June, 1940

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

Political Trends in America

An Editorial

Albert Gates:

A NEW HORIZON FOR AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

Dwight Macdonald: READING FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

Ernest Erber: MARXISM AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

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Archive Section:

"WHERE IS THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS OPPOSITION?"

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Manager's Column

In order to catch up with our regular date-line, the Management is determined to issue THE NEW INTERNATIONAL in three week intervals. This endeavor is of supreme importance in the light of the developments in the second imperialist world war. A number of important articles have already been written and others are in preparation now-most of them deal with theoretical and political problems arising out of the war; others with questions of Marxist theory and economy. We require not only the regular issuance of the magazine, but also an enlargement of its size to meet the requirements of the present world situation.

The increasing difficulties of an international circulation places a heavier burden upon us in the United States. We must take up the slack caused by the loss of readers in the belligerent nations. It means simply, that the branches must increase the circulation of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. They must insure its existence by sending in subscriptions. Above all they must be prompt in payments for bundle orders. Only in that manner will it be possible for us to continue publication.

In the past three weeks we have received only twenty-two new subscriptions. New York leads again with eight new subscribers. Five subs were received from Los Angeles. Worcester and St. Louis each sent in two. This is by no means a satisfactory showing. We expect far better results and we await especially, substantial responses from localities like Chicago, San Francisco, Boston, Philadelphia, Akron and Cleveland. We are certain that New York can do ten times better between now and the July issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL.

Payments for the May issue are slow in coming in. The literature agents must drive hard in this field and make certain that they meet their obligations. Over a hundred and fifty dollars is owing on bundle accounts. This is a situation which cannot be permitted to last very long. Delinquents face the loss of their bundles until they pay their bills. Such a step is necessary in order to keep the magazine alive.

In the last analysis, the decision rests with the branches, the literature agents and those comrades who are conscious of the indispensibility of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. Let us feel the response in immediate payments for bundle orders, increased subscriptions and wider sale.

★

- THE MANAGER

LENIN:

Certain bourgeois writers express the opinion that the international cartels, representing one of the most striking forms of the internationalization of capital afford us the hope of the maintenance of peace under the capitalist system. Theoretically this opinion is absurd, while in practice it is a sophism and a dishonest defense of the worst opportunism. The international cartels show to what point capitalist monopolies have developed and WHAT is the object of the struggle between capitalist groups. This last circumstance is the most important; it alone shows us the historico-economic direction of events. For the FORMS of the struggle can change, and do change constantly, because of various relatively temporary and special causes, but the ESSENCE of the struggle, its class CONTENT, CANNOT change while classes exist. It is easy to understand for example, that it may be useful for the interest of the German bourgeoisie to hide the REASON for the actual economic struggle (the division of the world) and to emphasize one FORM or another of it. Kautsky makes the same mistake. And it is a question not of the German bourgeoisie, but of the bourgeoisie throughout the world. The capitalists divide up the world, not because of original sin, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to take this road in order to get profits.

The latest period of capitalism shows us that definite relations are being established amongst capitalist groups, relations BASED on the economic partition of the world; whilst, parallel with this fact and in connection with it, definite relations are being established between political groups, between States, on

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the basis of the territorial division of the world, of the struggle for colonies, of the "struggle for economic territory". (*N. Lenin: Imperialism*)

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LIEBKNECHT:

When the function of militarism against the enemy abroad is called a national function, it does not mean that it is a function which corresponds to the interests, the welfare and the will of the exploited peoples ruled by capitalism. The proletariat of the whole world has no advantage to expect from this policy which necessitates militarism directed against the enemy abroad; its interests are, in fact, opposed to it in the most striking way. This policy serves directly or indirectly the interests of the exploiting classes of capitalism. It tries with more or less dexterity to pave the way into the world for the recklessly chaotic production and senseless and murderous competition of Capitalism. In doing this it tramples under foot all the duties of civilization towards the less developed peoples. And in reality it attains nothing save that it insanely endangers the whole fabric of our culture by conjuring up the complications of a world war. (Karl Liebknecht: Militarism and Anti-Militarism)

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LUXEMBURG:

"Under the circumstances the question of victory or defeat becomes, for the European workers, in its political, exactly as in its economic aspects, a choice between two beatings. It is, therefore, nothing short of a dangerous madness for the French Socialists to believe that they can deal a death blow to militarism and imperialism and clean the road for peaceful democracy, by overthrowing Germany. Imperialism, and its servant militarism, will reappear after every victory and after every defeat in this war. There can be but one exception: if the international proletariat through its intervention should overthrow all previous calculations." (Rosa Luxemburg; The Crisis in the German Social Democracy)

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Political Trends in America

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The Blitzkrieg and The Two-Party System

VENERAL Marshall, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, recently stated to a Congress committee that for the first time in history the United States was "preparing" national defense before entering a war, and not during its course. What does that mean? It means that in truth the United States is already in the war. Walter Lippman knows this very well when he writes: "The decisions in foreign policy will in the present crisis have to be made in the very early stage of the defense program, long before the program has been carried out." In fact, the conditions for American imperialists are different from those prevailing in fascist countries, and in the United States "preparedness" means a revolution in imperialist economy to transform it into a gigantic machine working for war, excluding everything else, that is, with the sacrifice of the immense majority of the population. It is therefore impossible to prepare the country's "defense" beforehand for total war conditions. To prepare defense means to establish war economy, without which war is not feasible. That is why the allies were unable to prepare in time.

Once the economic reorganization toward "defense" is begun, stopping it would introduce chaotic conditions. Consequently, bombs, tanks and warplanes have to be "consumed" in order not to stifle the country under their volume. The main difference between the situation of the Allies and that of the United States is that the former have to "organize their defense" and to mobilize their economy under the devastating blows of the "stukas" while this country is as yet safe against German bombs. This strategic advantage, furthermore, will allow a much clearer internal political development here than in the European "democracies", already facing extinction. It seems that the American bourgeoisie, with the heavy industry magnates at its head, has decided to cross the Rubicon: Roosevelt spoke on their behalf at Congress when he delivered his dramatic speech asking for 50,000 planes. This may be considered as the real declaration of war of the United States.

Meanwhile, the crisis exposes the extreme political immaturity of this country. The deepest desire of the masses and their feelings as well as the great dangers and problems of the present time find no political instruments to give them a national expression. Politicians understand nothing or mislead the people out of apprehension for the elections. The Baltimore Sun accuses the President of "under-estimating the character of the American people." Walter Lippman demands that knowledge of "the hard truth" be given to the people, otherwise we can not expect them to "withstand and endure the things that may now be in store for them."

Bankruptcy of the Republicans

In this turn of the world's destinies, both parties are almost ridiculous anachronisms. The candidates to Roosevelt's succession, Republicans and Democrats alike, are in utter confusion. In the Democratic camp, the most popular candidates—Garner, McNutt, Farley, Wheeler—simply disappeared from the field leaving the road clear for the President. On the Republican side, the candidates are taken by surprise. They have just discovered, only now, that there is an external policy and that a war is going on in this world. Hitler's spectacular victories in the Western Front threw them into such confusion that, in the crisis, they all rallied around the President. Later on they recovered their political balance, but not fast enough to keep the country from remarking their reaction.

It seems almost certain that the blitzkrieg has blocked the way to power for the Republicans. Their provincial strategy has proved inadequate in the face of events. They had two sources of strength: the confidence of Wall Street and the widespread isolationist sentiment. But the crisis has drawn Roosevelt closer to finance capital, whose more accredited representatives are beginning to join the President's camp, attracted by his far-sighted imperialism and his personal popularity. On the other hand, the isolationist Republican leaders , forced to drop their anti-war mask, have lost face at the eleventh hour. Now nobody believes in their isolationism.

Following Hoover, the Republicans had limited their internal program to demands that the big private enterprises be free to conduct their business, that national debt be reduced and that the New Deal's social reforms be cut off. But even this program breaks down in face of the new necessities. Stettinius himself, it is known, asks, in his report on war resources, a much stricter control over the national economy, exerted by two virtual dictators, one for production and the other for prices.

Roosevelt's Demagogy . . .

The game of half-measures, of lies, continues to hold the political stage. Roosevelt, most accomplished of demagogues, pretends to be able to execute his gigantic rearmament program without altering the "great social gains" of the past years. He promises that "minimum wage regulation must not be changed", and swears that there is nothing "to justify making the workers . . . toil for longer hours than those now imposed by statute". The liberal New York Times criticizes these patently false declarations and teaches us that "the gains of labor cannot be separated from the gains of the nation as a whole". And with great magnanimity the Times pontificates that a worker is not a simple worker, but a "human being" for whom only "the freedom of his thought and his leisure" must count, and not his prosaic every day earning, his salary. This human being, explains the Times of May 28, must not sacrifice these gains to his immediate interest, as a mere union member.

... and the Stern Reality

It is good to contrast this hypocritical optimism of the President with the comparative sincerity of Willkie, the only one among all the candidates to the presidency who dares to indicate what is at stake. This gentleman has the courage to realize that the problem which Hitler had to solve some years ago to finance his gigantic rearmament program is not entirely different from the problem that the United States has to face now. And he explains that Hitler financed his rearmament in a very simple way "by taking it out of the hides of the people", lowering "the German standard of living by one-third in the process".

In the last war the United States was unable to cover by taxation more than one-third of the war costs. But everybody agrees that even this was possible only due to the extraordinary phase of prosperity during the years of neutrality and to the comparatively short period of the United States' participation in the conflict. Under these exceptionally favorable circumstances, only one-fourth of the national revenue was lost in the war.

Today conditions are entirely different. Instead of prosperity, the country is in the deepest depression in its history and burdened with an astronomic national debt. The *National City Bank Survey* for June reveals that in high financial circles the conviction has prevailed for a long time that "if it became necessary to carry out a huge defense program on top of a debt approaching \$45,000,000,000, the danger of inflation would be correspondingly increased, while the conduct of actual war without causing an inflationary debacle would be immensely difficult".

In order not to reduce drastically the American standard of living Willkie proposes a typically Republican remedy: "What we need is an administration that will let capital flow into enterprise and increase the national income to the level it would be at today but for the repressive policies of the present administration". This is answered with very solid reasonings by the bankers of the New York City Bank, who are also against Roosevelt: "The enormous burden of their cost must be borne directly or indirectly by taxes upon other productive activity, namely, the earnings of business and the people of the country. Whether in totalitarian or democratic countries this must be so." Thus, capital may flow as it will, but in living social reality national income will not increase.

It is calculated that Germany has turned out at least 80 per cent of her production to war purposes. This is the maximum that the experts consider possible for the United States, in case of actual warfare. And, according to Turner Catledge (*New York Times*, June 1), it is calculated that even now 20 per cent more or less of American industrial plants will be used in the current defense program.

The Trend Toward Bonapartism

Because of the impotence of the traditional political parties to offer to the public satisfactory solutions for these problems, characteristic traits of Bonapartism, are more and more coming into evidence. First of all comes the instinctive search for a strong man who will place himself above existing political parties. People want "dictators" to control this and that. The constitution of "non-partisan" organs to assure the execution of the war preparation program is urged. The economic control which has to be extended over all the country in one way or another tends more and more to be coordinated by the military command. Intervention of the general staff in public affairs will be increasingly felt. The attempts at a "coalition" government, even though thwarted, are signs in the same direction. Finally, there is the Third Term campaign, which seems destined to triumph. In a certain sense Roosevelt's election will probably turn out to be the first plebiscite of American Bonapartism.

From day to day Congress loses a little more of its authority. The pressure of events places new men at the direction of public affairs. In this country the businessman is still the prototype of the efficient man. (It must be admitted, by the way, that even in the United States the businessmen, the bosses, are generally more clear-sighted than their mouthpieces, the politicians.) In the serious crisis which we are facing, there is a very real danger that the big industrialists may get tired of the conservative and short-sighted politicians and seek other ways out of the blind alley. And it seems that at the present time, finding nothing better, they are content to try Roosevelt once more, for even his victory will be something unusual, out of tradition. In the historical situation now facing the country, the success of the third term movement may well constitute a fatal blow to the two-party system. It will be difficult for the Republican party to survive after this test, which will mean that Wall Street has abandoned it and decided to try something new. It will no longer be allowed to speak on Wall Street's behalf, because of its plain inability to win back the masses. It will have no function in the political mechanism of the country. If it does not undergo a radical change, it will, at best, end up as the English liberals did, as no more than an echo of the past. Such a collapse of one of the two parties, furthermore, will decisively affect the internal balance of the other one.

The ruling class on the one hand and the masses on the other will seek feverishly for other means of political expression. The famous and almost mythical Third Party may then step into the stage. But its features may be entirely different from those the radical movement has long anticipated. Unless the masses listen in time to the revolutionary message, for peace, for liberty and for socialism, the Third Party, when it actually materializes, may turn out to be not a labor party but a hideous reflection of the face of totalitarianism. June 1940

A New Horizon for American Imperialism

THE military reverses suffered by the Allied armies, to whom Roosevelt had long ago pledged economic. political and moral support, has resulted in the sharpest reactions in the United States, drawing this country closer to a military participation in the second imperialist war. Battle lines are no longer confined to Flander Fields. In the imperialist world of an international economy there is not a single section of the globe which does not feel the reverberations of the war in Europe. Germany appears to be winning the war and this possibility has fundamental significance for the future of American capitalism.

In a historical sense, under conditions of normal capitalist development (the absence of wars or revolutions) the main economic antagonist of the United States is England. The Empire, up to the outbreak of the present war, along with the United States, formed the two dominant factors in the world market, with the former possessing the largest area of colonies. Their economic rivalry penetrated into every continent. British capitalism, however, is a decaying capitalism ruled by a degenerated aristocracy. The United States, with the greatest industrial organization in the world, never feared the Empire, because it has always felt that John Bull could in time be easily subdued.

United States imperialism, however, *does* fear a dynamic Germany, under the rule of a totalitarian regime. German industry is the finest on the European Continent. Latest technological improvements, extreme rationalization of production, and an enslaved proletariat, have enabled the German ruling class to overcome its post-war debilitation and to make its way once more as a serious rival in the arena of world trade and the struggle for a redivision of the earth.

Post War America

The economic center of the world shifted to the United States in the post-war period. It emerged from the World War a creditor nation seeking to bring about a rehabilitation of Europe under its complete economic hegemony. Trotsky, in examining this phenomenon from the viewpoint of the continental proletarian revolution and the establishment of the United States of Socialist Europe (A Criticism of the Draft Program of the Communist International), foresaw an intense conflict between the revolution and America's attempt to put Europe on "rations" (absolute control of economic life; dictating production, consumption, trade, wage standards, etc., in favor of American capitalism).

Throughout the twenties this was the prevailing tendency. In an effort to prevent complete economic domination of the continent by England and France, especially where it concerned German capitalism, the United States intervened time and time again to forestall the collapse of Reich economy (the Dawes Plan, the Young Commission,

Hoover Moratorium, etc). The reasons were two-fold: to prevent a victory of the proletarian revolution in Germany and to balance off that country against Anglo-French imperialism.

The first problem was solved by Stalinism in a rather precarious way for the United States. Stalinism decapitated two revolutions and in concert with German social democracy paved the way for the victory of German fascism. The reactionary Hitler revolution resulted in a revivified German economy, a regrowth of Germany imperialism and the establishment of an enormous military organization.

Under Hitler, Germany has marched from victory to victory; it now demands a lion's share of the world market and in particular, Britain's colonial empire. But more important for the United States, it has closed the door to American economic domination of the Continent and has postponed-perhaps for many decades-the possibility of American imperialism placing Europe on rations. Naturally, an Allied triumph of devastating proportions, made possible through American military intervention in the war, would force the problem to the foreground once more, but this time American imperialism would proceed quickly to establish its domain over European economy. Europe under rations in that case and in the absence of a successful proletarian revolution, would become a fact! This development, however, is highly speculative when the fortunes of war point in an opposite direction.

Temporarily at least, there is a way out for the United States. Trotsky, in his brilliant observations on this problem, indicated that in the event of a successful continental revolution,

"The United States will try to overcome and get out of its difficulties and helplessness primarily at the expense of Europe – REGARDLESS WHETHER THIS WILL HAPPEN IN ASIA, CANADA, SOUTH AMERICA, AUSTRALIA or EUR-OPE ITSELF." (*Emphasis mine-A.* G.)

Under present-day world conditions, complete domination of South America has become America's principal objective.

The probability of an early European proletarian revolution has been temporarily avoided by recent events. But the victory of Hitler created, in a totally different manner, the same problems for the United States. German industry under Nazi rule strives to control world economy and therefore must, in the event of a military victory over Anglo-French imperialism, move against the United States. These two mighty industrial nations would become enmeshed in a struggle to the finish.

"In a critical epoch," wrote Trotsky, "the hegemony of the United States will prove even more complete, more open, more ruthless, than in the period of boom". We are now approaching such a development which will, in the ensuing months, become clear to everyone.

America Moves Toward Autarchy and Totalitarianism

Roosevelt, his administration and the decisive section of America's financial and industrial ruling class prepare to fortify their military organizations for the immediate future with two perspectives which are interlinked. The first, is an autarchic and totalitarian development in the United States so as to be in a position to engage an autarchic and totalitarian Germany. "Totalitarian means to fight totalitarian Germany", is the watchword of the leading governmental spokesmen as they pay obeisance to democracy and democratic methods. The drive in this direction will gain added momentum with the continuance of the second imperialist war.

Revolutionary Marxists long ago predicted this development in the democratic states in the event of war. France and England have already adopted the necessary measures by which their governments more closely resemble the German example. These trends are being solidified so that even assuming an Allied victory, few expect a return to the pre-war democartic conditions in England and France.

American Economy as an International Economy

There are many who vainly hope that the United States may avoid all foreign entanglements, especially war, by a policy of economic and political insulation. This hope is

policy of economic and political insulation. This hope is based upon the erroneous belief that American economy is self-sustained; that it can withdraw behind the protection of its borders and prosper on the basis of an all-embracing domestic economy, that is, upon an expansion of the home market.

The living factors of American economic existence, however, precludes such a development. A few facts will suffice to bear this out.

While the United States enjoys a favorable balance of trade, a preponderance of exports over imports, it requires, nevertheless, a quantity of raw materials unobtainable in domestic areas. These raw materials are of enormous importance to American industry.

For example, American imports all of its coffee, tea, cacao beans, and most of its cane sugar. Rubber is obtained from Malaya and the Dutch East Indies; jute from India; and manganese from Russia, Brazil, the Gold Coast and India. Chrome ore is brought from Russia; tungsten from China, and vanadium ore from Peru. The indispensable tin is derived from the Dutch East Indies, Malaya and Bolivia. Additional petroleum is obtained from Mexico, Venezuela and Colombia, while Chile supplies nitrates. Without these raw materials, a large number of industries would be greatly handicapped.

More important is the manner in which American economy is interwoven with world economy. Isolationists insist that American property is not dependent upon foreign trade or the world market because of the small percentage of production diverted into the channels of export trade. Figures are cited to illustrate the validity of this theory. For example, it is shown that between the years 1909 and 1935, the highest percentage of American production so diverted, stood at the figure of 12.8 (1921); that in 1929, at the height of the prosperity period, the figure dropped to 9.8, and that during the thirties, in the years of crisis, the figures ranged between 6 and 7.

Such a view is extremely shortsighted, because it fails to take into consideration the following fundamental facts in the imperialist development of the United States. First of all, the United States is an imperialist nation, and having acquired colonies, embarked on the road of colonial exploitation. Within these colonies, or "possessions", American finance capital has poured heavy investments. A profit economy demands continuous expansion, either in the direction of acquiring additional colonies, or by way of expansion on the basis of the existing empire.

Export trade is only one aspect of the international economic problem of the United States. More decisive than this, is the existence of American investments beyond her borders, both portfolio (investments in foreign government bond, government guaranteed corporations, bonds and stocks of foreign controlled and managed corporations) and direct (investments in American corporations abroad).

An examination of this field of American economy shows that in 1900, many years prior to American entrance in the World War, foreign investments reached the total of a half a billion dollars, confined largely to Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean. Immediately prior to the World War, this figure was trebled and American interests became international, even though from the point of view of world economy, it remained at a modest figure. But at the end of the twenties, portfolio investments increased to \$8,238,-700,000 and direct investments to \$7,866,000,000, making a total foreign investment of \$16,104,700,000. These figures show without the slightest doubt the development of American economy as a world economy.

Withdrawal from world economy would signify immediate paralysis and decay for American imperialism. Quite the contrary, the United States cannot withdraw from the struggle for domination of the world market. It must push ever onward toward complete world hegemony. This is the fundamental course of American economy. Roosevelt understands this. So does his Administration. It was long ago clear to America's leading financiers and industrialists.

The War Dislocates World Economy

The outbreak of the present war brought about a dislocation of world economy. The European market, except for the Allies, is largely lost. Trade with England and France is essentially a war trade and its permanence is dependent entirely upon results of the battle. Under the given circumstances the European market is a completely distorted one and may cease entirely. In Asia, that is to say, China, Japan is today the decisive factor. Here the United States faces a challenge which it must ultimately face, but there is first Europe and Hitler.

Heretofore, Europe has been the largest single field of American investment, with a figure of \$4,929,200,000. The safety of these investments is today highly dubious. It is impossible to foretell what will happen to them, since a Hitler victory will mean their complete usurpation. The loss of the Asiatic and European markets must therefore be compensated for in some other sector of the globe. There remains the Western Hemisphere, Canada, Mexico, the Carribean and South America.

The Americas as a group are the largest area of economic penetration by the United States. Total investments in the Western world are, despite the economic crisis, near the figure of ten billion dollars. Canadian investments alone, reach almost four billion dollars, followed closely by South America, Mexico and the Caribbean.

What is Possible in South America?

In search for avenues of escape from the impasse created by the world economic crisis and the war, the United States prepares to dominate completely the western world, more particularly, South America.

Canada already forms a large area of investment and trade and expansion here is quite limited. The same is in a considerable degree true of Mexico and the Caribbean, areas which are of immense importance for politico-military reasons. But South America with a population of over a hundred million, is a vast and unexplored field for exploitation.

As we have already indicated, South America now supplies the United States with considerable quantities of tin, copper, petroleum, nitrates and rubber. Planned production of rubber and tin to satisfy the needs of an immense military America, would help solve the problem of losses resulting from possible adverse developments in Africa and the Dutch East Indies. In addition thereto, with investments of great masses of capital, the United States could enhance the general supply of raw materials from this end of the hemisphere.

It is in relation to the great potentialities of South America that the Administration envisages the development of a hemispheric division of labor wherein the immense industrial United States would exploit the tremendous agricultural reaches of those countries and insure a continuous supply of necessary raw materials to the north.

But South America is militarily vulnerable. The long periods of anti-American sentiment has offered a fruitful field in many parts to the operations of the German, Italian and Japanese propagandists in the guise of trade missions and organizations. The great numbers of German military and air instructors who flooded the southern continent in the period preceding German rearmament, have left an indelible pro-German stamp upon numerous sections. They remain sources of irritation to the American aim of solidifying the western hemisphere against the totalitarian states, but precisely because of these conditions, the United States is preparing to intervene actively in the economic, political and military life of the Spanish American countries.

The Pan-American conference is the strongest weapon in the hands of Washington now. The existence of the Inter-American Neutrality Committee and the Inter-American Economic Committee serve to tighten the bonds between the colossus of the north and the southern continent, and as is patently clear, the preponderance of power rests with the United States.

In more recent weeks the drive of Germany across the lowlands offered Roosevelt the pretext of direct intervention in the affairs of South America. Secret discussions have taken place in the State Department with Brazilian representatives on the matter of common defense of that nation, as of the rest of South America. Brazil is presumed to be most dangerously affected by a victory of the Berlin-Rome Axis, since it is that part of the continent which projects deeply into the South Atlantic ocean, within bombing range of the totalitarian airmen. It is also the country where American military experts expect the first landings of foreign troops. That is why Brazil is the immediate object of American intervention. Plans already exist for American naval, air and army bases in that country. Arrangements have been concluded for the training of Brazilian airmen by the U.S. army using American equipment.

In one country after another, daily discoveries of German Fifth Columns are announced and America offers aid to the smaller South American nations, who presumably cannot alone resist German espionage and sabotage organizations. The U.S.S. Quincy sailed for Uruguay as a symbol of American "protective" power, and a warning to Germany, Italy and Japan. A campaign of political pressure has been unloosed for the purpose of preparing more direct American intervention of a permanent character.

The State Department is now pushing plans for a Inter-American Bank. The purpose is to unite the 21 Latin-American countries in a system of hemispheric finance. But as Marquis W. Childs points out, American capital will make up the chief resources of this bank. Through this bank the United States will dominate the financial structrading structure of South America. Childs writes:

"... the State Department has been working for a more intelligent interchange of commodities and manufactured goods between North and South America. The Inter-American Bank would facilitate this exchange. What all this looks forward to is hemisphere trading."

Eight countries have already agreed to the establishment of this bank. whose initial shares will be subscribed by the United States. These economic efforts are frankly directed against the totalitarian states.

The more recent events illustrate the manner of American intervention. The press reports Fifth Column activities in every Latin American country. General Marshall, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, forecasts trouble in this hemisphere within a month, elaborating that he has in mind South Ameirca. That is the area within which the President desires the use of the National Guard in emergency services.

Leading commentators demand the seizure of all foreign colonies in the western world. Others propose that the United States shall buy them-take them in payment for war supplies, or defaulted war debts. The State Department announces that the United States will not tolerate a new foreign power in North or South America; that it will fight any incursion by Germany, Italy or Japan.

Under the slogan of "the Americas for Americans", the United States envisages complete control of both western continents. This time, however, intervention is not aimed for a momentary economic and political victory. There is a far greater effort involved: Hemispheric control of the new world by the United States, the establishment of an inter-continental division of labor favorable to the United States, what Alsop and Kintner, in their American White paper, describe as a "modified imperialism." What is certain by this is the establishment and an economic and political dictatorship of Washington in all the Americas. The United States is preparing to place South America on rations, to thereby replace its losses on other Continents.

Unlike former "normal" imperialist expansion, initiated by the private financial oligarchs of the country, followed by the sword and flag, the phenomenon of expansion under the direct leadership of the government has emerged. In the case of the present American aims in South America it is Washington itself which initiates and directs the movement toward domination. Acting for the government the inter-American Bank, as previously stated, will effect a financial dictatorship over all the Americas. The primacy of American industry in this hemisphere and the subjugation of Latin-American agriculture will be the task of the Administration, whether of Roosevelt or any other to succeed him. To make conclusive this control of the New World, the American government will establish what will be tantamount to a political and military dictatorship over the two continents. All of this, to be sure, will be done in the interest of American finance and industry. That is to say, the Sixty Families, whose whole interests the government represents.

These developments are certain unless the bourgeois order is overthrown, unless the era of socialism replaces the decaying capitalism of the New World. The future rests with the enormous proletarian reserves of the United States and the many millions of oppressed in Latin America.

– Albert GATES

Reading from Left to Right

The New Turn in The War – Some Speculations

NE of the chief bases for Marxism's claim to superiority over other methods of interpreting history is that it can more accurately predict the future. And in the last decade, this claim has indeed received some impressive documentation. The collapse of the Popular Front in France and the New Deal in this country; the Hitler-Stalin pact; the explosion of the second world war; the crumbling of the bourgeois isolationist front in this country in the last month-these were all foreseen by Marxist analysis. But in the past year there have occurred turns of world history which we, as Marxists, did not foresee, notably the imperialist role played by the Soviet Union in the early months of the war, and-the question which is currently the most important for us-the tremendous military power of the German armies and, correspondingly, the unexpected military weakness of the Allies.

(Whether this means that Marxist doctrine itself requires some overhauilng, or whether it simply shows a failure on the part of our movement to correctly apply Marxism—this important question cannot be gone into here. Personally I believe the latter to be the case.)

This miscalculation as to the course of the war has forced us to radically alter our agitational line in the past month, and may also indicate that our understanding of the social and economic nature of German fascism, and of the degree of its difference from the old-style imperialisms of England and France, that this understanding has been defective. Our perspective on the war up to a month ago assumed (1) a long drawn-out struggle which would leave both sides exhausted, (2) an ultimate Allied victory. (In other words, we, along with most bourgeois opinion, thought of this war as essentially a repetition of the last war.) Therefore, the main aim of our propaganda was to show that an Allied victory would *not* mean democracy, that the Allies were fighting for the same imperialist aims as the Nazis.

These propositions remain as true today as ever, but they are now somewhat beside the point. The new turn the war has taken poses two questions to us: (1) what modifications, if any, are necessary in our propaganda? (2) is the unexpected power of the Nazi offensive simply a military-technical question, or is it a reflection of a much greater qualitative difference between the Nazi socioeconomic system and the Anglo-French system than we have up to now recognized?

These questions seem to me to be the most important problems now facing our movement. Elswhere in this issue there is an article by E. Erber discussing the first. In following issues, I plan to attempt some consideration of the second question, based on data now being gathered. This month I propose to turn over this department to a manuscript dealing with these themes, which has recently come into my hands. As will be seen, it is written as informal notes or memoranda. The author prefers to remain anonymous. I have added a few comments of my own at the end.

The paper takes up the general nature of the war and raises the interesting question of totalitarianism-fromabove as against totalitarianism-from-below:

1.

Up to now, Marxist propaganda has been based on the assumption that Germany will be defeated in this war. Its gist, in proletarian English, is: what good is victory with the prospect of another and greater war twenty years from now?

From this assumption of Allied victory stems the hopeless floundering of the revolutionary movement since the beginning of the war, its inability not only to make itself felt, but to grow at all.

The Marxists pointed out that only a totalitarian nation could fight a total war. Totalitarianism is masses plus machines, not machines alone. What conclusions were drawn from this observation? Only the conclusions of ABC. But it was not at all considered that totalitarianism by legal decree, which is in substance the wartime totalitarianism of the Allies, is not the terrible monolithism that wins wars. It more closely resembles the adaptation of classic South American government.

From the Marxist premises, the only possible conclusion is that Germany must win the war. For if, only totalitarianism can win the war, and if M-Day is not the right brand, being totalitarianism by decree and not from below, then Germany *must* win. Yet in our activity we have failed to draw that conclusion.

To induce from the imperialist necessity of totalitarianism that the Allies will establish fascism on the pattern of the Industrial Mobilization Bill is only possible if revolutionary thought has become corrupted by two muddy streams: "third period" Stalinism with its inability to distinguish between fascism and militarism, and "official" thought in this country, which cannot see its own demise.

2.

It is wrong to call M-Day a blueprint for fascism. Fascism is a movement from below, utilized not even by individual capitalists necessarily, but by institutionalized capitalism as a whole. Fascism in America will not come by administrative repression. It will come when the war-torn soldiers and civil populace overturn the executives of the "Jewish War". Watch the Christian Front; the psychology of its members suggests that when America participates, they will go along. Their mental reservations will be far different from those of Norman Thomas or Jack Altman. A program of Jingoism coupled with demands for the ousting of Jews from the control of the Jingo machine, exposes of "Jewish treason" in the conduct of the war-the coincidence of Jewish treason in the conduct of a Jewish war is no more difficult to reconcile than that of the harmony of (Jewish) Bolshevism and (Jewish) finance-capital worked out by Spengler-will prepare for the timed opposition by which the Coughlin mob will either try to effect a revolution during the war or after it.

3.

If the basis of the tremendous German victories so far were really nothing more than the military superiority of Germany, *Man's Hope* would become the outstanding political document of our epoch, and revolutionists should "fight rather to keep something alive than in the hope that anything will triumph". For military inferiority would be just as real for a Red France as for a Black France.

The Allies cannot win because their peoples have nothing to fight for. It is the unofficial stalling of the buck privates which determines defeat. There are ideas by which even the lowly masses live, and democracy was once one of them. The democratic and imperial ideas have crumbled, and the birth rate is falling. And the birth-rate is important. It means not only that capitalism has reached an economic impasse, where children become a luxury. The rich have less children than the poor. It means that the process of the dissolution of faith in the validity of life which dominated the English world of letters in the last century has reached its hedonistic conclusion in this century. For the wealthy, it is too much pain to bear children; it complicates divorces; etc.

Only the totalitarian nations have been able to arrest the fall of the birth-rate by state subsidies. But the subsidy is enforced by the idea: the evening of imperialism is shining on the Stonehenge-estates.

It does not matter whether the German masses have anything to fight for; it is important that they think they have. German economy by its policy of dynamic aggression is able to postpone its collapse; the mass depends on the velocity. Military defeat can make a revolutionary Germany again, but not from the incredible Allies.

Can the entrance of America turn the tide? Are the American people all used up, or ready for imperialist resurgence? The United States is Carthage to Hitler's Rome just as England is Rome to Hitler's Attila.

The American masses are duped as to the nature of the war much more easily than they were in 1917, but they will fight much less efficiently when they are sent. The majority of the workingclass right now believe that American participation in the world slaughter would be beneficient to the national interest but probably mortal to their own interest; and they are afraid.

To transform fear into revolutionary heroism is not easy. It is necessary for revolutionists to confront the people with their own fear. It is time to analyze the war from the standpoint of inevitable German victory, even with American entry, and trace the basis of that victory in the national paralysis of the status-quo powers. We must, above all, expose the economic roots of this paralysis, this death-wish. Instead of beginning from proofs that Allied victory will settle nothing, we must begin with what is for the masses the almost experiential certainty of German victory and prove that only a revolutionary army can defeat Hitler.

4.

The most valuable point made above, it seems to me is the distinction between Anglo-French-American totalitarianism by administrative decree "from above", and the more organic and monolithic German variety "from below". We have understood clearly enough that fascism could not be built in this country from the top down, that the great corporations and banking interests could not charm into being a native fascism by any amount of money and force. As Guerin puts it: "Fascism is not born solely from the desires and subsidies of big business." But, while rejecting the Stalinist equation of Hooverism with fascism, we have not been keenly enough aware that, by the same token, the Administration's M-Day and industrial mobilization plans cannot properly be called "fascist". The war has not strengthened native fascist movements; on the contrary, they are now in the "fifth column" category. The new American totalitarianism now being worked out jointly by finance capital and the New Deal in Washington is not fascist because its basic ideology is the old bourgeoisdemocratic stuff that has already proved its historical bankruptcy in England and France. This fact makes the greatest difference to both bourgeois and revolutionary strategies in this next period over here.

But my correspondent overstresses his valid point when he writes, "It does not matter whether the German masses have anything to fight for; it is important that they think they have." The great weakness in Hitler's position is precisely that it *does* matter to the German masses whether they have something real to fight for, and that a German victory will by no means give solid, material answers to this question of war aims. The Allies are facing their supreme crisis now. Hitler will face his after he wins the war.

In the same way, my correspondent overstresses the factor of morale in this war—"the unofficial stalling of the buck privates." It is true that the German troops seem to have high morale, and, even more significant, that the new German military tactics (parachute troops, wholesale use of tanks and planes) depend much more on the initiative and courage of the individual soldier than do the defensive tactics of the Allies. But it is also true, if the newspapers are to be believed, that the remarkable feat of evacuating most of the B.E.F. from Dunkirk was possible only because of high morale among the Allied troops. Not morale but equipment seems to be the decisive factor in this war.

Finally, I don't believe that most American workers believe entry into the war would be good for America's *national* interests but fatal to their own *class* interests. I don't think they make any such distinction. The American working class will have to become very much more class conscious than it is now before it understands that its class interests can conflict with the national interest as well as coincide with it.

- Dwight MACDONALD

Marxism and **National Defense**

A S is done by every imperialist bourgeoisie, the Roosevelt administration proceeds with its war preparations under a thick smoke-screen of "national defense" hysteria. Since no worker will become excited when told that the Nazis threaten the Firestone Rubber Company properties in Liberia, Africa and the Chase National Bank investments in South America, or that the Japanese threaten to jump in on the oil wells of the Dutch East Indies before Standard Oil can get a hold of them, it is necessary to stir him up with stories about parachute troops about to land on his roof and tanks to rumble down his street.

The creation of a widespread fear of invasion in the past would have been almost impossible since the geographical location of the United States made invasion seem very absurd. Unlike the European countries in which the "enemy" was always at the border, the "enemy" of the United States was thousands of miles beyond the sea. However, the Hitler "blitzkrieg" has made such a deep impression upon the public's thoughts that Roosevelt found little difficulty in convincing the bulk of the people that a plane and parachute invasion could suddenly swoop down upon the country without the slightest notice.

The "national defense" hysteria puts to the test for the first time the ability of the Revolutionary Marxist movement in America to withstand the tremendous bourgeois patriotic pressure and yet find the agitational forms through to speak to the workers without being driven to purely abstract formulas.

To place the two tasks in their proper realtioniship, it is necessary to point out that the maintainance of the basic views of Marxism upon the class state and national defense in the imperialist epoch is far more important than the task of forging the agitational weapons with which to burst through the "national defense" illusion. Once the movement has been swept from its basic moorings, all else is lost.

This article is, therefore, an attempt to re-state those basic principles upon which our anti-war fight rests and show how our movement, far from standing on the sidelines and repeating bare formulas, can boldly wade into the struggle with a program to answer the "national defense" swindle.

The "radicals" of yesterday who are beating the drums on behalf of the re-armament program seek to convince us of the error of our ways with arguments like this:

"Of course we are still opposed to imperialism. If it were a matter of 50,000 planes to defend Wall Street investments abroad, we would also oppose re-armament. But you have to admit that every nation has a right to national independence. Is not that what we fight for in China? If we are opposed to China becoming a Japanese colony, should we not as vigorously oppose attempts to make America a German colony? If you do not believe in a war for democracy in Europe, you should at least support the President's program of national defense."

Unless the revolutionary ranks are steeled with an understanding of both the basic principles of our movement and armed with a living program, such sophistry, supported by the whole pressure of bourgeois public opinion, will make inroads among the most determined revolutionists.

I. THE NATIONAL STATE

Beginning with Karl Marx himself, Marxist historians have viewed the creation of the national state out of the ruins of the feudal system as one of the great progressive achievements of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. It was the political prerequisite to the expansion of the means of production and the basis for the extension and development of the class struggle and proletarian organizations.

As such, Marxists in the bourgeois-democratic epoch not only fought for the creation of national states but also for their defense. The creation and maintainance of national states coincided with the class interests of the proletariat. The fight for the national unification of Germany in the 19th century was also the fight for a strong German labor movement and the possibility of confronting the German bourgeoisie class against class, without the confusing and diverting baggage of a national problem.

However, the outbreak of the World War in 1914 signalized the fact that the means of production had outgrown their national borders. Capitalism had entered its imperialist epoch. Its further expansion now meant the clash of the capitalist states for a division and re-division of the earth.

The World War proved that capitalist economy was over-ripe for socialization. The hour had come for the proletariat to appear on the stage of history, in the words of the "Communist Manifesto," as "the gravedigger of capitalism."

With the Socialist Revolution on the order of the day in Europe, America, and other advanced industrial centers, national states lost their progressive character. They now became a straightjacket upon human progress. The new task for humanity became, not the preservation of state boundaries, but their abolition through the Socialist Revolution to clear the path for planned production and the division of labor on an international scale.

Marx and National Wars

Marx had already exposed the fraud of a war of national defense under capitalism at the threshold of the imperialist epoch. In his famous address to the General Council of the International on the defeat of the Paris Commune, written soon after the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, he wrote:

The highest heroic accomplishment of which the old order is capable, is the national war. And this has now proved to be a fraud perpetrated by governments for no other purpose than to put off the class struggle, a fraud that is bared as soon as the class struggle flares up in civil war. Class rule can no longer hide behind a national uniform. The national governments are united against the proletariat.

The unity of Bismark and Thiers against the Parisian proletariat was to be repeated on a much vaster scale and with less disguise when international capitalism, including the Russian capitalists who had sent millions to die on June 1940

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the battlefield in the name of "national defense", carried on a joint attack upon the Soviet regime.

When capitalism entered its imperialist epoch and Socialism became the only way out for humanity, the defense of its own national state became a blind alley for the proletariat. The failure of Social Democracy to see this in 1914 lead the workers into the impasse in which wage slave murdered wage slave in the name of "national defense".

The imperialist epoch has posed—all the more clearly in the post-war period of decline—the question as follows: Either subordinate the struggle for the Socialist Revolution in the interests of national defense or subordinate the interests of national defense to the struggle for the Socialist Revolution.

The proletariat cannot solve its problem by fighting for both—as Social Democracy claims to do in this war. The two tasks are contradictory under the police regime of degenerate capitalism.

The struggle for the Socialist Revolution means an intensification of the class struggle aimed at the establishment of a workers government. This weakens the war efforts of the capitalist state—above all in the totalitarian form which it assumes in modern war.

A policy of "national defense" under capitalist class rule means for the proletariat civil peace, the liquidation of the class struggle, and a postponement of the Socialist Revolution.

The continuation of the struggle for Socialism in time of war may lead, it is true, to the defeat and national subjugation of the nation by a foreign power. However, in the continuation of the struggle for Socialism in time of war there is the hope of a future for the proletariat. In the abandonment of the class struggle in the interests of "national defense" their is only the continued prospect of life under a degenerate capitalism with its future of hunger, totalitarianism, and more wars.

II. THE PROLETARIAT AND ITS NATION

Again the "radicals" of yesterday come to the fore with an argument:

"Who will deny that German conquest had a detrimental effect upon the class struggle and the political education of the proletariat in Poland, Czecho-slovakia, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, and the Netherlands? These countries did not seek a war with Germany. They sought only to defend their national independence. How can you tell the worker that foreign conquest does not matter to him?"

The above is not a polemic against a Marxist understanding of the proletariat and the independence of its nation. This might be a polemic against those who have vulgarized Marxist teachings upon this question by literally saying that it makes no difference to the worker whether his nation lost its independence or not. It was this same vulgarization of Marxism that lead to the perversion of "revolutionary defeatism" to mean the active attempt of the proletariat to bring about the military defeat of its "own" bourgeoisie at the hands of the "enemy" bourgeoisie as an alleged means of advancing the revolution at home.

Such vulgarizations are not only inconsistent with the general body of Marxist theoretical views upon the national state and the revolution, but their very sectarian unreality lead to sterility and futility in the daily political struggle and are a source of weakness rather than strength in the face of the tremendous bourgeois pressure upon the movement in time of war. Such a position deprives the movement of some of its most potent agitational weapons against the "national defense" swindle of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Unless a living movement gives living answers, the unreality of its slogans will lead to uncertainty in its own ranks and tendencies to seek refuge in opportunist formulations.

National Oppression and Class Struggle

Without a doubt, it is true to say that the conquest of half of Europe by Hitler has been a blow to the class struggle. The proletariat of the oppressed nation has always been driven into greater reliance upon its own bourgeoisie. It has always tended to see its problem through the nationalist spectacles of the bourgeoisie rather than its own proletarian class spectacles.

Also without a doubt, the countries overrun by Hitler did not seek the war and fought for their national independence.

But what do our Messrs. Ex-Radicals conclude from the above? They conclude what appears as a simple, "common sense" truth-support the transgressed nations against the aggressor.

But who will determine the policies of the "transgressed" nations? Who will limit it to a struggle for national defense? Not the workers of these nations. And certainly not the poor deluded and badly frightened ex-radicals. The policies will be determined by the bourgeoisie of the nations concerned.

Let us examine the case of Czecho-slovakia. Certainly the Czech bourgeoisie did not seek a war with Germany when Hitler conquered the country in 1939. After they had lost the Sudetan areas and control over the Slovaks and Ruthenians, one could certainly have said that here was the case of a bourgeoisie solely concerned with saving its national independence.

But what would have happened had they fought Germany and won? Would the Czech munitions makers, textile barons, and shoe kings have retired to their own borders? Of coures not. They would have disarmed Germany, robbed her of territory, re-erected their rule over the Slovaks and Ruthenians, and emerged as the dominant imperialist power of Central Europe.

What will happen if the Allies defeat Germany in this war? They would certainly carve it up beyond recognition. Germany would be set back to a stage it was in 100 years ago. Would not this also be a terrific blow to the "class struggle and the political education of the proletariat" in Germany? Of course it would.

The proletarian youth who enlists in the U.S. army today in response to Roosevelt's propaganda about "national defense" will in many cases be motivated by a genuine and progressive sentiment of wanting to defend his home. But tomorrow he may find himself dying upon a battlefield in Europe, Australia, Asia, or Africa.

No, Marxists do not say that the proletariat is unconcerned with the fate of its nation. What they say is that they place the interests of Socialism above those of the nation when the capitalist police state establishes an unbridgable contradiction between the fight for Socialism and national defense. Page 108

However, Marxists are not opposed to national defense when it does not contradict the struggle for Socialism.

Marxists were for the defense of the national state in the bourgeois revolutionary epoch because it furthered the proletarian cause. Marxists can be for national defense today, upon a basis that furthers the interests of the proletariat against those of the bourgeoisie. In this lies the key to our agitation in the daily political struggle—our agitation to expose the "national defense" of the bourgeoisie and reveal its fraudulent character.

Luxemburg's Answer to National Defense

Writing on this problem during the last war, Rosa Luxemburg said:

In view of all these considerations, what shall be the practical attitude of the Social-Democracy in the present war? Shall it declare: since this is an imperialist war, since we do not enjoy in our country, any Socialist self-determination, its existence or non-existence is of no consequence to us, and we will surrender it to the enemy? Passive fatalism can never be the role of a revolutionary party, like the Social Democracy. It must neither place itself at the disposal of the existing class state, under the command of the ruling classes, nor can it stand silently by to wait until the storm is past. It must adopt a policy of active class politics, a policy that will whip the ruling classes forward in every great social crisis, and that will drive the crisis itself far beyond its original extent. That is the role that the Social Democracy must play as the leader of the fighting proletariat. Instead of covering this imperialistic war with a lying mantle of national self-defense, the Social Democracy should have demanded the right of national self-determination seriously, should have used it as a lever against the imperialist war.

The most elementary demand of national defense is that the nation take its defense into its own hands. The first step in this direction is the militia; not only the immediate armament of the entire adult male populace, but above all, popular decision in all matters of war and peace. It must demand, furthermore, the immediate removal of every form of political oppression, since the greatest political freedom is the best basis for national defense. To proclaim these fundamental measures of national defense, to demand their realization, that was the first duty of the Social Democracy. (Rosa Luxemburg: "The Crisis in the German Social Democracy.")

In our agitation we can truthfully hurl the lie back in the faces of the bourgeois spokesmen who accuse the revolutionists of being unconcerned with national independence. We oppose the hoax and swindle of the Roosevelt administration which is put over under a cover of "national defense" slogans. It is they—the bourgeois rulers—who are opposed to national defense. They are only for the defense of their own imperialist interests. Wall Street cares no more for "national independence" than did the Russian bourgeoisie after it lost control in 1917.

A Proletarian Program for National Defense

We have our own program for national defense—a proletarian program that will make national defense part and parcel of our struggle for the final solution of Socialism.

1. Arm the working masses-the city workers and poor farmers. Let them organize their own People's Army with democratically-elected command and the right to keep their arms at home.

Abolish the standing army and National Guard with their officer castes of Jim Crow, anti-semitic, labor-hating reactionaries. Establish sailors councils in the Navy.

Remove the "college education" clause and open the

Air Corps training schools to sons of workingclass families. If a militia composed of workers and farmers with their own elected officers was able to drive out the British in the War for Independence, a People's Army today will be able to defend independence and democratic rights against the enemy at home and abroad.

2. Withdraw all troops from foreign territories and ships from foreign waters. Grant full and immediate freedom to all colonies and spheres dominated by American imperialism.

If it is national independence we are concerned with, let us begin by giving it to those nations subjected by American rule. If it is an invasion we are opposed to, let us stop invading foreign territory.

3. Abolish secret diplomacy. Open the files of the Department of State. Publish all diplomatic correspondence and treaties.

If we are only concerned with national independence, there should be nothing in our diplomacy that we are ashamed to publish. Conduct all diplomacy open and above board.

4. No war loans to Europe-20 billions to build new homes in America.

Before having the temerity to ask the worker to "defend his home," give him a home worth defending.

5. Put the jobless back to work by reducing hours of labor without any cuts in wages. \$30 minimum wage-30 hours maximum work.

Hungry and jobless men will never be very enthusiastic about defending their nation.

6. Let the people vote on war through a popular referendum.

Certainly the majority of the people should know whether their national independence is threatened. Let them decide.

7. Abolish Nazi race practices in America first. Full social, political, and economic equality for the Negroes and all other minorities.

Why should the threat of a Nazi invasion frighten the Negro in Alabama who continually lives in fear of a lynch mob?

8. Fullest extension – not curtailment – of democratic rights. No wartime dictatorship. Smash the labor-spy system. Abolish poll taxes. Defend civil liberties.

Only a free people can defend its national independence.

9. Government ownership of all basic industries-steel, oil, chemicals, public utilities, railorads, coal, etc.-with control over production by workers committees in the shops.

Why should the bankers and munitions makers wax rich out of a struggle for so sacred a cause as national defense? The conduct of these gentlemen in the last war makes it sheer madness to leave them in control of basic industries. Only the workers employed in the industries can be trusted with their management in the interests of the whole nation.

If the above program were to be accepted and executed, there would no longer be any contradiction between national defense and the Socialist future of humanity. But those bourgeois propagandists who howl loudest for "national defense" would as soon permit Hitler to take over the country as to carry out such a program. In their horirfied rejection of the above, they reveal their own national defense talk to be a swindle to cover their imperialist aims.

For the revolutionists the task remains-not a single concession that compromises the struggle for Socialism, the only future for humanity.

- Ernest ERBER

Marxism and Deweyism

A Discussion Article

Some people in and around the labor movement have begun to raise the question of the relationship between the work of Karl Marx and that of John Dewey. That seems to me to be pretty important—so I'd like to say a few words about it.

One distinction has to be kept clearly in mind, that between what men do and what they say they do. Most of the criticism of Marxism has called into question what Marx and the Marxists have said (their opinions on philosophy, sociology, political economy, etc.) And the best part of this criticism, including most of Dewey's remarks in his Freedom and Culture, is, in my opinion, amply justified. It's pretty clear to me that Marx took over the metaphysics of Hegel as well as the assumptions of classical political economy. And neither can stand up under serious critical examination today. If we think of Marxism only in terms of its philosophical doctrine, then of course it is radically different from Deweyism. But if we consider Marxism in what I feel is its far more significant phase, as a group of organized individuals with a job to do, then the relation becomes rather clear. This phase is revolutionary Marxism; it is Marxism in action; it is what the Marxists (Leninists) do.

Essentially Deweyism is this: firstly, the explicit formulation of the general features of scientific activity and secondly, the plea for the use of scientific method in social action. What I want to show is that there is an already existing relation between Marxism and science, and that the explicit, conscious acceptance of the procedures of inquiry is necessary for Marxism.

The same kind of critical analysis which Dewey applied to the method of science can be fruitfully utilized in a consideration of Marxism. Marxism, like science, is problemsolving activity. (And Marxists, like scientists, talk a great deal of nonsense about that activity.) The Marxist party seeks to accomplish a social revolution. To this end it must make analyses of existing conditions, and if it is serious, must propose solutions to the problems of various groups, itself included, within society. In this process the specific weight of traditional Marxist doctrine dwindles in importance at the same time that the procedures of inquiry come to the fore. And, as a matter of fact, it couldn't be otherwise. It's a very naive notion which says that a social movement-any social movement-which actually takes part in the day-to-day struggles of living people could rely on a system of Absolutes for answers to the questions which that struggle raises. It might say it did, but we don't have to believe that. Consider, in these terms, the problem of the dialectic. Even as the traditional Hegelian formula, it is no doubt defended by most Marxists. But in the Leninist movement, "dialectic" is also and perhaps above all the name for a procedure. In practice, those procedures are called dialectical which place the received Marxian formulae in their context in inquiry. What is meant is that while these abstract formulae (nature of state, class struggle, etc.) may aid in the construction of hypotheses, may help to delimit the situation, nevertheless where action is to be taken, no judgment

can be made which does not take the concrete aims of the party plus the existing conditions into consideration. This use of the term can be amply verified by a study of the Marxist critique of sectarianism in which "undialectical" is a word of opprobrium, used to designate the use of the Marxian formulae deductively, ripped out of the context of the needs and goals of the party and of the existing conditions. This, as I understand it, is a Deweyite analysis, whose very applicability is significant.

What is crucial, of course, in the consideration of Marxism and Deweyism is the place of science in the Marxist scheme.

All social action involves common-sense activity and thus may be viewed in terms of the relevant problem-situations and efforts at the construction of judgments. Thus in that sense alone, just because it is social action, there is a close relation between Marxism and science. But the Marxist movement has gone further than that. Long years of participation in the mass movements throughout the world has made necessary repeated analyses cf concrete situations in the light of the needs of the struggle for power; and this has tended to systematize the body of knowledge relevant to revolutionary activity which has been developed by Marxist political scientists. And if Dewey would apply himself to a study of the actual procedures of the Marxists, he would soon see that goals, too, are not fixed. "World socialist revolution" is a concept broad enough to permit the adjustment of ends to the needs of the concrete situation, although it undoubtedly serves to shape those ends. Thus, approximately and in general, the procedures of the Marxists have been those of scientific inquiry. All this is cloaked, of course, in the proper worldhistorical phraseology, but it is no less significant on that account.

But if that is so, what need have Marxists of Deweyism-that is, of the conscious acceptance of the method of science? A profound need. Firstly, because these procedures have never been more than at best a rather close approximation to those of science. Secondly, because Marxists have had a limited notion of what constitutes democratic procedure. Widespread participation in the determination of actions is at a minimum. That is because participation cannot be important if a course of action is supposed to be determined by a set of received principles in which everyone "believes." The leadership may "believe" as well, but it, at least, must answer concrete questions. The fight for socialismand socialism without democracy is a contradiction in terms-must be a process of conscious application by an ever-growing group of intelligent men of the methods of inquiry in social action. The education of the rank and file of that movement must be one in the consciousness of those methods rather than in the repetition of empty shibboleths. And lastly, there may come a time when even highly abstract formulae will be betrayed by existing conditions. At such a time, a devotion to the formula may hamper the arrival at the required problem-solution. Facts will be forced into the necessary mold, the previously constructed system of procedures will have to be torn down, and it will be the beginning of the end for the movement as a revolutionary participant in the social scene. Thus every count requires the extension throughout the movement of the "scientific morale."

Before concluding, there is one distinction which I think it is necessary to make: that is the difference between Dewey and Deweyism. I feel that Dewey, and Hook after him, tends to make a fatal error. An appeal to "the American people" for the use of scientific method can remain a sterile and utopian dream. The proper place for that appeal is within the group which is prepared to see things through to the end. If we propose experimental socialist politics we must be ready to accept whatever judgment results from our inquiry. We cannot appeal to people in general for that acceptance-it requires devotion and an iron will. To appeal to various mass groups in society on the basis of participation in the solution of their problems which, dominantly, are rooted in their socioeconomic position, is one thing. But to attempt to educate "the people" to a devotion to cultural freedom or scientific method in the abstract is to deny the tenets of Deweyism itself as to the real bases for action. Significant action is always motivated by a problem-situation, but the choice between scientific method and something else is certainly not felt to be a problem by the American people. Various groups within American society have problems of their own which demand solution before the democratic order which Dewey desires can be established. But this is not inconsistent with Deweyism. On the contrary, Deweyism, even if not Dewey, would strive to guide the mass movement in problem-solving activity. Education as to the best ,that is scientific, procedures would and could rise only from the experience of that activity. Dewey himself has pointed out the close relation between common-sense and inquiry. It is madness to demand that all people consciously apply the methods of science before action can be taken. That is an ideal which may shape our present goals, but which cannot be substituted for them.

Nor does the political activity of Dewey and Hook raise any serious hopes as to their ability to meet today's problems in a forthright and intelligent manner. A struggle against totalitarianism in the abstract and chummy relations with those who are willing to water down Marxism *only* in order to be able more easily to defend the status quo -all this bodes ill for a correct position on war and fascism and unemployment.

Just as there is a distinction to be drawn between what the Marxists say and what *they* do, so it is valid to do the same for Dewey. Dewey *claims* that he uses the method of science in politics—whether he does or not is at least questionable. This sets the problem. For, roughly, the major link between Marxist action and Dewey's claims. I believe that to bring them together would aid tremendously the fight for democratic socialism in America.

- Philip SHERMAN

Archives of the Revolutionary Movement

Where Is the Petty Bourgeois Opposition?

A Repeated Challenge Remains Unanswered

EDITORS NOTE: We present below the second instalment of a document issued by the Minority members of the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party during the internal discussions of last winter. This article, dated March 9, 1940, was written in partial reply to Leon Trotsky's article, "From a Scratch to The Danger of Gangrene."

As against such trivialities which could be dug up by the dozen if one were interested, can and should be placed the vigorous, effective and in-transigent political campaign in de-fense of revolutionary Marxism, of the Fourth International and of the party, and against precisely that type of critic represented by the Eastmans and the Lyonses. Trotsky mentions only a yellow leaf here and there and makes no reference to the big green forest. The defense of the party and its program from the Lyonses, the education of wide circles of radical workers and intellectuals to the true meaning of the "democratic" backsliders and renegades-have the representatives of the Minority been behindhand in this work in the past? If anything, they have been in the forefront. It is not necessary to institute an objective re-examination of the record as a whole, instead of taking up isolated, insignficant incidents of fugitive importance. The party needs no such re-examination for the simple reason that the record is already common knowledge.

And if there were such a re-examination, it would reveal that it is the Cannonites, more than anyone else, who showed a complete indifference to the defense of the party program and of Marxism on the theoretical front. Except for one article by Goldman and another by Wright, the Cannonite leadership is represented by a blank space in the past two-three years of struggle against precisely that tendency in and around the radical labor movement which is represented variously by Hook, Eastman, Lyons, Stolberg, etc., etc. Has Trotsky failed to notice this fact? Has he failed to call attention to it in the proper quarters? In any case, the party in general has noticed it and has drawn the necessary conclusions: Execpt for factional considerations, the "normal" interest of the Cannonites, Cannon in particular, in theoretical questions of Marxism, is distinguished by its absence. The "practical" leader leaves that to the "intellectuals."

7, 8, 9. The Socialist Appeal

It is not necessary to dwell on the defects of the Socialist Appeal in this document. They are not unknown to the party. On the basis of criticisms of the Appeal made by Trotsky and comrades in the American party, on the basis of many direct experiences, on the basis of criticisms of many readers of the paper, these criticisms, with proposals for improving the paper, were incorporated in the report to the July Convention delivered by Comrade Abern, in the remarks of Morrow, Shachtman and many other delegates.

However, to refer to the defects of the Appeal for the purpose of characterizing either one of the factions in the party, or any group of comrades, or any individual comrade, is totally absurd. The problem of the Appeal is, and always has been, and most likely always will be, the problem of the party itself. The official organ of the party can, so to speak, rise above the party to a certain extent, as has been pointed out on more than one occasion, but it cannot reflect the class struggle in the country to a radically different degree than the one to which that struggle is participated in by the party itself. On more than one occasion, the editorial staff made efforts to organize a network of worker-correspondents for the Appeal, and it succeeded in a modest measure. If the success was far from what is desirable and necessary, it is, as was recognized by all comrades in many discussions, due basically to the detachment of the party as a whole (with isolated exceptions) from the political life and the life of the working class of the country. It is at bottom only to the extent that the entire party enters into the political life of the country, into the life and movements of the working class, that the "face" and the contents of the Appeal will be altered in the right direction.

But it is precisely at this point that the criticism of the Minority shows its validity-the criticism of the bureaucratic conservatism that characterizes the Cannon faction. The analysis of the Minority, "War and Bureaucratic Conservatism," replete with facts that are easily verifiable where they are not already common party knowledge, has not been refuted to the present day. The attempt to dispose of the indictment of the Cannon regime by a few sarcastic remarks in passing, will not serve as a refutation.

10. Again, The Social Composition

Trotsky quotes also from a letter to Cannon on June 16, 1939, on the poor social composition of the party and its consequent greater liability to the pressure of "official public opinion." Wherein is this a point of proof of the charge that the Minority group represents a petty-bourgeois tendency? In quoting his letter to prove his charge, Trotsky assumes that which he is attempting to prove, namely, that the Cannon group is the group of the proletariat in the party, and the Minority the group of the petty-bourgeois. But this is just what it is impossible to demonstrate on the basis of the facts.

In the first place, even if this division corresponded to the reality – and we deny it—it would be necessary to emphasize that it would not have the same significance in our tiny organization that it has in a mass party of tens or hundreds of thousands which, because it is deep in the turbulent streams of the class struggle, is directly affected by the changes of the prevailing current. In general, the smaller the organization, the less rooted it is in the classes—the less accurately it reflects social forces and pressures.

In the second place, even if this division corresponded to the reality-again, we deny it—it would be necessary to examine the actual situation not so much in terms of generalities, not so much in terms of what holds true "in the long run, in the final analysis," but

in terms of what is demonstrable in the given dispute, of what is shown by concrete experience. The social composition of the revolutionary party is deci-sive in the long run, for the quite obvious reason that the working class is the decisive and only consistently progressive class in modern society, that the working class alone can lead the struggle for socialism. The social composition of the revolutionary party is decisive immediately, in this sense, that the revolutionary party, regardless of its social composition at its formation or at any given stage, must constantly strive to become a proletarian party, it must orient itself mainly towards the working class. It would, however, be erroneous to make the arbitrary deduction from this that at any given stage, and in any political dispute, that party or group in a party which is predominantly proletarian in its composition, is correct in its political standpoint, as against another party or group whose social composition is, from the proletarian viewpoint, inferior. Such a conclusion would have meant, as we know from the past, the capitulation, on more than one occasion, of the revolutionary Marxist tendency to the reformist tendency, specifically in the Russian Social-Democratic party, where the Menshe-viks at times had by far the greater number of proletarians in their ranks, compared with the Bolsheviks. The problem then boils down, as it always does fundamentally, to the question of the political position, as it does in the present dispute. And there it is necessary to decide, objectively, on whether victory of Stalin's annexationist army in Finland, for example, or the struggle for the development of the independent class activity of the Third Camp, is the correct position, the one that really represents the interests of the proletarian revolution.

The triumphant reference of the Cannonites to the fact that the Minneapolis branch, for example, supports the Majority-with such remarkable unanimity, too - does not decide for a minute the correctness or incorrectness of their political position. There is no smaller number of proletarian militants in other sections of the party who support the standpoint of the Minority. But even if this were not true (and its truth is easily demonstrated), it would not be as decisive, precisely from the standpoint of social composition and class pressures, as the fact which we consider to be much more decisive and significant in the present dispute, namely, the fact that the overwhelming majority of the Youth comrades support the Minority. The Youth, with all the deficiencies that characterize them, are

precisely the ones who, more than any other single stratum in the party, are the best barometer in the present discussion.

The young comrades who make up our Youth movement are, by and large, quite different from the elements who made up the revolutionary youth organizations in the past, say, ten-fifteen years ago. They are literally the vanguard of the "locked-out generation." In the past, many of the youth aspired (and even had the possibility) to "lift" themselves out of the working class, to become part of the bourgeois or pettybourgeois world-lawyers, doctors, teachers, members of the "liberal professions" or even "better." Their conduct in the movement corresponded to this aspiration. Thus, their constant conflicts with the party (we speak of the early days of the C.P. in the U.S.A.) were most often based on their resistance to the party's demands for activity in the class struggle, in the political life of the country, to the party's demands for sacrifices, etc. The Youth of our party differs radically in every respect. With few exceptions, they have no illusions about the possibilities for "rising in the world" of American capitalism today. They have a deep attachment to the movement, based on far more than intellectual reasons. It is not comfort they seek but struggle. The war question to them is not an abstraction but a reality. It is most significant that their conflicts with the party in the past two years have been based precisely on their criticisms-substantially if not always justified-of the party leadership's tendency to do-nothingness, to routinism, to lack of initiative, to lack of planned and systematic activity. It is most significant that in Cannon's pre-convention articles in the Appeal, he attacked the Youth comrades not for "petty-bourgeois dilletantism" or for "opportunism" or for "inactivity" or for "refusing to get into action," but rather in the opposite sense, for their alleged "adventurism" and "leftism."

The Youth of our movement in this country are immature in many respects. They have not gone through many indispensable experiences. They have not passed all the tests. But in the present party dispute, they passed the test of the war crisis and the problems posed by it, far, far better than did the Cannon clique. To try to pass off the strong support which the Youth have given to the Minority with the argument that it is most susceptible to "bourgeois-democratic and patriotic pressure," can be put down either to ignorance of the real composition and sentiments of the bulk of our Youth, or, at best, to sheer rationalization.

One last point may be made here. The self-styled "proletarian" wing of the party claims Minneapolis and the seamen's fraction as its citadels. Let us grant that for the moment it is correct. It claims also that the Soviet Union has been under the attack of imperialism for the past six months, and particularly now, in the war in Finland; claims, too, that the United States is also engaged in an imperialist attack on the Soviet Union. What social pressure has thus far prevented the Majority, completely in control of the party apparatus, from issuing a single leaflet to the American seamen, to the longshoremen, calling upon them to refuse to load or sail ships with material for Finland and its backers and to load and sail ships with material for the Soviet Union? What social pressure has prevented the raising of this concrete slogan even in the columns of the Appeal since the war began? What social pressure has pre-vented the comrades in Minnesota, heavily populated by Finnish and Scandinavian workers, from issuing a leaflet explaining in simple but clear terms that we are not only for the defeat of the Mannerheim army in Finland but that we are for the victory of the Red Army?

The Minority has asked this question for months. The answer is still to be heard.

11. Negrin's Military Budget

One of Trotsky's trump cards, so to speak, is the exchange of letters between him and Shachtman on the question of voting for the military budget of Negrin in the Loyalist Cortes. Let us grant that Shachtman's position on this question was entirely wrong. But in whose name did Shachtman write his letter of inquiry? The letter speaks of "we" and "us." The "we" and "us" referred to most of the comrades of the Political Committee. Upon receiving Trotsky's 1937 article in which he said that we would not vote for the Loyalist military budget, Cannon and Shachtman, among others, could not believe that this was Trotsky's position. This may not speak well for their political development, but it is the fact. It was decided that Shachtman write Trotsky about it, not in his name alone, but in the name of Cannon and the others. The "opportunist position" which Trotsky attributes to Shachtman alone, in an attempt to prove a continuity of line of the Minority, was the position of Cannon and other leading comrades of the party. In this as in so many of the other cases noted above, Trotsky tries in vain to separate that which was inseparable.

What Has Been "Proved"

It may be argued, after all this, that Trotsky does nevertheless prove that for the past two-three years he constantly called attention to the dangers and mistakes of a petty-bourgeois tendency that existed in general in the party, and that by its present position in the Russian question, the Minority shows itself to be the clearest expression of this tendency.

In the first place, what it was necessary to prove was that the Minority, on a series of political questions in the past, took or tended to take a pettybourgeois position on these questions as against the Cannonites, who took or tended to take the Marxist position. Even if Trotsky is granted all his points, they would at best show that on the whole the position of both the Majority and the Minority was the same in the eleven cases he mentions. The distinction between the two groups first occurs clearly on the Russian question. It is therefore necessary to demonstrate how, on this question, the position of the Minority is petty-bourgeois. But this is no easy matter. At least, it has not yet been done and, in our opinion, it cannot be done.

In the second place, we contend that by Trotsky's method of selection, one could "prove" almost anything about the tendency of the two groups. Out of two-three years of the political record of the party and its leadership, Trotský has taken a number of isolated instances in which he adopted a critical attitude, and then quite arbitrarily, and after the fact, he makes the present Minority the object of that criticism. Trotsky writes: "Let Shachtman not object that the lapses and mistakes in which the correspondence is concerned likewise can be brought against other comrades, including representatives of the present Majority. Possibly. Probably. But Shachtman's name is not repeated in this correspondence accidentally." But why should we not object? Whether or not Cannon's name is mentioned as often as Shachtman's (it is), is besides the point. What is important is that, as has been demonstrated above, what applied to one comrade applied at least as well to many others, to the Majority as well as the Minority. Why is it not just as legitimate to say today. "Cannon's present position on the Russian question is the logical flowering of the pettybourgeois tendency he showed on the question of Negrin's military budget, of the S.P. tactic, of the Eastman letter, of the Socialist Appeal, etc." To answer: "But it is not, it is the Marxian position!"-is merely an assertion, which is made just as vigorously by the Minority. The conflicting assertions have to be examined objectively; the arguments have to be judged on their merits. The fact that Cannon and Shachtman, or Goldman and Burnham, took the same position on political questions in the past, does not prove that one of them represents a different tendency today.

In the third place, even if it were granted that in every one of the eleven cases Trotsky's criticism was valid, and that it applied to Shachtman, or even to all the leaders of the Minority exclusively, as against the Majority leaders, it would still be necessary to ask: What importance have all these cases, including the invitation of Lyons to the Pioneer banquet and the prominence given to Eastman's article on the cover of the New International, *in comparison with* the known record of these comrades on all the other political problems facing the party in the past period? The struggle for the Fourth International and its program, their defense from all varieties of democrats, social-democrats, Stalinists, sectarians and others, did not begin a couple of months ago, when Cannon discovered that Burnham was not a defender of dialectics. It has been going on in the party for some time. We repeat: the record of the leaders of the Minority in the struggle to build the Fourth International and to defend its program, above all in the question of war and bourgeois-patriotism, is wellknown, and it is not worse than the record of the other comrades. Can it so easily be forgotten, or wiped out, even by all the eleven "proofs" cited by Trotsky, even if they were multiplied by two? That, too, will not be so easy. For the party to try to deny this record would be to deny itself.

Our characterization of the political tendency represented by the Cannon clique has only been denied, but never refuted. Not even the attempt has been made. To our challeng to show the development of the "petty-bourgeois tendency" from the political record of the Minority in the past, only Comrade Trotsky replied, although one would suppose that our most immediate collaborators, the Cannonites, who know that record intimately, should have been the first to meet the challenge by drawing on that knowledge. Not a single one of Trotsky's eleven "proofs" have been evaded in our answer, which shows the utter groundlessness of the political characterization which he has attempted to attach to the Minority. The charge remains unproved because there is no proof for it.

POLITICAL COMMITTEE MINORITY

March 9, 1940.

The	lights are	out	in Eur	rope		
The	darkness	is da	rawing	over	America	

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