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Farrell Dobbs
For the Secretariat

Dear Comrade:

I enclose "Russia's Economic Policy in Eastern Europe" which I submit for publication in Fourth International.

In accordance with my proposal to discuss the Russian question both in the PC and the Plenum, I request that copies of the enclosed be made available to all PC and Plenum members. Likewise Danial Logan's "The Eruption of Bureaucratic Imperialism," which I previously requested (after refusal of publication of it in Fourth International) be published in the internal bulletin.

Comradely,

Felix Morrow

* * *

RUSSIA'S ECONOMIC POLICY IN EASTERN EUROPE

By C. Georges

Introductory Note by Felix Morrow: It is important to note that Comrade Georges' article was completed over six months ago. It is important not because anything has changed since then, for everything in the interim confirms Comrade Georges' conclusions concerning the extension of state property in Eastern Europe. It is important because, despite the evidence available already last October, the editors of Fourth International continue to hesitate to recognize this reality. Thus in the latest issue (April, 1946) they speak of the pressure upon the USSR from "the full-blown capitalist elements in the Soviet 'buffer-zone' of Eastern Europe and the Balkans." An astonishing formulation, indeed, in the light of the facts gathered below by Comrade Georges.

The editors of Fourth International will no doubt find it hard to reconcile these facts with their conception that nationalized property determines the proletarian character of a state. For in that case they are faced with characterising Beirut's Polish state and that of Tito in Yugoslavia, etc., as workers' states!

Before we can go on to theoretical questions, however, it is necessary to see whether we agree on the indubitable facts. Comrade Georges' article primarily aims to provide the necessary facts.

April 20, 1946.

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The expression Eastern Europe is not used in this report in a strictly geographical sense, but rather as a political term covering the greater part of European territory controlled by Soviet Russia after the defeat of Germany: namely, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Not included are the territories incorporated directly into the Soviet Union (the Baltic States, Eastern Poland, the

Subcarpathian Ukraine, Bessarabia, Soviet Moldavia and the Bucovina), or Austria, the German provinces under Russian military government, and Finland.

The forms of Russian control differ in the different countries according to a series of circumstances, particularly the fact that some of the countries involved are members of the United Nations, others are defeated enemies. But in spite of different status, geographical distance and political set-up, the economic pattern, as will be shown, is uniform.

The sources I have used consist of (1) radio broadcasts of Eastern European and Russian stations, (2) releases of the official news agencies of the governments in question, (3) newspaper articles published by various Eastern European or Russian papers, and, as additional evidence only, (4) accounts of foreign correspondents in the British and American press.

I. The Land Reform

Eastern Europe is predominantly agrarian. Though industrialization made progress between the two World Wars and was further stimulated by the German policy of building up a raw material basis within Fortress Europe, the agrarian question, on the whole, remained the central problem of Eastern European economics. The only exception is Czechoslovakia, or better Bohemia and Moravia, the western part of the now federative state of Czechoslovakia, which is a highly industrialized region.

The problem had quite similar traits in the whole of Eastern Europe. It weighed most heavily upon the economy of Poland and Hungary. It was less acute in Czechoslovakia and Rumania, where a partial reform had been introduced after World War I, and it took on new aspects in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria where the land owned by big landlords was only a small part of the cultivated land.

Today the big land estates are being liquidated.

If we take Hungary as a point of departure, the situation presents itself as follows:*

On March 17, 1945, the Hungarian government passed a law under which all estates of over 1420 acres (1000 katastraljoch) is being seized. Estates over 142 and less than 1420 acres are being reduced to 142 acres. Only church institutions will be allowed to retain 142 acres even when their original estates were larger than 1420 acres. Compensation will be paid for the expropriated land. It will, however, not be paid to war criminals. Probably most of the Hungarian counts and land barons -- the backbone of the Horthy regime -- can be considered war criminals. The government does not intend to transform the latifundia into collectively operated farms, at least for the time being. The land is being divided among landless and small peasants whose number, including family members, is estimated at 3,000,000.

*Central European Observer, June 1, 1945.

It is worth noting that little will be changed in Hungary by the expulsion of national minorities, whereas in Poland and Czechoslovakia this kind of expropriation on a large scale is one of the main sources of land allotments to "nationally reliable" peasants. The deportation of German (and Hungarian) peasants has, of course, nothing in common with a progressive agrarian reform. There is an abundance of land in the new Polish state, thanks to the deportations. Hence it finds it easy to be more benevolent to the middle peasant as well as the Church.

Our Polish informants are Prime Minister Osobka-Morawski*, the former Minister of Agriculture and Land Reform Edward Bertold**, and Vice-Minister Michal Szyszko***. Osobka-Morawski declared in his interview with Edgar Snow that "there won't be any large estates left in Poland, except for land owned by the Church. . . Land of the Germans, traitors to the Polish people, and landed estates of over 50 hectares (123.5 acres) were confiscated. . . In the case of lands taken from the Reich, individual landowners would be permitted to retain estates as large as 100 hectares. Some areas were set aside as model farms, to be operated as enterprises of the Polish state. The bulk was divided among small and middle peasants, small tenant farmers with large families and agricultural laborers. . . taking as a basis five hectares of arable land for the average family."

1,300,000 hectares of land are said to have been divided among 360,000 landless, small and middle farmers. And a previous report by Bertold claimed that a total of 303,000 families, including about 1,500,000 persons, have acquired farmland. Land thus distributed, Bertold states, covers 21% of Polish territory, excluding the western areas. The Agrarian Decree embraced 8,832 estates with a total area of 4,242,949 hectares, of which 2,408,000 hectares are arable land. A total of 243,700 hectares were in process of division.

How many Polish peasant families have moved west is difficult to ascertain. The latest official statement of mid-August 1945 gives a total of 693,000 new settlers from Central Poland and 100,000 repatriated from the USSR. Earlier figures, not less official, contradict this statement. But whatever the correct figure, we touch here upon the sorest spot among the many sore spots of Eastern Europe. The economic destruction of the Junker caste which might be achieved by Poland's annexation of German territories is only one side of the picture. The wholesale elimination of minorities is the other side. Their fate is either deportation or forced labor.

On August 3, 1945, the Prague Radio broadcast an interview with a Czech official in the Bohemian border region of Most who declared: "We can do without the Germans well enough, but we cannot do without labor, especially not in the border regions. This is why we adapted some camps from which the Germans go to work to the Stalin works, the gasoline refinery, and into the mines."

On August 11 Prime Minister Fierlinger stated in his weekly broadcast that "the Czech Government had decided that the Minister of the Interior was to send interned Germans as well as non-interned German nationals to the mines, especially those residing in the vicinity of the

* Edgar Snow; "Pattern of Soviet Power."

** Address in the May 4, 1945 session of the National Council of Poland.

*** Report to the Congress of the Polish Socialist Party, July 18, 1945.

coal fields. The Economic Association of the Mining Industry will state the number of workers required and their selection will be made by the local National Committees in consultation with mine managements.

And Pravo Lidu, the organ of the Czech Social Democratic Party, suggested in its issue of August 17 "unconditional compulsory German labor."

The principles of the Czechoslovak land reform follow the now familiar pattern. A National Land Fund was set up which comprises all estates "belonging to the German and Hungarian Gentry or large estate owners irrespective of their citizenship or to other citizens of enemy countries, in particular Germany and Hungary." These estates were confiscated without compensation. In Bohemia and Moravia, the land at the disposal of the National Land Fund is being distributed among Czech, in Slovakia, among Slovak and Ukrainian cottagers, small and middle farmers, and agricultural laborers, preference being given to those "who distinguished themselves in the struggle for national liberation, such as partisans, soldiers, underground patriots, victims of foreign terror and so on." The upper limit for land property was fixed at 50 hectares. 2,300,000 hectares of forest and arable land are available for distribution to peasants who may receive from 8 to 13 hectares per family.

The propagandistic accent is definitely on the "national" importance of the land reform. The Czechoslovak government insists that it is "guided primarily by the endeavor once and for all to wrest the land from the German and Hungarian Gentry as well as from traitors."

An illustration of the methods by which this "wresting of the land from traitors" is put into practice is furnished by a speech of the leader of the Hungarian Communist Party, Mathias Rakosi, (Gzabad-sag, July 17), in which he appealed to the Slovak government "to change its point of view in the question of expelling Hungarians against whom there is no proof of collaboration with Germans and fascists and particularly not to tolerate transgressions of local authorities which remind strongly of old fascist methods. . . In more than one place Hungarians have to wear an armband with an 'M', in many places Hungarians were given one hour's time to pack a bag weighing 50 to 100 pounds and then are thrown across the border. . . The continuation of the present policy could only result in destroying good relations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia."

It is a savory detail that the accusation of fascist methods is hurled by Rakosi against the Slovak government presided over by Karol Schmadke who is himself an oldtimer in the Third International.

In Rumania, according to the Moscow radio, all estates exceeding 50 hectares, including church, royal and other properties, have been distributed among the peasants, less the 50 hectares left to each such estate. In addition, all lands belonging to German and Rumanian "fascists" have been parceled out in full. Over 500 large estates, consisting of 1,000 or more hectares each, have been distributed among the landless peasants, claims the same source. They received up to five hectares per family.

In Yugoslavia big landed estates are relatively unimportant. Thus, the projected agrarian law is pointed mainly against national minorities and the church. A report in the New York Times of August 7, 1945 quotes Moshe Piade, the spokesman of the Yugoslav Communist Party, on a government proposal to confiscate the land of churches and monasteries, leaving about five hectares to the average monastery and a maximum of 20 hectares to monasteries of historic significance.

No national minorities are left in Bulgaria. This may account for the fact that little is heard about land reform there.

So much for the figures. The uniformity in planning and executing the fragmentation of big landed estates in Eastern Europe is obvious. National dissimilarities are of secondary importance and do not refute the identity of purpose. Everywhere land holdings in private hands have been reduced to about 50 hectares, allotments to peasants varying from five to 13 hectares. Collective farming has not been stimulated.

Yet state control of market conditions and state control of agricultural machinery -- in some countries there is state ownership of tractors and machinery -- as well as the small size of land plots turned over to peasant proprietors make the development of agricultural production independently of government intervention a more than dubious issue.

The potentialities of the agrarian reform in Eastern Europe are doubtlessly great. But, being essentially a democratic reform, it requires a democratic structure to stabilize and develop it. Right now the strengthening of the peasant economy, which in theory flows from the breaking up of latifundia, is offset by the requisitions for Russia and the Red Army living off the land and by the lack of machinery, livestock, and fertilizers.

The present result is indicated by the report of one of the few eye-witnesses from the West, a French socialist, writing in Combat of August 23, 1945. He refers to Hungary but it is probably broader in application:

"The curious fact is that this (land) reform, accepted with resignation by the old proprietors, has not been very popular among the peasants who benefitted from it; numerous were those who refused the offer (of land) which the State made them. Some feared the difficulties which tilling the soil presents in the actual circumstances, without work-animals, without tools, without fertilizer; the others, on the other hand, would not accept the system of delivery of produce which has been imposed on them."

II. The Industrial Policy

The nationalistic overtones of the official proclamations of the land reform have been even more accentuated, if possible, in the propaganda campaign which accompanied the new industrial policy in Central Europe and the Balkans. To put it briefly: We are witnessing a large-scale nationalization of industrial enterprises. But the decrees of nationalization are full of references to fascists and collaborators, as if to justify before the world a thing that certainly does not need such a strange justification. To be sure, the German policy of indus-

trial expansion and aryanization had made the Dredner Bank, the Deutsche Bank, the Hermann-Goering-Werke, and the I.G. Farben, the biggest industrial concerns in Eastern Europe. This fact alone created a situation which called for drastic measures in the field of industrial ownership. And even industries which remained in the hands of non-German entrepreneurs had been coordinated with the German war effort. The bourgeoisie of each country collaborated to the extent to which they produced. Producing was collaborating. This, however, is true in Czechoslovakia as well as in France, in Rumania as well as in Belgium. If we are not willing to accept offhand the thesis that Marshal Tito is a more fervent patriot than General de Gaulle, we are forced to assume that behind the patriotic facade other factors are pushing Eastern Europe on the road to state control over all industrial production.

To begin with Czechoslovakia, the industrially most important country of the Eastern European state group. On June 4, 1945, the Prague Radio announced the creation of an institution called National Administration "that will be set up in all enterprises which were held by German and Hungarian subjects insofar as they did not actively take part in the fight for the Czechoslovak Republic. . . and also in enterprises held by Czechs and Slovaks who betrayed the nation and the Republic or actively supported the German invader."

Then the stress was still exclusively on the national aspect of the new industrial policy. But from the very beginning it was understood that about 70% of all industrial companies would thus come under state management, including 40 major concerns, such as the Skoda Works, the Vitkovice Iron Works, the Bohemian-Moravian-Kolben-Danek, the Poldi Foundry, the Bata Works, the Mining and Smelting Works, etc. Joint-stock banks were placed under state administration en bloc, as were insurance companies, because of the paramount importance of financial capital in Czechoslovakia -- as everywhere in Europe -- in the field of industrial production. And to make clear that the government meant business, Jaroslav Preiss, the Czech general manager of the Zivnobank, the only big bank which had remained in Czech hands during the German occupation and one of the leading banking institutes in Central Europe, was arrested as collaborator.

"The expropriated property will not be split up as in the case of agricultural property, but will be concentrated and embodied still further in great industrial production," wrote the semi-official Central European Observer on June 15, "but on the whole, agriculture, medium-sized industries and commerce will continue to function on the principles of private enterprise, and personal initiative is to be encouraged."

On August 3, Bohumil Lausman, the Czechoslovak Minister of Industry, reported over the Prague Radio "that on July 18, a Committee was set up to prepare industrial nationalization. A prepared bill will define the extent of nationalization and deal with problems of claims of third persons and questions of compensation. Nationalization of enterprises belonging to people who committed crimes against the Republic will be carried out without compensation. Other owners at home and abroad will receive compensation, which however will not amount to more than the material value of an enterprise. In nationalized industries the management must be elastic, and personal responsibility must not be neglected. . . Small and medium enterprises will remain in pri-

vate hands and the nationalization will not affect the interests of the local self-administration. . . The nationalization of heavy and key industries made necessary the nationalization of joint-stock banks. The policy of these banks had hitherto demanded great sacrifices of our people and our industries."

Thus, the present state management of the larger part of Czechoslovak industry will change into full-fledged state ownership as soon as this law is passed by the National Assembly. (It has since been passed. - Ed.)

An economic commission was created by the Central Trade Union Council, which is controlled by the Communist Party, the duties of which are (1) to support the Works Committees in exercising their rights and duty of controlling the management of firms, (2) to establish a special section which will advise the Works Committees and administrators of nationalized enterprises, (3) to be consulted in connection with the appointments of administrators of nationalized enterprises.

The division of jurisdictional competence between the ostensibly elected Works Committees and appointed managers has not been clearly defined. The Trade Union Council which serves as mediating agency between employes and administrators is itself a highly bureaucratized body.

Let us summarize the essential points of the governmental program during this first period after Germany's defeat. Officially the nationalization policy covered three main fields: heavy and key industry, commercial banks, and insurance companies. Other industries and commercial firms, i.e., the distribution of goods, were to remain in private hands, subject only to the provisions of the economic plan of the government. Private initiative was to be encouraged.

In the light of the actual development this program is already antiquated. Speaking at the Congress of national administrators in Prague, August 17 and 18, the Minister of Industry declared that 2,500 industrial enterprises were run by administrators. And he gave the keynote of future developments when he stated that "there was nothing to compare with these institutions in Europe, save in the Soviet Union." To emphasize this example, Premier Fierlinger accepted in his weekly broadcast of the same date the new propagandistic line in an elaborate statement from which I quote:

"In our country the idea of nationalization of heavy and key industries has been brought to the fore by our revolution and has been incorporated in the government program with the approval of all political parties. In the USSR, nationalization has long been adopted with great success as was proved by the victorious war. This does not imply, however, that Russian methods can be our sole guide and model in every respect. . .

"We are faced by immense difficulties in the nationalization of industry. . . Nevertheless we are convinced that we can only overcome the difficulties of modern economy through courageous but circumspect planning of production. Otherwise, we should soon be engulfed in a

new unemployment crisis, always a feature of large-scale private enterprise, unorganized and lacking a clear economic and social purpose. . .

"The Government has passed a decree to be submitted for signature to the President concerning the organization of an Economic Council and an affiliated planning Office. . . This Council will prepare and maintain a survey of the general economic situation and prepare an economic plan encompassing every section of our economic life."

A programmatic article by Minister Lausman, published shortly afterwards in the newspaper Prace, went even further; "The chaotic industrial conditions of liberalism must be abolished. . . We must take into account on the economic front the experience of the Soviet Union. . . Our system of economic planning must embrace all branches of economic life because only such a system will guarantee the same success which was achieved in the USSR."

Accordingly the scope of the nationalization program was quickly extended, "In response to the spontaneous popular demand," as a Prague paper put it. The new draft of the nationalization law replaced the words "key and heavy industries" by "all large industries." Other enterprises than large ones would be nationalized after special consideration of the national needs.

The same policy has since been adopted with some modifications by the other East European states. In Poland -- according to the interview Edgar Snow had with Osobka-Morawski -- "expropriated industrial plants are being operated by state boards which include representatives of labor. . . Some factories may be returned to their previous owners, and property of traitors may be sold to other private persons, if there is a market for them. But all industry of national importance will be owned by the state. We are in favor of placing all industry under government control. We also want to encourage private enterprise wherever possible, but there will be government regulation of all production and distribution." As to foreign investments, Snow voices the opinion "that in Poland and Czechoslovakia any foreign investment will necessarily take on the form of a contract with the state, and be worth no more than the stability of the regime in power."

These statements were borne out by the report of Hilary Minc, Polish Minister of Industry, to the July session of the National Council of Poland. "Two basic changes have been introduced into the internal economy of Poland by the new government," Mr. Minc said, "(1) the agrarian reform and (2) the elimination of cartels and trusts from our economic life. No power on earth can compel us to restore the large estates or private monopolies. . . The State is directing heavy industry, especially those phases formerly controlled by cartels and trusts."

Political considerations were not the only ones which forced the Polish government into a comprehensive nationalization policy. Silesia, the industrial heart of the new Polish state, and the rest of former German territory, is economic no man's land. Moreover, many Jewish owners of industrial plants have been either killed in the Nazi pogrom or have left the country. Still, the "national movement" emphasized

in the official version falls short of a satisfactory explanation. It is probable that we will hear more about Russia and the Russian example in the near future.

The cleavage between the actual situation and the tenor of government enunciations is especially striking in the case of Yugoslavia.

Minister Krdelj, Communist Party leader and vice-premier of the Yugoslav government, is particularly profuse in asserting the importance of private enterprise. From his many speeches it is worth while to quote the one made over the radio on May 30th:

"We must not consider," he said, "all private economic representatives as speculators because such procedure paralyzes private enterprise and prevents the development of economic life. . . Private economic representatives must be able to take part in the country's economic reconstruction."

And Tito himself spoke the same language when he declared at a reception for foreign correspondents "that private property was respected in Yugoslavia. We have nationalized only property belonging to enemies and traitors."

Several conclusions can be drawn from these confused statements and contradictory policies. Industrial nationalization, i.e., the passing of large industrial enterprises into state ownership, is being carried out everywhere in the Russian sphere of influence. Notwithstanding this fact the bolstering up of private initiative cannot be dismissed as sheer propaganda. Lack of machinery and raw materials and transportation difficulties make it imperative to encourage private enterprise in the field of small and medium production as well as in the commercial field. Reasons of expediency, thus, and the importance of a successful appeal to the West for economic help force upon the governments of Eastern Europe a certain caution in their economic practice.

It is only an apparent inconsistency that the governments represented by members of the Communist Party -- Yugoslavia is the case in point -- are especially emphatic in denying anti-capitalist aims and in professing respect for private property. Russia, and consequently any one of the governments in the Russian zone, is interested in stimulating production first. Considering the territories up to the Bohemian forests the political and economic forefield of her European position, Russia will try to avoid frictions which could hamper the flow of industrial goods eastwards. This means to some degree a "realistic" approach to the economic status quo ante. With two all-important limitations though: (1) the political and economic elimination of groups who, by virtue of their vested interests, are liable to resist an exclusive eastward orientation of their respective countries, and (2) the creation of production conditions similar enough to those in Russia to permit an economic coordination which will not find its limits in the accountability principles and organizational forms of the capitalistic market economy. Russia is gearing all of Eastern Europe to the Russian economy.

The removing of plant equipment to Russia which is going on under different pretexts in the different East European countries, economically and politically important as it certainly is, will not be dealt

with in this paper.* Officially only German equipment is being shipped to Russia. But there is documentary proof that the Russians decided what is "made in Germany" and that holds true not only for Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria.

The negotiations between Czechoslovakia and Soviet Russia, led by Premier Fierlinger and Vice-Minister of Industry Hromadko for the Czechoslovak Government and one, Major Sarjov, for the USSR, ended in an agreement on the definition of war booty. According to this agreement, plants constructed by the Germans on Czechoslovak territory during the occupation years are considered as booty. In cases where German enterprises were formed through conversion of former Czech factories, the original equipment remains Czechoslovak property. The Soviet military organs will return machinery and equipment "which, by error, has been confiscated previously if it is still on Czechoslovak territory." It is officially estimated that one-fifth of Czechoslovak industrial equipment has been already shipped to Russia.

Polish authorities have admitted that Russian removals from that country amount to 30%.

The Bucharest radio of May 28 announced the conclusion of two conventions between the Soviet Union and Rumania. A one-year agreement for the exchange of raw materials and finished products, and a five-year agreement for economic collaboration. The USSR is supposed to furnish 50% of the capital of several Soviet-Rumanian companies which will be created "while the other half will be furnished by the Rumanian state and private individuals." About these "private individuals," mentioned in the broadcast, there was nothing heard later. At any rate, the two mixed societies which are the most important leave little space for them. "Discussions are going on at the Commissariat General of Foreign Trade -- Bucharest Radio, August 3 -- preparing a Soviet-Rumanian Banking Society in which the Soviet Union will be represented by the Industrial Bank of Moscow and Rumania by a group of the country's banks." And a mixed Russo-Rumanian Society was constituted by the Soviet-Rumanian Commission at the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum. A dispatch by C.L. Sulzberger of the New York Times states that "a petroleum pipeline linking Constanza with Odessa is under construction, according to reports circulated in diplomatic circles."

Since this report was written, Hungaria has followed Rumania on the path of closest collaboration with Russia through mixed economic societies.

In the few months which have passed since the cessation of hostilities in Europe, all East European states have concluded economic agreements with Soviet Russia, agreements placing the foreign trade of all these countries in practice under state control. It is only a question of time when the virtual state monopoly of foreign trade will become an official one. It is the only trade policy consistent with the nationalization measures in the field of industrial production and the dominant position of Russia in the economic relations of Eastern Europe with the outside world.

October, 1945.

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* Its economic and political significance is explained in Daniel Logan's "The Eruption of Bureaucratic Imperialism." - F.M.

To the Political Committee:

May 3, 1946

Dear Comrades,

I am presenting this resolution on the National Question on behalf of those comrades whose names are appended to it, for the consideration of the PC and the coming Plenum. I would like to appear before the PC in order to speak in support of the resolution.

Fraternally,
Dave Jeffries

* * *

RESOLUTION ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION
IN GERMANY AND EASTERN EUROPE

1. The decline of capitalism has posed anew for solution a whole host of the problems that had once been solved progressively by bourgeois society in the period of its rise. This can be seen most clearly when it is recalled that the most important accomplishments of progressive capitalism were the establishment of independent national states, the proclamation of basic democratic liberties and the steady expansion of the productive forces. Decaying capitalism, however, along the highway to self-destruction, must destroy the products of its own growth. It prepares to hurl society into a barbaric abyss by a wholesale destruction of the productive forces, the abolition of every democratic liberty and the enslavement of entire nations.

2. Only yesterday almost all the peoples of Europe were engaged in a struggle to prevent the stripping of their industries and the deportation of their labor, to regain national independence and the most elementary democratic liberties. Today, despite the partial victory of the masses, as in the Greek, North Italian and Paris uprisings, more than half of Europe is still faced with these problems as Number One on the political agenda.

3. To say that problems once solved by the bourgeoisie must be solved again is, of course, not to say that they can be solved in the same way or by the same means. In the epoch of nascent capitalism the young bourgeoisie took upon its shoulders the progressive solution of these tasks, since they were a pre-condition for its own healthy existence. Today the bourgeoisie has turned into its opposite -- in its frenzied attempt to preserve a doomed life it is itself destroying every achievement that once justified its existence and presenting humanity with new horrors that make the Spanish Inquisition and the Dark Ages look like periods of enlightened humanism.

4. The old tasks must be solved again -- but they can only be solved this time by the working class. The bourgeoisie today is the avowed enemy of national independence and every democratic liberty. But it is more than just a threatening opponent of these rights. By virtue of having defeated the proletariat in the first prolonged struggle for power (1917-1933) it has set civilization a good step back along the road to barbarism and has succeeded in destroying throughout much of the world those democratic rights against which it has arrayed itself. The fact that the labor movement suffered a defeat in its first decisive battle with capital means that it must take up battle now from new and weaker positions. Throughout much of the world it is faced with the problem of regaining the territory it has lost -- national independence and the other democratic rights. The struggle for these national and democratic rights lies directly along the road to social revolution, and this section of the road cannot be bypassed. That it is a longer and harder road than was faced

in 1918 is the penalty the proletariat must pay for its failure to solve the social problem in its first attempt.

5. But if the existence of national oppression is a penalty for the proletariat, it also offers it new and unprecedented opportunities. National oppression has the tendency of galvanizing the nethermost and least politically active layers of the masses into action and uniting them, if the leadership is adequate, behind the revolutionary struggle against imperialism and for a socialist society. For while ordinary capitalist oppression makes life hard for the masses, national oppression added to it makes life intolerable. It poses the alternative to the broadest section of the masses, to the most reactionary petty bourgeois and the most backward worker-- "struggle or perish!" Imperialism thus calls up against itself the greatest mass resistance yet encountered, and if the revolutionary movement proves capable of putting itself at the head of this resistance the socialist victory is assured.

6. The movement in occupied Europe showed that there is no short cut around the national and democratic problems. In each country the masses rose up with their primary aim to drive the national oppressor out and regain their necessary democratic rights. But more than this, the experience of the Resistance showed that in no case could the movement stop after solving its immediate problems, but every time proceeded forward in the direction of a decisive solution of the social question. The dual power in Europe came out of the national movement in every instance. In Greece, especially, the masses in the national movement showed that they knew how to take up arms against their own bourgeoisie also, not to mention the not-so-democratic liberators whom so many feared the masses were helping by their national struggle against the Nazis. France, Belgium, Jugoslavia, etc. showed similar features, to different degrees. He who failed to recognize the crucial importance of the national struggle in Europe during the past period was lost on a by-road of history -- and he had no one to blame but himself if the masses did not find him despite his certificate of bona fide proletarian revolutionist.

7. It must be clearly recognized -- the whole revolutionary potential to emerge out of World War II came from the national movement. That the potential remained no more than that was due to the fact that the Fourth International failed to put itself at the head of this movement, and under the bourgeois influence of the Socialist and Stalinist parties it could but dissipate its revolutionary energies.

8. But that is water under the bridge. The important thing now is to recognize the significance of the national question for the period of declining capitalism and to draw appropriate conclusions for the European struggle at the present time.

The Problem of Germany

9. Foremost of all the countries of Europe today suffering from acute national oppression stands Germany. To this country has fallen the miserable lot of becoming the classic example of the barbarism which decaying capitalism is preparing for the whole of

humanity. The bourgeois world can see the features of its future in the mirror of desolation that is now Germany.

10. Today the German masses still suffer the penalty for the sins of their leadership in failing to prevent Fascism's rise to power. They face utter ruin and destruction, with the future blacker than the present. Their country is carved apart by four occupying powers, of whom it is difficult to tell which is the most ruthless. They are faced with the prospect of being turned into a nation of small farmers -- farmers who will not have to worry about the high price of agricultural equipment because none will be produced, nor about the low price of farm commodities, because after the benevolent conquerors take their share there will be nothing left to sell. Mass starvation threatens to whittle away that remainder of the population which has not been siphoned off for forced labor all over Europe. Completely at the mercy of their oppressors, without the most elementary democratic or human rights, the German people must start at the lowest political level if they are to enter upon the long road to their political and social liberation.

11. The national oppression of the German people cannot fail to produce its opposite -- a national consciousness on the part of the German masses. The first signs of this consciousness, slow to manifest itself actively due to the crushing and demoralizing blows suffered by the people as a result of the war, are already appearing. Reports from Germany are beginning to tell of "resistance groups" that are "definitely anti-occupation". That these embryo resistance groups should be slandered as "Nazi" is only what we should expect. We know differently, however -- they are the inevitable reaction to an unbearable national oppression.

12. With what demands must the German proletariat begin their struggle? As we have said, with the most elementary, and they are manifold. Complete freedom of the press, of trade union organization and political parties are the first. In its present partitioned state the demand for unfettered municipal elections with full freedom of propaganda, becomes a burning "must" for Germany if the masses are to re-occupy the political arena. At the next stage the struggle for a sovereign Constituent Assembly for the entire Reich will be the key question -- for with such a struggle is tied the whole question of an end to the dismemberment of the country. In this way, in the form of the concrete struggle for simple democratic rights, will the struggle of the German masses take shape and pass over to higher levels. The allied conquerors will be informed -- and not gently -- that they are not at all welcome and that their departure is requested. They must be told to withdraw their troops, and this means, it is necessary to emphasize, those of Stalin as well as Truman's and Attlee's. All these struggles are summed up in the slogan "National freedom for Germany!" and this is a cry that must be inscribed boldly on the escutcheon of Trotskyism as a precondition for the emancipation of the German proletariat.

13. Let he who is worried that such a struggle may be a detour from the fight for socialism be informed: far from being a detour, it is the ONLY road to socialism, around which there is no

detour. From such a victorious national struggle (which above all means a death fight against Stalinism) the German proletariat would emerge with new vigor and confidence, as unready to subordinate themselves to their own bourgeoisie as were the masses of Greece and France after their national struggle. At any rate, it must be understood: there is no other way for the German proletariat to reconstitute itself.

14. The International must become the foremost partisan of this struggle from the beginning -- to hang back would be fatal. To discredit the Stalinist and Social-Democratic parties will be easy in Germany of all countries if only the masses are offered a real political road to travel. The alternative to revolutionary leadership of the movement is the leadership of a neo-Fascism that would not find it at all contradictory to become the champion of democratic demands when a struggle against foreign imperialism is concerned. If this were to happen, the whole outcome of the national movement would be similar to the result in France, where the French bourgeoisie was able to achieve independence of the Anglo-American imperialists through the vehicle of the Resistance movement, despite the fact that this movement constituted a danger to its own interests and had to be destroyed.

The Struggle in Eastern Europe

15. The Stalinist marauders have swept through Eastern Europe like a swarm of locusts. The economies of countries like Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, etc. have been swept bare of almost every kind of industry that Stalin could make use of, and Czechoslovakia, Poland and other beloved Allies have fared little better. In Vienna the "Red Army", not content with the seizure of such baubles as industrial equipment and the sewer pipes of the city, has made off with the very household furniture of the workers, and usually with the workers' wives and daughters as well. Large estates have been divided up to destroy the power of the landlords, the easier to rob agricultural produce from the helpless peasants. If the living standards of the Russian masses improve this year, it will be entirely at the expense of the people of Eastern Europe.

16. Accompanying this economic devastation is the inevitable totalitarian terror of the GPU and its East European offspring. Political opposition is driven underground -- the only oppositional forces that have even a minimum of formal legality are those who can cling to the apron-strings of the British and American embassies. Every voice of protest by the embittered masses is labeled "Fascist" and ruthlessly suppressed. When, for example, 50,000 Rumanians seized the occasion and the cover of King Michael's birthday to stage an anti-Stalinist demonstration, the gathering was fired upon and broken up.

17. Prevented from expressing itself in the normal way by the totalitarian repression, the discontent of the masses flows with crushing force into the only available channel of protest in each situation. The lid of complete totalitarian oppression over Eastern Europe is kept open a narrow gap by the wedge of Anglo-American diplomacy which Stalin cannot yet flout completely. In the elbow-room provided by this gap the conservative bourgeois parties have maintained, to one degree or another, the formal legality referred to previously, while prevented

of course from exercising any real power. It is through the channel provided by these bourgeois parties that the ever-ingenious protest of the masses has expressed itself. The tens of thousands in Bucharest who demonstrated before the royal palace on the king's birthday can no more be considered devoted worshippers of King Michael than the hundreds of thousands of Austrian workers who voted for the Peoples Party can be called conservative bourgeois, or than the Budapest workers who voted in such tremendous numbers for the Small Landholders' Party can be considered peasant proprietors.

18. In these countries the so-called "progressive steps" have been frauds, and for revolutionists not to brand them as such would be criminal. In the same way that land has been divided in order to pave the way for Stalinist seizure of agricultural produce, industry has been nationalized the better to be looted, and at the same time to destroy the power of the oppositional bourgeoisie. With industry administered by one central body and all data on production gathered together by the Quisling government, deciding just what plants to strip and carrying out the process is all the easier for Stalin's regime. Nationalization without workers' control has never benefited the exploited; in this case it strikes them a body blow by taking away their means of livelihood for the greater benefit of the Soviet rulers.

19. By stripping industry in this way, Stalinist despotism strikes the greatest blow imaginable at socialism -- and this is doubly true for Germany, where the Allies and Stalin have elevated industrial destruction to a proclaimed policy. For the stripping of industry means the atomization and decimation of the proletariat as an economic class. When the worker is deprived of his industrial plant he loses not only his job and his skill, but also his class-consciousness -- he becomes a lumpen element. All the hopes of revolutionary socialism ride on the ability of the industrial proletariat, concentrated in great industrial centers, to achieve sufficient consciousness and cohesion to overthrow capitalist society. In this sense, the right to be exploited in the factory becomes a basic right of the working class and a pre-requisite to socialism. By destroying this right the Stalinists, together with the Allies in Germany and all by their arrogant selves in Eastern Europe commit the penultimate crime against socialism.

20. In depriving the workers of the Eastern European countries of the right to be exploited, the Russian oppression also deprives them of that other right which is a pre-condition for victorious socialism, the right of national self-determination. There is not the same almost chemically pure national oppression in the East that there is in Germany, but the difference is one of degree, not of kind. What little of democratic or national rights exists does so, as has been pointed out, by virtue of the intervention of Anglo-American imperialism which has its own interests in these countries. The fact that the masses are forced to flock to the bourgeois and peasant parties as the only available channel of protest is the clearest illustration of the barrier to socialism that national oppression is. Here, as in Germany, there is no detour around this barrier -- it must be removed.

21. The Stalinist oppression will inevitably generate a great movement of resistance, which will have as one of its primary aims the restoration of democratic rights and national freedom. The Stalinist invaders will have to be expelled -- that is the pre-condition for progress in these countries. It is now high time that the International took up the struggle for the rights of the masses under the Stalinist yoke.

22. "Every 'Red Army' soldier out!" -- that is the most pressing demand that must be made, and it must be made immediately. It would not be amiss to bring this cry to the attention of the western European workers either, as an effective method of exposing Stalinism. Many workers in Northern Italy have already been repelled by Stalinism by the stories of Russian looting in next-door Austria. It is as essential that Russian troops be told to get out of the countries they occupy as it is that the Anglo-Americans be driven off the preserves where they have no business.

23. "For unrestricted freedom of the press, assembly and political parties! Out with the GPU! An end to the enforced 'Fatherland Front' and other electoral combinations that stifle the aspirations of the masses!" Parliaments are a joke so long as the different parties are not permitted to oppose one another, either before the elections or after, or carry on unrestricted agitation.

24. "For real workers' control of industry! An end to the stripping of factories, reparations and slave labor!" If the Stalinist looting is allowed to continue much longer these countries will suffer an economic catastrophe from which it will surely take decades to recover.

25. Here, as in Germany, these democratic demands and others are the concretization of the struggle for national freedom. In the Balkans and Germany, due principally to the inner conflict among the Allied oppressors, the lid of national oppression is not so tight as under the Nazi heel (countries like Latvia, Lithuania, etc. are of course excepted). In the countries occupied by Hitler it was almost impossible to conceive of a single democratic right of the people being granted without first expelling the Nazis. Hence the abstract slogan of national liberation became the primary demand in which were embodied all the democratic desires of the masses. In those countries occupied by Stalin and the Anglo-Americans, the situation is the reverse. Since the arena for struggle is wider, for the reasons we have adduced, the desire for national freedom is embodied in the struggle for each concrete democratic demand. Needless to say, this fact does not enjoin us from becoming the clear protagonists of the slogan which sums up all these desires of the masses; "For complete national self-determination for all nations under the Stalinist boot."

* * *

26. The national question has become one of those key historical problems, which, if seized hold of correctly by the revolutionary vanguard, can become the lever propelling socialism to power. However, if it is ignored, if it is regarded with annoyance as a distraction

from the "pure", "proletarian" struggle and taken up only after long hesitation and in a begrudging, half-hearted fashion, then it will become the question on which the revolutionary movement will break its neck. In history it is fatal to arrive with too little and too late. The Fourth International must be there with all its forces, and on time.

Dave Jeffries
John Fredericks
A. Winters
Leo Lyons
Dan Shelton
Eugene Shays

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SOME NEW ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

By John Fredericks

A number of issues, dealing with our party work, have deeply concerned me during the past few months since I have returned from the armed service. I feel that the following questions must be placed before our leadership for answer at this time, because they require clarification, which the leadership has not provided.

First, let me make one point clear. I am not a member of the minority faction and I do not associate myself with any of their statements or actions.

1. Our abstentionism from intervention in the Nuremberg Trials demands examination. On December 23, 1945, the Revolutionary Communist Party, British Section of the Fourth International, took the initiative in demanding of Prime Minister Attlee that, in the interests of historical truth, any "evidence" concerning Leon Trotsky and Sedov and their alleged connections with the Nazis, be introduced at Nuremberg. They demanded the right to question witnesses, especially Hess, who, it was claimed in the Moscow Trials, had conversed with Trotsky. They obviously felt that such an action could only serve to further vindicate Trotsky and expose the Stalinists before the whole world.

In a letter to the American Section, the SWP was asked to initiate similar action. The answer of the PC came in a letter to the branches dated February 21, 1946, accompanied by another addressed to Al Goldman dated February 18. The latter stated that it believed the action of the British Party was mistaken. The letter ruled out the idea of re-activating the Dewey Commission as "unrealistic". Goldman was granted permission to act in his capacity as attorney for Natalia, who apparently is anxious that the issue be raised at Nuremberg. The party has done nothing to support or aid even so feeble a gesture.

To this day, no mention of the event has appeared in our press. On March 26, 1946 a press release was distributed to the press of New York in which over 100 American Political figures, trade unionists, clergymen, professors and writers joined a similar English group in demanding the use of Nazi archives and examination of Nazi prisoners to further establish the truth or falsity of Stalinist charges that Trotsky conspired with the Nazis. The New York Times and the New York World Telegram and the Sun prominently displayed the story.

The petition was signed in England by such well known figures as H.G. Wells and Arthur Koestler. The American petition carried the names of Mathew Woll, Powers Hapgood, Norman Thomas, James T. Farrell and many others. It did not carry the name of any member of the SWP in spite of the fact that the party had been invited to participate in all stages of the action.

Over four months have passed since the issue was first raised and so far the party has given no public indication that it knows anything about it. How can the SWP remain silent when the whole world is aware that the issue has been raised? Are we to leave the defense of Trotsky to others? Or are we pretending that nothing has happened because our own failure lost us the initiative?

The Party should be in the forefront of this case. It has not taken even the smallest part. The initiative has fallen, by default, to the Workers Party. For American aid in its action, our British Section is indebted entirely to forces outside the International. We abstain. WHY?

The related documents in the case, (The British letter, Goldman's letters and the PC answers as well as the text and list of signers of the petition) should be published in the Internal Bulletin along with any correspondence between the Workers Party and the SWP concerning the case.

Only a full discussion of the case, with documents before us will clarify this issue.

Had this issue not been raised by the British Section, had the trials continued without a statement from the Fourth International, the result might have been disastrous for the party. The groundwork would then have been laid for Stalin, one year hence, to proclaim that, in going over the Nazi archives, certain documents relating to Trotsky had been found. He would then have published the forged documents to the world and told all who desired to see them to come to the Marx-Engles-Lenin Institute in Moscow and look them over.

The British Party, and those who supported the American petition, have spiked such a trick. The Frame-Up has been exposed before it could be properly hatched. To make such a proposal to the court after the defendants had been executed and the records sealed, as our leadership proposed to do, would have been too late. The claim that the British letter was badly formulated may be sound. It has nothing to do with the wisdom of intervention. We could write our own letter, make our own demands. We neither wrote a correct letter nor did we do anything else. We simply abstained!

2. Another problem that has concerned me is the party attitude toward the Catholic Church. As Communists we should recognize the Church as the arch foe of Communism. We cannot be neutral or indifferent toward it and its political actions. Yet, it is possible to scan the pages of our press for some period back without finding one word of criticism of its many attacks on Communism.

What is the reason for this? Is it a conscious policy of the editorial board to omit from our press any criticism of the arch reactionary role of the Catholic Church on the political field? Do they fear that they might alienate some Catholic workers by such criticism? Tell me, how else are we to educate these Catholic workers away from their reactionary religious leaders?

During the last year a number of Cardinals were elevated to the tune of page upon page of publicity in the Capitalist press. The Pope has issued innumerable political statements. A Stalinist inspired split in the ranks of the Church has taken place and now the bishops of the Church of the Eastern Rite are working for him. The Catholic Trade Union League is playing a larger role in trade union politics. A recent issue of the Brooklyn Tablet, official Catholic publication for New York, contained 27 separate attacks against Communism in its 8 pages. Practically every Catholic Church in New York conducts a "Labor School" to miseducate its followers on the true meaning of Communism. Yet we, the true defenders of Marxism remain silent. We turn our backs and allow these attacks to pass unanswered.

There must be no compromise with reactionary political Catholicism, and no disguise of our position towards it in our press. Any other attitude is cowardice, or as it stand now, another case of abstentionism.

3. At the time of the last convention the party resolution recognized that the slogan of the defense of the Soviet Union was no longer in the foreground. It went on to recognize that we should push to the forefront the slogan of the "Defense of the European Revolution against All its Enemies."

In Comrade Cannon's New York speech (Militant, November 17) a contrary idea was introduced to the effect that the war is not over and that our analysis of the Soviet Union still stands. This is a significant change back to the old line without any preparation. Our old analysis says that during the process of the war the fate of the Soviet Union would be decided. Trotsky predicted that it would either begin the process of regeneration or continue the process of degeneration towards Capitalism. To admit the obvious, that the war is in actuality over, would necessitate a re-analysis of the nature of the Soviet Union.

I feel that the theory that the war is still on, as propounded in Cannon's speech, is erroneous. I feel that the present "anti-war campaign" now being waged by the party is based upon faulty analysis. It is true that the imperialists are trying to regroup their forces and that they would like nothing better than a new war upon the Soviet Union. But we are Marxists; we know that due to many factors it is impossible for any of the nations involved to start another war. The peoples of the world would not stand for it. Revolution would then be on the order of the day in every country. The material conditions for another war simply do not exist.

I repeat, it is impossible to lead the peoples of the world into another war in this period. The entire basis of the imperialist claims would have to be revised, the sympathies of the workers would have to be reoriented in favor of the campaign, favorable material conditions and many other factors that are lacking in the present situation would have to exist.

The war scare has been created largely by Stalin for internal consumption, to conceal the chaotic internal conditions in the USSR

created by himself. The war scare serves Stalin's internal interests and furthers his foreign policy. We should not accept his phoney war scare as good coin.

More important, however, than the speculation over the possibilities of immediate war is the basic question of the nature of the Soviet Union and the nature of its defense. Our party line on the Soviet Union has not changed basically during the last five years, yet the changes in the Soviet Union during the same period have been many and profound. The process of degeneration does not stand still, but rather accelerates. What were once symptoms of a disease may become a sickness and the hopelessly diseased body becomes a corpse.

Our diagnosis of five years ago needs bringing up to date. Perhaps Comrade Cannon's assertions are an uneasy indication that he would like to forestall the inevitable. We may disagree on the question of the end of the war, but we must recognize that the class war continues.

The role of the Soviet Union in this greater war must be examined today, not merely because the imperialist war has resulted in the defeat of Nazi-Japanese imperialism and capitalist armies no longer batter at the defenses of the Soviet Union, but primarily because these five years have seen great changes in the Soviet Union itself.

Consider these points:

1. There have been sweeping changes in the Soviet Civil Code; inheritance laws have been changed to permit transmission of unlimited funds to any citizen or Soviet institution.
2. The Baltic countries, Eastern Poland, Bessarabia and part of Finland have been incorporated into the Soviet Union. The economy and political government have been made identical with that of the Soviet Union by bureaucratic action from above. Is the result of this action part of the Socialized economy which justifies characterizing the Soviet Union as a workers' state?
3. To what extent do the policies of the "occupation governments" (Soviet spheres in Germany and Austria) and the puppet governments in eastern Europe (Poland, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, etc.) illuminate the role of the Soviet Union today in the struggle between Capitalism and Socialism? Are the betrayals of the revolution being perpetrated there essentially the same as previous betrayals chargeable to Stalinism, are they merely different quantitatively, or are they qualitatively different?
4. There have been important changes in family relationships, marriage, divorce, abortion, the rights and status of women.
5. Friendly relationships have been established with the Greek Orthodox Church. Even the Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church has split with Rome and made its peace with Stalin. Does this portend the establishment of a State Church, a religious arm of the State

Apparatus? If so, what kind of state supports such an establishment?

6. Russian nationalism has been greatly intensified during the war, to the degree that it is quite different from previous manifestations in this direction. Conversely the war against Germany was prosecuted as a war on a whole nation, and the only form of solidari- zation employed was that typified in the dealings with Von Paulus. What kind of State employs the slave labor of a conquered nation?

7. The wartime Defense Councils and the People's Commissar- iat for War have been abolished, and all branches of military power concentrated into the treacherous hands of Stalin.

8. Increased differences in Rewards as between the bureau- cracy and the workers; elaboration of honors and privileges available to the bureaucracy; further concentration of authority and power at the top; wider separation of control of social property from the workers.

All these changes have been taking place. Our press and our internal discussions are almost entirely innocent of any evaluation of them. Yet, anyone who fails to feel the need for such an evalua- tion, leading to a complete overhauling of our position, must be in- credibly obtuse. Or must we put our faith in E.R. Frank's apocalyptic revelation that we possess a "finished program" -- the very word -- inscribed on tablets of stone by some materialistically dialectical Holy Ghost?

In default of Marxist analysis the political position of our leadership changes from week to week. Comrade Hansen continues the line of "Defend the Soviet Union" in the pages of the Militant while Comrade Wright, in the April F.I., in analyzing the USSR, fails to mention the nature of the Soviet State and says nothing about its defense.

The effect of continuing to maintain the old line is to con- vert the defense of the USSR into a defense of Stalinism. The two can no longer be separated. Faulty tactics are flowing from faulty political analysis.

Trotsky set the time for us to reexamine the Soviet State. He said that the war would make the decisive change. Either the USSR would continue its degeneration into capitalism or start the regenera- tion towards Socialism. I have cited cases of its further degenera- tion, now show me just one sign of its regeneration!

4. One of the most important tactics of a Communist Party is the United Front. Understanding of this tactic lies within the pro- vince of the ABC of Marxism. Yet, the SWP in recent years has per- mitted the tactic to fall into disuse.

The reason given by the leadership for this has been that objective conditions are not favorable. This is true only in the most limited sense. If the tactic were employed CORRECTLY it could be used more frequently and to better advantage today than formerly.

Let us see what Trotsky meant by the tactic and its use. The following quotations are from "Tactics of the United Front," by Leon Trotsky (March 1941, Fourth International) written March 1922. He says:

"After assuring itself complete independence and ideological homogeneity of its ranks, the Communist Party fights for influence over the majority of the working class. This struggle can assume a swifter or more protracted character depending upon objective circumstances and the expediency of the tactic pursued.

"In these clashes, (with the industrialists and the bourgeoisie) insofar as they involve the living interests of the entire working class, or its majority, or this or that section, the working masses feel the need of unity in action -- of unity in resisting the onslaught of Capitalism or unity in taking the offensive against the latter. Any party that mechanically counterposes itself to this need of the working class for unity in action will be unfailingly condemned in the minds of the workers.

"If the Communist Party did not seek for organizational avenues to the end that at every given moment joint, coordinated actions between the Communists and the non-Communist (including the Social Democratic) working masses were made possible, it would thereby lay bare its own incapacity to win over -- on the basis of mass actions -- the majority of the working class. It would degenerate into a society for Communist propaganda but never develop into a party for the conquest of power."

As the party now employs the united front tactic, it usually aims its call only at organizations which are larger than ourselves: the trade unions and the CP. The party invariably refrains from inviting the Social Democrats, the SP and the Workers Party. When the unions and the CP reject our call, we have no united front. The alternative is then independent action if any.

If the SWP were to invite the smaller workers parties to participate, and with them, appeal to the trade unions, the drive for united action would by so much be strengthened. Only the light minded or the cynically obdurate will scorn such moves toward working class unity. One thousand people living in a glass house cannot afford to throw stones at 600 living elsewhere.

Far more important than the one-sided perspective the leadership suffers from is the fact that the leadership is turning its back upon one of our most useful weapons in winning the workers over from other parties to the SWP. We cannot live rejoicing in the purity of our hearts, waiting for the day when our "finished program" suddenly dawns on the working class as it once dawned on E.R. Frank. This is SLP'ism or perhaps Pentecostalism.

The United Front is an aggressive tactic, by which we demonstrate in action our superiority to other parties, and thereby win increased support for our program and activity.

The most damning evidence of failure in the use of the united front tactic is our series of encounters with the Workers Party. In every case, both in united front offers and in negotiations on the unity question, the initiative has been with the Workers Party.

In contrast to proper aggressive action on this question what do we see? United Front offers are scouted with as much apprehension as the Social Democratic Rand School crowd ever showed to the CP during the "third Period".

By our present attitude toward the united front tactic we are in fact using an ultra-leftist position, which in practice becomes opportunism. Or worse still, another page in the book of abstentionism.

5. The proposal for unity, after a number of delaying actions, has finally stalled on the preposterous subterfuge of a "discussion" which, until now, has never begun. I see no way of escaping the conclusion that this is abstentionism further degraded to the level of abject flight -- away from Max Shachtman!

The consequence of such a failure is that the Workers Party bids fair to win a considerable number of members from the SWP. The Workers Party has gained and the SWP has lost. Certain types of minds may gain a neurotic comfort from dismissing the lost members as of inferior caliber, as some are already doing. The shocking fact remains that the SWP has been defeated at every turn. The most elaborate rationalization will never change this shameful fact.

There is a further shameful consequence of this failure. In the past the Workers Party bore the responsibility for their split. Since the recent negotiations the relationship has been completely reversed by the errors of the SWP leadership. They have not only blocked unity through a transparent device, but they have put the party in the indefensible position of being too unsure of its own program to be willing to trust it to win the victory in competition with the weaker Workers Party. What a damning self indictment.

If anybody thinks that the responsibility for the continuing schism between the two parties can be concealed or bluffed out, then he stands self convicted of a criminally cynical attitude toward the working class, an attitude that has nothing in common with Marxism. The leadership of the SWP stands convicted of preventing the unification of the Trotskyist forces in America.

Conclusions

The party leadership has strayed off the beaten path of Marxism. It no longer analyzes events with the burning searchlight of Marxist truth. It gives lip service to dialectic materialism but fails completely to understand it, if their line is an example of its use. Their boldest predictions concern events of months past. Their timidity in discussing political events is not leading the party, but allowing it to wander blindly into dark alleys. As a matter of record it does little but repeat old formulas until they become meaningless.

The pages of our central theoretical organ, the Fourth International, are empty of fresh political content, and it provides little food for party thought. The circulation figures, if the leadership dared to publish them, would reflect the lack of respect in which the magazine is held.

The issues I raised on Nuremberg and the Catholic Church will not, in the long run, seriously effect the course of the world revolution. They are however, straws in the wind. They are indicative of a creeping paralysis of thought that is leading the party into abstentionist paths. Abstentionism and opportunism go hand in hand.

The Russian question that I have raised is a fundamental one. I do not claim to have all the answers or even to have made a thoroughgoing analysis of the question here. Of one thing I am certain. The party has made no attempt to give the correct answer to the question. It must be done or it becomes a confession of utter bankruptcy.

The unity question speaks for itself. The leadership is bound to give a fuller answer to the offer of unity. If they do not answer the question today, then they must do so tomorrow before the court of world working class opinion. Neither does their refusal to answer solve the problem for them. It does not dissolve the Workers Party into thin air. They have shown a tenacious ability to remain on the political scene and even to grow. They will be with us tomorrow and the year after that.

Let the leadership answer the questions of the workers then. The responsibility for two Trotskyist Parties in America lies squarely in front of its door. The crime of disunity lies along side it. Remember Cannon's own words, "the workers vote with their feet", and act for unity before the movement takes place.

April 7, 1946
New York.

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INTERNATIONAL REPORT

(Minority Report to the Plenum, May 19, 1946)

By Felix Morrow

Note: Two other documents which I submitted to the Plenum will provide the reader with the theoretical and factual background of my conclusions on the Russian question: Daniel Logan's "The Eruption of Bureaucratic Imperialism" and C. Georges' "Russian Economic Policy in Eastern Europe."

On the national question, I agree to the substance of the theoretical position of the resolution "The National Question in Europe" submitted to the party by Comrades Jeffries, Shelton, Fredericks and others.

Comrades, we have been sharply and bitterly disputing international perspectives and tasks for three years now. Our differences are not diminishing. They are growing. But I think that our differences are becoming better defined. Big events are dictating to both sides in the dispute the taking of precise positions; the real meaning of our generalizations are shown in those specific decisions. Three such specific decisions are of particular importance today.

1. The decision of the French party to vote "yes" in the May 5 referendum on the constitution adopted by the Socialist-Communist majority of the Constituent Assembly. As I shall show when we come to discuss it, this is not a new question. What it did was to pose on a razor edge our three years' dispute on the real situation in Europe, on how to build the Fourth International, on how to break the coalition between the workers' parties and the bourgeoisie, on the importance today of democratic demands. It is a big step forward that the SWP majority has put in writing an unambiguous position on the French referendum; had the majority done the same in our earlier disputes on the slogans of the republic and the Constituent Assembly, we would be farther along in our discussion than we are.

2. The decision of the British party calling upon the Pre-conference to take a position for the withdrawal of the Russian occupation troops from eastern Europe and Germany. By rejecting this proposal, the Preconference majority has drawn the lines on an international scale on the most crucial question connected with Stalinism today. Involved in it is not only the heart of the Russian question but also the national question. By all means let us discuss all "fundamentals" of the Russian and national questions; but we shall now be discussing them not in the abstract but in terms of action -- shall we or shall we not call upon the proletariat of the Russian zone to make their own the national struggle for independence and throw out the foreign invader?

3. The decision of the SWP majority to reject the slogan, "Wage raises without price increases." This question we shall discuss

under another point on the agenda but its implications are international. Involved in it is the whole question of what is the transitional program and what is a transitional slogan. In the course of our dispute on this question we shall show the worthlessness of merely saying hurrah for the transitional program as the International Resolution does.

Now that we are beginning to have such specific decisions on which both sides take clear-cut positions, one can perhaps hope that there will be more light and less heat in our disputes. For my part, I shall make every effort to remove all obstacles to the centering of our attention on the political questions. To achieve this I asked the Secretariat to separate the International point on the agenda into two parts -- one the political resolution, the other the organizational questions. When this was not granted, I decided, and so notified the P.C. last week, that I am not contesting the organizational questions connected with the Preconference. Those organizational questions include reorganization of the German section on ideological grounds; assumption, without previous notice, of the authority of a World Conference after being called as a Preconference with limited aims; the decision that the Preconference decisions and resolutions are binding on all parties before they are discussed and voted on; the composition of the new International Executive Committee. All this must be laid aside because, in the end, it will be seen, they are organizational decisions flowing from a political line. First it is necessary to defeat that political line. I mention the organizational questions connected with the Preconference only so that everyone will understand that the fact that I do not contest them does not mean that I take any responsibility for them.

As the disputes come to the fore in definite decisions, they are cutting across previously-established lineups. What a striking example is provided by what has happened in the French party! The French majority joined with the SWP majority in writing the resounding generalizations of the International Resolution and the Manifesto of the Preconference. From those generalizations which proclaimed a revolutionary situation in Europe, it certainly followed logically enough that the revolutionary party would have nothing to do with the adoption of a bourgeois constitution. But within a matter of days after the polishing of the final text of the resolution and the manifesto, their authors, the French majority, blew up. I note that Comrade Cannon comforts himself in his resolution on the French referendum by referring to the "small majority" achieved on this question by the former minority. But that "small majority" in the Central Committee is only a reflection of the widespread revolt in the ranks of the party which, together with the compelling reality of the actual situation in France, split up the old majority. No doubt many in the old majority still insist that they still agree with the political line of the Preconference and have parted company only on the referendum question. In reality, however, the referendum was a touchstone which revealed the bankruptcy of the Preconference's political line. I venture to predict that the old French majority will never be put together again after this decisive test.

Previously-established lineups will break up, too, on the touchstone of the withdrawal of the Russian occupation troops. The

British leaders, whose revolutionary instincts have led them to take a correct position on this question, will find that it will carry them much further than they now dream. They will have to learn, unwillingly, resistingly, but learn nevertheless, just as I learned willy-nilly, not to repeat outworn formulas on the Russian and national questions. They will have to eat their words, as I have had to eat mine, about the position of the German section on the national question. They will have to, as I must, recognize that all the reasons we gave for defending the Soviet Union have disappeared. These same things will happen to the new French majority. They will happen to comrades in this room who today recoil from what I am saying. In the end, I am confident, they will happen to the majority of the Fourth International because with each succeeding day it will become more and more impossible to repeat the outworn formulas of the Preconference resolution.

This mad clinging to outworn formulas -- that is the source of all the disputes between us. What Comrade Cannon calls our "unchanging program." There is the heart of the dispute. For Cannon and his followers the program must not have rude hands laid upon it; it is sacred, inviolable. Comrade Cannon described his method well-enough in a letter of August 16, 1944. He wrote:

"This carefulness, this aversion to the practice of going off half-cocked, this habit of waiting to think things through before we speak, has been denominated 'conservatism' by light-minded feuilleton writers, who imagine themselves to be alter politicians. But it is this very 'conservatism' that has given all our previous resolutions since the death of the Old Man their thought-out character and made them stand up from year to year as supplements logically flowing from one unchanging program, and like the program itself, needing no fundamental revision."

"Unchanging program"! "No fundamental revision." This is the method of Cannon and of the Preconference resolution. According to their method, it is more virtuous to say the earth is flat than to go off half-cocked and say it's round. I must confess that Cannon used to scare me with his thunderous pronouncements against changing the program. I accepted the implication that the onus, the burden of proof, was on the one who wanted to change something. But that's a lot of nonsense. There is no burden of proof in these matters; those who want to stand still and those who want to change are equals, equally responsible for defending their positions.

What hair-raising nonsense the majority has defended in the name of the unchanging program! In the name of the unchanging program, Comrade Cannon, you taught the following things: That our proletarian military policy means that we should telescope together overthrow of capitalism and defense of the country against foreign fascism. That the Polish revolutionists should subordinate themselves to the Russian Army. That there is an objectively revolutionary logic brought about by the Russian victories. That naked military dictatorships are the only possible governments in Europe because it is impossible to set up a new series of Weimar republics in Europe. That American imperialism is at least as predatory as Nazi imperialism in its methods in Europe. That it is theoretically impossible for America to help rebuild or feed Europe. That there are no democratic illusions in

Europe. That there are no illusions about American imperialism. That amid the revolutionary upsurge it is reformist to call for the republic in Greece, Italy and Belgium or the Constituent Assembly. That to speak of a Stalinist danger to the European revolution is only possible for a professional defeatist. That the fate of the Soviet Union would be decided by the war but only careless people think the war is over.

What happened to those planks in your unchanging program, Comrade Cannon? I notice they aren't in the International Resolution. Is their disappearance, to use your expression, a typographical error?

We fought for three years over these questions and now they have been quietly dropped out of the latest resolution. True, the International Secretariat promises us to publish soon a document of self-criticism of the previous political errors; that, and from proponents of the unchanging program, is quite an innovation. Marxists used to correct their errors in the next political resolution, but now we are to have a new kind of resolution, entirely separate from the political resolutions, in which the errors will be quietly interred. I predict safely that that self-criticism will be as worthless as the political resolutions, designed to justify rather than to correct errors. The whole approach is indicated by the statement in the International Resolution that "the ones who correctly criticised the leftist exaggerations in evaluating the tempo of events during the war and in the first phase of the period succeeding the war, proceed in reality from a different and false general perspective as regards the nature of the period which we are entering" and are "the greatest threat" to the political orientation of the movement. How we could be correct from a false perspective -- that is a new mystery which no doubt the Warde school of dialectic can explain.

It is small comfort that you have quietly dropped a lot of your old baggage overboard. Your new baggage is just as bad because it flows from the same false method of "unchanging program" instead of coming to grips with the changing reality.

It is fruitful, comrades, to look back and see how this dispute began.

Central to our understanding of the dispute is to understand the situation created by the death of Trotsky. The death of Trotsky was bound, sooner or later, to lead to a political crisis of the Fourth International, and that is what we are confronted with -- a political crisis on an international scale. It was bound to happen because Trotsky's death created a gap which nobody could fill either individually or collectively. I am confident that in the end we shall fill that gap by a collective work on an international scale, but that can come only as the end-result of the long and painful process of this struggle which is already now three years old.

In answer to the "independent thinkers" Cannon used to say "Trotsky is my brain." When the brain died, Cannon and Gabriel tried to freeze the program as it stood. That is the source of the political crisis.

In Trotsky's lifetime, his genius and authority made the necessary process of change relatively easy. There were of course disputes and splits but they were reduced to a minimum, not only by Trotsky's authority but also by his readiness to change when change was indicated.

One example in the history of our own party will indicate what I mean. In 1938 the Republican Congressman Ludlow introduced a proposed constitutional amendment for a referendum on war. I was then in Minneapolis editing the Northwest Organizer of the teamsters' movement. I was for critical support of the Ludlow amendment and proceeded to show in the pages of the Northwest Organizer how revolutionary Marxists could make revolutionary propaganda through critical support of the referendum on war. The question came up in the Political Committee. Burnham supported my position. Comrade Goldman opposed me sharply. Comrade Shachtman howled for my reformist head. Comrade Cannon, if I recall, took the same position as Comrade Goldman. The P.C. voted overwhelmingly against supporting the referendum on war. Trotsky saw the decision in the Political Committee minutes. He understood the error immediately, brilliantly demonstrated the transitional character of the slogan of a referendum on war. His arguments and his authority swiftly mustered unanimity in the P.C. That is how the referendum on war was borrowed from Congressman Ludlow and became part of our transition program.

It is easy to imagine what would have happened had the referendum on war first arisen as a problem after Trotsky's death. What profound arguments would have been offered against it! Comrade Warde would show that it isn't in our transition program, and it is not an accident that it isn't in there. Comrade Wright would marshal scores of quotations from Trotsky to show that war can be prevented only by overthrowing capitalism. Comrade Cannon would prove conclusively that it is another petty-bourgeois deviation.

I shudder to think what would have happened had Trotsky died before he switched positions on the Labor Party, leaving behind all the bad arguments he used up to 1938 against advocating a Labor Party. How those quotations would have been poured over the head of anyone daring to propose a change in position on the Labor Party! Spoon-fed the pap about "unchanging" program, how many of the new members of the party -- and they are now the majority -- know that we changed our position on the war-referendum and the Labor Party as recently as 1938?

Trotsky's death made inevitable a great political crisis in the Fourth International. It was bound to start just as soon as new questions confronted the movement, as new questions will always rise as the years pass. Especially the political crisis was bound to come after World War II and its aftermath confront us with new questions.

At the October 1942 convention, Cannon was able to boast of the unanimity prevailing in the leadership. We came to the convention with a common resolution. In reality, however, that unanimity was based on a compromise on one big and new question -- the national question in western Europe. It was a compromise not on the part of Cannon and his supporters, who committed themselves to nothing except an ambiguous paragraph or two, but on the part of myself and Logan,

Logan and my position on the national question was essentially that of the French party at the time which, under the leadership of Hic and Cordier, had quickly understood that in hitherto unoppressed countries the national struggle is our struggle under conditions of national oppression and had oriented toward making the French party a fraction of the resistance movement. They published "La Nation Libre" (The Free Nation) for this purpose.

Under the pressure of the attacks of the P.C. majority on some of Logan's formulations, I made the mistake of trying to reconcile the position of Logan with that of the majority. And I joined with the majority in attacking the position of the German section on the national question, which, while stated often in extreme terms was, nevertheless, essentially identical with the position of Hic and Cordier. The most one could justly have said against it was that it was a rightist emphasis within the fundamentally correct position of integration in the national resistance movement. I, however, accused the German comrades of revisionism. My political confusion on the national question cleared up very slowly indeed. It is very hard for an American to understand the national question:

So I must take my share of responsibility for the aftermath. The position of the German section became anathema, neither published nor seriously analyzed in our press but made unholy by sheer dint of repetition of curses against it. This would not have mattered too much had the French party been able to develop its work in the resistance movement. But then came the terrible tragedy of October 1943 when Hic and almost all his leading co-workers were seized by the Gestapo, with Hic and others dying in concentration camps. The be-headed party fell into the hands of inexperienced and foreign comrades and turned its back on the resistance movement. To what extent, you will learn when you get an opportunity to read the theses of the French majority at their recent convention; they try to reduce the question to a mere error in allocating forces, admitting they gave insufficient forces to the resistance movement, but even this pseudo-explanation is eloquent enough of the fact that when the armed proletariat made the Paris insurrection in August 1944 our party was completely outside the movement thanks to their false position on the resistance movement.

What had the German comrades said on the national question in the "Three Theses" with which the majority here still frightens little children? Simply that if we are not integrated in the resistance movement its revolutionary drive will be diverted to re-establishment of the bourgeois order. And that is just what happened. No amount of mendacious arguments against the German section can cover up the terrible fact that our French party failed to penetrate the insurrectionary movement of the armed masses. No amount of misquotations and misinterpretations of the German section's documents can cover up the responsibility of the SWP majority for buttressing the sectarian trend of the French party after 1943. Maybe the German comrades did make this or that mistake, but as I wrote last October to the European Secretariat: "I know a mistake ten times, a hundred times worse, and that is the mistake of those who failed to enter the resistance movement."

Logan and I compromised with the majority in October 1942 on the national question, but already then there was an end to the normal

friendly relations among us. Friction accumulated in various incidents. We didn't get along with each other anymore. For we were people moving in different directions. The majority was blindly determined to cling to the unchanging program, while Logan, Goldman and I were trying to come to grips with events which more and more failed to fit into the prognosis with which we entered the war.

What was that prognosis? The Manifesto of the Preconference dares to say that that prognosis has been confirmed. It can do so only by tailoring its quotations and leaving out the heart of the matter. For the first time in the history of the Trotskyist movement we can't say about our documents that we have nothing to unsay and nothing to conceal. What must be unsaid and what the Manifesto and the resolution try to conceal are the two main ingredients of our prognosis of 1940:

1. That in the course of the war the Soviet Union would either collapse into capitalism or be regenerated and victorious. In either case we would be through with the problem of Stalinism. Soviet victories, bringing the Red Army into Europe, would inspire a wave of revolution which would in turn topple Stalinism.

2. That, galvanized by the ravages of the war and freed of the incubus of Stalinism, the European proletariat would surge forward in a wave of proletarian revolution (the first revolution, Trotsky thought, would come early in the war) on a greater scale than in 1917-1921. This did not necessarily mean immediate establishment of Soviet power throughout Europe, but certainly meant the emergence of great mass parties of the Fourth International. (By 1948, Trotsky was sure, the Trotskyist membership would number in the millions.)

Trotsky tried to teach us to understand that it is necessary to make a prognosis but equally necessary to understand that it is impossible to guess the tempos in advance for a prolonged period and hence one must introduce the necessary correctives into it in the course of experience. This is what the minority tried to do since 1943. The majority answer was that the real issue was not one over tempo but over fundamental perspective and program. Now, in the International Resolution, the majority explains that the only mistakes it made were mistakes about tempo. But the term tempo has been rendered in the course of this dispute so meaningless that it is better to say: yes, we have profound differences in perspective and program, meaning by these terms the estimate of what is to come during the next few years and what is to be done about it. Please take note that we are talking of the short-term perspective and not what is to come in a decade or more.

We definitively parted company in July 1943. The dispute began with estimating the significance of the fall of Mussolini. The majority proceeded to take it as a complete confirmation of our 1940 prognosis. It wrote along its line in The Militant, and I wrote along a very different line in Fourth International. True, I didn't yet understand the full implications, but comrades who want to understand the roots of this struggle could fruitfully go back and compare the two lines at that time.

You won't find the majority's line about the fall of Mussolini in the International Resolution although one might think at least a passing estimate of that event ought to be in the first International Resolution of the Fourth International in six years. You will find it, however, in a speech of E. R. Frank published as late as the February 1945 Fourth International. There, slandering the German comrades, falsely attributing to them the idea that "They consider the European revolution already defeated," he refutes them by the following:

"We base ourselves on the rising working class revolution. They consider the European revolution already defeated.

"We knew that out of the war would come a gigantic revolutionary explosion, above all in Europe, and we were confidently preparing for it. And less than a year after our 1942 convention, Italian fascism crashed to the ground. We saw in the downfall of Mussolini and the beginning of the Italian revolution the most striking confirmation of our analysis and program, and by the same token, an annihilating refutation of all the theories and speculations of our enemies. We immediately proceeded in our press to subject the Italian events to a thorough-going analysis and point to the road ahead."

The alleged thorough-going analysis to which E. R. Frank refers was based on a false, arbitrary, obviously factually untrue idea: the idea that Mussolini had been directly overthrown by a revolutionary uprising of the masses. That idea was necessary in order to claim the Italian events as a confirmation of our 1940 prognosis. But it was not true.

Recently our Italian section's Central Committee adopted a resolution on the situation in Italy. It makes clear that no one can understand what has happened in Italy unless he understands that Mussolini was not overthrown by the masses but by a palace coup d'etat. I saw a translation of this resolution the other day on Comrade Carsten's desk; I trust it will be published.

In the months between July and the October 1943 Plenum, the Italian experience unfolded and mirrored the future of western Europe: the development of bourgeois democracy; the revival of the dominance of the traditional reformist workers' parties; the central role of such democratic questions as the republic and the Constituent Assembly; illusions about American imperialism. I tried to explain this at the Plenum and was met with a vicious slander campaign. All this is presumably what the International Resolution now admits to have been correct criticisms of leftist exaggerations.

The Italian experience showed what had happened to our 1940 prognosis of a wave of proletarian revolution in the course of the war. Instead of the masses overthrowing fascism as we had expected, fascism was being overthrown by its imperialist opponents, not only in Italy but in Germany and occupied Europe as well. Such a purely imperialist conclusion to the war would mean continuation of European capitalism. The one chance to prevent this was the transformation of the ideology of the resistance movement. But to do this one had to be in it. Our comrades weren't in it, thanks to the sectarian prejudices which they shared with the SWP majority.

These sectarian prejudices were buttressed by their theory of the revolutionary consequences of Russian victories. What a terrible tragedy! They ignored the revolutionary movement which was everywhere about them, the armed proletariat and peasantry of western Europe, and instead saw the coming revolution being brought by the Russian Army. Instead of preparing to play a role in the coming Paris insurrection, they looked to the East for the Red dawn. There is irony, pitiful irony, in this awful error.

This question, too, we first disputed at the October 1943 Plenum. It is a little laughable to myself to go back and see how timidly I raised the question at the 1943 Plenum. As Shachtman very well said, in commenting on it, my attitude was a please-don't-hit-me one; he also predicted that, having taken the first step of warning against the Stalinist danger to the European revolution flowing from the Soviet victories, I would have to go on from there. I have. At the October 1943 Plenum I still spoke of the two-sided consequences of the Soviet victories, one side being the progressive fact that it preserved the Soviet Union, the other being the reactionary fact that Stalinist prestige enhanced by victory would be employed for counter-revolutionary purposes. Infinitely more correctly, a year later Natalia wrote: "We must hammer away at one point: the reactionary consequences of the Soviet victories."

The majority recoiled from even my timid formula and stuck to the 1940 prognosis: Soviet victories would bring revolutionary consequences. Even a year later when the majority yielded to the pressure of Natalia and accepted the formula for the convention resolution -- that defense of the Soviet Union has receded into the background and in the foreground is the defense of the European revolution against Stalinism, even then Cannon, in his very letter accepting Natalia's proposition, added: "And I do not for a minute forget that the objective logic of the Red Army achievements in the war against the Nazis, regardless of the officially declared aims, is profoundly revolutionary."

To read that kind of nonsense in America is one thing. But try to realize what were the consequences of it in Europe. I have already told you what it meant: the French party ignored the revolutionary movement at home and instead looked to the East for revolutionary deliverance. Their underground press, put out at the cost of immeasurable sacrifices, was devoted to this in large part. Here, for example, is a typical-enough issue, La Verite of February 10, 1944. Its main headlines read as follows: "The flags of the Red Army will join themselves with our red flags." I am reading from the main article:

"Stalin knows that with the advance of the Soviet Army a general uprising can break out in Europe. Tomorrow, ten thousand factory soviets can cover the old continent.

"He knows also that it is less than certain that these workers' and peasants' soviets created in the advanced European countries will passively obey the parasitic bureaucracy of Moscow.

"Stalin cannot ignore the fact that he cannot count upon his

army to put down the revolutionary workers of Europe.

"The army of the USSR will not wipe out the soviets of Berlin, of Budapest and of Paris. It is these soviets on the contrary that will remind the Russian army that it is a Soviet army.

"The communist revolution in Europe will be the end of exploiting capitalism and also the end of the parasitic bureaucracy. The Moscow usurpers know it. But the Red Army continues to advance. . ."

Was this idea, that the Russian army was bringing the socialist revolution, that the Russian army was not the instrumentality of the Stalinist bureaucracy, that its red flags were still the flags of revolution, was this idea some awful aberration of the isolated French comrades in the Paris underground? Or was it, as some people pretend, an aberration of John G. Wright?

No comrades, it was the common idea of the Fourth International. Parties of our International divided by oceans and without contact for many years were simultaneously repeating the same idea. Seven months after the issue of La Verite that I have quoted, the very able leadership of the Bolshevick-Leninist Party of India met in Conference, in September 1944, and adopted a resolution on "The Red Army in Eastern Europe" which stated:

". . . particularly the entry of the Red Army will give a powerful impetus to the revolutionary movement. For these reasons proletarian revolutionaries will not in any way modify the unconditional support given hitherto to the Red Army in its actions against the forces of imperialism, as the Red Army leaves Russian territory in pursuit of the German army.

"The entry of the Red Army into these territories will release latent forces and give such an impetus to the revolutionary movement as to create a pre-revolutionary situation in Eastern Europe, the heightening of which is of inestimable importance for world revolutionary perspectives."

The Indian comrades went on to warn that "it is certain that the Red Army will be brought into conflict with the developing revolution, either to crush it completely or to bureaucratise the social conquests made."

Their revolutionary understanding made it impossible for them to blind themselves to what the Red Army is. What is important, however, is that in spite of this they were saying, as our French comrades, that the entry of the Red Army into Europe would give an impetus to the revolutionary movement.

Four months later, the organ of our Belgian party, La Voie de Lenine of February 4, 1945, gave as its main headline, "The new soviet victories, are they preparing the German revolution?" It answered the question affirmatively, the first paragraph saying:

"Scarcely have the soviet troops penetrated into (German) Silesia than outbreaks take place at Ratibor, Gleiwitz and Beuthen.

The tremendous advance of the Red Army can play a capital role in the uprising which is preparing little by little in Germany against Hitler."

Three months later, in the May Day 1945 issue of the organ of our comrades in Chile, El Militante, the headline reads: "Will Europe be Sovietized?" and the question is answered affirmatively, the first paragraph reading:

"When El Militante arrives on the street, making its homage to the first of May, BERLIN, the capitol of German imperialism, the centre of fascism, will already be in the hands of the Red Army and of the German workers who have risen writing epic pages against their totalitarian oppressors."

This was the universal theory of the Fourth International. Abler and more educated comrades advanced it in India with more intelligent reservations than the crude formulas of the leadership in Chile, but they shared with all other Trotskyists -- except the Workers Party -- the idea that Russian victories, the entry of the Russian army into Europe, would give an impetus to social revolution.

What is the source of this theory? Trotsky's writings of 1939-40 on the occupation of Poland and the war in Finland. It seemed to Trotsky that when the Russian army entered new territory and sought to turn private property into state property, it can do so only by methods of civil war. Hence he wrote that the bureaucracy "gives an impulse to the socialist revolution through bureaucratic methods" in its occupation of Poland. Hence he wrote of the Kremlin's "appeal to independent activity on the part of the masses in the new territories -- and without such an appeal, even if worded with extreme caution, it is impossible to constitute a new regime. . . ." And even more categorically he wrote about what would have happened if the Finnish war had continued: "Occupation presupposed a social overturn which would be impossible without involving the workers and poorer farmers in civil war."

Trotsky sharply distinguished this first stage -- the uprising of the masses -- from the second in which the Stalinist bureaucracy attempts to crush the masses. The distinction meant: Stalin can achieve the second stage in godforsaken Galicia, but if victorious Red Armies occupy advanced countries in western Europe the socialist revolution, to which the bureaucracy is compelled to give this impulse, will get beyond the control of the bureaucracy and overthrow it.

After Trotsky's death, and especially after the USSR survived the first year of war, this idea that the bureaucracy is compelled against its will to "give an impulse to the socialist revolution through bureaucratic methods" became the main justification for Soviet defensism in the Fourth International. The quotations I have already given from the world Trotskyist press show that.

This theory has proven completely false. In eastern Europe the Soviet occupation took place without risings of the masses; it is now clear that the 1939 rising in Poland was not, as Trotsky thought,

a necessary "interaction between the masses, the workers' state and the bureaucracy." In 1939 the illusions of the masses about the "liberating" Red Army played a great role; there was also deliberate staging by the bureaucracy which, allied then to Hitler, needed the "risings" to show the masses in the democracies that the USSR was different from its ally. In 1945 there were fewer illusions in Eastern Europe about the Red Army; still more important, the bureaucracy had to consider its present democratic allies. The point is that the will of the bureaucracy was sufficient to prevent risings, rather than risings being dictated to the bureaucracy by statification of property. As to risings which could get out of the control of the bureaucracy -- the very possibility did not arise.

Comrade Natalia saw this very clearly, and wrote in this vein to the party in 1944. Under her pressure, and appalled by the debacle of our theory of the revolutionary consequences of Soviet victory, the SWP majority yielded at the last moment and inserted in the convention resolution -- it was one of those famous "literary and clarifying amendments" which the membership had never seen or discussed -- the idea that defense of the USSR has receded into the background in the face of the Stalinist danger to the European revolution.

Comrade Natalia's proposal was new and unprecedented. It was based on what was new: the reactionary consequences of Soviet victory. Comrade Natalia's proposal to relegate the slogan of defense to the background was, in my opinion, a half-way house to dropping the slogan of the defense altogether from the program. One cannot defend (fight for) victories which bring reactionary consequences. The consequences of Russian victory in World War II demonstrate irrefutably that they would be the same consequences in any foreseeable war conducted by the Stalinist bureaucracy. That is why I shall shortly present theses on the Russian question in which I shall propose not only, as Comrade Natalia originally proposed, to withdraw the slogan of defense from the foreground, but to withdraw it altogether from the program of the Fourth International.

If further proof were necessary as to the imperative need for withdrawing the slogan of defense, it is provided by the horrible example of what Russian defensism is doing to the press of the Fourth International. To limit myself only to THE MILITANT, and only to a few passing examples:

Try to find out from THE MILITANT the Trotskyist position on the Chinese student demonstrations before the Soviet consulates against Russian imperialism in Manchuria. Try to find out what Trotskyists should say about the Polish student demonstrations in Cracow on Polish Independence Day (May 3) against Stalin's puppet government. Try to find out what Trotskyism says about the Stalinist attempts to force the German Socialists into a totalitarian "united" party, or about the profound significance of the overwhelming vote of those Socialists against the "unity".

You won't find these things and a hundred like questions in THE MILITANT. But you will find an article on the "Kremlin's policy inside Germany" sent special to THE MILITANT (April 27 issue) from the International Secretariat which approvingly quotes "an important

article" from the Economist: that in the Russian zone there exists "a fair amount of resemblance to the 'factory democracy' of the early years of the Russian revolution." As if to underline this, this article appears side by side on one page with one headed: "Rule of U.S. Imperialism brings starvation to people of Germany."

Let me repeat. That article about factory democracy in the Russian zone was not something cooked up in The Militant office to fill a hole in the paper, it was sent by the International Secretariat.

How can such madness be? The answer is the same as the answer to all the disputes we have had during these three years. The majority leadership blindly clings to outworn formulas, to the unchanging program, and hence must distort, must falsify what is being revealed by the changing reality. Our theory said there must be revolutionary consequences to Soviet victory and, by God, the majority will find them even if it has to invent them. Out of ten thousand press clippings on the terrible consequences of Soviet occupation of Germany, the International Secretariat picks the rare exception which talks nonsense about factory democracy.

And to what terrible, terrible, reactionary positions the Russian defensists are led by their theory! I confess, I did not anticipate that the Preconference resolution would go so far as to oppose the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the countries it has occupied. I never dreamt that in a resolution of the Fourth International would appear this paragraph:

"In the oppressor countries (USA, Great Britain, France insofar as Germany is concerned) the Fourth International actively defends the right of the occupied nations to independence and demands the recall of the occupation troops."

Russia is thus deliberately left out of the list of the powers which are oppressing Germany! The other troops must leave but not the Russian troops! Our Russian party is not to tell the Russian workers that the Russian army must get out of the countries it is holding against the will of the occupied peoples! And this foul line, this capitulation to Stalinism, is proclaimed in the name of Trotsky!

Here we can see the profoundly reactionary character of the majority's line not only on the Russian question but also on the national question. The national struggle for independence of the occupied peoples is not a radical-enough struggle for Cannon and Gabriel, they want nothing less than the proletarian revolution. Therefore? Therefore no struggle to throw the Russian armies out of the countries they are oppressing. .

The facts are now so clear that the majority must admit that there is national oppression in eastern Europe. But they admit it only to deny the need for the national struggle today. They do so in the following paragraph of the resolution:

"Just like the German occupation, the present occupation of Europe by the Anglo-American, French and Russian armies is also the cause of a certain national oppression. Given the perspective of a

definite decline in the revolutionary movement, the prolongation for several years of this occupation could throw certain nations back to the level of colonial countries and open a new era of national struggles and wars."

This nonsense is proclaimed in the name of the unchanging program. But it has nothing whatsoever in common with Leninism. Leninism teaches that the national struggle of oppressed countries is our struggle, and that is true even when it is merely called "a certain national oppression." Leninism teaches us that the national struggle is not a separate stage arising after a decline of the revolutionary movement, but is inextricably part of the revolutionary movement. That is how it happened in the Russian Revolution and that is how it will happen again in the European revolution: national struggles occurring simultaneously with and intermingled with the development of the proletarian revolution. Yesterday it was still the ABC of Leninism that the October revolution succeeded because it supported all national struggles. Today this ABC is condemned as the revisionism of the "Three Theses."

What is the national question? It is the struggle for democracy against the foreign invader. The revolutionary party demands from the occupying power all the democratic rights, including the right of the people to choose its own government freely, which can only be done, isn't that clear, comrades, by ridding the country of the occupying troops. He who does not demand the recall of the Russian troops can spout words about being for the democratic rights and freedom of the occupied peoples, but his words are empty, they are lies. That's what Lenin taught us about the Austro-Marxists who were for autonomy, for complete democracy, for everything you please to be granted to the subject peoples of the Austrian Empire but not for the ousting of the Austrian troops. The right of self-determination is the right to throw out the foreign invader.

Themselves not a little frightened at where their line is carrying them, the majority tries to cover it up by phrases and formulas borrowed from the classical centrist position on the national question. Here is just one example, in the section of the resolution on "Tasks in the Countries Occupied by the USSR":

"In the European zone occupied by the Red Army, our sections... tolerate the presence of the Red Army only to the extent that it is a friendly proletarian armed force having as its objective to guarantee the fulfillment of agrarian reform and the state-ization of the means of production against imperialism and against national reactionary elements, without hindering in any way whatsoever the free development of the working-class movement." (p. 32)

What is this centrist ambiguity doing in a Trotskyist resolution? This is the most classical centrist formula: "we support... only to the extent that." Bolshevism scorns such claptrap. Bolshevism answers the question: is the Red Army "a friendly proletarian armed force... without hindering in any way whatsoever the free development of the working-class movement." The answer, written in the blood of tens of millions of German, Austrian, Roumanian, Yugoslav, Bulgarian, Polish workers and peasants -- in their blood spilled

by the GPU or drained from them in slave labor -- is that the Red Army is no Red army, is not a friendly proletarian force, is instead the main enemy of the proletariat of the countries it occupies and oppresses. He who can talk about the Red Army as a friendly proletarian force has lost his head as a Marxist, has lost his feeling for proletarian democracy, and has objectively capitulated to Stalinism.

Why does the International Resolution oppose recall of the Russian troops from the countries they oppress? A terrible answer is indicated in the section on the Soviet Union (pages 6-7) in the following paragraphs:

"In order that Soviet economy rise again, in order that this revival be accomplished without resorting to the exclusive or principal aid of American imperialism, which would take advantage of this opportunity to destroy the USSR's independence, in order that the USSR gain a certain protective cover against the pressure of world imperialism, the Soviet bureaucracy finds it necessary to extend its strategic zones and to draw on the economic resources of other countries, in Europe and Asia alike. . .

"In its defense against both the external pressure of imperialism and of the internal reactionary elements, and in its efforts to rapidly revive the Soviet economy, the bureaucracy's best chances for success lie in the economic contribution of the countries now under Soviet control."

What does this mean, except to justify what you call Soviet expansionism and what I call bureaucratic imperialism? And this you dare do in the name of the unchanging program which still, let us hope, says that we are not in favor of seizures of new territory by the Kremlin bureaucracy.

To justify its continuation of Russian defensism, the International Resolution is compelled to pretend that what we based Russian defensism on in the past has now happened, namely that the entry of the Red Army gave an impetus to the socialist revolution by bureaucratic methods. But we didn't in 1940 mean by this the statification of property. That wasn't the basis of our revolutionary hope. Our hope was based on the idea that in order to statify the property the bureaucracy, against its will, would have to precipitate an uprising of the masses. And now, in spite of all that has happened, the International Resolution dares to say that this happened. It says it on page 8:

"The Soviet occupation and control have given an impetus, although in varying degrees, to civil war and the development of a regime of dual power. . . the promotion of organs of dual power (committees for the control of production and trade, committees of poor peasants to carry out the agrarian reforms)."

So, comrades, the Trotskyist world movement is to proclaim that Stalin's Potemkin villages are the real thing -- that the farcical pseudo-committees he sets up are veritably organs of dual power. What is dual power? It is a regime in which the formal power is still in the hands of a bourgeois or Stalinist government but the essence of

real power is already in the hands of the rising proletariat organized in soviets or the equivalent of soviets. That is what "a regime of dual power" has meant in the dictionary of our movement. Is that what exists in the Russian zone? So you say on page 8. But ten pages later (p. 18) we read:

"In the part of Europe controlled by the USSR, the working class movement has in several places attained the level of dual power, but it has experienced at the same time the bureaucratic straitjacket and the demoralization which are provoked by the Stalinist bureaucracy."

Dual power in a bureaucratic straitjacket -- that is certainly a novel terminological contribution to Marxism, no doubt in the name of the unchanging program.

The International Resolution is enabled by such mumbo-jumbo to proclaim the European situation more revolutionary than ever before. By turning the minus of the Russian occupation into the plus of dual power -- by such a mad method one can call anything revolutionary.

More revolutionary than ever before. Please ask yourselves a simple question. When was the situation in western Europe more revolutionary -- in August 1944 when the proletariat was armed or today when it has been disarmed?

The Manifesto of the Preconference lists the factors whose existence defines a revolutionary situation, and asserts they exist in Europe. Time presses, I shall limit myself to one of them: that the petty-bourgeois masses are following the workers' parties. But what is the meaning of the French referendum results, in which the proletariat voted one way and the petty-bourgeoisie (the peasantry) the other way? Or of the Belgian elections in which the same division took place? Again, the same thing in the Dutch elections? But enough.

One final word: The International Resolution correctly says: "Our European sections, having for a long time prior to the war lived on general propaganda, and then during the war having lived isolated from the masses, inexperienced and in the strictest illegality, are today finding it difficult to break with obsolete ideas and methods of organization and activity." Correct, but very significantly it appears in the resolution in the wrong place, under the wrong heading, "Organizational Tasks." The obsolete ideas that the European sections are finding difficult to break with are not in the first instance organizational ideas, but political ones, and they come precisely from the people who are complaining about it. The fish stinks from the head, as always. The chief culprit is the International leadership, whose theory of the revolutionary situation bars from aiding the sections in formulating programs of action with which to go to the masses.

Just one fantastic example: not a word in this very, very long document about the question of food. The famine is upon Europe, not for a day or a month but for years to come, it is the question which preoccupies every man, woman and child in Europe, it is the question which defines the relations between Europe and America, it is the political question, and it isn't even mentioned in this document, much less is it submitted to a program of action for struggle against the famine. That alone is enough to characterize the bankruptcy of the political line of this document.

THE REMOVAL OF COMRADE MORROW FROM FULL-TIME PARTY WORK

Statement of the Minority to the Political Committee

At the closing of the May 19-22 Plenum, Comrade Cannon stated that he welcomed the fact that Comrade Morrow and his associates were remaining in the party; that it is important that the ideas they stand for be discussed thoroughly in the party; that immediately following the Plenum the pre-convention discussion is already opened.

Within the week, however, the Secretariat called in Comrade Morrow and informed him that he is removed from full-time party work. The reason is allegedly the need for financial retrenchment.

By what criterion, however, is financial retrenchment achieved by removing from the party payroll the leader of the Minority and the only Minority comrade who is on the party payroll?

The Minority has yet to prepare its principal documents for the pre-convention discussion. These documents were to be written by the Minority leader, Comrade Morrow. The Minority hoped to present a spokesman as Minority reporter not only at New York membership meetings but also in the other principal party centers. Again, this was to be Comrade Morrow.

The effect of the removal of Comrade Morrow is to make well-nigh impossible the effective participation of the Minority in the pre-convention discussion. Quite apart from all other limitations on the pre-convention discussion, the removal of Comrade Morrow compels us to declare to all Trotskyists that the pre-convention discussion has been seriously interfered with at its very beginning.

June 4, 1946

EXCERPTS FROM POLITICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES, June 4, 1946

PERSONNEL

Report by Dobbs that as one of the steps decided upon by the Secretariat in the present necessary financial retrenchment, Comrade Morrow is being removed from the subsidy list as of June 13. Comrade Morrow wishes to appeal this decision to the Political Committee.

Statement submitted by Morrow. (See attached).

Report by Dobbs that because of the financial situation reductions have been made in the technical staff of the Secretariat, of the Militant, further reductions are being effected in the editorial expenses, and expenses must be cut back in this connection on Pioneer. A reduction has already been effected in the maintenance department. Subsidies have been cut off to organizers in eleven party branches in the past few months, and the subsidy has in addition been reduced, in one instance by half, in two other branches. There is a genuine problem of retrenchment, which has touched every department of party activity.

When you consider the volume of the work, the size of the publications, their circulation, the publishing program of Pioneer, when you consider the magnitude of the organization problems the party is confronted with, the pressing need for organizational assistance in every quarter of party work -- in view of that, in the light of the limited material resources with which we have to operate, it should be very clear to one and all that it is absolutely necessary that we expend our funds as judiciously as we can and strive to the best of our ability to maintain an all-sided operation.

Comrade Morrow has made no contributions whatever to party work for an extensive period of time. He has been subsidized ever since he came out of Sandstone and has been developing his differences and conducting his faction work, and doing absolutely nothing to facilitate the work of the party, and manifested nothing more than a glib promise here and there to do that. Therefore, in the interest of getting the party work done and making the cuts in expenditure where they can best be made, it is necessary we believe to take that action.

Finally, on this very touching appeal that is made here to us today about the manifold responsibilities that Morrow has as the leader and spokesman of his faction, insofar as I know this is a bit of a precedent he is attempting to set here that the party has to be responsible for financing the work of any faction in the party; and to make a demand upon the party that it finance his faction work at the expense of being responsible for stifling his voice in the party, is far-fetched, unreal and typical of Morrow's dishonest, disloyal line of argument.

Morrow: I have been available for party work throughout this period. I have executed any assignments offered me. The fact is, of course,

that there haven't been many assignments. It was quite by accident, for example, that Comrade Cannon made a motion on the eve of the UAW convention that I remain in the city and work on the paper. I was able to do the work on the paper and still get to the UAW convention. This was the first work the editors had offered me in a long time. I have offered to do translations, to speak to the party. I have simply not been given any work, and the record will show that. But at least equally important is the fact that the majority insists on relegating my contributions to the Internal Bulletin. That doesn't change the character of those documents. I do not have your conception, which is implicit in what you have said, that critical work is not part of party work. The fact is that you are removing me from full-time party work and that I must now go to work to earn a living at the very opening of the pre-convention discussion. Obviously that is going to change the character of our participation in the discussion.

Stein: There are several very serious flaws in Morrow's line of argument, aside from the fact that he fails to take into account the financial situation in the party. One: he says that he was available for party work. That is not true because everybody who has edited the paper had that experience with Morrow. I know, for example, that long before the faction fight reached the present stage Morrow insisted on writing along his lines and not along the lines which suited the requirements of the paper or the line as laid down by the editorial board of the paper. I remember the first clash he had with Comrade Graham. Comrade Graham threw up his hands and said to us in the Secretariat that he just couldn't use Morrow because he refuses to take the assignments given him. I can remember many instances when we asked Morrow to take certain assignments and he turned us down. We asked him to go to Pittsburgh in the Patterson case and he refused to do this. In other words, we had to staff the paper without considering Morrow as a full-time worker. The job of translations is not a full-time job in the party. We have a crew of volunteers to do this work.

To imply that we are cutting him off in order to make it impossible for him to participate in the pre-convention discussion is a falsehood because the discussion is not beginning. It has been going on for two and one-half years, and ever since they came out of Sandstone Morrow has been doing full-time work unfolding his political position. If he hasn't unfolded it up to now, it is not because he didn't have the time. The truth of the matter is that we have been very patient with this problem. For close to a year Morrow has been functioning in closer ties with the Workers Party than he had with us, while ostensibly doing full-time work for us. It is only at the last Plenum that he said "We remain in the party." He was to all intents and purposes out of the party. I understand that the Workers Party was informed promptly of his removal from the subsidy list as it has been informed of everything else that transpires here.

So I don't think this argument is going to carry any weight with anybody who knows the score. The fact is that Comrade Goldman did the far more decent thing when he himself proposed to get off the subsidy list when he found he could not collaborate properly as a full-time party worker, and he did that a year or so ago.

Thomas: If I understand Morrow's position, it is a question of the party financing his factional activity. Otherwise I can't understand this counterposing being on subsidy to going to work. If he is going to be on subsidy and intends to work like the other members of the staff do, then certainly the time you have available for your faction activity is just as limited as if you had another job. But I don't think that is your intention.

But even more important to me is the record of the faction. It has been a disloyal faction from the beginning. It hasn't contributed financially to the party, to the building of the party. The whole faction in Chicago, for example, said they couldn't contribute one cent to the Militant fund campaign because they had to finance Goldman's trip by airplane to the south. Here they stopped paying dues months ago and contributing to the party. It has been characteristic of the faction that you have every right to demand rights from the party without the corresponding obligations and duties. It would seem to me that as long as your faction isn't contributing to the party and they feel it is so important that you devote full-time to doing faction work, that the faction support you and not come to the party to support you in carrying on your faction activities. They are certainly not supporting the party.

Morrow: I want to make one thing clear again. I have been available for party work throughout this period. The only assignment anybody can possibly refer to as my not accepting was an assignment to go to Pennsylvania for an extended stay at the time when the discussion was just really getting underway in the party.

Statement by Morrow: You are dictating to the minority, if we were to carry out your proposition, that the minority attempt to finance my work, that the minority not reintegrate itself into the party. That is the meaning of that because for a small minority to attempt to finance my full-time work would mean for it not to contribute any money to the party. Specifically it would mean for the Bayonne branch to cease in actual effect its financial relations with the party. That is why I have made no proposal to the faction to finance my work.

Motion by Henderson: To approve the action of the Secretariat in this matter. Carried.

Motion by Morrow: That the minority statement be sent to the branches.

Substitute Motion by Stein: That the minority statement be made available to the members in the internal bulletin, together with an answer.
Motion carried; Morrow against.

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EXCERPTS FROM POLITICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES, June 25, 1946

Point raised by Morrow: In the minutes of June 4, 1946 there appears a statement of mine which has no apparent motivation -- a statement in which I explain why I did not ask the minority to undertake to finance my work in the party after I was removed from the party subsidy. I made this statement in answer to a statement by Comrade Frank which for some reason does not appear in the minutes. In his statement Comrade Frank stated that he saw no reason why the party should finance a minority faction and wanted to know why the minority did not undertake to finance my work in the party.

Frank: As I recall the discussion at that PC meeting, I made no statement. I simply made an interjection while Comrade Morrow was speaking. The PC minutes, as we know, are not a complete transcript of everything that is said at PC meetings. That is why to my mind this is not a correction to the minutes.

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