

# Fourth International

## **TRUMAN AND EISENHOWER**

*By George Clarke*

*Does America Disprove Marx?*

## **Income Trends: Fact and Fiction**

*By Harry Frankel*

## **Egypt in Revolt**

*By S. Munier*

## **The "Third Camp"**

*By Pierre Frank*

## **Tom Paine -- Revolutionist**

*By Jean Simon*

## **DISUNITED EUROPE**

*By Michel Pablo*

*March-April 1952*

*25c*

# FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Vol. XIII - No. 2 March-April 1952 (Total No. 115)

Published Bimonthly by the  
Fourth International Publishing Association

116 University Pl., New York 3, N. Y. Telephone: ALgonquin 5-7460.  
Subscription rates: U.S.A. and Latin America \$1.25 for 6 issues;  
bundles, 20c for 5 copies and up. Foreign and Canada: \$1.50 for  
6 issues; bundles 21c for 5 copies and up.

Reentered as second class matter April 4, 1950, at the Post  
Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Managing Editor: GEORGE CLARKE  
Business Manager; JOSEPH HANSEN

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## Coming in the Next Issue

**Inflation and the Armaments Economy** by Arne Swabeck. In a Marxist study of the present economic problems created by the war drive of American imperialism, Arne Swabeck delves into the fundamental causes and driving forces behind the present inflationary trend.

from an agricultural to an industrial region as well as an analysis of the contradictions and difficulties resulting from Stalinist bureaucratic domination.

\* \* \*

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# Manager's Column

The January-February issue of *Fourth International* containing George Breitman's excellent treatment of The Bomb Murder of Harry T. Moore has met with a very favorable response. Good sales at protest meetings and rallies are reported by Socialist Workers Party branches from coast to coast. Orders for extra copies still coming in from Akron, Chicago, Newark, Detroit, Flint, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York, Pittsburgh and San Francisco.

\* \* \*

St. Paul literature agent James writes: "Sales of the Jan.-Feb. issue of the *FI* were very, very good. Our extra bundle is all gone and we are ordering another. In the Negro community the Harry Moore article is being received with particular interest. Several Negro leaders were extremely well-impressed with the article, by its clarity of thought, preciseness and method of handling the subject. In their enthusiasm they immediately thought of other people who they thought should have the magazine.

"The Steel Workers Convention article by Harry Frankel is also greatly appreciated by the union militants. Those in the "pie-card" category are disdainful, to put it mildly but it was well received by the newer, younger unionists. These are the people who should be looked to, for they will take a leading part in the coming struggles."

\* \* \*

Detroit literature agent Bea Allen reports a wide sale of the Jan.-Feb. issue. At one meeting where they advertised the Harry Moore article, over 20 copies in addition to other literature was sold.

New York conducted a very good sale of the Jan.-Feb. issue at the NAACP convention in Washington, D. C. Myron, Connie, Rebecca and Fred E. went down and sold 64 copies to the delegates along with 74 copies of *The Militant*.

Additional orders for the Nov.-Dec. magazine indicates that Los Angeles and New York are still doing a good business in sales of the issue devoted to The World Congress of The Fourth International.

\* \* \*

"We have some incontrovertible evidence," R. D. writes for a group of friends in Toronto, "that you must be getting better and better. We sold out the last two issues of the *FI*." He also requested extra copies of these issues and a larger bundle of the coming number.

Our sincere thanks to JGB, a friend in Moonlake, Canada for his contribution of \$5 sent in with sub renewals for *The Militant* and *Fourth International*. "I do not want to miss any copies," he writes, "so I am sending in the money ahead of time. I want to say that the *FI* is very good. Especially the Nov.-Dec. issue. Best wishes for the coming presidential campaign."

Many thanks also to WW of Hamden, Conn. for his contribution sent in together with the new renewal of his *FI* subscription.

# FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

VOLUME XIII

MARCH-APRIL, 1952

NUMBER 2

## Truman and Eisenhower

By *GEORGE CLARKE*

The big question that dominates the political scene in 1952 is this: Will there be an old-style two-party election contest in the Fall, or will there just be a national plebiscite — with a dummy opposition to keep up appearances — to ratify The General as President-Commander-in-Chief of the nation?

As if by magic, this possibility of a dramatic break with that holy-of-holies of American politics — the two party system — is generally accepted by the politicians on both sides almost like an act of God against which the hand of man dare not be raised. No one has even suggested that Congress or the Supreme Court or the people — oh! terrible thought! — might even be consulted for their opinion on this strange departure from the "American way of life."

### The Politicians Maneuver

Harry Truman, guardian of 20 years of Democratic power, of billions of present and future spoils for his comrades, announces his abdication many months in advance. Adlai Stevenson, the only other plausible banner-bearer for the party cannot find it in his soul to challenge Eisenhower and declines the nomination. What remains? To choose from among a coonskin cap, a "New Deal" Economic Royalist, a Dixiecrat, a senile Veep for the "fall guy" who will enter the ring for no other reason than to preserve the fiction of a two party election.

The party politicians are unanimous on one point: Eisenhower as candidate must mean Eisenhower as President. Their only hope is that he will fail to win the nomination. From the time Eisenhower's candidacy was first projected there has ensued a complicated game of devious maneuvers and stratagems to spirit away the "White Horse" before the General could get close enough to mount it. The crucial moment, all are agreed, is not in November where the people presumably make the decision. It is in July at the Republican Party Convention.

Taft's frantic efforts to convince the Republican bosses that they will be cheated of the fruits of victory if a general without real party loyalties or ties were elected have their counterpart in Truman's disingenuous maneuvers. His first announcement that he was prepared to extend the Democratic nomination to Eisenhower, if the General wanted it, broke up the previously developing unity around Taft and divided the GOP into two hostile camps. Obviously if Truman would support Eisenhower then so would millions of Democratic voters. Then there would be no need for a bitter anti-labor campaign and a demagogic stirring

of the discontent against the Korean war as was certainly to be expected of Taft.

Truman's second move of withdrawing from the race, followed by Stevenson's declination, has made the confusion worse confounded — this time by strengthening Taft as against Eisenhower. Anyone, it would appear, even a Taft, could defeat such nonentities as Kefauver or Harriman. What reason is there then, opine the Republican party bosses, to permit a general to deprive them of the emoluments of office for which they have been hungering for the last 20 years? If the maneuver succeeds and Taft is actually nominated, then Truman or possibly even Stevenson is in a position to yield to the "call of the people," and to attempt by a combination of anti-Big Business demagogy and a pro-war anti-isolationist program to return the Democratic Party to power in November.

The outcome of these political gyrations and intrigues is of less importance, however, than the powerful social forces which have set them into motion. How else explain Eisenhower's sudden emergence as the central figure on the political stage? How explain that the future of Truman and the Democratic Party is now so utterly dependent on the choice made in the Republican convention? It is obvious that the new pressures and trends in American politics will not vanish if Truman were re-elected or even if Taft should win. On the contrary, these social forces will determine the course and character of any new administration, more indirectly perhaps than under an Eisenhower regime, but no less decisively.

### Old Alignment Disappearing

A new alignment of forces has been shaping up in the past several years. With the advent of the "cold war," the axis of social stability has been gradually shifting away from the Truman-labor-liberal coalition. The dominant economic factor has become the war economy; the dominant political factor the preparations for the world counter-revolutionary war. These new trends have been eroding the foundations and the very reason for existence of the Truman administration.

Long ago, the outstanding New Deal "planners" were shown the gate in official Washington. The "Welfare State" returned as an election slogan in 1948 but it died the day after the votes were counted. Full employment has continued virtually since the end of the war but not by virtue of any elaborate program of social reforms or any major concessions to labor. Since 1948, but more especially since the beginning of the Korean war, it has been expenditures

for military purposes and for the foreign aid program which have primed the national economic pump.

The war planners in the Pentagon hold all the trump cards in the economy. Their billions of investments in new plant construction and in orders for certain types of military equipment stemmed the downturn to depression in 1949. Three years later, given the tremendous increase in production capacity and productivity, business again faces the danger of overproduction. And once again the economic fate of the nation will soon hang on the timing of the decision of the Pentagon clique to freeze military models and begin their mass production. In this process Truman's rôle has been increasingly limited to that of mouthpiece for the Pentagon, to its go-between with Congress to extort the necessary appropriations.

### War Is the Main Business

So it is with the nature of the affairs of state which have undergone a similar alteration. It has become a rare occurrence in the past years for the President or Congress to seriously preoccupy themselves with proposals for social security, public housing or new TVA developments except to cut existing appropriations. The big issues are now those projected by the General Staff in its strategic operations: the North Atlantic Alliance, the rearmament of Germany, the peace treaty with Japan, the war in Korea, etc. They are such questions as require speedy decision, a minimum of parliamentary red-tape and Congressional palaver. Under such circumstances it becomes an obstacle and an irritation to have to deal with a civilian concerned always with the needs of his party machine, with an eye on votes in the next election and who is still tied, if not very firmly, to an alliance with the labor bureaucracy.

All the troubles that beset American imperialism in its drive to conquer a world erupting with colonial revolutions, shaken by social crisis, reluctant to join in a suicidal war — the loss of China, the stalemate in Korea, the difficulties of western European rearmament — all are laid at the door of the Administration. No one in ruling class circles, it is true, has a different program. But that doesn't make this kind of propaganda less plausible, less insidious: Truman and Acheson are beyond their depth in affairs such as these; they are too weak to bully Stalin into terms, not strong enough to make war and win it quickly. In the mind of the middle class, still fascinated by the power of the atom bomb but devoid of any conception of the real relationship of forces in the world, the Truman regime is weak, capable only of pilfering the public treasury and of conciliation with the "labor bosses." The very slogan of the Administration "peace by strength" undermines it most. How can there be a show of strength in the world if there is nothing but weakness at home?

Even the alliance with labor, although continuing in attenuated form, no longer has the force it had in the past. The government is less capable of acting as shock absorber to cushion the clash between labor and the corporations. Government boards have lost their magnetism. They have ceased to be the court of last resort. The corporations resist what they consider unfavorable decisions without second

thought. Even the cowardly labor bureaucracy is less hesitant about strikes than in the past.

The big test came with the last Truman effort to create a new agency of class collaboration in the Wage Stabilization Board. But the retreat of Truman and Wilson when the union representatives walked out in early 1951 deprived the board of effective power to reduce the standard of living. Now Wilson's walkout and the opposition of the steel barons to the Board's recommendation in the current steel dispute has virtually blown up the WSB. The only means left at Truman's disposal are increasingly those of direct intervention — the Taft-Hartley injunction, the anti-labor seizure of the railroads or the "pro-labor" seizure of the steel mills. This is government by-decree, bonapartism in action and by virtue of this fact far more suited to an Eisenhower than to a Truman.

### McCarthy Dominates the Scene

Meanwhile the political center of gravity in the country has moved far to the right. McCarthy has not labored in vain. Infinitely more than Truman, he is the true domestic representative of the world-wide anti-communist crusade being prepared by American imperialism. Despite technical setbacks, McCarthy has won practically every fight in his witchhunt campaign. Truman has either retreated or adopted McCarthy's proposals. Not a single prominent New Dealer remains in the administration. The State Department has been anathematized and purged from top to bottom. Marshall escaped into retirement only by the skin of his teeth. Acheson stays in office partly because of Truman's curious standards of personal loyalty but mostly because he made the program of the China Lobby his own, recognized Franco and offered to send an Ambassador to the Vatican.

As McCarthy grew stronger outside of the Democratic Party, its Dixiecrat and southern wing became more powerful within it. Nothing, hardly a whisper, remains of Truman's glittering 1948 Civil Rights program. Under the relentless pounding of McCarthyism, the three main pillars on which the Democratic Party has rested since the days of Roosevelt — labor, the liberals and the Negroes — are being hacked out from beneath it. The witch hunt can chalk up a tremendous victory, for it was against the Truman administration that it was politically directed.

The defeatism of the Democratic Party leaders in the face of Eisenhower grows out of this combination of circumstances. A lesser-evil campaign, they are confident, would stop Taft as it did Dewey. But to win against Eisenhower would require a restoration of the labor-liberal-Negro alliance on the boldest and most radical pro-labor, anti-monopolist and above all anti-militarist, anti-war program. The second coming of Christ can sooner be expected.

### The Business-Man's Bonaparte

The General is the ideal chief executive for the monopolist oligarchy at this time. He is not so patently a symbol of war and militarism as MacArthur and unlike him he is not exigent of more power than the capitalists are yet ready to cede. Eisenhower is the business-man's Bonaparte. A Republican by convenience, he is loyal to

no party, no political machine. He has no program but "national unity" — and will have no other, all the bleating pleas of the liberals notwithstanding. That leaves him free at the beginning to pull his punches against labor if need be, to conceal his plans for total regimentation, so as the better to create an atmosphere of "impartiality" that will enable him to strike out with the mailed fist later on.

Huey Long once said fascism would come to power in the United States on a program of anti-fascism. Eisenhower, if nominated will clear the road for his presidency over a garrison state by shouting the loudest for "liberty," for "freedom" from the "special interests," meaning of course labor and the Negro people.

The General is ideal also for the kind of war that must be fought by U.S. imperialism. What civilian could expect to take the sudden desperate move that would roll up the curtain to World War III and still hope to rally the people behind him? Considered insane for a civilian, the move would be regarded an act of consummate strategy when executed by the general.

### Labor's Political Paralysis

One force alone could stay the rise of the military bonaparte and with him the garrison state and the onrushing counter-revolutionary war. Labor. Its great power is undamaged — but it is also unrepresented politically which leaves the field clear for its enemies. Precisely the absence of the union movement from the political arena in its own independent formation, the labor bureaucracy's total acceptance of the "anti-communist" war drive has freed reaction's hands and shifted the balance of power to the right. Now, in the full knowledge that Eisenhower may be a presidential candidate, that his election will bring with it a series of crippling moves against the labor movement the bureaucrats have no other plan than to support the

Democratic party dummy opposition and to go down to defeat with him. Some of them, undoubtedly are even prepared to back Eisenhower openly while others are getting ready to line up at the back door of the White House after the election. Shades of the German social democratic labor bureaucracy!

The very break-up of the two-party system, which will be foreshadowed if Eisenhower heads the Republican Party ticket, will make the absence of effective union opposition in the form of a labor party more conspicuous than ever. There will be no alternative offered the workers by the bureaucrats but to waste their votes on the hopeless Democratic dummy or to stay away from the polls altogether. Under such circumstances, the General's victory is assured. Yet it will be a victory over labor driven to the sidelines by its leadership. The real attempt to subjugate the labor movement is ahead, after the election, in the months and years to come. It is in that inevitable encounter, with the unions in the most disadvantageous position since the rise of the CIO, that the political treachery of Murray, Green and Reuther will become the common knowledge of the masses of organized workers. The lesson of 1952, corroborated over and again by the ordeal of subsequent events, blows and bitter struggles, will reverberate in the ranks: Regimentation, impoverishment, war — or the labor party.

That lesson will be engraved on the banner of the Socialist Workers Party in 1952. Through its presidential ticket, Farrell Dobbs and Grace Carlson, it will demonstrate that the voice of the revolutionary left wing has not been stilled by witchhunters, courts or union bureaucrats. By its courageous leadership of the existing opposition to the counter-revolutionary war and to the would-be-general-dictator of the nation it will be blazing the trail for the mighty opposition of millions of workers on the morrow.

# Disunited Europe

## *The Balance Sheet of the Marshall Plan*

By MICHEL PABLO

A few months from June 1952, the time for the realization of a balanced European economy, predicted by the specialists who conceived the Marshall Plan in 1947, the objective appears still far off and as then Europe is threatened again with a grave crisis.

"Where are we?" Such was the recent query of M. Van Zeeland, Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs. "I admit I am disturbed. Great clouds are appearing on the European horizon." (*Le Monde*, March 3).

In reality the clouds never disappeared from the European skies since the end of the war and the storm warnings have sounded more than once since then.

M. Van Zeeland is not wrong however. As in 1947, when it was an emergency necessity to save the tottering structure of European capitalism, so today the conjuncture

of the armaments economy and accelerated preparations for war are threatening Europe with a crisis as serious as the one which existed four years ago.

Normally the Marshall Plan should come to an end next June.

"It is ironical," the London *Economist* remarks (Jan. 5), "that after four years of cooperation, Europe will find itself in what can appear to be the same situation as in 1947."

Even before this date, the implementing organization of the Marshall Plan, the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA), has had to change its name to the *Mutual Security Administration* (MSA). And despite the fact that this new organism has still not eliminated the *Organization for European Economic Cooperation* (OEEC),

the initial function of the Marshall Plan has already been qualitatively changed.

"The conception of economic cooperation," the *Economist* of Jan. 5 admits, "in which the emphasis has been on Europe, is being transformed into the wider concept of mutual security, with the emphasis on the North Atlantic Community."

If these fine distinctions have any meaning whatever they mean that the *military and political* character of assistance has taken priority over what could have been considered above all as an *economic objective* at the beginning of the Marshall Plan.

### Aims of the Marshall Plan

Let us briefly recall the aims which this plan was given at the time based on the report of the Sixteen (drawn up following the conference held in August 1947 by sixteen European nations): increase of production and of productivity especially in the sphere of agriculture, coal, electric power and steel; financial stability, development of economic cooperation of the countries of Western Europe, tending toward the creation of a single European market; reduction of the European deficit in dollars through the development of an export program with the United States and Canada.

According to the report of the Sixteen, if these aims were to be realized the following conditions also had to be fulfilled: lowering of prices in the United States, curtailment of European imports from the United States, compensated by imports coming from Eastern Europe and Asia, increased exports to the United States and to the American continent in general.

It is apparent on the face of it how the evolution of the "cold war" since then has destroyed most of these conditions just as we foresaw at the time that they would, and consequently has compromised the success of the plan. (See "The Marshall Plan" by M. Pablo, *Fourth International*, March-April and May 1948).

"Europe is still starved for dollars," the *Economist* (Jan. 5) bitterly notes. "The overseas payment accounts of most of the countries are again markedly in the red; the countries are still trying in vain to fight inflation while the necessity of developing productivity is just as great as it was four years ago."

Naturally the approximately \$12 billion expended since then by the USA for the Marshall Plan (as against \$22 billion provided for in the report of the Sixteen and against \$15 billion announced at the beginning of the Marshall Plan) has permitted the attainment of at least some of the initial objectives: European production and productivity have more or less progressed as originally envisaged and their level at the end of 1951 was with some exceptions close to that fixed at the time.

Agricultural production except for livestock, has attained and slightly surpassed its objectives, as well as the production of electric energy and of steel. On the contrary coal production remains below expectations, and this is especially due to the falling off of English production in particular.

Total industrial production of Western Europe was 13%

higher in 1949 than in 1948, 25% higher in 1950, 35% in 1951.

Productivity also has made notable progress during these four years and several European industries, thanks to the Marshall Plan, have been able to re-equip, to expand and to modernize their equipment.

So far as stabilization and financial stability in the struggle against inflation are concerned, all the very moderate progress realized in this sphere, particularly between 1949 and the first half of 1950, was completely destroyed with the outbreak of the Korean conflict and the new conjuncture of armaments economy and accelerated preparation for war.

"The age of inflation," in which the capitalist world has lived since the last war especially, is far from being closed.

On the contrary, the inflationary pressure is stronger than ever, cracking the fragile edifice of European economy on all sides.

### "Plans" and Trade

So far as inter-European economic collaboration and the creation of a single market is concerned, "progress" has never gone beyond the stage of "plans" such as the "Schuman Plan" and such daring recommendations like those contained in the "Liberation Code" published by the OEEC in 1951.

The practical application of these plans is quite another matter.

The "Schuman Plan," by proposing to create a single "European market" for coal and steel, corresponded to a need of agreement between the magnates of the Lorraine metal industry and the magnates of the Ruhr coal industry in order better to cope with the threat of a crisis and also to better exploit the perspectives opened by the armaments economy. With the aid of the Americans this will inevitably result in the transformation of the Lorraine-Ruhr combine into the war arsenal of Western Europe.

There are, however, still very important problems to be solved relating to organization and to the concrete administration of the plan before it can become a reality.

The antagonistic relationships between the various European powers and between each of them and the USA are reflected as in everything else also within the "Schuman Plan" complicating and delaying its implementation.

Here is the situation regarding a broader financial and commercial "European market" guaranteeing free circulation of commodities:

In 1951, following the "Liberation Code" of the OEEC, 75% of the private commerce of several countries was theoretically no longer subject to export and import restrictions, and a common list of commodities which could thus freely circulate from country to country was adopted. *But as long as the governments retained control over the most important and most interesting imports for inter-European trade and maintained tariff barriers, the quantitative liberation of private inter-European commerce is a wretched consolation.*

Moreover, even this limited and timid liberation of trade did not stand up for more than a few months. In

effect, the new financial crisis which engulfed first England and then France since the end of 1951 has obliged both these countries to adopt draconic measures regarding their imports and has simultaneously seriously again paralyzed all inter-European commerce which was already so limited.

The condition of the *European Payments Union* (EPU) is another example of the disjointedness of capitalist Europe and of its organic inability — because of the nature of its social system and the concrete conditions under which this system must now function — to unite, to create a united economic structure. From its origin this organism has evolved in the direction of permanent imbalance which is constantly being aggravated: most of the countries, first and foremost England and France, have become “exaggeratedly debtor,” only Belgium, on the other hand, remaining “exaggeratedly creditor.” (Van Zeeland’s declaration in *Le Monde*, March 12, 1952).

This situation now threatens to lead to a paralysis of the European Payments Union which “will mean a relapse into bilateralism, that is, to a 40% retreat in the economic activity of Europe,” according to the same statement by Van Zeeland.

There remains for examination the evolution of the dollar deficit of total trade of Western Europe during this period.

Despite the substantial increase in exports to the USA and Canada which went from \$1.3 billion in 1948 to \$2.4 billion in 1951, the \$5.3 billion deficit in 1948 was reduced to \$3.8 billion in 1951 (that is, \$1 billion higher than the provisions in the report of the Sixteen for 1951).

The importance of this deficit, still enormous, can be still better grasped if one takes into consideration the fact that European exports to the North American continent in 1950 and 1951 have benefited from an exceptional conjuncture caused by the mass stockpiling in the USA of a series of raw materials and products necessary for the colossal armaments program undertaken by that country.

Can one say as much for European imports coming from the USA?

Under present conditions, they remain those that are strictly necessary for the very minimum of normal activity of the European market, and it is rather their limited character, in the absence of the means of payments, which prevents their increase and in certain sectors these imports are already threatened with paralysis.

Here we touch the very essence of the problem: whence the failure of a balanced restoration of European economy despite the \$12 billion expended by the Marshall Plan? What are the conditions which would be required for a healthy evolution of this economy?

There is no doubt that without the conjuncture of the armaments economy opened by the Korean conflict, European economy would still have been able to evolve for a certain time in a more normal fashion and it would still not be so quickly threatened again with dislocation.

The exceptional rise in the prices of raw materials and of products which it imports from overseas, caused by stockpiling in the USA, as well as the burden which the armaments economy has placed on each country, are incontestably the two factors which have acted in contrary

direction to the initial impulse given by the Marshall Plan, and have in large part wiped out the progress of restoration and cure of the European economy. But even without this unfavorable conjuncture, under the new postwar conditions, it would not have been possible to have recovered an equilibrium, stable even in the slightest manner, for example, in comparison with that which existed before the war of 1939-1944.

### Distortion of European Economy

The European capitalist economy is *organically unbalanced*, and this is at the bottom of the frequent crises which it has experienced at every important change of the international conjuncture.

Leaving aside the historic conditions under which European capitalism developed during the 19th century and up to the war of 1914-1918 — conditions which were in large part destroyed following this war — it is sufficient for us to recall the elements of relative equilibrium in the European economy on which it still rested in the period between the two wars, 1914-1918 and 1939-1944.

The group of large industrial countries which now form the nucleus of Western Europe — England, Germany, France, Italy — was engaged in economic relations with quite a different milieu than that of today, namely Eastern Europe, the African and Asian colonies, and the semi-colonial countries of Latin America.

On the other hand, the relationship of economic forces with the USA, while having changed in its favor — in comparison with the situation before the war of 1914-1918 — did not alter the industrial supremacy of the European group in the world: US production in 1937 was 76% of European production at the time (excluding the USSR) as against 151% in 1947. After the last war industrial Europe lost the largest part of its traditional outlets and its sources of revenues which would have balanced its accounts: Eastern Europe to the benefit of the USSR, China and partly India, Indonesia, Indo-China, Burma, Malaya, South Africa, Australia, Canada, the semi-colonial countries of Latin America. In one way or another all these countries changed their old semi-colonial or colonial relations as regards the metropolitan industrial countries of Europe, making their situation untenable on a capitalist basis in the long-run.

The removal of the traditional zones of European capitalism threatens it with pure and simple suffocation. The changes caused in this sphere by the last war have upset the *structure* of European capitalism.

Hence flows its irremediable decadence and its increased parasitic dependence upon American imperialism. But if this dependence keeps the crisis of capitalist Europe from assuming absolutely catastrophic form, on the other side it works in a way to accentuate its disequilibrium.

*Exchange between the USA and Europe is not that of industrial countries and colonial or semi-colonial countries but exchange between countries which are equally industrial and even today almost equal in economic and productive potential.*

On the other hand, the USA which deals separately with each of the countries of the European groups has a

crushing superiority over each of them which *still further unbalances exchange, already unbalanced in principle by the equally highly industrial nature and often non-complementary nature of the two parties.*

Thus the exchanges of Europe with the USA will never be able to replace the lost colonial and semi-colonial zone for the former, or to balance the currents in both senses, or to restore the former situation of European capitalism. *International economy has changed in its structure, and the first victim of these changes is European capitalism.*

### **Peculiarity of U.S. Imperialism**

However, the increased dependence of Europe on the USA bears with it another no less grave aspect. American imperialism is already profoundly involved in an armaments economy and in a policy of war preparation. This evolution is determined by the special conditions under which American imperialism develops.

The principal field of its economic activity still remains the domestic market while its productive capacity has doubled since 1937. On the other hand, it also has found itself, after the conclusion of war, in a world less favorable for imperialist expansion than that which formerly favored the rise of European imperialism.

It has had to confront the threat of over-production and of crisis through the means of *artificial markets* of which *state expenditures* have become the principal instrument since the *New Deal*.

In fact it is the state, more and more interlaced with several groups of big monopolists, which is trying to keep economic development in balance and to prevent the depression.

*Military expenditures combined with foreign aid*, exceed by far the whole of American exports and revenue from investments abroad.\* That is to say, the economic action of the state financed by its own budget is infinitely more important for the equilibrium of the American economy taken as a whole than the normal flow of its merchandise and capital abroad. This is a unique characteristic of American imperialism which is explained by the concrete actual conditions under which it has historically arrived at the summit of its power and is obliged to function.

Rigid and disturbing consequences flow from this state of affairs: the more and more important place which the state occupies in the function of the American economy, and the *military* form and *foreign aid* which this economic action of the state assumes, involves it in a war policy and one of increased interference in international affairs. In its turn this political behavior becomes the cause for new developments in the economic structure of society. Never has Lenin's formula "politics is concentrated economics," been more valid than for the case of American imperialism and its state.

This functioning of monopolistic economy of the United

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\*American exports do not exceed 10% of the total production of the country. (In reality they were 4.9% in 1946 and 6.6% in 1947). On the other hand, the average of private capital exported between 1946 and 1949 was hardly \$600 million, or 1/5 of the annual average of Marshall aid and 1/25 of the military budget up to 1949 (\$15 billion).

States, which threatens to stifle in its normal national boundaries, requires the diversion of an increased part of its strength in sectors (armaments economy, foreign aid) which in turn draw it into this sphere of aggressive international politics. This is the image of the apogee of the parasitic, decadent and destructive phase of imperialism. The effects on European capitalism were inevitable and will even be fatal for it.

We have seen that on the plane of commercial exchange the equally highly industrial structure of the USA as well as of Western Europe, and on the other hand the crushing preponderance of the USA in this sphere, result in European capitalism, divided, irrationally organized, being incapable under present conditions of balancing its exchanges.

On the other hand, all aid which the USA grants to foreign countries inevitably evolves with the whole of the policy of this state towards aid which has a *political* and *military* character.

This is the case of the Marshall Plan having been absorbed by the military aims of the Atlantic Pact. And it is also the Europe of the "European Army," directed by the Pentagon.

Thus European capitalism because of the pull of exchange as well as because of the evolution of the character of the assistance which American capitalism grants to foreign countries, cannot disengage itself from its dependence on the USA and finds itself a cogwheel in the preparation of imperialism for war, the only possible policy for world imperialism in its phase of final decadence.

It is not a question of the monstrosity of the leaders of the nation, but the monstrosity of a social system no longer having any other resources to maintain itself than to prepare and to engage in the most absurd wars and the destruction of the wealth of humanity.

The characteristics of American imperialism are the characteristics of contemporary imperialism in its most powerful, most complete, most consistent expression.

### **Problem of European Unification**

Nothing less than a revolution will suffice for Europe to liberate itself from this really suicidal enterprise.

In the present *social* state of affairs, with the divided and antagonistic national states reflecting the antagonisms between the particular economic structures of the European countries, whose development is unequal and uncomplementary, dependent on the USA and terrorized by the spectre of revolution, it is absolutely vain and utopian to envisage the possibility of a *united capitalist Europe*.

Any abolition of economic and national frontiers or the creation of a united European market would signify a reclassification of industries and of agricultural enterprises according to the law of the strongest, and most effective economically. It will result in a shake-up, antagonistic to the innumerable feudalisms organized within each present state and which subsist thanks only to its artificial protection and its complicity. The social reclassification of millions of men which would follow from this is not the least other aspect of this problem.

On the other hand, the struggle for the supremacy for this or that national economy over the whole of the Euro-



pean economy, would follow the same line of the strongest and naturally none of the weak are disposed to submit to it.

To organize a united European market from the point of departure of the present positions acquired by each industry and each national enterprise, which were created in the concrete historic development of European capitalism on an anarchistic, antagonistic, unequal basis, would signify a revolutionary transformation which the European bourgeoisie has not the strength to undertake.

The market of the US has been built on a normal development of the country from the east to the west. The development of European capitalism has followed the line of distinct unequal and antagonistic structures. It is infinitely less probable that in a capitalist world like that of Western Europe dominated by internal inter-European and international antagonisms, the European bourgeoisie can realize its unification.

### Failure of Capitalist Plans

Up to now its reactions have been clearly in another direction. On the economic plane even the experience in miniature of the united market of Benelux has not succeeded. The equilibrium between the two structures, Belgium and Holland, each plunged into an international involvement with the rest of the world market, is proving impossible.

One has the occasion to appreciate the spirit of collaboration which animates each "European" partner each time the crisis strikes at their door.

The measures of self-protection, taken without regard to their "European" consequences, in several hours destroys the work of several months, if not of years, which was undertaken in a different sense. Recent examples of restrictive measures and of the controls imposed by England and France and the projects of unilateral devaluation to which France in particular will very probably be driven, sow disaster and panic in all the "European communities."

On the political plane, the phrasemongering of the Strasbourg assembly concluded by exasperating so ponderous a man and such a "great European" as Spaak, leading to his resounding resignation last December.

On the same plane, the debates which took place in the French assembly in February 1952 on the European Army as well as the vehement controversy between Bonn and Paris on the question of the Saar have sufficiently demonstrated how inauspicious is the climate for "unitarian" enterprises and how much the past still weighs on the very slight "European" conscience of broad stratas of the bourgeoisie.

However, it is on the military plane that substantial progress has nevertheless been realized and of all the "European" plans, it is still the Pleven Plan which has more chances of success in one or another form. As a united "European" army, or as a federated "European" army, the military forces of the Western bourgeoisie will be obliged in any case to coalesce, to accept the super command of the Pentagon, and to carry on their counter-revolutionary war together.

"The unification of Europe" moves forward as an enterprise of the coalition of military forces of the bourgeoisie, subject to the American general staff.

If it is necessary on the other hand to exclude any genuine economic unification of Europe, on the contrary the coordination of its resources and the "planning" for war will prove to be a more and more urgent necessity.

American "aid" is already fully working in this direction.

Thus the only "united" Europe which moribund capitalism is capable of creating is that of the European Military Union directed by the Pentagon, the new Holy Alliance of the Atlantic Pact.

However, Europe, even amputated from the countries which now form part of the Soviet zone of influence (and whose production represents 6% of world production) is in reality under certain conditions capable of still playing a first-line role in the evolution of the international situation and of the immediate destinies of humanity. Taken together, the countries of Western Europe already possess a production superior in several spheres to that of the USSR and of the satellite countries. (In 1951 Western Europe produced 460 million tons of coal, 55.5 million tons of steel, 246 billion kilowatt hours of electric energy). And its production is potentially equal to that of the USA. A genuine unification of these countries, with the abolition of economic and national frontiers, followed by rational planning of their economies, will raise this potential to a still higher degree.

### Socialist Future of Europe

But this problem at the present stage of the history of the world is indissolubly connected to the social transformation of Europe, to its socialist future. If important forces of the European socialist workers movement could become conscious of its enormous possibilities and find the strength to smash the obstacles, routine, the cowardice toward American imperialism and their own bourgeoisie, and to rise to the stature of history and its demands, this *united socialist Europe* would have a chance of coming into being and of acting before the storm of the Third World War breaks over its ruins.

We are thinking especially of the leftwing of the Labor Party and that of the German Social-Democratic Party.

It is in England that the progressive forces of the socialist movement are now the most powerful and the best placed to seriously envisage the possibility of a genuinely socialist power in that country, then taking the initiative for a united socialist Europe. Such an initiative would call forth first of all in Germany no less important forces. Such developments in England and Germany would exercise a decisive influence on the Communist and Socialist movement in France and in Italy.

Therein is a grandiose perspective with ensuing immense possibilities, especially for the leftwing leaders of the Labor Party.

Will they grasp this opportunity in time?

March 15, 1952.

# Income Trends: Fact and Fiction

By HARRY FRANKEL

The immanent tendency of the capitalist mode of production is towards an ever more unequal distribution of incomes and wealth. This law of capitalism, discovered and elucidated by Karl Marx, has been repeatedly proven by empirical data.

Bourgeois economists, the "hired prizefighters" of capital, as Marx called them, have made this Marxist discovery the target of vain attacks for over a century. They intensify their offensive in times of "boom," when they feel that the transient flush of prosperity gives more plausibility to their arguments. It is not surprising therefore, that the present period, which is characterized by a war-boom economy and the most virulent anti-Marxist campaign of all history, should see the hired prizefighters flexing their muscles and cleaving the air with mighty swings as they try to deliver the KO blow to Karl Marx.

## The N.Y. Times Claims a "Social Revolution"

On March 5, the *N. Y. Times* published a full page "report" on income distribution, which tries to prove, by the most specious calculations, that a "shift in income distribution" amounting to a "social revolution" has taken place in the United States "in the last four decades, and particularly since the Thirties." The article is a report, made up by *Times* writer Will Lissner from a summary, prepared by Dr. Geoffrey H. Moore, of an analysis by Dr. Simon Kuznets, famed income analyst of the University of Pennsylvania. Thus the results reach us third hand. Further, most of the figures are stripped away, and rough "charts" and "graphs" are in most cases put in place of figures. Finally, the report does not give all the figures, but only a certain selection. It is well known that figures, if selected and juggled long enough, can be made to yield any desired result.

The *Times* report is obviously fallacious on a number of points. However, many of the vague claims in the report will not be susceptible of direct analysis until the figures on which they are based are published. A picture of income distribution in the U.S. over the last forty years, with emphasis upon the period since the Thirties, can however be presented on the basis of the figures now available to the public. Nothing in Dr. Kuznets' forthcoming material can decisively alter this picture.

## Are the Poor Still With Us?

The *Times* article begins with the claim that "the poor have become better off." The manner in which this statement is "proved" has been analyzed in an article in the March 17 issue of *The Militant* as follows:

"... the report claims that 'the very poor have become fewer by two-thirds of their 1939 number.' To prove this, it offers the following fact: that in 1939, slightly more than 40% of the family income units got under \$1,000 in income, while in 1949, only a little more than 10% were under this same \$1,000 a year ceiling. This approach ignores facts which change the picture entirely:

"1. 1939 was a year of extreme depression with at least 9 million unemployed, while 1949 was a boom year. Thus such a comparison is obviously unsuited to determine a long term trend.

"2. This comparison assumes the equality of \$1,000 in 1939 with \$1,000 in 1949. However, the cost of living index was 70% higher in 1949 than in 1939. More important, this cost of living index is made up for moderate income families, while the very low income families with which we are here concerned spend a far larger portion of their total incomes on food and clothing, the items which rose the most. The Bureau of Labor Statistics food index stood at 95.2 in 1939, while in 1949 it had risen to 201.9. Thus it took \$2,120.80 in 1949 to buy the same amount of food that could be purchased for \$1,000 in 1939.

"3. Hidden price rises that do not show in the index are not included. For example, rents were much higher in 1949 than the index shows. A large percentage of workers had to pay several months 'bonus' to renting agents, and secretly pay more than the rent ceiling in order to get a 'controlled' housing unit, do their own painting and repairs, etc., while in 1939, tenants were given far fuller maintenance plus one or two months 'concessions' (free rent) to induce them to take an apartment. None of this shows on the official index.

"4. Taxes are not taken into consideration by the so-called 'economists.' A worker earning \$1,000 a year in 1939 paid no income tax, while a worker earning an amount with an equivalent purchasing power in 1948 might have to pay a tax as high as a possible \$232. In addition, local sales and income taxes not included in the cost of living index must be taken into account, and they rose sharply between 1939 and 1949.

"5. Thus a family income of \$1,000 in 1939 was equal to possibly \$2,250 to \$2,500 in 1949. However, facts show that exactly 40% of the income units of this country got less than \$2,289 per year in 1949.

"These exact factual details completely destroy the propaganda of the *N. Y. Times* report on this point. We see that the same 40% of the population that was bumping up against a \$1,000 income ceiling in 1939 was in 1949 still

under a ceiling of approximately the same purchasing power as in 1939."

### Average Hourly Wages Compared

The fact that the bottom 40% of the population is under the same relative income ceiling does not, of course, tell the tale for the whole of the working class. However, another significant comparison may be made between average hourly wages in 1949 and 1939. In 1939, the average hourly rate in manufacturing industry was 63.3c., while in 1949, it was \$1.40. Thus if 1939 is considered as equal to 100, in 1949 hourly wage rates stood at 221. If this increase is compared with the cost of living increase as estimated in the *Militant* article quoted above, it can be seen that real hourly wages after taxes have, on the average, risen either very little or not at all.

These figures may come as a surprise to bemused economics professors who get their economics from the same place they get their salaries. But they will not surprise workers, and especially working-class housewives, who know that the average worker today has not a much greater purchasing power than the average fully employed worker in 1939, which was a bleak depression year.

There has been a certain improvement in the living standards of large sections of the working class. However, the improvement is more apparent than real, as a more detailed examination will show.

**Table I: Average Hourly Earnings, Hours, Weekly Earnings in Manufacturing Industry**

	Av. Hourly Pay		Average Hours		Av. Weekly Pay	
	Amount	Index	Amount	Index	Amount	Index
1939	\$0.63	100	37.7	100	\$23.86	100
1949	1.40	221	39.2	104	54.92	230

(Source: National Industrial Conference Board from Department of Labor.)

It will be seen from Table I that the hourly wage rates of workers in manufacturing industry increased by 121% between 1939 and 1949. This was roughly equivalent to the rise in the cost of living, including taxes, in the same period. The wage rates for manufacturing industry rose somewhat more than the average for all industries. Hence we may say that the hourly rates of American workers, calculated on a real basis, were about the same in 1949 as in 1939, give or take a few percent.

However, while hourly wage rates rose from 100 to 221, average weekly earnings rose from 100 to 230. This more rapid increase for weekly earnings than for hourly rates was due to an increase in average hours worked per week from 37.7 in 1939 to 39.2 in 1949, and to the firm establishment of the principle of overtime pay in a larger portion of industry by the union movement.

Our second big consideration is this: in 1939 official figures show that there were 9,480,000 unemployed, or 17.2% of the total labor force. By 1949 this had declined to 3,395,000, or 5.5% of the labor force, and by 1951 to 1,879,000, or 3% of the labor force.

Thus it can be seen that the improvements in the condition of the working people have resulted primarily from a greater average number of hours worked per week by each employed worker, and from the disappearance of mass unemployment. It will be seen that both of these factors can be subsumed under a single heading: an increase in hours worked by the total labor force of the country due to the war economy. But an increase in income deriving from an increase in hours worked is not at all a genuine increase in real wages.

### The Relative Position: Production and Pay

Up to this point we have been concerned solely with the question of real wages. However, underlying this there is another, more important matter. That is the relative position of the working class, or what the working class gets balanced against what it produces.

What is generally called a "productivity" increase is in reality compounded of two factors: the intensity and the productivity of labor. A higher intensity of labor means an increase in man-hour output resulting from harder, more intensive work, without any improvement in the means or methods of production. A productivity increase, on the other hand, is an increase in the hourly output of labor by means of improvements in the machinery or techniques of the productive process, without any increase in the average intensity of labor.

It has been calculated that the average increase in output per man hour (this would include output increases due to either increased productivity or intensity or both) since 1933 has been about 3% a year for manufacturing industry, and slightly over 2% a year for all industry. The total increase in gross output per man hour as calculated by John W. Kendrick, a Department of Commerce economist, was 27.3% from 1939 to 1949. Thus there was an increase in output of well over one-fourth by the average American worker during each hour he worked in the same period that his real hourly pay, as we have shown, remained approximately stationary.

The Labor Research Association calculated in a little book, *Trends in American Capitalism*, (International Pub. 1948), that the relative position of the American worker, that is, his buying power compared to his output, fell by 25% in the decade between 1919 and 1929. We see from the above data that, in the decade 1939 to 1949 a slightly greater decline took place.

There is another way to calculate the relative position of the worker, and that is by comparing the trend of his nominal (money) wages with the trend in the national income per capita. This method has the advantage that it eliminates all necessity to calculate the purchasing power of the workers' wages, a topic which is the subject of much dispute and widely varying estimates. It further eliminates disputes as to whether taxes should be deducted in the calculation of real wages. It simply compares two things: the trend of money wages per worker, and the trend of the national income. For this purpose I have constructed per capita Table II, made up of the money figures and the indices of two items: average annual wage and salary pay-

**Table II: Annual Wage and Salary Payments per Full Time Employee Compared with the National Income Per Capita (1929-1951)**

Year	Annual Wage and Salary Payments per Full Time Employee		National Income Per Capita	
	Amount	Index	Amount	Index
1929	1408	100	\$684	100
1932	1086	77	320	47
1933	1019	72	337	49
1935	1076	76	438	64
1936	1181	84	507	74
1937	1254	89	555	81
1938	1216	86	495	72
1939	1255	89	541	79
1940	1279	91	588	86
1941	1462	104	727	106
1942	1736	123	907	131
1943	2022	143	1095	160
1944	2193	156	1164	170
1945	2259	160	1153	169
1946	2369	168	1275	186
1947	2603	185	1379	202
1948	2812	199	1521	222
1949	2863	203	1453	212
1950	3020	214	1575	230
1951*	3350	238	1788	261

1929=100

\* Estimates based on incomplete data.

(Sources: National Industrial Conference Board from Department of Commerce, Economic Report of the President, 1952).

ments per worker in private industry, and the national income per capita.

### Booms, Depressions and the Position of the Workers

Two phenomena emerge from these very interesting figures. The first is the indubitable general trend towards an ever lower share of the national income received by the individual wage and salary worker. The second is that this general trend toward a worsening of the relative position of the wage worker is retarded and even temporarily reversed during periods of depression, and accelerated greatly by capitalist boom. This refers of course to only the employed portion of the working class.

The reason for this second phenomenon is not hard to understand. During periods of depression only a portion of the working class is employed at producing surplus value for the capitalist class, while during periods of boom, the entire working class (almost) is set to work at that most honored of all occupations. However, during both boom and depression virtually the entire working class must be maintained at some subsistence level. Even the unemployed

must be kept alive; capitalism has not reached the point where it can compel society to countenance the death from rapid starvation of fifteen million workers and their families.

Thus it is a peculiar irony of capitalist development that the working class can expect a small and temporary improvement in its relative position only when it is subjected to its worst miseries and privations. On the other hand, capitalism permits the working class to produce during boom periods only upon the condition that it betters the relative position of the capitalist class and worsens its own with each passing month. This irony, however bitter, is not the product of any "evil intentions;" it is part of the very mechanism of capitalist production. In any event, it can now be clearly seen how foolish it is for the *N. Y. Times* to attempt to show that a "social revolution" has taken place in income at the very time when the real trend is precisely the opposite. Such an attempt would have a far more likely basis in fact at the depth of a depression, but the editors of the *Times* would of course be far less likely to undertake it at such a time.

The increasing share in the national income which the working class loses is taken primarily by the corporations. In order to demonstrate this I have constructed Table III, which shows the growing percentage of the national income represented by corporate profits over the last four decades. It remains only to be added that the actual trend is far more favorable to the corporations than this chart shows. Due to the increasing pressure of corporate taxes, many new means of concealing corporate income have come into vogue during and since the second World War that were not in use prior to that time.

The same phenomena that were observable in Table II can be seen in Table III in inverted form. The relative position of the capitalist class is continually improving.

**Table III: Corporate Profits as a Percentage of the National Income (1910-1951)**

Year	Percent
1910	7.8%
1918	12.1
1922	7.9
1929	11.2
1933	5
1939	8.8
1943	14.8
1946	13.3
1947	15.8
1948	15.5
1949	13.1
1950	17.2
1951	16.3

(Sources: Commerce Department figures used to make percentage calculations, as reported by National Industrial Conference Board and Council of Economic Advisers.)

This is the general trend. However, this general trend is retarded in periods of depression and accelerated in periods of boom. In this we see an expression of the fact that the capitalist class is and can be enriched only by the labor of the working class. When it is forced to employ that labor on a smaller scale, as in the period 1930-1940, it cannot enrich itself as rapidly as when it exploits the labor of the working class upon a truly grand scale, as in the period from 1941 to the present.

**The Real Trend and the Attempted Falsification**

From various sources I have constructed Table IV. This table does not divide the population into economic classes, which is the most scientific approach, but into fifths according to income. In this table can be seen the continuous and general decline of the relative income of the lowest portions of the population.

The *N. Y. Times* report, in trying to make a "social revolution" out of facts which actually show a regressive tendency, is forced to resort to a dishonest selection of figures in order to falsify the trend. It will be seen from Table IV that if the year 1937 is compared with 1948 the bottom 40% of the population shows a 1% increase in the percentage of the national income accruing to it. The *Times* report selects these two years for comparison, makes the comparison on a rough bar graph, which shows an increase but does not show whether that increase is 1% or 10%, and points triumphantly to a "social revolution." Figures don't lie, but. . .

There is another aspect of the *Times* report with which we are not prepared to deal at present. It will be seen from Table IV that the portion of the national income received by the top fifth of the population remained roughly the same between 1910 and 1949. The *Times* report further indicates that according to Dr. Kuznets, the portion of the national income received by the top 1% of the

population has decreased since the late Thirties. This is another "proof" of redistribution of income cited by the *Times*. If this fact is correct, it would not indicate a shift in relative income away from the capitalist class but rather an apparent redistribution of relative income within the top levels of the capitalist class. The full analysis of this point will have to await publication of Dr. Kuznets' figures.

**Riches and Poverty**

We have cited sufficient material to show the declining relative position of the working class. This decline leads to a further general aspect of capitalist development. If the working class is restricted to subsistence as its share in the national income, it cannot enrich itself by saving. On the other hand, the capitalist class continually adds to its accumulation as a result of the "natural" workings of the capitalist mode of production. It may add more at one time and less at another, but since its profits are far above the level required for the most lavish subsistence of the capitalist class, its enrichment proceeds at all times.

This process is seen very graphically in the following figures, showing the net personal saving of the fifths of the population by income.

**Table V: Net Personal Saving of the Fifths of the Population, Arranged by Income**

(As percentages of total net saving)

	1941	1945	1946	1947	1948
Lowest	-7	0	-8	-13	-24
Second	0	6	3	1	-3
Middle	8	9	5	7	7
Fourth	11	21	21	12	21
Highest	88	64	79	93	99

(Source: Council of Economic Advisers Report to the President, January, 1950.)

**Table IV: National Income Distribution Trends (1910-1949)**

Percentage of National Income Going to Each Fifth of the Nation's Spending Units, by Size of Income

	Top Fifth	Second	Middle	Fourth	Lowest	Lowest 2/5
1910	46.2	19.0	15.0	11.5	8.3	19.8
1918	47.4	18.3	14.9	12.6	6.8	19.4
1921	51.0	19.4	13.9	10.5	5.2	15.7
1929	51.3	18.8	14.4	10.1	5.4	15.5
1934	46.7	20.4	15.5	11.5	5.9	17.4
1937	48.5	21.8	15.7	10.4	3.6	14.0
1947	48.	22.	16.	10.	4.	14.
1948	47.	22.	16.	11.	4.	15.
1949	47.	24.	17.	9.	3.	12.

(Sources: 1910-1937 National Industrial Conference Board  
 1947-1948 Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, as given by the 1950 Statistical Abstract.  
 1949 Census Bureau Report of Dec. 1, 1951.)

This shows an uninterrupted postwar trend, culminating in the 1948 situation where 99% of the total net saving done during that year were concentrated in the hands of the top fifth of the population, while the bottom two-fifths of the population were so-called "dis-savers," spending more than they earned either by borrowing, or by spending accumulated savings. In 1949, about 35% of all spending units of the nation were "dis-savers." The total amount that this bottom third of the people had to spend in excess of their earnings was about \$14 billions. The Council of Economic Advisers has estimated that the "dis-savers" spent this borrowed or accumulated money chiefly for medical care, food and clothing.

Further facts show that the trend indicated by the figures in Table V did not come to an end in 1948, but has increased since that time. Whereas in 1948 only slightly more than the bottom 40% of the nation's spending units had to spend more than they earned, by 1950 this had increased to a full 70% according to the *Survey of Consumer Finances* of the Federal Reserve Board.

In Table V we saw the distribution of net savings through the population divided into fifths by income. In the following table, taken from the 1950 Statistical Abstract, we can see the distribution of net savings by family groups arranged by size of income.

**Table VI: Percent Distribution of Family Saving by Income Groups, 1948**

Average 1948 Income Before Taxes	Percent of Net Saving
Under \$1,000	—18
\$1,000—\$1,999	— 7
\$2,000—\$2,999	0
\$3,000—\$3,999	16
\$4,000—\$4,999	16
\$5,000—\$7,499	27
\$7,500 and over	66

(Source: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.)

It will be seen from Table VI that all groups below \$3,000 per year income taken as a whole were unable to do any net saving during 1948, and that the three groups taken together were "dis-savers" to the extent of 25% of the national total of net savings. This becomes particularly significant when compared with another fact: that the average wage or salary payment during 1948, as calculated by the Department of Commerce, was \$2,812. The conclusion from these figures must be that family units had to climb well above the average wage or salary income before they could enter the portion of the population that was able to add to its savings in 1948. This conclusion does not hold for individuals, of course, but for the group as a whole.

The natural result of this trend is that an increasing portion of the population owns no liquid assets as shown by Table VII. This process of stripping down the population to complete dependence on current income has been accelerated since the end of World War II, at which time

a considerable portion of the people had savings accumulated during the war.

**Table VII: Percentage of Population Owning No Liquid Assets**

1946	24%
1947	24
1948	27
1949	29
1950	31

(Source: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.)

The same source tells us that the highest tenth of consumer units ranked according to income held about \$91 billions in liquid assets early in 1951, or 65% of the total for the nation.

### The Process Beneath the Trends

The two trends with which we have been concerned in this article are the trend towards ever increasing inequality of income distribution, and the concentration of savings in the form of liquid assets in the hands of fewer and fewer people. It must be pointed out that these two trends are only phenomenal forms, appearances that derive from a more fundamental process going on further beneath the surface. This process is the increasing concentration of ownership and centralization of control over the means of production.

In the Economic Report to the President of January, 1950, the Council of Economic Advisers calculated that the 250 giant manufacturing corporations that dominate American industry emerged from the second World War with manufacturing facilities in their possession that were equal to the entire productive plant of the country before the war. In other words, these 250 capitalist monsters owned after the war as much as all of the 75,000 manufacturing corporations of the nation put together owned before the war. This fact gives us a partial glimpse of the process that underlies the trends discussed in this article.

To return once more to the *New York Times* and its "social revolution." In his preface to the second edition of *Capital*, Karl Marx wrote of political economy:

"With the year 1830 came the decisive crisis. . . Thenceforth, the class-struggle, practically as well as theoretically, took on more and more outspoken and threatening forms. It sounded the knell of scientific bourgeois economy. It was thenceforth no longer a question, whether this theorem or that was true, but whether it was useful to capital or harmful, expedient or inexpedient, politically dangerous or not. In place of disinterested enquirers, there were hired prizefighters; in place of genuine scientific research, the bad conscience and evil intent of apologetic."

To this devastatingly accurate appraisal, we need only make one amendment: the hired prizefighters with their "evil intent of apologetic" are still in the ring, but the bad conscience is gone, and in its place there has come a hardened and unregenerate cynicism.

# Anti-Imperialist Struggle in Egypt

By S. MUNIER

The Egyptian events are new proof of the tremendous upsurge existing for months in the anti-imperialist movement in the Near East. The defeat of British imperialism in Iran had temporarily created a revolutionary situation, especially during the strike of the Abadan workers; now the revolutionary wave has enveloped all of Egypt and has given the Egyptian anti-imperialist movement a momentum unknown since 1946.

## Origins of the Upsurge of the Anti-Imperialist Movement

The fundamental factors which brought about this situation both in Iran and in Egypt are these:

1. The price increases of almost all basic necessities since the Korean war and especially during the last year. This price rise caused a further reduction of the living standards of the masses, especially the workers, at a rate similar to that of some of the war years. But in contrast to that period, the Iranian and Egyptian governments do not now have the means of temporarily appeasing the masses which the Allied military authorities made use of as long as social peace served the needs of the prosecution of the war. That is why the national and social uprisings of the previous wave did not occur during the war but only in 1946 (Abadan strike, Azerbaijan movement, entrance of the Tudeh party into the Iranian government, events of February-March 1946 in Cairo when workers and students controlled the streets for several days). The new sharpening of social contradictions during 1950-1951 has this time given rise to more rapid developments.

2. The enfeeblement of British imperialism in the course of World War II compelled it to shift from direct to indirect control in a number of colonies (India) and made it possible for American imperialism to oust British imperialism from some of its positions (Saudi Arabia, Palestine). The oppressed masses of the Near East, driven to action by the decline in their living standards, moved first of all against the remains of the system of British domination and took advantage of every new weakening of British imperialism.

3. The position of the feudal and semi-capitalist ruling classes in Iran and Egypt was greatly weakened when they could no longer entrust themselves to the protection of the British imperialist army. They lived in constant fear of the danger that the new wave of mass struggles would sooner or later turn against themselves, as had happened in the previous waves of the anti-imperialist movement. Thus they had no choice but to put themselves at the head of the movement in order to attempt to break it. On the other hand they are trying to obtain, in place of Great Britain, the support of American imperialism, from which

they expect more vigorous economic aid and military support and which they consider a guarantee against communism.

Up to now the ruling classes of Iran have been successful with this tactic. The real stake there was oil, which induced the Americans to lend their protection to Iran, especially since the Soviet Union has a common frontier with Iran and since the United States was not yet ready to launch the world war. When Mossadegh stated to the American ambassador Grady, "If we turn communist it will be because of the mistakes of the English and of yourselves," the Americans were convinced. But the Egyptian pashas had less luck. Here again the stake was an important communication line for the U.S. — the Suez Canal; but the Americans could not figure without the British army in their military plans for the Near East. That is why in this case Acheson gave full support to Great Britain.

## Policy of the WAFD

The events in Iran contributed to hastening the outbreak of the anti-imperialist movement in Egypt. The Egyptian laboring masses learned from the example of Iran that it was no longer possible for British imperialism to maintain its positions with tanks and bayonets. So it is not surprising that on October 9 and 12, after the abrogation of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty, the demonstrators in Cairo celebrated the "liberation of Iran" together with Egypt's action on the treaty. Nevertheless the popularity of the Iran movement could not have been the sole factor that suddenly drove the WAFD leaders to make their dramatic declaration of October 8. Up to 1950 the WAFD was the only Egyptian party which had any popularity among the Egyptian masses, as a result of its social demagoguery and its promises of social reforms. But since coming to power it has not kept one of these promises.\* The position of the WAFD in the eyes of the masses was shaken as a result of rising prices and the decline of their living standards, and also because of the sharp fall in the price of cotton which heavily affected large layers of the *fellahin* and the middle classes. So weakened was its position that the WAFD could not hope to win another respite for its regime except by making a dramatic decision in the field of foreign policy which would thus allow it to push economic and social problems into the background for a time.

\* In the spring of 1950 the government found itself obliged to enact a law giving cost-of-living increases to wage-workers — "for reasons of public security," according to Minister of Interior Serag el-Din. At the same time it sent its police to forcibly suppress the strikers who were trying to compel the capitalists to carry out the law.

Therein lies the significance of the Egyptian government's declaration of October 8 abrogating the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 and the 1899 agreement on the establishment of a condominium in the Sudan. In doing this the leaders of the WAFD were making a shrewd calculation. They knew, as would anyone who understood the position of the British troops, that the British command in the canal zone could easily cut off the supply of oil to Egypt which comes for the most part from two refineries in Suez; or could even stop the export of Egyptian cotton, which would cause the collapse of Egyptian economy. But Nahas Pasha was sure that British imperialism would not resort to such methods since it was itself anxious to maintain the existing social order in Egypt in order not to lose its own political and economic influence there. Nahas Pasha thus counted on a fictitious "struggle" between his government and that of Great Britain, limited to the sphere of diplomatic negotiations; and, when the British army began disrupting normal civilian life in Egypt, he stated to the British government:

"If imports are not reestablished here soon, water, electricity and other public services will cease to function. Disorders will result. There will be no bread, for the bakeries will not be able to operate. . . If the English think this sort of pressure will make us change our policy they are mistaken; *but undoubtedly the communist elements will not fail to use the occasion for their agitation.* . ."

### Proletarian Character of the Movement

But Nahas Pasha was grievously mistaken when he thought the Anglo-Egyptian conflict could be confined to diplomatic skirmishes. Upon the abrogation of the treaty some 60,000 workers and students crowded the streets of Cairo demanding arms of Nahas Pasha. A similar demonstration occurred in Alexandria, with the slogans "From now on, no more imperialism!" and "The workers are the army of the revolution!" These demonstrations were repeated the next day and the workers of Cairo and Alexandria assembled under the banners of their trade unions. In the Suez Canal zone the movement had a pronounced proletarian character, centering around the political strike of the workers against the British occupation troops. In the course of one month the majority of the 30,000 to 40,000 workers in the British military camps went on strike: railroad engineers on the special trains in the military districts stopped work; other railroad workers refused to transport British troops or their supplies; construction workers refused to continue work on the airfields; dock workers in Port Said and workers of the various shipping companies in the canal zone likewise went on strike. Because of the lack of central organization we cannot speak of a general strike; but in actual fact all work in the canal zone came to a halt.

Actions of solidarity of other working-class groups were also large scale; but they suffered similarly from the lack of centralized leadership and thus had the character of partial and sporadic actions. The workers at the Shell installations in Nefisha began a solidarity strike but returned to work after a week, "in the national interest" as an official source stated. At Suez itself the dock workers only

went out on a 24-hour protest strike and took up collections for the workers who had left the British military camps. Similar collections were made among the workers of the oil companies in Port Said and the white-collar workers in Ismailia.

The organizational dispersion of the Egyptian trade unions — a result of the repressive measures of the Egyptian government — and the lack of an autonomous political and trade union leadership of the workers, prevented this strike wave from becoming a political general strike which would have shaken not only the base of the British military occupation but also the pillars of the Egyptian government and the social system of the Nile valley. The movement was sufficiently powerful, nevertheless, to encourage workers in other parts of Egypt into action. The railroad company of the Delta had as usual fired the spokesmen of the workers when they demanded improvement in working conditions; but now one day of strike, on November 9, 1951, was enough to win complete satisfaction, including the rehiring of the discharged workers! Encouraged by the events in the Suez Canal zone, 10,000 workers and employees of the British army and the R.A.F. in the Sudan began a strike on November 26 for improvement in their working conditions.

This avalanche which swept over Egypt immediately after the abrogation of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty came most inopportunistly for the Egyptian government. So little was the government prepared to see the struggle against the occupation in the canal zone take the proletarian form of strike, that 1,400 workers who had left the British military camps had to return to them because they were not given work that had been promised by the government. In several cities in the Nile delta there were even demonstrations of workers who had lost their jobs as a result of the anti-imperialist strikes. The weakness of the trade union organization made it impossible to support the strike with collections from the workers. To this was added the fact that the government succeeded in giving the strike the form of an exodus of workers from the Suez Canal zone.

### Anglo-Egyptian Cooperation in Suppressing the Mass Movement

But the WAFD did not confine itself to thus splintering the movement of the masses and crushing its revolutionary spirit. Wherever it could, it even attempted to break the strikes. For example, it persuaded the canal workers in Port Said to let a naval transport with American troops go through, although at first the workers had refused to serve these imperialist allies of Great Britain. The technicians and skilled workers of the British arsenal at Timsah received an order from the Egyptian Labor Office to stay on their jobs and not to strike.

It was the same with the demonstrations. On October 12, 1951, three days after they had begun, all demonstrations were forbidden. The masses paid no attention to the decree. On October 16 they gathered in a gigantic demonstration with the slogans "We want arms and battle!" and "Down with the Mediterranean pact!"—and Nahas Pasha had to appeal to them: "I beg you, stop the demonstration."



Next day the Minister of Interior called a meeting of the editors of all newspapers for the purpose of publishing a long statement asking the people to cease all demonstrations.\* The WAFD press published slogans against the demonstrations; the sheik of the Azhar mosque called on the masses to be calm. The head of the WAFD youth, M. Belal, even felt it necessary in a statement on October 10 to denounce particularly the use of the slogan "Revolution" in the mass demonstrations.

But all this was still not enough. The revolutionary movement of the masses was beginning to bypass the leaders of the WAFD. When their pleadings and prayers made no headway with the people, they called on the police and the army for help in suppressing the revolutionary movement of the masses by force of arms. There were victims in Cairo and Alexandria, but primarily in the Suez Canal zone did repression assume a barbarously cruel form. On October 16 a crowd of Egyptians attacked a British military camp. According to the official report British troops supported by the Egyptian police opened fire on the demonstrators, killing seven Egyptians and wounding many others. On October 30 the British army arrested one of the labor leaders in Suez. The workers organized a huge demonstration to win his freedom. The Egyptian governor of the city immediately despatched a large police detachment to the scene which engaged the workers in battle and succeeded in scattering them. Here is how *The Economist*, organ of the City of London, described the situation in its issue of October 27:

**"In the canal zone the picture of the relationship between Egyptians and British is far from uniform. Relations between the two armies remain friendly, and one can hardly speak of a state of siege. In fact, at the time of our writing, reports are coming to London which speak of fine cooperation between the Egyptian police and our military authorities."**

### **British Provocations and Maneuvers of Diversion**

While the anti-imperialist movement of the Egyptian masses, especially the strikes and workers' demonstrations, was being brutally suppressed, efforts were undertaken to divert it on to a chauvinist and terrorist road. Various reactionary organizations and parties—among others, the "Mussulman Brothers" (Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimoun), the so-called "Socialist Party," the "Liberal-Constitutional Party" of the large landholders—set up a "Committee for a National Convention" and formed "combat troops" ("Kataib") whose task was to unleash individual terrorism against British soldiers in the canal zone and to supervise the boycott against the English and everything English. An important point in the program of the "Kataib" was *to maintain order in the country, especially in case of demonstrations!* General Aziz el-Masri, a known collaborator of fascist Italy during the war, was designated commander of these combat troops.

\* The statement used the pretext that there was a "British plot" to "exploit the demonstrations" in order to discredit Egypt.

These terrorist groups, of which the "Mussulman Brothers" were the main body, began terrorist actions against the British; soldiers were attacked, killed and thrown into the canals; attempts were made in the course of the demonstrations to arouse the population against all foreigners and attack their dwellings and stores in Cairo and Alexandria; the slogan of boycott was advanced against everything of English origin, including English culture. The "Mussulman Brothers" thus endeavored to splinter and destroy the revolutionary and anti-imperialist uprising of the masses through individual terroristic actions, chauvinism and religious fanaticism. At the same time, the central leadership of the organization supported the governmental repression against the workers. It is not surprising then that the WAFD, contrary to its traditional policy, legalized the "Mussulman Brothers" and supported the "Kataib," and for security took them under its direct protection.

British imperialism did not view this type of movement with hostility. The tendency to religious fanaticism, combined with individual terrorism, excluded any possibility of fraternization between the Egyptian workers and British soldiers. It gave the British the opportunity to launch anti-Egyptian propaganda in other countries, to completely ignore the proletarian movement, and even opened up the possibility of dividing the Coptic workers from their Moslem class-brothers and inciting them against each other. Since the death of a few British soldiers was of no importance for imperialism and the imperialists saw great advantages in diverting the masses from a proletarian movement and pushing them on to a road which would have to end in the collapse of the Egyptian anti-imperialist struggle, they encouraged the outbreak of individual terrorism through constant provocations, arbitrary requisitions, brigandage, attacks on persons and property. There are innumerable examples of these British provocations.\*

The clearest expression of this policy of the occupation troops can be found in the following statement (UP report, November 27, 1951) by Brigadier General R. B. Goldsmith, head of the general staff of the British command in the Suez Canal zone, at a press conference in Ismaila:

**"Incidents have been on a mounting scale during the last 48 hours. But we are satisfied that the rate is increasing. Every time we can take reprisals against the terrorists it is a good thing, because it gives the troops experience of the things they have to be prepared for. It is good training (!) for the young recruits."**

### **The Problem of the Sudan**

It is clear to every revolutionary communist in Egypt and abroad that he should unreservedly support the slogan of the Egyptian masses: *el Gala* (withdrawal of British troops from Egypt and the Sudan), and that he must be in the forefront of their fight for liberation from imperial-

\* One example among many: On October 17 the British command sent a column of armored cars to patrol the streets of Ismaila during a mass demonstration. In the ensuing tumult seven Egyptians were killed and forty wounded by the British.

ist occupation. At the same time it is his duty to sharply criticize the Sudan policy of the feudal and capitalist leaders of the WAFD and other Egyptian parties.

"Anglo-Egyptian Condominium" in the Sudan was established toward the end of the last century after the conquest of the country by British imperialism with the aid of Egyptian troops, following upon the Mahdi insurrection and within the framework of general imperialist expansion in Africa. The aim of this condominium was to make Egypt co-responsible with British imperialist rule but with Egypt having no real power (the Governor General of the Sudan has always been an Englishman!).

Since around 1930 an autonomous national movement has developed in the Sudan, divided into two camps. On one side is the *Ashigga* party, along with the Students' Congress from Gordon University, the center of gravity resting in the cities of southern Sudan (in municipal elections the Ashigga party always wins an overwhelming majority of votes); on the other, the *Umma* party under the leadership of Sir Abd el-Rahman al-Mahdi, a large landowner who received bountiful gifts from the British, notably his estate on an island in the Nile near Khartoum. The Ashigga party and the groups supporting it call for evacuation of the Sudan by the British troops and unification of the Sudan with Egypt under the Egyptian crown.

The Umma party advances the slogan of national independence for the Sudan, but always insists more on independence in relation to Egypt than independence in relation to England. That is why it enjoys the support of the British administration in the Sudan and collaborated with it in creating a "Legislative Assembly" and other similar institutions with fictitious sovereignty (they do not have the right to vote on the budget, the British administration can annul their decisions merely by its veto). The aim of British policy in the Sudan is to pass slowly, after many years of "education," from direct to indirect rule, as in Transjordan for instance—an indirect rule which will be based on faithful agents of Great Britain, the feudal leaders of the Umma party and the heads of the Negro tribes of southern Sudan.

Independently of these two camps there has developed in the Sudan since 1947 a powerful, militant and well organized trade union movement, the core of which is the union of railroad workers. This "federation of labor unions" has conducted a number of large strikes in the last years, the two high points being the general strikes of April and August, 1951, which virtually paralyzed all activity in the cities of southern Sudan. This labor organization has also given evidence of political independence. It calls for independence of the Sudan, abolishing of the condominium and evacuation of all foreign troops. It participated actively in the big demonstrations of April 1948 against the plan for a "Legislative Assembly." Both the Umma and Ashigga parties were suspicious of the growth of this workers' movement and not infrequently attempted to persuade the labor leaders to call off strikes

(this being one of the reasons for the collapse of the strike in July 1947).

Through its strikes and militant actions the workers' movement in the Sudan demonstrated that it was the only force in the country ready and able to carry on a real struggle against British imperialism. Coordination of the anti-imperialist movement of the Egyptian masses with this force (for example, the proletarian actions in the Suez Canal zone with the strike of 10,000 workers in the vicinity of the British army in the Sudan) would have shaken the British power and put the liberation of the Nile valley on the order of the day.

But the leadership of the Egyptian nationalist movement had for thirty years followed a policy which tended to set the anti-imperialist movement of the Sudan against the Egyptian movement. The leaders of the WAFD have always declared that the Sudan must return to Egypt for historical reasons; and in their negotiations with Great Britain they for the most part demanded nothing more than a real carrying out of the 1899 treaty, that is, that Egypt should have the same rights as Great Britain in the domination of the Sudan. Numerous Egyptian leaders declare, like did the Nazis, that the Sudan represents "living space" for Egypt.

The sharpest expression of these pseudo-imperialist aspirations of a colonial bourgeoisie who, without having won their own independence, are trying to imitate the highest and most reactionary stage of imperialism, is to be found in the statement of Nahas Pasha on October 8, 1951. Having abrogated the 1899 condominium treaty and proclaimed Farouk King of Egypt and the Sudan, he decreed (No. 4 of the Royal Decrees) that the Sudanese would have the right to elect their own government "democratically" but that all matters of foreign policy, national defense and finances would be reserved to the King in accordance with the Egyptian constitution.

This declaration afforded British imperialism another opportunity to isolate the anti-imperialist movement in the Sudan from that in Egypt. Immediately after October 8, when Cairo and Alexandria were shaken by vast demonstrations, the people of Khartoum, capital of the Sudan, quietly went about their affairs (according to a dispatch in the Egyptian paper *Al-Abram*, Oct. 11). It was only at the end of October that demonstrations took place in the Sudan, launched almost exclusively by students from the secondary schools and without participation by the workers. The above-mentioned strike at the military installations did not break out until the end of November, at which time the proletarian movement in Egypt already had clearly lost its momentum and the individual terrorism of the "Kataib" was in the forefront.

The leaders of the pro-Egyptian Ashigga party, confused and divided among themselves, remained silent for several days and then went to Cairo to get the WAFD leaders to arbitrate their disputes. On the other hand, the Umma party gave big publicity to statements against Egyptian imperialism (of course without mentioning Brit-

ish imperialism!) and correctly and in detail criticized the absurdity of "self-determination" as proposed by Egypt (without mentioning that the "self-determination" proposed by the British government was equally absurd!).

The main political advantage the British governor of the Sudan was able to derive from Nahas Pasha's declaration of October 8, was in the abrupt turn of Sir Ali el-Mirghani, chief political and religious rival of Abd el-Rahman al-Mahdi, who until then had supported Egypt and the Ashigga party and who now declared himself in favor of the British plans. In this atmosphere it was not difficult for the British governor on November 21 to have the leaders of the Ashigga party arrested, without any protest demonstrations from the masses, as had always occurred in Khartoum and Oundourman in such circumstances.

In this situation the Sudanese trade unions confined themselves to publishing a statement in which they supported the abrogation of the 1899 condominium treaty, called for an immediate end to the condominium and demanded the right of self-determination for the Sudanese people "as inscribed in the UN charter." This weak and vague statement was the result both of the Egyptian policy which isolated the Sudanese masses from the Egyptian, and of the lack of coordination and joint organization of the Egyptian and Sudanese working-class and trade union movements.

Only such an organization, fighting for the evacuation of the British troops and for an end to British rule in Egypt and the Sudan, as well as for the right of full self-determination for the Sudanese masses, and appealing to the Sudanese to struggle shoulder to shoulder with their Egyptian brothers against imperialism—only such an organization could inflict a real defeat on imperialism.

### Position of the Stalinists

The well-known Stalinist zigzag policy toward the national movements in the colonies had been and is still being sharply expressed by the Egyptian Stalinists. For them the leaders of the WAFD have either "definitely gone over to the imperialist camp" or else they are described as "the revolutionary fighters against imperialism." The Leninist policy toward the national movements in the colonies, which consists of "marching separately and striking together" and supports every real anti-imperialist action while criticizing the true intentions of the WAFD leaders and of educating the masses: such a policy of "supporting the WAFD as the rope supports the hanging man," while still maintaining the independence of the proletarian organization, remains completely unknown to them. Here is but one small example of the post-war policy of Egyptian Stalinism, from the Stalinist organ *El-Fagr-el-Gadid*, March 13, 1946:

"Rightist elements have taken over WAFD policy and are determining its orientation. The result is that today the WAFD is more inclined than previously to reach a compromise with imperialism. This situation demonstrates that the WAFD has become the representative of the

bourgeoisie (?), which has lost its revolutionary possibilities." But only two months later, May 22, the same organ wrote, regarding a WAFD statement on the negotiations with Great Britain:

"This statement expresses a nationalist tendency. . . and we consider it as a turn in the policy of the WAFD regarding British imperialism. It is the duty of all the progressives and all democratic organizations to support the WAFD."

The same turn from an ultra-left to a rightist position has occurred during the last months. Although it was not long ago that the Stalinist organizations were frequently being split by the expulsion of members or groups accused of a "pro-WAFD tendency," the proclamation of October 8 produced a flood of acclamations in the Stalinist ranks. The Stalinist statements and leaflets contained "congratulations to the WAFD government and its magnificent position"; they said that "a new epoch has opened" in which "all aspirations are joining together to drive out imperialism." Similarly, the statement of the Egyptian Stalinist "Committee for Peace" celebrated "the magnificence of the historic national action taken by the government" and saw in it "the realization of the old and always renewed aspirations of the people." Still further: "The Committee sees in the declaration of His Excellency the President of the Council and His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs a correct understanding (!) of the role Egypt must play in order to maintain world peace" (*Al-Mistri*, Oct. 13, 1951). The sole demand the Stalinists made of the government was for the release of political prisoners.

These Stalinist adulations naturally did not prevent the government of the WAFD from forcibly suppressing the workers' demonstrations and strikes and from cooperating during this "historic national action" with the British imperialist army! Nor did they prevent Minister of Interior Serag el-Din from stating to a foreign journalist that nothing had changed in the attitude of Egypt toward communism since the abrogation of the 1946 treaty. Nor did they prevent the police from again arresting communists or having them convicted by Egyptian judges. What the Stalinist policy did help to prevent, because of lack of a serious criticism of the decree transforming the Sudan into a province of the Egyptian realm, was unification of the Sudanese laboring masses with their Egyptian brothers for a common struggle against both British imperialism and the aspirations of the feudal Arabs to imitate imperialism and fascism.

### Lesson of the Egyptian Events

The recent events in Egypt have again demonstrated the enormous revolutionary spirit of the Egyptian proletariat, which had already been revealed at the time of the strike wave in the spring of 1950. They have once more confirmed that, despite the backward state of Egyptian industry, the Egyptian proletariat — because of its high degree of concentration in the ports, railroads, oil installations and the military camps—represents a revolutionary force which could become decisive in the struggle of the

Near East for national and social liberation. On the other hand, these events have confirmed the lessons of the strikes of the spring of 1950, lack of a centralized, coordinating leadership leads the revolutionary impetus into an impasse and prevents it from winning decisive victories. Without such leadership the magnificent actions of workers' solidarity break out separately in different enterprises and different cities instead of all together—and this greatly weakens their effectiveness.

Through lack of an internationalist revolutionary leadership the anti-imperialist movement of the masses did not take any steps toward fraternization with the British soldiers and did not turn to the international proletariat for help. That is why it was possible for the feudal and capitalist Egyptian leaders to stem the proletarian character of the movement and divert it on to the sterile and chauvinist road of individual terrorism. And that in its turn allowed British imperialism to hide from world public opinion the real content of the anti-imperialist movement of the Egyptian masses and to represent it as a fanatical explosion of primitive religious instincts.

The recent events in Egypt have again confirmed the correctness of the demands of Fourth International groups for the calling of a Congress to establish a federation of

trade unions and all the working-class organizations in all the countries of the Near East. Apart from a few student demonstrations in Beirut and Damascus, the Egyptian movement has had few echoes in the other Arab countries. Solidarity strikes on the part of working-class organizations have been completely lacking. Yet this is the only road for defeating imperialism. A correct position on the Sudan question is of basic importance for the organization of the Egyptian proletariat; for as long as the struggle of the Egyptian and the Sudanese masses is not organized in common, British imperialism will keep its base in the Sudan from where it will be able to strangle the revolutionary movement in Egypt. To achieve this unity of action it is necessary to combat the slogan "Union of the Nile valley under the Egyptian crown"; at the same time it is necessary to combat the policy of the Umma party in the Sudan which is only a disguised way of supporting British rule.

Such are the concrete tasks confronting the organizations of the Fourth International in Egypt and the Near East, and they are once more placed on the order of the day by the recent events in Egypt.

End of November, 1951

## Tom Paine -- Revolutionist

By JEAN SIMON

Thomas Paine was born on Jan. 29, 1737. On Jan. 10, 1776, his historic call for the American revolution, *Common Sense*, was published.\* Both of these events nowadays receive passing notice. But for those who seek to understand the dynamics of the revolutionary process in America and the role outstanding individuals played in that process, Tom Paine deserves a much larger place than the official hero-makers give him.

Most history books, if they mention Paine at all, merely note the undeniable fact that *Common Sense* was an important contribution to the preparation of the public mind for the open revolt against England. Few attempt to explain what went into the making of the man and why he was able to leave his indelible mark on American history.

### Early Background

Tom Paine was born in Thetford, England, the son of a Quaker staymaker (corset maker), a handicraft of the same category as shoemaking or tailoring in that day; his mother was a conservative Church of England member. So from his earliest childhood Paine's critical approach to religion was stimulated by the differences in his own home.

\* This article was originally written for January publication as an anniversary article. — Editor.

An only child, he was sent for six or seven years to a local grammar school which differed from most in that it provided some education in history and science. He left school at the age of 13 to be taught staymaking. He ran away to sea after five years, was brought back home by his father before he could actually leave the country, but ran away again, this time to spend a brief period on a privateer.

During the rest of his early life in England he supported himself by working from time to time as an exciseman, as a staymaker and as a teacher.

### Philosophical Influence

In London in 1757 he attended philosophical lectures at night. The lecturer was A. Ferguson, author of the *History of Civil Society* (1750) which is quoted favorably by Marx in *Capital*. Marx refers to Ferguson as Adam Smith's predecessor and an economist who had a keen appreciation of the harmful effects of the development of capitalist manufacture on the worker. Ferguson undoubtedly influenced Paine's philosophical and political-economic thinking, as expressed in his later writings.

Paine also participated in philosophical debates in a club that met at the White Hart Tavern in Lewes, where he was stationed as an exciseman, or government tax inspector, in 1768.

In 1772 he acted as spokesman for the excisemen seeking an increase in pay. He wrote a tract called "The Case of the Officers of the Excise" which cited the discrepancy between their nominal salary and their real wages, described the scope and effects of poverty, and urged the government in its own self-interest to raise wages in order to guarantee the honesty and loyalty of its employees by removing temptations.

### Spokesman in a Wage Struggle

Subsidized by the contributions of the excisemen, Paine published the report and spent some time in London lobbying at Parliament. The net result of his negotiations was no raise for the men, and the spotting of Paine as a "trouble-maker" to be removed at the first opportunity.

While in London, Paine met Benjamin Franklin, who was there on behalf of the colonies, made a favorable impression and later received a letter of recommendation from him to friends in Philadelphia.

When Paine was finally removed from his government job, for being "absent without leave," he settled his financial accounts by selling the property of a small shop he and his wife and maintained, separated from his wife, and left for Philadelphia, where he arrived November 30, 1774, with Franklin's letter of introduction.

### In Revolutionary America

By January 1775 he was editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, and actively interested in the colonial cause. The issue of independence had not yet been set forth positively by the revolutionary leaders, who still functioned on the basis of demands for reforms.

The first clear-cut call to the masses to break with England and monarchy, to give up the "patchwork" of reform and embark on the revolutionary course of independence, was issued in Paine's *Common Sense*, published in January 1776. With this Paine took his place as the chief propagandist of the American Revolution.

The pamphlet was written in simple, direct language, devoid of all obscure historical, biblical and other learned references and allusions so common in the literary style of the day. It was a powerful appeal to every segment of the population to join in a broad united front to win complete freedom from England and embark on a career as an independent nation.

A biographer of Thomas Paine has called *Common Sense* "This pamphlet, whose effect has never been paralleled in literary history. . . ." The passage of 60 years since this comment was written has seen great mass socialist movements and a response to Marxist pamphlets far overshadowing Paine. Nevertheless, the effect of Paine's great tract has still never been paralleled by anything in the literary history of the United States.

### Program of the Revolution

We must recall that when Paine penned *Common Sense*, the full program of the Revolution had not as yet been given to the people. The Revolutionary War was under way, and the people were in effect fighting for independence, but without as yet realizing it. No one,

not even Samuel Adams himself, had as yet put forward the full revolutionary program; not openly at any rate. Men's minds were weighed down by the incubus of past centuries: monarchy, empire, feudal servitude, all the untouchables of bygone days clouded the minds of the living.

Into this atmosphere, Thomas Paine flung his remarkable pamphlet, which advocated, at one stroke, independence, republicanism, equalitarian democracy, and inter-colonial unity! The Revolution was thenceforward armed with a program, or, to put the matter precisely, the program that was in the minds and private conversation of most radicals became the public property of the revolution.

Paine's great literary gift sparkles from every page of *Common Sense*. He stirred the workers and farmers of colonial times with his blunt and unceremonious comments, such as this: "In England a King hath little more to do than to make war and give away places (jobs); which, in plain terms, is to impoverish the nation and set it together by the ears. A pretty business indeed for a man to be allowed eight hundred thousand sterling a year for, and worshipped into the bargain! Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived."

In similar blunt terms, he made out the case for completing the Revolution by independence. "Everything that is right or reasonable pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, 'TIS TIME TO PART.'" These words sank into the consciousness of the new nation, and prepared the way for the Declaration of Independence, which followed in six months.

Indicative of how popular Paine's arguments were, *Common Sense* immediately became a best seller. About one hundred thousand copies were sold within the first six months after its publication. Since there was no copyright law, several pirated editions were also widely sold, so that the total distribution of the pamphlet is estimated at at least three hundred thousand — and this at a time when the population was less than three million!

### Paine and the Crisis

Paine's other major literary contributions to the American revolution were the *Crisis* papers, issued periodically throughout the war. Aimed at maintaining the morale of the soldiers and the colonial forces, they reported on the events in the war, polemicized against the British and American Tories appealed to the British people, and exuded revolutionary optimism despite defeats.

It is difficult to measure the effect of any particular document, but the circumstances surrounding the issuance of the first *Crisis* pamphlet give some indication of the basis for the comment of Joel Barlow, a contemporary American poet who served as minister to France under Madison. "The great American cause owed as much to the pen of Paine as to the sword of Washington," Barlow wrote.

Morale was at a low ebb when Paine started the *Crisis* series. From August to December 1776, the Americans had suffered defeats, retreats and desertions. Congress had

fled to Baltimore. Washington's freezing soldiers were retreating across New Jersey. Paine, who was accompanying them, gauged the mood and the need correctly, when, without false optimism, he wrote the now famous lines:

*"These are the times that try men's souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it NOW, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph."*

Washington had the pamphlet read aloud to every army detachment. A few nights later the army made the icy crossing of the Delaware that has been immortalized in painting and story, and won the victory at Trenton that began to turn the tide.

### **Paine as Man of Action**

Acknowledgments of the tremendous role played by Paine in mobilizing sentiment for the revolution have been plentiful from his enemies as well as his friends, and from all the leaders of the colonial struggle as well as historians since. But few give a rounded picture of his activity in the revolution.

In July 1776 Paine joined the Army as volunteer secretary to General Roberdeau, commander of the Flying Camp, an outfit that moved quickly to trouble spots where it was needed. From there Paine went to the army of General Nathaniel Greene as volunteer aide-de-camp.

In January 1777 Paine was appointed secretary of a commission to treat with the Indians in eastern Pennsylvania. His activities in Pennsylvania and around the Continental Congress continued throughout the war, and were by no means limited to legal and official bodies. He served, for example on the Committee of Inspection, a price control committee formed at a mass meeting in Philadelphia on May 27, 1779, to deal with merchants, innkeepers and others engaging in war-profiteering at the expense of the public. As W. E. Woodward puts it in his biography of Paine: "The committee had no legal standing, but it proposed to accomplish its ends by popular pressure; or by force, if necessary."

In April 1776 he was elected secretary of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, formerly the Committee on Secret Correspondence, but was induced to resign on January 9, 1779, after he had exposed what he considered shady dealings in some of the secret diplomacy of individuals involved in securing French aid for the revolution.

When Philadelphia was about to be attacked by the British in September 1777, Paine was convinced the city could be saved if the citizens were called out, fully informed on the military situation, and mobilized to build barricades and prepare for street-fighting.

Paine went to General Mifflin, who was then in the city, with his proposal, asking Mifflin, in his own words, "if two or three thousand men could be mustered up whether we might depend on him to command them, for without someone to lead, nothing could be done. He declined that part, not being then very well, but promised

what assistance he could. A few hours after this the alarm happened. I went directly to General Mifflin but he had set off, and nothing was done. I cannot help being of the opinion that the city might have been saved. . . ."

### **His Selflessness**

In 1779 Paine's chronic poverty was in a particularly acute stage, but within six months of his election as clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly in November, he contributed \$500 of his annual salary to head a subscription list for the relief of the Army. The funds raised were used to establish the Bank of Pennsylvania to provide for the Army's needs.

Paine resigned his post in November 1780 and went on a mission to France, seeking aid for the colonies. He returned in August with 2,500,000 livres, but Paine was so broke that he had to borrow ferry passage across the Delaware on his way home.

Upon the conclusion of the war Paine spent most of his time at his home in Bordentown, N. J., working on his inventions. A typical product of the spirit of scientific inquiry of his age, he was preoccupied after the revolution with the development of his idea for an iron bridge planned for the Schuylkill River at Philadelphia. He also worked on a planing machine, a new type of crane, an improved carriage wheel, and smokeless candles. He corresponded with Franklin, who encouraged him to continue.

### **A Permanent Radical**

Paine left for France with his model bridge on April 26, 1787. When he returned to America fifteen years later, revolutionary sentiment had so far abated that he was much too radical for his former colleagues and he was now a pariah where he had been a hero. He still had some friends, but persons were publicly discriminated against for holding to his views. Jefferson, however, invited him to stay for a while at the Executive Mansion, and he did.

An attempt to murder Paine was made at his New Rochelle home on Christmas Eve 1804. Though he suspected Christopher Derrick, a local laborer, this revolutionist who exalted objectivity and abhorred personal vindictiveness refused to press charges.

In January 1805 Paine went to New York City to live. He and his admirers continued to be victimized for his views. When he went to vote in New Rochelle on Election Day, 1806, the witch-hunters of his time got in their final blow: they charged that the man who had lived for nothing but the American cause and the spreading of its principles to Europe was an alien, and denied him the ballot.

When Paine died on June 8, 1809, after prolonged illness, at 59 Grove St., New York City, he had been reduced to almost complete friendlessness, so that the only attendants at his funeral in New Rochelle were a Quaker watchmaker, friends from France — Mrs. Bonneville and her two sons, and two Negro pall-bearers.

### **Revolutionary Concept of World Scope**

The significance of the man and his ideas remain, but they cannot be fully appreciated on the basis of his role

in the American revolution alone. Paine was not a narrow patriot in the modern sense. He was a principled revolutionist first, and when he went to France, and then England, after American independence was established, he continued to champion the struggles against the ancient order in those countries as whole-heartedly as he had the American cause. "Where liberty is not there is my country," he is said to have declaimed at his departure from America.

During his stay in England he was the guest of Edmund Burke and other Whig leaders for a period, while they were trying to court favorable trade relations with America. But their friendship cooled when they found him unsympathetic to their proposals.

Paine arrived in Paris in 1789 when the French Revolution was underway. Lafayette gave Paine the key to the Bastille as a token of esteem for George Washington, symbol of the American revolution.

When the French Revolution was viciously attacked and the divine right of kings upheld by Burke in his *Reflections*, published in 1790, Paine took up his pen again in defense of revolution, and wrote an answer, Part I of the Rights of Man. It was approved by the English Society for Promoting Constitutional Knowledge, and other democratic groups, but created a considerable controversy not only in England, but in America as well. Jefferson, Madison and Randolph commended it, and Jefferson sent it to an American printer.

### Activity in French Revolution

In July 1791 Paine was a prime mover in the organization of the Republican Society which aimed at the overthrow of monarchy and establishment of a French Republic. At the time, many who were later to become Jacobins were still hesitant about advocating the abolition of monarchy, but the Republican Society placarded Paris with a manifesto written by Paine demanding the abdication of the king and elimination of the office.

In November of the same year, back in London, Paine was guest of honor at the annual dinner of the Revolution Society formed to commemorate the English Revolution of 1688. There he made a speech toasting "The Revolution of the World" — the first man to raise that slogan, according to some historians. His remarks were noted and added to the dossier of the British government's preparations to arrest him for sedition.

Part II of *The Rights of Man* was a continuation of the attack on monarchy and aristocracy, and was dedicated to Lafayette. Its publication early in 1792 evoked a veritable lynch campaign against Paine in England. Burke's supporters instigated public protest meetings, book-burnings of *The Rights of Man*, and the distribution of medallions bearing slogans like "The End of Pain," "The Wrongs of Man," and "We dance; Paine swings." Paine's publisher was arrested for printing seditious literature, and the legal sale of the book was stopped by royal proclamation. Black market sales continued.

Paine fought the attack on his writings, distributing free copies of *The Rights* and encouraging his supporters to stand up for his ideas at meetings called to incite feeling against them.

Meanwhile the book was translated into French and acclaimed in that country. In August 1792 the French Assembly conferred the honorary title of Citizen on him, and four departments elected him to represent them in the National Convention. Consequently, when the English issued a warrant for his arrest, he left for France. He was found guilty of high treason in England in his absence.

In France, Paine participated in the Convention with the Girondists. He was selected October 11 to help draft the constitution, but he incurred popular disfavor when he attempted to save the life of the king by urging banishment instead of death, and was eventually expelled from the Convention in December 1793.

While awaiting the next turn of events in the Revolution, he completed his *Age of Reason*, an attack on the Bible and organized religion and an exposition of his Deist views.

Paine was arrested by order of a Committee of Public Safety in January 1794. Through the machinations of the American representative in France at the time, his old enemy, the arch-conservative Gouverneur Morris, Paine was disclaimed as an American citizen and kept in prison. Only when Morris was finally recalled at the request of the French, and replaced with James Monroe, was Paine released.

He remained in France, living with Monroe while completing Part II of the *Age of Reason*. Later, when he was living with the editor and publisher, Nicolas Bonneville, Paine was approached by Bonaparte on the prospect of leading a liberating army in an invasion of England. The project did not materialize, but seven years later, in 1804, Paine wrote a letter "To The People of England on the Invasion of England" in which he still favored the idea, which was again being discussed, "as the intention of the expedition was to give the people of England an opportunity of forming a government for themselves, and thereby bring about peace."

The world revolutionist had considerable difficulty in getting back to America, since Britain ruled the seas and he was a marked man. In March 1801, Jefferson, then president, wrote Paine that a frigate would pick him up. Jefferson was attacked for this in America, and Paine declined the offer to save his friend further difficulties on this score. When the war between England and France ended, so that French ships were no longer liable to attack, Paine sailed for the United States, arriving October 30, 1802.

His active personal participation in the British and French revolutionary movements was at an end, but he continued to write pamphlets and letters, such as the letter to the English people mentioned above, and a series of "Letters to the Citizens of the United States," attacking the Federalists.

Paine was reviled by his contemporary opponents, misrepresented by writers who repeated their slanders later, and has been inadequately or falsely depicted also by the modern liberals who have claimed to "rehabilitate" him.

Of his contemporaries, the British opponents of American independence would, under ordinary circumstances, be the least important since their bias is clear. But many

of Paine's anti-democratic attackers on this side of the Atlantic could find nothing better to base their slanders on than the interested political hack jobs written by professional propagandists of the British Crown, and therefore it is necessary to trace such slanders to their source.

Two of the earliest hatchet jobs done on Paine, were biographies written by Francis Oldys, A.M., who was actually George Chalmers, a London government clerk, and James Cheetham, an Englishman who came to America to edit an anti-democratic newspaper. Chalmers' book was published in the heat of the controversy between Burke and Paine over the French Revolution.

But Paine's revolutionary ideas made him the butt of equally vicious attack in America. John Adams, for example, labeled him "the filthy Tom Paine," an epithet that has been continued through modern times.

*The New England Palladium* called Paine a "lying, drunken, brutal infidel, who rejoiced in the opportunity of basking and wallowing in the confusion, bloodshed, rapine, and murder in which his soul delights."

More recent examples of how the early slanders affected his reputation are the fact that Paine's name was voted down for the Hall of Fame, where other Revolutionary leaders are honored; Theodore Roosevelt referred to him as a "filthy little atheist," and as late as 1942 the Fairmount Park Commission of Philadelphia refused to permit the erection of a statue of Paine because of his "reputed religious views."

Paine has not fared so well at the hands of the school of "objective historians" or the liberals who have attempted to "rehabilitate" him, either.

Curtis P. Nettels of Cornell University (*The Roots of American Civilization*, 1946) stigmatizes Paine as a "restless English adventurer in radicalism and idealism," and credits *Common Sense*, the most important single piece of literature for independence in the arsenal of the radicals of 1776, as having been "written in a rough, vigorous, flamboyant style that drove home with fierce blows the necessity of independence."

W. E. Woodward, in *Tom Paine: America's Godfather*, (1945) finds it necessary to deprive him of lasting significance by stating that "Paine was not a radical within the meaning of that term as it is used today. He was an individualist."

John C. Miller (*Triumph of Freedom, 1775-1783*, 1948) says that Paine reversed his line of criticism of the French government before the revolution in that country, accepting a bribe in the form of an offer to serve as paid propagandist for France in America. (Paine answered that old slander himself.)

Miller adds that Paine's irreligion was so bad that Sam Adams had to rebuke him for contributing to the "depravity of the younger generation."

James Truslow Adams (*Revolutionary New England, 1691-1776*, 1941) repeats the condescending characterization of *Common Sense*: "Crude and coarse as it was, it was written in words of power."

Probably the best of the liberal treatments of Paine is that of Charles Beard in *The Rise of American Civilization*, which, though sketchily, gives some indication of Paine's principled consistency as an outstanding product

of his times, as one who played an important part in helping shape revolutionary thinking, and as a courageous fighter whose plebian insight gave his writing a force that none of the superficial or apologetic defenders of the propertied classes could equal.

Paine was in the vanguard of the progressive bourgeois revolution of his day. Influenced by the classical political economists such as A. Ferguson and Adam Smith, and the natural rights philosophy, he was well equipped to attack and refute the apologists for the status quo like Burke.

In *The Rights of Man* and other works, Paine expressed the same logic and concreteness in his approach to labor as on other questions. "Several laws are in existence for regulating and limiting workmen's wages," he wrote. "Why not leave them as free to make their own bargains, as lawmakers are to let their farms and houses."

Paine opposed monarchy, slavery, poverty, organized religion and the Bible, and the unequal status of women. He was an advocate of universal education, reform of criminal law, pensions for the aged and other social security measures, reduction of armaments and universal peace.

But Paine was no meek pacifist: In writing on his proposal for reduction of armaments, he said that if others should refuse to disarm, he would take up his musket and thank God for giving him the strength to do so. Moreover, his enlistment in the colonial army and his whole life of revolutionary activity belie the picture some historians paint of him as a Quaker pacifist.

The explanation for the popularity of his writings, their broad mass appeal, is undoubtedly to be found in the fact that of all the American revolutionary leaders and writers, he was one who by his origin, background and way of life represented the plebian masses and consequently could consistently give more content to the democratic slogans and ideas of the time.

His popularity with the masses was based on his democratic convictions. Sam Adams, the chief organizer of the First American Revolution, also drew his chief strength from reliance on the masses. That Paine was in contact with and worked closely with Adams is indicated in the following quotation from a letter to Adams dated Jan. 1, 1803:

"I am obliged to you for your affectionate remembrance of what you style my services in awakening the public mind to a declaration of independence, and supporting it after it was declared. I also, like you, have often looked back on those times, and have thought that if independence had not been declared at the time it was, the public mind could not have been brought up to it afterwards.

"It will immediately occur to you, who were so intimately acquainted with the situation of things at that time, that I allude to the black times of Seventy-six; for though I know, and you my friend also know, they were no other than the natural consequences of the military blunders of that campaign, the country might have viewed them as proceeding from a natural inability to support its cause against the enemy, and have sunk under the despondency of that misconceived idea. This was the impression against which it was necessary that the country should be strongly animated."

Paine's view of himself and the revolution was clearly stated in another article. "I had no thought of Independence or of arms" (upon arriving in America), he wrote.



"The world could not then have persuaded me that I should be either a soldier or an author. If I had any talents for either, they were buried in me, and might ever have continued so, had not the necessity of the times dragged and driven them into action."

But Paine's talents as a soldier and author were based

on still another quality: he was a revolutionary thinker, honest, courageous, and prepared to go to the root of things. As he put it: "When precedents fail to assist us, we must return to the first principles of things for information, and think as if we were the first men that thought."

That was Tom Paine, revolutionist.

## Under Pressure of the Coming War

# Imperialism Beckons "Third Camp"

By PIERRE FRANK

The preparations for the third world war do not consist only in an enormous *material* arms production. In order to mobilize the greatest possible mass of people in the service of imperialism, the most varied ideas and arguments are set to work, reflecting the extraordinary material and ideological pressures bearing down upon individuals and organizations. A few dreamers are still able to muse about an impossible neutrality. The capitalists of Western Europe are beside themselves because they have to follow the directives of Washington, but they have no other choice. The conflict in preparation is developing such scope that it is already smashing century-old traditions. The idea of the bourgeois fatherland — for which millions of men went to their death in the course of two preceding world wars — can no longer serve to deceive very many people in Europe. More subtle ideologies are required. The simple booby-trap of "Stalinist totalitarianism" also serves the same end.

In any event, from now on every one is taking his place more or less openly in the struggle. The Kravchenkos have chosen "freedom" in order to don the American uniform with the hope of re-establishing private property in the USSR. At the same time the bourgeois world finds itself abandoned not only by the greater part of the laboring masses in a growing number of countries, but also by wide layers of intellectuals. Even bourgeois are deserting their class. Can there be a more striking symptom of the decline of the bourgeoisie than the case of those officials of the British Foreign Office, one of the most selectively staffed of institutions, deserting their world? But in the milieu of the working class and the revolutionary vanguard, or where claim is made to a place in this vanguard, the struggle is similarly going on, the class pressures are likewise in motion.

### We Are "Buried" Once More. . .

The Third World Congress of the Trotskyists has clearly drawn the positions of our movement in the coming war. We are in the camp of the USSR, of China, of the people's democracies against the camp of imperialism. This position has not emerged unexpectedly. It is the traditional line of our movement. It was ours during the course of the

Second World War. It has been particularly emphasized and more precisely defined since the beginning of the war in Korea and since the preparations for the third world war have taken on an intensive character.

This position has caused a great hue and cry. It has brought us once more the accusation launched almost periodically against us: We are capitulating to Stalinism! For some we are even tools of the Cominform. For others, good souls, the Fourth International which might have played such a great role in history has taken the fatal road leading to its ruin. Once again we are being buried, with or without flowers. To tell the truth, Stalin and his gang, who have had other means to employ against us, have so often boasted of slaying us that we are no longer awed by hearing such funeral orations. We are periodically "buried" because periodically certain people experience the need to bury Marxism.

We will say nothing here of those within the working class who have openly and without circumlocutions placed themselves in the camp of American imperialism, as in France the collaborators in that magazine which is still mockingly entitled *The Proletarian Revolution*.\* We want to deal with those who have defended, and with those who still defend, the so-called position of a "Third Camp" or of a "Third Front," with those who advocate equal independence of the two camps facing each other and a struggle directed simultaneously against the one and the other of these camps.

### Various Types of "Independence"

The idea of "independence" of the two camps or the two blocs exists not only in the ranks claiming to be part of the working class, but in certain bourgeois groups as well. Even certain bourgeois governments claim to follow an international policy based on such a consideration. We will deal only with organizations of individuals claiming to belong to the working class. Among them we can observe these ideas in tendencies that move in various directions. Recently a common statement was signed by the Socialist Parties of Japan and India in favor of a policy

\* Organ of the Syndicalists led by Pierre Monatte. — Ed.

independent of the two blocs. These organizations, as is evident to those who have followed their evolution, have not at all reached the stage of crystallization on the basis of clearly defined positions. They have broken, or are on the road to breaking, with the bourgeoisie and with the right wings which directly expressed the pressure of the bourgeoisie within their organizations.

We must neither pass judgment on these parties on the basis of these statements nor accept these positions as conclusive for these parties. The signing of such a statement by these parties expressed a stage in a progressive evolution which is, however, inadequate, incomplete, and repleté with dangers. We must turn elsewhere in order to see the inherent dangers in this position of the "Third Camp." Either toward such organizations as the Yugoslav CP which, after an excursion to the left, passed through this position in its evolution to the right; or to such organizations or tendencies relatively crystalized politically, such as the POUM ("Marxist Party of Workers Unity," in Spain) and the Shachtmanites, who have been and still are the most systematic defenders of the "Third Camp."

### The Yugoslav Case

There is not much to be gained in pursuing this subject on the Yugoslav side. Immediately following their break with the Cominform, the Yugoslavs made an obvious theoretical effort toward a political orientation. Then, when the pressure of the international situation became too strong and they saw their sole hope in important material assistance from the West, they remembered what they had learned at the Stalinist school: that principles were made to be scoffed at and that there were always theoreticians available to justify the worst compromises in the name of Marxism. Tito discovered the blessings of the West, concluded a military agreement with the USA, and now condemns every idea of a "Third Camp."

For the Yugoslav communists whose uneasiness requires some theoretical explanations, Djilas proclaims the bureaucracy a new class and the USSR as state capitalism. If that isn't enough, the Yugoslav State, which is "on the road to withering away," certainly possesses some more powerful arguments in the person of Rankovitch, the Minister of Internal Security. But the practical evolution in Yugoslav diplomacy is most striking. Breaking with Stalin, the Yugoslavs first claimed, and justly so, the right to decide for themselves what their policy shall be within the anti-imperialist camp. As pressure of the Soviet government and of its satellites became increasingly onerous, they declared for an "independent" position, and for a period walked upon this tightrope. Unquestionably their situation was a very difficult one.

But refusing to turn toward the workers of the world, and having far more confidence in the jet planes which might come to them from Washington, they sold their principles along with their merchandise. They abandoned Korea to American aggression. They came to the last session of the United Nations to deny even their principle of the equality of all nations, large and small, for which

they had dared rebel against Stalin. In his speech Kardelj, for the first time, took a position for a Pact of the Big Powers . . . in order to insure peace. Up to then the Yugoslavs had denounced this kind of agreement as made at the expense of the small nations, and as not aiding the cause of peace. However, the Yugoslavs are now ready to accept not just any kind of a pact among any combination of "big powers." Kardelj favors a "Four Power Pact" such as Washington might perhaps allow, but not a "Five Power Pact" such as Moscow, desiring to associate China in its game, is demanding. In this current Yugoslav policy principles play a very small part. An "independent" position, a "Third Camp" are very difficult positions to hold when there is a State to run. . . Shall we have better luck when we turn to those who only have slighter responsibilities or no responsibilities at all on their shoulders?

### With Whom Can a United Front Be Made?

In fairness to the POUM, let us note that of all the centrist organizations born between the first two world wars it is the only one to survive. Burnt by its experiences with the London Bureau, the International Workers Front, and other ephemeral creations which the POUM supported, the leadership of this organization had practically abandoned the idea of being an integral part of an international movement and was content with attending all possible meetings in the role of "observer." Violent debates may have taken place at these meetings but the POUM "observers" remained silent. *La Batalla* subsequently published reports with the minimum of political comment, the leadership of the POUM appearing to exist above all the difficulties which beset working class and would-be socialist organizations.

But the approach of war has brought about some changes. On the Third World Congress of the Fourth International, *La Batalla* expressed itself unequivocally:

"The three adopted resolutions and in general all the decisions taken confirm that the Trotskyist movement has radically changed the line followed for some months and is orienting towards a policy of capitulation to Stalinism." (October 10, 1951).

Capitulate to Stalinism? The accusation could have grave consequences not for the Trotskyists, at whom it has already been repeatedly levelled, but for those hurling it. For it is self-evident that, not to be politically inconsistent, one must adopt the same attitude towards those who capitulate to Stalinism as towards the Stalinists, and we will see further on that the POUM has a well defined attitude on this last point.

A national conference of the POUM recently held in Spain took a certain number of positions. On the coming war the conference took a position simultaneously against Washington and Moscow. According to this conference, the third world war will not be what the Trotskyists call it, namely an international civil war, but "a struggle for world domination" between Yankee imperialism and the Russian bureaucracy. In the working class movement "the socialists who have gained strength at the expense of the Stalinists in certain countries (Belgium, Germany, Scan-

dinavian countries) are acting almost without exception as a wing of Western capitalism. On their side, the Communist parties are behaving like what they are, instruments of the political and military strategy of the Kremlin."

As for the POUM, it sets itself the following tasks: "1) To intervene actively in all actions and all independent movements against war. 2) Collaborate closely with all forces independent of capitalism and of Stalinism. 3) Support the unification of all revolutionary socialist tendencies and organizations."

We find no theoretical basis in the document of the POUM sustaining this position, and we do not want to quibble over the "active intervention" of POUM observers in "independent" movements which the POUM will have ever increasing difficulty in finding, judging by its attitude toward us. But for a better evaluation of the position of the POUM, let us see how it is applied on the national scale. For the "Marxists" of the POUM will certainly not dispute with us over the fact that there is a connection between the international policies and the national policies of an organization as well as of a State. The resolution of this conference on the Spanish situation contains this directive: "To establish an organ for united action with all working class and republican organizations with the single exception of the Stalinists."

With the single exception of the Stalinists! An impassable barrier is raised — which, moreover, will render the greatest service to the Spanish Stalinists. But in the same number of *La Batalla* in which the resolutions of this conference are published is to be found an article criticizing the Spanish social-democrats for having made a pact with the monarchists, and in which we read:

"(The monarchists) forged the military uprising of July 1936, supported Franco with the greatest energy, have mingled and even identified themselves with Franco fascism. Nevertheless, one might for the moment put this aside, while never forgetting it, with the object of constituting a common front of struggle with them against Franco and his regime, hoping that the progressive forces would later go beyond the objectives of the monarchists. But all the monarchists, from the pretender and down the line, have never shown the slightest desire to struggle, to act, to want to overthrow Franco fascism."

Thus, according to the leadership of the POUM, a united front which must include all working class and republican organizations (with the sole exception of the Stalinists) could even be considered with the monarchists if there were even the slightest leaning toward struggle among the latter. Why? Because — one might hope "that the progressive forces would later go beyond the objectives of the monarchists." But we, who are for a united front with the Stalinists (whose objectives may be condemned, but of whom it cannot be said that they are not struggling), "hoping that the progressive forces (mainly the workers) would later go beyond the objectives" of the Stalinist leaders, we vulgar Trotskyists, are on that account capitulating to Stalinism. You can point to the examples of Yugoslavia and of China where the class struggle under the leadership of the Stalinist chiefs went beyond the plans of the Kremlin. It will be of no use, for the leadership of

the POUM, shut up in its national boundaries, does not recognize the Spanish CP as a working class party. . .

Why is the leadership of the POUM so flexible toward the bourgeois camp and so intransigent toward the Stalinists *where Spain is concerned*, and why does it manifest an equal hostility to both the camps on the *international plane*? (The political friends of the POUM, notably Shachtman as we will see later on, are far from being so "equidistant" on the international plane.) It is necessary not to forget that Washington persists in supporting Franco, and not those with whom the leadership of the POUM is bent upon agreement. For the moment there is an insurmountable wall, just as on the Stalinist side — but it is Washington and not the POUM which has erected it.

### Shachtman Studies Lenin

The "Third Camp" in the pure state, if one may use the phrase, is Shachtman himself. Ever since he broke with Trotskyism, he has constructed innumerable theories on innumerable subjects. He has abandoned the idea of building a broad organization embracing "all tendencies in revolutionary thought" for the far more modest role of an educator of the working class without political ambitions. In addition, he also dispenses priceless advice to working class militants and others throughout the world, but his advice is of precious little use to them. In all his flip-flops over more than ten years we must concede his consistency on one point: he has remained loyal to the "Third Camp" (although the latter has undergone several variations in the process of aging). He has, moreover, had to defend this idea tenaciously against his own followers, who at fairly regular intervals have deserted him and gone over openly to the camp of imperialism, abandoning forever the building of the "Third Camp" in order to struggle against their enemy number one, Stalinism.

In the course of the second world war, Shachtman took an attitude which we condemned on the question of the defense of the USSR and of the colonial countries entangled in this war. For him the war made an indivisible whole; the USSR, China and India were fighting for the imperialist cause. As a logical consequence he was a defeatist for these countries. But in spite of this error and although he could not build a hypothetical "Third Front," he did display an intransigent hostility to the bourgeoisie of his own country, and that was unquestionably something to his credit. It is always hardest to be a revolutionary in one's own country.

Unfortunately for him, the pressures bearing down today are incomparably stronger than those which prevailed all the way through the second world war. This cannot surprise those who understand that this time we are facing primarily an international civil war and that this is something different from the inter-imperialist war into which the USSR was drawn. . .

Subjected to far greater pressures today, the champion of the "Third Camp" is, as a consequence of his ideological weakness, slipping so fast as to foreshadow only the worst for the future. In the May-June and July-August 1951

issues of his magazine *New International* he has revealed his positions in a 22-page long article entitled "Socialist Policy and the War." The article is more than a significant retreat from his previous positions, more than a continuation of the backward march he has been pursuing. Capitulation to imperialism is virtually inscribed therein.

Like all of Shachtman's outpourings, the article twists and turns dizzily all over the landscape. It is painful to follow the author's train of thought. First observation: He quotes Lenin in these terms: "To be a Marxist, one must appraise each war separately and concretely." But Shachtman himself at no point undertakes more than the most superficial analysis of the social character of the forces and movements confronting one another. The question is treated at times as if it had already been settled once and for all, at times by some brief remarks which carry little weight in the article as a whole. More than half the article is devoted to historical precedents. More particularly, Shachtman pounces upon the first world war and recalls the positions supported by Lenin in that period. From there he makes a prodigious leap to the third world war, completely forgetting that there has been a second world war and that at the beginning of the latter he was somewhat at odds with Trotsky on the attitude toward the USSR and on the question of the "Third Camp." Shachtman's historical recollections are capricious.

### Lenin "Abandons" a Slogan

But let us return to Lenin and to the first world war. After all, it is not bad to delve into *Against the Stream*, into those articles which have been basic in the education of the revolutionary generations after 1920. Shachtman, at the end of wearisome dissertations, recalls the main political conclusions of Lenin in this first inter-imperialist war: revolutionary defeatism, transformation of the imperialist war into civil war. But having said that, Shachtman suddenly launches out into a very long disquisition on the theme: Lenin abandoned transforming the imperialist war into civil war. Shachtman indicates, without learning anything therefrom at all, that Lenin did not thereby make any concessions whatever to the so-called "revolutionary defensists."

Those alleged socialists called upon the masses to continue to get themselves massacred in order to "defend" democracy, while — as Lenin relentlessly emphasized — the provisional government was continuing to serve the same imperialist interests as were defended up to then by overthrown czarism. What Lenin did was to show that the problem had to be posed in another form for the masses. The masses had themselves begun to execute the Leninist strategy, that is to say, to "transform the imperialist war into civil war." Shachtman writes as though he is unaware of this in his article. But it was because of this fact, that Lenin's strategy required a formulation suited to the new conditions.

In the former empire of the czars a "dual power" had been set up, that of the bourgeoisie (the provisional government) and that of the masses (the Soviets, under a

leadership of Mensheviks and S-Rs anxious to collaborate with the bourgeoisie). These two powers went through a highly unstable coexistence at the beginnings of the revolution. The task of the revolutionists consisted in aiding the masses to go through their own experience with this dual power on the plane of domestic policies as well as on that of the war (which the bourgeoisie wanted to continue, whereas the masses longed for peace). It was necessary to aid this experience until such a time as it became possible to pass over to a new stage of the revolution, in which the dual power would be liquidated by the rise of a workers', peasants' and soldiers' power.

But Shachtman, who quoted the sentence of Lenin on "concreteness," no longer remembers it, any more than he bothers with the very special characteristics of this dual power. He has brought out this example only to retain one thing: Lenin modified his tactic, abandoning the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war.\* Only later on in his article will we understand why Shachtman has been on the hunt for this example. With history thus clear in our minds, let us follow Shachtman as he passes to the third world war. He defines this war as follows:

### A Definition of World War III

"The powers that will dominate and direct the Third World War are those that are dominating the preparations for it, the United States and Russia. Their relations make the conflict irrepressible. The conflict is imperialist on both sides, and that is what determines the predominant character of the war they will be (and in a sense are already) waging." (p. 195).

There follows what serves as analysis for Shachtman. We now find several pages demonstrating that the United States is an imperialist country. Apparently, some have to break through an open door in order to appear strong. As for Stalinism, here is what we find as a social analysis:

"The imperialism of the bureaucratic-collectivist states is different from that of the capitalist states. But the economic motive forces behind the one are no less powerful than in the case of the other. Only ignoramuses — people who know nothing about history and nothing about Lenin's theory of imperialism — can conceive of imperialism as a phenomenon unique to capitalist society." (p. 200).

We have learned to distinguish societies on the basis of their mode of production and of their property relations. We knew about a slave society, a feudal society, a capitalist society, and we did not think that one could usefully put ancient Rome, the Germanic Holy Roman Empire and Great Britain under the same label of "imperialism." We are very willing to concede our ignorance, but Shachtman should also in all fairness attribute it to Lenin, who wrote:

"Colonial policy and imperialism existed before this latest stage of capitalism, and even before capitalism. Rome, founded on slavery, pursued a colonial policy and achieved imperialism. But 'general' arguments about imperialism which ignore, or put into the background the fun-

\* We need not here dwell on Shachtman's studied effort to picture Lenin as a "democrat," in the most vulgar meaning of the term. As we shall see, Shachtman wishes to make use of the founder of the Bolshevik party for his own reformist purposes.

damental difference of social-economic systems, inevitably degenerate into absolutely empty banalities, or into grandiloquent comparisons like 'Greater Rome' and 'Greater Britain.' Even the colonial policy of capitalism in its previous stages is essentially different from the colonial policy of finance capital." (Imperialism, Little Lenin Library, pp. 81-82).

Although fore-warned that he would degenerate inevitably into empty banalities or into grandiloquent comparisons, Shachtman set out on a road which, as we shall see, caused him to degenerate much more.

### Still Another Definition

We cannot however hold it against Shachtman that he has remote and confused recollections about this work of Lenin, for his mind has a tendency to confuse everything. Several pages after having written that the third world war would be an imperialist war "on both sides," he gives a somewhat different definition:

"The Third World War will differ radically from the First and even the Second in that the two main belligerents find in one another not only imperialist rivals but class enemies representing antagonistic social systems" (p. 201).

It will then be something other than an inter-imperialist war, at least in the minds of the belligerents; for the formulation of Shachtman is, to say the least, ambiguous. In any event, we will see two systems confronting each other which have different property forms. This being granted, Shachtman says that when the American ruling class speaks of a war against communism this is "not so stupid" from its own point of view, but it is "arch-stupid" from his point of view for "there is nothing in common between communism and Stalinism" (p. 202). Shachtman is here referring to societies, the society of his dreams and Russian society. There is nothing in common between them except "the centralization of the means of production and planned production and distribution" (p. 200). Only a Trotskyist could maintain the Marxist conception that only one social regime, and not two, corresponds to a given set of production and property relations. For Shachtman, production relations, property relations, are not very concrete; otherwise one would be compelled to accept the Trotskyist theory of the USSR as a workers state. But wanting a fundamental analysis, Shachtman decides his policies by means of statements of a psychological and subjective order:

### In Place of Analysis -- Stalinophobia

"Far overshadowing all other obstacles to the realization of the American imperialist objective — nothing less than domination of the world — stand the forces of Stalinism. Without hesitation or ambiguity, we can say that the only greater disaster that humanity could suffer than the war itself... would be the victory of Stalinism as the outcome of the war." (p. 198). "We repeat: no greater disaster can be expected in connection with the Third World War than the victory of Stalinism. . . . Until it has been utterly destroyed as a political force, the victory of the working class is impossible" (p. 200).

Shachtman is so blinded by the possibility of a world-wide victory of Stalinism as to think that capitalism cannot be vanquished by the working class throughout the world unless Stalin is first overthrown. He has learned no lesson from the revolutionary struggles which have marked the world since 1943. He shuts his eyes to what took place in Yugoslavia, to the nature of the relations between the Kremlin and China. What is taking place in the countries of Eastern Europe is unimportant to him. He fails to see the revolutionary upsurge of the masses wearing away the foundations of Stalinism right within the Communist Parties themselves. So long as Stalin will be there, no victory is possible for the working class.\*

### Shachtman "Transforms" Lenin's Strategy

At this point, whoever will have followed Shachtman in his intellectual tribulations will be led to conclude: we must first support the United States in order to vanquish Soviet imperialism; only then can we think of fighting for socialism. This follows so logically that it explains why the Shachtmanite organization has above all been a passageway for intellectuals between the workers' camp and the imperialist camp. Shachtman himself raises the question. He begins by conceding that a victory of American imperialism would not be quite so disastrous:

"If the United States were to win the war, in all likelihood it would not mean the automatic and immediate establishment of totalitarian rule that would result directly from a victory of Stalinism. It is far from certain but it is quite probable that an American victory would leave at least some degree of democracy under which the working class and socialist movements could continue to develop with greater or lesser freedom" (p. 200).

Is it freedom of the type which the South Koreans are experiencing or of the type promised by that famous issue of *Collier's*? Shachtman does not tell us and he is not ready (not ready as yet) to go so far. He does not want, he protests, to march with American imperialism because the

\* We cannot follow Shachtman in all his "theoretical" promenades. It would be a pity, however, to let the following lines pass: "Stalinism is a powerful social force rooted and nurtured in the decay of capitalist society, which is incurable, and the decay of the labor movement, which, fortunately, is not at all incurable. . . Stalinism remains an unshaken force in countries like France and Italy because the bourgeoisie is incapable of taking serious measures to overcome the social crisis on a capitalist basis and the non-Stalinist labor movement, the Socialist Party and the reformist trade unions in France, for example, remain appendages or allies of the bourgeoisie; whereas Stalinism is an insignificant force in a country like England because, even though the bourgeoisie could not solve the social crisis in its way, the official labor movement has taken serious, if hesitant and inadequate, measures to solve it in an anti-capitalist way. With all the necessary changes, the same explanation can be made for the difference between the situation in India and the situation in China, or even in comparing the situations in Indonesia and Indo-China" (pp. 201-202).

The right-wing leadership of the Labor Party, the bourgeoisies of India and of Indonesia, they are the means of curing the decay of the working class! What is really incurable is Shachtman's decay.

latter bases itself on the worst forces of reaction throughout the world. For want of more arguments, Shachtman proceeds to define his position in the last three pages of his article in the following way:

"The labor movement in this country is today a minority politically. The socialists are a much tinier minority. We have our responsibilities; the ruling class has its responsibilities" (p. 204).

Shachtman's evaluation of the American working class is a bit summary and very static. But let us proceed further:

"The bourgeoisie is at the head of the nation. It is genuinely concerned with defense of the nation. But it conceives of it in the only way it can: as identical with the defense of capitalist property and imperialist power" (p. 204). "The working class, too, is concerned with the defense of the nation. Unlike the bourgeoisie, it does not identify this primarily with the defense of capitalist property and imperialist power. Its patriotism is of a fundamentally different type, no matter how heavily overlaid it may be with bourgeois ideology. It identifies national defense essentially with its own class interests: with the preservation of its organizations, its relatively high standard of living, its hard-won democratic rights, as well as the right to rule as a free and independent nation. One of the outstanding differences between the coming war and the First World War is that all the things that the working class identifies with national defense are actually threatened by Stalinism. The triumph of Stalinist arms would completely change the social and political regime in the United States, a fact which we can state with as much firmness as Lenin insisted upon the opposite with respect to the main belligerents of the war of 1914. We socialists are as one with the working class in wishing to resist this threat and overcome it. We differ with the working class, as it is now, in that we cannot and will not support the American capitalist side in the war which aims at violating the rights and integrity of other people. Socialist policy in the coming war, then, does not put forward any such slogans as 'revolutionary defeatism' or 'transform the imperialist war into a civil war'" (p. 205).

Thus the American labor organizations are not threatened by American imperialism (which aims merely at "the rights and integrity of other people"), but by Stalinism. At the same time the social and political regime of the United States — the capitalist regime — would fall with a defeat of the arms of American capitalism. Stated another way, the American working class organizations and American capitalism have a little something in common: they have the same enemy, Stalinism. If the latter wages war, an American worker cannot desire the defeat of his boss. Shachtman makes it even more explicit in these words:

"... To prosecute the class struggle in such a way that it would clearly imperil the military position of the government, even to the point where it may be defeated by the enemy and lose the war — that, in the conditions of the Third World War, would be disastrous to the working class and to socialism. Instead, socialist policy must be based upon the idea of transforming the imperialist war into a democratic war, that is, adopting broadly the view put forward by Lenin in 1917, with all the changes required by the differences between the situation then and now, and working for its adoption by the labor movement as a whole." (p. 205).

### Bowdlerizing Lenin's Ideas

It now becomes clear why Shachtman began by seeking out that example from Lenin. He has given it a broad, a very broad interpretation. Under what conditions did Lenin modify his position? Let us see:

"We have been advocating the turning of the imperialist war into civil war, and now we have reversed ourselves. We must bear in mind, however, that the first civil war in Russia has come to an end; we are now advancing toward the second war — the war between imperialism and the armed people. In this transitional period, as long as the armed force is in the hands of the soldiers, as long as Miliukov and Guchkov have not resorted to violence, this civil war turns for us into peaceful, extensive, and patient class propaganda. To speak of civil war before people have come to realize the need of it, is undoubtedly to fall into Blanquism" (The April Conference, Little Lenin Library, p. 19).

The imperialist war having begun to change into a civil war, the masses being armed, to speak of civil war would no longer be a question of strategy; it would become a slogan, it would mean calling for an armed struggle against the government. The majority of the people must first become convinced that this is necessary before they will take such an action. Lenin temporarily abandoned speaking of civil war as a *slogan of action*, at a time when "it is the soldiers and not the capitalists who are in possession of the guns and cannons" (Lenin), and while the Bolsheviks were in a minority in the class. Shachtman abandons it as a *strategy* at a time when, according to him, "the labor movement is a minority, politically," while American imperialism is slaughtering the revolutionaries of Korea, of the Philippines, is helping to slaughter those of Vietnam, and is preparing to plunge the whole world into war. In order to take into account so vast a difference in situations, Shachtman changes Lenin a little bit more. Lenin wished to propose "a democratic peace to all the nations" in order to help the masses go through their experience with the provisional government. Shachtman wants to organize "a democratic war" against the USSR and the nations which may be allied with the USSR.

Not only is this one of the most impudent examples of bowdlerizing Lenin's thoughts; it also discloses in Shachtman the scarcely refurbished ideas of the social patriots and centrists which Lenin castigated during the first world war. When Shachtman speaks of the democratic rights and workers organizations he wants to defend against Stalinism, this is only a belated echo of the German social democrats of those days who carried out their betrayal under the pretext of protecting their organizations against czarism, and of the French Guesde socialists who did their betraying under pretext of defending their country's revolutionary traditions against the Kaiser.

### The "Third Camp" to the Rescue

How is Shachtman going "to transform the imperialist war into a democratic war?" He calls upon the labor movement to champion a series of economic and political measures, such as control of production, of the distribution of commodities, of prices and profits, abolition of all

measures of racial discrimination, economic aid to backward countries, etc. And, he adds, since only a workers' government would carry out this program, such a government "could mobilize such an international force — the force to which we refer as the Third Camp — as could be counted upon either to postpone the outbreak of the Third World War or, if it is precipitated by a desperate Stalinism, to bring it to a speedy, democratic and progressive termination" (p. 206).

The "Third Camp" thus appears on the scene for the first time in the last twenty lines of Shachtman's article. There are the people who are not as yet ready to die for Wall Street today. Shachtman is presenting a political line for enlisting them under the stars and stripes.

But while one thing is clear in this political line, namely that Shachtman is set upon a war to the death against the USSR, he has omitted to tell us *how* and by what means he contemplates replacing the capitalist government of Washington by a workers' government. We know that he does not want to carry on the class struggle disturbing to the schemes of the Pentagon. What does he propose? In the history of the international working class movement we have heard of only two proposed roads: the (realistic) revolutionary road and the (utopian) reformist road. Shachtman is abandoning the revolutionary road. Has he discovered a "Third Road," just as he invented a "Third Camp"? No, he has sunken into shame-faced reformism and does not want to admit this even to himself. His "Third Camp" has led him in practice to capitulation to American imperialism, for which he does not want to cause any serious difficulty in wartime and which he is trying to change gradually. . .

### From the "Third Camp" to the Imperialist Camp

We have had occasion to point out in passing examples of incoherence in Shachtman's thinking, but his own evolution and that of his concept of the "Third Camp" are not at all incoherent. For a long time he was with us in the camp of the working class, with all its imperfections, despite its miserably inept and scoundrelly leaders, aware that that was the only road to the unfolding socialist showdown with capitalism. At that time he unconditionally defended the USSR, despite the criminal policies of the Kremlin. When great social pressures began to bear down, that is to say, at the beginning of the second world war, when the petty bourgeoisie was shocked by the Hitler-Stalin pact, he took a stand for several weeks for "conditional defense" of the USSR, and called on the Polish masses to organize an insurrection simultaneously against Hitler and Stalin. Then he invented his "Third Camp," and abandoned the Trotskyist conception of the USSR in order to adopt the theory of "bureaucratic collectivism" which Burnham had whispered in his ear. Somewhat later, when Stalin and Roosevelt became allied against Hitler, his "Third Camp" had to find a reorientation. Incapable of distinguishing between the war which the USSR was fighting and that being conducted by imperialism he sought refuge in abstention. Now that a life and death struggle is developing between world capitalism girding for a decisive

test and the organized masses which are under the command of the bureaucratic leaderships, his "Third Camp" is undergoing a new transformation: this "Third Camp" is also for a life and death struggle against the USSR, and while it must not jeopardize the decisions and the actions of the White House and the Pentagon, it must wait until the American camp has received a good coating of democratic paint. Again we find behind this position, just as in 1939, the same social force, but with greater intensity: that liberal petty bourgeoisie which chokes at the unsavory aspects which history assumes; which dreams, if not of an ideal development, then at least of a nice orderly camp, in which one could take one's place without the danger of getting dirty. This liberal section of the American petty bourgeoisie cannot determine the march of history, but it is sufficiently powerful to push Shachtman into the camp of imperialism.

The "Third Camp" of Shachtman has had its evolution — a rapid one in the case of its adherents (the erstwhile R.D.R.) in France where the situation hardly lends itself to equivocation, slower in the United States, just so long as the war did not take on definite form. But rapid or slow this evolution has led inexorably into the camp of imperialism. The Shachtman case illustrates, on a microscopic scale, the inevitable evolutions which the gigantic forces now prevailing and criss-crossing one another are provoking and will continue to provoke. For the petty bourgeoisie socialism has merit only as a moral idea and becomes odious when it takes on the form of an attack against the foundations of capitalist society. Under the pretext of not "capitulating to Stalinism," and yielding to the pressure of petty bourgeois public opinion these alleged revolutionaries, who cannot adjust themselves to a working class which is not dressed in a style they like, enter the "Third Camp" which brings about their capitulation to the imperialist camp.

The search for quotations from Lenin, the subtleties of thought or alleged subtleties of thought employed to prop up a theory of the "Third Camp" which abandons the fundamental Marxist concept of the class struggle carried on by the two main social camps — all these verbal acrobatics have led and inevitably lead those who are taken in by them right into the arms of the bourgeoisie. Stalinism, which is not a social system but an ultra-reactionary leadership of the working class, will be conquered only by those who remain rooted in the working class camp and fear neither Stalinism itself nor contamination in a united front struggle with Stalinists.

December 15, 1951

Translated from *Quatrieme Internationale*

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