, 849, 853, 871-2, 909; invades Russia, 876, 878
Epicurus, 348
Episcopal Church, 31
Erfurt Congress, 407
Espionage Law, 327
Essay Concerning Human Understanding (John Locke), 47
Essay for Imploying the Poor to Profit (John Bellers), 37
Essay on the Duties of Man (J. Mazzini), 164, 585
Estates, General, 96
Estonia, 574, 885, 887, 951, 977
Ethics (B. de Spinoza), 546
Ethics (Kropotkin), 258
Eupen, 606
Europe, 20, 93, 107, 111, 133, 173, 175-6, 191, 200-1, 213, 216-7, 222, 240, 254, 259-60, 306, 393, 398, 410, 426, 452, 469-70, 475, 478, 494, 518, 533, 537, 541, 571, 605, 627, 631-2, 719, 1154-6; post-War breakdown, 486, 490, 494 ff, 503; under Versailles system, 499, 622, 624, 948; rise of fascism in, 1074
European War and Socialism (H. W. Laidler), 452, 453
Evolutionary Socialism (E. Bernstein), 422
Executive Committee of the Communist International, 965 n, 976-8, 1013, 1048; right wing policy in Germany (1923), 976-7; ultra-left role in Estonia, Bulgaria, 977; allies with English trade union bureaucrats, 979; beheads Chinese Revolution, 986; "infallibility" of, 1074
Executive Committee of the Soviets, 841-2, 845-7, 859
experimentalism, 358

Fabian Society, 408, 435, 981; *see also* Socialism, Fabian
Facta, Luigi, 587, 590, 673
Far East, 494 n, 499-502
Farmer Labor Party (U. S. A.), 430
Farmers Alliance, 275, 687
Fasci, 584, 587
Fasci d'Azione Revolutionario, 583
Fascism, 18, 20, 165, 174, 177, 192, 195, 197-8, 202, 212, 265, 292, 329, 362-3, 378, 380, 393, 485-729, 1051, 1076, 1139; form of reformism, 18; Italian, 265, 303, 327, 493, 499, 575, 577, 580-604, *see also* Mussolini; Spanish, 310, 1082; German, 249 n, 493, 499, 525, 540, 575, 577, 605, 612 ff, 1074, *see also* Hitler; Austrian, 499, 654-61, 675-6, 1074; prototypes and forerunners of, 540-64, 666; English, 498, 548, 577, 665-72, 980; Polish, 575; Hungarian, 575; wipes out dissident parties, 576; role of party under, 593-4; supported by international finance capital, 598; idealizes youth, 600; proletariat under, 603-4, 680; peasantry under, 646-7; French, 561-5, 756, 1061, 1080; road to power of, 671 ff; American, 490, 676, 683 ff
Fascism (B. Mussolini), 584, 591
Fascism (J. S. Barnes), 593

Fascism and National Socialism (M T. Florinsky), 589, 590
Fascism and Social Revolution (R P. Dutt), 582, 588, 589
Fascism Fails Italy (H Quigley), 603, 604
Fascisme (Gorgolini), 661
Fascist Dictatorship (G Salvemini), 582
Fascist Home Front, 1077
Fascist Party (Italy), 594, 599; propaganda in United States, 683; *see also* Mussolini, Fascism, Fascisti, *Fasci*
Fascisti (Black Shirts), aided by government, 588, attack workers' organizations, 589, *see also*, Fascism, Mussolini, Fascist Party
Father Gassoniana (D DeLeon), 437
Favre, 764-5
February Revolution, 838 ff, 871, role of Anarchists, 263, role of Menshevíks, 842 6, role of Social Revolutionaries, 842-5, role of Bolsheviks, 836, 840, 842 8
Federal Council, 820
Federalist, 73
Federalists, 71, 74, 76, 87, 130
Federated Farmer Labor Party (Minnesota), 984-5
Fédération Nationale Catholique, 662
Federation of the Just (League of the Just), 742-5, becomes Communist League, 745
Feng, General, 1009, 1011
Ferdinand Lassalle (E Bernstein), 405
Ferguson, I F, 1107
feudalism, 15, 27, 32 ff, 44, 47, 84 ff, 107, 110, 205, 214, 217, 240, 269, 397, 458, 463, 734
Feuerbach, 211
Feuerbach (F Engels), 351
Fiat, 601
Fichte, 551, 644
Fields, Factories, and Workshops (Kropotkin), 258
Fifteen Questions (D DeLeon), 439
Figaro, 662
Figner, 794
Finland, 327, 627, 870, 887, 901, 928, German intervention in, 885, 905, communist insurrection, 905, White Terror, 905; trade unions, 951
Finnish Labor Party 904-5
First American Civil War (R. H. Belcher), 66
First International (International Workingmen's Association), 144, 243, 251-2, 259 n, 273, 276, 295-6, 396, 397-414, 419-20, 425, 431-2, 436, 760-1, 935, 944, 1162; Bakuninist Marxist struggle in, 250, 760-1; dissolution of, 250, 253, 262, 402, Marx's "Inaugural Address," 398-9; role during Commune, 401-2; withdrawal of English trade unions, 402; moves to New York, 402; achievements, 403; compared with Second International, 432-3; withdrawal of Blanquists, 762; role during Franco-Prussian War, 401, 763-5, 767-8, 771; strategy of, 1130-1
Fiume, 580, 1064
Five Types of Ethical Theory (C. D. Broad), 154
Five-Year Plan, 1025, 1029-30, 1032-5, 1056, 1074; Second, 1043
'Flag' in Utah (D. DeLeon), 464
Flocon, 434
Fluchtlinge Volkstaat, 758
Fokine, 1013 n
For a New Communist International (A Weisbord), 1013
Ford, Henry, 610, 688-9, 698-9, 708
Fordism, 698
Foreign Relations in British Labour Politics (W P Maddox), 946
Forerunners of American Fascism (R. G Swing), 688
Fors Clavigera (John Ruskin), 693
Foster, William Z, 1101-3, 1111 2, 1115, 1117, turns patriot, 1101, role in steel strike, 1101-2
Foundations of the Nineteenth Century (H S Chamberlain), 633
Fourier, 87 n, 231, 378, 382 6, 739, 743
Fourierism, 382 6, in United States, 385 6
Fourth Congress of the Communist International, 965
Fourth International 1014 1046, 1094 5, strategy of, 1125-53, on Workers' Control of production, 1133-8, on direct action, 1138-40, 1164, 1172, on arming the worker, 1141 7, on pacifism, 1144 on Soviet Union, 1147 8, on war, 1147 50 on insurrection, 1150 3
Fourth National Convention of Workers (Communist) Party of America, 1114
Fox, 105, 121 n
Franna, Louis C, *see* Corey, Lewis
France, 25, 31, 62 3, 65, 69 70, 76, 78, 81, 83, 84-115, 126, 128, 135, 149 51, 153, 164, 174, 183, 200 1, 213 5, 219 ff, 230, 241, 251, 381 ff, 399, 420, 465, 469 70, 474, 491, 498, 501 2, 508, 580, 660, 764, 1057, population of, 84 n, 215, Radicalism, 84 ff, 115, 169, 205, proletariat, 95, 213, 215-6, 222, 240 2, 244, 251, 296 7, 299-300, 744, 756, Revolution of 1848 in, 213 7, 224, 242, 434, 673, 742, 745, 750, 755, 759, petty bourgeoisie, 215, 220, 222, 243, 429, bourgeoisie, 216, 220 n, 296, 427, trade unions of, 258 9, 295 ff, 400, 451, 558, 665, 761, 949, 1080; strikes, 400, 435, 557, 660 1, 901, 1078, 1080-1; coalition governments, 409-10, 434-5; "sit-down" strikes, 444 n, 1081; compulsory military service, 463, currency crisis, 492, 660 n; cost of living, 492, wages, 492; Social Catholic movement in, 557, Fascism, 561-5, 756, 1060, 1061, militarism, 665; policy towards Germany, 627, policy towards Russia, 627 8, 661, 887, 902; unemployment, 660; peasantry, 735, February (1934) days, 756, 1080; co-operatives, 761; intervenes in Russia, 887, 902; invades Ruhr, 927-8; People's Front government, 1078-82; neutrality pol-

icy, 1082; *see also* Anarchism, Liberalism, Capitalism, Imperialism, Socialism, Bonapartism, Syndicalism, anti-Semitism
Francis Joseph, Archduke, 160, 613
Franco-Jugo Slav alliance, 657
Franco-Polish alliance, 499
Franco-Prussian War, 151, 175, 252, 401, 406-7, 470, 508, 682, 765, role of First International in, 401, 763-5, 767, Marx's views of, 458-60; Engel's military analysis of, 461 n
Franco-Soviet Alliance, 661, 1042, 1058 ff, 1074, 1078, 1088, 1144 5, effect upon French workers, 664, value to Soviet Union, 1063
Frankfort, 397, 552, 927, National Assembly, 748, 751
Franklin, 76 n
Franklin, Benjamin, 17 n, 70, 76 n, 82 n, 83, 95 n, 124 n, 1167
Franklin's Economic Views (L G Carey), 83
Franz Joseph, 160, 613
Frederick II (the Great), 151, 191, 209, 509, 514, 640, 644 n
Frederick Wilhelm IV, 747
Freedom of the Seas (Grotius), 30
Freemasonry and the Anti Christian Movement (F Cahill), 101, 753
Freemasons, *see* Masons
Free Soil Party, 137 8
Free Will, 154 6, 209, 211, 357
Freiheit, 260
Fremont, General, 141
French and Indian War (1763) 62 3, 65
French Equatorial Africa, 493 n
French Grand Orient, 101 n
French Morocco, 1064
French Revolution (1789), 28, 35, 41 n, 68, 70, 76, 84-115, 121, 123, 125, 149, 151 2, 157 8, 162, 164, 178, 205, 213, 215, 217, 378, 381 2, 386, 547, 555, 738, 739 n, 1036 40, 1090, bourgeois capitalist, 84, 95-7, armies of, 98 n, first great People's Revolution, 114, Terror, 1038, *see also* Paris Commune, Jacobins
French Revolution (C D Hazen), 87
French Revolution and Modern French Socialism (J Peixotto), 88
French Revolution of *1830*, *126*, *151*
Freud, 366, 611
Friedland, 112
Friends of New Germany, 683
"Friends of the People," 758
Froelich, Paul, 936
Froissard, 957
From Marx to Lenin (M Hillquit), 471
From Socialism to Fascism (Bonomi), 582
Frost, John, 173
Frunze, 870
Fugitive Slave Act, 138, 141
Fulda, 553
Fuller, Margaret, 386 n
Future of Democracy (H. M. Hyndman), 454
Gabriel Bonnot de Mably (E. A. Whitfield), 739
Galicia, 159, 888
Galileo, 24
Gallifet, General, 300
Gannes, Harry, 1070
Gapon, Father, 803-4
Garbia, 907
Garibaldi, 158, 163, 165, 244, 401, 580, 585
Garrison, William Lloyd, 139-40
Gastonia strike, 330, 1115
Gegetchkori, 969
General Chiang Kai-shek, Builder of New China (Chen Tsung-shu, Wang An-tsiang and Want I-tung), 995
General Confederation of Labor (Italy), 310
General Federation of Labor (France), see *Confédération Générale du Travail*
General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century (P J Proudhon), 222, 224
General Introduction to Social Science (A. Brisbane), 383, 384
General Labor Union (Spain), 309
General Strike (W H Crook), 272, 305, 306, 307, 474
General View of Positivism (A Comte), 179, 181
Geneva, 33 n, 399, 402, 541
George, Henry, 17 n, 415, 440, Movement, 372
George, King, 64
George, Lloyd, 176, 886 n
George V, King, 672
Georgetown, 136 n
Georgia (Asia Minor), 888 901, 969-70, 1091, declares independence 473, civil war in, 473, 969 70
Georgia (K Kautsky), 473
Germanen in Frankreich (L Woltman), 516
German Ideology (Karl Marx), 352
German People's Party, 617
German Philosophy and Politics (John Dewey), 517
German Revolution, 507, 574, 607, 819 n, 879, 917-29 Workers Councils' role in, 605, 918, 920-2, January insurrection, 923-4 March insurrection, 924, errors of communists in, 922 6 defeat of, 976 7, 1048, *see also* Bavaria
German Revolution (R. H Lutz), 920, 923, 924, 925
German Socialism and Ferdinand Lassalle (W H Dawson), 552
German Workers Educational Society, 744
German Workers Educational Union, 396
German Workers Party, 612
German Workers Society (Brussels), 745
Germany, 20, 86 n, 121, 149, 157, 162, 174-5, 183-4, 200 1, 209, 213, 239, 241, 299, 397, 399, 404, 463 5, 472, 476, 491 2, 495, 497 9, 508, 511, 526, 541, 552, 605 82, 747 8, 901, 916 29, 977, 1045, 1051, 1054, peasant wars of, 36 n, 150-1, 205, 737-8; suffrage in, 146-7; petty bourgeoisie of, 208-

10, 212, 217-8, 607, 609, 626, 645; Revolution of 1848 in, 209, 214, 748; bourgeoisie of, 217, 607, 747-8, proletariat of, 210, 218, 242, 311, 404 5, 607, 609, 650, 652, 744, 756, trade unions in, 300, 307, 319, 451, 478, 556, 607, 610, 641, 689, 949-51, general strikes in, 319, 480, 918; co-operatives in, 405, 645-6, Socialists form government, 474, communist uprisings suppressed, 474 6, 923 4, currency crisis, 492, 606, 608, 929, cost of living, 492, 648, wages, 492, 648, fascism, 249 n, 493, 499, 526, 605, 612 ff, 640, 675, 677, 1074, relations with Austria, 499, 620, 634, 654, 655-9, unemployment, 506, 609-11, 625, 645, 648-9, 651, 695, militarism, 514 6, 625-6, 632; Catholic Socialism in, 552 6; cartels, 605-6, 608-9, effects of world crisis on, 610, intervenes in Soviet Union, 876, 886-7, economic breakdown of, 929; *see also* German Revolution, Prussia, Bavaria, Hitler, Anarchism, Liberalism, Capitalism, Imperialism, Socialism, Bonapartism, Syndicalism, anti Semitism

Germany's Default (P Einzig), 615

Gerry, Elbridge, 69 n

Ghenghis Khan, 776

Gift of the Black Folk (W. E B Du Bois), 56 n, 66, 144

Giolitti, 587, 589, 664, 673

Giovanni Italiane, 599

Gironde, 95

Girondists, 88, 95, 99, 103, 111, 112 n

Gitlow, Benjamin, 1101

Gladstone, William, 135, 173 7

Glasgow, 387, 498

Glorious Revolution (1688), 28, 201

"Glorious Whig Revolution," 42

God and the State (Bakunin), 243

Godwin, William, 205 9, 213, 224 5, 228, 239, 254 n, 386 n

Goethe, 637

Gold, Mike, 725

Goldman, Emma, 254 n, 261, 263 n

Goltz, General von der, 516, 887

Gompers, Samuel, 275 6, 282, 284, 286, 1101

Gospel of the Poor (W. Weitling), 743

"Gospodin," 871 n

Gotha, Congress at, 406, program, 406 7, 1052

Gotha Program (Karl Marx), 407, 1089

Gould, Jay, 276

government, definition of, 16

Government in Business (S Chase), 490, 523, 537

Grand National Consolidated Trades Union, 272

Gray, John, 389 91

Great Britain, 16 7, 49 n, 61 4, 76, 78, 84 ff, 110 4, 119 28, 134 5, 142, 149 50, 169-77, 183, 200 1, 209, 214, 239 40, 275, 382, 399, 491-2, 495, 501-2, 508, 545, 552, 580, 627, 630-1, proletariat, 32, 122, 124, 171-2, 244, 275, 547 n, 744, Radicalism in, 35 ff, 123, 125, 408; utilitarianism, 42 ff; population, 84 n; peasant revolts, 84 n, 735; land seizures, 123; trade unions, 124, 243, 272-3, 296, 300, 318-9, 388, 400-2, 408-9, 451, 563, 901, 949; suffrage, 146, 170 n, 175; bourgeoisie, 216; Revolution of 1848, 214 (*see also* Chartism); general strikes, 306, 474, 479, 497, 561, 574, 669, 971, 978-81, 1047, break up of Empire, 493, 496 8; unemployment, 497; fascist trends in, 498, 548, 577, 665-72, 980, Constitution of, 498 n, social Catholic movement in, 560-1, policy towards Russia, 628, militarism, 671, slavery in, 735-6; intervenes in Russia, 887 8, 902; demands sanctions against Italy, 1065; *see also* English Civil Wars, Anarchism, Liberalism, Capitalism, imperialism, Socialism, Bonapartism, anti Semitism

Great French Revolution (P Kropotkin), 249

Great Illusion (Norman Angell), 508

Great Jubilee of 1300, 27

Great Rebellion (1640 1660), 28, 35 ff, 64, 201, 544

Greece, 16 n, 24, 92, 99, 200, 257 n, 348

Greeley, 386 n

Green, William, 286

Greenback party, 415

Greene, General, 66, 67 n

Grotius, 25, 30, 44 5

Grounds of Right Against Tyrants (S T Brutus) 542

Growth of American Trade Unions 1880 1923 (L Wolman), 274, 451

Growth of Philosophic Radicalism (F Halévy), 119, 208

Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom (W Weitling), 743

Guchkov, 844, 851, 853

Guesde, 297, 409, 435, 437, turns chauvinist, 454

Guesdists, 297 9, 304, 323, 409 10, 420, 432, 447

Guild of St Matthews, 550

guilds, 269, 554 5, destruction of, 34 5, 562

Guilds and the Social Crisis (A J Penty), 561

Guildsman's Interpretation of History (A J Penty), 561

Guillaume, 402

Guilt of William Hohenzollern (K. Kautsky), 454

Haase, 916

Hague, 402, 466

Haiti, 76

Hall, G Stanley, 156

Halle uprising, 927

Hals, Franz, 25

Hamburg, 1054, uprising, 917, 925

Hamilton, Alexander, 66, 69, 73, 76 n

Hampden, 39, 52

Hanau, 927

Hankow, 1005 6

Hanseatic League, 541, 551, 736

Harbinger, 386

Hardie, Keir, 409

Harding, President, 69
Harper's Ferry, 140
Harper's Magazine, 523
Harrison, 527
Harvey, 172
Hathaway, 984
Hawthorne, 386 n
Haymarket riots, 261-2, 274, 277, 413-4, 419
Haywood, Wm. D., 314, 1101
Hearst, William Randolph, 687, 1073 n
Hébert, 41 n, 95, 103-4, 205, 243, 738, 741, 1037
Hedonists, 348-9
Hegel, 121, 152, 162, 164, 183, 211, 247, 347, 349-50, 352 n, 364, 402, 550-1, 637
Heimwehr, 655, 657-8
Helvetic Republic, 111
Helvetius, 87 n, 208
Henderson, Arthur, 1104
Henry, Patrick, 59, 64
Henry VIII, 31-2, 34, 527
Henry of Portugal, Prince, 25
Heraclitus, 348
Hereditary Homestead Law, 647, 727
Hertzen, 411
Hevia, 1072
"Hic Rhodus, Hic Salta!," 404
Higher Learning in America (T. Veblen), 635, 694
Hillman, Sidney, 287 n, 291, 1133
Hillquit, Morris, 456-8, 471, 477, 480; view on State, 429; War position, 457; hostility to Soviet Union, 473
Hindenburg, 608-9, 612, 619-20, 1051; "lesser evil," 568; aids Nazis, 617; venality, 648
Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism (C. J. H. Hayes), 98, 104
historical materialism, 347, 352-3, 399, 437, 454; sectarian misinterpretations of, 438
Historical, Political, and Diplomatic Writings of Machiavelli, 543, 544
History of Agriculture in the Northern United States, 1620-1860 (Bidwell and Falconer), 131
History of American Economic Life (E. C. Kirkland), 53, 57, 231
History of British Socialism (M. Beer), 171
History of Economic Doctrines (Gide and Rist), 94, 122, 186, 220, 224, 381
History of England (D. Hume), 119
History of Freemasonry (Haywood and Craig), 101
History of Freemasonry Throughout the World, (R. F. Gould), 101
History of French Colonial Policy, 1870-1925 (S. H. Roberts), 493, 507
History of Materialism (F. A. Lange), 348
History of Political Theories, Ancient and Medieval (W. A. Dunning), 544
History of Socialism (T. Kirkup), 383, 405
History of Socialism in the United States (M. Hillquit), 383, 385, 413
History of Socialist Thought (H. W. Laidler), 408, 410
History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate (S. R. Gardner), 38
History of the Commune of 1871 (Lissagaray), 251, 761, 767
History of the First International (G. M. Steklov), 399, 402
History of the Great American Fortunes (G. Myers), 142, 536
History of the Great Civil War, 1642-1649 (S. R. Gardner), 36, 38
History of the Insurrections in Massachusetts (G. R. Minot), 71
History of the Middle and Working Classes (John Wade), 527
History of the Russian Revolution (L. D. Trotsky), 166, 836, 837, 838, 841, 842, 844, 847, 852, 861, 862, 863, 886
History of the Supreme Court (G. Myers), 536
History of the Theories of Surplus Value (Karl Marx), 1114
History of Trade and Commerce (Anderson), 61
Hitler, Adolph (der Fuehrer), 146 n, 197, 359, 548, 568, 585, 609, 612 ff, 625-6, 629-30, 632, 650, 652, 664-5, 671, 681, 684, 688, 694, 704, 715, 910 n, 986, 1047-8, 1050-2, 1054 ff, 1061, 1079, 1083, 1088; race credo of, 614-4, 634-6, 639, anti-Semitism, 613-4, 616; program of, 613, 615-6, 645-9; Munich putsch, 616-7; referendum, 617; purges, 626, 649-50, 1058; anti-communist crusade, 620, 629, 634, 639; struggles against Catholic Church, 639-42; attacks Protestants, 643-4; smashes trade unions, 648; his role in Austria, 655-9
Hitlerism Turns the Clock Back for Women (V. Buch), 650
Hobbes, 48, 89-91, 349 n, 542, 544-6, 666
Hobbes (Leslie Stephen), 545
Hobson, 562, 564
Hodgskin, Thomas, 389, 391
Hoffmann, General von, 872
Hoglund, 932
Holland, 25, 29 30, 36 n, 42, 44, 85, 200, 400, 628; trade unions, 951
Holstein, 606
Holy Alliance, 156, 160, 458, 747, 750
Holy Roman Empire, 27, 111, 640, 736
Home Rule 63, 175-6, 177 n, 753
Homestead Act, 133, 142
Homestead strike, 275 n
Homicide in the United States (H. C. Brearley), 527
Hongkong, 994, 999
Hook, Sidney, 725
Hooker, 36 n
Hoover, J. E., 527, 529
Hoover, President Herbert, 518-9, 1044, 1072, 1158
Hopkins, Harry L., 598, 703
Horthy, Admiral, 915-6
Hourwich, 1101
How We Advertised America (G. Creel), 519
Hugenberg, 618-9, 640

Huguenots, 85-6, 201, 542 n, 546
Hu-Han-min, 1000
Human, All-Too-Human (F. W. Nietzsche), 637, 651, 652
humanism, 200
Humanité, 901, 1079, 1080
Hume, David, 42, 45 n, 47 n, 119-21, 125, 152, 154, 353
Hundred Years' War, 84 n, 85 n
Hungary, 162, *260*, 327, 397, *400*, 556, *627*, 749-50, 901, 905-16, 928; abolition of serfdom, 158; Declaration of Independence of, 160; communist uprising in, 474-5, 654, 909-15, 1135; fascism in, 575; strikes, 906; Workmen's Councils in, 906-7; Soviet Republic of, 909 ff, 942; industrial backwardness, 911; proletariat, 911, 1135; peasantry, 912; White Terror in, 915; *see also* anti-Semitism
Hunter, General, 142
Huss, 735
Hutchinson, Mrs. Anne, 228
Hyndman, H. M., 408, 426, 437, 442, 446-7, 930; turns patriot, 426, 454
Hyndman, Prophet of Socialism (F. J. Gould), 447

Icaria (A. Shaw), 742
Idea of National Interest (Beard and Smith), 699
Illinois, 132, 136-7, 291
Illinois Crime Survey (John H. Wigmore, ed.), 184, 530-1
Illuminati (Perfectibles), 753 4
Immortal Italy (E. A. Mowrer), 584, 588
Imperial Fascists, 669
Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution (T. Veblen), 604
imperialism, 192, 195-6, 198, 253, 259, 263, 280, 326, 328, 340-1, 344-5, 374, 436, 442, 451, 463, 467, 493, 506, 524, 534, 573-4, 938, 1065, 1126; English, 42, 51 ff, 62-3, 107, 119, 127, 175 7, 273, 459, 496 8, 501 2, 507, 547, 628, 665-6, 670, 980, 986-7, 1063-5; supported by Liberals, 195, incompatibility with Democracy of, 198-9, bribes skilled workers, 280, French, 51, 86, 299, 502, 507 n, 627, 651-2, 657, 661, 665, 887, 902, 927-8; wars of, 343, German, 401, 458, 460, 467 70, 506, 607, 609, 616, 657, 986; American, 313, 414, 430, 455, 479, 498, 501, 707, 1066-71; Kautsky's theory of, 476-7; post-War chronic crisis of, 486 ff, 503; Japanese, 497, 500-2, 986, 1015-6; contradictions of, 504, 507, *see also* Capitalism, contradictions of, colonial wars against, 518, 1145; an era of wars and revolutions, 573; fails to overthrow Soviets, 574-5; Italian, 455, 507, 657, 1063-5; *see also* Italo Ethiopian War; Russian, 986
Imperialism The Last Stage of Capitalism (V. I. Lenin), 340
"impossibilists," 440
Inaugural Address (Karl Marx), 398
Independent Labor Party (I. L. P.), 409, 478, 981; opposes War, 466
Independent Labor Party (Scotland), 936
Independents (England), 35 ff
Independent Socialist Party (Germany), 474, 479-80, 917 ff, 930, 932, 935-6; allies with Majority Socialists, 918; program, 919-20
India, 86, 166 n, 195, 198, 338, 493, 496, 507, 980, 991, 1146; proletariat, 241-2; Anarchism, 241; revolutionary movement, 574, 631, 665, 991; National Congress, 987, 995
Indians, 51, 53, 58 n, 60, 62, 259
individualism, 127 ff, 210, 232, 533, 541-2, 643, 679, 717, 1165; *see also laissez-faire*
Individualism, Old and New (John Dewey), 359
Individual Liberty (B. R. Tucker), 232, 233
Indo-China, 574
Industrial Germany (H. Levy), 341, 606
Industrial Prices and Their Relative Inflexibility (G. C. Means), 346
Industrial Revolution, 83, 121, 135
industrial unionism, 279, 283, 290, 445, 570, 954, French, 308, American, 312-33, 570, 689, 716, 1101; Russian, 321; Fascist, 595-6
Industrial Unionism in America (M. D Savage), 317, 319, 320
Industrial Worker, 1840-60 (N. J. Ware), 380 394, 395
Industrial Workers of the World (I. W. W.), 148, 279, 282, 313 ff, 414, 429, 433, 445-6, 456, 933, 937, 944, 950, 1100 1, 1111, 1164; sabotage policy, 315-6, organize migratory workers, 323; "Detroit," 323; Chicago, 324; strike policies, 325, anti War position, 326, 454; provincialism, 329, decline, 330-3; hostile to Communist International, 332; Australian, 950
Industrie (Saint Simon), 381
In Memory of the Supreme German Patriots, 1806-1807 (Borkheim), 462
Inner Mongolia, 502
Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations (Adam Smith), 122
Inquiry into the Nature of Peace (T. Veblen), 504, 524
Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth (W Thompson), 389
Inside View of Slavery (C. G. Parsons), 134
Instead of a Book (B. R. Tucker), 232
Institutes of the Christian Religion (Calvin), 542
instrumentalism, 156, 358-9, 362
Interallied Labor and Socialist Conference, 477
Internal Debts of the U. S. (E. Clark), 526
International Alliance of Social Democracy (International Brotherhood), 243, 250
International Conference of Socialist Youth Organizations, 931
International Congresses (Anarchist), 254-5
International Council of Trade and Industrial Unions (A. Losovsky), 949, 950
International Council of Trade Unions, 951

International Federation of Trade Unions (I. F. T. U.), 433-4, 478-9
International Labor Charter, 477
International Press Correspondence, 1021
International Secretariat of Trade Unions, 433
International Socialism and the War (A W Humphrey), 452
International Socialism and the World War (M Fainsod), 933
International Socialist Commission, 467, 932
International Workingmen's Association, *see* First International
Interpretations of Legal History (R Pound), 359, 701
Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy (Karl Marx), 364
Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation (J Bentham), 123
Introduction to the Study of Labor Problems (G S Watkins), 192
Ireland (Irish Free State), 42, 63, 175 6, 177 n, 195, 393, 430 1, 498, 753, 1144 n, trade unions of, 951
Ireton, 36, 40
"Iron Front, 619
Iskra (the Spark), 787 8, 790, 801 2, 821
Iskra Period (V I Lenin), 787, 788, 789, 790
Issues in the Needle Trades Convention (J Johnstone), 1117
Italian Corporative State (F Pitigliani), 559, 582, 598
Italian Federation of Workers (Catholic), 558 9
Italo Ethiopian War, 600, 603 4, 631, 1063-5, 1074, 1118, 1145
Italy, 20, 25, 44 107, 111, 158, 162 3, 243 4, 303, 381 n, 397, 399 401, 410, 421, 469, 498, 552, 580 604, 627, 640, 1057 proletariat of, 163, 241 2, 259, 581, 588 90, 597, 603 4, nationalism in 162 5, trade unions, 259, 310, 410, 451, 558 60, 587, 590, 592, 595, 597, 604 689, 936, 949, 951, wars of liberation, 243, Fascism, 265, 303, 327, 493, 499, 575, 577, 580 604, *see also* Mussolini, general strikes in, 306, 590, currency crisis, 492, wages, 492, 603, and Little Entente, 499, and Austria, 499, 654, 656-8, workers seize factories in, 582 3, 588 9, 1135 strikes forbidden, 595, cartels, 601 unemployment, 604, *see also* Anarchism, Liberalism, Capitalism Imperialism, Socialism, Syndicalism
Italy in the Making (G F Berkeley), 162
ius gentium 44
I Write as I Please (W Duranty), 1027
I W W, a Study of American Syndicalism (Brissenden), 314
Izvestia, 883, 1059
Izvestia of the Party, 823
Izvestia of the Soviet, 815

Jackson, Andrew, 72, 77, 130-1, 145, 148
Jacobin Club, 98, 108, 1037 8
Jacobin Party, 106
Jacobins, 84-5, 88, 91, 96, 98, 100 ff, 111, 112 n, 114, 157, 178, 205, 215, 222, 240, 243, 690, 738, 757 8, 772, 1037-8, 1090; struggle against Commune, 104
Jacobins (C. Brinton), 102
Jacobites, 119
Jacqueries, 84 n, 150, 735
Jamaica, 61
James, Henry, 386 n
James, King, 33 n
James, William, 156 n, 355 ff, 584, 586, pacifism of, 359
Jansenists, 27
Japan, 166 n, 492-3, 496, 498-502, 1045, 1056, 1064, 1074, 1077, proletariat, 500, unbalanced economy of, 500, rationalization in, 500, wages, 500, seizes Chinese territory, 500 2, 986, strikes in, 502, Fascism in, 502, revolutionary movement in, 502
Jászi, Oskar, 915
Jaurès, Jean, 102, 106, 305, 409, 420, 426, 463, 662, 758 n, fear of peasantry, 427, advocates coalition governments, 434
Jay Treaty, 76
Jean Paul Marat (L R Gottschalk), 102
Jefferson, Thomas, 59, 64, 68, 75, 76 n, 77, 82, 95, 120, 1159
Jefferson's First Inaugural Address, 82
Jefferson's First Message to Congress, 82
Jeffersonian Democracy, 130
Jesuits, 27, 43-4
Jeunesse Patriote, 662
Jewish Bund, 801
Jews, 30 41, 85, 110, 175, 556, 613 4, 616, 633-4, 637, 639, 642-3, 645, 649, 485 6, 688, 718, *see also* anti Semitism
Joffe, 992 3, 1041
John Reed Clubs, 1105
Johnson, General Hugh, 290, 689
Johnstone, Jack, 1101, 1117
Jones, Dr H I, 512 n
Jones, Ernest 172-3, 394, 397
Jordania, 970
Josiah Warren (William Bailie), 231
Journal of Negro History (W B Hartgrove), 66 n
Journalism versus Art (M Eastman), 1103
Judicial Cases Concerning American Slavery and the Negro (H T Catterall, ed), 58, 61
Jugo Slavia, 628 657, 985, trade unions, 949, 951
June Days (1848), 215 6, 224, 242, 742, 750, 755, 759
Jungle (Upton Sinclair), 184
Jurassic Federation, 254
Justinian, Emperor, 44

Kadet (Constitutional Democrat) Party, 518, 824, 844, 851, 853, 855, 859, 866-7, 876, 884, 886, 909
Kaledin, Hetman, 886
Kalinin, 870
Kamenev, 848, 850, 865, 869 70, 875, 932, 1021 n, 1026, arrest and execution of, 1087 8

Kant, Immanuel, 47 n, 127 n, 152-4, 164, 211, 353, 357, 425
Kapp *putsch*, 926-7
Karakhan, 993, 1041
Karolyi, Count Michael, 905-8, 910
Karolyi Party, 906
Kautsky, Karl, 306, 380, 425, 435, 437, 454, 476-7, 756, 791, 801, 884, 951-2, 1044; revisionism, 471-3; anti-Bolshevism, 473; theory of ultra-imperialism, 722; War position, 916
Kazakhistan, 1091
Kellogg Peace Pact, 1045
Kemalist Party, 996
Kemal Pasha, 1159; suppresses communist movement, 996
Keppler, 24
Kerensky, 470, 844-5, 847 n, 859 ff, 871, 908-10, 926, 932, 953, 970, 978, 1010; attacks Bolsheviks, 860; conspires with Kornilov, 861, 867
Keyserling, Graf von, 638 n, 1157
Keystone of Fascism (C. M Cresswell), 581
Khabalov, General, 839
Kharkov, 812
Kiaochow, 501, 986
Kienthal Conference, 467, 931
Kiev, 823
Kinds of Love (M. Eastman), 1103
King, Rufus, 72
Kingsley, 174, 549, 560
King's Republics (H. J Schlosberg), 498
Kirghizistan, 1091
Kirov assassination, 1087
Kirov Assassination (L D Trotsky), 1021, 1025, 1087
Knights of Columbus 753
Knights of Labor, 186, 273 ff, 322, 414, 444
Koehler, 1077 n
Koeln, 752
Koenigsberg, 555, uprising, 925
Kolchak, 876, 881, 888 9
Kolokol (The Bell), 411
Korea, 501, 986
Kornilov, General, 852, 860, 874; counter-revolutionary activities of, 861-3, 867, 878, 886
Kossuth, Louis, 160, 397, 905
Kosziuscko, 157
Krassnov, General, 871, 875, 884, 885
Kress, General von, 969
Kronstadt, 854-5; revolt, 815-6, 891; sailors defend Petrograd, 863
Kropotkin, P., 100 n, 164, 212, 233, 247, 250-1, 253 ff, 460
Krupskaya, N. K., 931, 1021 n
Kruse, William, 1110
Krylenko, 860
Kugelmann, 405
Kuibishev, 1021
Ku Klux Klan, 18, 684, 1109, 1147
kulak, 95, 264, 780, 874, 877, 879, 885, 892, 1019-20, 1023-5, 1029, 1031, 1040, 1043, 1085; favored by light taxes, 1024; sabotage, 1032; receives right to vote, 1085
Kulturideal und der Krieg (Lasson), 515
Kun, Bela, 907-15; denounces peasantry, 912; allies with reformists, 914-5
Kunfi, 907
Kuomintang, 986, 988-9, 991 ff, 1012, 1077 n, 1096; program, 995, 1005; Left, 1000, 1006, 1009-11; subordinates C. P., 1001
Kuomintang and the Future of the Chinese Revolution (T. C. Wu), 988, 989, 990, 993, 999, 1001, 1009

labor, *see* proletariat
Labor and Internationalism (L. Lorwin), 970
Labor and Politics (M. R. Carroll), 284
Labor and Socialist International, 970; *see also* Second International
Labor Federation of New York, 414
Labor, Industry and Government (M. Woll), 287, 289, 538
Labor in Europe and America (S Gompers), 284, 285
Labor in Modern Industrial Society (N. J. Ware), 288
laborism, 19, 195-6, 202, 273, 279 80, 572
Labor League Congress, 404
Labor Movement in America (R. T. Ely), 385, 394
Labor Movement in France (L. Levine), 296
Labor Movement in Post War France (D. J. Saposs), 901
Labor Non Partisan Committee, 1073
labor notes, 231, 375, 388, 392, 556
Labor Party (Belgium), 477-8
Labor Party movement, 291-2, 982-5, 1171
Labor Problems and the Social Catholic Movement in France (P. T. Moon), 557
Labor Question and Christianity (Monsignor Kettler), 553
Labour Defended Against the Claims of Capital (T. Hodgskin), 391
Labour Monthly, 892, 893, 947, 957
Labour Party (Great Britain), 195, 409, 478, 563, 946 n, 971, 977, 979 84, 995, 1088, 1098; joins Second International, 433; enters coalition War government, 452-3; forms Labour government, 478; federated structure of, 981
Labour Rewarded (W. Thompson), 389
Labour's Wrongs and Labour's Remedy (J. Bray), 391, 392
Ladies Garment Workers Union, 317
Lafayette, 87 n, 88 n, 97 n
Lafayette and Three Revolutions (J. S. Penman), 88
La Follette, 186, 286, 984-5, 1111
Lagardelle, 584
laissez-faire, 94, 111, 121 ff, 161, 163-4, 169, 181, 382, 391, 541, 547, 548 n, 551, 555, 643
Lamennais, 557
Lamont, Corliss, 725
"Land and Freedom," 411
Landmarks of Scientific Socialism (F. Engels), 361

Landon, 1073, 1119
Land Revolution in Russia (V. I. Lenin), 878, 879
Larkin, 1101
La Rocque, Colonel Robert de, *see* Rocque, Colonel Robert de la
Lassalle, Ferdinand, 405, 424, 553-4, 744
Lasson, 632
Last Episode of the French Revolution (E B Bax), 740
Latin-America, 479, 494 n; proletariat, 241-2; Anarchism, 241, 259, Anarcho-Syndicalism in, 259
Latvia, 887, 901, 904, German intervention in, 885
Lavrov, 411
Law, Bonar, 176
Law and Morals (R Pound), 43
law of combined development, 571, 1158
Law of Freedom in a Platform, etc. (Jerrard Winstanley), 37
law of uneven development, 300, 491, 808, 978, 1155
Laws of the Chinese Soviet Republic, 1015
League Against War and Fascism, 1065
League of Nations, 474, 477, 498, *606*, *620*, 622, 668, 948, 1063 6, 1080, role of Soviet Union in, 1058, 1061
League of Peace and Freedom, 400
League of Social Democrats Abroad, 786, 793
League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, 412, 786
League of the Just, 396
Lectme on Human Happiness (J Gray), 389, 390
Lectures on the Nature and Use of Money (J Gray), 389
Lectures on the Philosophy of History (G W. F Hegel), 550
"Left" Communism, an Infantile Disorder (V. I Lenin), 824, 831, 832, 953, 956, 977, 1109
Left Opposition, 1002 4, 1021 n, 1028 9, 1031, 1036 7, 1040, 1048, 1087, 1096 9, 1116 n, persecutions of, 1014, 1026, urges industrialization, 1023, 1025, platform, 1024-5; agrarian program, 1025, collapse of, 1096-9
Left Social Revolutionists Party, 786, 875, 877
Legendre, 738
Legurian Republic, 111
Lehman, 1120
Leipsig uprising, 927
Leisler's rebellion, 1162
Lena Gold Fields, massacre at, 835
Lenin, V I. (Ulyanov), 36 n, 263 n, 265, 366, 379-80, 412, 429, 433, 435-8, 470, 472, 479, 590, 770, 783 n, 784 ff, 806 ff, 820 1, 822 5, 828 34, 836, 848 ff, 860, 864 ff, 879 80, 882 3, 888 ff, 901-3, 915, 921, 929, 931-2, 947 8, 952 5, 971, 975-6, 981-2, 991-2, 994, 996, 1003-4, 1017, 1019-22, 1027, 1033-4, 1037, 1039-41, 1043-5, 1050, 1053, 1057, 1074-5, 1079, 1085, 1087-8, 1091-2, 1097-8, 1100, 1107, 1110-1, 1114, 1125-6, 1132, 1143, 1157, 1159-61; at Zimmerwald, 961; founds *Iskra*, 787; on Struvism, 784, 786-7; on Economists, 787-92; on party, 792 ff, 828 32, 964-5, 976 7, on trade unions, 791-2, 823, 895-6, 952-3; on soviets, 820; on terror, 825; leads October revolution, 841; April theses of, 850-1; presses for insurrection, 870, on October revolution, 879 ff; on peasantry, 880 ff, theses to First Congress, 934-5, theses on Organization, 956-65; "Testament" of, 1021, breaks with Stalin, 1021
Lenin Bund (Germany), 1036
Leningrad, 1026; *see also* Petrograd
Lenin on Organization, 797, 798, 799, 800, 831
Leo XII's Encyclical, 554
Leo XIII's Encyclical, 559
Letters (Henry Thoreau), 128
Letters from Afar (V I Lenin), 849
Letters of Rosa Luxemburg (Luise Kautsky), 428, 429
Letters on Education (R Owen), 386
Letters to Kugelmann (Karl Marx), 769
Letter to the American Workers (V I Lenin), *63*, 1159
Letter to the German Communist Party (V. I Lenin), 957
Levant Company, 51
Leveller Movement (T. C Pease), 40, 41
Levellers, 35 ff, 38 n, 39 n, 66, 82, 100, demands of, 39
Levi, 957
Leviathan (T. Hobbes), 48, 99, 544, 545
Levien, 924
Levine, 924
Lewis, John L , 287 n, 291-2, 1119 n, 1133
Liberalism, 18-20, 23-202, 205, 228, 231, 235, 239, 244, 246, 254, 300, 353, 422, 427, 434, 447, 494, 534 5, 538, 549, 569, form of reformism, 18, paradox of, 23, origin of, 28, English, 20, 23 ff, 43, 107, 135, 183, 169 ff 182 6, 191, 195, 214, 272, 296, 544, American, 20, 23, 51-83, 115, 142, 144 ff, 155 6, 181, 186 94, 196 7, 225, 261, 280, French, 23, 84 115, 177 ff, 186, 382, 550, class theories of, 91, 123, 182; its political tricks, 115; Continental, 149-66; German, 149 ff, 181 191, 210, 239, 551; Italian, 156, 161-5, Hungarian, 156, 160-1; Polish 156-60 Russian, 165 6; dissolution of, 191 202, 216 7, 592, South American, 259, influences trade unions, 272-3, defended by Bernstein, 424, check and balance system of, 593
Liberalism and Social Action (John Dewey), 700, 701
Liberal Labor Alliance (Lib Lab), 186, 195-6, 273, 279
Liberal Party (England), 173, 175
Liberator, 1103
Libertarianism, 55, 205-12
Liberty 232
Liberty and the Great Libertarians (Spradling), 226

Lib Labism, 186, 195 6, 273, 279
Liebknecht, Karl, 437, 480, 851, 916, 920, 932, 936, 945, murder of, 923-4
Liebknecht, Wilhelm, 406
Life and Correspondence (R King), 72
Life of Albert Parsons (Lucy E Parsons), 274
Life of Elbridge Gerry (J T Austen), 72
Life of Emerson (Van Wyck Brooks), 129
Life of Gladstone (J Morley), 135
Life of John Bright (G M Trevelyan), 126
Life of John Marshall (A J Beveridge), 65, 66, 76
Life of Richard Cobden (J Morley), 127
Life of Robert Owen (G D H Cole), 386, 388
Life of William Cobbett (G D H Cole), 124, 126
Lifschitz, 1109
Ligue de l'Action Française, 661
Ligue des Patriotes, 662
Lilburne, John, 38, 41 n, 95 n
Lincoln, Abraham, 77, 132, 136 ff, 459, 1159, 1162
Lincoln and the Railroads (J W Starr, Jr), 132
Lincoln Frees the Slaves (S B Leacock), 131, 137
Liquid Claims and National Wealth (A A Berle), 523
Lithuania, 887, 904, German intervention in, 885, seizes Memel 1064
Little Entente, 499, 627
Litvinoff, 1041, 1043 4 1059, 1067, 1069
Locke (Fowler), 50
Locke, John, 42 3, 44 n, 46 7, 48 n, 50, 62, 79 80, 87, 89 92, 95 n, 119, 207 8, 353, 544, theory of property, 49, 120
Lodz, 160, 823
Lombardy, 150
London, 33 n, 39 n, 173, 295 398, 400, 432 511, 761, riots, 438
London Bureau, 1004 5
London Economist 391
London Workers Educational Society, 744
Long, Huey, 683, 689 92 701, 706, 728
Long Parliament, 35, 38, 40
Longuet, 930, 934-5
Looking Backward (Edward Bellamy), 693
Loose Leaves from a Busy Life (M Hillquit), 457
Lore, Ludwig, 1100
Losovsky, 949
Louis XIV, 86
Louis XVI, 69, 87, 96 7, 102 n, 106, 157
Louis XVIII, 112
Louisiana, 136
Louis-Philippe, 102 n, 112, 114, 214 5, 749
Lovejoy, 137
Lovestone, Jay (Jacob Liebstein), 1101, 1111 2, 1116
Lovett, William, 171-2
Lowell, James Russell, 386 n
Luddism, 678
Ludendorff, von, General, 616
Lueger, 609
Lunacharsky, 860
Lundeen Frazier Bill, 1119
Luther, 30, 150 1, 541 2, 737
Luxemburg, Rosa, 428, 433, 435 6, 437, 480, 800, 916 7, 932, 952, murdered, 923 4
Lvov, Prince, 844
Lybia, 580
lynching, 535, 573, 685, 722 4, 1140, 1163 4, 1172 5
Lyons, 104, 107, commune, 772

Mably, 101, 739
MacAlpine, Eamon, 1100
MacDonald, Ramsay, 466, 478, 1077
Machado, 1067 8
Machiavelli, 24, 32 n, 191, 542 4 546, 584 5, 614
MacLean, 932
Madison, James, 68, 69 n, 77, 82 n
Magna Carta, 80
Maintenance Men, 669, 980
Major Forces in World Business Depression (National Industrial Conference Board), 492
Majority Socialists (Germany), 306, 474 5, 917 ff, 930, form government, 474, 917 put down Communist insurrection, 474, 973
Makhno, Nestor, 263 n 264 5, 889 90
Making of Modern England (G Slater), 170
Making the Fascist State (H W Schneider), 579, 592
Malatesta, 260 1, 265, 309
Malay Peninsula, 496
Malmy, 606
Malon, 409
Malthus, 122, 182, 190, 387, 389
Man!, 259
Man and Technics (O Spengler), 638
Man and the Statesman (O Bismarck), 469 470
Manchester, 126, 272
Manchester, Earl of, 39
Manchester School 126 8, 343
Manchuria, 498, 500, 502, 1016, 1056 1063, 1074
Mankind as It Is and as It Should Be (W Weitling), 743
Mann Tom, 312 n
Manning, Bishop, 560 1
Man or the State? (W R Browne), 174
Mantoux, 122
Manuilsky, 870
Marat, 41 n, 95 101 n, 102 3, 108
Mare Clausum (*The Sea Closed* Selden), 30
Mariana, 542 n
Marie Louise, 112
Marine Transport Workers Union, 331
Mark 736-7, 782
Mark (F Engels), 737
Marlo, Karl (Professor Winkelblech), 551 2, 555
Marsal, 663

Marseilles commune, 772
Marshall, John, 59, 77
Marston Moor, 32, 39
Martov, 412, 429, 787, 795, 799, 801, 845, 1095
Marx, Karl, 19, 31, 102, 144, 160, 183, 214, 217, 219, 224, 234, 243, 252, 256, 260, 296, 329, 340 n, 347, 350-3, 359-61, 363 ff, 377-80, 391, 393-4, 396 ff, 422 ff, 438-40, 453-4, 458-61, 471, 561, 610, 615, 733, 744-5, 747-8, 752, 776, 935, 1004, 1040, 1052, 1079, 1099 n, 1114, 1125-6, 1129, 1131-2, 1152, 1155, 1157; opposes Bakunin, 250; theory of dialectical materialism, 347, 350-3, 360, 422; theory of historical materialism, 347, 352-3; theory of surplus value, 347, 365, 368-9, 423; laws of capitalist accumulation, 347, 369 70, 439, 487, 489, methodology, 363; theory of money, 365, theory of wages, 365; on ground rent, 372; on religion, 438, 827; on Czarism, 458 9; on Crimean War, 459; on military training, 461-2; on Commune, 771
Marx and Lenin the Science of Revolution (M Eastman), 1104, 1132
Marxian Theory of the State (S H. M Chang), 360
Marxism, 197, 234, 245, 252-3, 256-7, 260, 324, 347, 350-4, 363 ff, 378, 393, 401 3, 408, 411-2, 421 ff, 453, 556, 1044; revolutionary, 183, 422, 437; struggle with Bakuninism, 250, compared with Pragmatism, 353, 360-2, struggle with Lassalle, 405 6, revision of, 419 ff, 471 3, 476-7, *see also* Bernstein, Kautsky; fatalistic, 440; strategy for bourgeois democratic revolution, 458; "Jewish doctrine" of, 614, 643; Legal, 784, 786-7, 795; social base of, 1093; *see also* Socialism, Communism
Marxist, 352
Marxist League (Germany), 406
Maryland, 52, 58, 134, 413
Masons, 101, 753-4
Massachusetts, 36, 41 n, 52, 70-2, 75, 227
Masses, 1103
Mathon, 663
Matteoti, 591, 598, 650
Matthew, 644
Maurice, 549, 560
Maurras, Charles, 661
Max Eastman's Address to the Jury, etc., 1104
Maxims of War (Napoleon I), 510
May Day, 432, 788, 1156, 1162
Mazzini, 161-5, 243 n, 244, 310, 397, 399, 401, 580, 584-6
McClellan, General, 141-2
McFadden, Lewis T., 685
Meaning of the Agricultural Tax (V. I. Lenin), 892
Means and Ends (A. J. Penty), 561
Measurement of American Wealth (R. R. Doane), 523
Mechanistic View of War and Peace (G. W. Crile), 514
Mediterranean, 23-5, 27, 200, 668
Mehring, Franz, 916, 932
Meliorism, 182, 196, 284, 567-8, 586, 729
Memel, 1064
Memories and Studies (W. James), 359
Menace of Fascism (J. Strachey), 650
Mendietta, 1072
Mensheviks, 412, 428-9, 460, 470-4, 811, 834, 864, 1013, 1019; differences with Bolsheviks, 428, 784, 793 ff, 824-8, 830; role in 1917 Revolution, 472-4, 842 ff, 1084; role in Georgia, 472-3, 969-70; role in 1905 Revolution, 805, 807 ff, 819-22, 824-5; enter government, 853, 860; counter-revolutionary activity, 877 ff; join Bolsheviks after October, 897; *see also* Social Democratic Labor Party
Men's League for Women's Suffrage, 1103
Mercantile System and Its Historical Significance (G. Schmoller), 541
mercantilism, 49, 83, 541, 551, 609, 670
Mercier, 88 n
Merriam, C. E., 530 n
Metaphysical Theory of the State (L T. Hobhouse), 152, 162, 551
Metternich, 160, 614, 747-8
Mexican War, 228, 1167
Mexico, 136
Michelangelo, 24
Mikhailov, 794
Milan, 250, 581
militarism, 192, 206-7, 342, 432, 434, 455, 511 2, 581, 630-1, 1044; rise of, 503 ff, 509 ff, 628
Militarism and Statecraft (Munroe Smith), 470
Military Revolutionary Committee, 862
Miliukov, 844, 851 3 866, 886
Miliutin, 870 n
Mill, John Stuart, 177, 179-83, 229, 247, 279, 366 n, 382, 389, 392, 506 n, 547
Millerand, 300, 409-10, 434-5, 437, 809
Millerandism, 441
Miners Federation of Great Britain, 563
Mir (Russian commune), 166, 258, 777, 782-3
Mirabeau, 70, 87 n, 96 n
Mirbach, Count von, 877
Mirsky, Sviatopolk, 804
Misleaders of Labor (W Z Foster), 1120
Missouri Compromise, 75, 130, 136, 138
Mittel Europa, 499
Mobilization of a University, 521
Modern Corporation and Private Property (A. A Berle and G. C. Means), 695, 696
Modern Monthly, 1105, 1149
Modern Science and Anarchism (P. Kropotkin), 212
Modern Theories and Forms of Industrial Organization (G. D. H. Cole), 563
Moghiliev, 862
Moltke, General von, 516, 633
Mond, Sir Alfred, 669
Mongolia, 499, 1016
Monist (M. Baum), 359

Monroe Doctrine, 455
Montaignards, *see* Jacobins
Montecanti, 601
Montenegro, 580
Montesquieu, 87 n, 90, 99, 120, 208
Monthly Labor Review (U S Bureau of Labor Statistics), 280, 487, 1068
Moors, 85, 244
Moral Equivalent to War (W James), 359
Morelly, 101, 739
Morgan, 183
Morgan loan to Italy, 602
Morocco, 1064, 1145
Morris, William, 408
Moscow, 84, 332, 478, 629, 817, 875, 884, 994, 1026, 1905 insurrection, 429, 811-2, 815, 821-3 1917 revolution 861, 871
Moscow's Reply to the I I P, 982
Mosley, Sir Oswald, 498, 669 71, 715
Most, Johan, 260 3, 414
Mountain, 95, 99, *see also* Jacobins
Mr Gladstone (W P Hall), 175
Mueller, Reichsbishop, 643
Mueller, Richard, 916
Muensterberg, 515
Muenzer, Thomas, 737
Muhsam, Erich, 924
Mumford, Lewis, 701
Mun, Count Albert de, 557
Munich, 612, Hitler putsch at 616 7, Communist uprising, 901, 918, 924
Murmansk region, 887, 902
Muscovy Company, 51
Mussolini (Il Duce) 165 197 8, 359, 363, 543, 578, 583 ff, 620, 648, 650, 655, 657, 661-3, 667, 671, 681, 683 4, 700, 704, 715, 1063, turns patriot, 563 march on Rome, 300, 590 program, 591 2
Muste, A J 1112
Mutual Aid (Kropotkin), 258
Mutualism, 201, 213 24, 229-35, 761, program of, 295 6
My Battle (A Hitler), 609, 614, 617, 634
My Disillusionment in Russia (E Goldman), 263
My Further Disillusionment in Russia (E Goldman), 263
My Life (L D Trotsky), 889
My Philosophy of Industry (H Ford), 698
Myshkin, 794
Mysterious Universe (Jeans), 358

Nanking, 500, 989, 1006
Nanking Government, 501
Napoleon and America (E L Andrews), 112
Napoleon and Macchiavelli (F P Sterns), 110, 543
Napoleon I (the Great), 41 n, 87, 98 n, 106 ff, 114, 120, 123, 135, 149, 158, 178, 181, 295, 381 n, 382, 461, 503, 509, 551, 664, 673, 714, 889, 1037 9, 1083, wars of, 110 124, 151, 217, capitalist advances under, 107-12
Napoleonic Studies (J. H Rose), 110
Napoleon III (Louis Napoleon, "Social Emperor," the Little), 62, 173-4, 224, 295-6, 459-60, 557, 673, 751, 761, 763-4, 766, 772
Narbonne commune, 772
Narodnaia Volia (Will of the People), 166
Narodniki (populists), 412, 782-6, 1042, 1160, 1162, terrorism, 783, idealize peasantry, 783, 785, hostile to Marxism, 785, *see also* Populism "Narrows," 935
Naseby, 32, 39
Nashe Slovo (Our Word), 845
Nassanov, 1013 n
National Catholic Federation, *See* Fédération Nationale Catholique
National Civic Federation, 282, 290
National Confederation of Labor (C N T) 309, 1137, joins Third International, 936
National Confederation of Labor (France), 664
National Fascists, 669
National Federation of Bourses, 298
National Federation of Labor, 297 8
National Industrial Recovery Act (N I R A), 289 91, 715 6, 1072, *see also* New Deal
Nationalist Party (Germany), 617 8
National Labor Union 273, 400 1, 413
National Party Platforms, (K H Porter), 430 431, 445 446 456
National Socialist German Workers Party (N S D A P, Nazis), 614 ff, economic principles of, 621 ff, propaganda in U S, 683 4, attack workers' parties, 1048 9, *see also* Hitler
National Socialist Party (Germany), *see* National Socialist German Workers Party (Great Britain) 930
National Textile Workers Union, 1115
National Workshops, 220 742, 749 50
Natural and Artificial Rights of Property Contrasted (T Hodgskin), 391
Natural Law (Lysander Spooner) 229
Nature of Capitalist Crisis (J Strachey), 1099
Nature of the Physical World (Eddington), 358
Nazis, *see* National Socialist German Workers Party
Near East, 631, 1064
Nearing, Dr Scott, 623 n, 1100
Necker, 96 n
Neglected Socialist (F C Clark), 744
Negro, 17, 53, 58 ff, 65-6, 74, 76, 112, 127, 134 ff, 198, 278, 285, 413, 537 8, 572 3, 684-5, 718, 722 5, 728, 1139 40, 1160, revolts, 62 n, 1163, suffrage, 146, permanently disemployed, 490 n problem, 1168-70, *see also* lynching, slavery
Neither God nor Master, 758
neo-Hegelians, 152, 211
neo Kantianism, 156, 353, 437
Nepluev, 818
Nepman, 1020, 1024-5, 1029
Netherlands, 25, 86 n, 407
Netschajeff, 249, 261

New Bedford strike, 330, 1115
New Deal, 289, 700, 717 n, 1072, 1164; *see also* National Industrial Recovery Act, Roosevelt, Franklin D
New Deal and the Old Deal (A. Bittleman), 1072
New Democracy (H L Ickes), 526
New Economic Policy and the Tasks of Political Enlightenment (V I Lenin), 893
New Economic Policy (Nep), 883, 892-4, 957, 1017, 1019-20, 1022, 1024-5, 1029, 1035, 1085
New England, 33, 53, 57, 68, 71, 133-5
New Freedom (W Wilson), 188, 189
New German Republic (E Luehr), 927
New Governments of Central Europe (M W Graham), 914
New Harmony, 231, 388
New International, 1036, 1100
New Lanark, 387 8
New Masses, 1070, 1103
New Policies of Soviet Russia (Lenin, Bucharin and Rutgers), 892
News From Nowhere (William Morris), 693
New Society and Other Writings (R Owen), 670
New Testament, 637
Newton, 43
New Unionism (Andre Tridon), 302
New View of Society and Other Writings (R Owen), 386
New York Central, 132, 142 n
New York Central Labor Union, 276, 279
New York City, 65, 146 7, 332, 394, 402-3, 412, 488, 529, 683, 707, 1115, 1156, draft riots, 143 4
New York Daily Tribune 394
New York Times 1088
New Zealand, 166 n
Next Ten Years in British Social and Economic Policy (G D H Cole), 666, 667
Nicaragua, 136, 1146
Nicholas, Czar 837 8, 845 6, 877
Nicolaiev, 1087
Niebelungen 645
Nietzsche, 512, 514 5, 586, 621, 633, 635 8, 644, 651 2, 679
nihilism, 166, 249 n, 782, 1161
1905 (L D Trotsky), 248, 776, 778, 780, 803, 804, 814, 816, 818
Ninth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada (Department of Labor, Canada), 319
Nishni Novgorod, 776
Nitti, 587, 673
Nogin, 870 n, 932
Non Partisan League, 687, 1120
Northern Star, 745
North German Confederation, 406
Norway, trade unions in, 951
Noske, 479, massacres workers, 474, 923-5
Notes on English History (Napoleon), 41
Notes to the People (E Jones), 394
Notes on the War (F Engels), 764
Nouveau Christianisme (Saint-Simon), 381
Novaya Zhizn (New Life), 821
Now and After, the A B C of Communist Anarchism (E Goldman), 263

O Brien, J. Bronterre, 171, 173, 394
O B U. Bulletin, 320
Ochrana, 798
O Connor, Feargus, 171 2
October (1917) Revolution 63 n, 101, 263, 870 ff, role of Anarchists in, 263 5, role of Bolshevik right wing, 870, completes bourgeois democratic revolution, 884, *see also* Russian Revolution of 1917
Odessa, 812, 823, 887, 902
Of Civil Government, etc (J Locke), 49
OGPU, 1021 n, 1086
Ohio Land Company, 53 n, 54
Ohio Socialist, 1107
Old South Leaflets 140
Old Testament, 637, 644 735
Olgin M 1109 n
Oliver Cromwell (C H Firth), 38
Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches (T Carlyle) 39
On Civil Disobedience (H Thoreau) 228
One Big Union movement, 319 20
One Step Forward Two Steps Backward (V I Lenin) 797
On Our Way (F D Roosevelt), 713, 717 1119
On the Future of Our Educational Institutions (F W Nietzsche), 635
On the Prospects of Society (J E Smith), 395
On the Sovereign Power Among the Scots (G Buchanan), 542
On War (C von Clausewitz), 516
Open Court (H Simons), 355
Open Door at Home (C A Beard), 699
Opinions and Reflections of Napoleon (L C Breed ed) 109 110
Order No 1, 847
Order of Seventy Six, 685
Oregon general strike, 474
Orel, 888
Organisateur (Saint Simon), 381
Organization of a World Party (O Piatnitski), 981
Origin of the Family Private Property and the State (F Engels), 734
Orleans, Duc d, 98
Orleans House of, 109
Osthilfe scandal, 648
Otsovism 828 30
Otto of Hapsburg, 657
Our Heritage from 1776 (B D Wolfe), 1160
Our Neurotic Age (S D Schmalhausen), 1105
Outer Mongolia, 502, 992
Outlines of Lectures on Jurisprudence (R Pound), 193
Outlines of Sociology (L Gumplowicz), 634
Outlines of Two Speeches (Karl Marx), 398, 399
Out of a Job (Earl Browder), 1072

Out of Their Own Mouths (Munroe Smith), 209, 514, 515, 516
Out of the Past (R W Postgate), 758, 762
Ouverture, Toussaint L', 112 n
Overproduction and Crises (K. Rodbertus), 554
Owen, Robert, 169, 221, 231-2, 272, 377, 384 ff, 392, 670, 693
Owen and the Christian Socialists (E. Seligman), 550
Owenism, 172, 220-1; in U. S, 385-6

pacifism, 192, 227, 343, 455, 466, 578, 630 1, 641, 698-9, 1144, 1146, 1167; Anarchist, 265; denounced by Kienthal Conference, 467; Catholic, 641
Paine, Thomas, 46, 68, 82 n, 95, 96 n, 119-21, 129, 207-8
Palatinate, 752
Palfrey, 137
Palma, President, 1068
Palmer, Attorney General, Red Raids, 1109
Palmerston, Lord, 459
Panama Canal, 384 n, 707
Pan-American Federation of Labor, 479
Pan-Germanism, 613, 619, 621, 629, 632 3
Pan-Islamism, 948
Pan-Slavism, 243 749
Papen, von, 619, 650, 673, 1051
Papers of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1851 (M F Williams, ed), 723
Paper Tigers, 997
Paris, 39 n, 86, 96, 98, 105 6, 111, 216-7, 251, 296, 298, 385, 400, 432-3, 511, 742; proletariat, 251, 738, 749; condition of masses in, 393
Paris Commune, 103-5, 111, 114, 240, 243, 378, 738, 1037-9
Paris Commune (E. S. Mason), 251, 757, 758, 760
Paris Commune (Karl Marx), 764, 773
Paris Commune of 1871, 127, 144, 158, 164-5, 176, 205, 213, 241, 243-4, 249 54, 258, 273, 296, 299, 337, 401-3, 409, 419, 427, 460, 469, 472, 682, 760 1, 763-75, 1130; role of First International in, 401-2, lessons of, 461, 755, 773; role of bourgeoisie, 764-8, 771 n, 772-4; program, 767 8; revolutionary acts, 769-71; role of peasantry, 770; mistakes, 771 2, 774, suppression of, 772; National Guard of, 764, 766, 768-70, Assembly, 769, 771
Parke, 386 n
Parker, Theodore, 386 n
Parmanides, 348
Parsons, Albert, 261-3, 413
Parthenopian Republic, 111
Party of 1848 (Hungary), 905
Parvus, 805-6
Pascaic (A. Weisbord), 285
Passaic strike (1926), 321, 330, 1114-5
Past and Present (T. Carlyle), 548, 549
Pataud, E , 304-5
Paul, 644
Peaceful Revolutionist, 231
Peasant Question in France and Germany (F. Engels), 439
Peasants International, 985
Peasants Union (Russia), 817
Pecs mutiny, 906
Peel, Sir Robert, 127
Pegley, 584
Peidle, 916
Pekin, 998, 1006
Pelley, 685
Pen and Hammer Societies, 1105
Penn, William, 52
Penty, A J., 561-2, 564
People's Democratic Party (Germany), 748
"People's Freedom," 411
People's Party (U. S), 19, 186, 274, 275 n, 322, 687
Pepper, John (Schwartz, Pogany), 915, 984-5
Perkins, Francis, 1118
Perovskaia, Sophia, 411, 794
Pershing, General, 519
Persia, 631, 851
Peru, 496
Pestaña, 950
Peter the Great, 224 n, 778
Petition of Rights of 1688, 48
Petlura, 887-9
Petrograd (St Petersburg, Leningrad), 411-2, 428 9, 784, 803, 811 2, 816 821-2, 855 861-3, 875, 889, 1905 Soviet, 428, 813 5, 821-3, 1026, February (1917) insurrection, 839, 841
petty bourgeoisie, 114, 125, 170-1, 173, 197 8, 201, 212, 235, 240-2, 247, 419 20, 422 3, 612, 615, 679; as leader, 241, 253, 397, 419, 480; *see also* Jacobins; in present crisis, 489-90; role under Fascism, 576, 623, 626; role in 1848 Revolution, 759-60
Phalanx, 384-5
Phalanx or Journal of Social Science, 386
Phenomenology of Mind (G W F Hegel), 350
Philippines, 455, 1146
Phillips, Wendell, 137, 140 n, 142, 400 n
"Philosophes," 93
Philosophical Opinion in America (G. Santayana), 356
Philosophy and Civilization (John Dewey), 359
Philosophy of "As If," (Vaihinger), 155
Philosophy of Auguste Comte (L. Lévy-Bruhl), 179
Philosophy of Law (I. Kant), 155
Philosophy of Misery (Proudhon), 213
Physiocrats, 17 n, 83, 93-4, 101, 366, French, 94, 96
Piccole Italiane, 599
Piedmont, 163
Pierce, 156 n, 355
Pilgrims, 36 n
Pilsudski, 888
Pitkin, Walter B., 700
Pitt, William, 95 n, 109, 105, 121
Plato, 348-9

Platt Amendment, 1068
Plechanov, George, 412, 783 n, 784, 786-7, 793, 845, 1095
Plehve, von, 803 4
Plum Plan, 286
Pluralistic Universe (W James), 357, 358
Pogany, Jacob, *see* Pepper, John
Poincaré, 662
Poland, 86 n, 111, 159 60, 162, 224, 243, 327, 398, 459-60, 468, 492, 628, 634, 657, 748, 750, 819, 873, 885, 888, 901, Fascism in, 575, general strikes in 817, seizes Vilna, 1064, *see also* Liberalism, Capitalism, Socialism
Polish French alliance, 627
Polish German alliance, 620, 628 9
Political Economy of War (F W Hirst), 100, 172, 503
Political Ideas of the English Romanticists (C Brinton), 549
Political Science Quarterly, 314, 550
Political Theories from Luther to Montesquieu (W A Dunning), 542
Political Theories of P J Proudhon (S Y Lu), 215
Political Treatise (B de Spinoza), 546
Political Writings of Rousseau 93
Politique (Saint Simon), 381
Politische Anthropologie (L Woltmann), 516
Pomerania, 152
Poncet, 663
Pontine Marshes, 601
Poor, Konrad, 737
Poor Law Amendment Act (1834), 170, 173
Popolo d Italia, 583, 588
Popular Party (Italy), 559
Popular Political Economy (T Hodgskin), 391
Popular View of the Doctrines of Charles Fourier (P Godwin), 395
Populism, 19, Russian, 166, 249, 258, 412, 785, *see also* Narodniki American 56, 187 8 English, 214 Anarchist, 260
Populist Revolt (J D Hicks), 187
Port Arthur, 986
Portrait of National Socialism (Leon Trotsky), 613
Portugal, 25, 31, 243
Positive Outcome of Philosophy (J Dietzgen) 751
Positivism, 178 80
Possibilists, 432
Potressov, 787
Pouget, E, 304 5
Pound, Roscoe, 701
Poverty of Philosophy (Karl Marx), 364
Powderly, Terence V, 274 n, 414, 440
Practical Directions for the Speedy and Economical Establishment of Communities (W Thompson), 389
Pragmatic Elements in Kant's Philosophy (C E Witter), 357
Pragmatism, 156, 198, 284, 353 ff, 701, 723, compared with Marxism, 353, 360-2
Pragmatism and French Voluntarism (L S Stebbing), 358
Pragmatism (W. James), 356, 358
Pravda (Truth), 848 50, 976, 1004, 1012, 1021, 1025
Preparing for Revolt (V I Lenin) 867, 868
Pre-Parliament, 864, 869, 1092
Presbyterians, 35 6, 38-9
Pressburg, 913-5
Prince (Machiavelli), 543
"Prince Potemkin," mutiny on, 818
Principles of Political Economy (J. S. Mill), 177
Principles of Political Economy and Taxation (Ricardo), 122
Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons in 1933 (U S Bureau of Census), 529
Private History of a Polish Insurrection (H S Edwards), 159
Private Soldier Under Washington (C K Bolton), 67, 69
Problems of the Chinese Revolution (L D Trotsky), 990, 991, 996, 1004, 1007, 1008, 1010, 1011, 1012, 1013
Proclamation of the Army of the East (Wilhelm II), 516
Production Trends in the United States Since 1870 (A F Burnes), 488
Program and Constitution, Workers Party of America 1110
Program der blanquistischen Kommune (F. Engel), 758
Progress and Poverty (Henry George), 408
Progressive Party (U S), 430
Proletarian 1108
Proletarian Party, 1106, 1108
Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky the Renegade (V I Lenin), 884, 885, 1089, 1091
proletariat, 122 178, 184, 193 4, 199, 212, 213 4, 217 8, 220 222, 230-1 240 2, 244-5, 256, 269, 296, 372-3, 378, 402, 469 ff, 518, 554, 586, 697, 741, 745 6, internationalism of, 253, role of, 353, 400, 420, 747, 750 2, led by skilled workers, 419 443, 480, has no fatherland, 426 463 alliance of peasantry and, 429, 1084, 1126, 1130, alliance with democratic bourgeoisie, 459 cannot absorb petty bourgeoisie, 490, 609 *lumpen* 490, under fascism, 603 4, 680, *see also* Dictatorship of the Proletariat
Proletarii, 821
Propaganda Technique in the World War (H D Lasswell), 517
Proposed Roads to Freedom (Bertrand Russell), 250
Proudhon, 87 n, 171, 205, 206 n 213 5, 218 ff, 229 31, 233, 244 7, 251 2, 254, 257 8, 295, 364, 384, 391, 407, 424, 686, 757, 769 61
Proudhonists, 218, 243, 251 2, 295, 400, 760 1, 769, 771 2
Provisional Committee of Duma Members, 843-4
Provisional Government (Russia), 844, 846 ff, 864 ff
Prussia, 111 2, 151, 157, 458 9, 463, 508, 551, 553, 555, 606, 747, 751 2 927, Social

1st government in, 619, soviets in, 920, Nazi referendum in, 1052
Psychic Factors of Civilization (L F. Ward), 190
Public Discussion between Robert Owen and the Rev J H Roebuck (R Owen), 387
Purcell, 949
Puritanism, 31, 33
Puritan Revolution, *see* English Civil Wars
Puritans, 35 ff, 38 n, 41 n, 52
Putilov, 862
Pym, 52

Quadregesimo Anno ("Reconstructing the Social Order"), 559
Quakers (Society of Friends, Children of Light), 36 8, 41 n, 60, 134, 228
Quick and the Dead (G Bradford), 689

Rabkrin, 1021
Radek, Karl, 969 994, 1004, 1088
Radicalism, 19, 79 82, 162, 201, 205, 208, 245, 430, English, 35 ff, 123, 125, 408, American, 56, 64, 115, 139 169 187 8, 225, French, 84 ff, 115, 169, 205, Napoleonic 109 11, philosophic, 125, 173 4, 201, 208, 547
Radical Socialists, 186 1078
Radicals of 1848, 401
Raditch, 985
Raete system, 935
Railroad Brotherhoods, 286, 317
Railroad Union (Russia), 875
Rakovsky, 932
Randolph, 69 n
Rapallo, Treaty of, 893
Raskolnikov, 1008
Rasputin, 837 8
rationalization 341, 487, 490, 610
Rationalization Movement in German Industry (R A Brady), 606, 610
Raw Materials Population Pressure and War (Norman Angell) 506
Real Situation in Russia (L D Trotsky), 1020 1028
Rebels and Renegades (M Nomad) 265
Recent American Socialism (R T Fly), 276
Reclus, Elisee, 258
Reconstruction Finance Corporation, 716
Red Army, 263 4, 474, 888 90, 894
Red Guard, 264
Red Insurrection in Finland in 1918 (H Soderhjelm), 904
Red International of Labor Unions, 332, 478, 951, 970, 1075, 1103
Red Trade Union Center, 1050, 1080
Reed, John, 1100, 1103, 1107
Reflections on Violence (G Sorel), 180, 307, 586, 587
Reformation, 23, 28, 85, 150, 153 n, 201, 542, 552
Reform Bill of 1832, 126, 170, 174, 388
Réforme, 745
reformism, 253 4, 299, 304, 321-2, 420 ff, 576 ff, defined, 16-8, petty-bourgeois, 235; trade union, 269 92, social base of, 1093
Reichstag fire, 620
Reichswehr, 926, 1061
Relation of Carlyle to Kant and Fichte (M Storrs), 155
Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (R H Tawney), 31, 33, 540, 541
Rembrandt, 25
Remmele, 1054
Renaissance, 23 ff, 44, 85 n, 99, 200
Reparations Commission, 606
Report of the Fifth National Convention of the Young Communist League of U S A, 1116
Report on the Steel Strike of 1919 (Interchurch World Movement), 1101, 1102
Republic (Plato), 703
Republican Party (U S), 133, 138 40, 142, 188 190 n, 191, 284, 322, 717
Republican Tradition in Europe (H A L Fisher), 99, 106
Republic of the Workingmen 413
Rerum Novarum ("On the Condition of Labor"), 559
Resolutions and Theses of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International, 966, 968, 971
Restoration (England), 42 51
Restoration (France), 111
Revel 812
revisionism 419 ff, 802 *see also* Bernstein, Kautsky
revolution bourgeois 403 426, 431, 458, 1038 9, *see also* French Revolution American Revolution Russian Revolution, proletarian, 403, 431, 469 ff 486, 493, *see also* Russian Revolution, Dictatorship of the Proletariat First International Second International Third International, theory of permanent, 992, 1004
Revolution and Counter Revolution in Hungary (O Jászi), 908, 910 912, 915
Revolution and Counter Revolution (Karl Marx), 217, 752
Revolution and Its Leader (A Turati), 599
Revolutionary Age 1100, 1107
Revolutionary Idea in France (G Elton), 95, 381
Revolutionary Pamphlets of Kropotkin, 212, 257, 265
Revolutionary Party of China, 989, 992
Revolutionary Syndicalism (J A Estey), 301
Revolution from 1789 to 1906 (R W Postgate), 171, 393, 395
Revolution of 1848, 133, 213 4, 239, 241 3, 245, 337, 548, 746, 748, 755, 1130, ends leading role of petty bourgeoisie, 241, *see also* France, Germany, Great Britain
Revolution of 1830, 214, 747
Revolution of 1905, 165, 233 n, 412, 428 9, 452, 755 6, 763, 803 ff, 988, St Petersburg Soviet of, 428, 813-5, Moscow insurrection, 429 811-2, 815, 821-3, role of Mensheviks in, 805, 807 ff, 819-22, 824-5; role of Bol-

sheviks in, 805 ff, 819-21, 822-5; role of proletariat in, 812; role of bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie in, 815
Revolution of 1688, *see* English Civil Wars
Revolution (Weydemeyer), 413
Rhenish Gazette, 747, 752
Rhine, re-militarization of, 620, 656
Rhineland Commission, 606
Rhineland uprising, 925
Riazanov, 869
Ricardian Socialists (E. Lowenthal), 390, 392
Ricardo, 169, 219, 221, 363, 365-6, 372, 388-9, 391
Richard Cobden (J. A. Hobson), 127
Richberg, Donald, 290 n
Rights of Man (T. Paine), 46
Rights of War and Peace (Grotius), 30, 45
Ripley, George, 386 n
Rise of American Civilization (C. and Mary Beard), 69, 133
Rise of the German Republic (H. G. Daniels), 917, 920, 922, 923, 927
Rittendorf, General, 616
Robert Owen (A. J. Booth), 387
Robespierre, 41 n, 92, 95, 101 n, 102-6, 190, 243, 738, 1036-8
Rochedale, 171, 241
Rochefoucauld, Duc de la, 88 n
Rockefeller, 1073 n
Rocque, Colonel Robert de La, 663 4
Rodbertus, 554, 556
Rodzianko, 838, 851
Roehm, 649-50
Rogachev, 794
Roland, 87 n
Rollin, Ledru, 434
Romagna province, insurrection in, 581
Roman Republic, 111
Rome, 24, 85, 92, 99, 200, 348, 543, 590; Fascist march on, 300
Roosevelt, Franklin D., 289, 291, 668 n, 685, 702-3, 713, 715-6, 1067, 1069-73, 1118-20, 1164; recognizes Russia, 1066
Roosevelt, Theodore, 188, 190, 430, 707-8, 717 n
Rosenberg, 634, 644-5
Rote Fahne, 1054
Rothschild family, 556, 664
Rotten Boroughs, 49, 76 n, 121, 125-6
Rousseau, J. J., 46, 87 n, 88 ff, 101, 119, 121, 153, 155 n, 180-1, 206, 227, 358, 546, 665, 739, 757, 783
Roux, 103, 741
Rowan, 331
R. Owen and His Social Philosophy (W. L. Sargent), 388
Roy, 1006
Ruhr, 606-7, 640, 925, 927-9, 1054
Rumania, 627, 657, 888; seizes Bessarabia, 1064
Ruskin, John, 549, 693
Russell, Bertrand, 250, 1104
Russell, Charles Edward, 457
Russia in Revolution (D. DeLeon), 471
Russian Revolution (G. Vernadski), 875
Russian Revolution (J. Mavor), 875
Russian Revolution of 1917, 263-4, 285, 328, 467-8, 469 ff, 480, 574, 682, 763, 819 n, 835-97; role of Mensheviks in, 472-4, 842 ff, 1084; Bolshevik theory of, 472; role of peasantry in, 472, 837, 847, 853, 862, 865-6, 870, 873 ff; role of bourgeoisie, 835, 841-4, 853; role of Social-Revolutionaries, 842 ff; role of Bolsheviks, 836, 840, 842 ff; April days, 851-3; June demonstration, 854; July days, 855-8, 868; August days, 861-3; state forms evolved by, 1084-6; *see also* February Revolution, October Revolution
Russian Revolution (W. H. Chamberlin), 876, 877, 896
Russian Turmoil (General A. I. Denikin), 847
Russia, Political and Social (L. Tikhomirov), 166, 167
Russia (Soviet Union), 15, 19-20, 86 n, 121, 135, 147, 157-60, 165, 224, 227 n, 243, 263-5, 288, 317, 332-3, 354, 377, 379-80, 426, 428, 430-1, 453, 458-9, 470-4, 496-7, 500, 502, 627-8, 652, 705 n, 749, 776-897, 969-70, 992, 1017 ff, 1025, 1029-30, 1032-5, 1043-6, 1056, 1074; foreign intervention in, 265, 876, 878, 902; general strikes in, 306-7, 803-4, 812-3, 815, 820; trade unions of, 319, 321, 789, 803, 951, 1018-9, 1024-5, 1028-9, 1034; proletariat of, 428, 779, 781, 812, 836, 1017, 1019, 1021, 1023, 1032; Marx-Engels tactic on, 458-9, 466; capitalist recognition of, 479, 1066-7; economy of, 490, 493, 499, 779-80, *see also* Five-Year Plan; role of party in, 594; preparations for war against, 620, 629-30, 632, 643, 675, 682; peasantry, 777-8, 780, 80 , 817, 823-4, 890, 1023-4, 103 1043, 1085-6, 1092; alliance of workers and peasants in, 805-7, 817, 878 ff, 1021, 1030, 1035, 1091; bourgeoisie of, 781, 815, 835; petty-bourgeoisie of, 805, 815; growth of capitalism in, 1033-4; alliance with Czecho-Slovakia, 1060; role in Italo Ethiopian War, 1064-5; new Constitution of, 1082-93; re-introduction of bourgeois ideals into, 1086; *see also* Revolution of 1905, Russian Revolution of 1917, Capitalism, Bonapartism, anti-Semitism, Populism
Russland in der Revolution (Trotsky), 307
Russo Japanese War, 707, 764, 778, 803, 986
Rutgers, J. S., 1101
Ruthenberg, Charles E., 457, 1101, 1111, 1112 n
Rykov, 865, 869-70, 875, 1026, 1029, 1088

Saar, 606, 620, 660; plebescite, 656, 1058
sabotage, 301-2, 315, 429, 534, 610, 704, 1100; capitalist, 523-5, 534
Sabotage (E. Pouget), 301
Sacco, 261
St. Etienne, 393; commune, 772
St. Louis, 413-4
St. Petersburg, *see* Petrograd
Saint-Simon, 87 n, 169, 177-9, 220, 377 n, 378, 380 ff, 548, 594, 659, 693, 743-4, 760

Saint-Simon and Saint-Simonism (A. J. Booth), 381
Saint Simonism in the Radicalism of Thomas Carlyle (D B Cofer), 382, 548
Sakhalin, 501
Sanini, 1069 71
San Martin, Grau, 1068, 1072
Sansculottes, 84, 466
Sansculottism, 100
Santo Domingo, 112
Sardinia, 580
Savoy, House of, 662
Saxony, 618 9, 917, 1054, uprising, 924, 927, 929
Say-O, 1007-8
Scepticism, 85 n, 87
Schapper, Karl, 404, 744
Scheidemann, 474, 479, 620, 917 ff
Schleicher, von, 619, 673, 1051
Schleswig, 465
Schlueter, 730
Schmidt, 949
Schmidt, Lieutenant, 818
Schmoller, 554
Schnaebele, 470
Schopenhauer, 154 n, 637, 644
Schulze Delitzsch group, 405
Schuschnig, 659, 673
Science of Logic (G W F Hegel), 352
Science of Right (I Kant), 155
Science of Society (S P Andrew), 226
Sciences and Philosophy (J S Haldane), 358
Scotland, 42, 84 n, 123, 508
Scott, Sir Walter, 549
Scotus, Duns, 545
Seamen's Union (China), 994
Séances officielles de l'Internationale à Paris pendant le siège et pendant la Commune, 771
Seattle, general strike in, 474, 902
Sebastopol, 818
Second and Third International and the Vienna Union, 969, 970
Second Chambers in Theory and Practice (H B Lees Smith), 1090
Second Chambers (J A R Marriott), 1089
Second Empire, 251
Second International, 306, 329, 379, 408 ff, 419 ff, 451 ff, 465 7, 479, 776, 797, 800, 802, 807 8, 834, 902 3, 935 7, 944, 961-2, 969, 1094, tactics primary interest of, 431, 1130 1, includes trade unions, 432, 477, excludes Anarchists, 432 Congresses, 432, 434 5, 477 8, 930, 934 compared with First International, 432 3, 1130 2, Secretariat, 433, 931, position on war, 435 6, 466 7, opposes armed insurrection, 435-6, centrism, 420 ff, 437, 447, 451, 455, opportunism, 442, 447, 451, sectarianism, 437 47, 451; Bureau of, 467, struggles against Soviet Union, 471, 478, 577, post War growth, 478, paves way for Fascism, 577-8; *see also* Socialist Parties
Second Republic (French), 213
Second Year of the Workers Party of America, 1110
sectarians, 437 47, 451
Sedan, 406, 764-5
Sedelnikov, General, 818
Sedition Acts, 75
Selassie, Haile, 1145
Selected Essays (Karl Marx), 349, 827
Selections From Lenin, 756, 785, 795, 799, 800, 809, 810, 811, 823, 825, 828, 829, 830
Selections from Treitschke's Lectures on Politics (A L Gowans), 515
Seligman, 701, 1104
Seminole war, 1163
Semitism, 826
Serbia, 580
Sermon on the Mount, 644
Serrati, 589, 957
Seventy Years of Life and Labor (S Gompers), 276
Shanghai, 756, 997 1000, 1004-9, 1011, 1016
share croppers, 728
Share Our Wealth (Huey Long), 690
"Share the Wealth" movement, 689 91
Shatzkin, Lazar, 1087
'Shayites," 74
Shays Rebellion, 68, 70 1, 76, 82 n, 1162
Shelley Godwin and Their Circle (C H N Brailsford), 207
Sherman, 314
Shing Chung Hwei 987-8
Shop Steward movement, 319 21, 933, 935 944, 949 50
Shrine of the Little Flower, 687
Siberia, 502, 631, 837, 878, 1045
Silesia, 404, 606, 620, 748, 925, 927
Silver Shirts, 684 5
Sinclair, Upton, 698, 701 3, 720
Single Tax, 17 n, 408
Siskind, 1109
Sismondi, 219
Six Centuries of Work and Wages (J E T Rogers), 34, 40
Six Radical Thinkers (J MacCunn), 183
Skoropadsky, Hetman, 886
Slave Power (J F Cairnes), 135
Slavery, 53, 58 ff, 68, 74, 130 ff, 227 n, 228, 397, 547 n, 636, 1159, 1163, wage, 374 394 5, 413, 678
Sloan, Sir Hans, 61
Slovakian Soviet Republic, 913, 915
smitchka, see Russia, alliance of workers and peasants in
Smith, Adam, 83, 121 2, 174, 206 7, 219, 222, 363, 389
Smith, William S, 82 n
Social Basis of the German Reformation (R Pascal), 542
Social Catholic Movement in Great Britain (G P McEntee), 560
Social Contract, 48-9, 85, 119-20, 206-7
Social Contract and Discourses (J J Rousseau), 89, 90
Social Contract (J. J Rousseau), 89, 92, 93

Social Democracy, 247, 306, 379, 577-8, *see also* Second International
Social Democratic Federation (Great Britain), 408 9, 930
Social Democratic Labor Party (Russia), 166, 410, 412, 467, 794-5, 801, 811, 823-4, 828 n, splits, 420-1, 830, *see also* Bolsheviks, Mensheviks
Social Democratic Party (Austria), 453, 936, *see* Socialist Party (Austria)
Social Democratic Party (Germany), *see* Socialist Party (Germany)
Social Democratic Party (Great Britain), 930
Social Democratic Party (U S), 415, 446
Social Destiny of Man (C Fourier), 386
Social General Strike (Arnold Roller), 304
Social Guild, 561
Socialism, 19 20, 156, 171, 173 4, 176 7, 184 5, 196, 201 2, 216, 222, 234, 242, 253, 260, 304, 337 480, Polish, 160, Italian, 163, 165, 259, 265, 422, Utopian, 164, 220 1, 296, 377 93, Guild, 174, 385, 393, 561-4, 594, 666 7, Christian, 174, 393, 549 50, 560 1, 609, 613 4, 665, State, 174, 235, 393, 405 7, 431, 554 6, 578, 668, 1136 n, Fabian, 196, 408 Austrian, 260, 655 6, French, 297, 300, 409, 437, 557 8, revolutionary, 297, 420 American, 312, 321, 323, 412 5, 437, Scientific, 347 76, 377, 399, 1126, *see also* Marxism definition of, 379 80, Ricardian, 388 93, Catholic, 393, 405, 549, 552 8, 560 1, 665 German, 404 8, 421, 552 6, 609 10 reformist, 420 ff, 567 ff, 578, English, 280, 408 9, 437, 549 50 560 4, Federal, 551, National, 605 ff, 678, Russian, 166 265, 410 2, 420, *see also* Second International, Socialist Parties
Socialism and Syndicalism (P Snowden), 273
Socialism and Unsocialism of Thomas Carlyle (T Carlyle)
"Socialism at a small s pace,' 1030
Socialism before the French Revolution (W B Guthrie), 739
Socialism in England (S Webb), 408
'Socialism in One Country,' 377, 706, 808, 879 1013, 1016 1040 7, 1056, 1125
"Socialism in our time," 196 478
Socialism in Theory and Practice (M Hillquit), 429
Socialism in Thought and Action (H. W Laidler), 457
Socialism Made Easy or a Plain Exposition of Mr Owen's Views (C Southwell), 387
Socialism, Utopian and Scientific (F Engels), 352, 379
Socialist and Labor International, 480, *see also* Second International
Socialist Democratic Workingmen's Party (Germany), 406
Socialist International, *see* Second International
Socialist Labor Party (Great Britain), 466
Socialist Labor Party (U S), 276, 279, 314, 321 2, 413 [illegible], 432, 435, 442, 444 6, 454-5, 933
Socialist League (Great Britain), 408
Socialist Party (Austria), 410, 453, 654-7, 936; refuses to take power, 475
(Balkan States), 467
(Baltic Provinces), 467
(Belgium), 427
(Bulgaria), 477
(Denmark), 427, 467, 931, forms government, 478
(France), 305, 410, 426 7, 467, 587, 930, 1078 9, turns chauvinist, 451 2, subservience to French imperialism of, 661, 664, Congress of Tours, 901, 935, joins Third International, 935
(Germany), 260, 404 8, 421, 425 7, 432, 435, 437, 453-4, 463 7, 610, 619 20, 923, 928, 1048, 1057 patriotism of, 426, 453, opportunism of, 421, 426, 466, votes war credits, 453, policy of "lesser evil', 568, 619, *see also* Majority Socialists
(Great Britain), 466, 930, 981, joins Third International, 935
(Greece), 935
(Holland), 467
(Hungary), 906, fuses with Communists, 909, joins Third International, 935
(Italy), 310, 410, 434, 455, 466-7, 477, 581 3, 588 91, 930 1, splits, 589, joins Third International, 935
(Norway), 427, 467, 935
(Poland) 467
(Rumania), 477
(Serbia), 466, 477, 930
(Spain), 936
(Sweden), 427, 467, 930, 935, forms government, 478
(Switzerland), 467, 477, 936
(U S), 262, 286, 291, 314 5, 321 2, 329, 415, 429 31 45 [illegible], 466, 479 81, 704, 1100, 1106 ff splits, 481, 936, 1100, 1109, 1120, unemployment program, 704 7, favors Labor Party, 982 3
Socialist Propaganda League, 1100
Socialist Reconstruction of Society (D DeLeon), 445
Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self Determination (V I Lenin), 947
Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, 279, 314, 323 414, 414 5
Socialist Traditions in the French Revolution (H J Laski), 95, 101
Social Monster (J Most), 260
Social Party (U S), 413
Social Philosophy of Carlyle and Ruskin (F Rowe), 548
Social Revolutionary Party (Russia), 166, 412, 466, 470, 786, 821, 865 6, 873, 875, 881 n, 1019, 1042, 1084, role in 1917 Revolution, 472 4, 842 ff, 1084, enters government, 853, counter revolutionary activity, 876 8
Social Struggles and Modern Socialism (M Beer), 152, 404, 545, 552, 554
Social Struggles and Thought (M Beer), 551
Social Struggles in Antiquity (M Beer), 733

Social Struggles in the Middle Ages (M. Beer), 48
Social System (J. Gray), 389
Société d'Armements, 663
Society for Social Economy, 409
Society for the Liberation of Labor (Russia), 412
Society of Cincinnati, 69-71, 73
Society of Old Bolsheviks, 1086
Society of the Equals, 740
Society of the Families, 758
Society of the Seasons, 758
Socrates, 348-9
Solidarité Française, 662
Solidarity, 316
Sorel, George, 180, 306-7, 584, 586-7, 665
Sorge, F. A., 276, 402, 465 n
Soul of Man Under Socialism (O. Wilde), 408-9
South Africa, 1064
South America, 51, 259-60, 493, 707; Anarchism in, 20; proletariat of, 259; imperialist competition in, 497-8
Southey, 174, 549
Souvarine, 957
Soviet Union, *see* Russia
Soviet Union and the Russian Revolution (L. D. Trotsky), 1084
Spain, 31, 44, 51, 86, 111-2, 200, 249, 253, 303, 308-10, 399, 400, 421, 492, 1056; proletariat of, 241-2, 244; trade unions in, 258-9, 308, 326, 400, 949, 951, backwardness of capitalism in, 308; revolution in, 574, 1125; fascist rebellion, 1082, People's Front government of, 1082; *see also* Anarchism, Syndicalism
Spanish-American War, 1067, 1167
Spanish Federation, 259 n
Spanish-Moroccan War, 306
Spanish Morocco, 1064
Spargo, John, 457
Spartacists, 319, 479, 915-7 919 ff, 930, 932, 935-6, 955; mistakes of, 922-6; join Third International, 935
Spartacus Union, *see* Spartacists
Special Report on Crime Conditions, etc., 529
Speech April 23, 1918 (V. I. Lenin), 880
Speech at the Geneva Disarmament Conference (Litvinoff), 1043
Speech at the Third All-Russian Trade Union Congress, 1920 (V. I. Lenin), 880
Speech March 7, 1918 (V. I Lenin), 879
Speech of Remmele in Reichstag, 1054
Speech on the Colonial Question (V. I. Lenin), 948
Speeches and Lectures (Wendell Phillips), 142
Speeches of V. I. Lenin, 880
speed-up, 342, 345
Spencer, Herbert, 153 n, 154, 183-5, 189, 229, 232, 234, 254, 257, 408, 678
Spengler, Oswald, 621, 637-9
Spies, 261
Spinoza, 25, 30, 546
Spirit of Laws (Baron de Montesquieu), 99
Spirit of the Common Law (R. Pound), 33
Spooner, Lysander, 229
Stahlheim, 618, 640
Stahremberg, 657, 659
Stalin (Djugeshvili), 377, 380, 656, 706, 808, 848, 850-1, 865, 870, 897, 929, 977 n, 979, 1017, 1020-2, 1035, 1037-41, 1045, 1060-1, 1096, 1104, 1112, 1116; role in October Revolution of, 870 n; role in Civil War of, 887; role in Chinese Revolution of, 1002-4, 1008-10; nationalism of, 1013; postpones Congresses of Comintern, 1026, 1075; political methods of, 1026-8; approves militarism in France, 1058-60; exterminates Old Bolsheviks, 1088
Stalinism, 578 n, 652, 706 n, 975-1098, 1147-8, 1155; idealizes peasantry, 985, 995, beheads Chinese Revolution, 986; its theory of bloc of four classes, 1003, 1009; on social-fascism, 1047-51; on dual unions, 1047, 1116-7, isolates Soviet Union, 1057; its theory of the Third Period, 1116-7; its policy of People's Fronts, 1075 ff
"Stalintern," *see* Third International, Stalinism
State, 15 ff, 89 ff, 129-30, 154-5, 162, 173-6, 181-2, 192-3, 210, 220, 226, 229, 234, 253, 257, 263, 296, 302, 307, 324, 328, 344-5, 379, 383, 400, 405-7, 424, 429, 455-6, 471, 503-4, 532, 535, 538-9, 540 ff, 562-3, 588, 670, 1089; defined, 15; types, 15 n; Democratic, 55 ff, as arbitrator, 182; Anarchist views of, 245, 247-8, 255, 257 n, under Socialism, 375, workers', 438; and war, 515-6, 518-22; totalitarian, 577, 625 ff; corporative, 577, 591 ff, autarchic, 622 ff; forms evolved by Russian Revolution, 1089-6; armed forces of, 1142-3
State and Revolution (V. I Lenin), 374, 1132
State (Kropotkin), 257
State Socialists of the Chair, 554-6
Statute of Labourers (1547), 735
Stauning, 478
Stavisky scandal, 660
Stephens, 137
Stephens, Reverend Joseph, 173
Stinnes, 606, 608
Stirner, Max (Caspar Schmidt), 205, 208-13, 225, 239, 246, 637
Stockholm Conference, 932-3
Storel, 455
Stories of the Great Railroads (C. E. Russell), 142
Story of the French Revolution (E. Belfort Bax), 100, 103, 104
Strachey, John, 725, 1099 n
Strasser, 276
Strasser, Gregory, 649
Strategy of the World Revolution (L. D. Trotsky), 975, 976, 979, 980
Strenuous Life (T. Roosevelt), 707, 708
stretch-out, 342
strikes: anti-war, 296, 307, 326, 400, 435, 456; of unskilled, 281, 285, 419; political, 302-3, 307, 322, 570, 812; "sit-down," 444 n, 1081

Strike Strategy, No 7, 1117
Struggle for Bread (V W Germain), 516
Struggles and Achievements of the Soviets (L Colesnikov), 870
Struve, Peter, 784, 786-7
Stuarts, 32, 119 n
Studies in Socialism (Jean Jaurès), 426, 427
Study of Organized Labor in America (G G Groat), 274
Suarez, 542 n
Subjugation of Women (J S Mill), 179
Sudan, 1064
Suez, 384 n
suffrage, 57 8, 129, 145 8, 175, 222, 254-5, 306, 405, 420, 427, 748
Summa Theologica (St Thomas Aquinas), 43
Sumner, 287-8
Sumner, Charles, 138
Sun Fo, 1006
Sun Yat sen, Dr, 987 9 991 5, 997-8, 1001
Sun Yat sen, Madame 1006
Sun Yat sen University 994
Svinhufvud, 905
Sweden, 306
Switzerland, 99, 260, 299 400, 470
Sylvis, 273, 400, 413
Symbol and Satire in the French Revolution (E F Henderson), 88
Syndicalism, 19 20, 202, 235, 259 269 333 446, 455, Spanish, 20, 23 29 295, 308 10, 326 French, 295 307, 312 3 325 6, 331, 434, Italian 295 310 326 7 583, 590, German 310 1 American 273 ff 312 ff, 446, failures of, 326 Communist, 328, opposes Soviet Union, 332 3
Syndicalism (J Ramsay MacDonald), 300, 315
Syndicalism and the Co operative Commonwealth, etc (E Pataud and E Pouget), 304 5
Syndicalism, Industrial Unionism and Socialism (John Spargo), 324
Syndicalism in France (L Levine), 299
Syndicalist Educational League 312 n
Syndicalist League of North America, 312 n
syndicates, 340 1
Système Industriel (Saint Simon), 381
Szechwan, 502

Tacitus, 1103
Taittinger, Pierre, 662, 663 n
Taiwan, 986
Tajikistan, 1091
Talien, 738
Talk Between Two Workers (E Malatesta), 261
Taney, Chief Justice, 136
Tang Ping shan, 1004, 1008, 1010
Tang San chi, General, 1009, 1011
Tarde, 383
Tardieu, André, 663
Tax in Kind (V I Lenin), 880, 882, 883
Taylorism, 341
Teachings of Karl Marx (V I Lenin), 366
Technics and Civilization (L Mumford), 701
Technocracy, 330, 693, 695-8, 1104
Technocracy (Stuart Chase), 695
terrorism, 249, 411
Terrorism and Communism (K Kautsky), 472
Tertullian, 644
Test Act, 121
Thalheimer, 976
Theists, 38 n
Theologico Political Treatise (B. de Spinoza), 546
Theory of Business Enterprise (T. Veblen), 694
Theory of the Four Movements (C Fourier), 384
Theory of the Labor Movement (S Perlman), 780
Theory of the Leisure Class (T Veblen) 694
Thermidor, 103, 105 6, 738 Soviet, 1020, 1036 9
Theses and Resolutions of the Fifth World Congress of the Comintern 965 966, 968, 977
Theses of the Communist International Second Congress 942, 943, 944, 946 948, 951
Theses of the Third Congress of the Communist International 954 957, 958, 961, 962, 963 964
Theses of Zinoviev 990, 991, 996
Theses on National and Colonial Questions 948
Theses on the Trade Union Movement 952
Thiers, 397 765 7, 772
Thionville de, 735
Third International (Communist International Comintern) 332, 280, 467, 477, 479 81, 901 1121, influx of centrists into, 903 program of call, 933 First Congress (1919), 930, 933 6, 941, 9 956 Second Congress (1920) 941 ff 95- 956, 981, 992, 996, 1003 Third Congress (1921), 880, 954, 956 66 975 n Fourth Congress (1922), 965 9 971, 975 n Fifth Congress (1924) 965, 977 985 993 ff Sixth Congress (1928) 1040 ff, Seventh Congress (1935), 1067, 1074 6, 1079 on dual unions, 952, 1047, 1116 21 conditions for entry into, 942 on united front 965 9 1047, statutes of 942 theory of social fascism of, 1047 51 theory of Third Period of, 1116 , as auxiliary to Soviet diplomacy, 1045, errors in Germany, 1048 ff, strategy of, 1131 2
Third Period, 1080, 1116 7
Third Reich, *see* Germany
Third Republic (France), 297, 397 558, 774
Thirty Years War, 151 462, 634
Thomas, Albert 1104
Thompson William, 388 92
Thomson, General, 969 70
Thoreau Henry 129, 131, 226 9, 232, 386 n
Thoreau's Philosophy of Life etc (H A Snyder), 227
Thorez, M 1079 81
Thorstein Veblen and His America (J Dorfman), 693, 703

Thoughts Out of Season (F. W. Nietzsche), 636
Thoughts Upon Democracy (J. Mazzini), 163
Through Fascism to World Power (J. S. Monroe), 584
Thuringia, 917; uprising, 925
Thus Spake Zarathustra (F. Nietzsche), 515
Thynnes trust, 617, 658
Tilden, 72
Tilsit, Treaty of, 551
Tocqueville, A. de, 52, 78, 557
Toiler, 1107, 1110
Toller, Ernst, 924
Tolstoy, 227 n, 233, 258
Tomsky, 870, 949, 979, 1026, 1029, 1088
Toombs, 137
Tories, 79, 119-20, 174, 547, 549
Toulon, 106, 1080
Toulouse commune, 772
Tourcoing, 393
Tourgee, Judge A. W., 145
Towards a Christian Sociology (A. J. Penty), 561
Towards a United Front (L. Samson), 1157
Toward Soviet America (W. Z. Foster), 1117
Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx (S. Hook), 361
Townsend, Dr., 589 n, 691-2, 701, 706, 728
Toynbee, Arnold, 172 n
Trachtenberg, Alexander, 1110
Trades and Labor Congress of the Dominion, 319
Trade Union Educational League (U. S.), 1103, 1110
Trade Union General Council, 979-81
Trade Unionism—The Road to Freedom (W. Z. Foster), 1102
trade unions, 124, 126, 164, 172, 174, 177, 196, 222, 233, 250, 252-3, 269-333, 342, 389, 397-8, 424-5, 441-3, 446-7, 451, 480, 554, 560, 569-70, 573, 579, 595, 680, 722, 1072; role of, 270-2, 305, 397, 441-2; racketeering in, 287-8, 531; Fascist, 316, 559-60, 595, 604; Catholic, 556, 558-60, 587, 590, 592, 641, 689
Trade Unions in Soviet Russia, 880
Trade Union Unity League (T. U. U. L.), 1117
Tragedy of Central Europe (E. Ashmead-Bartlett), 906
Tragedy of Waste (S. Chase), 523
Trans-Caucasia, 873, 878
Transvaal War, 442
Treatise on Human Nature (D. Hume), 120
Treint, 957
Treitschke, 515
Trepoff, 411
Trial by Jury (Lysander Spooner), 229
"Tribune" group, 935
Trochu, General, 765
Trotsky, Leon (Bronstein), 307, 783 n, 795, 805-7, 845, 855, 869-70, 894-7, 915, 929, 932, 1020-3, 1026-9, 1036-41, 1084, 1087-8, 1096-9, 1100, 1104-5, 1111, 1116 n, 1126, 1157; at first St. Petersburg Soviet, 428; centrism of, 428-9, 895, 1096-9; imprisoned, 850, 863; at Brest Litovsk, 872; leads Red Army, 888-9, 894; presses for German insurrection, 976-7; on Chinese Revolution, 996, 1002, 1004, 1008; deported, 1028
Trotskyism, 1004, 1026
Trudoviks, 470
True Constitution of Government, etc. (S. P. Andrews), 226
trusts, 340-1, 489, 504, 534-5, 598, 601, 605-6, 608-9, 695, 708, 726
Tseritelli, 845, 970
Tsiperovitch, 949
Tucker, Benjamin R., 232-4, 262
Tugwell, Rex, 703
Tung Ming Hwei (Revolutionary Alliance), 988-9
Turati, 434 n, 589, 957
Turgot, 88 n, 96 n
Turin, 259
Turkestan, 502
Turkey (Ottoman Empire), 200, 459, 851
Turkish War, 581
Turner, 1163
Two-and-a-half International, 479, 969, *see also* Vienna Union
Two Articles on Centrism (Leon Trotsky), 1096
Two Internationals (R. P. Dutt), 451, 478
Two Speeches (Karl Marx), 219
Tyrol, 606

Ukraine, 264, 628, 870, 873, 885 ff, 904, 1032, 1091; German intervention in, 876, 878, 885-6
Ulianova, M. I., 1021 n
Ulyanov, *see* Lenin
Undiplomatic Diary (Maj. Gen. H. H. Brandholdz), 915
Uniform Crime Reports (U. S. Bureau of Investigation), 528, 530
Union Nationale des Combattants, 664
Union of Social Justice, 688-9
Union of Unions, 817
Union Pacific Railway, 132
Union Sacrée, 1078-9
Union Shoe, 737
Unitarian Confederation of Labor (France), 936, 1080
Unitarians, 41 n, 121 n
United Calvin-Lutheran Church, 643
United Communist Party (Germany), 923, 927-8, 936, 955
United Communist Party (U. S.), 1109
United Hebrew Trades, 414
United Mine Workers, 283, 287-8, 290-1, 317-8, 571, 1120, 1134
United Socialist Party, *see* Socialist Party (France)
United States, 15, 16 n, 17, 51-83, 87, 91, 113-5, 127 ff, 149, 175, 182, 184, 194-5, 201, 239, 275-6, 378, 313, 353 ff, 372, 385-6, 397, 413, 444, 470, 474, 485 ff,

499-500, 508, 519 ff, 535-8, 598, 669, 683-4, 687, 707 n, 716, 719, 726, 1146; utilitarianism, 42, 128; distribution of wealth in, 57-8; suffrage in, 57-8, 145-8; wages in, 58, 343, 394, 538, 692, 716; proletariat of, 60-1, 196-7, 280, 285, 343, 440, 687, 721, 1094, 1156-7, 1162-3; Radicalism, 56, 60, 115, 139, 169, 187-8, 225, individualism, 128, 155-6, 1165; petty bourgeoisie of, 191, 261, 344, 686-9, 691-2, 721, 727-9, 1158-9; trade unions, 262-3, 272 ff, 312-33, 401, 414, 451, 535, 570-2, 689, 716, 951, 1101; general strikes in, 306, 474, 902, unemployment, 332, 344, 413, 431, 488, 506, 701 ff, 716, 1072 n, 1118, 1172; agrarian crisis, 345 6; working conditions, 394; fascist trends in, 490, 676, 683 ff; hegemony over world economy, 489-90, 493 4, saves Europe from revolution, 495, 575, struggle with Great Britain, 496, militarism, 511-2, criminality, 527 ff, 572, government bureaucracy, 536 8, trusts, 695, 708, intervenes in Russia, 887-8, *see also* American Revolution, Civil War, Anarchism, Liberalism, Capitalism, imperialism, Socialism, Bonapartism, Syndicalism, anti Semitism
United States Commission on Law Observance, Report of, 531
"United States of Europe," 495-6, 630, 1053
United States of the World, 699, 722
United States Steel Corporation, 476
United Textile Workers, 291, 318
United Toilers, 1109
Universal Aspects of Fascism (J B Barnes), 586
Universal German Workingmen's Association for Full and Equal Suffrage, 405
Urbahns, 1036
utilitarianism, 42, 119 ff, 155, 171-2, 207 8, 354, 544

Vaillant Couturier, 1079
Valois, George, 661
value labor theory of, 221, 230, 347, 365, 389, 423, Marx's analysis of, 365 ff
Value of the Vote (M. Eastman), 1103
Vancouver Trade and Labor Council, 319
Vandervelde, Emile, 478, 1104
Vanzetti, 261
Varieties of Religious Experience (W James), 355
Veblen, Thorstein, 517, 524, 584, 693-5
Velasquez, 25
Vendée, 86
Versailles, 97, 766-8, 771 n, 772, 774
Versailles Treaty, 195, 477, 488, 499, 526, 580, 606, 608, 611-2, 620, 628, 675, 928, 934, 969, 1053, 1061
Vesey, 1163
Veterans of Foreign Wars, 686
Vienna, 111, 151, 159, 366, 611, 654-5, 748, 751, 755, 915
Vienna Union (Two-and a-half International), 479, 957, 1094-5, fuses with Second International, 970
Vigilantes Committee of Anti-Fascist Intellectuals, 663 n
Vilna, 1064
Vinci, Leonardo da, 24
Vindication of the English Constitution (Disraeli, The Younger), 81, 115
Virginia, 52, 58 n, 71, 73-5, 134
Viviani, 409, 584
Vladivostok, 876
Voelkische Beobachter, 617
Voice of Labor, 1107
Voices of Revolt, 880
Voikoff, 1060
Voltaire, 87 n, 88, 95, 783
Voluntarism, 180, 353, 357-8
Volya, 824 n
Vperiod (*Forward*), 821, 824 n
Vorovsky, 1060
Vyx, Colonel, 908-9

Wagenknecht, 1107
Wages, 58, 219, 233, 280, 359, 391-2, 397, 405 6, 446 7, 487, 497, 534, 553, 667, 752 n, government regulation of, 289, rate of rise of, 338, 345, 389, Marxist theory of, 365, post War, 492, regulated by Fascism, 596, 599, 648
Wagner, 554, 637
Waldeck Rousseau Cabinet, 410
Waldenses, 734
Wales, 84 n, 123
Wang Ching wei, 1000, 1006, 1009, 1061
Wan Min, 1077 n
War and America (H Muensterberg), 514, 515, 551
War and the Commune (J Mazzini), 164, 585
War of the Roses, 84 n
Ward, Lester F, 190, 701
Warren, Josiah, 229-32, 686
Warsaw, 158 60, 428, 823, Boshevik march on, 889, 891
Washington, George, 51, 54, 64-6, 68-9, 73, 75 6, 699, 1159
Washington Conference (1922), 997
Washington (D C), 69, 136 n, 147, 478, 529, 712, 1072
"Washingtonians," 74
Waste in Industry (Federated American Engineering Societies), 525
Wealth and Misery (R Owen), 387
Weekly People, 464
Weekly Worker 1110
Weihaiwei, 986
Weimar Republic, 608, 612, 619, 1051, 1054 coalition government of, 619, 977
Weinstein, 1107
Weisbord, Albert, 330, 1115, 1116 n
Weishaupt, Adam, 754
Weitling, William, 210, 412 3, 743 5
Welfare-Liberalism, 169 97, 279, 360, 389, 430-1, 533
Wellington, Duke of, 173
Wendell family, 664
Western Federation of Miners, 279, 314, 323

Western Labor Union, 279, 314
Westervelt, General W L, 524
West Indies, 86, 134
Westminster, 42, 560, Statute of, 498
Westphalia, 752, uprising, 925
Weydemeyer, 347 n, 413
Weygand, General, 889
Whampoa Academy, 993, 997
What Inheritance Do We Reject? (V I Lenin), 1160
What Is Mutualism? (C L Swartz), 235
What Is Property? (Proudhon), 213
What Is to Be Done (V I Lenin), 791, 792, 793, 794
What Next? (L D Trotsky), 1054, 1094
What Social Classes Owe to Each Other (W G Sumner), 129
What Will I Do When America Goes to War? (A Weisbord), 1149
When and Under What Conditions Soviets of Workers Deputies Should Be Formed 946
Whigs, 42, 51, 62, 79, 99, 119 20, 136 8, 173
Whiskey Rebellion, 68, 76
White Guards, 881, 886 ff, 915, 1028
White Russia, 888, 1091
White Slaves of England (J C Cobden), 122
Whitman, Walt, 226
Who Gets the Money? (W Rautenstrauch), 523
Why William James 'Stood By' God (H Simons), 355
Wickersham, George W, 531
Wilde, Oscar, 408 9, 693 4
Wilhelm II, Kaiser, 469, 474 5
William of Orange, 30, 42, 85
Williams, 949
Williams, Roger, 36 n
Will to Believe (W James), 356
Wilson, Woodrow, 188 90, 193, 456 7, 477, 519, 708, 715, 717 n, 886 n, 907, 918
Winnipeg general strike, 320, 474, 902
Winnipeg Trades Council, 320
Winstanley Jerrard, 37 8
Winthrop, 52
Wischnewetsky, Florence, 441 n, 730 n
Witte, Count, 814, 816
Witte, Duma, 826
Wm of Ockam, 48
Wolfe, B D, 1161 1163
Wollkammerai, 611
Woltmann, 632
Women s International Council of Socialist and Labor Organizations 467, 931 936
Women s Order of the Red Swastika, 650
Women's Socialist Conference, 467
Women Suffrage and Sentiment (M Eastman), 1103
Woosung, 1016
Word of Advice to the Orbistonians (J Gray), 389
Wordsworth, 549
Work and Wages (J E T Rogers), 34
Workers Challenge, 1107, 1109
Workers (Communist) Party, 1114 n
Workers Council, 1110
Workers Council group (U S), 1110
Workers' Councils (Germany), 605, 920-3, 929
Workers International (R W Postgate), 259, 400, 768
Workers Opposition, 1137
Workers' Opposition in Russia (A Kolontay), 895
Workers Party of America, 1109-12
Workers Party (U S), 1036 n, 1112
Working Men s College, 550
Workingmen's Party of the United States, 413
Work of the Seventh Congress (D Z Manuil sky), 1074, 1075, 1079
Works (B Franklin), 184
Works Council Movement, 319 21
Works (C Sumner), 138, 139
(D Ricardo, 389
(E Burke), 121
(H Thoreau), 226, 228, 229
(J Adams), 69
(J Madison), 68
World Court, 477
World Revolution (N H Webster), 754
World War, 475, 504, 513, destroys Second International, 451 68, exhausts Europe, 499, 503, destroys capitalism in Russia, 503, role of churches in 519 20 production during, 522 3, cost of, 526, revolutionary movements after 573 5, *see also* Third International
Woytinsky, Vladimir, 526 n
W P A 1118
Wrangel, 875
Writings (Jefferson), 82
(T Paine), 208
Wu, T C, 1006
Wuchang, 989, 1005
Wu Han, 1006 10, government, 1006, 1010
Wurtemberg, 752
Wyclif, 32, 735

Yellow Trade Union Internatinoal, 942
Young Communist International, 963, 1087
Young Communist League (China), 999
(U S), 1121
Young Plan, 608, 611, 617, 619
Your Money's Worth (Chase and Schlink), 341
Yuin Shih Kai, 989
Yudenitch, General, 887 9
Yunan, 502

Zaharoff, Sir Basil, 663
Zasulich, Vera, 411, 412 n, 784, 845
Zetkin Clara, 467, 916, 931 2
Zhelyabov, 794
Zimmerwald Conference 467, 845, 931, 1144
Zimmerwald Union, 932 3
Zinoviev (Applebaum), 848, 870, 889, 932, 934, 949, 965 n, 977, 979, 1002 3, 1021 n, 1026, 1028 9, arrested and executed, 1087 8
Zubatoff, 789, 803
Zwingli, 541