
January 1943

Fourth International

Darlan and the Liberals

By Marc Loris

The Post-War Strategy of Food

By C. Charles

LENIN MEMORIAL ARTICLES:

- The Nineteenth Anniversary . . . *Editorial Comment*
Lenin Wounded--A Speech . . . *By Leon Trotsky*
Lenin on Nationalities . . . *By John G. Wright*

Roosevelt's Financial Problems

By William F. Warde

The Renegades: Lewis Corey

By Harry Frankel

The Slogan for Europe

By M. Morrison

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Manager's Column

Since our readers and agents have learned of the post office decision to hold "from dispatch" the December issue of **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL**, they have extended to us the greatest co-operation. We want to quote from a few of the letters received:

San Francisco: "Under the circumstances, I believe that all agents should try and pay their bills in advance. I am enclosing check. . . ."

Minneapolis: "We are conducting a systematic campaign for additional financial support for our cause . . . we are gratified with the appearance of the last *Militant* and also of the set-up of the present F.I. I am sure it will be well received and that the results of our requests for aid will not go unanswered."

Vancouver, B.C., "Enclosed you will find three dollars which is a donation to the *Fourth International*."

New Haven: "We intend to contribute all we can to carry in the fight against the ban on our publications."

New York: "Please accept this subscription as a token of appreciation of past *Militants* and *Fourth Internationals*."

Milwaukee: "Good news! Since we have at present adequate funds, we've decided to clean the slate of our debts. Enclosed you will find a money order."

* * *

We feel the following entire letter is interesting enough to quote in its entirety:

"I have been a steady reader of the F.I. since I first came across it. However I didn't realize till recently what a necessity it was to any worker trying to keep his head clear in the midst of all the propaganda and counter-propaganda barrages that are being hurled about via press, radio and the movies. My work during the past year was of such a nature that I could rarely get hold of even a newspaper, much less a copy of the *F.I.* However I managed to keep my balance due to the great education the *F.I.* had given me in the past year. Nevertheless, much that happened remained unclear and I became filled with many uncertainties. Well, I can hardly

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describe to you my feelings when I was finally able to get back to a place where I could round up all the back issues and dig in! Gradually I came out of the fog, so to speak, and into clear daylight again. Things once more had a beginning and an end; the future, under the brilliant analytical articles, began to assume forms that made sense; and once more I felt that solid ground was under my feet, that I knew where I was going and what I had to do.

"Your magazine is absolutely indispensable to any class-con-

scious person who is trying to do his bit toward a world free from the hell that it has been plunged into again by world imperialism. It is indispensable, in fact, to anyone who is simply looking for the *straight facts*. I am positive that more and more workers and honest intellectuals will find themselves compelled to turn to the *Fourth International* as the only guide through the madhouse of the present to a civilized future.

"I remain, with gratitude, yours for the future as we both see it and want it."

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The new **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** agent in Newark writes:

"Officially I took over the agent's job in November. At that time the F.I. was pretty much a mess; no records kept, many copies left on the shelves each month, etc. So my first job was to get the current issue off the shelf and to our contacts, and in addition make enough money to pay for the bundle. Results have not been too spectacular, but at least it's a beginning. Twenty-five copies were sold. Most of the nine contacts who bought the magazine had bought it at one time or another, but from now on we will visit all of the 20 or so contacts who should be reading the F.I. regularly, and try to sell 20 copies to them.

"We had made plans for setting a quota of ten subs for this month. We are going ahead with our plans.

"We are going to cover the I.L.A. (Longshoremen's) with this month's issue of the F.I. Will inform you of results."

* * *

We are receiving an increasing number of requests for back issues of the magazine, some for purposes of completing files and others for specific articles.

One request is for any issues of **FOURTH INTERNATIONAL** or the *Militant* dealing with refutation of Burnham's "Managerial Revolution." We took this opportunity of telling the inquirer about the series of articles by Trotsky answering the major issues raised by Burnham, which are now being published as a collection by Pioneer Publishers under the title "In Defense of Marxism."

Another request asks that we "state what it will cost to have all the back copies of F.I. and N.I. as I wish to make my library as complete as possible. As soon as you write and tell me regarding this matter, I will send a money order and also include money for a subscription for one year."

A postscript is added: "As a farmer I would like it if you would carry more articles in the F.I. on the subject of agriculture, farm problems, farm 'bloc,' etc. I'm sure it would be enjoyed by other readers of *Fourth International*."

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME IV

JANUARY 1943

NO. 1

Editorial Comment:

The Nineteenth Anniversary of Lenin's Death—The Capitalists Help Stalin in His Attempt to Pervert Lenin's Ideas—But the Capitalists Must Also Tell Themselves the Truth About Stalin's Counter-Revolutionary Role—The Role They Assign Stalin—The Fatal Flaw in Their Perspective

On January 21 it will be nineteen years since Lenin died. As we commemorate this anniversary, the whole course of events testifies to the accuracy of Lenin's famous characterization of this period of world history: "This is the epoch of imperialist war, proletarian revolutions and colonial uprisings." We are in the midst of the fourth year of such a war; the uprising in India has aroused the whole colonial world; and all the cabinets of the capitalist world are preoccupied with the fear of the coming wave of proletarian revolutions. Willkie quite frankly expressed this fear in his November 25 speech in Toronto: "Europe in 1917 was probably in much the same mood [as today]. It is an inevitable corollary of blood and war-weariness. Then, in 1917, Lenin gave the world one set of answers." Today, as in 1917, the capitalist rulers are frantically seeking ways and means to prevent Lenin's answer from becoming the answer of the workers of the world. The capitalists failed then in Russia and very nearly failed in all Europe. This time the "inevitable corollary of blood and war-weariness" faces them not only in Europe but equally in Asia which slumbered in 1917. It may well be that the twentieth anniversary of Lenin's death will be commemorated in the capitals of new Workers' and Peasants' Republics in Europe or Asia.

Meanwhile, the nineteenth anniversary of Lenin's death is likely to be commemorated by some very strange people. We do not refer to the Stalinists, who commemorated the seventeenth anniversary in 1941 as a year of imperialist war and the next one as a year of "democratic" war; this year, too, they will picture Lenin as a Russian George Washington, "founder of the Soviet Union," and seek to wipe out from the memory of man that he was a world revolutionist. In addition, however, we must steel ourselves to the likely spectacle of Churchill and Roosevelt, or their subordinates, commemorating this nineteenth anniversary, joining with Stalin in the attempt to turn Lenin into a harmless icon. During the past year we have already had such an obscene ceremony: on March 15, 1942 in London high officials of the Churchill government participated at the unveiling of a plaque, draped in a British flag, which was affixed to the house where Lenin had lived for a time forty years before. As Lenin wrote of Marx: "After their death attempts are made to turn the revolutionaries into harmless icons, canonize them, and surround their names with a certain halo for the 'consolation' of the oppressed classes and with the object of duping them, while at the same time emasculating and vulgarizing the *real essence* of their revolutionary theories and blunting their revolutionary edge." The class struggle takes many

forms, including "interpretations" of Marx and Lenin. Churchill carried on the class struggle in 1918-21 by leading world capitalist intervention against the young Soviet republic; he carries it on likewise when he puts up a plaque for Lenin.

While seeking to deceive the masses, the bourgeoisie must nevertheless try to give their own class an accurate accounting of the real situation. If the capitalist rulers join with Stalin in attempting to obscure what Lenin stood for, they must also tell themselves what Stalin really stands for and thus indicate the abyss which separates the world revolutionist Lenin from the Thermidorian Stalin. Thus, for example, the leading editorial in the December 20 *New York Times*:

"Because of . . . a Communist International guided by the Trotskyist ideology of the proletarian world revolution, Hitler could still raise an issue which frightened many Germans into his camp and win a following for similar crusaders elsewhere, including the United States. But the with the 'liquidation' of the Trotskyists in Russia, the proletarian world revolution began to take a back seat, on which sat in the main the Communist dupes in other countries, whom the Moscow ruler despised as tools and liquidated first wherever Moscow itself took over, as in the Baltic states. The state of Stalin became more and more a national state, and the Communist International became the tool of Russian power politics. . . .

"The slogans with which Stalin is spurring the Russian armies to ever greater efforts today are not the Marxist slogans, urging the proletarians of the world to unite, but slogans about patriotism, liberty and the fatherland."

There are obvious "inaccuracies" here. By the time Hitler came to power, the Communist International was no longer guided by "the Trotskyist ideology of the proletarian world revolution." Not the Comintern ideology, but the fact that the Soviet Union remained a workers' state based on nationalization of the means of production, led the capitalists, "including the United States," to facilitate Hitler's rearming of Germany in the hope that he would destroy the Soviet Union. Only when German imperialism became an imminent menace to its capitalist rivals did they cease looking upon Hitler as the leader of world capitalism against the Soviet Union. Naturally one could not expect the *New York Times* to admit these indubitable facts.

Nevertheless, the *New York Times* is accurate in essence. It recognizes Stalin's reactionary role and his uses to world capitalism as an irreconcilable enemy of "the Trotskyist ideology of world revolution." It recognizes that the liquidation of the "Trotskyists" was a blow against world revolution. It under-

stands the real role of the Communist International as a tool of Stalin's nationalistic foreign policy. It makes the first open reference that we have seen in the American press to the fact, hitherto suppressed, that Stalin had ordered the wiping out of the Communist parties in the Baltic states (and also in Poland)—thousands of these Stalinists, upon being united with the Soviet Union, were murdered by the GPU. And, finally, the *Times* contrasts Stalin's nationalistic slogans with the Marxist slogans under which the Soviet Union successfully fought off the capitalist world in 1917-21. Needless to say, the *Times* editorial writer knows very well that the "Trotskyist ideology of the proletarian world revolution" is the ideology of Lenin; but in deference to the Stalinist myth the *Times* makes no reference to Lenin since Stalin pretends to be his inheritor instead of his usurper.

The capitalists have not at all abandoned their belief in the necessity of destroying the nationalized economy of the Soviet Union, if capitalism is to survive. What the *Times* editorial indicates is the growing understanding of the bourgeoisie that Stalin's role aids them in approaching this goal. It is this strategy which Willkie is crusading for: Stalin is useful to "us" not only in this war but also in the post-war revolutionary period. With Stalin's help, the proletarian revolution in western Europe can be liquidated, and then the unfinished business of reviving capitalism in Russia can be undertaken. This is the perspective urged upon world capitalism by Willkie and now by the *New York Times*.

The fundamental flaw in this perspective is that nineteen years of Stalinism have failed to undo Lenin's work. The firm foundations which Lenin laid down in the Soviet Union are still there. Stalin has succeeded in destroying much of the superstructure: he has wiped out the democratically-elected soviets, the factory committees, the trade unions, Lenin's party, and rules by totalitarian methods as much as does Hitler. But the nationalized economy, the great conquest of the October revolution, remains essentially unimpaired.

It is this nationalized economy which inspires the Soviet masses to their unbelievably titanic efforts. Not the repressions which Stalin continues to wage against the Soviet masses in war as in peace. Not the incompetent and bureaucratic leadership of the Red Army—which Stalin beheaded of all its able leaders in the mass purges accompanying the Moscow trials. Not the spectacle of a bureaucracy clinging to its privileges amid the suffering of the masses. Not these but the nationalized economy is the inspiration of the Soviet masses and the Red Army. The Stalinist bureaucracy could not provide the leadership for offensive warfare. But the masses proved able, despite

this, to summon up all their powers of resistance to the capitalist invader. This is the real meaning of the heroic struggle at Stalingrad; and this meaning is behind the words of General V. I. Chuikoff, in command on the Stalingrad sector, on the nature of the fighting:

"The Germans hoped to break our morale with uninterrupted tank, plane and infantry attacks. But Russians can beat any Germans, even the most fanatical, as far as firmness is concerned. Our soldiers had only one idea—not to retreat." (*New York Times*, December 27, 1942.)

The morale of the Soviet masses—that is what has made the difference, not the Stalinist bureaucracy which, in war as in peace, has remained an obstacle to the success of the Soviet Union.

This Soviet morale, unparalleled in world history, is still preoccupied with the struggle against the Nazi invader. But when the German military machine cracks and revolution flares in Germany and the occupied countries—then this Soviet morale, hardened and tempered in this terrible war, will be free to deal with the bureaucratic oppressors at home. The Soviet worker has gritted his teeth and endured the bureaucracy precisely because the capitalist invader was at the border. But when the horizons of the Soviet Union are ringed with red instead of brown then, we can be confident, the masses will settle accounts with the Kremlin.

Soviet morale, product of the nationalized economy, is not the only enduring contribution of Lenin. Stalin succeeded in perverting Lenin's party and International into reactionary instruments, but Lenin's world-revolutionary theory succeeded in building a new instrument: the Fourth International. After Lenin's death his work was carried on by Trotsky who, before Stalin succeeded in assassinating him in 1940, had placed the heritage of Lenin and Trotsky beyond Stalin's reach: in 30 parties and groups in as many countries. These organizations affiliated to or supporting the Fourth International are the allies of the Soviet workers and peasants in their common task of spreading the October revolution and reviving the soviet democracy of Lenin and Trotsky.

As Soviet morale rose up despite the bestial repressions of Stalin, so from the concentration camps of Europe will come men and women maimed physically but spiritually steeled for their great role of transforming the battlefields into the Socialist United States of Europe. This is the task of the Fourth International. The events of our epoch will facilitate it, despite all the plans of the capitalists and their Stalinist allies. For, as Lenin taught us, over and over again: "This is the epoch of imperialist war, proletarian revolutions and colonial uprisings."

Darlan and the Liberals

By MARC LORIS

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article was written prior to the assassination of Darlan and the subsequent developments. The correctness of its analysis of the Darlan deal and the politics of the liberals remains unaffected by the later events, which will be dealt with in the next issue of *Fourth International*.

Washington's deal with Admiral Darlan in North Africa dealt a sharp blow to the democratic myth which covered the real aims of this war. Now Darlan-the-Jailer is working, along with Eisenhower and Roosevelt, to "free" France. Everyone can now see how dirty are the hands that bring "freedom" to

the peoples of Europe. All the democratic ideals suddenly have become prostituted to a degree which seemed impossible to many just a few weeks ago.

And so the Darlan affair has provoked great anxiety within the caste of high priests who are the professional guardians of the democratic myth: the American liberals. Until recently they had an easy time of it. The United Nations were on the defensive. Hitler's crimes and conquests allowed them to concoct the legend of an "anti-fascist" war. Who would dare speak of imperialist struggle in face of this crusade

of humanity versus fascist barbarism? No, this was clearly a "people's war." And even an "international civil war," a "revolution." Less than a year ago—last February—George Soule, one of the editors of the *New Republic* assured us: "The Second World War is already a revolution."

A curious revolution whose first act on the offensive was to place Darlan-the-Jailer in power! The ignoble agreement at Algiers tore a big hole in the sacred veil of democracy with which the high priests of liberalism attempted to clothe the not too agreeable realities of imperialism.

They were taken unawares. The November 16 *New Republic* commented on the debarkment, which had just been effected, under the title "We Begin!":

"The Petain-Laval-Darlan clique at Vichy will do its best to play the game of its Nazi masters. . . . What is essential today is that . . . we prove to the French people as a whole that the world we are fighting for includes their liberation."

Unfortunately for this unsolicited advice, Eisenhower and Roosevelt had a different idea of what was "essential." The next week, still calling for a good democratic attitude in North Africa, the *New Republic* warned: "We are now drawing the image of the future on the blackboard of history." Right. Washington is now drawing the image of the future that it wants, but that image differs perceptibly from the purple dream of democracy painted by the *New Republic*. Washington's picture of the future already includes such silhouettes as Darlan, Otto von Hapsburg, Franco, Mannerheim and some "good" Italian general or prince.

Confronted with such a difference between the myth which they have diligently built up and the reality as it was revealed in the person of Darlan, the liberals have gone in search of an explanation. Alas, the arsenal of liberalism is rather empty when it comes to explaining the mechanism of imperialism. The only bit of explanation they can find is that it was all a "mistake."

As early as November 14 the *Nation* declares: "The exclusion of the Fighting French from the North African expedition was a mistake." A week later, editor Freda Kirchwey calls the whole affair a "costly political blunder" and discovers no less than three successive "mistakes." On December 14, an editorial in the *New Republic* gives us the final explanation of the deal with Darlan by revealing that President Roosevelt "sometimes makes mistakes." Without doubt. One day he puts on the wrong pair of socks; the next day he puts the wrong man in power in Algiers.

But this explanation is a bit too hollow even for the *Nation*. So, to explain the mistake, this oracle of liberalism reveals that "the appeasers have never been in a majority even in the State Department, but from 1935 until this hour they have been able to force the long series of concessions and bargains which bit by bit weakened the force of democratic resistance." Who are these mysterious appeasers? Why have they been "able to force" their will? What are the great democrats in our government doing? Why . . . —but why ask questions to which the *Nation* has no answer?

Trying to deepen their superficial explanation, the liberals would have us separate the military plan from the political. "What doubtless appeared a reasonable military expedient is proving a costly political blunder," declares editor Freda Kirchwey in the *Nation* of November 21. The same distinction is made again and again by the liberals in their criticism of the Darlan deal. However, repetition does not make it a bit more clever. If war is the continuation of politics by other means, so the politics which are conducted during a war cor-

respond to the character of the military struggle, to the class which wages this fight, to its war aims, etc. Washington's deal with Darlan is not a "mistake," that is, an accident, but corresponds to the imperialist character of the present war. Since the war is not waged for democracy, it is easy for Washington to take Darlan as its first Quisling, and there is no mistake in that.

In a polemic with the *New Republic* over the Darlan deal, the newspaper *PM*, in somewhat crude but quite clear language, showed the emptiness of the theory of the "political mistake." On December 3, *PM* wrote:

"Hitler and Hirohito are this nation's major enemies. We must destroy them first. And, in fighting them, we cannot always be too finicky about the politics of the other United Nations. (Nor can they be too finicky about ours.) We cannot turn our backs on the Poles because their government was tyrannical, brutal, virtually as anti-Semitic as the Germans', and participated in the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. We cannot refuse to march with the soldiers of the Netherlands because of the way that nation exploited the East Indies and the East Indians. We sup at the same table as Stalin, much though we disapprove of Communism and his aggressions in the Baltic; we rub elbows with Churchill, though we detest his attitude toward India."

Of the war frankly described by *PM*, the Darlan deal is a true part, and no "mistake" at all.

A Dark Future—For the Liberals

With such an artificial and empty distinction between the right military move and the political "mistake," the liberals can reassure no one, not even themselves, about the strength of the democratic myth. Every line they have written in the last weeks betrays their disquiet.

Michael Straight, in the November 30 *New Republic*, asks: "In whose mind is not the remembrance of 1919 like a dry wind stirring up uneasy fear?" On December 14, he complains once more: "Our line is under heavy attack." On November 28, Freda Kirchwey discovers that the present epoch does not lack "ill omens for the future of democracy." And all together lament: What kind of peace will we get?

In the November 30 *New Republic*, Michael Straight, under the title "The Warning," recalls the experience of the last war. A very instructive experience indeed and worth being recalled now! He tells us of Woodrow Wilson's promises to eliminate the "very causes" of war, of how the *New Republic* (yes, the same) greeted the nationalization of the railroads in 1917 as the beginning of a new social order. He quotes American and English liberals, especially Sidney Webb, who assured the masses that the old world would never come back, that peace would bring abundance and security for all! We might think we were reading, almost word for word, the recent promises of their present-day successors. The only difference is that this democratic vision of the future was more audacious, fresher, brighter in 1917-18 than now. This is easy to understand. The epoch between the two world wars brought forth rather hard realities, and the liberals of today have the thankless task of reheating a dish long grown cold.

After performing the useful task of recalling this piece of history, Michael Straight has nothing more to say. Like a frightened animal that sees danger but cannot act, he keeps silent. Not a single liberal proposes a better remedy.

Freda Kirchwey tells us in the *Nation* of November 28 that, to avoid the Darlan "mistake," there should have been an Inter-Allied Political Council. If such a council "were now

in existence, the Darlan blunder would not have been made." Who should have appointed this Council? Apparently the statesmen who decided the deal with Darlan, jointly with the smaller statesmen who passively submit to their will. Everyone can see the value of the remedy.

The same Freda Kirchwey tries to put Roosevelt back on the right road of democracy. "Mr. Roosevelt faces the necessity of regaining the ground he has lost. He must take the risks of a counter-offensive against the reactionaries who have forced him into retreat." But what if Mr. Roosevelt does not mind being "forced" by the "reactionaries" too much?

No, there must be a radical solution. The *New Republic* brings it to us. On November 30 an editorial flung out the battle cry: "Liberals, be strong!" Two weeks later a new call: "Liberals, unite and act!" Alas, who does not know that a "strong" liberal is, in our epoch, a *contradictio in adiecto*, something like a square circle? The *New Republic* calls on the liberals to "act," but is at a loss to say just what this action could be.

The Real Content of the Quarrel

The embarrassment of the liberals is easy to understand if we simply remember their position on the war. They are for the war, but want a "clean" war followed by a "good" peace. But if the war is not so "clean" and the future peace, already today, does not look so "good," they have to swallow willy-nilly all that goes with it because they cannot abandon their support of the war.

The impotence of the liberals flows from their acceptance of the war, and they come to an impasse each time they undertake to criticize some particularly undemocratic action. This is especially clear in the Darlan affair.

In the *Nation* of November 21, Freda Kirchwey writes: "There was reason to use Darlan. No other French official knows as much as he about military and naval installation in Africa from Dakar to Bizerte, and his services were worth a good sum." In exactly the same sense, an editorial in the *New Republic* on November 30 affirms: "The temporary acceptance of Admiral Darlan was probably a wise move." This last sentence sounds almost like Roosevelt's statement, according to which the Darlan deal is a "temporary agreement." Then what is the exact difference of the liberals with the government? What frightens them so?

Their writings during the past weeks give us a precise answer to this question. Michael Straight writes in *PM* on December 3:

"Our liberal government is again in danger of sacrificing so much of its essential spirit that it is losing the rank and file of its best supporters: the workers, the progressive farmers, the Negroes and other groups."

And he continues:

"If the heart goes out of the liberal movement because of too much discouragement, then the rank and file though they may prefer the President, will not give him the enthusiastic support that alone can save the New Deal."

It is rather doubtful what remains of the New Deal, but Michael Straight's reasoning is clear: If Roosevelt goes on with many Darlan deals, the "rank and file" will look for other ways. But since this deal was "probably a wise move," what can "we" do except ask the President to respect the democratic forms a little more in the future, in order not to "discourage" the "rank and file" too much?

On November 30 the *New Republic* breaks through to the real reason for its uneasiness when it writes: "It is argued that

now we can win the conflict without recourse to all the 'slush about a people's war.'" As the very *raison d'être* of the liberals is to make slush, their anxiety is easily understandable. In the distribution of war roles, the liberals were awarded the department of camouflage and they valiantly applied themselves to painting motley canvases called "war for democracy," "people's war," etc. But if an army camouflages itself while making preparations, it must inevitably to some extent break the camouflage when it attacks. Thus in the first offensive action of great scope on the part of the United States, it was necessary to discard some of the democratic camouflage in order to install Darlan. The camouflage specialists are fluttering, disturbed, and are asking themselves: Could it be possible that now they have no more need of us? We have worked so hard.

One of these camouflagists even gives a warning to his masters: Look here, camouflage is very useful and it is dangerous to completely discard it so soon. His name is Alvarez del Vayo, former Republican Spanish leader, and he writes in the *Nation* of December 5:

"The war is not yet finished. The Allied troops are not yet nearing the German border. The moment has not been reached when the diplomatic technicians and professional politicians can risk a cynical shrug as their only answer to the disappointment of the people. Difficult crises lie ahead of us in which the people will be needed quite as much as all the war materials that all the United Nations can produce. And for the people it will not be a Darlan, even as an occasional guest of the democracies, that will keep alive their enthusiasm and restore their confidence."

Here is the position of the liberals in all its ugly servility: Be careful of the war material called the people, Messrs. Statesmen, and don't make our task of keeping it ready for your use too difficult. The moment has not yet come when you can disappoint it too much!

* * *

Washington is now demonstrating to us—not, surely, by Vice President Henry Wallace's speeches, but by plain, simple and clear facts—that this war is an imperialist war. Not only this war, but the peace that follows it will be an imperialist peace—if Washington has its way.

The liberals have tried to present this war as a "war for freedom and democracy," even as an "international civil war" against Nazism. In fact, according to them, it was the continuation and development of the struggle against fascism which had started with the Spanish Civil War. We Marxists answered this sophism very simply. The Spanish war was essentially the struggle of different classes inside one nation, while the contenders in the present war belong to one class, the imperialist bourgeoisie. Their fight is not conducted for freedom but for domination of the world. With the development of the war, this simple truth appears more and more clearly. The slush of the liberals cannot hide it any more. This is the reason for their despair. It is the reason for our hope.

Trotsky's Last Book

We call the attention of our readers to the advertisement on the back page of this issue. Pioneer Publishers is to be congratulated for the publication of *In Defense of Marxism* (Against the Petty-Bourgeois Opposition). These writings of Trotsky's last year are indispensable to every serious person who would understand the Soviet Union and the revolutionary movement today.

The Imperialist Strategy of Food

By C. CHARLES

The appointment of Herbert Lehman as Director of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation is an important indication that the capitalist class of this country is preparing for the "peace" that will follow the war.

The more far-seeing capitalists know what is coming. They know that the peoples of the world will present to them a demand for an accounting for the dead, the crippled, blinded and shell-shocked, for the widowed and fatherless, for the dwarfed children and blighted individuals, for the disease, hunger and cold, for the national oppression and degradation and anti-Semitism, for the political autocracy, for the cultural decline, for the disappointed hopes and broken promises which result from the war.

This demand will take the form of a series of social revolutions in the last period of the war as well as in the post-war period. The very existence of the capitalists as a class will be at stake. The "peace" will be an intense war of the classes.

A basic weapon of the capitalists in their struggle for life as a social class will be the control of food. American—and to a degree British—capitalists will brandish this weapon over Europe, Asia and Africa. The famished and starved revolutionary masses, the capitalists hope, are to be brought to their knees by the weapon of food.

They will also attempt to use food to secure from the governing regime of the USSR ever greater economic and political concessions aiming at the eventual restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. The USSR is considered by the imperialists to be in the category of "unfinished business."

That is the essential meaning of the naming of Lehman to his new post. Following the appointment, the *New York Times* declared on Nov. 28, 1942:

"Food will be a mighty weapon and a powerful persuader in that crucial period between war and peace when the future of the world will be decided.

"... food will decide many questions in the armistice period; it will be a potent adjunct to the diplomacy of peace. We are fighting with arms to make the world free, but when the arms are laid down, for a time at least, we shall have to fight with food to make it safe."

The Food Crisis in Europe Today

Both the scope and depth of the food problem in Europe is much greater than during the last period of the First World War and the post-war period. Countries which then did not require foreign food and were even able to help in the feeding of the war-ravaged regions—the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Italy, northern Africa, France—are now in extreme need of food. The countries which knew hunger during the last war are this time suffering even greater famine.

The Consul General of the Netherlands stated on December 10 that insufficient nourishment was expressed in the mounting death rate in that country. Much of the increase in fatalities from contagious disease is the result of the rampant hunger, deriving from deficiencies of vitamins A and C.

On the same day, the Norwegian Consul General declared that the situation in Norway was becoming "worse and worse from month to month, and that this winter will certainly be critical."

According to the Belgian Consul General the diet deficiency of the adult population in Belgium is estimated at not less than 60 per cent—in other words the adults are getting only about 40 per cent of the food they require for healthy life. The average American consumes about 20 pounds of meat and combined fats monthly. The average adult in Belgium gets two pounds. The prevalence of tuberculosis has increased among children by 30 per cent, as has rickets, and the cases of swelling of feet and limbs from starvation are clogging up the hospitals. Child mortality in the industrial centers has doubled.

If this is the situation in these relatively favored countries, the condition of the masses in eastern Europe must be many times more horrible. The state of starvation in Greece is well known. By 1941, industrial France had suffered a cut of between one-third and one-half its consumption of bread, and two-thirds in sugars, meats and fat. Now the conditions have worsened. Italy, Germany's ally, is only in a slightly, if at all, better condition than Hitler's fallen foes. Germany itself, the best fed of continental European lands, hovers close to the hunger level, and will undoubtedly sink into conditions like those in the rest of Europe before the end of the war.

And to the list of countries in Europe which will require food from abroad must be added northern Africa, Asia Minor, Japan, India and China.

As manpower is further drained from agriculture and as the remaining draft animals are harnessed to cannon instead of plows, as the farm implements become outworn and cannot be replaced, as all the chemicals are diverted from enriching the soil to the manufacture of explosives, as planting and harvesting become less effective, as the cattle, hogs and sheep dependent on imported grasses and grains are slaughtered, as the fishing craft are driven from the sea and the fishermen forced into the armies and navies, as the railroads collapse and the roads are demolished, as the monetary systems break down—as the war continues—the hunger will become ever more intense and far reaching.

The last days of the war will be days not only of hunger but of revolution. As Herbert Hoover wrote in the November 28 *Colliers*:

"A starving world must be fed after this war ends. . . . Even if it had not been promised, we would have to do it if we want to make a lasting peace instead of lasting anarchy. . . .

"There are more Horsemen that follow modern war than at the time the Apocalypse was written. In modern total war, Famine and Pestilence are accompanied by four new recruits whose names are Revolution, Unemployment, Suspicion and Hate."

On July 23, 1942, Cordell Hull warned that "In some countries confusion and chaos will follow the cessation of hostilities."

Wendell Willkie, in his Toronto speech on November 25, 1942, put it most plainly:

"I found worry and doubt in the hearts and minds of the peoples behind those fronts. They were searching for a common purpose. . . .

"Europe in 1917 was probably in much the same mood. It is an inevitable corollary of blood and war-weariness. Then, in 1917, Lenin gave the world one set of answers."

In proceeding to use food as a weapon of counter-revolution, the American capitalists have a rich experience to draw

upon. They did it once before on a grand scale when, following the last war, and as a matter of fact bringing the war to an end, a series of revolutions swept through Europe.

Hoover was then head of the American Relief Administration and the European Children's Relief Fund, a post similar to that which has just been filled by Lehman.

Food and Counter-Revolution, 1919-1922

A few weeks after the signing of the armistice, Woodrow Wilson requested of Congress \$100,000,000 for European relief purposes. He said in this message of February 24, 1919:

"Food relief is now the key to the whole European situation and to the solution of peace. Bolshevism is steadily advancing westward, is poisoning Germany. It can not be stopped by force, but it can be stopped by food, and all the (Allied) leaders with whom I am in conference agree that concerted action in this matter is of immediate and vital importance.

"The money will not be spent for food for Germany itself, because Germany can buy its food, but it will be spent for financing the movement of our real friends in Poland and to the people of the liberated units of Austro-Hungarian Empire and to our associates in the Balkans.

"I do not see how we can find definite powers with whom to conclude peace unless this means of stemming the tide of anarchism be employed."

While Wilson was claiming that Bolshevism could not be stopped by force, he was using force against the newly founded Soviet Republic. At the moment of his message, there were on Russian soil, in active struggle against the revolution, American and British troops in Murmansk; American and Japanese soldiers at Vladivostok; Czechoslovaks in eastern Siberia; French naval forces at Odessa, all in active cooperation with White Guard Russian forces. The Allies were also subsidizing the Russian White Guards and the countries bordering Soviet Russia in their wars against the Soviet regime. These White Guards were to Wilson "our real friends in Poland" and "our associates in the Balkans."

Vernon Kellogg, close collaborator of Hoover in the relief work in Europe, says in his "Herbert Hoover, The Man and His Work" (1920), which he describes in the preface as the book of an admiring "friend":

"It is from my personal knowledge of his achievements in this extraordinary position during the first eight months after the Armistice that I have declared my belief earlier in this account that it is owing more to Hoover and his work than to any other single influence that utter anarchy and chaos and complete Bolshevik domination in Eastern Europe (west of Russia) was averted." (Page 267.)

"Somebody had to do something that counted. So Hoover did it. It was not only lives that had to be saved; it was nations. It was not only starvation that had to be fought . . . it was Bolshevism." (Page 276.)

And Hoover himself, in his recent article in *Colliers* of Nov. 28, 1942, summarizes his work following the last war thus:

"Our major purpose was to save hundreds of millions of lives.

But food and restored employment were the foundations upon which order could be preserved and the completion of peace made possible. Moreover, we sought to sustain the feeble plants of democracy which had sprung up in all these countries."

Democracy for Hoover meant the regime of "Butcher" Manerheim in Finland, Paderewski and Pilsudski in Poland, Wrangel, Denikin and other White Guards in Russia, and Horthy in Hungary.

A clear example of the role of the relief administration is the counter-revolution in Hungary. Following the collapse of Austria-Hungary and the signing of the armistice a left liberal government under Count Karolyi came to power in Hungary. However, the economic and political conditions in Hungary,

had reached a state of extreme tension. Hungary was blockaded by the Allies. Food was scarce as were raw materials and fuel. The Yugoslav, Rumanian and Czechoslovak governments, puppets of the Allies, were chopping pieces off Hungary, encouraged by the Allied Council in Paris. Within the country the Republican army was going over to the Communists. The workers were becoming steadily more radical. On March 24 the Karolyi government peacefully stepped aside and a Soviet government was established under the control of the Socialist Party of Hungary, which represented a newly formed united organization of Communists and Social Democrats.*

This Soviet Republic lived four and a half months. T. C. C. Gregory was one of the key figures in the events which led to the crushing of the Hungarian soviets. Let us allow Herbert Hoover's friend, Vernon Kellogg, to introduce this person:

"One of Hoover's rules was that food could only go into regions where it could be safeguarded and controlled. That counted against Bolshevism. Shrewd Bela Kun [head of the Soviet regime in Hungary] was able to play a winning game in Hungary against the Peace Conference and Supreme Council [of the Allies] at Paris, but he was outplayed by softspoken, square-jawed Captain 'Tommy' Gregory, Hoover's general director for South East Europe." (Page 277.)

In *World's Work* of June 1921, Gregory wrote an article entitled "Overthrowing a Red Regime." He described the events frankly enough:

"It was apparent to all in touch with the situation, whether in Paris and London, or in the capitals of southeastern Europe, that the salvation of central Europe depended, in the early summer of 1919, on the immediate ousting of Bela Kun from his position as Bolshevik dictator in Hungary."

"The obvious method was to employ force. . . . Marshal Foch was summoned for conference, he said that this could be done, but that it would take an army of 250,000 men, completely equipped and prepared for a vigorous campaign. This program staggered Paris. . . ."

The use of direct force was ruled out. Other methods had to be devised. Gregory, in Vienna, came into contact with a General Boehm, representative in Austria of the Hungarian Soviet Government. Boehm, Gregory thought, "was the key to the situation." He thereupon went to work on Boehm's "egotism, ambition and nerve."

Boehm proved amenable to Gregory's proposal that he should take steps to lead a counter-revolutionary movement. In answer to a number of questions he put he was told that

"Paris would undoubtedly recognize and support any government, representative of all classes, on which the whole people of Hungary could agree; on the second [question he was told] that he undoubtedly knew of men who wielded really powerful influences in Hungary and who would undoubtedly fall in with any plan for the unhorsing of Bela Kun, were it sufficiently well conceived and organized to have a reasonable chance of success. He instantly named Agoston and Haubricht, two of the most powerful of the labor representatives in the Kun government. . . . They were sent for and came secretly to Vienna."

Gregory, together with Sir Thomas Cunningham of the British military commission and the Italian diplomatic representative, Borghesi, worked together with the treacherous Social Democratic leaders and they all

"agreed at once that the next step must be the framing of a

*For the sake of avoiding any misunderstanding it must be stated that in spite of the unity and their assumption of positions of leadership in the Soviet Republic—to which they were forced by the upsurge of the masses—the Social Democrats remained Social Democrats while the Communists were led by a group of careerists headed by Bela Kun and J. Pogany who proved completely incompetent and who later became part of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

pronouncement of principle on which the Allied governments could stand in giving their moral support to the anti-Kun movement. . . .

"The declaration, almost immediately suggested to Paris, through Mr. Hoover, contained the following points:

"1. The assumption of dictatorship in which complete powers of government were to be vested. Names to be discussed: Haubricht, Agoston, Garami, and Boehm.

"2. Dismissal of the communistic Kun government, with a repudiation of Bolshevism and a complete cessation of Bolshevik propaganda.

"3. Dictatorship to bridge over period until formation of a government representative of all classes.

"4. Immediate cessation of all terroristic acts, confiscation and seizures.

"5. Raising of blockade and immediate steps to be taken by Entente to supply Hungary with food and coal, and to assist in opening up the Danube.

"6. Immediate calling of an Entente advisory body.

"7. No political prosecutions.

"8. Ultimate determination respecting socialization of permanent government.

"It must be kept clearly in mind, that aside from Boehm, who was a mere tool, the real conspiracy we had set afoot was one dominated by the labor-democratic interests in Hungary. . . . Without this strong and active body of men, and without the leadership of the three named, Boehm, or any other military or monarchist conspiracy, would have been helpless as a school-boy. The plot hinged on the labor element. . . .

"I wired the eight points to Hoover the moment they were drawn up and now Cunningham and Borghesi communicated them to their respective governments."

The French government was also notified. Gregory goes on:

"There is no doubt that Mr. Hoover was the principal agency responsible for the prompt return we received" [at the hands of the Supreme Allied Council]. "The Supreme Council, emphatic in the statement that the programme for Hungary was a general rather than a specific one, signed and issued it. Boehm and his associates . . . began to crystalize their plans."

Among the programmatic points was one promising the lifting of the blockade and the supplying of food to Hungary. However, Gregory just at this key point found himself in a difficulty:

"The work for which our [Relief] Mission was created was almost finished and by irrevocable stipulation we were to wind up our activities, close our offices, discharge our staffs, and leave central Europe on August 1. It was now July 28th. Hoover had wired me that our funds were used up and that no more was forthcoming. There was food in Trieste belonging to private packers, as well as supplies of wheat and maize in the Barat that were available, but I had no money with which to purchase these commodities and there was no source from which I could obtain any. Save one.

"Two or three times the assistant Bolshevik food administrator of Hungary, a shrew and clever man, had come to me secretly in Vienna, representing Bela Kun, and begged me to sell him supplies. I had refused him absolutely for there was a blockade on Red Hungary. I had told him from the first that we would have no dealings of any nature with Bolshevism, and that he was wasting time asking me. Through this source I saw the possibility of effecting a coup that would help terminate our mission in central Europe with complete success.

"The food minister had no more knowledge than had Bela Kun that a mine was being laid under Bolshevism. . . . Within forty-eight hours of the time that the finale [the overthrow of Kun] was to be attempted in Budapest I sent for him and told him that it was possible that I might reconsider my former decision as to selling him food for the Hungarian people.

"He almost cried with joy. But I checked him.

"There is one difficulty in the way,' I said. 'I cannot send you a grain of wheat nor an ounce of fat until it is paid for in cold cash. Have you any real money.' . . .

"You can have your choice,' he said. 'The Bolsheviks have taken charge of the banks in Hungary, and I have millions of cronin, francs, marks, pounds—I have even American dollars.' . . .

"About three o'clock the next afternoon two men accompanied by the perspiring Hungarian minister entered carrying a clothes basket, covered with a cloth. For two hours my assistant checked pounds British and Turkish, French francs, Italian lire, to say nothing of marks and crowns, and with the whole topped with \$90,000 in crisp one-thousand dollar bills of the vintage of Uncle Sam. That night they rested in our name in the Vienna Bank Verein. A trade had been closed with the packers' agents and three train loads of fats ordered to be made ready for immediate shipment to Budapest on receipt of a wire from me."

That afternoon the Bela Kun regime was overthrown. At 10 o'clock next morning

"supply trains, loaded to the guards, and coming from every direction began to roll into Hungary."

However, the overthrow of the Bela Kun regime was but the first stage on the downslope of reaction. The government of yellow Socialists lasted a few days and was overthrown by the Rumanian soldiers—armed and supplied by the Allies—who placed a Hapsburg on the throne. He was removed by the Allied Council of Paris which didn't want a Hapsburg in power, preferring another variety of reactionary.

At this point Gregory's narrative ends. We know what followed. Hapsburg was followed in a short period by the Hungarian White Guards and reactionaries headed by Horthy who came into power and have remained there through pitiless terror and extermination of every individual who raises a voice against the brutal dictatorship. Horthy and the White Guards were encouraged and aided by the Allies while workers' and peasants' Hungary was starved into submission.

Everything falls into a logical place in this account: the use of a food and medicine blockade against a revolution while helping the counter-revolutionary preparations; the use by the capitalists of the only force which could dislodge the workers, the yellow Social Democratic leaders; then the curt dismissal of the latter by the reactionaries after having served their purpose. The timing is varied, but basically the sequence is much the same in the entire post-World War I history of Europe.

Hoover's Counter-Revolution in Finland

Following the Russian revolution of November 1917, a similar revolution took place in Finland. The Finnish workers and peasants found arrayed against themselves both the Finnish bourgeoisie under General Mannerheim and German regiments under General von der Goltz. The combination was able to defeat the Finnish Soviet regime and a period of white terror began during which Mannerheim, supported by German imperialist bayonets, slaughtered 15,000 workers and peasants while 15,000 more died in prisons where a total of 150,000 were held. As a result of these exploits Mannerheim earned the soubriquet of "Butcher." But he could not have succeeded without the aid of Hoover's "relief" organization.

The division of labor is interesting. The Germans aid Mannerheim against the masses. Then this obviously German agent is helped, following the armistice, by the American Relief Administration. In the *Saturday Evening Post* of April 30, 1921, Hoover relates:

"The case of Finland as related to me not long ago by the Finnish minister will illustrate the final importance of all these [relief] measures—not child relief alone. He declared that the American Relief Administration in the winter of 1918-19, and to a lesser extent in the winter of 1919-20, not only enabled the Finnish government to survive but laid the foundations for national stability. Its results so upheld the arms of the forces of order that the country has been able to overcome the menace of Bolshevism at its own door!"

The New York Times on Dec. 22, 1918, carried the following dispatch:

"Washington, Dec. 22.—Official announcement was made tonight through the War Trade Board that Finland had apparently been able to overthrow German rule [!] since the signing of the armistice; and set up a popular government and that large shipments of food had been authorized to help the suffering population. This action, which had been recommended by Herbert Hoover, Food Administrator, has been approved by the Allied nations.

"The statement also is made that this government is prepared to extend material help to all parts of Russia which succeed in driving out the Bolsheviki and the German agents. It is understood that one problem which President Wilson and Herbert Hoover took up with the Allied nations was the importance of such action at the earliest date possible and the tonnage needed for Russian aid will be supplied as rapidly as required, despite other claims here.

"The announcement concerning Finland is taken here as an indication that this government in concert with the Allies is hopeful soon of extending the Russian relief program which includes the shipment of 200,000 tons of food, clothing, agricultural supplies and railroad equipment in the next three months to follow the armies of occupation. . . .

"This plan of extending aid gradually to many parts of Russia will be carried out as rapidly as possible pending a decision on the question of increasing the armies of occupation."

Toward Soviet Russia, thus, the policy of the Allies was one of armed intervention, and stringent blockade of the Bolsheviki—the *cordon sanitaire*—through which the Bolsheviki could not buy, much less receive as relief either food, medicine or machinery, while ARA relief was supplementing Allied arms and funds furnished to the White Guards and the various border states. This policy lasted for four years until it became clear that the Soviets of Russia were firmly established in power.

The first Allied efforts to crush Soviet Russia took the form of the direct employment of armies of intervention: American, British, Canadian, Czechoslovak and Japanese. This method, however, had to be abandoned. American troops mutinied; the Canadian government, acting under popular pressure, demanded that Canadian troops be withdrawn; the Czechoslovaks fought half-heartedly; the French Black Sea fleet sailors mutinied, and revolt swept through the British Army of Occupation and aroused the English civilian population. English regiments destined to Russia refused to embark. Lloyd George, Prime Minister of Great Britain, informed Clemenceau that if the efforts to send Allied troops against Russia were continued, "soviets would be set up in London and Paris."

Following the first fiasco the Allies entered upon a slightly different course: instead of direct intervention they armed, financed and fed White Guard restorationists in their war against Soviet Russia and deliberately encouraged imperialist adventures by the new states bordering on Soviet Russia, especially Poland.

Prominent among the armies of attempted restoration of capitalism were those led by the mercenaries and Czarists, Mannerheim, Semenoff, von der Goltz,* Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenitch, Wrangel, Rodzianko and Pilsudski. The population in the territories of these armies were fed by the ARA and the other relief organizations, thus relieving these White Guards of that expense.

*Von der Goltz was a German general stationed by the Kaiser in the small Baltic states between Poland and Soviet Russia. His role in Finland has been noted. So great was the Allied fear of Bolshevism that the armistice terms stipulated that the German forces under his command remain in this region as a safeguard against a socialist revolution. The Soviet regime set up by the Lettish masses was crushed by this German imperialist. Later he attempted various expeditions into Soviet Russia.

In No. 8, Series 2 of the *American Relief Administration Bulletin* we find:

"The American Relief Administration's work in the liberated regions of Russia has followed closely the fortunes and misfortunes of the forces arrayed against Bolshevism. From the beginning of the relief in April 1919, its field of operation has enlarged or contracted as Rodzianko's and Yudenitch's men advanced or retreated. . . .

"The work of feeding Pskoff came to an end on the 26th of August with the capture of that city by Soviet troops. Part of the district remained in the possession of the Whites and there the work was carried on as before.

"There was little change during September until the offensive against Petrograd [by Yudenitch] began. September the 28th saw the White troops under way in the direction of Luga and the ARA European Children's Fund following the army and feeding the children of the districts newly liberated. . . .

"On the 15th of October, General Yudenitch announced that Petrograd would fall within three days. On the 16th, Krasnoe Selo was captured and the ARA immediately organized kitchens there."

Petrograd was not taken, and Yudenitch fled in a rout, ARA kitchens and all.

Hoover's continued support of the Whites and the political motivation behind it was indicated in the April 30, 1921 *Saturday Evening Post*. In the course of the interview he declared:

"The Russian refugees present a dilemma for which there is no solution as far as I can see until the Bolshevik government falls. In addition to more than two hundred thousand Russian children there are eight hundred thousand adults—the *Intelligentsia*—scattered all the way from Helsingfors to Constantinople. If these men and women are not kept alive there will be no nucleus out of which to build the future Russia."

Feeding Children in White Territory

Feeding children has an appealing humanitarian ring to it. It is indeed a calloused person that will resist such a plea. Approximately \$90,000,000 was raised in the United States for the starving children of Europe.

While 86 per cent of the Hoover Children's Relief Fund was being spent in Poland to feed the children, the Polish "Republic" found ample funds to carry on a war against the Soviets on a 1600-mile front, which was able to slash 200 miles into Russian territory with 700,000 men under Polish arms. Pilsudski received hundreds of millions of dollars from the Allies in this war, besides the relief funds. Soviet Russia, to repeat, far from receiving arms, was denied the right to even buy either food to feed the starving or medicine for the sick.

Following the collapse of the Polish forces in August 1920 and the driving of Wrangel out of the Crimea, it was apparent that the Soviets were firmly entrenched. However, the blockade and the armed attacks were having a terrible effect on Soviet Russia, bled white by three and a half years' previous participation in the imperialist war. Another and even worse famine was in prospect for the coming year. With the lifting of the blockade and the recognition of the Soviets by various countries, the more sincere relief organizations started to come to the aid of the famine-stricken regions of Soviet Russia. Among these organizations were the Friends Committee, the Nansen organization, the Jewish Joint Distribution organization, the Friends of Soviet Russia. Popular outcry against Hoover's policy was strong. It was only at this point—July 23, 1921, after four years of effort to starve the Soviet masses into submission—

that Hoover's organizations grudgingly agreed to aid in the feeding of Soviet children in the famine zones.*

The use of "philanthropy" now will not be substantially different than it was in 1918-22. Lehman will duplicate the role of Hoover. The only difference between World War I and World War II is that the latter conflict takes place when the social system is 25 years older and therefore more degenerated. This degeneration expresses itself in all fields: economically, in the stagnation of world capitalism as exemplified in the post-war depressions; politically, in the rise of fascism. Food was used in the last war ostensibly to insure the "safety of the newborn democracies." Long before the present war ends this pretense is not seriously maintained. Even capitalist democracy would be too risky a political system for Europe for the Allied imperialists. This time they are banking on out-and-out reactionaries as instruments of political control over the socialist masses. This is the meaning of the relations with Hapsburg, Darlan, Franco.

If World War I was fought under the slogan of "Hang the Kaiser," the Second World War has all the appearances of being fought with the purpose of placing Kaisers back on their thrones, as witness the American State and Military Departments' close relations with Otto of Hapsburg, pretender to the Austrian throne.

An editorial in the *New York Times* of December 1 entitled "An Offer to Italy" says:

"... we must tell the Italians, at least in broad terms, what our conditions of peace must be. . . . The Italians must depose Mussolini and his Fascist organization. . . . We must make it clear that as an immediate consequence of peace, trade between them and the United Nations will be restored, so that they may receive the food and other supplies necessary for the prompt rehabilitation of their country. . . . Clearly the United Nations cannot make peace with the existing Fascist regime. *Here again, however, a problem would arise regarding the extent to which it is wise to attempt to impose from the outside a democratic regime or a particular form of government on Italy.*" (Our italics.)

*In the light of his feeding of Poland while she was conducting a war against Soviet Russia, Hoover's recent explanation for his refusal to aid the masses of Soviet Russia is obviously contradictory. In his *Colliers* article of November 28, 1942, Hoover says: "In the last war, defeated Russia, with roughly 140,000,000 people was famine stricken in certain areas. We made an effort to furnish food but Russia refused relief because the Allies stipulated she must stop fighting her neighbors. It was not until the renewed famine in 1922 that we were able to assist her on a large scale."

Evidently no such condition was put on Poland—nor Finland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia or the White Guards as a prerequisite to receive relief. Quite the contrary, if they were fighting a Soviet regime!

The Allies are perfectly willing to make peace with an anti-Axis non-democratic government, feed it and support it. What the Allies are seeking is an Italian prototype of Hapsburg or Darlan. Maybe the Italian King? or Crown Prince? or General Bagdolio? The future will single out the candidate, but his political physiognomy is clearly delineated: reaction, the ability to deal firmly with the aroused masses.

There are many more months of agony before the war terminates. But as the end of the beginning becomes the beginning of the end, the capitalists are preparing politically and organizationally to suppress the workers and peasants. Likewise must the workers begin to prepare so that food will not be used to support counter-revolution and starve the revolutionary masses. To allow the capitalist governments to control the dispensation of relief can have terrible consequences.

Even the pro-war International Transport Workers Federation, in the leading article of its bulletin of June-July 1942, warns that food will be used for reactionary political purposes. It concludes its article by declaring that "Only the Labour Movement could offer such a guarantee" against the use of food for reactionary political aims. "In view of what happened from the end of 1918 on there are well-founded reasons for fearing that when the fighting ceases the generally prevalent distress will once again be exploited for political ends," the organ of the Transport Workers points out.

Considering the power of the transport workers, with affiliated transport unions in 35 countries, the article of their bulletin is a welcome sign.

Such a guarantee on the part of the labor movement can be made good in only two ways. One, through the establishment of workers' and farmers' governments in Great Britain, Canada, the United States and other countries with supplies of food. These socialist governments would extend to revolutionary countries under blockade the hand of class solidarity. However, in those countries in which the workers have not succeeded in establishing governments of their class, the slogan of trade union control of post-war relief can be a rallying cry and a method of defeating reactionary purposes in the distribution of food and relief.

The American capitalists are preparing to use food as a means of making the world safe for capitalism after the war. They plan to use it to "persuade" Europe, Africa and Asia's masses. They make their calculations with the hope that the American masses will prove immune to socialism. Is this idea well founded? Not in the least. The power of the awakened American workers may prove the fatal flaw in all the plans of American and Allied capitalism.

Roosevelt's Financial Problems

By WILLIAM F. WARDE

In the December issue of *Fourth International* I demonstrated that American economy was in the initial phases of inflation. I noted that inflation was not simply an American but a world phenomenon and that the process of inflation had its roots in the disruption and devastation of capitalist world economy caused by the war coupled with the unprecedented diversion of capital and labor from productive civilian production into unproductive military production. The inflationary proc-

ess manifested in the cumulative rise of bank loans, bank deposits, currency in circulation and commodity prices was the inevitable economic consequence of these conditions. As the war is prolonged, all these conditions are aggravated in the extreme.

The financial problems and policies of Roosevelt's administration must be viewed in the light of these general conditions. They control Roosevelt; he does not control them.

Moreover, Roosevelt heads a capitalist government in the foremost capitalist country. He is duty-bound to protect and to promote the welfare of American capitalism. That means first of all the profits of our ruling monopolists. Capitalists produce commodities, in war as in peace, not for the sake of production but for the making of profits. Without profits—and plenty of them, as the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times* continually remind Washington—our industrialists have no “incentive” to produce.

That is why all suggestions emanating from official circles that they are going (always in the future!) “to take the profits out of war” are fraudulent. The American imperialists have embarked upon this war for the specific purpose of preserving their profits and increasing their profit-making possibilities.

How are the capitalists faring under Roosevelt’s “equality of sacrifice” program? Look at the following picture of “industry’s profit outlook for 1942 and 1943” presented in the December 4 *United States News*:

“Profits promise in 1943, as in 1942, to be better than anticipated. In 1942 profits will be about 18 per cent under 1941. Yet: except for that one year, *the 1942 profits will be the highest since the 1920’s.*”

“In 1943, profits probably will be 10 per cent higher than in 1942. . . . *Prospect is that 1943 will be the peak year for war profits.*”

“In terms of dollars: corporation net income, before taxes, is likely to be \$17,350,000,000 this year against \$14,496,000,000 last year and \$9,069,000,000 in 1940. Next year, corporation net before taxes will be about \$19,240,000,000.

“But: after taxes, corporations will have left about \$5,130,000,000 this year, against \$6,250,000,000 last year. And: next year they will have left a net profit of about \$5,690,000,000. That is for all corporations, including those that will show a deficit. It reflects a rather healthy picture.

“When it comes to dividends: Prospect is that corporations will pay out about \$4,350,000,000 this year against \$4,600,000,000 last year. They may rise somewhat in 1943. Tendency of Congress to be conservative in taxing corporation income improves the dividend outlook.”

It ought also to be kept in mind that 10 per cent of the taxes deducted from gross profit will return to the corporations in post-war refunds!

How are such enormous profits to be acquired in the face of ever-mounting costs of the war? In only one way: by exacting the necessary funds from the people. Roosevelt today finds himself confronted with a twofold task. While safeguarding capitalist profits and interests, he must make the masses cough up the costs of the war. The people must pay; the monopolists must profit. How is his administration going about to achieve these ends?

Costs of This War

Roosevelt’s financial problems are rendered difficult by the colossal costs of this war. In 1941 the United States expended approximately 32.5 billions for war purposes. The entire *direct* cost of the First World War to the United States from the time of its entry in 1917 until the peace treaty was ratified in 1921 has been estimated at 25.7 billions. That is to say, the United States spent more money before it actually entered this war than it expended during the entire period of the first war!

The direct expenditures of all belligerents in the First World War have been estimated at 200 billions. Authorized

appropriations for the war program from June 1940 to October 1942 total 230 billions. Merely to initiate the first phase of its participation in the conflict, this country will spend 30 billions more than all the belligerents in the last war. This is 75 billions more than the United States government spent from the inauguration of George Washington as president until Pearl Harbor!

Consider these war costs from another angle. In 1918, at the height of the first war, the United States spent only one-fourth (or 25 per cent) of its annual income for war purposes. In the first months of 1942 the military budget took 36 per cent of the annual national income—the largest in history!—against 14 per cent in 1941 and only two per cent in 1938.

The rate of spending mounts dizzily. War spending in May 1942 was more than four times that for the similar month of last year. Expenditures are stepping along at the pace of a billion and a half dollars a week, six billions a month. \$5,722,000,000 was spent in October 1942. For the first year of the war, appropriations will reach 140 billions. This is far more than the expenditures of any other belligerent. England, according to Sir Kingsley Wood, Chancellor of the Exchequer, is spending 337 millions per week—about one-fourth of our total. According to Budget Director Harold Smith, the war costs of Germany, Soviet Russia and other countries are lower than ours.

The transition to this mad dance of the billions was explosive. The leaders of the American bourgeoisie were caught unawares. On the eve of the fall of France, May 16, 1940, the President asked Congress for a military budget of one billion dollars, a sum which he thought adequate and which, he said, need not “discomboomerate” anybody! Twenty-four months later that modest one billion has swollen over two hundred-fold. Such a precipitous jump has never before occurred in our history. And, notwithstanding Roosevelt’s assurances of two years ago, the enormous expenditures are beginning to “discomboomerate” everybody.

It is now officially anticipated that the United States will spend 78 billions from June 1942 to July 1943—22 billions more than Roosevelt estimated in January 1942. When the United States entered the war, estimates were that its cost would total about 100 billion dollars. Now Washington speaks of 300 and 400 billions. Even these revised figures are based upon the perspective of a relatively short war.

On November 30, 1918, the national debt stood at 19.4 billions. One year after Pearl Harbor the national debt passed the hundred billion dollar mark. It was 58 billions only a year ago. Mounting by the billions every month, it is expected to hit at least 140 billions by July 1943.

Such statistics indicate the prospects for the United States alone. Imagine the economic strain upon those belligerents which are not only much poorer but have been at war much longer! Can American capitalism undergo such stresses and strains without catastrophic economic consequences?

Roosevelt is no Aladdin and his Treasury Department has no magic lamp to conjure money out of thin air. The United States, to be sure, is richer and more productive than other countries. Nevertheless its productive forces and resources are not inexhaustible. They have very definite limits, as the current shortage of steel and skilled labor is demonstrating.

The United States government has only three ways of raising the sums of money required for the war: 1) it can tax; 2) it can borrow; 3) it can create new money.

Taxation has always been the primary source of federal

revenue. The new tax bill has enormously broadened the base of direct taxation. Income tax payers numbered 7,000,000 in 1940; 15,000,000 in 1941; and 27,000,000 in 1942. They will embrace 50,000,000 in 1943. Tens of millions are about to meet the income tax collector for the first time. Everyone earning over \$12 a week will have to pay a five per cent "Victory Tax." The mass of consumers will also have to pay additional indirect taxes in the form of increased excise taxes.

The new revenue law, it is estimated, will raise about 24 billion dollars. The total tax bill (federal, state and municipal) of the American people will amount to 40 billions next year when the national income will be about 120 billions. That means one-third of the national income will be taken in taxes, one dollar out of every three.

Roosevelt's Tax Program

Roosevelt and Congress have followed the same guiding line in this tax program as their Republican predecessors and all other capitalist governments. They soak the poor and spare the rich. Senator LaFollette justly remarked during the debates that the tax bill was so harsh on low incomes there would be "nothing left of the little man but pulp if this tax bill were adopted." This did not prevent the Senator from Wisconsin from voting for the measure.

Congress left untouched all the special privileges: tax-exempt securities, separate returns for husband and wife, depreciation allowances whereby the rich elude the tax net. It added dozens of new loopholes by which corporations could dodge taxes. While taxes on small incomes were raised about five billions, corporation tax increases amounted to only \$1,799,000,000—half as much as the Treasury requested. And \$550,000,000 of this increase will be returned in post-war refunds. How Wall Street rejoiced when Roosevelt signed this bill!

Unprecedented as they are, the new taxes will nevertheless cover less than one-third of the war costs. While the federal government expects to collect 24 billions in taxes this coming year, it will spend 78 billions. That leaves 54 billions more money to be raised. As compared with these estimates, the government is spending at the rate of six billions a month and collecting 1.2 billions in taxes. This means that taxes are actually covering only about one-fifth of the bills. How is the balance to be met?

"Congress knows as well as the administration," declared the October 10 *New York Times*, "that inflation cannot be prevented unless the tax bill is almost doubled." Taxes are sure to increase. Treasury officials have already set a tentative figure of 16 billions as the goal in additional revenue to be sought through a combination of heavier taxes and more enforced "savings." This means that the masses will have to give up not only such "luxuries" as refrigerators and radios but must cut down considerably on the necessities of life. With wages frozen they will be squeezed twice as hard by the vise of taxation and the rising cost of living. Moreover the revenue derivable from excise taxes will shrink as civilian consumption contracts. When people cannot buy or operate automobiles, they do not pay taxes on licenses, tires, accessories, gas, oil, etc. New sources of revenue must be opened up.

Can all the contemplated taxes be collected? How can worker families pay hundreds of dollars in taxes when every cent they get is needed for the bare necessities of existence? Non-payment of taxes may well reach in time the same mass proportions as non-payment of debts in 1932.

Taxation has already encountered such objective economic and political limits. No country has ever financed a major war by taxation alone. In the last war the United States raised only one-third of its expenditures through taxation. It borrowed the other two-thirds.

The Treasury has to borrow the bulk of its expenditures. How is it planning to do this?

The sale of war bonds and stamps is expected to bring in 12 billions this year. But sales have not equalled expectations to date—and will undoubtedly fall off still more as taxes cut more heavily into workers' incomes.

Small investors can absorb less than a quarter of the government borrowings. The government must therefore turn to the banks and other big financial institutions for the money it needs. The banks entered the war period already heavily loaded with government obligations. In 1933 the banks held \$6,887,000,000; in 1940 \$14,722,000,000. At present about 46 per cent of government securities are in the hands of the 15,000 commercial banks in this country. They are now buying bonds at so fast a rate that they are expected to hold some 48 billions by June 30, 1943 and 74 billions a year later.

The situation and its significance has been summarized by the *New York Times* as follows:

"The Treasury now expects to spend about \$80,000,000,000 in the fiscal year ending next June 30, and about \$100,000,000,000 in the following twelve months. The new tax bill is calculated to bring in only about \$25,000,000,000.* That leaves \$55,000,000,000 to be borrowed this fiscal year and a still larger amount next year. The most optimistic estimates do not put the total of bonds that can be placed outside the commercial banks at more than \$20,000,000,000. That leaves \$35,000,000,000 for the commercial banks."

It is not easy to raise such sums. In December the Treasury set out to borrow nine billion dollars—only a fraction of the total required. Yet this is the greatest financial operation in American history. The largest previous amount ever borrowed at one time by the Treasury was 6.9 billions on the Fourth Liberty Loan in 1918. Half of this borrowing was directly covered by the banks. And then Morgenthau had to raise this nine billions to 11 billions!

To enable the banks to shoulder this burden, the Federal Reserve System has had to take a series of extraordinary actions. It has lowered the rediscount rate to one-half of one per cent, the lowest in the history of central banking; it has reduced reserve requirements; it has made record purchases of government obligations on the open market to keep banks well supplied with reserves. The net result of these measures has been to shift part of the burden from the shoulders of the commercial banks to the central banking system. But the load has simply been shifted—it has not at all been lightened or removed.

The inflationary pressure has thereby been enormously increased. Banks are buying government bonds, not with accumulated savings or their own capital, but on credit provided them by the Federal Reserve System. The result, as the *New York Times* warns, is credit inflation:

"Every dollar of that \$35,000,000,000 absorbed by the commercial banks contributed to inflation because it means an expansion of bank deposits by that amount, an increase in the money supply of the country. It means, too, a terrific strain

*It will be observed that the annual estimates emanating from authoritative circles, including Roosevelt, differ considerably from one another, in some cases by five or ten billion dollars and more. From one month to the next, the estimates undergo "revision." This confusion reflects the "discomboomeration" in ruling circles.

upon the whole banking system that can only be met by drastic reductions of reserve requirements."

For months a behind-the-scenes battle has been going on between the Treasury and the big banks on methods of financing the war and the rate of interest on bonds. The Treasury floated its offering of four billions in October by a very narrow margin and only after a direct, last-minute appeal to the banks and insurance companies to bail it out. Now, taking advantage of the Treasury's difficulties, the bankers are demanding higher taxes for the masses and higher interest rates on their loans to the government. They want to duplicate their extortions of the last war when the First Liberty Loan paid 3.5 per cent, the Second 4 per cent and the final Victory Loan 4.75 per cent. Now they are asking for 2.5 per cent in place of 2 per cent for their loans.

So far Morgenthau has managed to hold the Wall Street wolves at bay. But the economic forces of capitalism are working in their favor. As the government's credit becomes weaker with each succeeding bond issue, it is only a question of time before the Treasury will have to bow before the bankers and offer them premiums of one kind or another to obtain the money it needs.

The Mechanism of Credit Inflation

The principal means of the circulation of liquid funds in this country consist not of paper currency but of bank deposits and checks. An important and growing proportion of these bank deposits does not come from previous deposits. It is created by means of loans by the banks to their customer-borrowers.

The more money an ordinary person lends, the less he has. But the opposite is true of a bank. The more money it lends, the more it has on deposit. How is this seeming paradox made possible? Ordinarily only a small percentage of the bank's depositors withdraw their funds at any given time. Banks are thus enabled to make loans on the basis of these "idle" funds, that is, to extend credit by taking advantage of this specific fact. These loans are credited to borrowers as deposits to their accounts. The money thus available is *credit money*. The U.S. government is today the biggest borrower on the money market.

A general increase of bank loans will obviously cause a general increase of bank deposits and a general rise in the amount of purchasing power in circulation as these deposits are drawn upon in payment of obligations. How much credit can the banks extend or create? This must be determined in practise. There are limits which banks cannot transgress in creating credit money without endangering their own solvency and therewith the financial system of the country. Since the establishment of the Federal Reserve System in 1913 commercial banks have been able to expand their credit facilities considerably. The limits of credit expansion for the commercial banks are fixed by federal regulations.

The Federal Reserve System has safeguarded the solvency of its member banks by requiring every bank to keep on hand a certain cash reserve to meet the demands of its depositors. This cash reserve has been cut down for commercial banks from 25 per cent in 1912 to 10 per cent by the Federal Reserve Act of 1933. In the past a bank could loan out ninety dollars in credit for each ten dollars of cash in its vaults without being called to account by the Federal Reserve examiners. Any creation of credit money beyond these limits was considered credit inflation which could quickly impair and imperil the entire fiscal structure.

To get the money it needs to finance the war, and in par-

ticular to raise the \$9 billion loan this December, the United States government has been compelled *in the first year of the war* not only to lower the rediscount rate but to destroy all these indispensable safeguards. According to a United Press dispatch from Washington on November 24:

"All federal and state limitations on the nation's banks were removed today to permit unlimited purchases of most government securities to help finance the war. At the same time the banks were authorized to make short-term loans to individuals wishing to purchase more government securities than their immediate capital permits."

What other conclusion can be drawn from this sweeping move than that, from now on, there are no fixed limits to the creation of credit money? This is the point made by the *New York Times* in its editorial the following day:

"The commercial banks . . . must face the prospect of breaking with some traditional guide-posts of 'sound finance.' In particular they must expect to see the proportion of their capital to liabilities fall far below the time-honored ratio of one to ten."

Late in December the Federal Reserve System increased to 4,739 the number of banks which qualify as special depositories of government funds. These special depositories are permitted to subscribe for government bonds without putting up cash. Instead they simply credit the Treasury on their books with a deposit equal to the amount of their subscriptions to government bond issues which the Treasury draws upon. This means that all restrictions upon reserves have been abolished in practice. The *New York Times* (Dec. 7) estimated that "book credit is being used to the extent of about 70 per cent in banks' payments for the new securities." The lid is off!

Secretary Morgenthau, writing in the December issue of the *Army and Navy Journal* blandly explains:

"Governments have been known to debase their coinage, issue new currency and rely on the credit manufacturing mechanism of the banks to provide them with the necessary resources to conduct war. These practices did not reduce by one iota the sacrifices people were called upon to make during the war."

Secretary Morgenthau preferred not to mention the fact that he, too, must now "rely on the credit manufacturing mechanism of the banks."

This credit inflation is occurring under conditions of war economy which pile up one disproportion upon another. There is, first of all, the widening gap between the available supply of consumer goods and the amount of purchasing power. "There is no getting away from the fact," stated the October 10 *New York Times*, "that income payments to individuals in the United States will total about \$120,000,000,000 next year, while the available supply of consumer goods and services in which this income could be spent will have shrunk to about \$70,000,000,000. This will leave \$50,000,000,000 which, if not taken in taxes or borrowed voluntarily or compulsorily, will be available to bid up the prices of the ever-diminishing supply of consumer goods until they burst through ceilings."

The authorities are hoping to siphon off these scores of billions through taxes and forced savings. Meanwhile purchasing power is piling up in unprecedented volume and at an unprecedented rate.

Individual savings in 1942 "were estimated by the Department of Commerce at the unprecedented total of 26 billions, more than twice as great as in 1941 and more than three times as great as in 1940." (*New York Times*, December 18, 1942.) The Securities and Exchange Commission has stated that there is "evidence of a further acceleration of such funds

in the near future." The *Times* warns that these billions of dollars represent "the greatest single threat to check inflation of the currency."

At the same time currency in circulation continues to increase at a record-breaking rate. Last month I stated that the total "should soon pass 15 billions." This mark has since been surpassed and there are no signs of any check in its upward course.

All these swelling billions hang over the market like a reservoir brimming over with spring rains. Sooner or later

they must burst the dams and pour through the market in the most destructive torrent of runaway currency inflation this country has ever experienced. Every additional step taken by the authorities to expand credit, every bar they let down, pushes the country farther along the road of credit inflation and makes it more and more difficult to finance the war by borrowings. The longer the war, all the more swiftly is the Treasury impelled to the printing press—that last resort of financially hard-pressed regimes.

We have so far seen only the early blossoms of the inflationary process. The bitterest berries are still to come.

Lenin on the Problem of Nationalities

By JOHN G. WRIGHT

V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Volume XIX, International Publishers, New York. 463 pp. \$2.50.

This volume of Lenin's *Collected Works* contains his speeches and writings for the year 1916 and the first three months of 1917. It was on the eve of the Russian revolution that Lenin made some of his most important contributions to Marxism. He wrote his classic analysis of imperialism which has long been translated into English. But a great deal of his writings during the war years, especially his pieces pertaining to the problem of nationalities in the imperialist epoch, have not been so readily available. By publishing this volume the Stalinists, who betrayed all the teachings of Lenin, have made an involuntary gift to the revolutionary movement.

Marx and Engels, the founders of scientific socialism, died before the entry of capitalism into its highest stage, that of imperialism, which is at the same time its stage of decay and death agony. They outlined the general tendencies of capitalist development. They forecast its decay and doom. What they did not and could not foresee were the specific characteristics of this stage and the shifts to the right and to the left that the actual course of events would introduce during this epoch. This work was done primarily by Lenin, and after him by Trotsky.

Marx and Engels thus left unsolved several problems arising from the extraordinary peculiarities of capitalism in its imperialist stage. Among these unsolved problems was the struggle of colonial and semi-colonial peoples for independence.

The *Communist Manifesto* contains no reference to this struggle. The omission was not an oversight on their part. Here is how Trotsky explained it in his article, "The Ninetieth Anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto*":

"Inasmuch as Marx and Engels considered the socialist revolution 'in the leading civilized countries at least' to be a matter of the next few years, the colonial question was resolved automatically for them, not in consequence of an independent movement of oppressed nationalities but in consequence of the victory of the proletariat in the metropolitan centers of capitalism."

"The questions of revolutionary strategy," continues Trotsky, "in colonial and semi-colonial countries are therefore not touched upon at all by the *Manifesto*. Yet these questions demand an independent solution. For example, it is quite self-evident that while the 'national fatherland' has become the baneful historical brake in advanced capitalist countries, it still remains a relatively progressive factor in backward countries compelled to struggle for an independent existence. 'The Communists,' declares the *Manifesto*, 'everywhere support every revolutionary move-

ment against the existing social and political order of things.' The movement of the colored races against their imperialist oppressors is one of the most important and powerful movements against the existing order and therefore calls for the complete, unconditional and unlimited support on the part of the proletariat of the white race." (*New Internationalist*, Feb. 1938.)

Marx and Engels left this problem unsolved but they also left behind them the indispensable method for its solution, namely, the Marxist dialectic. In the above-quoted article Trotsky stated: "The credit for developing revolutionary strategy for the oppressed nationalities belongs primarily to Lenin."

Lenin's teachings on imperialism and on the national and colonial question are the product of years of study of developing events and the application of the Marxist method toward their analysis and clarification. Although considerable work had been accomplished—especially under Ryazanov, the former head of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute who was purged by Stalin—in studying the background of Lenin's work in this period, the present volume is issued without any introduction or notes to speak of. Least known is the background of Lenin's work on the problem of nationalities.

The Iskra Period

Lenin began working on the national question in the period of the *Iskra*, that is, in 1900-03, even before the appearance of Bolshevism as an independent political tendency within the Russian labor movement. His writings for this period comprise five articles. Three of them are devoted to a polemic against the Bundists who demanded "complete autonomy" for the Bund on all questions relating to the Jewish people in the empire of the Czars. The dispute between Lenin and the Bundists centered at that time around the building of the proletarian party in Russia. Concessions to the Bund's position would have made impossible the existence of a party based on democratic centralism. Lenin's attitude is clearly revealed by the titles of his articles: "Does the Jewish Proletariat Need an Independent Political Party?" "The Position of the Bund in the Party"; and (a speech delivered at the Second Party Congress in 1903) "On the Place of the Bund in the Party." Of the remaining two articles, the more important one is entitled, "The National Question in Our Program." Lenin's attention was first attracted to the problem of nationalities because it confronted him on a national scale and as an internal party problem.

Lenin began to work systematically in this sphere only after the 1905 revolution, or more precisely, seven years later in 1912.

There were three main reasons for this.

First, as a consequence of the triumph of Czarist reaction following the 1905 defeat, all national issues in Russia were gravely sharpened. This in turn led to a resurgence of nationalist movements among the oppressed peoples under Czarism.

Second, flowing directly from the preparations for the impending imperialist dog-fight, there was an extreme aggravation of all national relations in Europe.

Third, the awakening of Asiatic peoples prior to the First World War. The liberationist movement of the East is just as new as the twentieth century itself. It was not until the turn of our century that countries like China and India—these classic examples of centuries-old stagnation—began to emerge on the world arena as independent political forces and revolutionary factors. The Russian revolution of 1905 was the most important single event which set the Eastern peoples in motion. The years immediately following 1905 witnessed revolutionary ferment in countries like Turkey and Persia. In September 1911 the Manchu Dynasty was overthrown in China and more than 450 million workers, coolies and peasants entered for the first time into the revolutionary flood. In the same period we find the beginnings of ferment in India, of which the current events are a direct continuation. Similarly, a nationalist movement under the banner of Islam was under way in the Dutch East Indies. Something no one had foreseen was taking place: colonial peoples were launching a revolutionary struggle for national independence *before* the proletariat in advanced countries of Europe had succeeded in solving their socialist tasks.

The problem which had at the outset confronted Lenin on a *national* scale and as an *internal* party problem now appeared before him as a *world political* problem. The dialectic, it will be observed, was at work both in Lenin's mind and in living reality.

Lenin grasped before anyone else the crucial meaning of the liberationist movement of the Eastern peoples. In May 1913 he wrote these prophetic words:

"A new zone of world history has been opened at the beginning of the twentieth century by the awakening of Asia and by the beginnings of the struggle for power on the part of the advanced proletariat of Europe."

Six years later in 1919, the newly-founded Communist International will inscribe on its banner this immortal formula in its most finished form: "*We live in the epoch of imperialist wars, proletarian revolutions and colonial uprisings.*"

The Gist of Lenin's Position

In elaborating his position on the national question in the pre-1914 years, Lenin had to conduct a struggle on two fronts: on one side, against the opportunism and chauvinism of the Mensheviks (chiefly the Bundists and Georgian Mensheviks); and, on the other, against the deviation of the Polish party which, under Rosa Luxemburg's influence, adopted an entirely false position. The Polish party began by underestimating the importance of the national problem in Poland and ended by denying altogether the very possibility of national struggles under imperialism. From this flowed their rejection of the slogan of the right of self-determination. After the outbreak of the war in 1914 this standpoint found its

expression even within the ranks of the Bolsheviks themselves (Bukharin, Pyatakov and others). The most striking thing about Lenin's polemics of 1912-14 is that they anticipate all the fundamental questions of revolutionary strategy which were posed in their full scope only by the war itself.

The First World War revealed completely the importance of the problem of nationalities from the proletarian standpoint by speeding up those processes which everywhere tend to merge national problems more and more closely with the social. It is only natural that we find Lenin writing so extensively on this question during the war. In 1916 Lenin developed in full programmatic form his views on the problem of nationalities in the imperialist epoch. This programmatic document bears the title, "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination."

The title itself is ample proof that Lenin never approached the national question separate and apart from the proletarian struggle for socialism. He always subordinated the former to the latter. Today the Stalinists have not only severed the two but have betrayed completely the socialist struggle. They lie to the workers that only the Axis powers are waging imperialist war whereas the "democratic" imperialists are conducting wars of "national liberation." They have finally published volume XIX only to dupe the workers into believing that they still speak in Lenin's name. But Lenin in these writings said just the opposite of what the Stalinists are now saying about the kind of epoch we are living in, and, in particular, about the national question.

We single out Lenin's 1916 theses because of their historical and theoretical importance. In Marxist literature they are commonly referred to as the *Sotsial Demokrat Theses*, because they were first published as the position of the *Sotsial Demokrat*, then the central organ of the Bolsheviks. They were adopted by the majority of the Bolshevik Central Committee and therefore represent the official position of Bolshevism. This position was defended throughout the war by Lenin against the ultra-lefts in the various countries as well as against the social patriots. The social patriots were at that time also "in favor" of self-determination and supported the imperialists essentially under the same pretext as do the Stalinists today, namely, that the imperialist war was being waged to defend the "national fatherland" or effect "national liberation."

To understand Lenin's approach to the problem of nationalities it is above all necessary to bear in mind that Lenin's method, the Marxist dialectic, prohibits the assertion that national problems are combined with the social in the same way in every country in the world. "The truth is always concrete."

Lenin had to explain this time and again. Even after the October revolution there was a conflict on the national question in the Bolshevik Party. Bukharin, supported behind the scenes by Stalin, opposed the recognition of the right of self-determination for the nationalities within the young Soviet Republic. Bukharin and Stalin wanted to limit the right of self-determination to the workers among these nationalities. Pyatakov, taking the most extreme position, opposed self-determination on principle. At the Eighth Party Congress in March 1919, Lenin delivered a speech in which he explained to Stalin-Bukharin-Pyatakov the gist of the Marxist approach to the national question.

"While the different nations are marching along the same historical route, they traverse it with many zigzags and detours which are varied in the extreme, and, furthermore, the more cul-

tured nations traverse this route in an obviously different manner from those on a lower cultural level."

Any other position brushes aside the unevenness of the historical process and disregards the specific stage of development through which a given country is passing. All these factors have a direct and decisive bearing both upon the manner in which the national and social problems combine in each given case, as well as upon the immediate tasks of workers in the given country.

Lenin taught us to differentiate between no less than three types of countries in relation to the problem of nationalities. Thesis 6 of his 1916 document reads as follows:

"In this respect, countries must be divided into three main types:

First, the advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe and the United States of America. In these countries the bourgeois, progressive national movements came to an end long ago. Every one of these 'great' nations oppresses other nations in the colonies and within its own country. The tasks of the proletariat of these ruling nations are the same as those of the proletariat in England in the nineteenth century in relation to Ireland.

"Secondly, Eastern Europe: Austria, the Balkans and particularly Russia. Here it was the twentieth century that particularly developed the bourgeois-democratic national movements and intensified the national struggle. The tasks of the proletariat in these countries—in regard to the consummation of their bourgeois-democratic transformation as well as in regards to assisting the socialist revolution in other countries—cannot be achieved unless it champions the right of nations to self-determination. In this connection the most difficult but most important task is to merge the class struggle of the workers in the oppressing nations with the class struggle of the workers in the oppressed nations.

"Thirdly, the semi-colonial countries, like China, Persia, Turkey and all the colonies, which have a combined population amounting to a billion. In these countries the bourgeois-democratic movements have either hardly begun, or are far from having been completed. Socialists must not only demand the unconditional and immediate liberation without compensation—and this demand in its political expression signifies nothing more nor less than the recognition of the right to self-determination—but must render determined support to the more revolutionary elements in the bourgeois-democratic movements for national liberation in these countries and assist their rebellion—and if need be, their revolutionary war—against the imperialist powers that oppress them." (*Works*, English edition, Vol. XIX, pp. 54-55.)

Every serious article or statement concerning the national and colonial question made in the Communist International under Lenin and Trotsky or subsequently in the Fourth International never failed to restate the fundamental ideas contained in the *Sotsial Demokrat Theses*.

At first glance it might appear that in 1916 Lenin still left unsolved what he referred to as the task of merging "the class struggle of the workers in the oppressing nations with the class struggle of the workers in the oppressed nations." This is true only in the sense that the credit for the full solution of this particular task belongs to Trotsky, who advanced in September 1914 the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe. This slogan was included originally in the *Sotsial Demokrat Theses* but was later rejected by Lenin for purely tactical considerations. It was formally adopted in 1923 by the Communist International and was rejected by Stalin and his clique only after Lenin's death.

Why is it necessary to differentiate between the oppressed European countries and the Eastern peoples? Because in Eu-

rope the irreconcilable contradiction between imperialism and the needs of all European peoples must be resolved on an entirely different and a far higher stage of development from that in colonies and semi-colonies. In Europe, unlike the Eastern countries, imperialism has developed productive forces to such a point that they are strangled within the respective national boundaries. In Europe not only imperialism but also the national state itself acts as a brake upon further progress.

"Europe," as Trotsky explained long ago, "is not only a geographical term but constitutes a certain economic and cultural-historic unit." (*The Program of Peace, Works*, Russian Edition, Vol. II, p. 478.)

In this same programmatic document written by Trotsky in May 1917 and circulated as a text book in the Communist International in Lenin's lifetime, it is stated: "The prerequisite for the self determination of the large and small European nations is the state unification of Europe itself." (*Idem*, p. 472). That is why, following Lenin and Trotsky, we advance today the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe as the only genuine solution for the national problem there.

In his 1916 theses Lenin insisted that correct revolutionary strategy sets immediate historic tasks for workers in Eastern countries which differ profoundly from the tasks of the European workers. This difference in revolutionary tasks derives from the belated appearance of the Eastern peoples on the historical arena. The progressive character of the struggle of such countries for national independence, even under the leadership of the native bourgeoisie, flows from the irreconcilable contradiction between imperialist rule and the material and cultural needs of these Eastern peoples. Imperialism acts as a monstrous brake upon their economic and cultural development. That is why, following Lenin and Trotsky, we advance the slogan of national liberation for the Eastern peoples. That is why we support the struggles of China and India unconditionally.

The period of the Third International, or to be more precise, the period of the first four Congresses (1919-22) is the period of Lenin's final work on the national and colonial question. His theses on this question were adopted by the Second World Congress in 1920. While reporting at this Congress on "The Tactic of the Russian Communist Party," Lenin declared that he wished "once again at this point to emphasize the importance of colonial movements."

"It is quite clear," he continued, "that in the impending decisive battles of the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population on our planet, which is initially directed toward national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism and it will perhaps play a much more revolutionary role than we all expect. It is important to underscore that we in our International have for the first time begun to prepare for this struggle. Naturally, there are a great many difficulties in this enormous sphere, but in any case the movement is advancing and the masses of toilers and peasants in the colonial countries, notwithstanding the fact that they are still very backward, will play a very great revolutionary role in the next phases of the world revolution." (*Works*, First Russian Edition, Vol. XVIII, part I, p. 299.)

Prophetic words!

Lenin died before the first of these great revolutionary struggles erupted in China. The Chinese revolution of 1925-27 was defeated. For this defeat Stalinism bears the responsibility. But a defeated revolution is still a revolution. It left neither China nor the rest of the Orient as they were before. The repercussions of this world-historic event, the first in the series predicted by Lenin, are today unfolding before our eyes

in the Orient under the impact of the Second World War.

Trotsky's work on the problem of nationalities parallels that of Lenin from 1903 to 1917. It merges with the latter in the first period of the Russian revolution and the first four Congresses of the Communist International. It represents a direct continuation and extension of it after Lenin's death. The Stalinists are the only ones who ever claimed that there were fundamental disagreements in this respect between Trotsky and Lenin. Trotsky remained to his death a consistent orthodox Leninist on the national and colonial question. This is not difficult to prove even from the standpoint of formulations.

For example, in 1934, our movement adopted theses entitled "The War and the Fourth International."

In this basic and programmatic document written by Trotsky it is stated:

"A special and important place is occupied by the question of colonial and semi-colonial countries of the East which are even now fighting for the independent national state. Their struggle

is doubly progressive: tearing backward peoples from Asiatic, sectionalism and foreign bondage, they strike powerful blows at the imperialist states." (Theses 16. Our emphasis.)

Trotsky's formulation of 1934 differs from that of Lenin in 1916 in phraseology but not in essential ideas. Our document assigns a "special place" to colonies and semi-colonies. Lenin referred to them as a *type*, expressing the self-same idea in other words.

In assigning a special role to the Eastern peoples or referring to them as a type, we thereby take cognizance of the fact that they are backward peoples, still remaining, like China and India, in conditions of pre-capitalist societies. In this way we also recognize that imperialism retards their economic and cultural development. In this way we express in most general form the peculiarities of their historical development, and draw the same conclusions that Lenin did in 1916.

"The national policy of Lenin," wrote Trotsky, "will find its place among the eternal treasures of mankind."

Discussion

The Central Slogan for Occupied Europe

By M. MORRISON

EDITOR'S NOTE: Continuing the discussion on the national question in Europe, on which we have published articles in each issue since September, we publish comrade M. Morrison's contribution. Other comrades have indicated that they intend to contribute articles to the discussion in subsequent issues.

The terrible oppression to which the peoples of the occupied countries are subject has naturally led some very serious comrades to propose that the slogan of national liberation be adopted for all countries in Europe now under the heel of German imperialism. A close study of the connotation of the slogan and of all the factors involved in the present European situation is necessary before deciding whether to accept or reject the proposal.

Now that a victory for Hitler appears much less likely than it did a year or so ago, when a few comrades presented the "Three Theses" (published in the December 1942 issue of *Fourth International*), it may be argued that the question need no longer be discussed. This argument is not at all convincing. For, in the first place, the same problem may arise with the occupation of Europe by the forces of the Allies and, in the second place, the proposal involves a question which, since it has been raised, should be discussed for the sake of theoretical clarity.

All parties adhering to or sympathetic with the Fourth International have as part of their program the right of all nations to self-determination. This principle of the right of nations to self-determination is of course also applicable to imperialist countries that have been defeated and occupied by Hitler's army—France, for instance. France is now in the category of oppressed nations. It must be understood, however, that recognition of the right of France to national freedom does not mean that revolutionary Marxists would support the war carried on by any section of the French ruling class against Germany. When the war began it was imperialist in character and the defeat of one of the imperialist nations does not alter the character of the war.

In the light of the fact that we accept the principles of independence of nations and the right of self-determination, it must be assumed that those in our movement who now propose the slogan of national liberation for the occupied countries mean something more than the mere recognition of these principles. The slogan of national liberation is raised by us in China, in India and in other colonial and semi-colonial countries. It must be assumed that the comrades who propose the raising of the slogan for European countries mean that we apply it in the same way in these countries as we do in China and India. This is not explicitly stated either by the authors of the "Three Theses" or by Marc Loris in his articles in the September and November 1942 issues of *Fourth International*. It is almost certain that such is the case with the "Three Theses." It is not so certain as far as the articles of Loris are concerned and therein lies one of their ambiguities.

Whenever Marxists have advanced the slogan of national liberation it has been under circumstances where they were willing to support a struggle for independence even when it was under bourgeois leadership. In China we support the struggle for national liberation against Japanese imperialism in spite of the fact that it is under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek representing the Chinese capitalists and murderer of tens of thousands of revolutionary workers. In India we support the struggle for national independence against British imperialism regardless of the fact that it is under bourgeois leadership. True, we distinguish ourselves from that leadership and we give it no political support. Nevertheless we support the struggle.

Our support of such struggles is based on the proposition that the struggle of colonial and semi-colonial countries for and achievement of independence weakens the imperialist system and furthers the growth of the productive forces of the oppressed nations. In addition, national freedom is a democratic demand and any struggle for national freedom is one which Marxists are in duty bound to support even though it is led by capitalist elements. At all times, socialism must stand out as

the champion of freedom and democracy for the oppressed masses and nations.

Were we to adopt the slogan of national liberation for the occupied countries of Europe, consistency would demand that we pursue the same course in these countries as in China and India, that is, that we support the struggle for independence even if led by representatives of capitalism. Assuredly, enough quotations can be found in the writings of Lenin to show that when a nation is under the heel of an oppressor, revolutionary Marxists are obligated to struggle for the independence of the subject nation and to support such a struggle even if under the leadership of bourgeois elements. But it is quite elementary for all Marxists that to solve a new problem it is not at all sufficient to quote Marx or Lenin or Trotsky. What is necessary is to use the method that our teachers used, that is, to start from the concrete and analyze all the factors of a given situation.

The Central Fact in Europe: The War

The central factor in the European situation at the present moment is that an imperialist war is still raging in the world to determine whether German imperialism or Anglo-American imperialism is to control Europe and the colonial world. Revolutionary Marxists refuse to support either one of the imperialist camps. They refuse to support the governments of the small European nations invaded by German imperialism. Not because they are indifferent to the fate of small nations but because the governments of these small nations represent a class whose interests are inextricably tied up with the interests of the big imperialist powers. Had Germany's invasion of any small country been independent of the imperialist conflict all revolutionary Marxists would have gone to the defense of the small nation. But it is impossible to separate the current struggle of the small nations of Europe from the imperialist conflict and because we refuse to be involved in this conflict we refrain from giving support to the small nations of Europe.

If we retain the meaning that Marxists, up to the present, have given to the slogan of national liberation, that is, the sense in which we use it in China and India, it is difficult to see how its adoption would not entail supporting those sections of the bourgeoisie of the occupied countries who are participating in the struggle against the German occupation. But the struggle of the bourgeoisie of the small nations of Europe, at the present time, is part and parcel of the imperialist conflict. In effect, then, to adopt the slogan of national liberation as an independent slogan, retaining its historic meaning, would mean to change our course and support the small nations of Europe in the imperialist conflict. I do not think that anyone intends to propose such a change in our course.

Are we not, however, supporting the Chinese struggle against Japanese imperialism, even though China is allied with Anglo-American imperialism? We have explained that our support of China is predicated on the fact that the Chinese struggle in its origin was clearly one against imperialism and that China's formal alliance with the Anglo-American imperialism has not as yet changed the essential character of its war. Analyzing all the factors in the war China is waging against Japan we conclude that it continues to be independent of the imperialist war; doing the same thing with reference to the small nations of Europe we conclude that their war continues to be part of the imperialist conflict.

When asked whether the slogan of national liberation for Europe is similar to or analogous with the same slogan in China,

comrade Loris went off on a tangent to show that Lenin criticized Rosa Luxemburg and other Marxists for making a distinction between the European countries and the colonial world. The distinction which must be recognized at the present time between China and the small countries of Europe is not the general distinction made by Luxemburg, Radek and others. They falsely held that the slogan of self-determination is applicable to the colonial world but is not applicable to European countries. The distinction I insist upon is one between a country where the struggle for national liberation can be considered as independent of the imperialist conflict and countries where the struggle by sections of the bourgeoisie against German imperialism is inseparable from the imperialist conflict.

If the slogan of national liberation means to support a struggle even though led by bourgeois elements then its adoption means, under present conditions in Europe, to support a struggle which we refused to support when Hitler first invaded the occupied countries. Is there any sense in refusing to support the Greek or Norwegian or Yugoslav governments at the time of the invasion and supporting them after the countries have been occupied? Now that the countries are occupied the struggle pursued by the fallen governments or their representatives within the occupied countries is the same struggle waged by them when their countries were invaded. Were we to come out with the slogan of national liberation it would appear as if we are not willing to defend independence before it is lost but only to regain independence after it has been lost.

It may be contended that Loris, at least, does not mean to use the slogan of national liberation as justifying support to any struggle within the occupied countries led by bourgeois elements. That is not at all clear from his articles. In previous answers to written questions (published in an Internal Bulletin of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party) he strongly implied that support of the struggle led by Mikhailovitch is possible. I think he has changed his mind on this question as he is careful, in his articles written subsequently, to avoid saying anything implying such support.

The Mikhailovitch example shows how dangerous it would be to adopt the slogan of national liberation for the European countries. If we support the struggle of Chiang Kai-shek, why not that of Mikhailovitch? It so happens, however, that the latter is the minister of war of the Yugoslav government in London and that the war he is carrying on is only a continuation of the war which he waged at the time of the invasion. Mikhailovitch is no worse than Chiang Kai-shek but the war led by him cannot be distinguished from the imperialist war while that led by Chiang Kai-shek is independent of the imperialist conflict.

It should not be concluded that it is impermissible, under all circumstances, to support a struggle led by a Mikhailovitch. Lenin mentioned the possibility of the political subjugation of all of Europe by some imperialist power, in which case the struggle for national liberation would come on the order of the day. Were Hitler victorious, it is quite possible that after a certain period the struggle for national liberation would, even in Europe, become the central struggle, with the revolutionary Marxists wholeheartedly supporting it.

But a definitive victory and the subjugation of Europe is only a historical possibility. It is as yet far from an actuality. It seems that the authors of the "Three Theses" as well as comrade Loris, when proposing the adoption of the slogan of national liberation for the occupied European countries, could only have done so by assuming Hitler's victory as definitive. They do not take into consideration the fact that the imperial-

ist war is still going on. To ignore that factor is to ignore the most important factor in the whole situation.

Loris places great emphasis on the fact that the struggle for national liberation is now being waged largely by the workers; and he states that Germany's occupation of the European countries raises the national problem in a unique manner. These statements indicate that he does not view the adoption of the slogan as necessarily implying the support of a struggle for national liberation even if led by bourgeois elements. In this he separates himself from the authors of the "Three Theses" who appear to be willing to accept all the logical implications of the slogan. In fact the phraseology of the "Three Theses" is so vague as to justify the inference that the authors intend to ignore all class distinctions. If that is what they mean, it constitutes a fundamental break with Marxism.

There is of course no law making it obligatory to give the slogan of national liberation a meaning which would necessitate the support of a struggle led by capitalist elements. But certain difficulties arise if one insists on the use of the slogan in a sense different from its historical usage in Marxist literature. In the first place, it will be constantly necessary to explain that we are using the slogan in a different sense than that given to it in the past. Confusion will also result from the fact that in colonial and semi-colonial countries we mean by the slogan that we support a nationalist struggle even if led by a Chiang Kai-shek or a Gandhi. In general it is advisable to retain the historic meaning of a slogan and to give it the same political content everywhere.

Furthermore, to use the slogan of national liberation in the European countries, independently of the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe, is actually to place before the eyes of the workers the goal of national liberation under the capitalist system. As indicated above, it might be that we shall in the future be compelled to do that very thing, but to do so now would constitute a serious error.

The Socialist United States of Europe

Socialism has been on the order of the day, as far as Europe is concerned, for many years. Objective conditions have been more than ripe for the unification of Europe on the basis of proletarian regimes in the various countries. This does not mean that a struggle for national independence was excluded in the isolated countries where such independence had not been achieved. It means only that revolutionary socialists emphasized over and over again that the national problems confronting the European masses could be solved only by a Socialist United States of Europe. The betrayals by the official socialist leadership of the European countries, particularly of Germany, permitted the reactionary force of fascism to gain the adherence of the middle classes and bring to Europe the agony which is now its lot.

No doubt, the masses of the occupied countries prefer that which they had prior to Hitler's conquest to the misery which they are experiencing at the present moment. But it would be a mistake for Marxists, at this time, to shift, in the slightest degree, from the central slogan of their propaganda in the past years. For in the minds of the masses there must also be a serious doubt that the restoration of the conditions existing prior to the conquests of Hitler will in any way solve their problems. They have not yet forgotten their misery under the pre-Hitler regimes and, while they may not know and understand all the reasons for the rise and success of fascism, they know that capitalist democracy did not prevent the fascists from gaining

power. More so now than at any other time is it necessary to stress the idea of a Socialist United States of Europe.

The fact, stressed by Loris, and we accept it as a fact, that it is the workers who are putting up the fiercest struggle against German oppression, makes it all the more necessary for us to give the struggle a socialist character and aim. What shall we tell the workers to struggle for? For national liberation implying a return to the pre-Hitler period or for the proletarian revolution which would give them both national and social freedom?

Loris speaks of the necessity of having independent states before proceeding to have a Socialist United States of Europe. Ignoring the schematicism inherent in such a formulation, it tends to imply that the workers, in their struggle against the German imperialist oppressor, should aim at national independence under capitalism before going over to the task of the proletarian revolution and a Socialist United States of Europe. It is difficult to see why, if the workers are the mainstay of the struggle against the foreign oppressor, they should not aim to achieve a Socialist United States of Europe. At the very least it is the duty of revolutionary Marxists to concentrate the attention of the workers on that aim rather than on the aim of national independence. Even assuming, for the sake of argument, that the workers are struggling only for national independence under capitalism, it still remains our duty to raise a slogan which would direct them into the right channels.

It would seem that Loris agrees with this viewpoint, for he expressly states that "to speak of freedom now and to remain silent about the only means of attaining it, by the proletarian revolution, is to repeat an empty phrase, is to deceive the masses." But if, at the same time, he proposes the adoption of the slogan of national liberation without expressly stating that it should not be used independently, he practically nullifies his statement about the necessity of the proletarian revolution to attain freedom.

It goes without saying that under no circumstances should a revolutionary party ignore the natural and justifiable sentiments of the masses for national freedom. The masses must at all times see in socialism a champion of the right of self-determination of nations. That is true during the imperialist war as well as before or after it. It is not at all a question, as Loris puts it, of abandoning the demand for national freedom during the war.

It does not at all follow, that, in order to be the champions of national freedom, we must under all circumstances use the slogan of national liberation. At the present moment, in the occupied countries we must concentrate on three things. We must refuse to support or participate in any way in the imperialist war; we must stand out as the champion of national freedom; we must emphasize the necessity of socialism as the solution to the problem confronting the European masses. Insofar as one slogan is capable of indicating these manifold tasks, the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe best serves that purpose.

To any question whether we are for national independence, an unhesitating answer in the affirmative must be forthcoming, with the explanation that in order to achieve it the masses must struggle for power to the workers.

We must be careful not to confuse the question of the proper political slogan with the question of whether we should support a particular group of workers struggling against German oppression. Under all circumstances revolutionary Marx-

ists are obligated to support workers struggling against either a foreign or native oppressor.

Where there are groups of partisans offering resistance to the German imperialist conqueror it is necessary to study the composition and leadership of a particular partisan group before revolutionary Marxists decide to join or support it. If it is a group led by representatives of the official government, then it is participating in the imperialist war and support of such a group is out of the question. If it is a group of workers and peasants who are driven to take up arms against the foreign oppressor, it may be advisable and necessary to join and support such a partisan group and try to give the struggle the direction which we would like it to have, try to educate the workers and peasants to adopt our slogans. In the extremely complicated conditions existing at present in the occupied countries there can be no rigid formula worked out to serve under all and any conditions.

There can also be no question about the necessity of fighting for and supporting democratic demands such as the right of free speech, free press and free assembly. Democratic demands are to be supported regardless of whether one expects a proletarian or bourgeois democratic revolution to follow the reign of fascism. When the masses begin the revolt against the fascists it will be our duty to urge them to estab-

lish soviets and take over the governmental power. They may not follow our advice. In all probability the parties of revolutionary Marxism will not be strong enough, if the revolt against fascism should break out in the near future, to have a decisive influence over the workers at first. A combination of liberal democrats, reformist socialists and Stalinists may gain control of the masses before they accept the leadership of revolutionary Marxism. No one is in a position to predict the exact course events will take.

At all times we participate in the struggle of the masses for greater freedom and at all times we point out to the masses the path which they should follow to attain that freedom. The masses must know that our central aim is to establish a Socialist United States of Europe. Any slogan which at this time will tend to take away the attention of the masses from this central idea is incorrect and harmful to the socialist revolution.

We cannot say what changes we shall make in our program if either one of the imperialist camps succeeds in subjugating Europe, politically and economically. We can only say that, while the imperialist war is still raging and while in the memory of the masses the conditions prevailing before the conquests of Hitler are still fresh, the slogan of the Socialist United States of Europe must continue to be the central political slogan of revolutionary Marxism.

Why the German Revolution Failed II

By WALTER HELD

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the second of two articles by Walter Held on a profoundly important question which has been the subject of controversy for two decades. The author, one of the outstanding leaders of the Fourth International, is known to many of our readers by his previous articles. Other comrades have indicated their intention to contribute articles on this question. In his first article, published in our December 1942 issue, comrade Held sought to explain why, due to the tardiness of the revolutionists in Germany and elsewhere in separating themselves from the centrists represented by Kautsky, there were no Leninist parties in western Europe. The Leninist conception of the revolutionary party and the Bolshevik strategy leading to the October revolution were little known and still less practiced. Hence, says Held, the mistakes of the young German Communist Party, culminating, in March 1921, in an attempt to precipitate a revolution at a time when the party was still supported by only a minority of the workers.

The question of the March Action caused a sharp clash in the Russian party. Their judgment of the March Action brought Lenin and Trotsky into the extreme right wing of their own party. The Third World Congress of the Comintern was imminent. Only through great effort did the Russian party arrive at a general agreement. Unity was established on the basis of a compromise, a compromise "to the left" as Trotsky described it at the Congress, and by left in this case he referred to the ultra-left, putchist, tendency.

On the surface, the Third World Congress of the Comintern (June 22-July 12, 1921) was an all-imposing spectacle. The influence of the Second International had been constantly diminishing in Europe, so that delegates of every color and race, from almost every country in the world, were assembled in Moscow: a total of 605 delegates, representing 52 different countries. In Germany, Italy, France, Czechoslovakia and Scan-

dinavia, the new international counted tens of thousands of members, and even in the East a mighty movement was beginning to arise. The brilliant climax of the Congress was Trotsky's analysis of the world political situation, which lasted several hours and which he presented on the very same day in Russian, French and German, an oratorical performance without precedent. Nevertheless, in spite of its outwardly brilliant and correct course, the Third World Congress already contained the diseased germs which were a few years later to precipitate the degeneration of the Communist International and, along with it, the Soviet state.

The "compromise to the left" on the German question was approximately as follows: The March Action was an "advance" insofar as the German party led large masses into the struggle; it was nevertheless a grave error insofar as the party forsook a defensive line in favor of an offensive one; Levi's criticism, although generally correct, signified a breach of discipline and therefore his expulsion was justified.*

That Trotsky was not altogether satisfied with this compromise was clearly evident both in his report and participation in the debates. Thus he attempted as far as possible to weaken the position that the March Action was a step forward. "When we say that the March Action was a step forward, we mean—I, at least do [he thought it necessary to limit himself—W.H.]—the fact that the Communist Party stands before us as a united independent self-sufficient party which has a possibility of independently entering the proletarian struggle." After this concession to the general rhetoric of the Congress, the speaker adopted an altogether different tone when he discussed the

*Held does not make entirely clear that Levi had not launched his critique inside the party but *outside*.—Ed.

March adventure more concretely. "The March Action is not to be defended. . . . The attempt of the party to play a leading role in a great mass movement was not successful . . . and when we then say we'll throw Paul Levi out the window and we discuss the March Action in confusing phraseology as 'a first attempt,' 'a step forward,' we are, in a word, with phrase-mongering covering up the critique, but we have not fulfilled our duty."

However, when we look more closely, didn't the criticisms of the Third World Congress consist of such phrase-mongering? The theses of the Russian delegation declared that the March Action was a struggle which the German party was provoked into by the government (what a way to describe it); as a step forward in contrast to the patient policies of Levi in the year 1920 (whereas it represented a worse regression to the stupidities of the first month of the year 1919); the theses limited themselves to condemning the so-called "offensive theory" in accordance with which the party was obligated to assume the offensive under all circumstances regardless of whether it had the following of the masses or not. While they treated the putchists with velvet gloves, the theses anathematized the critics of the ultra-leftists. It is no wonder, then, that the leaders of the March Action had no misgivings about "adopting in principle the theses presented by the Russian delegation" and only expressed objection to "Trotsky's interpretation of the theses."

Perhaps the unhappiest role at the Congress was played by Karl Radek. The truth about the proceedings in the small bureau of the ECCI seeped out later when Zinoviev and Radek got into each other's hair during the spring of 1924 and openly attacked each other in the press. In the course of these debates, Radek repeated what Levi had said three years previously, he accused Zinoviev of responsibility for the March Action. Levi's suggestion (supported by Radek) of a united front tactic toward the Social Democracy, says Radek, "was refused by a number of highly responsible comrades in the Executive Committee of the Comintern. In mid-February 1921, the comrades wanted to whitewash the March Action, and only through the personal intervention of comrade Lenin was this prevented." Nevertheless no official decision of the Executive Committee had been made. Zinoviev and Bukharin had continued their machinations against Levi's policies and, as a result, the March Action had taken place. In his summary at the Fifth World Congress (1924), Zinoviev in his own way confirmed the correctness of Radek's assertion and even boasted of having fought against Levi and having favored the ultra-lefts since 1920.

Nevertheless, at the Third World Congress in 1922 when the March Action was being discussed and when the fate of the German movement depended upon the result of this debate, Radek maintained absolute silence about these internal doings in the Moscow Executive Committee and made his speech in the worst spirit of clique solidarity. Not only is the Executive Committee absolutely innocent, but also in Germany the putchists were not so much to blame as their opponents. "We say to the German party: You have fought and you have made mistakes in the course of battle. But the very fact that you fought indicates that you are a good Communist party." Levi was already expelled at the time of the Congress and therefore was not present. The most important of his supporters, like Hoffmann, Brass, and Dauemig, were prevented from making the trip to Moscow through all sorts of machinations. There were only a few rank and file members of the Levi opposition present, who were in a difficult position because of the numerous famous speakers and only timidly ventured to present their point of view. Thus it was very easy for the men on the Executive

Committee to assume the position of prosecutors. Prosecutor Radek is tolerant enough to grant the opposition extenuating circumstances. The International Executive is of course not to blame, but the leadership of the German party cannot be absolved of all mistakes. "It is clear that if the German comrades had not made mistakes and if there had arisen an opposition to the March Action, the opposition would be ripe for expulsion. The mistakes have necessitated a milder attitude towards this opposition because it is not clear whether they are all opportunists or just alarmists. That necessitates the concession to the rightists." But the opposition should understand: "The Comintern would not forgive such things a second time." Generally this is what is wrong with ideological compromises: they allow various interpretations and clarify nothing. What was a "compromise to the left" for Trotsky was a "compromise to the right" for Radek and a majority of the participants at the Third World Congress.

Levi was nevertheless right, when he maintained after the Congress: "Whoever advised the Communist Party to accept such a compromise, advised her to take poison. . . . For if the March Action was a step forward, there should be no hesitation about taking the next step. But if the March Action was a crime, then say so, so that every one should know where he stands." The compromise transformed the open crisis of the German party into a "hidden crisis." Levi prophesied that the German Communist Party would never withstand this covert crisis. "Perhaps it will come to pass, and unless miracles happen it must come to pass, that the Communist Party will share the same fate as the Tarim River, that river of Central Asia which arises from the mountains with many waters but never reaches the sea. It disappears in the Siberian steppe as if it had never existed. . . . Then it will be necessary to start a great task from the very beginning, under new conditions but with the old beliefs."

Lenin's Views of Levi

In his talks with Clara Zetkin during the Third World Congress, Lenin charged Levi's criticism with not differentiating between the defensive action of the struggling workers and the initiation of an offensive by an ill-advised party leadership. Levi's critique lacked the feeling of solidarity with the party and had embittered the comrades by its tone, rather than by its content. This argument sounds surprising, coming from a politician who had always used the sharpest tone in his polemics and had ridiculed every criticism of sharp tone as evidence of political weakness. Even when one grants that Lenin's comments were correct and that Levi's brochure against the March Action "expressed a strong tendency of self-sufficiency and self-satisfaction and not a little literary conceit," it remains difficult to understand how Lenin and Trotsky could follow the Third World Congress in placing the form above the content. "The political principles of Levi will triumph brilliantly at the Congress," exclaimed Lenin, nevertheless, "the Congress will condemn Paul Levi and treat him harshly." On the other hand, the Congress was to nullify the famous leftist theory of the offensive at any price and to condemn its tactics.

As far as the personalities are concerned, we shall not handle the "leftists severely, but we shall put a little salve on their wounds, so that they can resume work energetically and happily," and pursue sound politics. Of course Lenin didn't want to lose Paul Levi whose qualities he esteemed. "I became acquainted with him in Switzerland and had high hopes for him. He showed himself to be faithful in the most trying times,

he was courageous, intelligent, and unselfish. . . . For Paul Levi the road back to us is open if he does not block it himself. . . . We cannot afford to lose Paul Levi. For his sake and for our sake. We are not blessed to excess with talents and must conserve whatever we can. If Levi submits to discipline and behaves, he can, for example, write anonymously in the party press or write a few pamphlets—then I shall, in an open letter, request his readmission in three or four months.” When Lenin spoke to Clara Zetkin in this manner it was naturally with the intention of having her use her influence with Levi. Such a relationship with the left on one side and with Levi on the other seemed necessary to Lenin, in order to maintain the unity of the German party. He looked upon the March adventure as a result of “infantilism” and deemed it necessary to have “a fatherly patience” toward the leaders of the German party. Trotsky in 1929, in his sarcastic and penetrating pamphlet against the Comintern leaders, reports a conversation which Lenin and he had with Clara Zetkin some time after the March Action. Both agreed with Zetkin that great stupidities had been committed. But, reasoned Lenin, “Youth commits many stupid acts but nevertheless it will make a good revolution.” Clara Zetkin protested, “They will never make a bad one.” Lenin and Trotsky looked at each other and, as the latter reports, they couldn’t hide their smiles. Nevertheless, in this case, history proved Clara Zetkin to be right, she was wrong in that she later combined with stupid fools in a bad revolution.

Lenin and Trotsky’s mistake was that they overlooked the fact that it was not the “young and inexperienced” Germans but the political infant shoes of the mature adults like Zinoviev, Bukharin and Bela Kun which had led the way to the March adventure. The first duty of the Third World Congress should have been to publicly denounce and condemn the unfortunate intervention of the Executive Committee into the politics of the German party, to relieve the persons responsible of their functions and to subject the activity of the new committee to permanent democratic control. Then there would still have been time to correct the formal mistakes of Levi and his supporters. But as things developed all proportion was lost, and the delegates must have gained the impression that it would always be better to make mistakes following the orders of the Comintern than to act correctly while violating discipline. In this way the foundation stone was laid for the development which was to change the Communist International in the course of a few years into a society of Mamelukes, in slavish dependency upon the ruling faction in Moscow and finally into a mere instrument of Stalin’s opportunistic, nationalistic foreign policy.

What Happened to Levi

As far as Levi is concerned, it remains regrettable that he never accepted Lenin’s outstretched hand. It would surely have paid to attempt in this way to lead the movement back on the right road. That Lenin and Trotsky were free of cliquism was shown later in their absolute opposition to the bureaucratic tendencies in their own party. The fact that these tendencies had also found entry into the Executive Committee of the International could not long remain hidden from them. That would have been the hour of Levi’s vindication. It was still worse that Levi did not possess enough patience, self-confidence and strength of character to continue with his work with his own group. He and his small group of devoted supporters joined the Independent Social Democracy and a little later, together with the latter, rejoined the old Social Democracy. Of course, he never completely forgot his past. He didn’t become a Minister

of the unholy Weimar Republic or even a mayor, but remained in critical opposition. As a lawyer, in a series of sensational cases, he revealed the reactionary and dishonest justice of the Weimar Republic. The foulness of German politics affected him so deeply that he committed suicide in 1929. He leaped from a window in a Berlin apartment building, thus recalling Trotsky’s remark at the Third World Congress about throwing Levi out the window.

The attitude of the Third World Congress toward Levi seemed to be justified by his subsequent course. In his “Notes of a Publicist,” written in 1922 but published after his death, Lenin regrets having opposed Levi so harshly. The picture is one-sided, if one looks only at Levi’s later development and does not consider the party he left. In “What Is to Be Done” the young Lenin had emphasized the great significance of the continuity of leadership and cadres in the building of a party. In his discussions with Clara Zetkin during the Third World Congress he directed her attention to this point. “It is especially important that you retain in our ranks qualified comrades who have earned their spurs in the workers’ movement. I am thinking of comrades like Adolf Hoffmann, Fritz Geyer, Dauemig, Brass, and others. . . . Comrades of this sort bring experience and knowledge to the party, and they are, above all, a living bond between you and the working class, whose confidence they possess.” Lenin was also full of praise for the rank and file elements of the Levi opposition: “Wonderful fellows, these German workers like Malzahn and his friends. I grant that they probably would not carry off honors in a debate. I don’t know whether they would be good as shock troops. But I am absolutely sure that people of this sort are the steadfast, well-organized, fighting vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat, and its foundation and support in the factories. We must gather to us such elements and activate them.”

Only a few months after the Third World Congress all those mentioned by Lenin, “the solid bond between the party and the masses,” had left the party in which they had lost confidence. The fraction of the party in the Reichstag had shrunk from 26 to 11. The continuity in the party leadership was lost and never regained. Although the permanent crisis of German economy and politics drove many new followers and voters to the party of the extreme left, a stable relation of trust between it and the masses was never again achieved. The leadership of the party was for a while in the hands of the quartet, Brandler, Thalheimer, Walcher and Froehlich, who found their complement in the “opposition” of Maslow-Ruth Fischer. Heinrich Brandler was a good factory or union official with organizational talent and a certain practical instinct, but had no basic theoretical education, no imagination and no gift of creative leadership. August Thalheimer, whom Lenin and Trotsky, God knows why, once endowed with the title of an educated theoretician, was really nothing but a dry eclectic, always ready to justify the opportunistic practices of his friend Brandler with the necessary theory. In the same manner, Jacob Walcher and Paul Froehlich complemented each other. Since Walcher’s political horizon was more restricted than Brandler’s, he could allow his practical instinct freer reign. Froehlich’s theoretical knowledge surpassed that of young Thalheimer although the latter was superior in literary ability. As far as the Maslow-Fischer combination was concerned, their political level was close to that of the hooligans of the extreme right, the rabble around Streicher and Strasser.

Lenin was very much distressed with the subsequent development of the German party. At the Fourth World Congress of the Comintern, which was nothing but a less spectacular repe-

tion of the Third, he found the opportunity to continue his dialogue with Clara Zetkin. One evening after Ruth Fischer's speech, Lenin poured out his heart to the old comrade. "Hm, hm, I can very well understand why there is a 'left opposition' in this case. . . . Things are progressing so slowly. World history doesn't seem to be moving very rapidly, but the dissatisfied workers think that your party doesn't wish it to move any faster. I understand all that. But what I cannot understand is the type of leadership of the 'left opposition,' to which I have just listened. . . . Such an opposition, such a leadership does not impress me. However, I openly admit to you that your Central Committee impresses me just as little, for it doesn't understand, it doesn't have the energy to clean out these small demagogues. It is certainly an easy matter to dispose of such people, to alienate the revolutionary-minded workers from them and to politically educate the latter. Precisely because they are revolutionary-minded workers, whereas radicals of this sort (Fischer and Maslow) represent fundamentally the worst sort of opportunists." This characterization was fully justified by the later activity of both, but nevertheless did not prevent their being at the top of the German party for some time. It is surprising that it didn't occur to Lenin to connect this desperate situation in the German party with the course of the March Action and the treatment of it by the Third World Congress. After they got rid of the serious elements it was not surprising that the sterile bureaucrats and adventurist demagogues took control.

The Revolutionary Crisis of 1923

The year 1923 justified Lenin's dark forebodings about the German movement. In that year Germany was confronted with a unique revolutionary situation. The German government answered the French occupation of the Ruhr with the call for "passive resistance" and its accompanying inflation. Under the masquerade of patriotism there took place the most sinister robbery of the middle class and the proletariat by finance capital that has been known in the history of modern society. According to the calculations of the famous German economist, Professor Lederer, the net profit of German finance capital from this inflation was 78 billion gold marks, to which should be added the steep taxes.

While Stinnes, Thyssen, Krupp, Duisberg and Cuno, who was chosen by them as pilot at the head of the ship of state, plundered to their heart's content, they cried, as is customary in such cases, "Hold that thief," namely Poincare. Or to be more exact, they had others do the crying for them. As a product of the collapsing bourgeois society, a new political tendency had developed, the fascists or Nazis, whose first members were recruited from the bankrupt petty bourgeoisie, unemployed officers and lumpen-proletariat, and whose demagogic ideology contained the reality of chauvinism and the destruction of democracy. The robber barons gave a small per cent of their gigantic booty to the Nazis whose revenge propaganda had provided a favorable sounding board for the action of French imperialism. The money given for Nazi propaganda was a sound investment and the effect was twofold: the fanatic hatred of France directed the attention of the people away from the machinations of the robber barons and the iron and steel princes, and at the same time the rise of the Nazis put the Social Democracy into such a state of fear of the "Fascist danger" that it swallowed the inflationary politics of Cuno as the lesser evil.

But the most hopeless floundering was in the ranks of the Communist Party. With its adventurist soul it swam in the wake of the chauvinist Nazi propaganda; with its bureaucratic

"ministerial" soul it adapted itself to the sterile, negatively limited anti-fascism of the Social Democracy. There was hardly a phase of German politics into which the Communist Party did not project itself, even into that of the particularism of the provincial governments. Brandler and Co. made Saxony and Thuringia the center of their politics instead of Berlin. Confusion reached its height when, in Moscow, Radek glorified the anti-Semitic soldier, Schlageter. "Schlageter, the courageous soldier of the counter-revolution, deserves to be honored by us soldiers of the revolution," declared Radek in an improvised speech at the extended plenum of the ECCI (Executive Committee of the Communist International) on the day after Schlageter was shot by the French troops of occupation. The speaker turned to the "German People's Party" (as the Nazis were then called) with the question: "Against whom do you want to fight, Entente capitalism or the Russian people? With whom do you want to unite, the Russian workers and peasants in our common struggle to throw off the burden of finance capital or with Entente capital to enslave the German and Russian people?" Through Radek's words the Communists declared themselves ready to be in league with the Nazis: "We shall do everything so that men like Schlageter, who were ready to encounter death for a common cause shall not be wanderers into nothingness, but travelers towards a better future for all of humanity." At this conference only one delegate, the German Bohemian, Neurath, protested against this nationalistic-communistic mischief. Otherwise Radek's speech aroused frantic applause. In Germany it was the basis of a series of fraternal actions between the Communists and the Nazis. Communist firms published brochures in which Communist and Nazi statements appeared alongside each other. This ideological disintegration made rapid progress.

The 1923 Events in Russia

To be sure, neither Lenin nor Trotsky were present at this plenum of the ECCI. Lenin's consciousness was already lost forever, although the body which carried his spirit continued to perform its functions. And Trotsky? Although it was not generally known, at this time he was already in deep conflict with the bureaucratic center of his party: the General Secretary Stalin and his henchmen, Zinoviev and Kamenev. At the beginning of the year Trotsky and Lenin had come to an understanding about their common action against the underhanded bureaucratism in the party and the state. All of Lenin's last articles and letters were directed against Stalin's policies and methods. Lenin and Trotsky intended to strike the decisive blow against Stalin and his bureaucratic group at the coming 12th Convention of the Russian party. Shortly before the convening of the Congress, Lenin had suffered his second stroke from which he was never to recover. In his last letter to the party, which was later known as his Last Testament, he demanded Stalin's removal from the post of General Secretary; among his other demands was the expulsion of Ordzhonikidze, who had boxed the ears of a Georgian comrade in the course of a discussion, and the removal of Dzerzhinski from his responsible post as head of the Cheka. Although Lenin was out of action, nevertheless he had bequeathed to his co-worker Trotsky excellent and potent weapons in the form of these last articles and letters.

It is interesting to note how Trotsky himself evaluated the chances he had at that time in the struggle against the bureaucratic disintegrating tendencies. In his autobiography he wrote: "Our appearance together before the Central Committee would

have been very successful at the beginning of 1923. In fact, I have no doubt that if I had appeared in the spirit of the Lenin-Trotsky bloc against Stalinist bureaucratism on the eve of the 12th Party Convention, I would have been victorious even without the direct intervention of Lenin." Lenin had expressly warned Trotsky against a compromise with his opponents: "Stalin will accept it and then betray it." In expectation of Lenin's recovery, Trotsky had entered into a compromise. He summoned Kamenev, Stalin's supporter at the time, and told him: "Take note of this and tell others that I have not the least intention to start a struggle on organizational questions at the convention. I am for the retention of the status quo. . . . I am opposed to Stalin's removal, against the expulsion of Ordzhonikidze and the removal of Dzerzhinski. . . . But I am in fundamental agreement with Lenin. I am striving for a radical change in our politics on the national question, the cessation of the persecution of Stalin's opponents in Georgia, the removal of administrative pressure on the party."

Kamenev and Stalin did exactly as Lenin had predicted, they accepted everything and did the opposite. It is certainly not very advisable to entrust bureaucrats with executing an anti-bureaucratic program or, as the proverb goes, to make the goat the gardener. When Trotsky spoke of his possible victory at the 12th Convention, he added: "How long this victory would have lasted is another question." One can certainly agree with him here. In view of the backwardness of Russia and the failure of the world revolution to materialize, reaction was unavoidable in Russia. But if Trotsky had publicly stepped forward in the spring of 1923, the Thermidorian tendencies would have been forced out into open battle, the reaction would not have assumed this veiled character, the meaning of the events in Russia would have been better understood in Europe and the rest of the world, and perhaps it would have been possible to release the Communist International from the hands of the bureaucrats.

Forty years before, in a letter to Bebel, Engels had defended his and Marx's position on the split of the First International at the Hague Conference: "We knew very well that the bubble would have to burst. All sorts of trash attached themselves to the International. The confirmed sectarians became snobbish, misused the International with the hope that they would be permitted the greatest stupidities and absurdities. We did not allow it. Knowing very well that the bubble would burst, we were not concerned with postponing the catastrophe but with seeing to it that the International would come out of it wholesome and unfalsified. . . . And if we had appeared at The Hague in conciliatory mood, if we had hushed up the outbreak of the split, what would have been the result? The sectarians would have continued for a year to commit even greater stupidities and infamies in the name of the International; the workers in the advanced countries would have turned away in disgust, the bubble would not have burst. It would have collapsed gradually from a needle-prick."

Trotsky and the German Crisis

The one opportunity "to cause the bubble to burst" was missed by Trotsky in the spring of 1923. As a result, Stalin and his confederates secured the time and opportunity to commit the worst infamies in the name of the Russian party and the International, "the bubble did not burst, but it gradually collapsed from a needle-prick." The stench that it spread made the rise of a new movement impossible for a long time.

We are at a loss to understand why Trotsky stayed away

from the plenum of the ECCI which acclaimed Radek's speech on Schlageter. Perhaps, while waiting for Lenin's recovery, he was exercising the utmost caution and, after his experience at the 12th Convention, did not feel inclined to take responsibility for decisions in the carrying out of which he had no part. His absence did not denote that he was indifferent to the German developments; on the contrary, he followed them with eager attention . . . and serious concern.

The objective conditions for a revolutionary solution of the German crisis were so favorable, that the influence of the Communist Party grew tremendously in spite of its unstable politics. Widespread, all-embracing strikes broke out with no end in sight; the factory councils, the method of choosing workers' representatives in the factories which was created by the November revolution and recognized by the Weimar government, won enormous importance among the rising masses as their organized leadership; in several industrial centers the workers organized themselves into militias (in units of a hundred each) and began to arm themselves. "We are dancing on a volcano and the revolution confronts us," declared Stresemann, the leading bourgeois politician and later Reich-chancellor, at the beginning of July.

Under such circumstances everything depended upon the correct handling of the situation by the leadership of the German party, and Trotsky did not esteem this leadership any higher than had Lenin in his heart-to-heart talk with Clara Zetkin. At a plenary session of the Central Committee of the Russian party in September, Trotsky delivered a speech which, according to the official report, greatly enraged all the members of the Committee. He asserted that the leadership of the German Communist Party was no good, that the Central Committee of this party was imbued with the spirit of fatalism and ridden with incompetence. As a consequence, they were condemning the German revolution to failure. This speech, as the report adds, "had a depressing effect upon the participants." "In order to win, the German leadership must have a precisely thought out and careful plan for the revolutionary overthrow," Trotsky reminded the German party leadership. "The revolutionary party must not limit itself to using the revolutionary movement which is at hand but it must assume the direct political, organizational and military-technical leadership of this movement," he explained in an article in which he attempted to come to the aid of the German party. Finally Trotsky demanded, as Lenin had done six years previously in connection with Russia, that a definite date should be decided upon for the uprising in Germany.

Zinoviev and the German party leaders wavered. There was no talk of a serious preparation for the uprising. Moscow's part was to offer to send some experienced Russians to Germany to help the leadership of the German party. There followed an unpleasant surprise for Stalin and his collaborators. Because they were not aware of the change of power in Russia the leadership of the German party requested Trotsky! The bureaucratic triumvirate (Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev) declared, however, that Trotsky could not be spared in Russia and sent a delegation with Radek at its head.

In the meantime the leadership of the German party had made further blunders against which Lenin and Trotsky had expressly warned them at the Fourth World Congress in 1922—they entered the Social-Democratic governments in Saxony and Thuringia. At a time when the doors to power in all Germany would have opened to the Communist Party, if they had only known how to use the key in their hands, Brandler and Thalheimer knocked at the servants' entrance and begged for

a few ministerial positions in the powerless provincial governments! In the face of so much helplessness, the bourgeoisie regained its self-confidence. Ebert and Stresemann sent the Reichswehr to Dresden (Saxony) and Weimar (Thuringia) to depose the governments there.

The leadership of the Communist Party had boasted for a long time that such action on the part of the government would be the signal for the uprising. What really happened, Radek told at a plenary session of the ECCI before the Fifth World Congress. "When the representatives of the ECCI came into the city on the night after the occupation of Dresden by the Reichswehr, comrade Brandler said that he had given the order for a retreat, but if the representatives of the ECCI considered this command incorrect, he would unquestioningly submit (the couriers had not been sent out yet). When the representative of the ECCI (Radek), after acquainting himself with the situation, decided that it would be impossible to start the struggle, he agreed with the decision of the Central Committee." It should be added that the delegation of the ECCI, before its departure from Moscow had been given the contents of a letter of Stalin in which the latter, for the first time making his powerful position in the Russian party felt in the field of the International, declared that the German party must be held back, not encouraged. So Brandler seemed to be covered on all sides when he gave his order to retreat. Because of some error the local leadership in Hamburg was notified too late; here several hundred battled with the Hamburg police for several days. In the rest of Germany they capitulated without a struggle. The German bourgeoisie had withstood its most difficult political crisis. For the German Communist Party the year 1923 signified the extension of the mistakes of 1921. At that time they wanted to assume the "offensive" in spite of the situation; now in the midst of the most advantageous situation they found themselves unable to act. The result was a new severe crisis in the party, in the course of which, with Zinoviev's help, Fischer-Maslow—christened by Lenin "petty demagogues"—came to the head of the party for some time. They introduced a decade of the disintegration of the German workers' movement which ended in the triumph of Hitler in 1933.

It is questionable whether the result would have been different if the German party had started the uprising on a fixed date in October 1923. Just as it was certain that Trotsky was correct in his evaluation of the political crisis in Germany, so it was also certain that his attempt to correct the policies of the German party was too late. The conception of the German party was not adequate from the very beginning. Its relations to the masses and to itself were not sufficiently analyzed and its practical, concrete policies were incorrect in all decisive events, beginning with January 1919, likewise in the Kapp Putsch (1920), the March Action (1921) and so too in the year 1923. The mistake of 1923 did not begin with the failure to organize an uprising but with January 11, the day of the occupation of the Ruhr by French troops. Thanks to its unstable national-Bolshevik policies, the party was so disoriented in October that an attempt at uprising could hardly count on a successful outcome. With the German collapse the dream of world revolution was buried for a long time. Herein lies also the cause of the world revolutionist, Trotsky's, downfall in Russia.

The reader may ask why we attach so much importance to the history of the German movement and so completely neglect the history of other sections of the Comintern. The answer is that during these years Germany was the weakest link in the chain of capitalist countries, so that social revolution was most imminent there. The German party became involved in

actual mass actions and far-reaching political events, and its policies were the center of the debates of the first five world congresses of the Comintern. The events in the German party were reflected in the other parties through Moscow. So the fate of the German party decided the fate of the Comintern.

A somewhat independent but also extremely brief role was played by the Italian party. The Italian Socialist Party, with the exception of Mussolini's small group, had maintained a pacifist-tinted anti-chauvinist position during the World War. It thus found itself at odds with the Second International; and the entire party, from the right-reformist Turati to the ultra-left anti-parliamentarian Bordiga, had joined the Third International. This heterogeneous party was held together by the skilled tactician Serrati, an Italian Bebel. The attempt of the Executive of the Comintern to split this party and change its left wing into a Bolshevik party had little success. Such an attempt was doomed to failure, because between the centrist Serrati and the ultra-leftists around Bordiga and Bombacci there was a vacuum. Here also were lacking theoretically schooled and practically talented Marxists of great stature. When the Moscow Executive, in its battle against Serrati, threw its support to Bordiga-Bombacci, it strengthened those same tendencies against which Lenin had written his "Left Wing Communism" and against which Levi had waged war in Germany. The split in the Italian Socialist Party accomplished by Zinoviev's messenger Rakosy at the convention in Livorno in 1921 was actually the overture to the March events in Germany. Italian radicalism remained bound in the chains of anti-parliamentarism, the traditional evil of the workers' movement of the Romance countries, and suffered a lamentable ending very shortly. In spite of its great numerical weight Italian socialism, because of its lack of decisive, consistent revolutionary politics, succumbed helplessly to the reckless rise of Mussolini. Italy anticipated the fate of the rest of Europe. This was all the more inescapable because the lessons of the Italian defeat were as little understood in Europe as the lessons of the Russian victory of October.

In Leon Trotsky's autobiography the Communist International is hardly mentioned. So much the more space does the chapter on the Comintern take up in his collected works. He always attributed the decisive reason for the defeat of his tendency in Russia to the defeat of the German revolution. Trotsky's writings explain brilliantly just how the failure of the Communist International favored the rise of the reactionary Soviet bureaucracy, and how this bureaucracy in turn finally destroyed the International. However the question still remains open: Why had not Lenin and Trotsky succeeded in building a serious Marxist International during the period from 1917 to 1923?

Our historical analysis offers us the following answer to this question: The deep-rooted social-democratic, fatalistic conception of revolution in Western Europe; the all-too-late unmasking of Kautskyism as the most skillful theoretical representative of this fatalism; the consequently delayed founding of the Communist International which, as a result, in its first years of existence showed revolutionary impatience in expecting the young, immature parties to accomplish the revolution; and, finally, the German March Action and the treatment of it by the Third World Congress, where form was placed above content, and a bureaucratic conception of discipline was sanctioned whereby the faith of the best western European workers' elements in the new International was shattered and the groundwork was laid for the catastrophic defeat of 1923.

Translated by Lou Held and James Cadman

The Renegades: Lewis Corey

By HARRY FRANKEL

One of the plainest phenomena of recent years has been the sharp swing to the right that has taken place among the middle class intellectuals everywhere in the world. Yesterday foes of imperialist war, they are today in the front ranks of the pro-war propagandists.

What was the reason for this occurrence? If we listened to the average intellectual we would be told that he went through a process of enlightenment. He "began to doubt Marxism," and soon "saw" that Marxism is "hampered by traditionalism and old fashioned ideas." These thoughts led him to "think of more progressive ideas in keeping with the times," and before long he "regretfully abandoned Marxism."

This is an inadequate explanation. It neglects to take into account the fact that this "enlightenment" was not limited to a few individuals, but embraced a whole generation of intellectuals. Was it a mere coincidence that the same ideas "occurred" to all of them at the same time? The movement of the intellectuals away from Marxism is a *social* and not an *individual* phenomenon.

The explanation is simply this: Sections of the petty-bourgeoisie came to the movement for socialism as a result of the breakdown of capitalist economy during the end of the 1920's and first part of the '30's. The onslaught of reaction in the years preceding the Second World War, and the outbreak of the war itself, drove these people away from the working-class movement. It was not a new "clarity of thought," but sheer terror at where their ideas were taking them that led them to abandon Marxism. They found it impossible to break all their ties with the old system and face the isolation, the difficulties and the personal privation—not to speak of repression—which the flood of reaction was beginning to impose on the revolutionists. One way and another, the intellectuals made their peace with capitalism.

The rightward turn of the intellectuals produced a barrage of books in which are set forth in great detail the various and sundry errors of Marxism. No sooner had they found their miserable way out, than they began to cast about for arguments to justify their course. It was, as part of this process that Lewis Corey has written "The Unfinished Task."

"The Unfinished Task"* is billed on the jacket design as being by the author of "The Decline of American Capitalism." This is only the first of the many inaccuracies to be found in this volume. The Lewis Corey who wrote "The Decline of American Capitalism" in 1934 belonged to an entirely different political species than the author in 1942 of this apology of capitalism.

The theory of his present book is simple enough. In the beginning there was free enterprise. Mankind flourished and democracy grew. But into this Garden of Eden crept the stealthy trusts, who committed the original sin called monopoly, in consequence of which the human race has been passing its days in the tortured expiation of this sin. The restoration of the "free market" will bring with it a restoration of the lost paradise.

The "free market" is described as follows:

"The supreme merit of the free market is its objective economic controls that reduce to a minimum the direct administrative controls which endanger freedom and personality. A free market is the democratic expression of the spirit of live and let live. It promotes a sense of equality." (*Loc. cit.*, p. 285.)

And so on.

There are short-tempered readers who might be tempted to dismiss "The Unfinished Task" after reading this painful passage. It is necessary, however, to examine Corey's ideas in greater detail.

Corey claims to be interested above all in the maintenance of democracy. Democracy is inseparably associated in his mind with four factors:

1. "The separation of economic and political power."
2. "Widespread popular ownership of property."
3. "The relations of freedom of enterprise, the free market, and competition."
4. "Free labor unionism."

According to Corey, these factors all existed in the America of the 1830's, and the struggle for democracy was won. This then is the Garden of Eden for which he yearns.

So far as the first point is concerned, it is simply untrue. There never was a party, program or government in the United States, from Federalism to the New Deal, that did not operate in the interest of an economic class. Separation of economic and political power never existed. There is a demagogic myth to that effect, calculated to deceive the masses. Corey has chosen, for reasons best known to himself, to accept that myth, but that does not alter the reality.

Of the remaining points we will say little, although "widespread popular indebtedness" might be added to point 2, and it is questionable that labor unionism was quite "free." We will permit them to stand on the strength that they were faintly characteristic of American capitalism in the Jacksonian period.

The important fact is, however, that this Jacksonian Garden of Eden rested on chattel slavery. This becomes clear when one views the whole national structure, and does not limit his view to one or another frontier or agrarian locality. Almost one-third of the population of the United States was the property of a handful of slave owners, and was bought and sold in the market place. This fact is assiduously ignored by Corey. Only thereby can he glorify the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian "democrats" of that day, who saw nothing wrong with the extension of the "free market" to trade in human flesh.

Petty-bourgeois democracy was the product of infant capitalism. But capitalism remained an infant in America only so long as its forward development was retarded by the existence of the chattel slave system. Therefore, Jacksonian democracy could hope to dominate only so long as slavery existed! This is Corey's "democracy." It was destroyed, never to return, by the Civil War.

In his eagerness to attribute all progressive features of American economic and political development to the petty-bourgeois agrarian influence, Corey neglects to mention that

*The Unfinished Task: Economic Reconstruction for Democracy, by Lewis Corey. The Viking Press, New York, 1942. 314 pages. \$3.00.

even after the Civil War, bourgeois democracy existed under the auspices of competitive industrial capitalism. This is another indication of the petty-bourgeois social roots of his theories.

Were Corey to picture "free enterprise" in a correct light, he would see it as the *transitory* and *anarchic* mode of production improvised by history from the bourgeois forms, which already had emerged under feudal society, and which served as the only convenient and the only possible structure for the development of industry at that time. When the ice jam of feudalism in the river of history was blasted loose by the dynamite of the bourgeois industrial and political revolutions and the ice chunks came churning down the narrows and falls at breakneck speed: that was free enterprise. It continued until it piled up in a new ice jam called monopoly and imperialist capitalism, a jam which can be blasted loose only by the socialist revolution. It was only a transitory phase. Nobody wants it any more. Surely not the bourgeoisie which must exist today on a monopolist basis or perish. Not the workers, who will want to organize a *planned* society when they hold the power. Only the petty-bourgeois intellectuals, to whom shopkeeper virtue is the best of all virtue, shopkeeper democracy the purest of all democracy, and petty, anarchic shopkeeper planning the finest of all economic planning; only the petty-bourgeois intellectual who fears the future more than he desires progress wants to cling to this outmoded improvisation, and even deifies it as the best of all possible systems.

What is the working-class socialist program? It is that the factories, the mines, the mills—as a matter of fact all the means of production—must be run and administered by the workers of those industries, and that the local and national planning and direction be in the hands of elected councils of the workers, farmers, and all other productive sections of the nation. The realization of this idea would establish democracy on the economic field and guarantee the flowering of democracy on the political and all other fields. Corey opposes this program, and yet he says he is for "democracy."

It becomes clear that Corey shares with all the other "democrats" of our day the most pernicious lack of confidence in the ability of the people to govern themselves. Therefore, the minority bourgeoisie must continue to rule and a few reforms and "free labor unions" will be added for conscience sake. This is the essence of Corey's "democracy."

Corey's basic argument on this point is the example of Russia:

"The economic framework of traditional socialism now exists in the Soviet Union: collective ownership, no capitalist property or profits. Yet there is no democracy: Russian 'socialism' is totalitarian. That is contrary to all expectations and ideals of socialism, a disturbing development that has led to all kinds of theoretical hocus-pocus." (Page 131.)

It is quite possible to solve this problem without having recourse to "theoretical hocus-pocus." Corey says that "widespread property ownership" and "free enterprise" result in democracy. But in France after the most sweeping bourgeois revolution in history, and the establishment on the widest basis in all Europe of small landowning and free enterprise, there came, in the beginning, nothing but dictatorship. There was the Jacobin dictatorship, followed by the dictatorship of the Directorate and the Napoleonic dictatorship. Why was this? Mr. Corey might answer that the vast dead-weight of feudal remnants inside of France and the pressure of feudal Europe surrounding France, as well as the military pressure of hostile England, deformed the political structure and in-

hibited the development of political democracy. Mr. Corey would see that easily enough because it happened 150 years ago. But he refuses to see that the terrible pressures of the bourgeois world upon the Soviet Union have deformed the young socialist republic in much the same way.

It is well known that all true liberals in England, Europe and America supported the rising French bourgeoisie against its reactionary feudal enemies who were being assisted by the English competitors of the French bourgeoisie. It is also well known that there existed at that time not a few Coreys who, pointing to the "excesses" and "dictatorship," turned their backs on the struggling revolution. Corey's progenitors were in the camp of the counter-revolution at that time, as he is today.

Corey's Insolvable Riddle

What is the real meaning of Corey's fabled relationship between democracy and "free enterprise"? He complains that socialists do not understand:

"Socialism was caught unaware by totalitarianism because it misunderstood the economic basis of democracy. It forgot the relation between democracy and economic freedom and never understood the relation of free business (economic) enterprise to free enterprise of all kinds, which is democracy." (Page 131.)

But if socialists do not "understand" there are others who see eye to eye with Mr. Corey. On October 13, 1942 the reactionary New York *World-Telegram* devoted a complete page to the republication of a long editorial from the *Saturday Evening Post*; an editorial which noted down in fairly accurate form the most petrified prejudices of the American bourgeoisie. The windup and climax ran as follows:

"Is there any one rock of truth to which the common man may cling while the storm rages about him? Is there any one pillar of freedom which is the key to all freedom around which he can concentrate his defenses?"

"There is such a freedom. Economic freedom. The freedom to develop his productive abilities, sell them to the highest bidder, and retain for himself and his family a fair share of the benefits. When this freedom is destroyed the entire democratic structure goes with it."

Economic freedom is the key to all freedom! Corey is having remarkable success with the propagation of his new doctrine.

An even more remarkable proof of the virility of Corey's ideas presents itself. Shortly after the publication of Corey's book in April of this year, no less a body than the National Association of Manufacturers announced a series of conferences to spread "*understanding of the necessity of continuing freedom of enterprise in order to preserve other freedoms.*"

That there is a germ of truth in this thought, it is impossible to deny. Socialists understand that real economic democracy is the only guarantee of the growth of political democracy. Their program will assure economic democracy. The bourgeoisie on the other hand tries to pass off the so-called "free market" and the freedom of man to exploit man as economic democracy, and Corey only echoes the big bourgeoisie. The petty-bourgeois democrat is only a "progressive" shadow of the spokesmen for monopoly capitalism. Corey's myth is an exact replica of the myth which is spread by the bourgeoisie as a cloak for its rule!

To complete his apology for capitalism, Corey must exonerate it of all responsibility for fascism. For this reason he accepts the idea that the fascist nations are no longer

capitalist. The refutation of this idea offers no problem for the simple reason that not a shred of evidence is adduced to support it. This theory seems to be offered solely on the strength of its present popularity in intellectual circles. The fact that the contention that fascism is something different from capitalism has never been proven and is false to the core seems to make no difference to Corey.

It is not necessary to present all the factual material here. We need only refer to two of the more recent books on the subject. Howard K. Smith's "Last Train from Berlin" contains sufficient refutation of Corey's notion. There is also the more comprehensive survey by Maxine Sweezey, "The Structure of German Economy."

It is also necessary for Carey to explain away imperialism. Thus he constructs an artificial division between the imperialism of Germany, Italy and Japan and that of the "democratic" nations:

"Fascist imperialism is not, however, the old capitalist imperialism. The fundamental difference is this: while the old capitalist imperialism is disintegrating, fascism reintegrates imperialism in new forms that give it new strength and greater scope." (Page 94.)

On the next page he explains why the "old imperialism is disintegrating."

"Imperialism cannot block the drive of the colonial peoples toward economic balance and independence; it could do so only by using an overwhelming violence that democratic nations would not permit."

This absurdity was written way back in the spring of 1942. Soon came the events in India. Recall Mr. Corey's statement. "Imperialism," he said, could "block the drive of the colonial peoples towards independence . . . only by using an overwhelming violence that democratic nations would not permit." And then the storm of British violence broke on the heads of the Indian people, with flogging, shooting, bombing and aerial strafing being used as the daily weapons of John Bull in India. By that time it was clear that Corey's statement was something less than accurate.

Corey might try to explain away the obvious efforts of the American government to prop up the remnants of the French colonial empire, and guarantee its future existence. It is plain to see that Corey's statement is false, and can only serve as a cover of whitewash for the activities of the imperialist "democracies."

"The Unfinished Task" is a typical product of the panic of the intellectuals. It represents a rationalization of this panic rather than an honest intellectual effort. Corey's ideas are plainly nothing but a recodification of the most ancient petty-bourgeois prejudices and nostrums. His economic "system" is incapable of achievement and would be reactionary if it could be attained.

"The Unfinished Task" never once touches upon the real unfinished task, which is the final and complete destruction of the capitalist system, and the construction of a socialist order by the workers organized as the ruling class. This is the source of all its errors.

From the Arsenal of Marxism

This speech was made by Leon Trotsky on September 2, 1918, at a session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets. The attempt on Lenin's life took place on August 30. Trotsky was at the front at the time and received the news only on September 1, when, as he relates in his autobiography, a code telegram arrived from Moscow: "Come at once. Vladimir Ilyich wounded, how dangerously not yet known. . . . Sverdlov." Trotsky left at once and, as is apparent from the dates, delivered his speech on the day of his arrival in Moscow, i.e., on the third day after the attempt. Lenin remained on his sick-bed the first time from August 30 to September 16, 1918.

Trotsky's speeches on Lenin are of added interest because of Lenin's own attitude toward them. After Lenin's death on January

21, 1924, N. K. Krupskaya sent a letter to Trotsky. This is how it read:

"Dear Lev Davidovich,

"I write to tell you that about a month before his death, as he was looking through your book, Vladimir Ilyich stopped at the place where you sum up Marx and Lenin, and asked me to read it over again to him; he listened very attentively, and then looked it over again himself. And here is another thing I want to tell you. The attitude of V.I. toward you at the time when you came to us in London from Siberia has not changed until his death. I wish you, Lev Davidovich, strength and health, and I embrace you warmly. "N. Krupskaya."

There are several English translations of the September 2 speech. This is a new translation from the original.—Ed.

Lenin Wounded: A Speech

By LEON TROTSKY

Comrades, your brotherly greetings I explain by the fact that in these difficult days and hours we all feel deeply as brothers a need of closer union with each other and with our Soviet organizations, and the need of closing our ranks more tightly under our Communist banner. In these days and hours so filled with anxiety, when our standard-bearer, and with perfect right it can be said, the international standard-bearer of the proletariat, lies on his sick-bed fighting with the terrible shadow of death, we are drawn closer to one another than in the hours of victory. . . .

The news of the attack on comrade Lenin reached me and many other comrades in Svyazhsk on the Kasan front. We suffered blows there, blows from the right, blows from the left, blows between the eyes. But this new blow was a blow in the back from ambush deep in the rear. This treacherous blow has opened a new front, which for the present moment is the most distressing, the most alarming for us: the front where Vladimir Ilyich's life struggles with death. Whatever defeats may await us on this or that front—and I am like you firmly convinced of our imminent victory—no single partial defeat

could be so onerous, so tragic, for the working class of Russia and the whole world, as would be a fatal issue of the fight at the front that runs through the breast of our leader.

One need only reflect in order to understand the concentrated hate that this figure has called forth and will continue to call forth from all the enemies of the working class. For nature produced a masterpiece when she created in a single individual an embodiment of the revolutionary thought and the unbending energy of the working class. This figure is Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. The gallery of proletarian leaders, revolutionary fighters, is very rich and varied, and like many other comrades who have been for three decades in revolutionary work, I have had the opportunity to meet in different lands many varieties of the proletarian type of leader—the revolutionary representatives of the working class. But only in the person of comrade Lenin have we a figure created for our epoch of blood and iron.

Behind us lies the epoch of so-called peaceful development of bourgeois society, during which contradictions accumulated gradually, while Europe lived through the period of so-called armed peace, and blood flowed almost in the colonies alone, where predatory capital tortured the more backward peoples. Europe enjoyed her so-called peace of capitalist militarism. In this epoch were formed and fashioned the outstanding leaders of the European working class movement. Among them we see such a brilliant figure as that of August Bebel, the great dead. But he reflected the epoch of the gradual and slow development of the working class. Along with courage and iron energy, the most extreme caution in all moves, the painstaking probing of the ground, the strategy of watchful waiting and preparation were peculiar to him. He reflected the process of the gradual molecular accumulation of the forces of the working class—his thought advanced step by step, just as the German working class in the epoch of world reaction rose only gradually from the depths, freeing itself from darkness and prejudices. His spiritual figure grew, developed, became stronger and rose in stature—but all this took place on the self-same ground of watchful waiting and preparation. Such was August Bebel in his ideas and methods—the best figure of an epoch which lies behind us and which already belongs to eternity.

Our epoch is woven of different material. This is the epoch when the old accumulated contradictions have led to a monstrous explosion, and have torn asunder the integument of bourgeois society. In this epoch all the foundations of world capitalism are being shattered to the ground by the holocaust of the European peoples. It is the epoch which has revealed all the class contradictions and has confronted the popular masses with the horrible reality of the destruction of millions in the name of the naked greed for profits. And it is for this epoch that the history of western Europe has forgotten, neglected, or failed to bring about the creation of the leader—and this was not due to chance: for all the leaders who on the eve of the war enjoyed the greatest confidence of the European working class reflected its past but not its present. . . .

And when the new epoch came, this epoch of terrible convulsions and bloody battles, it went beyond the strength of the earlier leaders. It pleased history—and not by accident!—to create a figure at a single casting in Russia, a figure that reflects in itself our entire harsh and great epoch. I repeat that this is no accident. In 1847, backward Germany produced from its milieu the figure of Marx, the greatest of all fighter-thinkers, who anticipated and pointed out the paths to new

history. Germany was then a backward country, but history willed it that Germany's intelligentsia of that time should go through a revolutionary development and that the greatest representative of this intelligentsia, enriched by their entire scientific knowledge, should break with bourgeois society, place himself on the side of the revolutionary proletariat, and work out the program of the workers' movement and the theory of development of the working class.

What Marx prophesied in that epoch, our epoch is called upon to carry out. But for this, our epoch needs new leaders, who must be the bearers of the great spirit of our epoch in which the working class has risen to the heights of its historic task and sees clearly the great frontier that it must pass if mankind is to live and not rot like carrion on the main highway of history. For this epoch Russian history has created a new leader. All that was best in the old revolutionary intelligentsia of Russia, their spirit of self-denial, their audacity and hatred of oppression, all this has been concentrated in this figure, who, in his youth, however, broke irrevocably with the world of the intelligentsia on account of their connections with the bourgeoisie, and embodied in himself the meaning and substance of the development of the working class. Relying on the young revolutionary proletariat of Russia, utilizing the rich experience of the world working class movement, transforming its ideology into a lever for action, this figure has today risen in its full stature on the political horizon. It is the figure of Lenin, the greatest man of our revolutionary epoch.

I know, and you know too, comrades, that the fate of the working class does not depend on single personalities; but that does not mean that personality is a matter of indifference in the history of our movement and in the development of the working class. A personality cannot model the working class in his own image and after his likeness, nor point out to the proletariat arbitrarily this or that path of development, but he can help the fulfillment of the workers' tasks and lead them more quickly to their goal. The critics of Karl Marx have pointed out that he forecast the revolution much sooner than was actually the case. The critics were answered with perfect right that inasmuch as Marx stood on a lofty peak, the distances seemed shorter to him.

Many including myself have criticized Vladimir Ilyich too, more than once for seemingly failing to take into account many secondary causes and concomitant circumstances. I must say that this might have been a defect for a political leader in an epoch of "normal" gradual development; but this is the greatest merit of comrade Lenin as leader of the new epoch, during which all that is concomitant, superficial and secondary falls away and recedes to the background, leaving only the basic, irreconcilable antagonism of the classes in the fearful form of civil war. To fix his revolutionary sight upon the future, to grasp and point out the most important, the fundamental, the most urgently needed—that was the gift peculiar to Lenin in the highest degree. Those to whom it was granted, as it was to me in this period, to observe Vladimir Ilyich at work and the workings of his mind at close range could not fail to greet with open and immediate enthusiasm—I repeat, with enthusiasm—this gift of the penetrating, piercing mind that rejected all the external, the accidental, the superficial, in order to mark out the main roads and methods of action. The working class is learning to value only those leaders who, after uncovering the path of development, follow it without hesitation, even when the prejudices of the proletariat itself become temporarily an obstacle along this path. In addition to this gift of

a powerful mind Vladimir Ilyich also was endowed with an inflexible will. And the combination of these qualities produces the real revolutionary leader, who is the fusion of a courageous, unwavering mind and a steeled and inflexible will.

What good fortune it is that all that we say, hear, and read in our resolutions on Lenin is not in the form of an obituary. And yet we came so near that. . . . We are convinced that on this near front, here in the Kremlin, life will conquer and Vladimir Ilyich will soon return to our ranks.

I have said, comrades, that he embodies the courageous mind and revolutionary will of the working class. One ought to say that there is an inner symbol, almost a conscious design of history in this, that our leader in these difficult hours when the Russian working class fights on the outer front with all its strength, against the Czechoslovaks, the White Guards, the mercenaries of England and France—that our leader is fighting those wounds which were inflicted on him by the agents of these very White Guards, Czechoslovaks, the mercenaries of England and France. In this is an inner connection and a deep historical symbol! And just as we are all convinced that in our struggle on the Czechoslovak, Anglo-French and White Guard front we are growing stronger every day and every hour—I can state that as an eye-witness who has just returned from the military arena—yes, we grow stronger every day, we shall be stronger tomorrow than we are today, and stronger the day after than we shall be tomorrow; I have no doubt that the day is not distant when we can say to you that Kasan, Simbirsk, Samara, Ufa, and the other temporarily occupied cities have returned to our Soviet family—in exactly the same way we are hopeful that the process of recovery of comrade Lenin will be swift.

But even now his image, the inspiring image of the

wounded leader, who has left the front for a time, stands clearly before us. We know that not for a moment has he left our ranks, for, even when laid low by treacherous bullets, he rouses us all, summons us, and drives onward. I have not seen a single comrade, not a single honest worker, who let his hands drop under the influence of the news of the traitorous attack on Lenin, but I have seen scores who clenched their fists, whose hands sought their guns; I have heard hundreds and thousands of lips that vowed merciless revenge on the class enemies of the proletariat. You need hardly be told how the class-conscious fighters at the front reacted, when they learned that Lenin was lying with two bullets in his body. No one can say of Lenin that his character lacks metal; but now there is metal not in his spirit only, but in his body, and thereby he is even dearer to the working class of Russia.

I do not know if our words and heart-beats can now reach Lenin's sick-bed, but I have no doubt that he senses them. I have no doubt that he knows even in his fever how our hearts too beat in double, threefold measure. We all realize now more clearly than ever that we are members of a single Communist Soviet family. Never did the life of each of us seem such a secondary or tertiary thing as it does at the moment when the life of the greatest man of our time is in mortal danger. Any fool can shoot a bullet through Lenin's head, but to create this head anew—that is a difficult task even for Nature herself.

But no, he will soon be up again, to think and to create, to fight side by side with us. In return we promise our beloved leader that as long as any mental power remains in our own heads, and blood runs through our hearts, we shall remain true to the banner of the Communist revolution. We shall fight against the enemies of the working class to the last drop of blood, to our last breath.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

When the Emigres Return . . .

Most of the political refugees from Germany and Austria are Social Democrats of various hues or Stalinists and are supporting the war against Germany. When the Nazi power collapses and the emigres return home, how will they be received by the masses? This very interesting question is asked and very honestly answered by one emigre in the November 1942 *Left*, the British monthly. The emigre, Olav Leroi, who comes from one of the Scandinavian countries, applies his answer particularly to the Germans and Austrians, but also extends it to the emigres from the countries occupied by the Nazis. His biting remarks are worth quoting at length:

"Some day the war will be over, and we'll go back to the Continent. And then? Then we'll be emigrants in our own country. The butcher and the greengrocer and the neighbors will know that we were not there while they were fighting their titanic struggle with the Nazi oppressors. They will gently remind us that our houses were found empty when a hundred hostages were collected. They will not call us 'cowards,' but they will think it, and that is even worse.

"People in our countries will ask us to

show them our hands, and they will try to find the results of manicure and bath-salts. In their turn they will show us their hands with wounds from the concentration camps. Their eyes will try to perceive how many clothing coupons we spent while their clothes were torn from their bodies by the Nazis. They will not ask the questions as such, but there will be disdain in their silence. . . .

"In this crucial time the leaders of tomorrow are being born, but not amongst us. They are being born in Europe, in Occupied Europe, and in Nazi territory.

"The human wrecks of Dachau and other concentration camps are usually pictured as broken men who cannot do more after the war than spend the rest of their lives in the best health-resorts Europe can provide. Indeed, we shall find human wrecks, but the wreckage will be only physical. We shall find living corpses, we shall find people with irreparably twisted arms and legs, with wounds which cannot be healed.

"But we shall find something more. Out of concentration camps and prisons will be carried on stretchers an army of people with a tremendous will-power born by the determination to survive during the dark-

est days of existence. We shall find an army of invalids who, having suffered as cruelly as they could suffer, will not yield to any difficulties. . . . Torture can ruin health, but in some people it can create an inflexible courage.

"We in emigration must not expect that these leaders of underground Europe, who stood up against the cruellest tortures, will allow us to take the lead of the people for whom they have suffered.

"We shall go back and watch, and watch only!

"We, the 'scum of the earth,' emigrants today, emigrants tomorrow."

This is a powerful characterization of the real relation of the emigres to the masses at home. It fails, however, to state the political essence of the relation: The emigres are and will be looked upon as agents of the victorious powers which will be attempting to crush the revolutionary wave in Europe. The small number of genuine revolutionists among the emigres, who will be able to prove that they remained true to revolutionary internationalism, will receive an entirely different reception from the workers of Europe. They will be honored as the men and women who told the truth about the war to the workers before the war began.

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