

The New _____ **INTERNATIONAL**

AUGUST • 1946

Notes of the Month

**LABOR'S POLITICS AFTER THE RAILROAD STRIKE
ELECTIONS SHIFT FRANCE TO RIGHT
INDIA: DISSOLUTION OF EMPIRE**

JAMES T. FARRELL:

The Problem of Public Sensibility

A Review of the Film, *The Open City*

ROBERT STILER:

The Politics of Psychoanalysis

The Political Implications of Freudian Theory

A. Rudzienski:

THE PROBLEMS OF THE POLISH REVOLUTION

Leon Shields and Albert Gates:

SELF-DETERMINATION IN PALESTINE

An Exchange of Views

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ATTENTION, SUBSCRIBERS:

Difficulties beyond our control have again made it necessary to skip publication of the June and July issues of our magazine. The circumstances under which it is necessary to publish have not improved sufficiently over last year to permit us to resume the publication of twelve issues a year, as we had hoped.

Although our registry with the Post Office lists us as appearing every month "except June and July" (carried in our editorial box since August, 1945), we will honor all yearly subscriptions for twelve issues.

The September issue will be devoted primarily to articles on the works and significance of Leon Trotsky. *Stalin* will be reviewed by Max Shachtman, *Five Years of the Communist International* by Albert Gates, *The New Course* by Irving Howe. "The Trotsky Heritage and the Workers Party" will be an evaluation of the contributions of Trotsky to the program of the WP. Daniel Logan will contribute an article tracing the development of Trotsky's view on the Russian question.

This issue will be an important theoretical contribution to the relationship of Trotsky's ideas and the programmatic views of the Workers Party as developed over the last six years. Every reader of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL will want this issue as a real addition to the arsenal of Marxism.

James Barrett, a regular contributor, has informed us that he intends to continue the controversy on how to fight fascism. His health has, unfortunately, not permitted literary work in the past months.

CORRECTION

In our May issue an omission was made from the letter of A. Arlins in reply to Ruth Phillips. A quotation from Max Shachtman given by Comrade Arlins in its original English text was not recopied by the translator and was overlooked by the editors. The quotation and the preceding sentence follow the sentence that begins a paragraph in the left-hand column of page 159 with the words, "And so, the 'Editorial Note' of December..." and ends with "community of interest." The omitted material reads:

"However, a whole month *before* my article was published in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, Max Shachtman wrote as follows on the Fourth International:

"'During the war, the Fourth International simply ceased to exist as any (!) kind of real movement. It is amazing, but a fact, that for five or six years the International had nothing (!) to say (or was prevented from saying anything) on a dozen of the most important problems of world politics. There was no (!) international leadership; and that which arrogated this role to itself was far worse than bad (!): it was arrogantly bureaucratic (!), theoretically sterile (!) or psittacotic (!), politically a thousand times (!) wrong or impotent (!). In a word: the International failed completely (!) during the war, failed in every (!) respect, failed inexcusably (!). If we do not (!) start by establishing this fact, we will not (!) make the progress that *must* be made. . .) It is possible, we think, to overcome the terrible (theoretical confusion (!) and political disorientation (!) of the various sections, provided the problem is tackled correctly.' (My exclamations.—A. A.)"

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

VOLUME XII

AUGUST, 1946

NUMBER 6

NOTES OF THE MONTH

***The Railroad Strike: Turning Point in Labor's Politics —
The Indian Negotiations: Empire in Dissolution —
France Shifts to Right***

The note of grim determination struck by the undistinguished-appearing little man who faced the battery of microphones to hurl threats and denunciation upon the nation's "enemies," the atmosphere of historic decision that pervaded the proceedings, the tenseness that bespoke suppressed hysteria on the part of the assembled lawmakers, all combined to make the joint session of Congress that heard Truman's message dealing with the nation-wide rail tie-up strikingly reminiscent of the session that heard the late President Roosevelt read his war message two days after Pearl Harbor.

Though the surrender of the rail union chiefs, announced in the very midst of the President's speech, made of the latter the climax rather than the prelude to hostilities, history will reveal that the dramatic setting in the House on that afternoon was fully warranted by the importance of the occasion. *Truman's message marked the irrevocable turning point in the relations between labor and government that have prevailed since 1933.*

No matter what the course of Hillman's PAC during the elections of this year, no matter how irresolute and apparently contradictory will be labor's policy in relation to the administration, the railroad strike closed a chapter in the political history of the American working class which can be reread but not relived. The twelve-year-long spectacle of the total dependence of American labor upon the political fortunes of a government which has revealed itself to be the most calculating and far-seeing representative of monopoly capitalism in American history could not continue indefinitely. All the contradictions inherent in this relationship were driven to their ultimate degree by the rail strike.

But the rail strike did not burst upon happy administration-labor relations as from a clear sky. The careful observer was able to chart the steady deterioration of Roosevelt's hold over the labor movement beginning in 1940. This process was slowed down and virtually dammed up by the pressure of the war upon the labor bureaucracy, but only to move at a swifter pace when the sluice-gates were opened with V-J Day. The replacement of the adroit Roosevelt, with his tremendous prestige, by the inept and incompetent Truman, with a record that added up to zero, only hastened the process. But had Roosevelt been once as skilled and had he survived to manipulate the labor relations of the post-war period, the results

would have been different only in tempo. For Truman has fallen heir to a vast, incongruous political coalition which was already in process of disintegration when headed by the master political opportunist himself, who in addition had the tremendous advantage of the unifying effect of war upon the nation.

What Truman Inherited

The mass base of the administration is greatly reduced from the imposing forces Roosevelt mobilized in 1936-38 when he united sections of monopoly capital, the AFL, the CIO, the unemployed, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the Middle Western farmers, the solid South and the northern Negroes. Truman has the unhappy task of steering a course in this crucial election year of 1946 that will prove satisfactory to what remains of this coalition. The basic contradiction, even more basic in its fundamentals than the attempt to gain the votes of both Bilbo-Rankin and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, is, of course, the need of the administration to continue the Roosevelt myth of being a pro-labor administration while complying with the demands of capital that "labor be put in its place."

Truman came near to foundering on this rock in the very beginning of the strike wave when he plunged into the General Motors strike with his inflexible proposals for "fact-finding" and a thirty-day "cooling-off period." The breach between the administration and labor that followed was not reconciled despite the efforts of Truman to retreat and placate the trade unions. If his conciliatory conduct created the illusion in the ranks of labor that perhaps he had made a bad error and would not repeat it, the rail crisis proved that both Truman and the labor bureaucracy were trying to reconcile the irreconcilable.

Had Truman been free to choose his spot for declaring war upon organized labor, he could hardly have chosen a less opportune one than the rail controversy. The obvious logic of the demands put forth by the rail unions, the tremendous good will toward railroad personnel on the part of the public, the "neutral" position of the independent brotherhoods in regard to the AFL-CIO controversy, the accepted conservatism of the rail union leadership, the inability to charge "Communist domination" to confuse the issues, the obvious fact that the rail union chiefs were under tremendous pressure from their

ranks, all combined to secure for the unions the maximum of labor support and general public sympathy.

However, Truman was not free to choose his spot. The critical nature of the railroad industry as immediately revealed by the successful tie-up of the entire nation, required that the intervention be quick and decisive. The rail strike, furthermore, threw down the gauntlet to a bourgeoisie that had come to feel increasingly frustrated and impotent as it went from one strike crisis to the next—auto, steel, meat packing, electrical goods, coal and—the railroads. The legislators in Washington were subjected, in addition, to the tremendous pressure of the millions of middle class suburbanites, deprived of necessary transportation. It was also necessary to take up the challenge vigorously because it was a direct strike against the government, since the latter had “seized” the railroads in the previous week. One final reason adding to the urgency that dictated this as the test was that the whole complicated machinery set up in the Railway Labor Act in the Twenties and held up as the model for industrial relations was at stake, and precisely at a time when similar legislation was being proposed for industry as a whole.

Truman's Dilemma

Truman's message to Congress was a tactical victory. He gained his objective. The trains began to run. But he won at the price of a death-blow to his strategic aim: viz., maintaining the support of labor for the administration and the Democratic Party generally. Truman and certainly his political strategist, Hannegan, know that the support they will get from labor in 1946 will be given avowedly on the basis that “there is no alternative.” Such support cannot but presage an apathetic and lackadaisical participation of labor's rank and file in Hillman's efforts to mobilize again the workers' votes for the Democratic Party. Meanwhile the very applause that arose throughout the nation for Truman's forthright strike-breaking presages the growing spirit and militancy of the Republican ranks, composed mainly of the small town middle class and the farmers.

Truman's efforts to undo the effects of his “draft labor” proposal by vetoing the Case bill, which proposed a milder form of anti-labor curbs, only added a grotesque touch to the tortured maneuvers of the heir to Roosevelt's house of cards. The winds of class struggle threaten to destroy it despite Truman's wild clutching to left and right in an effort to hold it together.

Truman's anti-strike proposals have been compared to the Trades Disputes Act passed by the British Parliament after the defeat of the General Strike of 1926. Aside from the fact that Truman's proposals were a much harsher method of dealing with strikes, the comparison fails to take into account the fact that the British anti-strike laws came at the conclusion of the decisive defeat of the trade unions in a major test of power on the industrial field. The Trades Disputes Act was a means of placing a seal upon a defeat already administered. The Truman proposals, on the contrary, were the result of the very impotence of the government in the face of the strike. This impotence is an outgrowth of what the bourgeois commentators have come to refer to disingenuously as the “unbalance of power” that has developed between capital and labor. With fifteen million organized members and the demand for labor pressing hard upon the supply, the specific weight of the working class and its relative weight as against capital has increased several fold over the pre-war situation. In addition, each strike is born of the same causes: the wage freeze during the war in

the midst of mounting prices and the post-war inflationary spiral of wages and prices. As a result, the most widespread sympathy and understanding pervades the entire working class in behalf of each specific strike, whether AFL, CIO, miners or railroad brotherhoods. In the face of the numerical strength of organized labor and its splendid solidarity (in the ranks, if not on top) and in the absence of a large industrial reserve army of potential scabs, all hitherto effective methods of strike-breaking prove ineffective.

Government "Seizures" Ineffective

Significant in this connection is the fact that the workers have come to see through the government “seizures.” When Roosevelt first initiated this form of strike-breaking during the war, the workers in their naïveté would consider a “seizure” by the government as a victory and would often demand that this action be taken. In order to reinforce this procedure further in breaking strikes, the Smith-Connally Act made it a crime to strike, or even advocate strikes, in government-seized industry. The many disillusioning experiences of the workers with government seizures have rendered this tactic so ineffective that in the mine and rail disputes the government seizure orders were heeded only sufficiently to take certain legal steps to avoid implication of the union leadership under the Smith-Connally Act. The government itself has perpetrated the utmost in stupidities to make a farce of “seizures.” What more could be done to disillusion the workers than the spectacle in the meat packing industry where the plants have been “seized” some eight months ago to break a strike and placed under the direction of the Department of Agriculture but continue to operate the biggest black markets in the country and are the subject of raids and arrests by Office of Price Control inspectors? The ineffectiveness to which the “seizure” method of strike-breaking has been reduced leaves the government little recourse except a “slave labor law” which permits the militarization of labor and their employment at the point of a bayonet, as Truman proposed.

It is interesting to note that in the latter part of the strike wave, involving miners, railroad workers and seamen, non-wage issues played a crucial role in the disputes. With the uncertainty of wage-price relations from month to month, workers have come to attach a relatively greater importance to questions of working conditions than in the past. In the mine dispute the one contention was the union's demand for a health fund controlled by the union but financed by the employers. In the rail dispute, the issue upon which the corporations would not yield was the union's demand for changes in the working rules, unaltered for decades. In the maritime dispute, the important question was that of hours and size of crews. Workers are coming to feel that if a wage increase is an uncertain gain which prices may cancel out within a few months, then changes in working conditions are something which, once attained, they can maintain through organization and militancy. But this growing importance of the non-wage issues also bespeaks the growing social consciousness of American labor. Workers are beginning to understand that a trade union is not simply a business proposition in which one pays so much dues and receives so much in wage increases. What they are beginning to demand with increasing insistence is that the unions do something about the problem that lurks over their lives like an ever-present shadow, regardless of what wage increases they obtain. This is the question of security. The worker is growing away from the philosophy that dictated that he “make his little pile” in the shortest possible time in order to escape

his existence as a wage worker and open a filling station or buy a chicken farm. He is beginning to feel that he will remain a worker and that his children, even with an education, will also work for a living. With this realization comes the demand to improve working conditions and gain the greatest security against unemployment, illness, old age, etc. This growing social consciousness will increasingly translate itself into a growing political consciousness. The experience of the railroad strike and Truman's intervention has contributed mightily to this process.

The Indian Negotiations

After three months lengthy negotiations, conducted in the cool but dark recesses of the Viceregal palaces at New Delhi and Simla, the three Labor Party representatives of His Majesty's Labor Government appear, at this moment of writing, to have made a conditional satisfactory settlement with India's political parties and communities. While the intricate details—that is, the actual and exact division of the various new posts and portfolios—have not yet been worked out, nevertheless it seems correct to assume that we are on the threshold of a new relationship, a new *modus vivendi* between those two ancient and bitter antagonists—*British imperialism*, represented today by the Attlee Labor Government, and *Indian nationalism*, represented today by the All-India Congress Party of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, and the Moslem League of Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

It is important to recognize, however, that while Gandhi and his Congress Party have accepted the over-all, long-range proposition of the British, this acceptance raises far more questions and problems than it solves. The plan may best be described as a general algebraic formula, filled with unknown variables only a few of which have as yet been given any concrete meaning and content. The new, post-war relations between India and the Empire are far from settled and British imperialism will find that it has taken only the first step toward its objective—the creation within India of a stable, orderly régime that will allow British capital investment to remain on and draw profit; that will share, but not usurp or challenge, power with the English; that will accept, even in modified form, defensive allegiance to the Empire and contribute in the general struggle to ward off encroaching Russian and American imperialism. But the preliminary nature of the agreement does not deny its importance or significance. This holds true for the British bourgeoisie and the Indian bourgeoisie (the real signers of the new contract) alike. Both are making a serious effort, perhaps the final effort, to achieve a harmonious front against the dangers of internal nationalist revolution, led by the Indian workers and peasantry; as well as the dangers represented by rival powers. The urgency of the situation, due both to Britain's world position and the tenseness of class and national relations within India itself, has forced both bourgeois forces to make important concessions to one another.

To begin with, Britain has recognized India's abstract right to independence, including the right to withdraw formally from the British Empire. This is certainly a concession over and beyond the former posing of the question as that of India becoming a Dominion, like Canada, South Africa, etc., within the Empire. Furthermore, in part II of the accepted plan, a

method is laid down for the convening of a Constituent Assembly to draft a new constitution for an independent India, which shall in turn make a treaty with England. Of course, these are *formulae*, the exact meaning of which are not yet clear even to the participants. It would nevertheless be an error not to recognize the real nature of these concessions, particularly since the people of that country will be the ones who determine precisely what is meant. Even part I of the Plan, providing for the creation of an interim government prior to the convening of the Constituent Assembly, is yet to become operative and worked out. Yet, from the standpoint of both bourgeoisies, this is secondary, since the general principle of an *orderly sharing of power* has been agreed upon.

Concession to "Pakistan"

Secondly, the Congress Party has been forced to make important concessions to the Moslem League's demand for a separatist, "Pakistan" state, ruled by a Moslem majority. Part II of the British proposal clearly provides for the grouping together of Moslem-majority provinces, destined to have a specific weight as Moslem territory, in the new India to be created by the Constituent Assembly. This concession was necessary to obtain Moslem League support to the proposal, and marks a clear retreat on the part of the Congress which has heretofore attempted to deny the strength of Moslem communalism. The interim government will, furthermore, recognize this increased weight of the Moslem League by the number of seats and the importance of the portfolios to be granted to the League. Jinnah demands parity with the Congress; he may obtain this, or only slightly less. Just as the Indian, predominantly Hindu, national bourgeoisie is able to drag concessions out of the British because of the latter's delicate position; so is the unique Moslem bourgeoisie able to effect concessions in its dealings with the Congress leadership. The relationship between these three forces—Hindu national bourgeoisie (Congress); Moslem bourgeoisie (League) and British imperialism (Labor Government)—is what shapes the concrete course of events in India today. This, admittedly, is on the level of bourgeois, diplomatic, imperialist politics, and will remain so until the masses of India are prepared to break their current silence.

But even on this plane, even on the basis of bourgeois relationships, all the major problems of India, its bourgeoisie, and relations with the Empire, remain. Here we wish only to list the important ones:

(1) An interim government must be organized, and its powers, composition, membership, duration, etc., established. This alone will require further negotiations, "deals" and shennanigans between the Viceroy and those primadonnas of Indian politics—Messrs. Gandhi, Nehru and Jinnah.

(2) Once established, such an interim government will be threatened with immediate collapse under the weight of the tragic food famine now threatening huge areas of the country. Nehru has told the peasants to revolt rather than starve. Will he, the future Prime Minister of his country, support such actions?

(3) The convocation of the proposed Constituent Assembly (we deal below with the character of this Assembly) still faces many difficulties. Shall Europeans (English) be represented despite objections by Gandhi and the Congress? How shall the undemocratic, fraudulent manner of convening the Assembly be "sold" to the Indian masses? What of other minorities and communities?

(4) More important, how shall the Assembly itself func-

tion? Will the Congress Party have a workable majority and impose its program? A bitter struggle over the new Constitution will unquestionably take place between various factions of the Assembly. Above all, what will be done on the issue of an unconditional declaration of independence from Britain, if a revolutionary delegate is present to propose such a resolution? In a word, the very ability of such an Assembly even to live is open to question.

(5) Finally, the new government for India to be created by this Constituent Assembly (and that, by itself, is a tremendous problem) must in turn draft a treaty defining its relations with Britain and the Empire. Here, the whole matter of trade, investment, customs and tariffs, etc., enters. How can the new government solve this to its advantage without posing, in a basic sense, the whole problem of expropriation of British capital?

The magnitude of these problems confronted by the Indian bourgeoisie is apparent. There is as much hope for the Indian capitalist class to effect an orderly, peaceful, smooth and long-drawn-out transition to a "bourgeois-democratic" Indian republic, as there was for the Russian liberal bourgeoisie to carry out a similar task under the Czar. At every step along the road, the whole problem of Indian social life and economy is dragged into the picture. Behind the constitutional, administrative and parliamentary issues lurk the general social problems of the 385,000,000 people of this sub-continent. The agrarian revolution, involving the matters of land ownership and distribution; the industrial revolution, involving the Indian proletariat and its class struggle against British-native capitalism; the acute Moslem and minorities problem; the relationship of an independent India with Britain and foreign imperialist powers, etc. It is inconceivable that the weak, feeble and often pathetic Indian bourgeoisie can tiptoe its way through this maze, without threatening a social outburst at each mincing step. To preserve the "peaceful" atmosphere and keep the masses off the scene, it could only capitulate to the British at each step. *Both*—we repeat—*both* know this.

To best understand what the forces involved will be fighting and maneuvering for in the future, we must explain the general objectives behind the various parties and organizations. We have already touched upon the objective of the British and it is evident enough not to require any expansion. This leaves the Congress Party, the Moslem League and other minority communities (Sikhs, Christians, etc.). The English and Anglo-American communities within Indian society will always be, of course, bitterly antagonistic to Indian nationalism and social change. Their future lies with the Viceroy and the British *Raj*, come what may. Other religious-communal minorities—Sikhs, Parsees, Christians, etc.—are of minor importance, numerically and politically, and, provided they are guaranteed their democratic rights of existence in both theory and practice, can easily be fitted into a federal, independent India. The real political movements in Indian affairs are represented by the Moslem League and the Congress Party.

The Moslem League

Within the last ten years, thanks primarily to the hostile attitude of the Congress Party leadership toward the Moslem people, the Moslem League of Jinnah has grown widely in support, membership and influence. It has succeeded in shaping, canalizing and presenting to the country the various complaints, discriminations and hardships to which the Mos-

lem community is subjected. In a word, it has created a reactionary, but living, force of narrow Moslemic communalism and chauvinism, and beyond doubt succeeded in splitting the generally united forces of Indian nationalism, formerly under Congress leadership. Moslem nationalism, in the form of the League, can no longer be belittled or underrated. We cannot here go into the reasons or history of this development. A future issue of *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL* will contain material on this subject and, in general, the whole problem of Hindu-Moslem relationships.

The Moslem League is the organization of the backward, semi-feudal but ambitious Moslem landlords, feudal princes, professionals and students. As the organized movement of the Moslem ruling class it aims to strengthen that classes general status within the Indian society, break out into the sphere of native industry and capitalist development, safeguard its feudal property and land rights and become accepted as the authoritative voice of the 92,000,000 Moslem workers and peasants. Its ultimate goal is the organization of a separatist state of "Pakistan," in which this class shall be the sole ruling class over the Hindu and Moslem populations within that territory. Its immediate goal is a satisfactory number of posts within the approaching interim government and a sufficiently strong representation at the Constituent Assembly.

Because of the fact that the Moslem masses are largely unorganized, and among the most apathetic and downtrodden section of the population, the Moslem League has, by default, appeared as the spokesman for the Moslem people. It has fed itself largely on legitimate experiences and complaints conveyed to it by the Moslem peasantry in the latter's dealings with Hindu landlords and bourgeois. But the real weakness of the League lies precisely in its present source of mass strength. Only so long as the Moslem masses are not organized into workers' unions and peasant associations will the League be able to retain its hold. Any class and social movement of the Moslem masses would immediately upset the League since it would be directed, first of all, against the Moslem rulers themselves. Thus we find the Moslem League holding a common front with the British and the Congress Party in denying the Moslem people, for example, the right to vote on the issue of "Pakistan" and separatism. This reason alone is more than justification for the revolutionists of India to become champions of the popular rights of the Moslem people, in their efforts to break the Moslems from their present narrow, reactionary leadership. Not a feudal-capitalist "Pakistan" state of the Moslem League, but the active participation of the Moslem workers and peasants in India's class struggle, and the resolving of the Moslem-communal problem *according to the express will of the Moslem people*, within an independent India.

Congress Party Moves to Right

The role of the Congress Party in Indian affairs has often been described. This Party functions as the organized instrument of the Indian national bourgeoisie, in its long struggle to create conditions favorable to the health and growth of native Indian capitalism. Naturally, the Party has had to organize the support of India's masses, to a certain extent and under given conditions, but it has never failed to lay low the mass nationalist struggle at each decisive phase of the movement. The Congress Party has become increasingly conservative and dominated by the rabid Hindu communalist organization of the Hindu Mahasabha. Today, it is openly the party of the big Indian industrialists, textile manufac-

turers, landlords and petty bourgeoisie. We cannot detail the various acts marking the Party's consistent turn to the right, but the latest and most significant example is its acceptance of the Constituent Assembly proposed by British imperialism. What revolting treachery lies in Gandhi's acceptance of this proposal! The Congress has ostensibly always stood for a popular Assembly, freely elected through universal suffrage. Instead, the Assembly accepted by them is to be (1) not even elected, but appointed by provincial Legislative Assemblies which were, in turn, elected by less than 5 per cent of the population, and (2) will consist of delegates appointed by the Rajahs of the feudal Native States, to the tune of 25 per cent of the total. It is doubtful if a more undemocratic, unrepresentative Assembly has ever been convened in the history of bourgeois society, yet the Congress has approved. The tactical problem of participation or boycott of this Assembly is, of course, a problem for the Indian revolutionists. Yet it is clear that no revolutionary party or tendency can assume the slightest responsibility for this joint Assembly of British imperialism and Indian capitalist-feudalism.

What does the Congress Party want? At the Poona session of the All-India Congress Committee, held in 1940, the Congress adopted a resolution expressing clearly, for the first time, its constitutional program. It demanded the creation of a strong government at the Center—a strong Congress government, it goes without saying. It is still seeking this objective and no doubt feels that the coming Constituent Assembly will enforce this demand. But this is merely the governmental form through which the Congress Party—i.e., the Indian capitalist class—hopes to win more basic economic victories. The Congress, furthermore, desires to see the withdrawal of the British Army from India and its replacement by a “national” Army; a government over which the British Viceroy has no veto rights, and a centralized state apparatus with clear-cut Congress Party majorities in the legislative and administrative bodies.

The union government at the Center, as envisaged by Congress, must have authority in all foreign affairs, regulations of defense and communications (with financial powers in the above categories); control of an independent revenue system; currency and customs (tariff, duties, excises, etc.) powers and “other subjects . . . intimately allied to them.” We quote from various letters of the Congress Working Committee in its dealings with the British mission. The nature and content of these demands are apparent. They belong to a class that, within definite limits, still believes history holds out to it the hope for riches, expansion and power over great masses.

If but one revolutionary delegate speaks out at the coming Constituent Assembly and voices the real demands of the Indian millions—the cry for food and land, for a free India without ties to England—he will tear the hypocritical mask off these enemies of India; enemies who stand united—British imperialism, Moslem communal-nationalism and the Hindu landlord-capitalists. For united they stand behind one proposition—the common exploitation of 385,000,000 people.

France Shifts Right

The vote on the Constitution in the French referendum and the elections to the Second Constituent Assembly both marked the shift of the French political situation to the right.

The controversy on the Constitution took place on definite class lines. The Constitution, product of the Assembly elected last October with its decisive Communist-Socialist majority, was supported by the working class parties and the trade unions. The fight against the Constitution was led by the MRP, which rallied behind it the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeois masses. The defeat of the CP-SP Constitution marked the shift of disillusioned middle class voters to the MRP camp, whose votes gave the CP and SP a popular mandate eight months ago. The increase in the total vote, accruing to the advantage of the Right, revealed the importance each side, but above all the bourgeoisie, attached to the contest. It also revealed the greater ability of the bourgeois front to bring additional reserves into the political arena.

The politically unstable petty bourgeois masses again demonstrated that they will give a letter of credit to a political trend that holds out hope for them, *but always with a definite date attached*. The inability of the CP-SP majority to act decisively, their fear of taking the power into their own hands, their maneuvers with the MRP, their reduction of all social and economic proposals to a level acceptable to the MRP, their eight-month-long “Big Three” party coalition that lacked internal unity or common direction but lacked no end of bickering and squabbling, all combined to cause enough petty bourgeois voters to foreclose on the October letter of credit for the CP-SP and to bring enough additional, aroused petty bourgeois voters to the polls to topple their Constitution and then their majority.

The slogan of “A CP-SP Government” (discussed in these columns in our February issue) was the only means of crystallizing the petty bourgeois support which the working class gained during the occupation and the “liberation days” and moving the situation to the left. However, neither the CP nor the SP dared to propose this class solution. If the CP proceeded entirely from the interests of Moscow foreign policy, then the SP proceeded with one eye cocked on the French bourgeoisie (MRP) and the other on the Anglo-American imperialists. With their traditional attachment to bourgeois interests, the SP felt the need of MRP support in the coalition on all domestic issues against the CP which proceeded with less regard for bourgeois property rights. The CP, however, likewise felt the need of the MRP support in the coalition when it came to matters of foreign policy. Since the foreign policy of the French bourgeoisie today has more in common with Russian proposals than with those of the Anglo-Americans, the MRP and CP saw eye to eye more often in this field than either did with the Socialists' orientation toward London-Washington.

Prospects and Strategy

With the policies of the CP and SP proceeding from the above calculations and with the bourgeoisie not yet firmly enough entrenched to risk a completely bourgeois government, French politics threaten to continue to stagnate in this impasse for the coming period. However, the relationship of forces in such an impasse never remains frozen for long. The recent two elections indicate the direction of the shift—toward the right. Only when the latter has become strong enough will the French bourgeoisie feel confident to dispense with the coalition of the workers' parties and re-establish its direct rule.

For the Marxists, the strategic aim remains the same—break the coalition. In the preceding period the specific tactic demanded by the given situation, a CP-SP majority in the Assembly, was concretized by the demand, “Out with the MRP! A CP-SP Government!” Today, with the failure of the CP and

SP to command a majority in the Second Assembly, the specific tactic is concretized by the demand, "Down with the Coalition! CP-SP Out of the Bourgeois Government!"

The 45,000 votes polled by the French Trotskyists for some eighty candidates in eleven electoral districts indicates that there has not yet been any appreciable shift away from the CP and SP on the part of workers. However, the widespread activity of the French Fourth Internationalists, as indicated by participation in the elections on such a scale, cannot but bring the party to the attention of large masses. Even if the close contest between the CP-SP and the bourgeois front com-

mands their attention today, the next shift to the left in the situation and the inevitable growth of dissatisfaction with the line of the CP and SP will bring the first heavy reinforcements to the Trotskyists from among workers who are only now hearing about the party that represents the revolutionary alternative to Stalinism and reformism. This will be all the more true if the shift to the left spills over the parliamentary banks and unlooses the mass struggles which are inevitable once the French proletariat recovers from the physical and psychological weariness from which all Europe suffers.

THE GERMANIES, II

A Social, Political and Economic Survey

Lieutenant General Clay, the American Deputy Military Governor of occupied Germany, plans to evacuate the zone of American troops some time in 1948. By that time, he estimates, the overall policy of America toward its zone will have been fulfilled. What are these objectives? The General states them as follows: destruction of Germany's military potential; completion of demilitarization and deindustrialization; restoration of democratic processes; creation of a provisional central German government accompanied by the abolition of the four zone system.

The military mind is fond of summing up matters in simple stages of bureaucratic formula. Behind the many reports of the American military authorities lies the story of the ruthless destruction of German industry and productive capacity, in line with the original Morgenthau-Baruch scheme. The basic objective of America is to destroy the competitive capacity and ability of a nation that threatened to be its greatest rival in the struggle for control of the world market. Everything else—"democratization," education, propaganda, etc.—is secondary and subordinate to this aim. The gradual resumption of German export trade, forecast by the head of the Military Government economic department, gives us the story in another form. Today, German export life is nil, but clearly there must be some export life in the future, if only to be applied against necessary food imports to prevent starvation. What export trade is contemplated? "Textiles, lumber, potash, certain medicines, light metal goods, cameras, carbon brushes and miscellaneous articles." In a word, the products of light, minor industry; things not dependent upon heavy, basic industry, and clearly of such a nature as not to compete with American export trade.

In the American zone, the resumption of industrial life is on the lowest of all levels. In November, 1945, General Eisenhower *boasted* that such had been the success of his administration that he had reduced production to ten per cent of its pre-war level! Almost one year after its victory over German imperialism, the United States has successfully prevented, in its zone, the resumption of mining; reconstruction of the ruined cities and transport systems (for which heavy industry is indispensable); resumption of manufacture of machinery, assembly work, etc. Only that industrial activity unavoidable for primitive economic life (milling, canning of food, handicraft repair shops, etc.) has been tolerated (not to mention those light, skilled industries, the products of which—cameras, cookoo-

clocks, pottery, leather goods, ceramics—our American occupation officers and troops are especially fond of).

Of the great I. G. Farben plants, 22 out of 42 in the American zone have been destroyed or dismantled for reparations. This complex monopoly of the German chemical, dye and munitions industry formed the heart of industrial life in the essentially agrarian sector occupied by American imperialism. Seizure, dismantling, distribution among the smaller powers*—such is the fate of German industry at American hands, belying the complaints from some quarters that America is "soft and friendly" to German industrialists. The ranks of the unemployed in the American zone constantly mount, facilitating the reactionary drive to force the skilled German workers back into farm life, handicraft and "luxury" industry. Hundreds of thousands of ex-Wehrmacht men wander about, idling in the countryside or the cities, gazing reflectively upon the ruins of a nation that would require several decades of unrelenting work to rebuild. But American imperialism has destroyed a rival and must keep that rival inert. The whole struggle in the American sector will unfold around the issue of the right of 22,000,000 people to live, produce and rebuild their ruins. The bitter reality of our occupation policy in Germany is summed up in the following food value table of what has been recommended by *American* medical authorities, and what actually is:

Diet in calories from V-E Day until	
March, 1946	1550 per day
Diet in calories recommended by Army	
medical men, as a non-starvation	
minimum productive diet	1750 to
	2000 per day
Diet in calories ordered by Military de-	
cree, March, 1946	1250 per day

The Democratization Program

But have we not brought a democratic régime to our portion of Germany? Every village and hamlet is plastered with placards, announcing the right to enjoy free speech and press, to form democratic trade unions, to organize political parties, etc. Are we not gradually turning back the country, after free elections, to control by the German people through elected rep-

*The United States has not yet begun the delivery of the 15 per cent surplus plant equipment promised to Russia under the Potsdam accord—a convenient excuse used by the Russians for their continued seizures of plants in their zone!

representatives? Have we not freed the masses from the curse of the rabid Nazis, by persistent elimination of such types from public life?

Much has been already reported on the concrete functioning of the American administration. The validity of the many criticisms—top-heavy bureaucratic machinery that does not function; arrogance, ignorance and incompetence on the part of the American officers; failure to carry out directives and proposals, etc.—is undeniable and attested to by the most conservative of reporters. The general swinishness of the American occupation heads, symbolized by the late General Patton (popularly known to the Germans as the new Mad King of Bavaria!), is only accenuated by the attitudes of the occupation troops themselves, living in their walled oases of plenty amidst the general German misery. A secret survey of AMG recently revealed the *real* dislike and hatred that exists in the population toward the Americans. This report also claimed that “mention of a new *Freikorps* or *Feme* had been frequent and that it was expected in many quarters that the desperation and idleness of youth would have violent consequences.” The discovery of an organized *Hitlerjugend* resistance network proved the validity of this report and, in itself, contains a damning indictment of the American administration because the very fact that organized resistance takes on such a *reactionary, chauvinistic, ultra-nationalist form* (despite the fact that the mass of Germans are utterly through with Nazism, in an ideological sense) testifies to the general feeling regarding the occupying power. If American imperialism, in its German administration, had carried through its alleged democratic aims, such a movement as the *Hitlerjugend*, symbolizing an effort to revive a political tendency that brought total destruction to the German nation, would not dare lift its head. Today, in the general apathy of the Germans, Nazism revives, feeding on stagnation and economic misery.

But these criticisms of our American liberals and churchmen are superficial in character, evading the real question. The Fourth International, on the contrary, states categorically the right of the German people to full independence and self-determination. The American Workers Party demands the withdrawal of our occupation troops and the return of German government to its people—that is, not reforms in the military administration, but its abolition. In the given situation of Germany, the alleged “democratic” reforms are meaningless, forms without substance.

The right to form trade unions is granted, but these unions cannot carry on the class struggle, i.e., go on strike. Furthermore, in the general poverty of the area—mass unemployment, lack of significant productive activity, lack of food and commodities in general—the traditional role of unions in fighting for improved living conditions becomes largely meaningless. Fight for higher wages? But there is nothing to buy!

The right to form political parties and vote for candidates of one's choice is granted. But only those parties approved by AMG can be formed; that is, quisling parties that agree to accept the occupation. Furthermore, the AMG concept of political democracy belongs to the Jacksonian era of frontier townships and the New England doctrine of selectmen councils. The right of a German village to elect a group of men to deal with trivialities has nothing to do with the right to settle broad issues involving government, economic reconstruction, etc.

We could go down the list of democratic “rights” allegedly granted to the Germans and discover the same “catch” attached to each. The very existence of AMG invalidates the premises

of political democracy, even from the standpoint of traditional liberal doctrine.

In summary then, America occupies its section of Germany in an imperialist fashion, destroying an economic and commercial rival, reducing 22,000,000 people to a primitive level of existence, robbing a territory of its resources and industry for the benefit of its general imperialist policy and throwing back a great area into an agrarian, pastoral stage that implies retrogression and stagnation in all fields. There is not a single feature of the American occupation that cannot but be condemned as reactionary. In this general respect, the American zone takes its place with the French, Russian and British zones.

The British Administration:

“At the contemplated level (of rationing) they foresee a sharply accelerated death rate, widespread hunger and rickets, as well as the possibility of epidemics resulting from malnutrition. Furthermore, it will hamper even minimal industrial recovery. Production in the British zone has fallen ten per cent since the ration cut.” (UP report)

* * *

“The Ruhr is producing less than a fourth of its pre-war capacity of 2,500,000 tons (of coal) a week and German mines are not meeting essential army requirements...” (New York Times)

* * *

Many a liberal journalist and ambitious American military governor has admired the alleged skill, experience and efficiency of the British as administrators of foreign territories. A more accurate portrayal of British imperialism is offered by Trotsky. “The English bourgeoisie has been trained to mercilessness by all the conditions of its insular position, its Calvinist moral philosophy, its colonial practice, its national arrogance.” (*Whither England*, p. 187) The two reports quoted above are more realistic appraisals of alleged administrative ability and efficiency. British imperialism, occupying the former industrial heart of Germany, acts no differently than the other powers—that is, it seeks to fulfill the concrete objectives of its program, to fit its German sector into the imperial world struggle for commercial and economic survival.

The Labor Government wants British-Germany to produce because it conceives of the Ruhr and its industrial remnants as a factor of assistance in its commercial battle with America. Not that the coal and steel taken from Germany can offer direct competition to America, to be sure, but rather for their value in the effort to revive European economy and thus re-establish the trade of the smaller countries with England and lessen their dependency upon American “charity.” Thus, for example, the bulk of Ruhr coal production now goes to France (with whom the Labor Government is anxious to form an alliance); Belgium, Norway, Denmark and Luxembourg. This production is considered a basic force in the strategy of building up England's desired “Western bloc” in Europe. It accounts for the differences between British policy and Russian, French and American policy, so far as the survival of German industrial activity is concerned. But this policy is no less ruthless toward the German bourgeoisie, with respect to the latter's continued existence, than that of the other occupying powers. In fact, the elimination of the great Ruhr steel and coal monopolists has been complete, including the placing of these gentlemen in jail! In January, 1946, the British Military Government expropriated without compensation the coal and steel industries of their sector, placing itself in the position of complete owner of all properties; under British control and management. The former owners are now in jail facing trials as war criminals. To make things perfectly clear, the British Mili-

tary Government followed up this action by extending it to all properties in their zone and taking control of all industries completely out of German hands. Thus, in effect, the British zone approximates more closely a colony in the traditional sense of the word than do the other zones. The basic aim of these actions, we repeat, was to most effectively employ German coal and steel in the struggle for European influence against America and Russia. It was the unique method dictated to British imperialism in its difficulty. Simply stated, it was a necessity to produce coal to compensate for the still ominously declining English coal production.

Was the effort successful, By no means. The entire population of Europe went cold this past winter, while even France failed to register gains in return to industrial life. The Ruhr is producing 25 per cent of its capacity, while reconstruction of bombed pit-heads and steel mills has not even started. Output, of course, is much below the pre-war standards. German miners, lacking proper nourishment, proper equipment and protection, are not effectual—plus their knowledge of the fact that their country receives virtually nothing of what they dig.

The whole future of the Ruhr area is, of course, a bone of bitter contention among the imperialists. But Britain will not lightly give it up, even at the expense of its desired alliance with France. Far more important for us is the future of the 11,000,000 Germans who inhabit the Ruhr, 5½ million of them in the great cities of the inner Ruhr. (Essen, Wupperthal, etc.) What is their future under British rule?

The recent decision of the Central Control Council fixing steel production at below 6,000,000 tons yearly and preventing the regrowth of industry by constant inspection of plants constitutes a terrific blow at the workers of the Ruhr. The Ruhr employed approximately 1,000,000 workers in iron and steel, plus 2,000,000 in allied industries. Less than half of this proletarian concentration of 3,000,000 will find work under the imposed schedule! A British intelligence officer predicts that perhaps 5,000,000 will be affected. "What do you think will happen in the Ruhr next winter with perhaps 5,000,000 people derived of jobs and security? What do you think they will turn to?" And he answers his own question by predicting a fierce resistance movement. (*New York Times*, January 26, 1946) A German Social-Democrat, working for the British, states matters more effectively. "The Allies are now setting up conditions which twenty years ago fostered nazism and which, if they continue, inevitably will force German youth into some new expression in militarism and fascism. . . . You cannot teach a man to be a democrat by taking away his job and his future and threatening him with starvation."

Thus we see that even British imperialism, the *sole* power among the four that has any interest, from its own narrow standpoint, of reviving German economic life, is incapable of doing this within the broader arena of the general occupation and subjugation of the German nation. In the most highly industrialized and wealthiest section of Germany rules a power that desires to utilize, to its own advantage, these benefits. But so thoroughly retrogressive has imperialism become, in all its forms, that this area threatens to surpass all the others in the depths of its misery for the population. Hunger and unemployment are what the "devoted and selfless" British administrators offer to their colonial wards, backed up by the armored units at their disposal. Their rule differs in no essential aspect from that of the other powers.

* * *

"...German industrial capacity after reparation removals should be physically capable of producing a standard of living

equivalent to the European average in, say, 1948. Given the difficult problems of administration and economic organization which the German peacetime economy will still face in 1948, it may be doubted that industrial equipment remaining in Germany at that time will in fact produce at full capacity, so that the standard of living realized in Germany is likely for some time to fall short of the European average." (State Department declaration on Germany, December 11, 1945)

Basic Policy of Big Four

We have examined in summary form the administrations of the various zones carved out of the German nation. Although each imperialist occupant pursues radically different *methods* of exploitation within its zone, all have much in common—pillage and robbery of German wealth and resources, denial of independence and meaningful democracy, imposition on great masses of an unwanted, oppressive régime. The differences in the working out of each powers' plans varies strictly according to the unique, special interests of that power. At Berlin, through the medium of the central Allied Control Council, the four powers attempt to minimize these differences, and work out a coordinated plan for common exploitation of the 66,000,000 remaining Germans.

Despite their differences, despite their failure to achieve any coordination between the four zones (in terms of the trade and commerce proposed in the Potsdam agreement), the Big Four have no difficulty in devising a common attitude toward the Germans. This may be summarized as follows:

(1) Germany shall be kept weak and divided and a combined light-industry, agricultural economy shall prevail in place of Europe's former most high-powered, industrialized nation.

(2) The German bourgeoisie shall be reduced to that small, light-industry, consumers' goods section of capitalists who may continue to exist under Allied supervision. (Thus we have the spectacle of American capitalism, the bulwark of world capitalism, placing under arrest the banking officers and the "Big 6" German banks, and preparing to try these bankers as war criminals! The United States has likewise proposed the decentralization of the German banking system, and the liquidation and dissolution of the "Big 6" banks.) The big German bourgeoisie of Ruhr monopolists and munition manufacturers and their Junker allies are historically finished as a ruling class in Germany.

The German people shall pay, in every conceivable way, for the costs of the war and reparations. Although, as an American report has admitted, "the truth is that no one has a clear idea of Germany's current assets, expenditures and tax revenues," the Allies will work out a system to drain the country of its liquid wealth. Today, when a widespread credit and currency inflation has begun despite Allied boasts to the contrary,* the German internal, national debt of 400 billion Marks stands in a state of suspension, while the Allied financial experts debate how to annul it and soak up, in their respective zones, whatever remains of German wealth.

(4) The area of agreement between the powers has been summed up in the recent accord of the Control Council, fixing the nature and extent of German economic life over an indefinite period. The powers must get together in some fashion, to prevent their mutual disagreements from undermining the whole purpose of the occupation. Naturally, this getting together can only be on the backs of the prostrate German nation, as the following chart of Germany's future life indicates:

*Seventy billions Marks in circulation (December, 1945), as compared with six billion Marks in circulation (1933).

Industries Abolished
 synthetic gasoline
 synthetic oil
 synthetic rubber
 ball bearings
 ammonia
 aluminum and magnesium
 mining
 heavy farming tractors
 heavy machine tools
 radio transmission
 aircraft
 ocean vessels
 cement

Industries Restricted
 steel
 chemicals (40 to 70% cut
 in pre-war)
 machine tools (11.4% of 1938
 production)
 locomotives (none to 1949)

Industries Allowed
 agriculture
 coal mining
 potash mining
 building construction
 light and handicraft goods

Here we have, in essence, the story of the destruction of Germany's means of production.

The Future of the German People:

The German people today constitute a subjugated nation, cast back by world imperialism into a state of division, decentralization and overt national oppression. Lenin's characterization of the Versailles Treaty and its consequences as a "national humiliation" of the German masses is a hundred-fold truth, applied to the Potsdam Treaty. Any starting point in evolving a political program for the future of Germany must, if it is to have any realistic orientation, begin with *the right of self-determination* for the 66 million Germans. That is, the categorical declaration that the occupation must cease, the troops of the occupation must be withdrawn, the artificial division into four zones must be done away with, and the right of the Germans to create their own, freely-elected government must be re-established. Or, to put it differently, every principle, method, tactic or means employed by one and all of the four occupying powers must be cleaned off the slate.

The broken-up Germany of today, with its ruined economy, has often been compared with the Germany of Napoleon Bonaparte's time, subsequent to the 1848 revolution, when the process of national unification began to move forward. Naturally, there are certain resemblances, but the differences are more basic. Despite its familiar vacillations on the issues of unifying Germany and fulfilling the democratic revolution, the German bourgeoisie of that period was an up-and-coming class, with an economic and political future ahead of it, and an expanding world economy within which to move about. Today, this bourgeoisie is largely destroyed and has no future but one of quivering-subservience to more powerful bourgeoisies of foreign nations. The preliminary problems of the German revolution therefore,—i.e., those problems *posed anew* to the people as a direct consequence of the war disaster (unification of Germany, winning of national independence, reconstruction of a national economy, solving of the agrarian question, building of a democratic government, etc.)—these democratic problems can only be handled and solved by the masses of German people themselves: the workers and the peasants. The remnants of the German capitalist class cannot play any part in the mobilization of the German people for resistance and national freedom. This is precisely why the growing-over, the continuation of the future popular, democratic revolution into its socialist phase, under clearcut leadership by the German workers, may be expected to take place rapidly, but this expectation does not avoid the necessity of understanding that Germany must pass through a period of mass, popular, unformed, confused *national resistance* (in the style of the French resistance movement) in which an independent class movement of the proletariat can establish itself and in which the German revolutionary vanguard must wholeheartedly participate. Talk about a "coming

German revolution"; ultimatic demands for the "hegemony of the German proletariat"; slogans of soviets and the like, is abstractionist misunderstanding of the entire situation in Germany today.

The question is one of grasping the fact that (a) a gigantic *resistance* movement, a *nationalist* movement centering around the issue of a Free Germany will inevitably develop as the first phase of post-Hitler German history; (b) that a revolutionary group and a revolutionary party must openly, willingly and unashamedly take its place in such a movement, accepting its broad slogans and objectives as its own, while—it goes without saying—advancing proletarian class hegemony and the socialist program as the ultimate means of achieving these objectives, assuring them and moving ahead. This point of view was advocated by the Workers Party during the period of the occupation of France by the Nazis; it is familiar to readers of our press and we shall not repeat it here, except to state we consider it even more applicable to Germany today and tomorrow. It is the point of view of the German section of the Fourth International (IKD), those comrades to whom falls the concrete task of working out this approach in living practice.

A manifesto of "International Solidarity with the German Proletariat" (*Fourth International*, January, 1946), signed by ten European sections of the Fourth International, proclaims "we are for self-determination of the German people." But this manifesto of elementary solidarity with and support to the German workers in their struggles nowhere tells us what this means! The whole document is so written and weighted that it seems to be addressed to a proletariat engaged in a sharp class struggle with its own ruling class; certainly not the doubly nationally oppressed workers and peasants of occupied Germany. Its abstract granting of the right of self-determination is negated by everything else, summed up in the final slogan of "Long live the German proletarian revolution!" Furthermore, while continuing to support the slogan of "the right of each people to self determination . . .", the European Secretariat of the Fourth International at the same moment "rejects as it did during the war the idea of a 'democratic national' revolution through which the struggle of the revolutionary proletariat must first pass, drawing behind it the national masses, before it can develop on the basis of its own socialist program and finally wind up with the proletarian revolution." (*Internal Bulletin*, SWP, Vol. VII No. 3, February, 1946)

And here is exactly the point that makes this whole approach so unreal and dogmatic—*what* proletarian movement? We already have given some details on the status of the German worker—his defeat, his confusion and groping, his preoccupation with the struggle to survive. Even the thesis of the European Secretariat mentioned above recognizes this, in part. "On the day after the military defeat, the material and human premises for all important revolutionary activity by the masses in Germany were already lacking." A modest understatement of reality, but more important is the further admission that "the rebuilding of the German labor movement will henceforth reflect the progress of the revival of the country's economic life, of the integration of the proletariat into production, and the amelioration of the new repressive régime of the occupying forces." But, as we know, the exact *opposite* to this has taken place—that is, the economic life of the country has sunk lower, the proletariat has become more dispersed and more unemployed, while the repressiveness of the régimes has hardly diminished! Therefore, the problem before the German workers is the same, only more so, as it was "on the day after

the military defeat"—namely, "*the rebuilding of the German labor movement!*" That's the point, not resounding phrases about proletarian revolution, etc.—all addressed to a working class that has yet to re-establish its elementary forms of bare economic struggle. The proposals of the Fourth International with regard to Germany are just as empty of meaning, as hopelessly sectarian as were their proposals to the French movement during the period of the Résistance.

But what about the German workers? Are they to submit themselves to the middle-class democrats, to follow along behind this amorphous national movement for a "democratic" Germany? Of course not, but we must recognize the point from which the German worker starts out today. He is not the French worker, who lived under Nazism—and then, only in an indirect form—during a short period. The first steps of the German workers—the formation of the new unions—are halting steps, in the effort to find the best form of organization for the future. It is the hesitant step of an infant movement, not the revival of German classic trade-unionism. It is in the struggle to live, the assertion of his right to live, that the German worker will find his class independence, it cannot be imposed by manifesto. Correctly, the German proletariat will fight for

retention of the national industries; for operation of those factories that remain idle; for a revival, in general, of economic, industrial and commercial life. Work, food, shelter, reconstruction, educational possibilities, recreation, etc.—it is through the concrete working out of these problems that revolutionists will aid in the reformation of the German labor movement and, by that fact alone, gain its independence as the spearhead and clearest section of the national resistance movement. The Communist Party, recognized by most workers as an instrument of Stalinist imperialism, has less appeal in Germany than anywhere else in Europe. The way is clear for a genuine workers' party, providing it understands the tasks of this period. "If the Allies create a situation in western Germany in which there is no hope for a decent economic future, they will in the long run create a situation where any party with dynamic leadership and a program which promises economic betterment can gain great strength among the industrial workers who are most affected." The situation has been created, not only in western Germany but in all of Germany. Drew Middleton, the shrewd *New York Times* reporter, understood this; now the Fourth Internationalists of Germany must prepare for its fulfillment.

HENRY JUDD.

PROBLEMS OF THE POLISH REVOLUTION

An Historical Analysis

The repeated partitioning of Poland between 1772-1795 by Russia, Prussia, and Austria constituted a great victory for European reaction, represented by Russia, and a defeat for the bourgeois revolution, represented by France. The French Encyclopedists, precursors of the revolution, found many readers, and a very fertile soil for their ideas, in Poland. Simultaneously with the French revolution there began in Poland the long parliament which proclaimed, in 1791, the equality of the bourgeoisie with the nobility, and the political reform of the old Polish feudal state. Catherine II, under the pretext of protecting the old prerogatives of the nobility, suppressed the party of reform with Russian weapons, abolished the Constitution of 1791, and proceeded in 1793 to the second division of Poland. The party of reform answered with the revolution of Kosciuszko in 1794, which was the first attempt to carry out an agrarian-democratic revolution in Poland. Kosciuszko, friend of Washington and Lafayette, general of the American revolution, understood that the problem of a democratic revolution in Poland centered on the abolition of the privileges of the nobility and the consummation of agrarian reforms. In his manifesto to the Polish people, Kosciuszko called all the peasantry to arms against the Russian oppressor, and promised the insurgent peasants freedom, and the abolition of serfdom. Being under the powerful pressure of the nobility, Kosciuszko could not offer all the peasantry land, limiting this offer only to those who participated actively in the revolution. This was one of the causes leading to Kosciuszko's—and Poland's—defeat. In 1795, following the defeat of the Polish insurrection, the third and final division was carried out. But though defeated, the Polish insurrection gave much comfort to the French revolution in its struggle against European reaction.

The defeat of Poland was the defeat of the bourgeois revolution in Central-Eastern Europe. The creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw furthered the work of the democratic reform of 1791 and the insurrection of 1794. But the defeat of Napoleon in Russia decided the fate of the revolution in Europe, and in Poland as well. The Congress of Vienna created a mutilated "Polish Kingdom" whose hereditary king was the Tzar of Russia. The forced union of the mutilated remnants of Poland and Tzarism terminated in a Polish national revolution in 1831, which had as its consequence a savage Tzarist repression, a government that ruled over defeated Poland and Lithuania with the aid of the gallows and exile to Siberia. On the left of the extensive Polish emigration having its headquarters in Paris, "The Democratic Society" was formed, possessing a bourgeois-democratic character, and in 1835 the utopian-socialist organization "Polish People" was created. The young Marx and Engels maintained direct relations with both organizations. In 1846-48, another revolution took place in Poland, headed by the Socialist, Edward Dembowski, who had much influence among the Polish-Carpathian peasants. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of Marx and Engels wrote on August 1, 1848: "Since the insurrection of Greovia in 1846, the struggle for the independence of Poland is also the struggle for agrarian democracy, the only democracy possible in Eastern Europe against patriarchal-feudal Absolutism." The final Polish national revolution against Russia broke out in 1863, and had as its consequence the liquidation of feudalism in Poland and the tempestuous development of industry and capitalism. As a result of this attempt, Tzarism felt compelled to realize the program of the defeated revolution, to carry out the agrarian reform and emancipate the peasant, a reform which created the economic and social bases for capitalism in Poland.

European Labor and Poland's Restoration

Marx and Engels unambiguously defended the cause of Polish independence against Russia. The first International, founded in 1864, inscribed on its banner, "Resistance to Russian intervention in Europe; restoration for Poland." (Engels—*The Working-Class of Poland*, *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL*, July, 1944.) The workers' movement of Europe, the English Chartists as well as the French and German workers demanded the restoration of Poland, and in 1848-49 Marx and Engels demanded a German war against Russia for the restoration of Polish independence. Marx roundly declared that "without an independent Poland there can be no liberty in Europe." In 1848 Marx demanded the creation of "not merely any kind of a Poland, weak and impotent, independent on paper only, but a strong state, really independent, resting on healthy foundations. Poland must receive the territories she possessed before 1772." ("The First Division of Poland"—K. Marx, *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.)

Lenin and the Russian Bolsheviks inherited this point of view. Lenin always defended the slogan of Polish independence against Rosa Luxemburg, leader of the SDKPL (Social-Democracy of Poland and Lithuania), who was of the opinion that the slogan of Polish independence was "reactionary" and "petty bourgeois." The Council of People's Commissars of Soviet Russia passed the following resolution on the 29th of August, 1919: "All the treaties concluded between the government of the old Russian Empire and the government of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, dealing with the division of Poland are being considered abrogated once and for all from this moment on, being contrary to the principle of the self-determination of all peoples, as well as to the revolutionary ideals of the Russian people, who recognize the right of the Polish people to unity and independence." Thus spoke the Russian Revolution.

Stalin proceeded otherwise. In 1939, by agreement with Hitler, he participated in the division of Poland, occupying 51 per cent of Polish territory, with its 13,200,000 inhabitants. Historic experience teaches us: when there is freedom in Russia, there is freedom in Poland; when the reaction conquers in Russia, Poland loses its independence and national freedom. Engels asserted that the workers' movement in Europe would be interrupted and checked while this question remained unresolved. "In the present state of affairs in Central Europe and especially Germany, Polish democracy is more than ever necessary." (F. Engels, *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL*, July, 1944.)

The Problem of the Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution

Leading the way in all of Central-Eastern Europe, the Polish democratic revolution, with its program of reform and the Kosciuszko insurrection, began simultaneously with the revolution in France. However, Poland was a feudal country, without industries, without capitalism, and without a conscious and revolutionary bourgeoisie. As for the party of reform, the participants in the insurrection of 1794, they were moderates, bourgeois reformists, monarchists, akin to the French Girondists. Polish Jacobinism was very weak and was to be found mainly among the artisans, the petty bourgeois and the people of Warsaw. The events of 1831 also developed within the limits of a conservative reformism which was formed by the "progressive" nobility and the moderate bourgeoisie. The left bourgeoisie, represented by the "Patriotic Society" under the command of Mochnacki, theoretician of

the revolution, could never maintain a decisive influence over the revolution beyond its very first stages.

A new turn became manifest in the Cracow revolution of 1846, led by the Utopian Socialists. This revolution had been prepared by the "Polish People" organization in Paris and carried out by means of a series of actions and agrarian uprisings in Poland and Lithuania under the leadership of Konarski and the curate, Sciegienny. In the year 1846, according to Marx, the struggle for independence took on a decided democratic-agrarian character. But the tragedy of Poland consisted of the lack of a developed industrial capitalism and of a formed and conscious Polish bourgeoisie which could carry to a conclusion the agrarian and national revolution against Czarism and the Polish nobility. The Polish bourgeoisie was then in its infancy, without class-consciousness, without any roots in the economic and political life of the country, was closely linked to the nobility, and was incapable of playing the rôle that history had assigned to it.

This state of affairs was confirmed by the revolution of 1863, prepared and initiated by the party of the radical bourgeoisie, known commonly as "The Reds." Its central committee, headed by the future generals of the Paris Commune in 1871, Jrosław Dombrowski and Wroblewski (the latter was also a member of the First International and a friend of Marx), proclaimed the agrarian revolution and the emancipation of the peasantry. Due to the weakness of "The Reds" and the revolution, the decree could not be realized, and only in isolated regions did the peasant masses respond to the call of the revolution and take part in the revolutionary struggles. The leadership of the revolution fell from "The Reds" into the hands of "The Whites," that is, the reformist nobility and the moderate bourgeoisie. The only possible form the national revolution in Poland could have taken was a "Jacquerie," a peasant war against Czarism and the Polish feudal aristocracy, under the leadership of the revolutionary bourgeoisie. But the part of the bourgeoisie was played by the "intelligentsia" (intellectuals). Stemming in the main from the impoverished nobility, this intelligentsia was incapable of casting aside its social and political traditions. Here was another reason for the defeat suffered by the Polish Revolution.

Tzarism, after putting down the revolution, felt compelled to realize the latter's program to carry out the agrarian reform. On this economic and social foundation, capitalism acquired not only a market for its products but also the indispensable labor power for industry. In 1870 the "Kingdom of Poland" had only one worker for every 95 inhabitants, in 1882 one worker for every 62 inhabitants, in 1897 one worker for 38 inhabitants, and in 1910 one worker for every 30 inhabitants. These statistics characterize in the best possible form the industrial development of Poland following the revolution of 1863, the agrarian reform and the changes in the social structure of the country.*

Rise of the Labor Movement

Paralleling this development, a Polish working class movement began to take shape from 1870 on among the various émigré groups; and in 1880 the first workers' party, "Proletariat," came into existence and carried on its struggles under the banner of Marxism.

After the last revolution of 1864, the Polish bourgeoisie became "practical," ridiculing the struggle for national independence as an idle "dream" and idealizing the "peaceful"

*S. Koszutski: *Industrial Development of Poland*.

pursuits of commerce, the development of industry and capitalist agriculture as the true national task. The proletariat, on the other hand, pursued the course of revolutionary strikes. In 1890, after the decline of "Proletariat" under the Czarist terror, the SDKPL (Social-Democracy of Poland and Lithuania) was formed under the leadership of Rosa Luxemburg and A. Warski, and in 1893 the PPS (Polish Socialist Party), led by J. Pilsudski, Perl, Narkiewicz, Daszynski, etc.; typical petty bourgeoisie. The PPS struggled first of all for the independence of Poland while the SDKP flatly rejected the slogan of independence as "reactionary," and struggled for the revolution and the democratic republic for the whole of Russia. It is well known that Lenin opposed Rosa Luxemburg's point of view and declared himself in favor of the struggle for Polish independence. Frightened by the development of the workers' movement, the Polish bourgeoisie moved from their "peaceful" pursuits to the formation of the National Democratic Party. The creation of this party marked the passing over of the bourgeoisie to the side of reaction and proclaimed its complete subjection to Czarism. The new party not only rejected the slogan of a democratic republic for Poland which had been taken up by the Socialists, but swore loyalty to Czarism, and limited itself to petitioning for the autonomy of Poland under the sway of the "Czar of all the Russias." Rosa Luxemburg had reason enough to affirm that Polish capitalism was "bound by chains of gold to Russian capitalism." (*Die Industriell Entwicklung Polens.*)

After the First World War and the Russian Revolution, an independent Poland came into being, but it was not the federated state of different nationalities that Engels had outlined. It was, instead, a national Polish state with national minorities. A popular government was formed in Lublin on November 7, 1918, under the presidency of Daszynski, which with one stroke proclaimed popular, democratic suffrage, with equal, direct and proportional rights for all citizens over 21, a democratic government responsible to the Parliament, a popular Polish republic, the social rights of the working class and the eight-hour working day, and promised a radical program of agrarian reform. The government lasted but a few days, but its program could not be wiped out in Poland no matter what the political changes. With this program and with the national independence of Poland, the bourgeois-democratic revolution comes to an end in Poland. The following statistics illustrate this affirmation:

Economic Development of Poland

In 1921 in all of Poland (not only the old "Kingdom of Poland," the most industrialized region) 15.4 per cent of the population was employed in industry and mining; 72.3 per cent of the population was engaged in agriculture; the remainder was found in other occupations or in the employ of the state.

In 1931, however, industry and commerce employed 26 per cent, 12.6 per cent in other occupations (state employees, liberal professions, etc.) and 60.6 in agriculture. As the reader can see, there was an enormous leap forward in the industrial development of the country.

National production was valued at 19 billion zlotys in 1921. Of this total, 13 billion zlotys, that is, 68 per cent, derived from agricultural production. In 1939, however, agriculture yielded only slightly more than half of the value of the national product. These simple statistics prove that Poland in its period of independence achieved a full capitalist development; contrary to the vulgar notions propagated by the

Stalinists, industry played a powerful part quantitatively almost equal to that of agriculture.

Polish agriculture hardly possessed a feudal structure and in any case was less feudal than the agriculture of Germany or England. The percentage of land held by farmers owning more than 50 hectares (120 acres) was about 20 per cent of the cultivable surface of the country, and at the most 25 per cent, while in Mecklenburg the same type of landholders owned 63 per cent of the arable soil, in East Prussia 52 per cent and in all of Germany more than 30 per cent. In England the landlords control more than half the arable land.

Out of 25,589,000 hectares of arable land in Poland in 1920, 6,900,000 hectares were held by land-owners in plots greater than 50 hectares. By 1939, 3,000,700 hectares had been distributed among the peasantry, that is, 15.6 per cent of the nation's arable land, comprising more than 40 per cent of the land of the large land-owners.

As we see, the bourgeois revolution carried out the agricultural reform in the "Prussian" manner, not as was necessary in Poland, in the revolutionary "French" way.

The conservative Polish bourgeoisie, grown old without having known any youth, received national independence as a gift from history and from the socialists and populists (peasants). It took this gift with distrust and opposed with all the means at its disposal the full development of the democratic revolution, whose basis, according to Marx, was the agrarian revolution. The bourgeoisie set itself in opposition to the agrarian revolution, to the "French" road, since this would have created a new peasant, radical petty-bourgeois strata, capable of separating itself from the government of the traditional bourgeoisie and of creating a democratic republic of workers and peasants in Poland. For this reason the bourgeoisie chose the "Prussian" road of moderate, agrarian reform which assured its political and economic power. At the same time the bourgeoisie sounded the death-knell for democracy in Poland, since the only form this democracy could take was "agrarian democracy," which would struggle to the end to realize the full program of the bourgeois revolution even against the bourgeoisie itself.

By curbing the agrarian revolution, the bourgeoisie prepared the way for the dictatorship of Pilsudski. The degeneration of bourgeois democracy took the concrete form of a totalitarian dictatorship.

It can be said, therefore, that pre-war Poland was not a feudal, but a capitalist country; that the agrarian reform extended the foundations of capitalism in Poland; and that the Pilsudski dictatorship gave Poland a decisive impulse in the direction of industrial and capitalist development, at the expense of the peasantry and the working class.

The Communist Party and the Problem of The Democratic-Socialist Revolution

With the revolution of 1905 the differences inside the workers' movement between the PPS and the SDKPL grew more profound. Together with Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg posed the problem of the workers' government, while the PPS raised the slogan of the independent Polish republic. The SDKP followed the proletarian tactic of struggle, of strikes, of working class action, while the right wing of the PPS proceeded to attempts at bomb throwing against the crimes of Czarism. This tactic of individual terrorism isolated the party from the masses and provoked an internal crisis in the party, bringing about the creation of the left PPS, led by Koszutska, Walecki, Krolkowski, etc. The new organization rejected the ter-

roristic tactic and the exaggerated nationalism of Pilsudski, it also rejected the national nihilism of Rosa Luxemburg. For this reason, the left PPS and the SDKP continued as separate organizations until 1918, even though they had much in common. At the beginning of 1919 the two organizations united and became the Communist Party of Poland, affiliated with the Third International. The union, however, was mechanical, lacking an ideological foundation. Led by Marchlewski, Radek, Kohn and Dzierzynski, the SDKP group viewed the fundamental questions of the Polish revolution in a manner peculiar to itself, denying the existence of the national question, the question of Polish independence. As far as they were concerned, the agrarian problem was the problem of the agrarian proletariat, agricultural workers without land, among whom the SDKP had a powerful organization. As for the peasantry, they did not exist for the SDKP'ers, and if they did exist, they formed a reactionary mass.

For this reason, the Polish SDKP'ers opposed Lenin's program of "land to the peasantry," advocating the nationalization of the land and its direct cultivation by the workers' state itself. The left PPS understood the weak sides of this theory but was incapable of formulating its own program, given the preponderance and the theoretical prestige of Rosa Luxemburg's disciples. As a result, the traditions of Luxemburgism triumphed over the national and agrarian program of Lenin in the Communist Party of Poland. The KPP, therefore, was incapable of winning the peasant masses to a social revolution. When the Russian armies stood outside the gates of Warsaw in 1920, the Bolsheviks did not divide the land among the peasants of Poland, as they had done in Russia, because such a course was opposed by the Polish Communist Party.

The Russian Bolsheviks pointed to this as the cause of their defeat. In reality, the majority of the Polish proletariat and peasantry observed the Russian advance with distrust, fearing a foreign invasion and the loss of their newly won national independence. This feeling was summed up by the Communist leader, Warski, an old collaborator of Rosa Luxemburg, when he remarked that the Polish proletariat did not desire "a revolution brought by foreign bayonets."

The events of this period, distorted by the official Stalinist interpretation, must be studied and re-evaluated anew. What can be said in any case is that the Polish Communist Party did not understand the fundamental problems of the democratic revolution as Lenin understood them, and gave proof of its ultra-left bias by abstaining from the general elections of 1919. Instead of pushing the democratic revolution on the road of proletarian power, it isolated itself from the masses. Its politics degenerated into a series of actions without the support of the workers. This debilitating tactic did not and could not push forward the democratic revolution; instead it made possible a bourgeois counter-offensive and the deflection of the agrarian revolution into the channels of capitalist reform.

As a reaction against these policies, the majority group, known in the Comintern as the "right wing," was formed. Led by Warski, formerly of the SDKP, Koszutska and Wlasecki, formerly of the left PPS, it revised the program and the policies of the party at the third congress of the KPP, putting forward a program on the national and agrarian questions in accordance with Lenin's views. "The Majority" formulated the famous theory of two stages of the Polish revolution, the democratic and the socialist stages. Taking as its point of departure the premise that Poland had as yet to complete the democratic revolution, whose historic task it was to solve the national

question and carry out the agrarian revolution by means of a democratic worker-peasant government, the majority advocated supporting the PPS and the peasant parties in order to carry out the program of the first revolution. In reality, it understood the fundamental problem of state power in far different fashion than Lenin, who demanded a government of the Soviets. Led by the majority, the KPP thought the first revolution would be carried out under the leadership of the reformists and the populists, and the job of the working class lay in then "pushing" them toward the socialist revolution. The theory had its practical consequences. When Pilsudski carried out his counter-revolutionary action in 1926, the KPP evaluated it as a "petty bourgeois" revolution, and offered him its support! The theory was wrong because the democratic revolution in Poland had been completed in 1919-20, a fact which the Communists had not taken into account. The theory of "two stages" looked to the past, since on the order of the day in Poland, as in Russia, and in all Europe was the Socialist revolution or the counter-revolution. Although the agrarian question had not been completely solved in a revolutionary manner, it could not serve to bring an already out-lived democratic revolution back to life. Only a socialist revolution was capable of solving the problems bequeathed by the bourgeois revolution.

From Opportunism to Ultra-Leftism

The opposition which arose between 1927-30 in the party, calling itself the "minority," was led by Lenski, Rying, Henrykowski. This opposition fought fiercely against the "historical right wing" and the "theory of two stages." But being a Stalinist opposition, it fought bureaucratically, mechanically and without achieving any revolutionary consequences; it degenerated into the theory of "social fascism," combatting, as in Germany, the Social-Democrats and the Populists first of all, instead of fighting the party of Pilsudski. This policy helped Pilsudski defeat the democratic opposition, the famous "Centrolew," a coalition of Catholics, Populists and Socialists, in 1930. Stalin fomented the struggle of the factions inside the KPP in order to further his struggle for power inside the Soviet Union. He stood to gain from the weakening of the KPP, whose revolutionary traditions of Luxemburgism and independent Bolshevism always represented a potential danger to the Stalinist counter-revolution. Fearful of any possible source of opposition, Stalin dissolved the KPP in 1937.

None of the factions within the KPP had been able to correctly solve the problems of the democratic-socialist revolution, viewed as an uninterrupted and permanent revolution carried to completion by the dictatorship of the proletariat, or as Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky put it, by a workers' government. The merit of the majority lay in the fact that it posed the fundamental problems of the democratic revolution: the agrarian and national questions. But what it lacked was a revolutionary perspective, since it posed on the order of the day the democratic revolution, when this was already an accomplished fact. It lagged behind with a theory that did not correspond to reality. The other faction, the "minority," criticized the theory of "two stages," but its criticisms were eclectic and Stalinist in kind, lending themselves to the domestic use of the Thermidorean clique, which feared the leadership of the KPP. Lacking an historic perspective besides, this criticism degenerated into the notion of "social fascism," which isolated the party from the masses and objectively gave support to "Pilsudskism." It must be recognized that the historic situation and the march of the counter-revolution in Russia, Germany and the rest of

Europe excuses in part the errors of the Polish Communists. Under the strong pressure of Stalinism which was interested in the dissolution of the KPP, persecuted savagely by the reaction in Poland, the party degenerated. But the ultimate blow was not struck by the Polish bourgeoisie; it was struck by Stalinism. In the same cold-blooded manner, he assassinated

the prominent Polish Communists as he had assassinated the Russian Bolsheviks.

A. RUDZIENSKI.

(Our next issue will carry a second article from the pen of Rudzienski dealing with the Russian occupation of Poland.—EDITORS.)

THE POLITICS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

The Political Implications of Freudian Psychoanalysis

From the time of the Russian Revolution until the advent of Hitler in 1933, the influence of Marxist thought on intellectuals, scientists and the professional middle class as a whole, grew to surprising proportions. Hardly a science, art, or profession existed that did not have its Marxist adherents. The Russian Revolution placed capitalism on trial and many a middle class intellectual took the witness stand against it.

The rise of Hitler to power, the defeat of the Spanish working class, and the shocking Moscow Trials, reverberating throughout the world, produced a reaction of defeat and pessimism. The intellectual, not rooted in either of the decisive classes in society, whose economic and consequently psychological moorings are weak, whose ambivalence causes him to vacillate his allegiance, was the first to flee under the combined blows of the bourgeoisie and Stalinism.

With the Moscow Trials, Stalin placed socialism on trial. And from then until the beginning of World War II the very same intellectuals who in the earlier period testified against capitalism were now found in the witness box decrying socialism. These were "the intellectuals in retreat," whom Shachtman and Burnham so aptly described and analysed, and whose ranks the latter joined at the outbreak of the war. Almost all of them are now in the camp of the bourgeoisie trying to conceal their "sinful" past with a smokescreen of abuse and villification of the Marxist movement. The retreat of the intellectuals which began with the Moscow Trials developed into a complete rout with the coming of the war.

The relatively weak ties of the intellectual to the working class make him more susceptible to the effects of its defeats. He does not have the recuperative power of the proletarian. The chaotic capitalist world imposes a sense of insecurity upon him and he is constantly driven to seek a *weltanschauung* which will "explain" the chaos and give him a sorely needed security in the sense of understanding the march of history.

The shock of the war, the defeats of the working class, for which Stalinism is in the main responsible, and his own inherent class weakness resulted in the flight of the younger middle class intellectual out of the camp of Marxism, searching for a new answer.

The obvious one—already at hand, mass produced—was religion. But religion could not do the job. It lacked the two basic prerequisites for security today. It was not "scientific" and it was not "materialistic." Due to the impact of Marxism both of these characteristics are necessary for any kind of outlook which attempts to explain the world crisis today. Marxism possessed both these qualities but, according to the too easily defeated allies of the working class, had completely

failed. What was needed was something new. Something that possessed the best qualities of Marxism, its scientific and materialistic basis, yet could offer some balm to their moral conscience suffering severe shock as a result of the war. Man's nature, they felt, was responsible for the world crisis. They needed a materialistic scientific explanation of human nature, and they discovered it in—psychoanalysis!

The Goodman Tendency

We find crystalizing around the magazine *Politics* a new school of younger middle class intellectuals who, using psychoanalysis as a guide, are re-examining politics and history and have wound up in Utopia. The theoretical leader of this school is Paul Goodman whose psychoanalysis of politics is summed up in two articles, "The Political Meaning of Some Recent Revisions of Freud" in the July 1945 issue of *Politics*, and "Revolution, Sociolatry and War," in the December 1945 issue.

According to Goodman "three different theories of neurosis directly imply three different political philosophies." From Freud's theory flows the "psychology of the post-revolution." The theory of Wm. Reich implies the "psychology of the revolution." And the theory of Horney-Fromm corresponds to the "ideal of the industrial status-quo."

The psychological discoveries of Freud have left an indelible imprint upon our knowledge of mental processes. He opened the whole world of the unconscious and devised an effective method for examining it. He was the first to demonstrate that psychic processes are determined and not accidental. His contribution to the understanding of the human mind from these two points of view must be regarded as milestones in human history.

The Marxist movement would do well to supplement its knowledge of the laws of historic development with the best in this comparatively new science of psychoanalysis. But psychoanalysis is a complex and intricate subject. It is not our intention to make a thorough and exhaustive analysis, but to make at least the beginnings of an attempt to fill a need that has long existed in our movement. It is our hope to stimulate a fresh and enlightening discussion on the relationship of Marxism to the various schools of psychoanalysis.

It is for this reason we wish to subject the three currently prevailing schools of psychoanalysis to Marxist examination. At the same time it will afford us an opportunity to answer those middle class intellectuals who are attempting to replace Marxism with psychoanalysis in the field of politics. We will answer the psychoanalysis of politics with a critique of the politics of psychoanalysis!

The Freudian Theory

From the time of the Philosophers of the Enlightenment human nature has been explained as a result of the combination of hereditary or constitutional and environmental factors. What is important for this study, however, is what are regarded as constitutional and environmental factors and how they are related to and influence each other. It is just this examination of the relation between environmental and biological elements in the formation of human nature which leads us to the essential dichotomy between the Freudian and Marxian theories of the development of human history and culture and to two basically opposed political philosophies.

Freudian psychoanalysis is based on the premises that there exists throughout history an unchanging, universal group of instincts which are constantly seeking gratification. The ego, which is that part of the id modified by the influence the external world has had on it, is sorely beset by three violent forces acting upon it. It is faced with the problem of dealing simultaneously with the harsh demands of the external world, the super-ego, and the id. When the ego is too weak to do the job, neurosis is the result. Essentially the theory boils down to a conflict between the absolute, immutable, unchanging instincts and the environment in which the ego plays the role of arbitrator.

On the basis of this construction, three different theories of therapy suggest themselves. The first is, to give the patient sufficient courage to live in such a manner as to satisfy all the demands of the instincts, then mental conflict would be eliminated. Since deprivation of instinctual gratification by environmental forces is at the core of every neurosis, if the patient were able to defy environment and gratify the demands of the instincts, mental health would be assured.

The second theory is to strengthen the ego so that it is in a position to organize a balance of power between the instincts and environment and thus establish harmony.

And the third theory is to change the environment so as to be more in harmony with instinctual demands. We will discuss each of these theories in turn.

The Theory of "Free Living"

Freud rejected completely the idea that giving the instincts a free hand would cure or prevent neurosis. He says:

It is out of the question that part of the analytic treatment should consist of advice to "live freely"—if for no other reason because we ourselves tell you that a stubborn conflict is going on in the patient between libidinal desires and sexual repression, between sensual and ascetic tendencies. This conflict is not resolved by helping one side to win a victory over the other. It is true, we see that in neurotics asceticism has gained the day; the result of which is that the suppressed sexual impulses have found a vent for themselves in the symptoms. If we were to make victory possible to the sensual side instead, the disregarded forces representing sexuality would have to indemnify themselves by symptoms.¹

In relation to children, Freud says:

The child has to learn to control its instincts. To grant its complete freedom, so that it obeys all its impulses without any restriction is impossible . . . it would do serious damage to the children themselves . . . partly at the time and partly during subsequent years.²

So we see, according to Freudian theory, environment cannot be defied. It is impossible to cure or prevent neurosis by providing the means for complete freedom in instinctual gratification. It would do serious damage to the child to help it develop the capacity to satisfy his instinctual needs with complete freedom.

Wm. Reich has revised this very aspect of Freudian psy-

choanalysis. By reducing all the instincts to one, the sexual, and by relegating to secondary importance the anti-social, perverse characteristics attributed to it by Freud, Reich arrives at the conclusion that instinctual gratification is the only way to mental health, and, that people who have the courage to defy environment to gratify their instincts inevitably seek to make a revolutionary change in society.

However, Goodman clings tenaciously to Freud, accepting Reich's revisions only insofar as they place a greater emphasis on the "natural," "healthy," characteristics of the sexual instinct. He still accepts Freud's concept of the instincts. "Reich gives a picture of the instinctual life which it seems to me is excessively simple and Rousseauian," he says. But by his acceptance of the Freudian instinctual picture, particularly the highly controversial death instinct, Goodman places himself in a hopeless contradiction, for he fails then, to eliminate the real and valid objection that Freud made to "free living," i.e., that the "forces repressing sexuality would have to indemnify themselves by symptoms." These forces get their energy from the death instinct. By doing away with the death instinct, Reich at least establishes some sort of consistency for his case. Goodman, however, has no need of consistency. If instinctual gratification is the road to mental health, it must be true of all instincts, the death instinct as well as the life instinct. But if the need to completely satisfy a death instinct remains, what sense is there in speaking of giving free rein to the need for instinctual gratification as a means of establishing mental health?

The Freudian Theory of Therapy

The second theory, that of helping the ego to establish harmony between the demands of the instincts and those of the environment is the only possible solution on the basis of a consistent application of the whole Freudian schemata of the mental personality. The therapeutical efforts of Freudian analysis are aimed at strengthening the ego to the point where it can establish harmony between the demands of the instincts and the environment, or more precisely, the existing social order!

"Analysis is a re-education," Freud says. And what does this re-education consist of? "Education has . . . to steer its way between the Scylla of giving the instincts free play and the Charybdis of frustrating them . . . It is a matter of finding out how much one may forbid, at which times and by what methods."

In the beginning of his article in the July 1945 issue of *Politics* Goodman quotes Dr. Franz Alexander, director of the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis, as follows: "The goal of psychotherapy is to increase the ego's efficiency in fulfilling its task of finding such gratification for a person's subjective needs (the id—R.S.) as is in harmony with the standard and ideals of the person (super-ego—R.S.) and with existing conditions (reality—R.S.)."

"Is it possible to draw any other conclusion from this," says Goodman, "than that the goal of therapy is the smooth running of the social machine as it exists? What a fantastic proposal, when a society creates emotional tensions, to reorient not the society but the people!"

Fantastic indeed! We are glad to hear Goodman say this. But does not Goodman know that Dr. Alexander was repeating Freud almost verbatim? Here is what Freud says, ". . . goaded on by the id, hemmed in by the super-ego, and rebuffed by reality, the ego struggles to cope with its economic task of reducing the forces and influences which work in it and upon

it to some kind of *harmony*" (italics mine—R.S.). The "fantastic proposal" is originally Freud's, not Alexander's.

The political implications of this theory are clear. It can serve no other objective purpose than that of a prop of dying capitalism. In this sense Freudian therapeutic theory is completely reactionary and can have nothing in common with Marxism. Its psychological dynamism is that of strengthening the reactionary element in society.

Goodman maintains that in the Freudian theory "there is no question of harmony but of enlightened choice and if need be struggle." Here Goodman is repeating an argument that even many misguided Marxists often repeat in their entirely commendable efforts to implement Marxism with a greater knowledge of psychology. What is generally understood by this argument is that Freud's theory of psychoanalysis does not attempt to get the patient to adapt himself to existing society. He is given a free choice. He can decide to struggle against the social order if he so desires.

Unfortunately, there is nothing to substantiate this in Freudian literature. In fact the opposite view is expressed very clearly. Freud himself says:

When the patient has to fight out the normal conflict with the resistances which we have discovered in him by analysis, he requires a powerful propelling force to influence him towards the decision we aim at, leading to recovery. Otherwise it might happen that he would decide for a repetition of the previous outcome, and allow that which had been raised into consciousness to slip back again under repression. The outcome of this struggle is *not decided by his intellectual insight*—(italics mine, R.S.) it is neither strong enough nor free enough to accomplish such a thing—but solely by his relationship to the physician. In so far as his transference bears the positive sign, it clothes the physician with authority, transforms itself into *faith in his findings and in his views*.³

It can clearly be seen from this that it is *not* a question of "enlightened choice," since the patient's intellectual insight is "neither strong enough nor free enough for such a thing." It depends a great deal on the patient's "faith" in the analyst's views, which is established through the transference situation. As for the question of struggle, it is evident that the struggle is between a return to his previous neurotic state or an acceptance of the analyst's solution. Such a concept eliminates the possibility of a struggle against the existing social order, unless the analyst presents revolutions as a solution, and this Freud expressly forbids!

Changing the Environment

Freud was very much opposed to making revolutionaries out of his patients, and as a method of prophylaxis to make revolutionaries out of children. He wrote:

"... if, it is argued, one is convinced of the shortcomings of our present-day social arrangements, one cannot think it right to give them the added support of this psychoanalytical education of ours. We must place before it another and a higher aim, one which is emancipated from the social standards that are dominant today. I do not feel, however, that this argument is valid. It is demanding more of analysis than its functions can justify... Psychoanalytic education will be assuming an unwarranted responsibility if it sets out to make its pupils into revolutionaries... I should go so far as to say that revolutionary children are not desirable from any point of view.⁴

What other conclusion could Freud possibly come to? The primitive, anti-social character of man's instincts requires control, *no matter what the form of society*. In the final analysis, man's immutable human nature is responsible for the chaos and ruin of the world today.

"It is not the business of the analyst to decide between parties," says Freud. Marxists know only too well the political

implications of such "scientific impartiality." It is neither scientific nor impartial but serves the specific purpose of maintaining the existing social order.

Freud was not silent on Marxism, though he admittedly understood very little about it. One cannot help smiling at the following quotation which exposes so clearly his confusion about Marxian theory: "Some of the propositions in Marx's theory seem strange to me, such as that the evolution of forms of society is a process of natural history, or that the changes in social stratification proceed from one another in the manner of dialectical process. I am by no means certain that I understand these statements rightly; moreover, they do not sound 'materialistic' but like traces of the obscure Hegelian philosophy under the influence of which Marx at one time passed."⁵ Freud does not understand that it is precisely the dialectical nature of Marxian theory which resembles Hegel's philosophy and that Marx's materialism is exactly the point at which Hegelian philosophy had no influence on Marx.

Freud was certain that the "Bolshevik experiment" in Russia had failed "from within." He analysed it as follows: "It (bolshevism) moves elsewhere the instinctual barriers, which are essential in any society; it directs outward the aggressive tendencies, which threaten every human community, and finds its support in the hostility of the poor against the rich, and of the hitherto powerless against the former holders of power. *But such an alteration in human nature is very improbable.*"⁶ (Italics mine—R. S.) Man's nature, then, according to Freud, is responsible for Stalinism, and Stalinism is simply the triumph of man's nature over Bolshevik theory, and no matter what the society, no matter what type of community exists, the necessary instinctual barriers lead it to chaos and ruin!

Is it any wonder, then, that the middle class intellectual clings to the apron strings of the Freudian theory (with revisions, of course) and repeats the solemn chant that the Russian Revolution failed "from within."

The Freudian Weltanschauung

Freud prided himself on his "scientific weltanschauung," which was nothing more than the mechanistic scientific methods characteristic of the nineteenth century bourgeois scientists. He rejected the dialectic completely. His philosophy, his science and his politics all followed the same pattern. Freud repeatedly remarked on the similarity between his views and Schopenhauer's. His outlook was pessimistic in every field. Happiness to Freud was an illusion. "The goal of all life is death," and "The inanimate was there before the animate,"⁷ he was fond of repeating. His postulation of the death instinct, which today even many Freudian analysts reject, has no scientific basis, but arises from his tendency to attribute the aggressiveness and cruelty in the world today to a universal biological characteristic of man, instead of recognizing it as a reflection of rapacious capitalist social relations. It is because of this that he concluded that capitalism had at least the advantage of permitting an outlet for the aggressive hostile drives of man.

Goodman feels compelled to apologize for this conclusion on the ground that Freud was getting senile. "He was 74 years old, and we know that he was ill and tired," he explains.

But Freud's pessimism, his affinity with the Schopenhauerian world outlook, is evident in his earliest writing, and inherent in his basic premises which were posed when Freud was a comparatively young man. *Such a conclusion flows inevitably from his basic premise of universal instincts, which he mistakenly arrived at by assuming that the various characteristics*

which he correctly observed in the upper middle class in a particular time and social milieu, were inherent in all human beings, in all times, and in all social milieus!

The Freudian Theory of Culture

The dilemma that his mechanistic method inevitably leads him to is never more apparent than in Freud's theory of culture. According to Freud, culture is the result of sublimated repressed instincts. The primitive sex instinct meets with the opposition of the ever watchful super-ego, or the death instinct seeks gratification and is thwarted, the ego then sublimates these instinctual needs in the form of art, or poetry, or war, or capitalist competition. Culture is the result of repression and repression is the result of culture. Here Freud exposes the weakness of his mechanistic science. Without the aid of the dialectic in history he is unable to demonstrate the real relationship between culture and repression, i.e., that repression is part of capitalist culture, not its cause.

It is precisely on this Freudian theory of culture that Goodman bases his contention that Freud's is the "psychology of the post-revolution." He says: "... culture is an art and science of the ego as the interpreter of reality. But in fact, Freud should but does not say, such an art is possible only after a thoroughgoing liberation has set free natural alternatives to choose from." What nonsense! Why should Freud say this when his entire theory says the opposite. Freud expressly states that aggressive tendencies threaten *every community*, the liberated as well as the oppressed ones.

No matter what the society, says Freud, instinctual barriers are necessary. In Goodman's "post-revolutionary" society, how are "natural alternatives to choose from" going to solve the problem of the death instinct? In this new society, his planning commissions will have to plan ever new and more repressions to have more art and science. In his article he already announces his intention to suppress incest and to sublimate it. What other primitive sexual demands are to be sacrificed to art and science? If art and science are to flourish in his society, he will have a race of sexually inhibited people. And to top off this amazingly muddled excursion into the realm of psychology and politics, Goodman contends that this new society of flourishing art through instinctual repression is to be brought about through the Reichian stunt of making people sexually free!

The Marxist theory of history demonstrates that the development of culture is based upon *the mode of production within society*. Freud's fundamental error, arising out of his mechanistic concept of history, is to base the development of culture upon the *mode of production within the individual*! This is the fundamental difference between the Marxian and Freudian theories of human history and they inexorably lead to essentially opposed political views. It is extremely significant that in every consequent revision of Freud by other analysts this basic error is repeated.

From this theory Freud consistently arrived at the therapeutic goal of strengthening the ego to put it in a position to establish harmony between the instinctual demands and the existing social order. Quite consistent with this, he drew the conclusion that capitalism provided an outlet for the aggressive drives of the death instinct. The Russian Revolution failed from within because human nature was immutable and consequently any attempt to change the world was doomed to result in a system which, in the final analysis, resembles the present capitalist world.

Is it any wonder that the younger middle class intellectuals, bewildered by the defeats of the working class, at a loss to explain the nature of Stalinism, with moral sensibilities that have been shocked by the horrors of fascism, war and the atom bomb, find *rapprochement* with Freud? He provides them with the "scientific" basis for attributing the chaotic state of the world to human nature. The philosophy of Schopenhauer, the mechanistic science of Freud, and Utopian politics all combine to provide a crutch for Goodman and his followers with which they hobble along behind the renewed, revitalized struggles of the working class.

Marxism and Psychoanalysis

Freud has made contributions to human psychology of incalculable value. His genius lay in his ability to probe deeply into the human mind in spite of the handicap of an outmoded scientific method. His remarkable acuteness in uncovering the unconscious and discovering a method of reaching it, his recognition that psychic life is as determined as economic life, his technique for analyzing dreams, all are major contributions to the science of the mind. Just as Hegel in his philosophy of history was able to make profound observations of the processes of history in spite of his "idealistic" basis, so Freud has given us a wonderful insight into the processes of the psyche despite his false premise.

With the aid of the dialectical laws of motion, Marxism has many times in the past preceded science in its discoveries, contributing to the understanding of pure or natural science as well as social science. Under the influence of Marxist scientific thought, several psychoanalysts have attempted to free Freudian theory from its mechanistic premise. Even many analysts who today practice Freudian analysis lay greater emphasis upon environmental forces. But nowhere in psychoanalytical literature has anyone attempted to draw the logical conclusions of this science which inherently has revolutionary significance. In every case the analysts revising Freud still cling to a predominantly "psychological" view of human history. They repeat the basic error of Freud and all the others who attribute this decaying world to something in human nature, i.e., that the cultural, social and political superstructure of society is based on the mode of production within the individual!

This is particularly evident in their analysis of fascism in which they attribute their own middle class weaknesses, ambivalence and yearning for authoritarian leadership to a universal characteristic of mankind, and arrive at the conclusion that the working class of Germany *desired* fascism.

What is needed is for Marxists to study this science; and just as Marxism freed the Hegelian system from its binding "idealistic" premise and enabled the world to gain a scientific insight into historical processes in the same way to free psychoanalysis and add to the long list of contributions to man's struggle for the conquest of nature, and, at the same time, implement its own immediate struggle for the emancipation of the working class with invaluable knowledge of the functions of the human mind.

ROBERT STILER.

1. Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, page 375.
2. Freud, *New Introductory Lectures*, page 203.
3. Freud, *A General Introduction To Psychoanalysis*—page 387.
4. Freud, *New Introductory Lectures*—page 205.
5. Same, page 242.
6. Same, page 246.
7. Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*—page 47.

FOR SELF-DETERMINATION IN PALESTINE

Against the Slogan of Majority Rule

The editorial entitled "A Socialist Program for the Jews" which appeared in the Nov. 12, 1945, issue of *Labor Action* contained serious errors in judgment as to the solution to the Arab-Jewish conflict which socialists should advance in Palestine. The editorial asks: "How does the issue of Palestine arise in the first place as the solution to the Jewish problem?" The question arises not because Jews lived on the land 2,000 years ago, nor because of the Balfour Declaration, although these were undoubtedly important factors at one time. Rather it arises from the fact that during the course of this century the Jews have become one of the two distinct nationalities in the country and, as a consequence, Palestine is the only place in the world where there is internal pressure for the admission of the refugees. Also, Palestine is one of the few countries in the world which contains a sufficient concentration of Jewish people to prevent assimilation at such a rapid rate as to insure the complete extinction of the nationality.

The editorial lists the various imperial interests in Palestine and points out, correctly, that "Zionism also fosters an imperialist policy of its own which is aimed at depriving the Arabs of their rights." But at this point the editorial parts company with the traditional Leninist conception of the national question.

The Question of a Program

The Jews "should approach the Arab masses on the basis of equality and as the outstanding fighters for democracy." Correct! How is this to be accomplished? First of all, "by fighting for... the establishment of a constituent assembly of the Jewish and Arab population based on universal suffrage and majority rule." If the Jews should do this, "they would win the support of the Arab masses." Right again! Only... the Jewish masses cannot be won to a support of this slogan! For majority rule at the present time means Arab rule, and this slogan asks the Jews to approach the Arab masses not on a basis of equality, but on a basis of Arab domination of the country!

One of the first results of such domination, at the present time, would be the virtual stopping of all Jewish immigration into the country (the most crucial

issue in dispute at the present time). But, the editorial protests, "It goes without saying that, as revolutionary socialists, we are against all bars, quotas and restrictions on immigration." Without saying! But unfortunately, once Arab rule is established it will no longer matter very much what we do or do not say about Jewish immigration into the country. But the Jews could then win the Arab masses to a realization of the true meaning of revolutionary socialism? Of course. But this would take time.

"The underdeveloped and oppressed nations are not waiting, they are not ceasing to live, they are not disappearing, while the proletariat of the advanced countries is overthrowing the bourgeoisie and repelling its attempts at counter-revolution," wrote Lenin. The slogan of majority rule for Palestine asks the Jews to be the outstanding fighters for a program which, if it were accomplished, would reduce them to the same status which they occupied in pre-Hitler Germany and Poland, and which would doom their fellow nationals in Europe to complete extinction while they waited for the revolution to mature. No wonder that no party has emerged in Palestine based upon the concept of majority rule!

The editorial attacks the slogan of a bi-national state as one "where two unequal populations rule jointly and postpones the demand for a genuinely democratic state to the time when the Jews are in the majority." Some of our comrades, in their researches, have discovered that this was the content with which Meier Yaari, theoretician of the Hashomer Hatzair organization, filled this slogan, and have quite properly flayed him for it. However, what possible effect on the Jews can such an exposure have when these same comrades then pass over to the opposite extreme and demand Arab rule by virtue of the fact that they constitute the majority of the Palestine population? Between the two the Jewish left-wingers will choose Yaari, and so far have done so.

Actually, there is every reason to believe that the main reason why this slogan makes such a popular appeal to the left wing of the Jewish labor movement and probably even to a majority of the members of the HH organization

is because there is implicit in it not Yaari's interpretation of it, but rather the demand for the recognition of full national rights for both of the contending nationalities. If this were not so, then why should it be necessary for the Hashomer leaders, in order to gain left wing support for their program of a Jewish majority, to mask their real demands behind the ambiguous slogan of bi-nationalism? To denounce this slogan completely, and to call for Arab domination as the LA editorial does, is simply to play into Yaari's hands, for it leaves the Hashomer members with no place else to go.

It may be objected to the above that all this has been said on the assumption that these slogans will be advanced under the present conditions, rather than in the course of a united struggle for socialism. Such an objection would be valid. However, what is under discussion is precisely the question of which slogans to raise in order to make possible such a united revolutionary anti-imperialist struggle. The slogan of majority rule which is advanced as the most important "democratic" demand would certainly gain the confidence of the Arabs, but must of necessity leave the Jewish masses cold.

The Crux of the Matter

The crux of the matter is the fact that where a clash of nationalists exists, it is impossible to resolve the conflict by calling for majority rule, for this would simply insure the domination of the more populous nationality. It is absurd to think, e.g., that at the time of the Irish rebellions it would have been possible to raise this slogan and have it accepted by the Irish, for this would only have been a guarantee of their perpetual enslavement by England.

In such a case, the primary democratic slogan must be concerned with the question of the recognition of the rights of each nationality, no matter what the always-disputed census may indicate concerning the population of the country. This means that each nationality must be recognized as having the right to determine its destiny for itself, whether it be separation from the rest of the country (such an action, if carried out voluntarily, could be termed self-determination, rather than British-dictated Parti-

tion), some form of autonomous cooperation, or simply majority rule.

A movement based upon this respect for the fundamental rights of each nationality could enlist the support of the Jewish workers, for they would then have no need to fear the consequences of an

Arab majority, or vice-versa. They could then raise the slogans of "land to the peasants," "independence from British imperialism," etc., and expect to draw the Arab masses into a united anti-imperialist socialist struggle with them.

LEON SHIELDS

The MEANING of SELF-DETERMINATION

A Reply to Leon Shields

The problem of Palestine and of Arab-Jewish relations is important not only because the Jewish population of Europe has been decimated and the remaining elements desire to leave the Continent to go to that country, but because in Palestine, the presence of the two populations tests the Marxist policy on national freedom in a nation dominated by imperialism. There are numerous historical reasons why some Jews wish to go to Palestine. However, over a period of many years, despite the agitation of Zionism toward ending the *diaspora*, the overwhelming number of Jews who had settled all over the world did not respond to it. They adapted themselves to nations and conditions under which they lived. Many supported Zionist activity because they felt that the Jews who wished to return to Palestine should have that right, and not merely the right, but the means to carry out their desire.

The present situation in Palestine does not arise, as Shields asserts, because there are two "distinct nationalities in the country," but because the European and world situation has made it impossible for the Jews to exist anywhere with any kind of guarantee for their safety. Thus the desire to go to Palestine, which during "normal" capitalist development represented a desire growing out of historical, religious and moral grounds, has today assumed the form of necessity. With the world borders closed to the Jews, they have turned to Palestine as a remaining hope for salvation. Assimilation has nothing whatever to do with the question. The Jews are not greatly worried about this problem; what does concern them is to find a place to live without the danger of "extinction" as a people, as human beings.

The criticism of Shields is wrong from the start. The very title of his letter indicates that he does not really understand Marxist principles on the national question and the right of self-determina-

tion. "For Self-Determination in Palestine: Against the Slogan of Majority Rule," is a travesty of Lenin's point of view and differs in no essential way from the position of the Zionists or the Hashomer Hatzair. The "left wing" Jews in Palestine are for that kind of self-determination; i.e., they do not want to drive the Arabs from Palestine and they at least give lip service to anti-imperialism. But where these left wingers fall down is in rejecting a policy of genuine equality with respect to the Arab population. For that reason they must ally themselves with British imperialism against genuine national freedom for Palestine.

The Crucial Question

The crucial question for Palestine is the question of the independence of the nation and the establishment of a constituent assembly as an instrument of the movement for freedom from imperialism. Those who seek a solution to the Palestinian question by evading the question of the kind of state which shall rule this peculiarly constituted country, really confess their own bankruptcy or reveal a reactionary bias toward the Arab population. The problem of Palestine cannot be answered with the generality: the socialist revolution (not only in Palestine, but the world socialist revolution!) is the only solution for Palestine and Arab-Jewish relations. That is abstentionism of the worst sort because it is utterly indefensible. It leads to programmatic sterility. A case in point is the series of articles on the Middle East, by T. Cliff, which appeared in three successive issues of the *Fourth International*. Here, an excellent series of analytical articles ends with a statement that the socialist revolution will in the end solve the Palestinian question. No reference is made to the question of how the national struggle can and must develop, what should be the relations between the Arabs and Jews in this anti-imperialist

struggle and what state power should replace the rule of British imperialism. This is the conclusion to a series of articles which contain an excellent summary of the rôle of British imperialism in the Middle East, the Arab movement, the rôle of Zionism and its league with the British rulers, and finally the rôle of the Jews in Palestine itself. But the article of Shields which does deal with this question reveals a dangerous conformance to the prejudices of the Jews toward the Arabs and an acceptance of what is in essence an imperialist attitude of the Jews toward a constituent assembly based upon universal suffrage and majority rule.

The slogan at the head of the Shields article implies two situations which are non-existent: 1. that Palestine is an independent nation; and 2. that the Jews in Palestine are an oppressed minority. Neither of these conditions obtains. Palestine is an oppressed nation in which both the Arabs and the Jews are victims of imperialism. And so Shields says that the trouble with the position advanced by *Labor Action* is that:

... the Jewish masses cannot be won to a support of this slogan! For "majority rule" at the present time means Arab rule, and this slogan asks the Jews to approach the Arab masses not on a basis of equality, but on a basis of Arab domination of the country!

This is an example of sophistic reasoning. Equality lies precisely in the fact that the majority can exercise its majority. Ancient history aside, the fact is that Palestine is an Arab nation. The return of the Jews to Palestine in recent years has, because of the reactionary attitude of Zionism, allowed the British and the Arab feudal rulers to promote sharp opposition of the Arab people toward this immigration. But it lay within the power of the Jews in Palestine to break down any opposition or prejudice which does exist by an intelligent policy and attitude toward the Arabs who look upon them as a force coming to take their nation and their land from them. Instead of allying themselves with the Arab masses, the Jewish leaders and parties have allied themselves with the British and thus helped to make effective the activity of the Arab feudal leaders. The relationship of population in Palestine is as two to one and not one hundred to one (Germany). This in itself creates a better possibility for a harmonious cohabitation of the two peoples, provided that the "advanced" Jewish population acts as the friend of the Arab and does not appear to them as usurpers.

The heart of the problem exists precisely in the fact that "... no party has emerged in Palestine based on the concept of majority rule." Thus the Jews appear to the Arabs as a force which seeks domination over the country; certainly they do not present themselves as a force for the liberation of the nation from imperialism.

Majority Rule

It becomes utterly incomprehensible then, why Shields is opposed to the bi-national state which aims for the establishment of Arab-Jewish equality in state rule despite the fact that the Arabs outnumber the Jews by two to one. Look to what absurdity Shields is driven. He is compelled to say that *Labor Action* has gone over to the opposite extreme and "... demands Arab rule by virtue of the fact that they constitute the majority of the Palestine population." Could there be any better reason for our position? We are then advised that between the bi-national state and real democracy, the "Jewish left wingers will choose Yaari [the theoretician of the bi-national state]."

Shields then seeks to explain this, recognizing that it is actually a reactionary position which the Jews hold, by saying that the interpretation of the Jews and Yaari on the bi-national state is different, that the former recognize it as a means of establishing full national rights for both nationalities! That means that Yaari looks upon it as a means of establishing Jewish domination over the Arabs! That is correct. That is what the bi-national state actually means. It counts upon the superior development of the Jews, their capital and their alignment with British capital to establish that domination until the day arrives when the Jews become a numerical majority in the land and magnanimously accord the Arabs their full rights!

The position of Shields is made no better when he writes: "The slogan of majority rule which is advanced as the most important 'democratic' demand would certainly gain the confidence of the Arabs, but must of necessity leave the Jewish masses cold." That is what is wrong in the Palestinian situation. The Jews of Palestine have a reactionary attitude toward the Arab masses who suffer from centuries of feudal relations and exploitation. The Jews could appear before them as liberators if they adopted a correct policy free of imperialist overtones. There is something

wrong with the ideology of Jews. The policy of Zionist imperialism dominates their minds and this condition becomes doubly serious precisely because "no party has emerged in Palestine based upon the concept of majority rule." Both the example of Ireland and the reference to Lenin are utterly without significance in the way Shields attempts to use them. In the case of Ireland particularly, we have a clear example of imperialist rule and oppression. There was no joint Irish-British population in the land and why Shields even refers to it is a mystery.

Shields is defending a reactionary position, one which yields to reactionary pressure. The fact that the Jews are against a constituent assembly, based on universal suffrage and majority rule, is no reason for a Marxist to reject such a slogan. On the contrary, it then becomes his duty to advocate it all the more determinedly and to patiently explain to the Jewish people why it is necessary to accept and advocate this position as the means of solving their own problem as well as that of the Arab masses. Revolutionary socialists are the only genuine democrats. That is why they must be the champions of the policy advocated by the Workers Party in the Palestinian situation. Any other position leads one directly toward an anti-Arab position on the most reactionary grounds of Jewish economic, political and social superiority, or on the ground that the Jews are "more civilized" than the Arabs. A revolutionist who succumbs to that kind of position, or rejects a correct slogan for Palestine on the grounds that the Jewish organizations, leaders, and even the majority of the people are against it, reflects the pressure of reaction and not progress.

We do not believe that the antagonisms between the Jewish and Arab masses are quite what the Zionist, British and Arab feudal lords describe them. On the contrary, there is abundant evidence that these people can live in harmony with one another provided a correct relationship is established between them. An answer is provided in the position which we advocate. To be sure, it is not the whole answer to the question, but it is the basis upon which the whole answer, i.e., socialism, can be given.

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THE PROBLEM OF PUBLIC SENSIBILITY

A Review of the Film, "The Open City"

Viewing films such as the Italian production, *The Open City* and the Swiss *The Last Chance*, one realizes how starved one has become for a breath of life in the motion picture film. And this stresses all the more clearly elements of the problem of public sensibility at the present time. This problem is not purely aesthetic: we will be far from exhausting its meaning if we conceive it merely as a question of taste and of form. Public sensibility and politics are being bound together in the modern world; in fact, Hitler gave a programmatic character to this connection when he discussed propaganda in *Mein Kampf*. He declared that the masses are feminine; he meant that they react more on a feelingful and a sensory basis than they do on an intellectual one. He attacked the intelligentsia not as it might be attacked from the standpoint of socialism for its tendencies merely to follow the leader, or for its vacillations, and the political characterlessness that it so frequently reveals: to the contrary, Hitler attacked the intelligentsia for its progressive virtues, for its representation of variety, disinterestedness, curiosity, reasonableness. One of the progressive functions of the intelligentsia is that of helping to lift the level of public sensibility. Clarity of thought, and a rising level of public sensibility, are now essential in any effort to oppose the propagandistic exploitation of the masses. In his insistence on the "femininity" of the masses, and his attacks on the intellectuals, Hitler was warranting his own practical ideas about propaganda. These include the political use of art. The Hitler technique of propaganda is familiar to us. Hitler said that a big lie should be told. This big lie is then driven into the consciousness of masses by a persistent and all-sided propagandistic effort. In order to assure mass acceptance of the big lie, processes of thought must be rendered rigid. Then the appeal to feeling, to sensations can be made more effectively. The totalitarian propaganda film aims to help achieve precisely such a kind of response. Fact and propagandistically presented lies are, thereby, bound together with an extraordinary cleverness—a cleverness which relies on sensory appeal as one of the means which assist in introducing the big lie into the consciousness of masses. This type of film

utilizes music, a commentator and other devices: it mixes up fact and myths: it juxtaposes maps, correct statistics, news-reel clips of true scenes with fictionalizations of a propagandistic order. It, thus, shows us concretely what Hitler meant by his assertion that the masses are "feminine." Feeling is appealed to in order to help establish an iron-bound and unquestioned conclusion. Frequently, this type of film even politicalizes meaning by a relative de-politicalization of content.¹

Analysis of Content Essential

The film is one of the paramount instrumentalities of mass culture in our time. The Nazis used it as one of their major propaganda weapons. Today, the political utilization of the films has become a contemporary commonplace. With this, the utilization of totalitarian techniques in Hollywood has now really begun.² In consequence, we cannot discuss the film merely in terms of pure art. When thousands and millions of human beings all over the world see current films, when these masses of people go to motion picture theatres with more or less starved sensibilities, when—as so often happens—films concretize the meagre conscious streams of reverie of many human beings, when the film affords one of the most magical, stirring, rousing and gripping types of experience which one can know today in the whole field of public life—then we must try to take account of the various types of influences and effects which a film can exert. Furthermore, motion picture films are, with rare exceptions such as Jean Cocteau's *The Blood of a Poet*, not important for the principal reason that they afford us with object of aesthetic experience. For the majority, motion pictures are important because of their surface content. The analysis of content is a necessary part of a critical and artistic discussion of modern motion pictures. When that content directly or indirectly involves politics, political events and tendencies of immediate world significance, we must refer our analysis to historic events.

1. For an analysis of the Nazi technique, cf. *Propaganda and the Nazi Film*, S. Krauch, New York, 1943.

2. Cf. the article, "Mission to Moscow," by Meyer Schapiro, *Partisan Review*, May-June, 1943, and my article, "More on Hollywood," in *The League of Frightened Philistines*, New York, 1945.

A realistically done film is a representation of life. We must look to the type of life that is represented when we discuss such a film. We demand that the artist have independence and sovereignty over his material, and we struggle to retain for him the widest possible freedom over that material. This struggle demands a persistent polemical and critical attack on all of those who would reduce the appreciation of art to the mere level of testing—usually with rigid concepts—the ideological, the political, the moral presuppositions or conclusions in a given work of art, and then, on the basis of this test, and then, of deciding that art is good or bad in accordance with the degree to which the ideological, the political, the moral presuppositions and formal conclusions of the artist agree or disagree with those of the critic. There is no real contradiction between this position, and the necessity of analyzing and evaluating content in a work of art, especially when the content reveals a guiding political theme. When characters are selected and developed, when details and events are dramatically organized, and even tendentiously conceived, in terms of a content, then, that content is not an irrelevant feature of the given work of art in which this is the case: this is especially so when it is likely that the content of a given work of art will have a definite and immediate political influence. Thus, it is proper, without any violation of our premises concerning the freedom of art, to analyze and to warn people concerning this influence. For motion pictures, films are now being used to form a definite kind and level of public sensibility: the film is becoming a major political weapon.

One of principal orientative attitudes which movie art is insidiously inculcating into the movie audience is that which indirectly—sometimes even directly—establishes the moral—*Follow The Leader!* We can, in a general sense, say that this type of movie art is bureaucratic, and that it is an art of the glorification of the functionary.

These general remarks should help us in an effort to deal with various current films, including the Italian one now being shown in New York City, *The Open City*.

II

Art Humanizes Knowledge

I have already mentioned the starved feeling one has for motion pictures which give us more than does the usual Hollywood films. Additionally we often also feel starved for more knowledge of what has gone on during recent years, what have been the human meanings of the terrible events of war. What has it done to people? What has life been like all over the world during recent years? What has personal life been like during the time that the fascist regimes of Italy and Germany held unchallenged power. What has the brutality, the bestiality of fascism done to human beings? Our knowledge of modern life in other countries is largely formal and generalized: it is mainly political, economic, sociological, journalistic. It is insufficiently human and immediate in the sense that our knowledge of life in America is human and immediate. And if we regard art from the standpoint of what it does for us in increasing our knowledge of the world, this function of humanizing our knowledge is one which it can or should perform.

If art does this, it helps to increase our awareness of the human aspect of life: it offers us images, representation of the quality of life and the quality of men in different times and places. Today we need most urgently to expand this price of awareness.

Again and again, when we see a Hollywood production, we know that life is not at all like what it is being shown us in this film. The human relationships embodied in the movement and sound before our eyes are all false to what we know, and to what we feel. The love story is adolescent, childish. In order to maintain any enthusiasm for, any abiding interest in the film other than one based on child-like, almost deliberate and wishful dreamy indulgence in commonplace fantasy, we must somehow find a way of convincing ourselves that the aims, the destiny, the feelings of the hero and the heroine have some real importance, some real significance, socially, or emotionally and personally. For instance, we must find some way of convincing or deceiving ourselves into believing that the all-encompassing need for some physically beautiful, characterless actress to become recognized and to sing boring songs in a large and gilded cabaret, is an all-important human end, an end which we wish to see her attain. We must ourselves supply what the film lacks—inter-

nal conviction. The greater majority of Hollywood films feature the young attractive and childish hero and heroine. They are mainly attractive because of their physical traits, and, in the case of the women, their clothes, and their make-up. Thanks to the roles they play and their very appearance, they become an implicit measure of types. Types differing from them are correspondingly reduced in human significance. Usually a deviation from the norms of youth, health and physical attractiveness must be of secondary significance in these films. Types with a certain kind of deviation are laughed at: the moron, the fat person, the unduly thin person, the ugly woman and so on. Such falseness to life becomes all-sided in Hollywood. We meet people in direct life much differently and we evaluate them differently than we are allowed to in the film. In a direct, an empirical, a vividly immediate way, the Hollywood film is creating a new hierarchical standard of evaluations of human beings, of their physiological and psychological traits and appearance. This is having the result of deforming public sensibility. In recent years, the sense of urgency which we feel concerning the problems of the world has created many dichotomies between what we need in the way of art and what we get. This need is more complicated and more subtle than that expressed in the demand for films which are formally true to life and history, which tell us what historic events and movements are like. It involves the evaluation of traits of character, of face and body; it involves setting, background, emotional and sensory response to objects, to fields of vision. The element of control, of emphasis in setting, in the types of rooms and homes in so many Hollywood films, even this leaves us starved.

The European Film

In reaction against such films, we welcome European films where the actors and actresses are less standardized, less typed. We react with enthusiasm when we see that setting is placed in closer relationship to character so that a home looks more like a home than it so often does in an American film. The trappings of vulgar glamour are absent from the best of European films. In this sense, one feels a rush of joy in seeing certain European films because one immediately recognizes that the appearance of the players is more an appearance that makes them seem like human beings. One gains a sense of humanity sitting in a theatre and seeing *The Last Chance* or in view-

ing certain scenes, at least, in *The Open City*. This fact, plus the additional one that this latter film is presented as an artistic representation of what life was like in Rome just prior to its capture by the Allied forces, endows the latter film with an added interest. History, recent history, our thirst for human knowledge, human awareness, vivid images of humanity engulfed in the floods of recent history—this all cooperates with the makers of *The Open City*. These considerations, then, only make more necessary the need for clear and careful analysis of such a film.

III

The Open City

The Open City presents a story of Rome in the grip of the Gestapo. Through a minor character—an Austrian deserter—we come to understand that the Americans are at Cassino. Due to the fact that we see a building ruined by bombing, we know that Mussolini has fallen. The hero is an engineer named Manfredi: he is a member of The National Committee of Liberation, and he fought in Spain with the "Reds": he was also an experienced member of the underground prior to the Spanish revolution and Civil War: and he is a member of the Communist Party. Early in the film, he escapes over a roof just as the police come to arrest him. He has been "named," and the Gestapo and the Italian police are searching for him. He has had a love affair with an actress, Marina, a girl who was once poor, but who, through the stage and love affairs, has managed to reach a higher level of comfort. He has, we learn, met her during a raid. She and he didn't go to the shelters. But he is going to break it off with her. Fleeing from the Gestapo, he goes to the home of Francesco, in a working class district. Francesco is a printer. He is going to marry Pina. She is a widow, mother of a boy who is around ten. Francesco and Pina have had a love affair which began two years before the time of the film and Pina is pregnant. Also early in the film, there is a shot of a raid on a bakery, and through subsequent dialogue, it is revealed that Pina has inspired this raid. Francesco is a worker member of the Liberation movement: he works in the underground printing plant where Liberation papers, or at least, a paper is printed. Francesco, the worker, is distinguished from Manfredi, the member of the Committee of National Libera-

tion. The latter is a professional Communist, but came to have assumed the title of engineer. There is one scene where the two lovers, Francesco and Pina sit in the hall—there is no place for privacy for the two lovers in their homes because they live in crowded quarters—and they talk of the future. Pina is distressed, unsure of the future. Francesco tells her that he is not a cultured man, like Manfredi, and that he cannot clearly explain what he means as could the latter, but that he believes in a better world, that she must also believe and that they must do this for their children.

Because he is a hunted man, it is dangerous for Manfredi to carry necessary money to the armed partisans. Manfredi sends for the local priest, Don Pietro. The latter, a Partisan priest, delivers one million lira, printed into books. (In passing, it is interesting to note that in the film itself, no information is given to us as to why this much money is needed, or as to where it came from.) The Liberation movement is not shown conveniently as a strong one, and we see only passing glimpses of it in action. Its political character must be assumed since it is not concretely and clinchingly represented. One cannot avoid the question: a movement which can get a million lira should be strong, stronger publicly than this one is. To continue: Francesco is a worker Communist, but yet after years of fascism, during which he has come to hold to revolutionary principles, he cannot explain to his beloved what he and she must really fight for. He isn't cultured enough for that. This is all the more glaring when one realizes that he is a printer, that he reads and works on the underground press. He even brings the latest issue of the paper to Manfredi and announces that twelve thousand copies were run off. Francesco and Pina are going to be married in the Church. She believes in God, although at the same time, she appears in the film as the working class and Communist woman, one who has inspired a food raid on a bakery. Besides citing her belief in God as a reason for being married in the Church, she asks Manfredi if it is not better to be married by a Partisan priest than by Fascist municipal authorities. The latter in a fraction of a second, agrees with her.

The Gestapo has a dragnet plan for the capture of the enemies of the fascists. They know that Manfredi, the

hunted, is in the neighborhood where Francesco lives. On the day of the intended wedding, they put their plan into operation in this district. Manfredi and Francesco flee out of a window. While all who live in the huge building the being lined up in the courtyard, they are captured. Pina breaks through the soldiery, and chases after the van in which her Francesco is being carried away, along with all of the other men whom the Gestapo have rounded up. And she is shot down, murdered in the street. The auto vans carrying the prisoners are attacked by the Partisans, and Francesco and Manfredi escape. They go to the rather luxurious apartment of Marina. There, Manfredi makes it clear to her that he is breaking off their affair. He tells her that love holds people together, makes human beings live more fully. But this is the love of men and women, husbands and wives, parents for children, not the sordid love she practices with fascists, Germans and others in order to have better clothes, better food, a career, a better home than the one she would have had. She knew Pina as a girl: Pina's sister, a young actress, who wants to escape from working class poverty, has even come to live with her, and during this scene, she is drunk. Marina tells Manfredi that if she had stayed in her class, she would have married a trolley car conductor, and would now be raising children. Manfredi and Francesco discuss plans. Manfredi, through the offices of Don Pietro, could have gone into hiding in a monastery. He has not done so in order to be active in the work of the National Committee of Liberation, which we do not see in the film. But now, he decides to go into hiding. On the morning after this evening at Marina's house, they go to Don Pietro, procure false papers and along with an Austrian deserter, are being taken by the priest to a monastic hiding place. But Marina has turned them in and they are caught on the street by the Gestapo. At first, the Chief of the Gestapo offers to make a deal with Manfredi. If the latter will give information, the Gestapo promises the Communist Party freedom in Rome. The Gestapo Chief also tries to persuade Manfredi, by pointing out that Italian Monarchists are not reliable allies. Unlike Molotov from 1939 to June 1941, Manfredi does not think that fascism is merely a matter of taste. He won't talk. He is tortured. He still won't talk. Don Pietro is appealed to, but he refuses to intervene, and sitting in the office, looking

through the opened door of the torture room, he sees Manfredi tortured to death.

Marina is at headquarters during these scenes. She is given an expensive coat as a reward for informing, and she is assured that all that will happen to Manfredi is that he'll be questioned and released in a couple of days. But she is tense and anxious, and is given drinks. After Manfredi has been brutally tortured to death, she comes into the office of the Chief with a drunken German officer named Captain Hartmann. (He was in the First World War, and he is cracking, because he sees no future, and thinks that the Germans are making themselves hated all over Europe and leaving behind them a trail of corpses.) Marina faints as she sees Manfredi dead. The coat is taken off of her stricken form. It will be useful the next time.

Hierarchical Concept of Characters

Certain other features of the film also need be mentioned here. The Partisan priest is one of the most attractive characters. He asks God to curse the Gestapo Chief after the latter has had Manfredi tortured to death; then, he prays to God for forgiveness. He is kind to the little boys: he is resourceful in outwitting the police and the Gestapo. He shows a certain leniency towards sinners, for instance, when he walks along a street—carrying money to the Partisans—and hears Pina's confession. That she has sinned by having sexual relationships with Francesco out of wedlock—that is human. We all don't do what we should. Even he. He is a good priest, human and understanding, and is a good patriot, a hero: he dies before a firing squad. The Gestapo Chief points out to him that the Communist Manfredi is an aesthetic foe of religion. But still Don Pietro will not change sides. And he and Manfredi together represent the leading elements in the Liberation. This is done by tendentious selection, by omissions, and by bringing their personal images forward in the action.

And let us note the treatment of children here. There is a child leader, Romoletto. He is, like Manfredi, a character with little temperament. Also, like the adult leader, Romoletto has few important connections of a personal character. He is not beaten up by parents when the children come home late, and apparently he has no parents, and lives alone on the roof. After a bombing raid, he addresses the children like a leader talking to his followers, and he thanks them, saying that he is proud of them.

He appears in the film only a few times, and for a few seconds in each appearance. Pina's son is the child equivalent of Francesco.

He is the main child character. Early in the film, the other boys are shown playing soccer with the priest as referee. But Pina's son is not in the game. Rather, he is sent with the important message for the priest to come and see Manfredi. He stands out from the other children just as Francesco stands out from the other workers. Manfredi is set apart, as is Romoletto, in a more important but parallel manner. The same parallel is seen concerning Francesco and Pina's son. As we have seen, Francesco tells Pina that Manfredi can tell what the fight for a better world means. Manfredi dies at the end. The priest is executed. The last shot shows the children walking off, their backs to the camera. For their parents there is only suffering and death and struggle. This suffering, this death, their struggle is necessary to make a better world for children. But they have their leader, the little son of the murdered Pina.

Liberation, the struggle for this better world is organized, hierarchically represented in the terms of human relationships. Here is a world of leaders and led, just as is the brutal world of the Nazis one of leaders of led. It is striking that the dialogue between the Gestapo Chief and Manfredi, victor and victim, is also one between equals. They can understand each other. Manfredi does not oppose ideals to the Gestapo Chief as much as he does loyalty to his own movement. He won't make a deal. The Gestapo Chief tries flattery, and indicates clearly that he and Manfredi understand one another. They are bitter enemies in a struggle for power, but each is removed from the masses: each lives and thinks on the plane of leadership. This hierarchical structure of human relationships, then, is embodied in the picture in the very characterizations and in the relationships between characters and it is stressed in small details. The priest goes to the underground printing plant. He is introduced to the *Director*. This title is used, rather than the word Comrade. The Director is set off from the workers in the printing plant, and this fact is established by his little office in a closed off space. He takes the priest into his office, just like any other executive.

The "New" Communist Woman

Pina is the most spontaneous character in *The Open City*. She is more free emo-

tionally than the other major characters. But her freedom and spontaneity is revealed only in her domestic and purely feminine role. In the first scenes, she appears to us as very charming. Her charm and appeal—she is dressed in character, and is lovely—in itself attracts us more genuinely than the Hollywood star actress can or usually does. Pina is natural, temperamental. She loses her temper with her little boy. She loves genuinely and with a spirit of self-sacrifice. She has suffered, and is a widow. She is pregnant. She feels guilty and needs to go to confession. She has a moment of doubt about the future, and Francesco assures her, sitting on the hall steps. Manfredi dies in stoical heroism: Don Pietro dies with dignity, declaring to the priest who prays at the end as he walks to be shot that it is not so difficult to die well, for the greater difficulty is found in trying to live well. But when Pina is murdered, she is carried away by frantic emotion, by love and fear. Her emotion gives her strength and courage to break past soldiers with guns, and to run down the street after the truck full of prisoners. As we learn through the dialogue, she inspired a food riot. But then, she relapses to human duties, to those of mother and beloved woman. The actions given to her by the scenarist establish her as the "new" Communist woman. And such, she is differentiated from man. She is hierarchized in this subtle fashion.

The inhabitants of the building where she lives, serve as a human background. We see them in most intimate and personal terms when they are engaged in an argument in a crowded home, concerning children and the difficulties of crowded family life. This constitutes a humorous touch, and elicits laughter from the audience. Only in a humorously humanizing role do they come forward. This fact further reveals the hierarchization within the picture. And contrasted with them, and with Pina, we see the actress Marina. As we have noted, she has escaped from such a life by selling her body as a commodity. But she has found love through a chance meeting with Manfredi. She would, through her love, cause him to forsake the people. She has lost her humanity by breaking from her past. She compares unfavorably with Pina. She is more nervous. She needs pills and cigarettes and clothes. She has no one to love, no one to live for. Rejected by her lover, she betrays him for a fur coat, and she does not even get this. She is last seen stretched out on

the floor of the Gestapo Chief's office, unconscious. The freer woman sexually, the woman with artistic gifts, is not as happy as the mother who is loved by the workingman. For the latter, though the goods of life are love and struggle, not a change from her present position in the world to one of more freedom. If you have more of the comforts of life, as does this actress, you are not happy. You can live without these, and you can have the emotional goods of life. And you have leaders who know how they can create a better world for your children.

Stalinist Functionary—Superman

This hierarchization is further stressed in the very characterization of Manfredi. He is nearly always calm. Only when he is subjected to unbearable tortures in the torture room, does he scream out. But hunted by the Gestapo, living in danger, he never loses his composure. He has far less temperament than Pina. Unlike the priest, he is faced with no inner contradictions. He has made a clear decision to break off his love affair with the actress—an alien element. He speaks clearly to her as to why he breaks it off. He suffers no strain in making other decisions. When he sees the necessity of going into hiding, he makes this decision with promptness. At the same time he is attentive to others. Francesco is shaken after his beloved Pina is murdered: at Marina's apartment, and he needs aspirin. Manfredi perceives that, and also that he needs sleep. He gives Francesco the couch on which to sleep: he takes the chair. He is, at the same time, modest and unassuming. He points out that he is no hero, but that others have died before him, without talking, and he hopes that he may measure up to them. His *milieu* is one of danger. It has been this for years. But danger has left no strains on his personality. In brief, he is the functionary, who has *courage*. He takes risks, willingly, but he is not foolhardy: the Hollywood hero is always foolhardy, determined to win by sheer bravery, physical power, and shrewdness against odds, and his actions are usually stupid and preposterous. The movie audience is used to such heroes, and this fact, for an American audience, endows Manfredi the more with a human attractiveness. His stoicism is magnificent. As we learn, his love affair began during a raid: he found this girl who was, like him, unafraid, and they both remained where they were instead of going to a shelter where there was more protec-

tion. He talks to others mainly about their problems, or about practical details, not about ideas. He says very little about himself. In this characterization then, we see a most subtle tendentiousness: the function of this tendentiousness is that of further embodying this new hierarchization. We have, in Manfredi, the new Stalinist functionary.

Myth of CP Role

The Open City depicts the new Stalinist myth concerning the role of the Communist parties. We have been familiarized with this myth in successive revolutionary situations ever since the Chinese revolution. On the political level this myth conceals the programmatic policies of the Stalinists: on the personal level, it brings forth the Stalinist heroes. In this movie, the hero and leader stands in front, and the politics are only passingly indicated. The only political party mentioned in the film is the Communist Party, although we know that in the Badoglio period of recent Italian history, there were six parties. The Catholic appears in the role of a priest, not a Catholic political leader. At one point in the film, the Gestapo Chief is at his desk, looking at the latest editions of the underground press. There are a number of these papers with different names: but yet only one left political tendency is positively named, the Communist. In effect, the Communist Party is almost the only party. Another tendency, monarchism, is referred to, however, as an unreliable ally for a Communist. But the Communist Party is so significant that the Gestapo can propose a deal with its leader, guaranteeing it freedom in Rome. As yet, we need to gain much more data on what happened in Italy just prior to and immediately after the fall of Mussolini. But we know enough to be certain that there was a higher and more tense political atmosphere. Prior to Mussolini's fall, there were tremendous strikes in the North: in Rome, Mussolini had no sooner fallen than the underground papers were out, and political parties with their leadership came into the open. Such facts as these predicate both a different political atmosphere and a different level of political consciousness in the masses of Rome than that concretized in this film. In brief, the movie is made to rewrite history in myth.

Art is given a practical political function. This function is not performed by a simple and obtuse didactic emphasis, but rather with the aid of tendentious characterization, tendentious organiza-

tion of plot, a tendentiousness in details. This tendentiousness serves, further, the purpose of distorting and concealing the politics of a political movie: a political movie, furthermore, which was made in Italy in a time of tense and centrally important political crisis. Formally, the film embodies the idea of national unity: more intimately, it establishes the leadership principle. The leader has, further, a definable social character. He is a cultured man, an engineer. He is the new intelligentsia, or the intelligentsia in its new role. Stalin, we know, has defined the intelligentsia of the Soviet Union as "a layer between classes." Hitler attacked and destroyed the old liberal intelligentsia, and put the intellectuals to work under his service. They were the carrier of propaganda, the rigidifiers of the public consciousness. From the standpoint of Stalinism, we have here something that is parallel. Manfredi is in, as it were, the layer between classes. He has contacts of a wider variety than Francesco or Pina: he can have a love affair with an actress: he can meet her in a restaurant or cafe, obviously one which is not patronized by workers. His province is ideas: his function in relationship to the masses is that of serving as an example, of listening to their talk of their problems, of making decisions, of giving the orders and blue printing the plans for the better world that the children will know. He has his parallel in the child who, even in boyhood, is being trained in life as the new leader, and as such, the next generation of men who serve as the layer between classes.

Public Sensibility vs. Totalitarian Art

This is the content of the film: this is its significance, its "message." The condition of public sensibility in America suggests that this message will be readily accepted by many serious persons. We have noted some of the reasons for this. The political and the artistic character of this film come together, as it were, and with this linkage of art and politics, the condition of public sensibility can be seen to be a crucial problem. I have emphasized the point that Francesco tells Pina that he is not cultured and cannot, like Manfredi, tell her what the better world is really to be like. Manfredi has the ideas and the programme in his head. These he doesn't state in the film. The audience is left in the same state as Francesco and Pina concerning the aims and ideals of this terrible struggle that is going on. A confused intellectual condition in the public is necessary for

this picture to achieve its effects. This intellectual confusion, in itself, smothers aesthetic sensibility, reduces it. Such being the case, the audience is likely to be less demanding. It is likely to miss this crucial flaw, both political and artistically, in the film. Just as the working people must rely on their leaders, so must the audience trust to faith. The picture is subtly ideologically without a statement of its ideology, a presentation of it in the film. In this sense, it doesn't carry its own full power of inner compulsion. It relies on historic events in the terms of their presentation and interpretation from the standpoint of an all-class, Popular-Front, National-Liberal conception of fascism. Both inside of the film, and in the world of History, we have the bestial Nazis, hated by millions on millions all over the world. Hatred of the Nazis must help the makers of this film to achieve their effects. Since the Nazis are bestial, then opposition to them is, in itself, a sufficient motivation. The anti-fascist front opposes them. But in the picture, this is turned into the Stalinist opposition. It is in this way that history is relied on to give to the film the compulsion and conviction which it does not fully carry within itself. The artistic flaw of *The Open City* serves as the means of establishing its *real* ideology, if the conception of trust and following the leader be considered an ideology.

If you add to a political and intellectual confusion, a low and a relatively starved aesthetic and public sensibility, then you can grasp more clearly the special nature and significance of this film. When public sensibility is sufficiently low, divert and uncritical emotional reactions dominate the response of the audience. The person sitting in the audience reacts favorably to heroism, and unfavorably to brutality, cruelty, injustice. Besides the direct presentation of these contrasts, the hero is anti-fascist: the brutes are Nazis. The anti-fascist hero wins the favor of the audience. And the leadership conception is thereby stamped into the mind of the audience.

This analysis should help to demonstrate, not only the importance of serious and clear political analysis: it should also suggest something of the problem of art, of the questions of sensibility in our own age. With mass distribution or circulation of art, the problem of lifting mass sensibilities becomes paramount. This need was implied in the very early writings of Marxism. Engels stated in *Ludwig Feuerbach* that the German

working class was the heir of German classical philosophy. The socialist conception of culture is a conception of a human culture, based on the highest possible standards. But this is not, any longer, a problem of theoretically postulating the conception of a human culture in the future. This has now become a practical problem demanding the most serious consideration and attention here and now. Aesthetic sensibility, in our time, will help to provide one more barrier to the subtle appeal embodied in

totalitarian art. For this art plays on the senses, the feelings. It divorces ideas and feelings, and rigidifies the former: it then uses all of the wealth of modern technical imaginativeness to attract the feelings. The Hitler technique of propaganda has entered the field of world art. The major art in which that technique is being utilized is the movies. *The Open City* is one of the most subtle, clever, appealing illustrations of just this fact.

JAMES T. FARRELL

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THE VATICAN'S NEW LINE

The enormous newspaper coverage accorded the recent elevation of several archbishops to the College of Cardinals poses a political question. Movements of members of the Catholic hierarchy are ordinarily given fairly prominent publicity in the American press, but the recent coverage was unprecedented, and in a non-Catholic country, quite surprising. The explanation that it was a Catholic-engineered publicity campaign is ruled out by the scope of the coverage—virtually the entire press and radio were engaged in “putting over” the new cardinals; such unanimity could not have been obtained for a “partisan” campaign. Moreover, all over the country the publicity centered around Cardinal Spellman. If it had been only the New York papers, one might think that perhaps the New York press had suddenly developed an intense “home-town” angle after all these years of cosmopolitan sophistication. The explanation of this publicity splurge must be sought on the level of common purpose of all the big newspapers.

There is a political “line” behind the appointments of the new cardinals. The appointments signify, on the one hand, the greatest success to date of American foreign policy in swinging the world Catholic Church to its side, and on the other hand, it reflects the church’s difficulties occasioned by the acquisition of the eastern half of the former Nazi empire by Russia. That the American newspapers should simultaneously launch a campaign to “educate” Americans to an understanding of the new “friendly” rôle of the Catholic Church will perplex only those liberals who think that the newspaper industry, unlike every other important industry, has remained “unfet-

tered” and that editors are not business men but latter-day Emersons who are loyal to “public trust” and only occasionally, very occasionally, betray that “trust” because of immense “pressure” brought to bear by “moneyed interests.” (The liberals compensate their failure to perceive the depth of the class struggle by seeing, instead, a whole series of struggles—in this case, the embattled editor against the “private interests”—which do not exist.)

The professed ideological differences between the two imperialist camps in World War II were vastly greater than in World War I. One of the consequences has been that the Catholic Church (which sustains nationalistic division much better than did the Second International) is now faced with the task of “explaining away” its support of Italian, German and Spanish fascism to the disillusioned European masses. More than twenty years of peaceful cohabitation of Mussolini and the Pope, Cardinal Innitzer’s support of the Anschluss in Austria, and the enormous rôle of the Church in the Spanish Civil War are only the highlights. The parochial schools received state financial aid from the *anciens régimes* of eastern Europe. The bishop of Győr (Raab), Hungary, defended his church and the SS troops in it with machine guns behind the altar. The Russians waited three days, and (after they got permission from Moscow) stormed the church. The bishop of Veszprém (Hungary) was building fortifications with his clergymen when he was seized and hanged in the window of his castle, not by the Russians, but by his own “flock.” Stories like this all over Europe give meaning to the answer reportedly given by a Russian general when asked if there was freedom of re-

ligion in Poland: “Yes, the churches are no longer being used for making guns.”

The Church and Franco

In the New World the disillusionment with fascism has not been so sharp, hence the present relationship of the Catholic Church to Debussy’s movement in Quebec, Peron’s in Argentina and Coughlin’s in America is still tenable, but in Europe the masses who have tasted the joys of fascism present a formidable political problem for the church. The church’s need for absolving itself of fascism is undoubtedly the reason why Generalissimo Franco is slated to fall. The Catholic Church is prepared to sacrifice Franco, and without the support of the church he has no alternative but to negotiate an abdication.

Even more formidable than the doctrinal reversals are the problems presented by the economic reversals. Poland, Rumania and Hungary included a great portion of the church’s wealth, i.e., land, and were thus important props of the Vatican’s world influence. In Hungary the Russians have announced a “fifty-fifty” treaty which means, in brief, that the Russians get 50 per cent of the national “take.” The Russians are muscling in not only at the expense of the wealthy land owners, who are almost all Catholics, but of the Catholic Church itself. In France, there is great agitation to end the state of subsidization of Catholic schools (Russian occupied Europe, of course, featured an immediate “separation of church from state”). The mass Catholic party of France (MRP) upholds the church’s interests on this issue, but seems to have broken away from traditional church political policy in almost everything else.

It is small wonder, then, that Roosevelt’s policy of wooing the church for the “democracies” is bearing rich fruit. Roosevelt, it should be remembered, got the Neutrality Act through Congress during the Spanish Civil War, and it was he who sent a personal representative, Myron C. Taylor, former head of U. S. Steel, to the Vatican. The Catholic Church can no longer maneuver with its old freedom between the major contending imperialist forces; it has cast its lot in with that of American imperialism, and thereby assumes a new palatability to American bourgeois politicians, especially those with an internationalist viewpoint. This is the reason that the recent conversion to Catholicism of the not unimportant political figures of

Representative Clare Luce and Senator Wagner, although they were motivated primarily by personal reasons, assumes a significance that it would not have had in other times.

It is not excluded, as the press is broadly hinting, that the next Pope may be Cardinal Spellman. Because America is *the* leader of the anti-Russian camp, the church may have decided to move its seat of power accordingly, but whether it takes this step or not, the shift is already being made politically.

The jockeying for power between the Big Two preparatory to the outbreak of World War III tends to focus attention on those areas of the world where the two antagonists are more or less equally pitted. This is especially true in the Far East, and it is accordingly clear why a Chinese bishop is among those raised to the rank of cardinal. We notice, too, that Cardinal Mindszenty of Hungary (Central Europe is the other great "no man's land" between American and Russian influence) had trouble getting to Rome for the formalities.

Russia's Attitude

So far we have considered the question primarily from the Catholic side; America's interest is obvious, but what of Russia's attitude? The story is told that Stalin was asked why he opposed inviting a Vatican representative to the Big Three conferences. He replied: "How many divisions has *he* got?"

Stalin can still try to appear before the masses of Eastern and Central Europe as the slayer of the Nazi dragon. Later, perhaps, Stalin may have need for the Church to pacify the hungry and oppressed people as all previous exploiting classes have. But Stalin has pretty nearly burned his bridges behind him by expropriating church land. Besides, Stalin has already equipped himself with a "trustworthy" church, i.e., the "restored" Orthodox Church, which is proselytizing in the Russian controlled areas of Europe (*New York Times*, March 2).

In Russia in 1917 the Bolsheviks had little trouble with the Orthodox Church, which had compromised itself fatally by its support of Czarism. But the Central Europeans have not made a revolution, and they do not even have the anti-clerical sentiment that was engendered by the bourgeois revolution in a country like France. Hence, for all the collaboration between the native Catholic officials and the fascists, the petty bourgeois and the peasant masses are still loyal

to the Pope. The result can be seen in the elections held recently in Bavaria and in Austria. In rural Hungary, which has been feudal all these centuries, the Russians may have even harder sledding, although there the land hunger of the peasants may prove more powerful than traditional church ties.

The fate of world Catholicism is now intimately bound up with the future of American imperialism, but whether either America or Russia emerges trium-

phant depends upon the world proletariat and its peasant allies. Estimates as to the prospects for the early victory of the Third Camp are altogether academic—unless we win such a victory, the problem of choosing the lesser evil between the two giant powers as they maneuver for position in the coming atomic war will be of interest only to a few "political" survivors of the transition into the new Dark Ages.

JOSEPH LEONARD.

Book Reviews . . .

HUMAN NATURE: THE MARXIAN VIEW, by Vernon Venable. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1945; \$3.00.

This book, written as a doctoral thesis, has as its purpose the presentation of what Marx and Engels said about the problem of human nature. It is a difficult task, for nowhere did Marx or Engels, perhaps precisely because of their views, write any rounded exposition on human nature. Mr. Venable has therefore patiently collected paragraphs here and phrases there, read the texts with evident care and attempted to present Marx's beliefs on human nature.

The reorganization of familiar material in a somewhat unconventional pattern presents certain difficulties and challenges. One may be familiar enough, for instance, with the classical Marxist description of the rise of industrial capitalism viewed as socio-economic history; but approach the same matter while attempting to derive Marx's conception of human nature and you realize how very much the study of history depends on the purpose for and viewpoint from which it is conducted. I mention this shift in perspective because it seems a little difficult and at present not especially necessary to reach any binding conclusion about the value of this book: there is not enough relevant material with which to compare it. And, in addition, Venable has written in typical doctorate style, his work being full of heavy academic jargon which is foreign to the spirit of the very subject he discusses, and full, too, of the timorous hesitancy which is characteristic of the American professor. Nonetheless, since it is virtually a pioneer work, at least in English, the book requires the attention of all Marxists.

It is clearly easier to say what Marx did *not* believe human nature to be, than what he did believe. Venable's first sec-

tion is therefore the familiar retelling of the Marxian case against any a priori theory of human nature, any static conception of immutable essences applicable to all times and conditions regardless of social level or economic organization. That human nature is flexible, amenable to change under varying social conditions and—as far as we can tell today—not predetermined or prelimited by innate categories which make a classless society impossible *by definition*; all this is, or has been until very recently, quite commonly accepted. The approach of modern anthropology and sociology has buttressed this relativist emphasis. (Though it should be noted that in the current trend away from scientific method and rational inquiry to various forms of intuitionism — the withdrawal of the intellectuals characterized as the "failure of nerve" — there has been a recrudescence of static and reactionary instinct theories of human nature). But between Marxism and even the most historically-minded of the pragmatists there remains an important difference of approach even on this matter: Granted that human nature is a flux and is variable, how is one to explain the forms and directions of its change? Contemporary liberal American sociology and anthropology flounder badly on this question; they lose themselves in an unrelieved relativism in which the investigator merely points out that differences in human behaviour exist in various societies, but make no attempt to move beyond that necessary descriptive prelude. This kind of barren relativism of the liberal school (e.g. Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture*) can become as absolutistic as the most insistently absolutist approach to human nature.

For the Marxist—and in pointing this

out Venable does an excellent job—man is *by definition* a social animal; he differs from other animals in that he doesn't merely use nature, but masters it and to an extent controls it. Such activity is necessarily social, even in the most primitive societies. And as Engels says in a remarkable sentence: Not only does labour change man, not only is it a necessary condition of human existence, but labour created man himself. It is literally impossible to think of a human being outside of some labor relationship, apart from some social context. But it is not labor in the abstract with which we are concerned; it is rather with various social relationships, productive patterns which determine the forms and kinds of divisions of labor which impress upon each generation or group of generations its distinctive character.

The method of historical materialism, then, insists that what man is at any given time—how he lives, loves, dreams, thinks, “projects,” and idealizes—is determined basically by the kind of society in which he lives. But this is not where the problem ends; it is where the problem begins.

Human Nature and the Historical Process

Venable, in the second half of his book, attempts to discover what in the actual historical process determines the course of human activity and results in the complex known as “human nature.” He does not content himself with a mere general statement about the crucial influence of environment factors, but proceeds to break down these factors into four categories: 1) the general nature of labour itself, which involves the application of the biological organism to external surroundings; 2) the social relationships within which that biological organism functions, that is the totality of class relationships which, rising upon certain productive levels, result at any given time in the society that encompasses and delimits individuals; 3) the natural objects of labor such as raw materials, “unworked nature”, etc.; and 4) the instruments of labor utilized by factor 1) upon factor 3) within the framework of factor 2). Now this scheme does not create hard and fast categories, or at least shouldn't; it is intended as a method of *isolating* various aspects of the historical process in order to study them and subsequently better to form an integrated conception.

There is no predetermined rule which informs us which of these always un-

equally weighted factors (separable, be it noted, only for purposes of inquiry: in actuality, they deal with a total process) is most important at any given time. An undue emphasis, let us say, on the instruments of labor may lead to a technological heresy in historical approach; correspondingly with others. It is here that the skill, intelligence and insight of the investigator enters; and it is here that the need for specific research and historical material cannot be replaced by mere reliance upon method itself.

The problem of human nature, then, is inseparable from—is, in measure, the same as—the problem of the social relations which prevail within a society. But, it may be asked, is there not a general biological foundation, a continuity in type which exists regardless of societal forms and which is independent of them? Are there not universal urges and instincts which remain unchanged? The question is not a meaningful one, in our opinion. For it is impossible to conceive of a human being outside of conscious society; and what we believe to be generic traits of humanity are merely the summary observation of partially continuous characteristics which—since societies are themselves in a continuum and not unrelated replacements—cannot be isolated from social relationships. The conception of a generic biological being with formed characteristics outside of society may be useful as an analytical myth, in the sense that Rousseau's social contract theory was once so useful, but it has no other basis: one cannot conceive of man without thinking of him as part of some form of society, for it is that which gives him his unique status as man. It is from this point of view that Marxists must categorically reject *as historical methods* all approaches which construct supra-historical categories, be they idealist imperatives or libidinal drives. “The human essence”, wrote Marx, “is no abstraction inherent in each separate individual; in its reality it is the ensemble of all social relations”.

Scientific Basis of Marxist Idealism

One other interesting problem is raised by Venable which has a special applicability to the present day. Did Marx and Engels, for all their insistence on realistic description, have a utopian conception of human nature? Didn't Engels write, in his *Condition of the Working Class in England*, of the Londoners who “have been forced to sacrifice the best qualities of their human nature”,

of “a hundred powers which slumbered within them”? Wasn't the conception of “alienation” which is so central to his system an idealist wish-thought? If one views the matter from a mechanical standpoint, one is forced to say that Marx and Engels did have an idealist approach after all (Max Eastman once discovered this all by himself!) for then one must deny the existence of potential qualities which occasionally spring up in human behaviour. These qualities arise not from some hidden source of good buried deep in the human soul, but from the fact that even under capitalism certain forms of activity permit cooperation and decency, as for instance class solidarity among workers. Marxism is not merely descriptive; it is frankly and unashamedly directive and normative in its approach. It deals not only with what is, but with what can and should be—and only pedants can therefore deny its claim to scientific stature.

But its normative aspects deal with possibilities that are real in the context in which they are raised, which is why Marx rejected the Utopian Socialists. It is meaningless to make the directive statement, “Let us prevent the sun from shining,” because thus far it is impossible for man to control the sun; but it is correspondingly meaningful to say “Let us abolish unemployment by constructing a socialist society.” Marxism is thereby scientific in that it deals with real possibilities, and directional and partisan in that it favors certain of those possibilities. Marxism is not merely a political-economic method; it is a call to arms, a summation of the greatest ideals of human history within the framework of a *relevant* program rather than an irrelevant utopia; *it is material science and directive morality united.*

In the above paragraphs, I have tried to suggest some of the provocative problems raised by this book. The reader should be warned, however, of its deficiencies as well: it is scholastic and pedantic in its approach; it deals not with the tradition or method of Marxism but only with the actual writings of Marx and Engels themselves and therefore does not discuss the challenges to Marxism offered by other theories; and above all, its scholasticism prevents it from appreciating the rôle of revolution as the major and triumphant historical factor which transforms human nature in the most extraordinary way. The Great French, the American, and the Russian Revolutions have been the climactic

points of modern history; and it is to them, rather than to anything else, that one must turn in order to understand modern man.

Within these limits, however, Venable has written a useful work. It should stimulate more original and bolder thinkers to a creative and integrated work on Marxism and human nature. In the meantime, it deserves the attention of every serious Marxist student.

IRVING HOWE.

THE FATE OF WRITING IN AMERICA, by James T. Farrell. *New Directions*, New York, 1946; 25 cents.

In this pamphlet, the novelist James T. Farrell has examined the tendencies towards concentration and centralization in the publishing business, the counter-tendencies which make for a relatively small scale and free industry, and the position of the serious writer in relation to these developments.

"The war boom", he writes, "demonstrated positively that mass production and distribution in books are both feasible and highly profitable. These developments are irreversible. Their structural consequences are revealed in the tendency towards combinations and centralization. Inevitably every phase of book business will become more concentrated than in the past. This concentration will increase the difficulties of operation for small and independent publishers, and it will probably have the effect of requiring a higher initial investment from any newcomers into the field."

This economic tendency, reflecting the general tendency of capitalist economy, is traced by Farrell in certain recent developments in the publishing field: the growth of gigantic reprint houses which produce books cheaply and on such a mass scale as to require a high degree of standardization and certainty of huge sales; the combination of a number of smaller houses into large concerns; the increasing dependence of publishing on Hollywood in a hoped-for sales of books for movie production.

But simultaneously Farrell indicates where, in his opinion, the tendency towards centralization and standardization has not yet reached and probably will soon not reach the extreme to which it has gone in Hollywood. The book medium has a tradition, a heritage of greatness as the major cultural conveyor of our civilization that is totally foreign to the movies and which gives the pub-

lishing business a certain kinship to cultural values. Limited though it may be by commercial considerations, such a kinship is still largely foreign to Hollywood. The capital investment required to publish a book is far less than that required to produce a movie and the publisher need not therefore concern himself so greatly with standardized tastes, pressure groups and "public opinion" as does the movie producer. And finally, the individual writer in his dealings with the publishers can, no matter what his personal discomfort, strive to maintain his integrity, to avoid the temptations of fat contracts which come from writing popular trash.

It is on this last note that Farrell ends his pamphlet: a call to his fellow writers to maintain their independence from commercial subservience. He is aware

that in order to live writers must deal with commercial considerations; they cannot loftily disdain the social conditions in which they function. But they must nevertheless say "with scorn in their voices, that they will not be hacks." The writer, says Farrell, is "an active and not a passive agent in this situation", and it is his responsibility firmly to refrain from the tawdry temptations which a decadent society may occasionally offer him—when it doesn't disdain him altogether.

In this brief notice, the issues raised by this pamphlet cannot be discussed. But it should be said that Farrell's article will be found both interesting and provocative to anyone who is concerned with the problem of culture in capitalist America.

I. H.

Correspondence . . .

Editor:

Permit me please some admittedly very belated lines on the still prevailing mess concerning the "workers' state" and "workers' economy." They may still be of some interest to you and your readers.

The matter is, in a large degree, a rather simple mix-up of the notional content of words. The word "property" has two meanings:

(a) The juridical meaning. In this sense it means the right to dispose of a thing (*res*, in the juridical sense), to do with it what one wants to. This property right can be limited. It can be limited so thoroughly by juridical (or even merely *via facti*) measures that simply nothing of its content remains. The Romans had a word for such utmost limited property in which nothing remained from the content of the legal definition of the property right but the mere name. They called this state: *nuda proprietas*. For illustration's sake: Somebody owns a factory. The bank has a huge mortgage on it; besides the bank intabulated in its favor the prohibition to sell or to mortgage that factory without its consent and the prohibition to dispose of it in any testament, etc., etc. Besides it has intabulated in its favor the exclusive right to use the factory in any way it wants to—without ever being liable to pay any rent, any indemnity, or compensation whatsoever for its right of exclusive use. Besides, all these rights of the bank are unlimited by time. They are forever. Besides, we assume, the bank has the right to sell its rights in whole or in part. Well, the owner owns the "*nuda proprietas*." The bank, however, is no proprietor at all (in the juridical sense): it has merely all the rights, one by one, which flow from the juridical property.

(b) The economic meaning. The economic proprietor is one who factually (not juridically) has the right to dispose of a property. In the example of our factory above or, still better, with all factories in a country (let us assume the bank above has the same rights as described above to all factories), the bank is the proprietor in the economic sense of the word. It is the bank which decides: what to produce, how to produce, what to do with the product, the price of the product, whom to sell it to, what wages to pay, to determine the working hours, the materials to be used, how to preserve the factory and the machines, whether and when to replace, to improve, to repair them, etc., how to organize the production and distribution, to determine which working men and official to hire and which not to, whom and when to dismiss, etc., etc. This bank would not be, under any circumstances, the proprietor of those factories in any juridical sense. The juridical proprietors would still be the men whose name is intabulated in some record at court. Let us call these men—in order to give them a collective name—the Blue Ones.

(Note: To be sure, the juridical property right may or may not coincide with the property in the economic sense. It sometimes does, sometimes does not.)

(c) Now, you may call this economy either by the name of the juridical or by the name of the economic proprietor: you may call it a bank-economy or a Blue Ones-economy. It's just a matter of taste or terminology (in which sense you happen to want to use the word "property"). And now please replace the term Blue Ones and the bank by the Russian workers and the Russian ruling, say, strata. The Russian workers, say, are intabulated in the court records (or the constitution or some-

where else) as the proprietors of all the factories and all the lands. All right: They are the nude proprietors. The bank, I want to say the Russian ruling strata, however, is the economic proprietor and does with the means of production and the products what it pleases. Whether the rights of that strata are recorded at court or in the constitution or somewhere else is unimportant and so is the fact whether it has, maybe, no "rights" at all but possesses and exercises the content of all the rights, factually, with or without title. The whole juridical construction is of utmost unimportance, boring and darkening the issue.

(d) May I add another example to the above? Some oriental tyrant, say the Bey of Tunis (I don't know whether this example is right) is the absolute sovereign in his country. But his sovereignty is a "*nuda suverinitas*"—all rights flowing from it belong to or are exercised by the French government exclusively. Now, you may call Tunis an absolute oriental despotism (which she legally is) or a French colony (which she virtually is) and can write carloads of paper defending either position. The reader himself may carry through the analogy to the Russian workers and the Russian ruling strata.

Fraternally yours,

W. BROOKS.

* * *

Dear Editor:

In a pre-convention discussion article on Germany (THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, May, 1946), Comrades Stone and Gorman direct some rather heavy polemical remarks against my notes on Germany published in the October, 1945, NI. This, of course, is their absolute right, and the article in question at least fulfills the function of indicating the enormous political gulf that separates the majority and minority political tendencies within the Workers Party.

It is not my intention to answer the authors of "Germany—Still the Key" in this letter. The whole pre-convention discussion, in general, and the international resolution adopted at the convention, in particular, can well serve that purpose. To anyone with an ounce of objectivity it was apparent that my notes on Germany—written in that unhappy land, and passing through army censorship—were intended for just that purpose; journalistic notes based upon direct observation. No effort was made to draw any political or programmatic conclusions—an impossibility in the situation. The current articles on Germany, by Henry Judd, are an effort in this direction. Nevertheless, I maintain that these notes on Germany were, and remain, a realistic appraisal of the German people in the immediate period of post-war defeat. I am compelled to say that the whole article of these comrades reveals an utter absence of any comprehension as to what has happened in Germany—an ignorance of even elementary facts.

Permit me one example. Quoting from that section of the notes (with, incidentally, that unfortunate habit of omitting most of my paragraph) that explains how, to a considerable extent, the German worker has lost his clear proletarian status, our authors

remark, "This is a most astonishing statement. Do the university professors in Germany go into the coal mines or do the railway workers consort with the American officers of occupation?"

Well, dear comrades, prepare yourselves for a shock. I'm afraid the answer is a distinct YES, and your sarcasm is misdirected. I do not know whether, specifically, college professors are now working in the Ruhr mines, but considering the extra food allowances, plus clothing and other benefits, it would not be at all surprising to learn that many professionals, deprived of all means of livelihood, have taken up coal digging to live. But I do know—having seen it many times—that college professors, doctors, lawyers, business men, etc., have taken up the "occupation" of wood-chopping at four pfennig per hour. I'm not referring to the fact that these men chopped wood all throughout last winter in order to heat a room in their homes. That everyone did. I'm referring to their *official mobilization*, by the labor branch of the military governments, to chop wood, clear roads, dig ditches, etc. Or haven't you heard?

As for the "railway workers consorting with the American officers of occupation"—forgive my lack of "revolutionary passion," but that is so widespread as to be obvious even to non-German speaking GIs. Nor am I referring to railway officers, foremen, etc. German railway workers are totally passive, subservient and "cooperative" at present, just as are German workers, in general, in all branches of industry. And who, but a dogmatist, would expect otherwise? In this respect, the German workers reveal far more revolutionary sense than do our incorrigible sectarians. These workers grasp the depths of their defeat, they are marking time and attempting to regroup their forces. Since the bayonet-point of the Allied occupation is at their throat, they understand a bit clearer than Stone and Gorman how one must go about adapting oneself to unfavorable conditions and not risk a premature struggle. May I risk a more violent denunciation by suggesting that I find their methods infinitely more correct?

Am I suggesting that the German worker is incapable of struggle? Nonsense. The question is—what *kind* of struggle, what *forms* of struggle, what *methods* of struggle. Blind doctrine of the type proposed by these

comrades (Germany is still the key to the European revolution: the destruction of the German capitalist class automatically makes the German working class the strongest force in the nation, etc.), all of this will lead us nowhere. Our comrades have forgotten a simple truth written by Marx in the "Manifesto." The failure of the socialist revolution to materialize will ultimately lead to the mutual decline and disintegration of all the contending classes into barbarism. In Germany, 1946, we have a colossal preview of the concrete meaning of this dread prophecy. The German proletariat, too, has suffered a catastrophe along with the entire nation. It is pointless to dispute with people who haven't understood that crying fact. Not to pass subjective, emotional judgments on the German masses; not to impose wishful schema upon the German nation; not to set tasks impossible of achievement before the German workers—but to grasp the meaning of what has occurred and to proceed from this point.

Comradely,

ROGER JUDSON.

* * *

We are in receipt of a letter from one of the leaders of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the Ceylonese section of the Fourth International, which contains the following verification of that party's position on the role of China in the war upon which we had previously only been informed through second hand sources:

"It was Comrade X who left behind in Calcutta THE NEW INTERNATIONAL for 1942. I had access to these issues. The articles by Comrade Max Shachtman on 'China in the World War' led me to revise my position on China. I reviewed them in the *Permanent Revolution* which I happened to edit at that time. At the first All-India conference of the party a resolution moved by me was adopted. It was along the lines of the Shachtman article. I will be shortly sending these documents and shall be glad to hear your opinion."

A limited number of the above mentioned article by Shachtman are still available in the form of a 16 page supplement to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL for June 1942. They can be ordered for 15 cents a copy.

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