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We have now run most of three chapters of Victor Serge's historical work *The Year One of the Russian Revolution*, taking up the period from the 1917 insurrection through the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. . . . The short excerpt in this issue is Serge's summary of that period. . . .

Our readers will remember we said, when we started the series, that we will judge by *their* reactions how much of the book we will run. . . . If there are a sufficient number of our readers interested, we are certainly willing to continue. . . .

And so we're asking you to—*react*, in writing. . . . Drop us a note, postcard or letter: Do you want more of it? . . .

No electioneering at the polls and all that, but personally we hope the response will be favorable. . . . However, unless the opinions expressed warrant continuation, we will put a period to *The Year One* at this point and return the space to the *NI's* previous department, "Archives of the Revolution," which was put in suspended animation for the duration of the Serge series. . . .

A good many of our Constant Readers no doubt remember the to-do over "Bruno R." in 1939, in the Trotskyist movement (James M. Fenwick recalls it to memory in his article in this issue). . . . Made famous (or at least notorious) by Trotsky's attack on it, the book itself remained unfindable and almost legendary until last June, when we laid eyes on it for the first time. . . . Then—it never rains but, etc.—only two weeks after the first copy turned up, a second copy made its appearance in our midst, brought back from Europe by Max Shachtman. . . . Curious to relate, the leaves of both were *uncut*. . . . Fenwick started work on the present article at that time, and the article in this issue is the result. . . .

We've propositioned our new contributor Valentin Toma for a monthly newsletter on the Balkans and East Europe. . . . His two articles on Rumania (in this issue and the last one) have only whetted our appetite for a bigger helping from his expert knowledge of that part of Europe. . . . What with transatlantic mail and such, we still haven't heard but we're expecting. . . .

Next month comes Max Shachtman's promised study of the independent socialist and Marxist movements of Europe—that is, the groups oriented to a greater or lesser degree toward a Third Camp position in opposition to both the Stalinists and reformist social-democracy, against a tie-up either with Washington or Moscow. . . . Comrade Shachtman will also discuss the present status of the Fourth International and the recent Second World Congress of the F. I. . . .

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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

VOL. XIV

SEPTEMBER 1948

NO. 7

Can the Marshall Plan Succeed?

Analysis of the Post-War Crisis of Capitalism

I

On June 5, 1947, Secretary of State Marshall, in a now famous speech delivered at Harvard University, stated that

Our policy is . . . the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and economic conditions in which free institutions can exist. . . . The program should be a joint one agreed to by a number, if not all, the European nations.

These words have now assumed the flesh and blood form of the European Recovery Program (ERP), better known as the Marshall Plan. This plan, backed by a financial appropriation by act of Congress of over \$5 billion, is now in operation in sixteen nations of Western Europe.

Since Marshall's first speech, within one year's time, a statement of intent and principle has grown to enormous proportions. In its broadest aspects, and in the sense that the Marshall Plan represents the sum and total of American historic and strategic interests relative to the entire world, one may correctly include within its embrace such matters as the Truman Doctrine, as expressed over the issue of Greece, the program to bolster the Chiang Kai-shek regime of Kuomintang China, the European Reconstruction bill (ERP) adopted by Congress in April 1948—in a word, all that enters into the framing and shaping of American imperialist policy.

In the more popular and truer sense, however, the Marshall Plan has come to mean that aspect of the whole program directed toward the reconstruction and stabilization of Western Europe and directly embodied in the above-mentioned ERP act itself. This popular narrowing down of the Marshall Plan, which makes the western half of the Old World the center of all efforts, has a definite validity since it is perfectly clear that the destiny of the plan, its failure or success, as well as its future evolution, depends upon what happens in the sixteen recipient nations of Western Europe, which are still the key arenas for the settling of world rivalries.

The question, for example, of whether or not American imperialism will be able to develop a similar program for the penetration of India and Asia (an Asiatic Marshall Plan) depends largely on what

happens in Europe; in fact, one of the major considerations in Asiatic politics today is the fact that American capitalism cannot, at the moment, provide capital to such countries as India, Burma, Ceylon, Indo-China, etc., and thus strengthen the semi-independent regimes of these countries and further drive out British financial holdings. The drive and direction of the Marshall Plan then can conveniently be limited for our purposes to its program for Western Europe.

One year's steady but complex evolution was required to begin actual operation of ERP. Issues of political principle had first to be settled, beginning with the general conference of June-July 1947, held in Paris and attended by all European powers, including Russia. At this conference, the exclusion of Russia from the scope of the plan was carried out, and Russian imperialism declared its holy war of opposition to American intervention in European political and economic life.

As is well known, all American efforts since this fatal moment of division have been bent toward setting the program into operation with the same energy that Russian imperialism has directed toward preventing its launching and development. We shall see later why this became the storm center of the American-Russian "cold war" for Europe.

Basis of the Marshall Plan

Then a series of congressional committees prepared reports and recommendations for consideration, while Stalinist Russia hastily concluded treaties and alliances binding the occupied lands of Eastern Europe still closer, economically and politically, to the Kremlin. As various skimpy and emergency appropriations were hastily adopted for interim aid (to prevent a total collapse during the winter of 1947-48), the sixteen nations, participating in still another Paris session, accepted six basic principles laid down by Secretary Clayton of the United States:

(1) *Immediate action for financial and currency stabilization.*

(2) *Guarantee of each nation's production schedules.*

(3) *Agreement to reduce trade barriers.*

(4) *Budgetary allowances for capital needs that would have to be financed through the World Bank.*

(5) *A system of organization for administering and checking the plan when it came into operation.*

(6) *Recognition of common objectives and responsibilities.*

Once these principles had been agreed to, the formulators of the plan were able to proceed with concrete legislation and enabling action. We shall not review the long, protracted course of the bill through Congress, except to point out that its vital need was shown by the fact that all political wings of the American bourgeoisie, while differing on details, finally united behind it on principle.

While Truman's proposal for a five-year bill, financed at \$17 billion to begin with, was not adopted, the measure finally approved is equivalent to what he had proposed for the first year in his own bill. In summary form it is as follows:

(a) The sum of \$5.3 billion is provided for, to be expended over the first twelve-month period, with a contemplated total outlay of \$17 billion within five years.

(b) Of the first year's expenditures, \$3.8 billion will go for direct relief commodities (food, fuel, fertilizer) and the balance of \$1.5 billion for machinery, equipment and raw materials. This relation between relief commodities and capital goods is to change each year, as the plan succeeds, and ultimately farm equipment, raw materials and machinery are to form the bulk of shipments.

(c) An elaborate administration is created, with a single, president-appointed authority at its top, empowered to make grants or loans. Elaborated treaties and agreements will, with each specific country, decide whether economic aid will be in the form of grants that will never be repaid, or loans and their conditions; as well as the quantity, type and nature of the aid. These treaties are being worked out, subject to approval by the American Senate and the respective parliamentary bodies of the sixteen governments. Statements of intent to abide by all stipulations of the ERP Act have already been signed.

(d) The four main items to be shipped during 1948 are: coal, steel, grains and machinery.

Over-All Objective

What is the intent of this program, in terms of its own designers? We may summarize it as follows, from Truman's original Marshall Plan message to Congress delivered on December 19, 1947:

First, the program is designed to make genuine recovery possible within a definite period of time. . . . Second, . . . the funds and goods which we furnish will be used most effectively for European recovery. Third, the program is designed to minimize the financial cost to the United States, but at the same time to avoid imposing on the European countries crushing financial burdens . . .

Other objectives were listed, but these are the significant ones. Naturally, these aims are contained within the ERP as a whole, whose over-all objective is never mentioned or even implied in the legislation itself. This objective has often been stated in *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL* and other Marxist publications—the stabilization and revival of European economy so that it may act as both a social and military bulwark against Russian expansionism, but a reconstruction so limited as not to offer serious rivalry to the organic need of American capitalism for mastery of the world market.

The numerous conditions and significant qualifications contained in the Marshall Plan and the ERP Act have been listed and described in sufficient detail by Homer Paxon in his article dealing with this subject (*NEW INTERNATIONAL*, July 1948), and need not be repeated. In fact, one of our serious disagreements with Comrade Paxon is over the undue and one-sided emphasis he places on these qualifications which, as we shall try to show, set desired but unrealizable goals for American imperialism.

What concerns us primarily, now that the bare facts of the ERP have been stated, is the question of its workability, the effects it may produce, and its possible social consequences. As Comrade Paxon pointed out in his article, the *concrete* imperialist details of the Marshall Plan itself will not be known until the sixteen specific treaties have been negotiated, ratified, signed and published.

Complexity of Relationships

The complex economic forces involved flow not in one direction (between America and the Europe it seeks to dominate) but in many. We must examine the relationship between: (a) America's economy and that of Europe; (b) the relationship between European economy and that of the world; (c) the relationship between the economies of Eastern and Western Europe—East-West trade relations; and finally (d) what effects any Marshall Plan recovery, no matter how small, will have upon all this.

It is this complexity of relationships which is far more important than the conditions and "strings" of the ERP Act itself, the vast physical destruction of Europe by the war, and the reactionary terms of the treaties which American imperialism will try to impose upon the sixteen nations of Western Europe.

But even before taking up this question we must first briefly pose yet another problem: What is the nature of the economic difficulties of Europe? From what and out of what must Europe recover? What, precisely, is wrong with European economy?

Only if we understand this can we deal with the real question of what results the Marshall Plan will have, if any, and whether the prospect for European reconstruction has any reality.

As posed in the original Truman report to Congress, the problem of Europe is essentially one of a maladjustment and malfunctioning of the established European economy.

This is alleged to be principally the result of the war and contingent factors. "The end of the fighting in Europe left that continent physically devastated and its economy temporarily paralyzed." Natural catastrophes enhanced the problems: "... difficulties were greatly increased during the present year, chiefly by a bitter winter followed by floods and droughts, which cut Western Europe's grain crop to the lowest figure in generations and hampered production of many other products."

The malfunctioning of European economy, according to the report, consisted essentially in the following:

... these elements of international trade were so badly disrupted by the war that the people of Western Europe have been unable to produce in their own countries, or to purchase elsewhere, the goods essential to their livelihood. Shortages of raw materials, productive capacity, and exportable commodities have set up vicious circles of increasing scarcities and lowered standards of living.

The Marshall Plan is to solve all this. How? The same report gives the reply:

[by] breaking through these vicious circles by increasing production to a point where exports and services can pay for the imports they must have to live. The basic problem in making Europe self-supporting is to increase European production.

This is the fundamental thesis of Marshall Plan doctrine. The question is: Does it correspond to reality?

The above explanations—the very way of posing the problem—is superficial and false. The familiar phenomena of inflation, devaluation of currencies, monetary controls, etc., are but symptoms of more serious difficulties.

Decline in Production

Who would maintain, for example, that the recent action of the Allied authorities in wiping out in one brutal blow vast masses of worthless inflated marks in Western Germany will have nothing but a momentary effect *unless* this step is accompanied by a tremendous spurt in productivity and a resumption of the flow of normal goods to the consumer's market? The malady of European economy is organic and deep-going; it lies in the development of European capitalism itself. The war must be considered as a part of this development, or else it loses all meaning. The war, as a French economist has pointed out, "did not overturn 'economic mechanisms,' but only exacerbated them." (Jacques Charrière, *La Revue Internationale*, page 82, October 1947.)

The examination and tracing back of symptoms, however, is useful in leading us to the disease itself.

The disruption and malfunctioning of European economy assumes many symptomatic forms and appears in all fields: currency, trade, commerce, shipping, levels of productivity, etc. It is idle to point out that the physical resources of the Continent still largely remain. Which fact is more significant, for example, in understanding the problem of Germany today?—the fact that beneath the ruined cities and alongside the rubble factories, that nation's resources in coal, iron ore, technical skill, etc., remain substantially intact (quite capable of plunging into a planned and ordered reconstruction of the ruins); or the fact that a truncated Germany, politically split and ideologically demoralized beyond belief, will never succeed in lifting itself up higher than its knees so long as the present political situation remains?

And Germany is but the sharpest image of the whole of Europe. The same lesions and diseases that affect Germany are present elsewhere, although to a lesser degree. Let us examine some of these factors.

Buried in the confusion between symptoms and organic causes of the crisis, the president's original report does suggest the principal factor—the *decline in production*—but nowhere does it develop or explain this. Charrière has summarized this as follows: "Europe has seen the volume of its production diminish." He summarizes four contributing factors to this decline, brought about by World War II. In an article entitled "The Economic Disintegration of Europe and Its Decadence" (*La Revue Internationale*, December 1945), Charles Bettelheim has analyzed in fine detail the pre-war decline of the productive forces. Charrière's summary is as follows:

(1) destruction and using up of means of production by military operations, or acts of military occupation;

(2) exhaustion of stocks, liquidation of means of international payment, wearing out of machines without their replacement;

(3) restrictions on international exchange and therefore on production in neutral countries; and

(4) the destruction or paralysis of the productive apparatus in conquered countries, and principally in Germany. To this we must add the concentration on production of means of destruction in the pre-war and war period—that is, for almost ten years!

Structural Crisis of Capitalism

But these factors only contributed to and hastened the process of decline. European economy had long since ceased its expansion and had begun to turn inward upon itself, devouring its stored-up capital. The percentage of European production (excluding Russia) in total world industrial production declined as follows:

1913—46.6 per cent of world production
1928—40.8 per cent of world production
1938—39.5 per cent of world production

The fall of European commerce was from 66.5 per cent of total world commerce in 1900 to about 52 per cent on the eve of the war. The same decline can be shown for European banking, export of capital, etc., in relation to the balance of the world. The role of the "special" factors brought about by the war has been to so accentuate these declines that one can only speak now of a fundamental *structural* crisis of European capitalism.

To all of this may be added the following generalizations and observations about the actual nature of European capitalism today. Much could be said to detail these observations, but there is neither space nor time:

(1) A worn-out, aged technology, unrationalized and antique (in contrast to America), in the principal European countries.

(2) National markets too narrow and bound to permit industrial expansion (particularly in the case of France, whose trustified system deliberately narrows down consumers' purchasing power).

(3) A very low man-hour rate of productivity.

(4) A feeble agricultural productivity (largely due to the backwardness of methods employed and the social structure of land-holding).

(5) A limited supply of raw materials.

(6) A social structure and stratification in each European country which hampers invention, improvement and expansion.

(7) A high cost of productivity which tends to eat into prior accumulations of surplus capital which are thus used solely for continuation of production, rather than renewal and expansion.

(8) Crushing public war debts.

(9) The further depressing effect upon production that American competition exerts.

America Comes Out on Top

These are the facts which lead Charrière to the apt and fully justified conclusion that all this runs counter to the possibility of "... a new extension of the productive forces of the European countries on the basis of their existing economic structures. . . ." (*Ibid.*, page 87.) To further round out the picture we return again to the Truman report:

. . . the peoples of Western Europe depend for their support upon international trade. It has been possible for some 270 million people, occupying this relatively small area, to enjoy a good standard of living only by manufacturing imported raw materials and exporting the finished products to the rest of the world. They must also import foodstuffs in large volume, for there is not enough farm land in Western Europe to support its population even with intensive cultivation and with favorable weather. They cannot produce adequate amounts of cotton, oil and other raw materials. Unless these deficiencies are met by imports, the production centers of Europe can function only at low efficiency, if at all.

From this description of what General Marshall has referred to as the "organic dislocation" of Euro-

pean economy (although, to him, it has been caused by the war exclusively), we must briefly examine the structure and nature of American economy as it stands isolated in the same world of which Europe forms one part. As is well known, to an even greater extent than Europe's productive capacity has fallen, that of America has leaped forward. This is, of course, at the center of Europe's difficulties.

This dual growth of American productive forces (absolute, in terms of its past capacities; relative, in terms of its supremacy over Europe and its percentage of world production) has made of American capitalism the undisputed head of the capitalist world. The productive index of the United States rose from 100 in 1939 to 248 in 1943. During the war and immediate post-war period, the destruction of capital and means of production created an insatiable market which resolved the production-consumption problem and encouraged this unprecedented expansion. America contributed 50 per cent of total world industrial production before the war. This went up to as high as 65 per cent during and after! Two specific examples will further illustrate this:

Steel—

America produced 32 per cent of world supply in 1938

America produced 70 per cent of world supply in 1945

Iron Ore—

America produced 37 per cent of world supply in 1938

America produced 71 per cent of world supply in 1945

Interrelation of Europe and U. S.

The direct effect, of course, of this huge volume of production is shown in the export statistics of the United States. We cite but one example of this: In 1944, the value of American exports was 4½ times that of its exports in 1939! This export rate has held fairly steady since 1944 and its decisive nature is suggested by a modest statement in a government report quoted by Charrière: "It is only through the re-establishment of an increased level of production and commercial exchange throughout the entire world that the United States can guarantee over the coming years a lifting of exports permitting the highest possible production and the full use of labor power."

To this decisive theme we must, naturally, return later and in greater detail.

Our brief survey of European economy and American economy in their mutual isolation has indicated the contrary tendencies of both. Of still greater importance is the interrelationship, both traditional and present, of these two great productive areas.

Here, too, we shall see that a most striking change has occurred, causing its share of malfunctioning and

“dislocation” to drive Europe to its present disintegration. Again, we can only describe this relationship in its broadest outlines. The Truman report gives us an indication of the character of this relationship:

In the past, the flow of raw materials and manufactured products between Western Europe, Latin America, Canada and the United States has integrated these areas in a great trading system. In the same manner, Far Eastern exports to the United States have helped pay for the goods shipped from Europe to the Far East. *Europe is thus an essential part of a world trading network.* The failure to revive fully this vast trading system . . . would result in economic deterioration throughout the world. The United States, in common with other nations, would suffer. [Emphasis mine—H. J.]

Because of its food and raw-material lacks, the foreign trade of Europe has always been proportionately greater than that of the United States. In 1938, the sixteen Marshall Plan nations (including Western Germany) imported 50 per cent of the world's total imports, as contrasted with 8 per cent for America (*The Nation*, January 3, 1948). The cost of these imports was paid for by industrial exports to the world, including a highly significant exchange of industrial products for food and materials between Western and Eastern Europe. Services such as shipping, banking and income from capital investments abroad furnished the balance for payments of imports not covered by export trade. That is to say, the nations of Western Europe had huge colonial empires to exploit in Africa, the Near East, Latin America and, above all, Asia. *This entire relationship, as is well known, between capitalist Western Europe and the colonial world was destroyed during World War II.*

One Great Debtor Area

Here, obviously, is one of the key factors behind the unbalancing of pre-war economic relationships. The British, French, Dutch, Belgian and Spanish colonial empires, in one or another fashion, have gone up in smoke as significant trading and commercial enterprises for Western Europe.

Together with this, the financial position of Europe has been reversed. Whereas England, at least, had remained a creditor nation after the First World War, even this asset has now been lost, although England still has large amounts of capital invested abroad and not yet liquidated. In the words of Sternberg, “. . . today Europe is one great debtor area and no longer able, as in the past, to pay for imports with interest from foreign investments.”

In the estimates of the Marshall Plan as originally outlined, the five-year deficit of the sixteen nations in trade with the entire Western Hemisphere is figured at between \$20 and \$22 billion—or approximately \$4 to \$4.4 billion each year. A chart in the *New York Times* (April 11, 1948) shows that whereas in 1938 there was a rough balance in European export and import life, in 1947 a total export trade

of \$6.1 billion left a deficit of \$7.5 billion when deducted from the total import sum of \$13.6 billion! No more graphic representation of the European disaster is possible.

But this deficit must be examined more concretely since it involves primarily the United States. Despite the undoubted increase in productivity, Europe's deficit in 1947 (estimated at \$7.5 billion above) represented a jump of \$1.7 billion from the deficit of 1946, and this deficit increase was exclusively to the United States! That is to say, while production and trade were increasing, it was all in the wrong direction, from the viewpoint of Europe.

Imports increase more rapidly than exports, and 90 per cent of Europe's current deficit flows from its unbalance of trade with the United States. A breakdown of the \$7.5 billion deficit in 1947 indicates this:

\$2.7 billion of deficit due to decline in profits from investments abroad, services, etc.

1.2 billion of deficit due to decline in volume of trade; i.e., lower exports, higher imports.

3.6 billion of deficit due to price increases in imported goods, primarily from America.

—
\$7.5 billions—total trade deficit.

Import-Export-Import

The principal way in which this deficit manifests itself is the notorious shortage of dollars for payments. If, as has been estimated, the United States (at its present productivity and rate of employment) produces annually a surplus of goods estimated between \$10 and \$14 billion which cannot be consumed by the internal national market and must therefore be exported, it is clear that the wherewithal to purchase this must exist in the world market. American imperialism spent \$16 billion in loans and advances in the interim period between the end of lend-lease and the start of the Marshall Plan. Yet the paucity of dollars for payment is as acute as ever!

The reason is, of course, that dollar pump-priming can never substitute for genuine exchange and trade, and if Europe can neither export nor find a willing American market if it could export, then the drainage of dollars is interminable and endless. This, as Charrière has explained, sets up an import-export relationship which is the exact opposite of the normal.

That is, the former basis of European economy in relation to the world was a process of export-import-export. The mechanism today has become one of import-export-import “under which Europe must first import in order to live and reindustrialize itself before thinking of exporting, in payment, a part of its production.” (*Ibid.*, page 90.)

An illustration of this is French trade in 1947. In that year, imports exceeded exports by 210 per

cent, and 85 per cent of this deficit was to the United States.

A more striking example was the astounding speed with which the \$4½ billion loan to England became exhausted and left England in essentially the same position as before the loan. As late as March 1948 England's monthly trade balance was running against her at an average of \$200 million monthly, despite the steady mounting of exports and productivity itself. Why? Because the volume of imports, far from decreasing as had been hoped for, leaped up to greater heights than ever, particularly in food, tobacco, oil, raw materials.

We have already cited the statement from the president's report that it is precisely the intent of the Marshall Plan to break down this vicious cycle and thus induce the harmonious rhythm of international trade and commerce to re-enter the world of European economy, accompanied by a return of prosperity and economic revival. While our description up to this point has dealt by inference with the possibility of such a development, it is necessary to put the question directly and attempt an answer.

Can American capitalism, with its Marshall Plan and its billions, achieve its stated goal? If not, why not? If not, what will it achieve?

III

The problem of success or failure of the plan is in itself a complicated matter since it exists on various levels. One can consider it in terms of the stated and alleged purposes (as expressed in the introduction to the ERP Act, for example); or in terms of the economic reports of the sixteen participants (submitted in September 1947); or in terms of the actual trends of American imperialism and its objectives. According to its formulators, the plan will revive and reconstruct European economy, set in motion a new flow of international trade and undermine the basis for Stalinist expansionism which results from stagnation, etc.

These general objectives have been formulated more specifically by the Committee for European Economic Cooperation, the co-ordinating body of the Marshall Plan nations. They have set them down as follows:

- (1) Increase of coal production to 584 million tons yearly (30 million tons above the 1938 level)
- (2) Restoration of pre-war grain production.
- (3) A 66 per cent expansion in pre-war electrical output.
- (4) Development of pre-war oil-refining capacity to two and a half times its former volume.
- (5) Expand inland transportation by 25 per cent.
- (6) Rehabilitate and rebuild the merchant fleets.
- (7) Supply from Europe itself the capital goods needed for this expansion.

These targets, endorsed by the United States, are to be achieved by the end of 1951, within four years.* This applies to Europe's expanded productive effort. Simultaneously, of course, it is proposed to re-establish normal trade relations with America (signifying an increase of American imports from the above expanded production, together with a large decline in exports from America) and to revive Europe's trade with the rest of the world—above all, that trade which formerly existed between the eastern and western halves of the Continent.

From its side, the American government states its concrete objectives as follows: a strong productive effort by each of the sixteen European nations; creation of internal financial stability within each country; maximum cooperation between the CEEC countries; and a solution of the trading deficit problem through the medium of increased European exports to America and elsewhere.

The Conference of the Sixteen has countered these generalities with its own set of generalities. Pointing out in its report that America accumulates a valueless credit balance due to the movement of goods and services in only one direction, the conference aims to restore the following conditions: adequate trade with overseas countries; renewal of revenues from merchant-marine activities and foreign investments; revival of commerce within Europe itself among the sixteen nations, with Germany and with the eastern sphere of Europe; the return of the fundamental exchange of Europe—that is, raw materials, food, fertilizers, etc., for machinery and manufactured goods.

The Goal: Back to 1938!

But enough of these wishful generalities and alleged objectives. The question is: What reality do they have?

It is clear from our report up to this point that we consider the Marshall Plan impossible of achievement so far as its stated goals, both in America and Europe, are concerned. We shall state in detail why, but first let us point out what has often been concealed within the mass of figures and percentages generally used to shroud the plan—that is, the relatively limited nature of the entire proposal, even if we assume the validity and attainability of its stated goals.

England's Bevin stated this most clearly when he admitted, in Parliament, that complete success of the plan would only signify the restoration of the 1938 standards of living. And in Germany, still the key to Europe's economic health, productivity by the end of 1951—with full success—will still remain far below its 1938 level! In the other countries, 1938 production standards are the maximum goal, despite population increases, revival of agricultural production, imports, etc.

Thus the most optimistic prognosis is for a revival of that same economy, productivity and distribution which existed one year before the very war came which contributed so much to creating today's problems. Such a goal is surely not only modest but, psychologically, self-defeating if it is supposed to arouse popular enthusiasm and interest.

Why the Plan Can't Succeed

Yet, given the conditions of the plan and assuming the continuation of the present social structure in both America and Western Europe, the stated goals cannot be achieved or, even if some are achieved, the effect desired will not come about. We summarize our reasons for this statement:

(1) It is and will remain impossible for Europe to pay for the loans and grants it receives from America. Even the foreseen deficit of over \$2 billion at the end of 1951 cannot be paid for. The only possible way for Europe to repay—a tremendous spurt in its export trade to America or the turning over to Europe by America of its Latin American markets and a sharing of its world markets—this way is forever closed to Europe by the very nature of American production, which more and more excludes the products of Europe while simultaneously reaching out to remove Europe from those very markets still remaining to it.

If European productivity should revive to the extent hoped for, to whom shall its excess products be sent? With whom shall it exchange its products for needed materials once American aid (on the ground that the crisis is past) has halted? These and a dozen other questions return us once more to the original nature of the crisis—its functional and structural character that makes it a part of the world crisis of capitalism itself.

(2) The nature of American production, with its huge volume of capital goods, semi-finished and finished products, is precisely the same as that which it seeks to revive in Europe through its aid program. It is impossible to seriously envisage an extensive exchange—on a normal market basis—between Western Europe and the United States. The very revival of European economy will only underline this difficulty which is so structural in character that only the closest and most careful type of planning could resolve it: that type of planning which could come about only through a division of labor and productivity that would be international in scope, with the element of competition excluded.

(3) American economic aid is both insufficient and uncertain in nature. "My great fear," said Administrator Hoffman to a Senate committee on April 21, "is that even with the most careful planning and the most rigorous supervision of expenditures, this amount may prove insufficient to accomplish the degree of recovery we seek." The facts regarding the

European Committee's proposal for \$22 billion for five years which was, in turn, reduced to \$17½ billion by Truman and then cut down to a one-year appropriation by Congress, are too well known to need repetition. What will happen in the second year is still more uncertain and depends upon political events. Further, a continuation of the price trend eats into the appropriation itself.

(4) The Marshall Plan assumes the lowering of prices and the end of European inflation. But both these developments can come only with a fundamental success of the plan itself, and this is excluded. There is no sign in Europe today either of an end to the inflationary process or a lowering of prices. This could be shown, to one or another degree, country by country. There is little reason to expect much in this direction beyond a halt to the price rise (at current level), and a checking of inflation.

East-West Trade

(5) The weight of unknown and uncertain factors—largely political—is ignored. Yet we know how completely determining they can be. Strike movements in the Marshall Plan countries, political events such as the struggle of Tito with Stalin, and the resistance of the presidents of the German Laender (states) to working the program for a Western German government tend to unbalance all economic aspects of the program. Finally, the factor of open Russian-Stalinist sabotage efforts (see below) can hardly be expected to add to the chances for even limited successes.

To this must be added a final and perhaps decisive proof of the impossibility for the Marshall Plan to work out in practice. This involves a question we have largely neglected in this study until this point, but which merits a separate and distinct section. That is the question of trade relations between Eastern and Western Europe, its trends and possible developments. Western Europe, always an area with a deficit in food, has long been helped by Eastern Europe (Poland, Hungary, Rumania, etc.), an area normally provided with a food surplus. In addition, the East has huge resources of timber, minerals, petroleum and by-products of its peasant economy.

The split of Germany into East and West which has so largely guaranteed that nation's stagnation and inability to rise above its war ruins is but one aspect of the deeper split between Eastern and Western Europe. What this has meant in economic terms can be illustrated by a few figures.

In 1947, trade and commerce between East and West amounted to only 56 per cent of its pre-war rate. In 1948, up to this moment, the situation has definitely worsened and the rate for the year will be still lower because of the well-known deterioration in political relations. A contrast of pre-war and current trade emphasizes this point:

Total trade in 1938—\$7 billion. Total trade in 1948—\$4 billion.

Percentage of Western Europe's world trade that came from Eastern Europe: 1938—10%, 1947—4%.

Percentage of Western Europe's world trade that went to Eastern Europe: 1938—10%, 1947—6%.

It should not be imagined that, despite this decline, intra-European trade is without importance, particularly for the Stalinist-occupied lands which, in 1947, sent 40 per cent of their exports to Western Europe, and which supplied that area with some grain, much coal, potash and timber. Yet the trend is toward further decline and only a sharp reversal in the political atmosphere will change this. The importance of this in relation to the Marshall Plan is that all estimates, both European and American, *assume the revival* rather than further decay of this traditional intra-European trade!

The dollar deficit of Western Europe contributes largely to this trade decline since, as the *New York Times* (May 22) comments, ". . . the decline in the exchange in goods among the European countries will turn out to be much greater than expected as the result of the jamming up of payment mechanisms established under bilateral payment agreements." Further, this decline will add to the dollar deficit because "Now the prospect is that even more purchases will be made in the Western Hemisphere, not because of the physical impossibility of supplying the items in Europe but because the countries cannot get dollars and cannot solve the intra-European payments problems."

No Revival Ahead

Here again we see the *functional* nature of the European economic crisis. Could the situation be helped? Clearly yes, by a revival of investment in Eastern Europe which would increase the production of exportable commodities now being purchased with deficit dollars.

. . . on the strictly economic view there is no question that a dollar invested in Poland or Czechoslovakia would do far more to improve the over-all European position than a dollar invested anywhere in ERP Europe.

So reports the *New York Times*. The already famous examples of Polish coal illustrates the point:

. . . Polish economic officials were seriously troubled [!] by the prospective glut of coal if output continues to expand at present rates. Already Polish coal is being sold with difficulty in Northern and Western Europe. . . .

At the same time, France is importing huge supplies of coal from America, unable to take Polish coal because it cannot pay for it with so-called hard currency.

Thus East and West are mutual victims of both Russian and American policy. American imperialism not only refused aid and capital investment to the

countries of Eastern Europe, but would not permit even the establishment of a dollar supply pool in Western Europe to facilitate intra-European trade! For its part, Stalinist Russia pushes industrialization at a forced tempo in the occupied lands, both to increase the amount of capital goods it may plunder from these lands and also to increase their internal consumption of raw materials formerly exported, thus lowering intra-European trade from yet another direction.

The economic basis of the current struggle between Tito and Stalin has one of its roots in this policy, which the Yugoslav dictator feels strong enough to resist. While American and Russian imperialism have entirely different characteristics, their effects upon the two occupied or controlled blocs of Europe are not dissimilar. Both are sick and malfunctioning. The East cannot send food and materials to the West while the West cannot send to the East the machinery and equipment needed to extract and move this material and food.

As *New York Times* European financial expert M. L. Hoffman points out:

Eastern Europe is as far as Western Europe from being able to lift itself by its own bootstraps. Only if Russia could offer vast quantities of capital goods and industrial materials for food could a permanent solution to Eastern Europe's problems be found wholly within the Russian orbit. [February 8, 1948.]

We conclude, then, that a Europe split into two such economically divergent camps excludes *in and of itself* any possibility for a substantial and full revival of the Continent as a whole, let alone only the western section.

IV

"The USSR will put all effort into seeing that the Marshall Plan is not realized."—Zhdanov, September 1947.

If the history of our world, in political terms, since the end of World War II is the story of the struggle between Russia and America and the slow hardening of these differences into incompatible social, economic and ideologic walls, then we may also say that the struggle over the Marshall Plan has been and will remain the most concrete expression of this antagonism. The remarks of Zhdanov, contained in the same speech that ordered the revival of the international Stalinist movement in the form of the Cominform, have been the basis of Russian policy for the past period.

The opposition of Russia and its Stalinist parties everywhere, as well as the methods pursued, is well known. The aggressive side of this struggle against America is conducted on the plane of sabotage, terror, political action and the diverting of social struggles in Western Europe and elsewhere into desired

channels. We limit ourselves here to a few words on the economic aspect of this opposition.

Russian Drive for Industrialization

As already mentioned, the ruling group of the Kremlin—primarily concerned with its national all-Russian interests—desires the speediest possible industrialization of those territories it influences or controls to one or another degree. This pressure for feverish industrialization has, as we see in the case of Yugoslavia, a disastrous effect on the relatively backward and undeveloped countries of the Russian bloc, and can readily have such serious consequences on the efforts of the local Stalinist bureaucratic-collectivist rulers that they, much in the manner of a national bourgeoisie of a truly colonial country, will risk taking the path of opposition to the Russian "motherland."

The basis of this Russian drive for forced industrialization is not merely to take the occupied lands out of the orbit of traditional European trade and economy, but also to satisfy the endless Russian need for machinery and capital goods of all types. Any examination of the economic facts of the Russian bloc (insofar as they are known) and the published trade treaties between the Kremlin and its various satellites can only lead to the conclusion that the people of the occupied lands benefit in no way, as a mass, from their enforced membership in this bloc. On the contrary, their recovery is hindered, their conditions worsened, and living standards lowered.

This we can see up to the present moment, despite the oft-heard rationalization of many intellectuals and semi-Stalinists, that (in spite of everything) the Russian method will justify itself by raising the level of productivity. The actual relationships of the bloc give no basis for this belief.

This relationship—a subject for further and independent examination—clearly creates its own difficulties. While differing in both nature and detail from the difficulties imposed upon Western Europe by American imperialism, it has this in common with the latter: the slowing-up of normal economic recovery; the discouragement of all national initiative; the wholesale robbery of the products of this laborious productivity and, most important of all, the steady strangulation of the vital economic interdependence of the two halves of the European continent.

Both sectors of Europe thus have the same general misfortune of having fallen victim to a superior and exploitive foreign power. In this sense, the movement for a reunification of Europe, independent of both external powers, must be the central strategic aim of any political tendency on the Continent which wishes to play a progressive role.

Limited Recovery

In summary, then, what is the indicated evolution of the Marshall Plan, in terms of political realities

rather than expressed goals or formal declarations?

Charrière (page 94, loc. cit.) motivates the American aid program in the following terms: ". . . the aid and loan policy of American capitalism to the European countries can have no other fundamental principle than political goals, to the extent that this imperialist power considers its *political security* is placed in danger through the existence of too miserable populations. . . ." A "controlled lifting of their living standard" is the attempted answer of America, and this is the essence of the Marshall Plan. Within the framework set by American capitalism—a framework that arises out of its own development and needs—the Marshall Plan constitutes a limited recovery effort.

This limited effort will succeed only to a still more limited extent, for reasons we have already indicated. There will be a partial economic revival in Europe, productive in nature, but its scope will be hardly extensive enough to make any fundamental change in the situation, and surely insufficient to be, in and of itself, a decisive answer to the problem of Stalinist expansionism. It will be far too limited, tenuous and shaky for that. At best, it will provide a breathing spell within which the *possibility* for new ideologic currents to develop exists. But nothing more will be settled.

From the point of view of America, Charrière is quite correct in stating that "The fundamental problem of the existence of a surplus of production is not resolved by the extension of a monopolist imperialism. These difficulties will be carried along step by step until the conquest of almost the totality of means of production and markets. This imperialism will then find itself, on a world scale, confronted with the same problems that it cannot solve on its own territory, but at this stage the safety valve of exports financed by loans will no longer exist."

HENRY JUDD

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Pattern of Jim Crow in South Africa

"Native Policy" of Decaying Imperialism

South Africa's native policy must be judged in relation to the tremendous changes made possible by the impact of modern European imperialism on the primitive African society, its total conquest over the African society, the natives' subjection to capitalist development, and the initial disturbance of their social equilibrium which imperialism provoked.

It is the momentous leap over centuries, the opportunity which imperialist conquest has unlocked but which it at the same time desperately and cunningly tries to keep shut—it is this that forms the core of the South African problem.

For the driving force behind the rulers' policies is to create elaborately contrived mechanisms to control and repress all those potentially revolutionary consequences which must obviously follow from the very nature of this historic clash. The methods of control contrived offer illuminating lessons on certain dominant trends of contemporary imperialist society. An analysis of all the historic forces responsible for shaping South Africa's native policy will contribute towards a more complete and concrete understanding of the variety and multiplicity of social configurations developed by imperialism to maintain its domination over the colonial world.

The first European settlers, isolated, living in poverty under circumstances of primitive self-sufficiency, survived precariously in the narrow grooves of a frontier existence. Stagnating economically, spiritually starved, socially cut off from the profound changes of capitalist Europe, they slept through two centuries of radical upheaval, becoming completely encrusted with the most backward, conservative and reactionary prejudices.

Land, which was plentiful, and cattle, which abounded, formed the basis for their economic activities. Not yet having come into mass contact with the indigenous African tribes, they imported slaves from Malaya, Asia, the East Coast of Africa and Madagascar to work these resources. The foundations of white society in South Africa were built upon the servitude of these imported slaves and the bondage of the indigenous Hottentot peoples. On the land formerly theirs, the Hottentots were bonded by the application of pass, vagrancy and other discriminatory laws.

For want of great staples and intensive use of the soil, a true slave economy like that of the sugar islands could not develop. Slavery in South Africa did not produce the economic advances that the system created in the West Indies or America. No slave econ-

omy was established in South Africa. Instead, the slaves and Hottentots took over all the menial and artisan labor, replacing the whites in the unenterprising and wasteful economic existence which prevailed.

On the meager surplus product produced by this system of production lived the intensely parasitic white masters. In a closed shell of white overlordship, the European slave owners evolved an ideology to rationalize their separation from productive labor and to give support to their supremacy. Hence was conceived the divinely ordained doctrine of the irrevocable gulf between white and black—the whites indisputably superior, the blacks permanently outcast, inferior and subjected beings.

It is this formative period which establishes the basic relationships between the white slave owner or master and the black slaves or toilers, which in the future was to mold and color the whole outlook and ideology of the white rulers.

The end of the eighteenth century also initiates the sharp armed contact between the white settlers and the integrated African tribes. The first reaction of the whites was to erect a strict barrier between themselves and the African, but the needs of the European farmers for land and labor pushed the barriers further and further into African territory; and each brutal outward thrust embedded growing numbers of Africans in the realm of white domination.

After the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, the colonists were particularly forced back on the indigenous labor supply. The natives became unpaid servants or laborers, bound to each farmer by the system of pass laws or as squatters, which reduced them to a semi-feudal status. Their subjection further entrenched the ruling concept of white supremacy and consolidated the slave owner's mentality.

Effect of Emancipation

But this period also ushers in the era of the industrial revolution and the rise of the industrial capitalist class with its new compelling needs and demands. The demand for a free, industrial working class and for a market for their products instigated the movement for the emancipation of slaves in the colonies of the British Empire.

Its impact was also felt at the Cape, where the agitation of missionaries and very localized slave uprisings led to the promulgation of the famous Ordinance 50 of 1828 "for improving the conditions of Hottentots and other free men of color." All the former discriminatory laws including the pass system were swept away. This was followed by the official emancipation of the slaves in 1834.

The emancipation of the slaves, however, did not fundamentally change the slave order at the Cape. Imposed from above, without any independent or massive uprisings of the slaves which would have burned the old relationships out of existence, it failed to radically disturb the master-slave setup. The new apprentices were still the old slaves. With no independent status (since there was no agrarian overturn involving a redistribution of the land) and the dearth of any large-scale industrial development, the emancipation failed to effect any revolutionary changes in the economic status of the former slaves. An economically backward, poor, and unproductive system inevitably exudes servile relations.

But there was initiated the policy of small-scale assimilation of the former slaves, Hottentots and Africans (then coming into increasing contact with European society) into the social and political life of the country. But even this policy did not exceed the bounds of "equal rights for all civilized men." All male adults irrespective of color or creed, who could pass the educational and property qualifications imposed, were eligible for citizenship. This measure automatically excluded the overwhelming majority of Africans, but it did provide political and democratic rights for a tiny section of Africans and coloreds.

Slavedrivers' Republics

The emancipation of the slaves was also one of the principal causes for another phase in the extension of European domination over new masses of African tribesmen. The emancipation, however limited in actual content, was felt by the race-ridden Boer farmers as a violation against their whole creed and mode of existence. Trekkers in organized groups left the Cape for the interior, there to establish their own republics wherein to enforce their conception of proper relations between master and servant.

In these northern republics (Transvaal, Orange Free State) which became in essence the embodiments of their flight from the demands set in motion by the industrial revolution, the Boers established regimes where "no equality between white and black in church or state" was to be tolerated. In these primitive and self-sufficient landowning states they subjected those Africans whom they conquered to labor conditions ranging from outright slavery to various forms of forced labor and serfdom.

In Natal, the other province of South Africa, British policy took a different form. Natal's plantation economy (sugar cane, coffee, tea) demanded a regular supply of agricultural laborers. These were supplied by means of land expropriation, the setting up of a reserve system, taxes, etc.; the perpetuation of the tribal system under conditions of total subordination and inferiority; and the importation of indentured Indian labor. The more intensive exploitation of Afri-

can and Indian labor expurgated the limited liberalism introduced in the Cape.

The social and political map of South Africa before the discovery of diamonds and gold was thus made up of vast areas of segregated native reserves, under primitive and tribal conditions, slavery and serfdom on the farms, and some small islands of bourgeois-democratic rights in the Cape.

The Industrialization of South Africa

With the rush of industrialization impelled by the discovery of diamonds and gold was cast that combination of antipathetic and uneven social forms which is the distinctive feature of present-day South Africa.

The industrial development of the country did not evolve organically in clearly defined stages but abruptly plunged both black and white into its swill. The industrialization of South Africa took place at a crucial moment in the transformation of competitive capitalism into monopoly capitalism and imperialism. The unique combinations created can only be understood when they are viewed in this context.

The typical and most highly developed characteristics of the imperialist epoch are woven into the very fabric of South African society. Control of the economy by a tight group of monopolists, linked to the great financial centers of the imperialist world; extensive intervention of the state in economic life (state control of railways, harbors and airways, posts and telegraphs, steel, power and electrical control, state bank, industrial credit facilities, and agricultural subsidization), fusion of monopoly capitalism with the state, a small labor aristocracy, democracy for a minority, tyranny and colonial bondage for the vast majority, Herrenvolkism and race oppression—these make up the physiognomy of the country.

Imperialism took over intact the pattern of slavery and serfdom, completed the total military conquest of the African tribes, drew in the reserve system as a reservoir of labor and a preservation of tribal "idiocy," enlarged and codified the color bar, stopped the liberalism of the Cape and embarked on a comprehensive process of absorbing hundreds of thousands of new African laborers into the unique system which they crystallized.

Pass laws were reintroduced, the compound indenture and recruiting system was established, the franchise qualification was raised in the Cape, striking 30,000 Africans off the roll. Monopoly capitalism joined the former rural slave owners and feudalists in their insistence that proper and distinct economic relations exist between black and white. The servile traditions of the farm were introduced into a modern industrial economy.

The ultra-imperialist Cecil Rhodes laid out the objective in the very beginning of capitalist penetration. In the following unambiguous terms he said: "We must adopt a system of despotism such as works

so well in India in our relations with the barbarians of South Africa." (Windex, *Cecil Rhodes, His Political Life and Speeches*, p. 162.)

The full political unfolding of this policy was the Act of Union whereby British imperialism joined with its vanquished enemies, the Boers (Afrikaaners), to preserve white supremacy in the interests of the social power of the Rand mining oligarchy, British finance capital and the local farmers whom they subsidize.

Thus culminated social relations between black and white which had operated over two centuries, in the legalization of "proper relations between master and servant."

In the Act of Union of 1910 which was passed by the British Parliament, the reduced and restricted Cape franchise was maintained; but in the three other provinces, the political slavery of the African and non-European peoples was the integral native policy of the Union.

The Theory of Segregation

The conscious ideology of the European ruling class is the policy of segregation. This was finally put into operation in all its ramifications under the leadership of Smuts and Hertzog (an alliance of the two sections of the ruling class: the predominant imperialist Chamber of Mines represented by Smuts, and the local landowners represented by Hertzog) to perpetuate the exploitation of the non-European people "for all time," under the most servile and repressed conditions.

The motive force behind the consolidation and rigidity of the color bar and segregation system is the European ruling class's haunting fear of the maturation of a permanent and free¹ working class, and the assimilation and Europeanization of the African people. No proof of this fear could be more explicit than the statement of the Native Affairs Commission of 1936, page 15:

If it be accepted that the Europeanization of the native is inevitable and that all that is necessary in native education is to "tide the black man over the period during which his tribal sanctions are weakening and before he feels the full force of the sanctions of European civilization," then our whole native policy is ridiculous. If common citizenship in a single society is to be the end we should obviously set about a proper education for citizenship instead of legislation for separate development. Our hope of building a Bantu nation, strong in its pride of race, developing its own genius in its own areas in the salvation of so much of its own culture and cooperative economy as is necessary to its distinctive advance, must be abandoned. The whole conception of parallel development with each race living harmoniously side by side must be dropped. Instead all that we have to look forward to is the development of an individual mixed society of white and black with each individual unit drawn into the vortex of competition, until the hereditary instincts of one section or the other gather in centripetal force

1. Free in the Marxist sense, i.e., from ownership of the means of production and thereby forced to sell labor power, but also possessing the freedom to withhold this labor power or to sell it in a competitive market; and free from all social fetters.

around a modern class ideology and usher in the class war. The Native Affairs Commission emphatically rejects this view.

Remove the glove of verbal velvet embroidered with unctuous concern for native culture and there emerges the mailed fist which not only emphatically rejects but violently resists any fundamental change in the *modus vivendi* established by imperialism. It is this centripetal anxiety over the dangers inherent in the development of a black proletariat, forced to wage class war against the bourgeoisie, gathering "around a modern class ideology," facilitating thereby the struggle for democracy, liberty and equality, and economic emancipation—it is this anxiety that is responsible for the South African segregation despotism and the blatant reactionary backwardness of ruling-class policy.

The "building of a Bantu nation" implies, in bourgeois terminology, dismembering, bewildering and enforcing primitivity on the African peoples in the reserves and on the farms. The policy is indicative of their trenchant determination to avoid any possibility of disturbing the historical stagnation of these primitive masses.

Capitalism in Old Age

But the policy has even deeper implications. Primarily it signifies the paralysis of imperialism in its self-appointed task of bringing modern civilization and advancement to the backward and undeveloped peoples. Indeed, its sole function today in its agonizing process of decomposition and regression is to keep the colonial masses in a state of underdevelopment and backwardness.

It yokes them to the powerhouse of modern capitalism, while vigilantly tightening the harness of their social primitivity and economic and political helplessness. In order to continue to exploit the vast mineral raw materials of South Africa, the European ruling class must maintain for as long as possible its non-European human material in a raw state of development. Imperialism is instinctively wary of unfettering forces which would prepare imperialism's long-overdue end.

The great achievement of the bourgeoisie in its lusty youth was to create the conditions for the development of a free working class liberated from all feudal dependencies. In this country the flourishing existence of imperialism and its local agents depends on counteracting and inhibiting the development of a free laboring force. Instead they tyrannize and press this developing working class into the confined framework of a regimented and slavelike existence.²

The progressive bourgeoisie succeeded in assimilating into its system the democratic revolutions carried forward by the emergent working class and peasantry in Europe and America. Today the troglodyte

2. The wage of the African mine worker, for example, has remained absolutely stationary for forty years, despite tremendous economic fluctuations.

European rulers acclaim the maintenance of European domination and supremacy and resist with all the brute power at their command the simplest democratic demands of the non-European masses. The demand for complete democracy drives them into frenzies of reactionary fury; they reach for their guns.

In its imperialist stage capitalism has stiffened to arid incapacity before the task of even starting to move non-European peoples towards the levels reached by the advanced capitalist countries. Unable to transcend the now rigid and congealed limits necessary for imperialist law and order they cannot allow the masses to reach even the levels attained in many other colonies.

The segregation system of South Africa represents an extreme condition of oppression, similar in motive and direction (although not yet developed to the same intensity) to the tyrannies over labor imposed by fascism under conditions of capitalist disintegration and to the regime of bureaucratic collectivism, product of a defeated proletarian revolution. It highlights the process of economic and political development towards totalitarian barbarism with all its accompanying prisons, ghettos, forced labor, callous destruction of human lives, regimentation of the working class, restrictions on its freedom of movement and of organization, and lack of political and democratic rights.

The National Struggle

Burdened with a complexity of unsolved problems, the non-European toilers face a most difficult task in their struggle for emancipation. The national liberation movement once formed must engage in a series of battles to consummate the historically overdue struggle against the still remaining effects of slavery and serfdom, against military conquest and subjection, and against the super-modern and super-refined political oppression and economic exploitation.

In the course of an epoch of rebellion they must break through the heavy crust of passivity, dazed dependence, inferiority, and frustration which has engulfed them. In the hard school of class and national struggle the non-European masses will receive a truly democratic and revolutionary education and emerge as an independent historical force. Today the non-European people are still a class only for the European exploiters, but not yet a class for themselves with an independent revolutionary mission of their own.

Only in the process of discovering themselves as a class and as a nation will they develop the realization of their dignity as human beings and their need to assert themselves as free men and rebels against their oppressors. Then the historical backwardness of South Africa, which is grounded in the slow tempo of its early development in the absence of any bourgeois revolution, in economic backwardness, primitiveness

of social forms and low levels of culture, will be overtaken in giant strides of revolutionary development.

This struggle is both simplified and retarded by the absence of a black bourgeoisie.

It is retarded by the lack of financial and organizational means of struggle which such a class could provide. The non-European masses will have to base themselves on the political and organizational growth of its own working-class leadership. It is simplified in that once the developing conflict gains the dynamism and momentum to challenge the present regime, it will move along clear-cut revolutionary and working-class lines.

The retrogressive character of imperialism in South Africa, which we have analyzed, does not, however, function one-sidedly or without aberrations. Within the framework of retrogression there are movements and processes which give an impulse to the creation of new social forces and energies, which begin to collide against the structure built around it.

The increasing industrialization of South Africa and of other British colonies in the interior and West Africa, the resultant of the new British drive for the more intensified exploitation of its colonies, releases new disturbances in the despotic Union. Britain's economic exhaustion and military needs create large industrial projects with the inevitable accrument of a black working class. Although this working class will exist within the bounds of the segregation system it will nevertheless be able to utilize in struggle the fissures cut open by the new industrial development.

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"Comrade" Tito and the 4th International

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Now 'tis the spring, and weeds are shallow-rooted;
Suffer them now, and they'll o'ergrow the garden,
And choke the herbs for want of husbandry.

—Henry VI, 2: III, i.

The galloping political degeneration of the leadership of the Fourth International goes on apace. The latest product of its brain trust, however, is something of a departure even for these theoreticians. For one thing, obviously, it can no longer be explained *merely* on grounds of political stupidity.

We are referring to the *Open Letter to the Congress, Central Committee and Members of the Yugoslav Communist Party* signed by the International Secretariat of the Fourth International.¹

This hair-raising document reaches a new high in Stalinotropism—a new high, that is, for people who call themselves "Trotskyists," indeed "orthodox Trotskyists." It does not quite come out of a clear blue sky, it is true, having been foreshadowed in a degree by the political support which these people gave to the Stalinists in the last Italian election and elsewhere, as well as by the whole course of their political devolution.

Yugoslavia as a "Capitalist State"

Or, as philosophers, who find
Some favorite system to their mind,
In every point to make it fit,
Will force all nature to submit.

—Jonathan Swift.

Some preliminary information will be useful before we present the *pièce de résistance* itself. At the Second Congress of the Fourth International, which took place only a couple of short months before our subjects were unhinged by the Tito explosion, a resolution was solemnly passed on the nature of Russia's satellite states in Eastern Europe, including Yugoslavia (the so-called *glacis* or buffer countries).

They had a head-breaking problem to work out in doing this. According to them, Russia itself is a (degenerated) workers' state—the criterion being its nationalized economy. Then how about Yugoslavia and the other satellites—in which industry has been nationalized anywhere from 60 to 90 per cent? By all logic and using the same criterion, they should

1. The copy from which passages in this article will be quoted is the French text as mimeographed and distributed by the I.S., eleven pages long single-spaced, dated July 14. We expect that the Socialist Workers Party (Cannonites) of this country will do its duty and publish it in full in its press. Under date of July 1, the I.S. had previously indited a short *Open Letter to the Communist Party of Yugoslavia* which ended by promising the longer follow-up; this was published in *The Militant* of July 26. The latter document is referred to in this article as "the Open Letter of July 1," in order to differentiate.

label these "workers' states" also. But this conclusion they rejected—adamantly and without equivocation!

The explanation for the resulting inconsistency is also clear. To admit that Yugoslavia (letting this country stand for all of these states) is now a "workers' state" is to admit that a social revolution has taken place there—a social revolution made not by the working class or under revolutionary socialist leadership, but a social revolution *bureaucratically imported* by the Stalinist totalitarians. One is therefore constrained to conclude that Stalinism—whatever distasteful characteristics it may have—is *capable* of spreading international revolution and overthrowing capitalism, leaving workers' states in its wake.

But if Stalinism does have this revolutionary mission, even if it accomplishes that mission by methods we do not prefer, there is no historical reason for existence for an independent revolutionary party and certainly no future for it. *At best, one can only look toward the role of a democratic opposition in, or wing of, the Stalinist wave-of-the-future, going along with it in its revolutionary role while seeking to moderate or relax its unpleasant features.*

To avoid this hard but inescapable deduction from their position, logic and reality were ruled off the agenda by the F. I. congress and the following conclusions installed in their place:

In the "buffer" countries the state remains bourgeois: (a) Because the state structure remains bourgeois; . . . (b) Because the *function* of the state remains bourgeois. Whereas the workers' state defends the collective ownership of the means of production, arising from a victorious socialist revolution, the state of the "buffer" countries defends property which, despite its diverse and hybrid forms, remains fundamentally bourgeois in character. . . .

Thus, while maintaining bourgeois function and structure, the state of the "buffer" countries represents at the same time an *extreme form of Bonapartism*. . . . [*Fourth International*, June 1948, p. 119.]

Furthermore:

From the bourgeois character of the state in the "buffer" countries results the necessity for the violent destruction of its bureaucratic machine as an essential condition for the victory of the socialist revolution in these countries. [*Quatrième Internationale*, March-May 1948, p. 39.]

The thesis furthermore speaks of the "Stalinist police dictatorship in these countries." A little later it draws a couple of concrete political corollaries:

The fact that capitalism still exists in these countries side by side with the exploitation by the Stalinist bureaucracy must fundamentally determine our strategy. The capitalist nature of these countries imposes the necessity of the strictest revolutionary defeatism in wartime. [*Fourth International*, p. 121.]

And—a sentiment to be especially kept in mind as we read the Open Letter—

Likewise, from the Russian occupation forces or from pro-Stalinist governments, which are completely reactionary, we do not demand the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, the setting up of a real foreign-trade monopoly, an effective struggle against speculation and the black market. [Ibid., p. 121. My emphasis.]

To sum this up:

- (1) The satellite states are capitalist states.
- (2) These capitalist states are furthermore “police dictatorships” and “an extreme form of Bonapartism”—that is, to translate, they are fascist states.
- (3) These capitalist-fascist state machines run by the Stalinists must be destroyed by violence (that is, they cannot be reformed) and this is moreover an “essential condition” for the socialist revolution.
- (4) These Stalinist-dominated capitalist-fascist states cannot be defended in any war. Not only is it necessary in time of war to apply the policy of revolutionary defeatism but the *strictest* revolutionary defeatism. This would naturally hold in case of a conflict between one of these states and another capitalist state. But if this is so, then in case of conflict with a workers’ state (say, Russia), the policy of revolutionary defeatism would not only have to be the “strictest” but—what word would be adequate?—the most rigid and intransigent . . . and, in fact, not only plain revolutionary defeatism but indeed *military* defeatism and sabotage at home.
- (5) One does *not* make demands on these states (let alone suggestions, let alone pleadings!) for progressive anti-capitalist measures, any more than socialists raised such demands for accomplishment by the Nazi state. On the contrary. We remember that not long before the Second World War, before the People’s Front line was torpedoed by the Stalin-Hitler Pact, the Italian Communist Party started a campaign appealing to “honest” Fascists to force Mussolini to carry out his original demagogic program of anti-capitalism—and we remember with what scandalized horror we pointed to this as revealing the depths to which the Stalinist movement had sunk.

Every one of these five points was tossed out of the window in the most unceremonious fashion in the production of the Open Letter, without even a decent leavetaking. We can spare barely a sentence to wonder how an executive committee can dare to do this only a couple of months after a “world congress” (following *their* leadership too!) has laid down the line. Our subjects evidently absorb more from the Stalinists than merely their politics. . . .

This, at any rate, was the line adopted by our “orthodox Trotskyists” in opposition to the dastardly attempts by petty-bourgeois revisionists and other canaille to tempt them from the path of virtue.

The Small Chameleon

The small chameleon has the knack
Of turning blue or green or black,
And yet, whatever hue he don,
He stays a small cha-me-le-on.

—Samuel Hoffenstein

This analysis and line on the satellite states was barely passed when the Tito events presented it with its first test. What attitude would seem to be required by the terms of the resolution?

The Yugoslav-Russian break represented a conflict between a capitalist state on the one hand and a “workers’ state” on the other (to use the F.I.’s labels). Setting itself up against “workers’ Russia” was a state in which the bourgeoisie had preserved “the maintenance of its essential social privileges,” in which “capitalist production relations” still existed, etc., as we have seen. There would seem to be no doubt about where the sympathies of the F.I. should lie—*with Russia as against Tito.*

In fact, on this basis one could even make a case for claiming that the resolution had “predicted” some such break, for in several passages it speaks of the stiffening resistance to Russian domination *by the bourgeoisies* of the satellite countries (see especially Point 21 of the resolution). In point after point, it paints a picture of the bourgeoisie beginning to feel its oats again, of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie being taken in tow by the bourgeoisie, etc. What more natural than to conclude, therefore, that Tito has capitulated to the pressure of the Yugoslav bourgeoisie and is being pushed by the latter to break with the foreign oppressors? *If any attitude flows from the resolution, it is precisely this: condemnation of the Tito split as a bourgeois-restorationist move.*

But our theoreticians, far from having the courage of their convictions, themselves looked upon the resolution as a mere exercise in apologetics. Yugoslavia had been labeled a capitalist state in the first place, as we pointed out, only in order to avoid an unwelcome conclusion, the theory of the bureaucratic road to the social revolution. Now, in order to avoid another unwelcome conclusion—support of Stalin against the Tito rebels—the whole fantastic structure upon which the *first* apologia was based had to be simply junked. Reeling from side to side under the impact of real events, they finally ended up by falling on their face.

In the United States, the *Militant* of the Socialist Workers Party (Cannonites) was faced on June 29 with the same problem as the *Daily Worker*: how to handle an event which failed to jibe with previous notions. Its first reaction was:

- (1) This is just a scrap between rival dictators.

Tito and Stalin want the workers to choose between them. . . . Regardless of what Tito and Stalin want, the workers will surely reject this trap of choosing between the type of gold braid worn in Belgrade as against the type Stalin prefers in the Kremlin. [*Militant*, July 19.]

(2) Tito is *not* a Trotskyist, they indignantly explain. Unaware of the fact that he is talking about a "comrade" of the Fourth International, John G. Wright even goes into detail:

Tito knows no other school of politics than Stalinism. The hands of this shady adventurer drip with the blood of hundreds of Yugoslav Trotskyists and other militants whom he murdered during the civil war in Yugoslavia. He began his service as a purger of Stalin's political opponents as far back as 1928. . . . Everywhere his specialty was purging "Trotskyists." It was precisely in this capacity as an unquestioning and willing tool of the GPU that Tito was permitted to rise to the top. [*Militant*, July 5.]

Let us keep this truthful description of "Comrade" Tito in mind. Even as it came off the press, the International Secretariat of the Fourth International was sending its first billet-doux, the Open Letter of July 1, followed up two weeks later by the longer letter we have mentioned.

Mash Note to Tito

It seemed to Jurgen that King Smoit evinced embarrassment, but it is hard to be quite certain when a ghost is blushing.

—Branch Cabell

The first thing that hits a socialist in the face, reading this letter to the bloody-handed totalitarian dictator of Belgrade and his party, is its *tone*. The Open Letter of July 1, being brief, exudes it in condensed form:

Comrades: . . .

The official press of the Communist parties is seeking to engulf you in a flood of slanders and insults . . . this system of slander campaigns which has in the past destroyed so many precious forces in the labor movement. . . . Now you are in a position to understand . . . the real meaning of the Moscow Trials. . . .

You hold in your hands a mighty power if only you summon enough strength to persevere on the road of the socialist revolution and its program. . . . Keep up your fight! . . . [The Fourth International] wants to address itself in this our first message to you not concerning those things about which we must be critical of you with regard to your past and more recent course. We wish rather to take note of the promise in your resistance—the promise of victorious resistance by a revolutionary workers' party against . . . the Kremlin machine. . . .

Long Live the Yugoslav Socialist Revolution! . . .

How tender, how comradely! It is with a mental wrench that one remembers that these honeyed accents are addressed to a Stalinist party ruling a police regime, to the party which is the bureaucratized apparatus of an experienced GPU butcher!

Note the reference to the Cominform's "slanders and insults." The second Open Letter begins by ringing further changes on this theme: "They [the Cominform] accuse your party of its 'lack of democracy,' . . . without giving you a chance to defend yourselves. . . ." *What slanders?* Apparently the Cominform's denunciations of Tito's "Turkish" regime! Is this a slander, i.e., untrue? There is not a word which gainsays the air of indignant repudiation of these

"slanders" against Tito's fair name (unless we are told it is the later passage in which the party is politely urged to democratize itself!).

We are also prepared to be told that this monstrous letter is not "really" addressed to the Tito gangsters but to the "honest workers" in the Yugoslav Stalinist party. We shall see other reasons to laugh at this, but right now we can ask: If the letter is addressed not to the dictator and his gang but to "honest workers," *then why this delicacy?* Why the total and complete failure to denounce (all right then, at least *criticize*) the fact that Tito's party is a bureaucratized creature of the secret police, like every other Stalinist party in Eastern Europe?

We have room to cite only the vilest portions of the Open Letter, content to point out that a complete reading is necessary in order to savor its full-bodied flavor of fawning flattery.

(1) The Fourth International pledges itself to be the devil's advocate:

It [the F.I.] calls upon the Communist workers of all countries to send their delegations to Yugoslavia, in order to find out on the spot the real policies pursued by your party. Tomorrow it will make known your documents in twenty different languages, because a Communist cannot tolerate that militants be judged without a hearing. It asks you to permit a delegation of its leadership to attend your congress, to make contact with the Yugoslav Communist movement to knit close fraternal ties with you, which can only be of service to the world Communist movement.

(2) It represents Tito's party machine as the rallying center for revolutionary workers, the decisive force for revolution in the country:

Your choice will decide for years, if not for decades, the fate of your country and its proletariat. . . .

On this road [if you capitulate to American imperialism] the work undertaken by your party will only come to complete ruin. . . . [The policy we advocate] will permit you to hold out while awaiting new mass struggles, to stimulate these and to conquer with them.

We have already quoted the previous exhortation to "summon up enough strength to persevere on the road of the socialist revolution and its program."

(2) It tells the Titoists there are three roads, three possible choices, before them. These are: capitulation to the Cominform; attempting to balance between Western imperialism and Russia, or even capitulation to Western imperialism; and (the only correct road) "a return to the Leninist conception of the social revolution." There is one possible choice, road or perspective which the letter does not even mention: namely, *the very perspective which the Tito Stalinists do in fact propose for themselves.*

This piece of stupidity is so typical of our subjects that we must pause. Everybody knows, except the I.S., that the road which the Titoists have chosen for themselves is: not capitulation to the Cominform's demands; not capitulation to Western imperialism; and not balancing between East and West. They proclaim that their road is that of remaining

within the Russian bloc as an independent partner. Now it may be argued that this is impossible, that the Russians will not permit them to do so, etc., but the fact is that this and no other is the direction in which their faces are set. And it is precisely this that the Open Letter does not even mention as a possible choice, let alone as the choice actually made!

The Clank of Chains

... can it be that ye
Have wasted inspiration on dead ears,
Dulled with the too familiar clank of chains?
—James Russell Lowell

(4) We raised the question of whether the Open Letter is addressed to the Tito bureaucracy or to "honest Communist workers" *against* the Tito bureaucracy. Let us try to overlook the fact that there is not a word in it differentiating between the two, since we will be told that this is after all a matter of diplomacy (diplomacy with a totalitarian butcher!). But the letter specifically *opposes* a change in leadership:

There are certainly militants among you who . . . even propose that it is preferable, under these conditions, to make a public apology, to declare acceptance of the Cominform's "criticism" and even to change your leadership. . . . Such a decision would be, in our opinion, an irreparably tragic error. . . . Together with your present leadership they [the Cominform] would completely eliminate all cadres with any independence of thought. . . . [My emphasis.]

Of course, the question of a "change in leadership" is here raised in connection with capitulation to the Cominform, but nowhere is there the slightest hint that some kind of change in leadership might be of benefit to the "honest workers." On the contrary, the "present leadership" is bracketed together with "all cadres with any independence of thought"!

The "honest workers"—that is, the rank and file—come in for consideration a little later, not as the force which is to be directed *against* Tito in order to return to the "Leninist conception," but *as an obstacle to such a possibility.*

We do not hide the fact that such a policy [return to Leninism] would come up against very great obstacles in your own country and even in your own ranks. A complete re-education of your cadres [active militants] in the spirit of true Leninism would be necessary.

This is the only "obstacle" mentioned—the necessity of re-educating the rank-and-file militants of the party. Who is to re-educate them?

Precisely the party leadership, of course, to whom this letter is appealing. Would a "return to Leninism" explode the whole bureaucratic Stalinized structure upon which Tito rests, the Yugoslav Communist Party? *No*, argues the Open Letter, *it would strengthen you!*

It is necessary to launch not only a vast campaign of re-education but also a period of discussion and free expression for all workers. . . . Your party has nothing to fear from

such a development. The confidence of the masses in it will grow enormously and it will indeed become the collective expression of the interests and sentiments of the proletariat of this country.

The Fourth International has come full circle back to the days of the Left Opposition, when the Trotskyist movement considered its task to be the *reformation* of the Communist Parties, the task of saving the Communist Parties from themselves.

(5) It is this "left opposition" approach which alone explains such an eye-goggling passage as the following. Speaking of the danger of capitulation to the Cominform—

Such a decision would deal a still heavier blow to the international Communist movement. In every country the most courageous and independent Communist militants would be reduced to silence. The most servile elements would triumph everywhere.

In very truth, the Fourth International is mentally back in the days when Stalin and Trotsky were still struggling for ascendancy in the Comintern! Comrades of the I.S.: in what country of the world have "the most servile elements" *not* yet triumphed in the CPs? In what country of the world have "the most courageous and independent militants" (which, we take it, means truly revolutionary workers) *not* been reduced to silence in the CPs—and indeed to a more deathlike silence than that of the dumb? Or is the phrase about "every country" supposed to point to Yugoslavia, where Tito, Kardelj, Djilas, Ranković & Co. are among "the most courageous and independent militants"?

(6) Comrades of the Yugoslav CP, says the Open Letter, democratize yourselves and your party!

The Front committees must be organs truly *elected* by the workers of city and country. . . . They must become real state organs, and take the place of the present hybrid organs, which are relics of the bourgeois state apparatus. [Etc., etc.]

How delicately our subjects dance around the necessity of designating the state as "capitalist" with the fine brashness which characterizes its private resolution! The present organs of the state are . . . *relics* of the bourgeois state apparatus—which can only imply that the bourgeois state apparatus is a thing of the past. Aren't we fortunate that, having access to the private resolutions of the Fourth International, we are privy to the secret that all this is . . . diplomacy? Shall we expect that a suitor for the Borgia's hand will inconsiderately refer to her peccadilloes with poison?

(7) And finally—the passage that one waits for with bated breath: the discussion, promised in the Open Letter of July 1, "concerning those things about which we must be critical of you." We are compelled to admit that there is such a passage. It consists of exactly three sentences.

We have numerous and important differences with your past and recent policies. We are in complete disagreement with

the theory and practice of "popular democracy," for we do not believe there is any road other than the dictatorship of the proletariat between capitalism and socialism. We believe that the use and propagation of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois customs (liveries, titles, offices' stripes, decorations) can only cause the demoralization of real communists.

That is all. These are the two criticisms singled out for mention in an address to the rulers of a Stalinist police dictatorship led by a bloody-handed GPU graduate. It would be quite useless to point out that Criticism No. 1 would fail to impress the Yugoslav Stalinists who carefully explained at their recent Fifth Congress that the "people's authority" in their "popular democracy" is the essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat in their opinion—that is, they are hanging on to the phrase. But this sentence in the Open Letter is not intended to impress any Yugoslavs: it is inserted as gingerly as possible merely in order to be able to say: *See, we aren't entirely uncritical, are we? . . .* The second "criticism" is simply a poor joke.

(8) In closing, the Open Letter calls for nothing less than *unity*. Its climactic slogan is: "YUGOSLAV COMMUNISTS, LET US UNITE OUR EFFORTS FOR A NEW LENINIST INTERNATIONAL!"

Back to the Womb

He touches the remotest pole, and in the center weeps
That Man should labor and sorrow, and learn and
forget, and return
To the dark valley whence he came, and begin his
labors anew.

—William Blake

It does not, of course, take great perspicacity to understand that the authors of the Open Letter look upon it as a clever maneuver. We are even willing to admit, for the sake of argument, that it will arouse the sympathy of a few Stalinist workers (in France or England or Belgium—not in Yugoslavia, of course, where it will never see the light of day!) in direct proportion to the extent to which it succeeds in convincing them that the "Trotskyists" are not so far from Stalinism as they thought.

Why has the Open Letter nothing to say about the crimes of Tito and the other ringleaders of the Belgrade dictatorship? Because our clever maneuverers are themselves trying to capitalize on the cult of Tito which was built up in the Communist Parties by the Stalinist propaganda apparatus.² Instead

2. Consider the following from the organ of the Belgian section of the Fourth International. The lead article says the Cominform statement reminds one of the Moscow Trials "where one saw the most prominent leaders of the Bolshevik Party accused of crimes which were invented out of whole cloth by the GPU." As if the comparison itself were not enough to choke them, it immediately continues: "There is however a difference between the case of Tito and that of the accused in the Moscow Trials: Tito does not confess but defends himself by attacking." (*Lutte Ouvrière*, July 10.) There it is, before one's popping eyes, in plain French. Noble, noble Tito! not only to be compared with Lenin's old Bolsheviks, but compared to his own advantage! In Belgrade, the chanting sycophants merely call him "Hero Tito."

of drawing a line of demarcation between the Fourth International and at least the *leadership* of the Yugoslav Stalinists, the Open Letter is deliberately and carefully written to make an amalgam of the two in the mind of a confused Stalinist worker in whose ears the hosannas to Tito are still resounding.

The "clever maneuver" is to take a ride on the tail of Tito's popularity. Very literally, the purpose of the Open Letter is to try to convince a Stalinist militant here or there that the Fourth International *does* represent a kind of left-wing Stalinism and that he should therefore not be "afraid" of it. The history of this type of clever maneuver is an overabundant one: *it is the maneuverers who wind up by being convinced of what they are saying, and it is their own ranks which are disoriented.*

The Stalinotropism of the Fourth International leadership is flowering. We have seen how great is the gravitational pull of the Stalinist movement on the working class of Europe. Not its most important manifestation but certainly its extremest one is its effect on this section even of the Trotskyists.

It would be correct but superficial to compare the present trend of the F.I. with the "left opposition" days of 1929-33: that was an expression of the infancy of the movement; this is a phenomenon of senility. Or: in those days the movement had not yet broken its umbilical cord; today our subjects are dreaming of crawling back into the womb.

With these politics we have nothing in common. The other side of the same coin is the gravitational pull of Western imperialism on the social-democracy and reformists. Not *between* both but *against* both is the only course for a socialist solution of the crisis of civilization.

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Stalinist Terror in Rumania

Real Face of the "Popular Democracy"

It seems that the "extraordinary victory won in the parliamentary elections" by the Rumanian "popular democracy" has not sufficed to ease the minds of the new state's leaders with regard to the solidity of their regime.

Thus at least one can interpret the recent "purge" proclaimed in big speeches by the top Stalinist leader, Vasile Luca, the secretary of the united "workers' party" and minister of finance in the government. "The liquidation of everyone who tries to turn us from our road"—this is the slogan and war cry which has been successfully spread throughout the terrorized land by Luca, the most sectarian member of the Stalinist ruling gang.

For if Vasile Luca is always found at the side of Ana Pauker, minister of foreign affairs, and of Emil Bodnaras, minister of war, it is because this triumvirate enjoys the complete confidence of the Kremlin. A brief excursion into the biography of this figure will provide us with the key to explain his rise to such power.

Profile of Luca

Of Hungarian nationality, his real name is Luka Laszlo. As a militant CP trade unionist he became acquainted with the anti-working-class repression of the Rumanian oligarchic regime and spent long years in prison. He was liberated in 1940 when Russian troops seized Bukovina, which had been ceded to Stalin. From 1940 to 1944 he was deputy mayor of Czerowitz and a deputy in the Soviet of Nationalities of the same district, which is an area populated by Ukrainians, Rumanians and Jews.

It was in this capacity that Vasile Luca directed the purge which every territory newly acquired by

the Russians is obliged to undergo. He participated in the deportation of almost 30,000 citizens of various nationalities from Northern Bukovina to far-distant Asiatic regions of the USSR. Hundreds of socialists were hit by this police measure, when a single word from Vasile Luca could have staved off this disastrous fate for them. But the hatred with which he pursued them even excited the indignation of his own CP comrades.

There is no need to rack one's brain for the meaning of this slogan of general purge, put forward after an election which was crowned by a victory gained under such shameful conditions. In proportion as the regime takes on a more and more totalitarian character, the Rumanian citizen can detect the characteristic features of every Russian satellite under the mask of the "popular democracy."

Russification Goes On

It is not without uneasiness that the average Rumanian sees the Russian uniform on his own country's soldiers; and he cannot fail to be shocked when he reads in the newspapers that the new hierarchy of the army is strictly modeled after the military setup of the powerful neighbor to the east.

He is obliged to note also the same process of Russian adaptation in the civil administration. In place of the former undersecretaries of state there are now (following the Russian model) "deputy ministers." And this change seems to him all the more disturbing and suspicious when he sees former collaborationists among these new dignitaries.

To cite only a single example: the deputy minister for university education is none other than a very well-known extreme Rightist who

has now jumped on the Stalinist bandwagon. And there is the old Rumanian proverb to remind one that though wolves may change their skin they do not change their ways.

Anecdotes making the rounds illustrate the fact that the Rumanians are not simply dupes in complete dependence on their government. Being anonymous they cannot be controlled by any censorship. A typical one goes as follows:

One day, right in the principal street of Bucharest, Prime Minister Petre Groza is walking with opened umbrella, under a cloudless sky with the sun shining brightly. A friend meets him and, astonished, asks the reason for this needless precaution. "Why, that's simple," replies the prime minister. "I've just heard over Radio Moscow that the whole of Moscow is at this very moment covered by a torrential rain."

The urge to imitate the Russian pattern also motivated the creation of the "Order of Labor." Among the intellectuals recently decorated are to be found especially the faithful interpreters of the new Stalinist catechism, the troubadours of slavery, the Singers of Praises to the glory of that genial father of the peoples, the victorious Marshal Stalin.

Pen Prostitutes

Who make up this glorious circle of literary lights? Above all, journalists who have long specialized in serving any foreign master whatsoever, plumping for any political creed whatsoever, and accepting payment from any regime whatsoever; it is they who have taken over the prostituted press and the profitable posts at the disposal of the ruling party.

Their compensation consists of the well-known emoluments of all

collaborationists. On the other hand, for those who set themselves in opposition to the "popular democratic" line-up there is only repression, designed to convince them of the uselessness of their agitation.

The organs of the Security Police have lately been exceedingly busy. The press was permitted to inform its readers about the arrest of a group of generals, known to be royalists but actually accused of having gotten involved in some dirty deals in their own spheres of work. Among the victims of the repression are also found bourgeois oppositionists — members of the National Peasant Party or the National Liberal Party — who are usually accused of "economic sabotage," "anti-democratic activity" or simply "espionage."

CP Heretics Purged

Under the pretense of "strengthening working-class unity," the new prisons have been filled with leaders of the socialist movement, and even old CP militants have been arrested. The leader of the independent socialist party Titel Petresco and the secretary of the same opposition party Dumitriu figure among the victims now being saved up for future show trials, now in preparation. Mironesco-Mera, a former socialist under-secretary in the government and a leader of the teachers' union, who was expelled from the party as a "right-wing socialist," is in the same boat. The real (but unadvertised) crime for which he is being punished is the role he played in uncovering and denouncing the celebrated scandal involving the ORAP (central bureau for the distribution of fur and leather); the Stalinists ran this racket and were its principal beneficiaries.

Taking place without publicity is the liquidation of the old CP cadres who have shown recalcitrance in the face of the new regime. Yet a bit leaks out from time to time about the terrible fate of the best-known figures. For example there

is the disappearance of an old militant who used to occupy a leading post in the organization of the Jewish minority; there is the case of the head of the economic police of Bucharest; there is the economist (a university professor) who was expelled from the party and fired from his job a year ago and who recently died in prison.

The same fate was suffered by the former leader of the artisans' union, who has been known for his political heresies and his opposition to the CP leadership. (On the list of liquidatees is also a boulevard journalist, a vile collaborator of the regime, who is accused of having put through certain dubious deals on behalf of some members of the Russian control commission.)

A number of militants of the unified party, under suspicion of having continued their activities as a socialist group, have been hit by the purge and disappear in the numerous prisons — camps set up for the opponents of the regime.

Among the new victims is also the former minister of justice, Patrascano, a Communist leader of the old school. An orthodox Leninist, he was excluded from public life and from his post as university professor. Patrascano is the author of the theoretical work *Under Three Dictatorships*, which he wrote during an enforced sojourn under the surveillance of the Nazi regime of Antonesco: is he now going to get a chance to continue his analysis of the fourth Rumanian dictatorship? Or will his be the fate of Stefan Foris, former general secretary of the illegal Communist Party, who has disappeared tracelessly in the dungeons of Bodnaras' secret police?

The "Social Conquests"

The self-styled "popular democracy" begins its career by applying the classic formula of totalitarianism—terror.

As far as concerns "social progress" and "the socialist conquests of the working class," we need only

cite a little example. It refers to the Rumanian miners, who have for many years enjoyed solid trade-union organization. Of all Rumanian workers they were truly the most class-conscious and the best fighters; and they were pretty much assured of real gains by the firmness of their political education.

Under the new regime they have begun to lose these gains one after the other. Under the guise of the so-called price-reduction policy, the government has fixed and imposed new production norms—by ministerial ukase—seemingly forgetful of the fact that even in the old capitalist regime these norms used to be established only after many discussions between the workers' and employers' representatives.

But that is how they are replacing the existing labor agreements with new ones—by peremptory orders transmitted through bureaucratic channels, orders which the worker has no right even to discuss, under pain of being mercilessly thrown out and liquidated.

Terror and Want

In the majority of the mining enterprises, by heroic struggles of legendary proportions against the bosses, the workers had won the right of portal-to-portal pay. By a single stroke of the pen the "workers' and peasants' government" has wiped out this gain, and now the workers again bear the whole cost in energy and time of traveling to and from their place of work.

The "social conquests" signify, in the language of the "popular democracy," the abolition of the workers' right to participate in determining their working conditions. In this strange "democracy" it is the state alone which fixes wage rates; and there is no channel through which anyone can complain about the unjust scale of wages—such a scale as not even the most bestial of fascist dictatorships ever had the courage to propose.

The Mysterious Bruno R.

Footnote on the History of the "Russian Question"

The mysterious "Bruno R." is one of the many persons who are remembered today only because their ideas were attacked by Leon Trotsky. The conceptions developed by Bruno R. in his book *La Bureaucratization du Monde* (*The Bureaucratization of the World*)¹ were first introduced to the Marxist public in the United States by Trotsky in 1939, during the great polemic on the Russian question between himself and the minority of the Socialist Workers Party which subsequently became the Workers Party. The book itself was unknown and remained unknown on this side of the ocean until recently.

The disruption of communication with Europe in 1939, the great historic events which followed, and the consequent posing and solving of new and burning political problems, caused Bruno R. to be almost forgotten. The SWP, of course, without knowing anything about him outside of what Trotsky had written, contented itself with making periodic ritualistic references to Bruno R. calculated to ward off the Evil Eye of bureaucratic collectivism.

Even in the press of the Workers Party doubts were raised concerning "the unfindable, unquotable, more or less in-

1. *La Bureaucratization du Monde*, by Bruno R., published by the author, Paris, 1939, 350 pages.

In the same showy way the government puts out blustering propaganda in its controlled press about the so-called reduction in prices on some articles. In the first place, this reduction is infinitesimal. In the second place, it merely masks the brutal reality that these prices are three times (or more) as high as pre-war prices, whereas most wages have been officially pegged at 45 per cent of 1939 figures. On the market this fake price reduction only distantly affects the articles of bare necessity for the mass of people, whose purchasing power is extremely reduced. All in all, much ado about nothing!

Terror and want—this is the face of the Rumanian "popular democracy" of the Stalinists.

Valentin TOMA

(Translated by H. D.)

corporeal and altogether mysterious Bruno R." and his views.² Now that Bruno R.'s book and a little collateral information on the man himself are available, this is a propitious occasion for straightening out Bruno R.'s place in the genealogical table of the theory of bureaucratic collectivism. Who then was Bruno R.? What were his ideas? What relation do they bear to the theory of bureaucratic collectivism as advanced by the Workers Party?³

Bruno Rizzi, Trotsky informs us, was an Italian who at one time belonged to the Fourth International. While earning his living in Italy, the nature of his work apparently enabled him to make occasional trips outside the country, in the course of which he was able to make brief contacts with French, English and Italian Trotskyists. Because of the ease with which he was able to get around, his lack of Italian revolutionary "references," and his heterodox political views, he was treated with caution by comrades with whom he came in contact. Of his subsequent fate nothing is known.

The evolution of his political ideas is related by Rizzi in his book. He first began to re-examine the Russian question in 1936, when he published *Whither the USSR?* in Italian. This book was confiscated by the Fascist government, which, says Rizzi, "certainly did not understand the real objective of our work."⁴ In it, he relates, he intuitively arrived at the conclusion that "a new ruling class had been born in Russia." He did not press the point because Trotsky denied it, and in the preface he "even declared the con-

2. In "Reply to Grant" by the mysterious Max Shachtman, *New International*, February 1947.

3. It has been assumed by some comrades both here and abroad that Trotsky's attack on Bruno R.'s theory of bureaucratic collectivism was in fact directed against the Workers Party's views. This is an error in chronology. Actually the very first draft of what was to become the WP position did not appear until December 1940, i.e., after Trotsky's death. In the 1939 dispute Trotsky tried to use Rizzi's book as a stalking-horse, in his opening gambit, when he thought that the axis of the discussion was going to turn on the theory of the Russian state. However, the discussion which ensued revolved around the political-programmatic question of defense of Russia in the war. Rizzi therefore disappeared from view; he is not even mentioned in the last two-thirds of Trotsky's *In Defense of Marxism*, for example.

4. This curious statement will become clear when we elaborate upon Rizzi's views.

trary of what was partly expressed in the book."

He returned to the question in *Is This the Twilight of Civilization?* written "to combat opportunism and to lead workers to the Fourth International." In this work he "dwelt on the question of the new ruling class in the USSR." Rizzi relates:

"At London in November 1938 we attempted to pose the question of the nature of the Soviet state in the English section of the Fourth International. Unfortunately, the comrades—totalitarians, also!—had already had 'plenty of discussions' and were all in agreement with Trotsky. We succeeded in being heard even in a limited way only by the East London comrades. They took us for a petty bourgeois, and obstructionism closed the development of the discussion."

The Bureaucratization of the World was conceived and written between the end of 1938 and the middle of May 1939. It is, the author says, a film of his meditations. Let no one be deceived by this quiet affirmation. Those meditations on occasion assume a very gaudy character.

Rizzi's Theory of Bureaucratic Collectivism

A preliminary summary and evaluation of Rizzi's leading ideas may prove useful. He believes that a new type of state, which he calls bureaucratic collectivist, has emerged in Russia. This state, which is neither proletarian nor capitalist, is ruled by the bureaucracy, which has assumed a class character.

As far as these two sentences go, they coincide with our own views. Beginning from such an insight into the nature of the Russian phenomenon, however, one can proceed in various directions. And from this point, the Workers Party parts company with the views of Rizzi. We shall see how far afield he goes in his own direction.

For Rizzi, bureaucratic collectivism is *historically progressive*. This indeed is the prime dividing line. For him, it is a world phenomenon intermediary between capitalism and socialism, partially achieved in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy and existing in embryonic form in the New Deal in the United States. This new society, whose historic function is to raise the level of world production through the cooperation of several large autarchies, has been made mandatory by the bankruptcy of the working class. The chief task of the working class of England, France and the United States is, therefore, to put pressure on their governments to relinquish living space and

raw materials to Germany and Italy—which would permit the dictatorships to relax and world production to rise.

With this birds'-eye view of Rizzi's conceptions on Russia, we can proceed to a more detailed examination of his ideas. First, as to his argumentation:

The first section, comprising somewhat less than a third of the book, titled "The USSR: Bureaucratic Collectivism" and subtitled "Class Property," opens with a synoptic view of the rise and decline of the Russian Revolution.

"What is the USSR today?" Rizzi asks. "Its economy is not capitalist, nor is it based on private property, but it is based upon the collective ownership of the means of production." Exploitation takes place through the extraction of surplus value. The cause of this condition lies in the fact that "the country was basically constituted of manual laborers and of illiterates, its industry was greatly inferior to the necessities of a vanguard economy."

Behind this lies the failure of the world revolution. Within Russia the decline was aided by "the real dictatorship, which was that of the Bolshevik Party and not of the proletariat, a dictatorship which was concentrated in the party branches and not in the soviets." "The state and Bolshevik Party functionaries, in socializing the land and industrializing the country, more and more undermined the power of the workers and finished by having monopolized the state. In this work they had to ally themselves with the technicians; thus was the first great fusion in the process of formation of the new ruling class realized in Russia."

This class now constitutes about fifteen million persons, among whom workers are conspicuously absent. "The worker has only the right to work . . . he does not exercise the slightest control." The bourgeoisie "does not have the slightest possibility of returning." The bureaucracy continues to grow enormously. It sets the living standards of the working class, which can no longer even offer its labor power to different entrepreneurs. "From the social viewpoint, this new form of society resolves the unbearable antagonism which renders capitalist society incapable of all progress." But, Rizzi adds, the necessity for war preparations can negate the advantages of collectivization and planning.

A new class neither bourgeois nor proletarian has appeared on the horizon. This class is fully formed in Russia and "it is also visible in Italy as well as in Germany. The first indications . . . are apparent everywhere, even in the countries of the great democracies." The purges which took place following the assassination of Kirov were "only the civil war necessary for the new class to solidify its power. It is not a question of this being a sign of weakness, but of

its being a demonstration of the strength of this class."

Russia's New Class

Rizzi then takes up some of the arguments advanced against this thesis, in particular those used by Trotsky in 1938 in his article "Neither a Workers' Nor a Bourgeois State?"

"Can the nature of a state always be judged," asks Rizzi, "without taking into account its political forms?" He replies: "It is a question of seeing to what end the expropriated and nationalized property in Russia is safeguarded from imperialism. . . ." If "a proletarian state with a bourgeois economy has existed"—as was the case immediately after the revolution—"could not a non-proletarian state with a nationalized economy also exist?"

Why should the new class attempt to denationalize property? "For if the nationalized property and planned economy remain it is because both are in consonance with the regime which holds power." Even bourgeois states tend more and more to plan and to nationalize property. The Russian bureaucracy may have developed under the pressure of imperialism "but the most important question is to establish if the Soviet bureaucracy does not represent something other than a mere transmitting mechanism for world imperialism." The numerical size of these "servants of imperialism," the vastness of the country they control, and the duration of their rule indicate that we are confronted with a class.

Rizzi then takes up the question of class property, that is, property which is neither private nor socialist. He attaches no great significance to the belief that inequities in distribution in Russia may next lead to denationalization of the means of production. "Actually, an exploiting class exists in Russia, having in its hands the means of production and acting as its owner." ". . . surplus value goes to the new exploiting class, to the bureaucracy en bloc." Thus, if "property is nationalized in a non-proletarian regime it also loses its potential character of socialist property; it remains only class property."

The author next takes up the bogey of capitalist-restorationist trends which haunt Fourth Internationalist thinking. He argues that historically progressive organizations, which increase the volume of production, do not go backward. "Did feudalism ever have the intention of going back to slavery?" Even if Russia were invaded by the Anti-Comintern Pact forces, there would be no reason for the destruction of an "economic system which is in the process of construction precisely in their own countries. . . ." Why think of the return of the bourgeoisie? "If a new class has formed, it is because, historically or accidentally, it

has a role to play in the historic ascent of humanity . . . it is charged with organizing production on the basis of collective property in planning the economy within the state framework, while for socialism there will remain only the problems of international 'nationalization' and the socialist distribution of products."

Is Nationalization Progressive?

Thus far Rizzi. As we have indicated, our common starting point is that Russia is neither a workers' state (however degenerated) nor a capitalist state, but rather a state ruled by a new class which is extensive, entrenched and showing no serious tendencies toward capitalist restoration. We likewise label this "bureaucratic collectivism." It must be admitted that Rizzi develops this part of his thesis with not inconsiderable skill and originality.

What *distinguishes* Rizzi's views, however, is his acceptance of bureaucratic-collectivist Russia as a *progressive* phenomenon. This idea—that nationalization of the means of production is, in and of itself, progressive—is the widespread fallacy of our day.

A significant rise in the level of production over previously existing levels (the criterion for judging the progressive character of a given set of property relations) must, in the period of declining capitalism, be decided on a world basis. Seen from this point of view, the expression "politics is concentrated economics" takes on real meaning. The effect of Stalinist politics in the past twenty-five years has been to hold back the establishment of international socialism (a superior mode of production); to facilitate the outbreak of World War II (which has seriously lowered even world *capitalist* production); and to make World War III virtually inevitable—which, given the present constellation of forces, means the victory of U. S. imperialism and, consequently, neo-barbarism. Only if socialism intervenes can the war be resolved on a progressive basis. From our vantage point we can see the concrete outcome of what to many, nearly a generation ago, seemed a theoretical quibble—the theory of "socialism in one country," i.e., Stalinist nationalism.

Actually, despite the limited resemblance between the Russian position of Bruno Rizzi and that of the Workers Party, in estimating Russia's historic role *he is much closer to the position of Trotsky and the Socialist Workers Party, for whom also the nationalized means of production form the decisive criterion of historical progressiveness, than he is to us.*

At this point in the showing of Rizzi's "film" we have to apologize to our audience. A complete reel of the meditations of Bruno Rizzi is missing. His "Part II"

was to deal with the totalitarian state and fascism. Rizzi did not include this section in the book. Whether it was ultimately published separately, as he intended, we do not know. Nor do we know whether his failure to include this section was prompted by the difficulties inherent in the development of his concepts, or by other considerations.

Rizzi has indicated, however, what his leading idea is: "Our conclusion is that, in Italy as well as in Germany, capitalist society is being destroyed day by day, while the corresponding crystallization of a new society replaces it, with economic characteristics identical with Soviet characteristics, even if they are still partial." This does not prevent Rizzi from speaking elsewhere as if his bureaucratic collectivism were a finished formation in these and other states. He says, for instance: "Nevertheless, while the work of Stalin, Mussolini, or Hitler is everywhere described as socialism or capitalism, it is a question only of bureaucratic collectivism." The first formulation is, however, the one most generally sustained throughout the book.

Since this point, which is crucial for Rizzi's general thesis, is asserted rather than developed, briefest of remarks on it will be sufficient. Unlike Rizzi, we cannot consider bureaucratic collectivism a world phenomenon intermediary between capitalism and socialism. We concur with Trotsky that state intervention in the fascist countries was primarily to coordinate the interests of the capitalists—and mainly for war purposes. Certainly to date bureaucratic collectivism bears the label "Made in Russia."

"Embryonic Bureaucratic Collectivism"

A hoarse question opens Part III of the work: "Quo vadis, America?" Rizzi asks, and he adds "Is It Really a 'New Deal'?"

"If we have begun Part III," says Rizzi, "it is only to confirm in the 'New Deal' the signs of that bureaucratization which we view as a world phenomenon." He is struck hard by the crop and farm-animal destruction program. This state intervention, he indicates, is paralleled by banking control, devaluation of the dollar, recall of gold certificates, wages-and-hours laws and labor legislation. "The process of envelopment by the state has hardly begun; but it will not stop. . . ."

Rizzi notes the uneasiness of the future bureaucrats over their glaring contradictions.⁵ They enunciate "an anti-capitalist philosophy which is—in part at least—consonant with the coming society and for which, moreover, they have

a vague and inspired intuition, but which remains in open contradiction with their governmental work." Fortunately for the New Dealers, droughts, floods and foreign armaments orders come to their aid. But the growing war economy "has as an economic consequence the accentuation of nationalizations and the concentration of the economy in the hands of the state itself or at least the accentuation of state intervention." Terrible political battles, says Rizzi, are foreseeable between the bourgeoisie and the New Deal, which the former recognizes as a potential enemy.

This section of the New Deal, by the way, manifests a tendency which becomes worse as the book progresses: Rizzi substitutes arias for argumentation. The text is filled with evocations of orchestras tuning up before the maestro raises his baton (capitalist anarchy before the dictator takes over), the "Forest Murmurs" from *Siegfried* (bureaucratic-collectivist tranquillity), Mephistopheles and Faust contesting for Marguerite (capitalism and bureaucratic collectivism struggling for the working class), etc.⁶ We shall confine our criticism to the political plane.

The tendency for the state to intervene in the activities of capitalism has long been a commonplace in the Marxist movement. This was construed as being "anti-capitalist" only in the sense that individual capitalist excesses were legislated against, or weak sections bolstered, in the interests of capitalism as a whole. That this tendency is less pronounced in the United States than it is in the other major capitalist powers is indicative of the relative strength of capitalism in this country.

Intervention by the state has taken place only during periods of crisis. The New Deal represented such an intervention. We amply demonstrated at the time that despite the howls of the "unreconstructed" capitalists it was the large insurance companies, the banks, the great agricultural and milling interests, and big business as a whole which benefited from the New Deal measures enumerated by Rizzi. Who among the capitalist spokesmen now wrings his hands over state intervention? Of this sort of "anti-capitalism" we have seen even more stringent examples since the demise of the New Deal. And nobody murmured.

That "politically the New Deal represents the beginning of the installation of a new ruling class" is equally false. The political purpose of the New Deal was to make possible the execution of the economic measures previously mentioned, by means of a political program directed to the working class and the petty bourgeoisie. The history of the past

5. It is obvious from the book as a whole that when the Fourth International gained a poor critic somebody lost a fair tenor.

ten years has all too clearly demonstrated that. Rizzi's evaluation of the New Deal rests on the most impressionistic of bases.

Program of Appeasement

In the next reel our author moves on to the plane of Historical Generalization. Like a Real Thinker. Deep. As witness:

Russia is the archetype of the new autarchic bureaucratic-collectivist state. It needs neither "further territory nor raw materials, but only to work tranquilly and intensely, exploiting the natural riches found in its domain." Japan is following the same course. If Germany and Italy are threatening to overrun the world it is because they lack living space and raw materials. Small states are being engulfed. "But if world peace and the increasing development of production are desired, a peaceful means must be found to give living space and the necessary raw materials for the building up of the German and Italian autarchies." The new ruling class must not seek to amass individual riches but be satisfied with good salaries while seeking an absolute increase in production. "Its historic function will end when it reveals itself incapable of pursuing this end."

"Nationalization, statification of the major means of production, economic planning, and production for non-individualistically speculative ends represent the trump cards of bureaucratic collectivism. In a political climate of reciprocal confidence among the autarchies, founded on sure economic bases, all possibilities for increasing production are offered to the new ruling class. From a historic point of view this class has the task of increasing the total world production in an organized manner. . . ." This bureaucratic state is historically necessary, but the "last ruling class in history is so near to the classless society that it denies its class and ownership characteristics."

There has been a leveling process throughout history, says Rizzi, tending to bring all ruling classes to the level of the working class, to the point of identifying themselves with it. "The ruling class in the coming society is nearer the worker than it is to the bourgeois. . . ."

Nevertheless, he agrees that the working class must have the right to strike, and the unions must be free of state control. They will serve as instruments of social control and criticism. State control of the unions in totalitarian countries must be relinquished. . . . This serves to remind one that Rizzi is *trying* to think like a socialist.

The first task of the working class, then, says Rizzi, is to secure a redivision of the living space and raw materials of the world. To achieve socialism the world must first be rationally industrialized. This new cycle between capitalism and socialism is historically necessary.

The workers of France, England, and the United States must "make themselves master of their state and impose at least a workers' and technicians' bureaucracy" but one which "will always permit proletarian control of the basic bodies." The seven or eight autarchies could then arrive at a working agreement with each other.

Rationale for Fascism

This progressive step is being threatened by world capitalism, which is opposing the fascist movement. The real enemies are not Hitler and Mussolini, who have, after all, "set out with the German and Italian workers on the new social road to the new world." "All feelings of bitterness or of hate" in regard to Stalin, Hitler and Mussolini must disappear. "They too will begin to pardon and to preach the law of Love which is the great law of Life, as well as social collaboration." Blinded by party passion we have failed to understand and to honor the fascist fallen. The job of the French, English and U. S. working class is to force their capitalists to relinquish living space and raw materials to Germany and Italy. These latter countries would then reintroduce democratic regimes. Workers and the new rulers could then rationalize production. Bankers would be pensioned off. Rizzi concludes this frenzied rapture: "Mussolini and Hitler extend their hand to Lenin."

The Hitler-Stalin Pact is predicted.⁷ "The workers will never be a ruling class . . . they will only have the supreme honor of 'ruling' a classless society!" "The Russian experience shows us that the dictatorship of the proletariat changes into a new ruling class: that of the bureaucrats, while the proletarians are transformed into citizen workers." "The fascists have committed the theoretical error of wishing to collaborate with the bourgeoisie, whereas they should liquidate it and have already half killed it." When "the new class has provided for its material, intellectual and moral needs, it will obviously take pleasure in continually elevating the working class materially, intellectually and morally."

This section contains the essence of Rizzi's program: a "socialist" rationale for fascism.

A few questions, even if they are necessarily rhetorical, are in order. Setting

7. This is in contrast to his co-thinker James Burnham, who, three years later, in a dashing elenchus, proved the inevitability of the Hitler-Stalin Pact AFTER it had taken place—and shortly before it blew up. Readers who cultivate submarginal political literature will note the striking resemblance between the views of Rizzi and of Burnham—the Burnham of *The Managerial Revolution* of course. How much Burnham owes to Rizzi we do not know; in any case it is of no great importance. The ideas were in the air at the time. It was inevitable that they be systematized—scholastically by Burnham, operatically by Rizzi.

aside for the moment the not-slight consideration of the rights of colonial peoples, would not the transfer of territory from one power to another at best redress the balance in one country—only to shift the unbalance to the country which relinquished the "living space and raw materials"? If stability were reached, however, what would prevent the autarchies from clashing? Perhaps "reciprocal confidence" engendered by the workers of England, France and the U. S., who will "make themselves master of their states and impose at least a workers' and technicians' bureaucracy"? But if that is possible, why not strike out for socialism directly? And Hitler, once he secured *Lebensraum*, did he begin preaching the gospel of Love or the gospel of Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Mauthausen?⁸

The basic premise underlying Rizzi's whole structure, that the working class has demonstrated its inability to take power, is equally impossible. Though no socialist revolution issued from World War II, and though bureaucratic collectivism extended its hold over new areas in Eastern Europe and heavily influences the working class of Western Europe, it is a fact that the working class of Germany and Italy and the colonial peoples of the world are in a better position to regroup themselves than they were before the war. Immense potentialities yet repose there, as is true of the working class of France, England and the United States. And even in the Stalinist structure, fissures are beginning to show.

Rizzi Corrects Hitler on Racism

Next in Rizzi's film of free association is a short subject, rung in, apparently, to drain off the emotional tensions of his elegiac lines addressed to the fascist dead. It is titled "The Jewish Question."

"All the racial theories of Rosenberg, Hitler, Italian racists, etc.," cries Rizzi in a big *tutti* passage, "have not been able to resist the slightest scientific attack. Questions of blood, of origin, etc. . . . are, in our modest opinion, only empty words." Nevertheless, it must be said that the Jews are the "most jealously racist nation in the world and they have even claimed to be more intelligent than the others." In a big majority of cases Jews have been capitalist types. The struggle against capitalism must

8. In view of these formulation and several others which Rizzi develops later, how Trotsky could treat Rizzi's ideas as if they fell within the broad bounds of Marxism is a little obscure. No less obscure is the casual way in which Trotsky could link Rizzi with the Workers Party, without indicating the entirety of Rizzi's position. One thing is certain: had Rizzi's full position been known, even less attention would have been paid to the bogey of Rizzi's "bureaucratic collectivism" than it actually attracted.

therefore be strongly identified with the struggle against the Jews. A mass campaign against the Jews must be initiated. "Hitler is right and we are wrong." But this should not be understood as advocacy of pogroms. Workers should not fall into the trap of treating *all* Jews alike. Jewish workers must be taken in marriage in order to regenerate them more rapidly and to eradicate them from the face of the earth! "We respect and honor Marx and Trotsky and a few others of our obscure friends of the Jewish race. Certain isolated and very beautiful flowers can grow in dung heaps, but as a whole the Jewish people have become a capitalist dung heap."

It is clear to what vile lengths of anti-Semitism Rizzi is led by his fatal acceptance of the "progressiveness" of Stalinist nationalization and fascist "statism." Of the degeneracy of his thinking it is enough to remark as did Dean Meeks of Grant's Tomb: "It's a tour de force, gentlemen. You cannot alter it in any way without improving its proportions."

In anticlimax, at the very end of the film of his meditations Rizzi undergoes a conversion. Having thought the whole matter over, he says, he now wishes to revise the opinions which he had previously elaborated. The involuted motivation for the change in Rizzi's ideas we shall not pause over. The change briefly consists in regarding bureaucratic collectivism in its Russian, German and Italian variations not as a socially progressive formation intermediary between capitalism and socialism but as a parasitic phenomenon. At the same time he still believes that "the petty bourgeoisie (technicians of production and distribution) must form an anti-capitalist bloc nationally and internationally" and that "workers not yet subjected to a totalitarian regime must trade their 'living space' for their chains and the chains of their comrades who have already fallen into a new slavery."

Rizzi concludes with "An Appeal to Mankind." He asks the bourgeoisie to repent, for they must know that a collapse is coming if they do not grant 'living space' and raw materials to Italy, Germany and Japan. If this is done, the dictators will relax their regimes. "We do not believe that in the bottom of their hearts, and as men, Stalin, Hitler and Mussolini are happy with their regimes. . . . The New World which we desire will liberate even these great prisoners. . . ."

And so, as all good films should, it is on this note of Love that we come to *The End* of the film of meditations of an isolated man who tried to think like a socialist under fascism—unsuccessfully.

JAMES M. FENWICK

Italy: Third Front Versus CP

The Revolt of the Masses and the Danger of Stalinism

The following discussion article by Comrade Rudzienski comes to us with the following appended note: "I have not dealt with the moral problem of the attempt on Togliatti's life since surely other comrades will deal with this problem. Naturally, we condemn the act, although the Stalinists always use political assassination as a weapon. Whoever sows the wind, reaps the whirlwind."—ED.

The attempt to assassinate the Italian Stalinist leader, Togliatti, unleashed a general strike spontaneous in character, something which has not been seen in Europe for some time. Enormous gatherings in Turin, Milan, Genoa, Rome and other Italian cities demonstrated the indignation and anger of the laboring masses. Before the Stalinist-controlled Confederation of Labor could decree a general strike, the factories had come to a standstill, the drivers had left their buses in mid-street, and the printing presses and hospitals had been abandoned by their personnel.

The spontaneity of the workers' movement was undeniable and had an eminently political character. This was not an instance of a general strike inspired by the desire for higher wages—even though controlled by the Stalinists—but of a strike that was above all political, caused by the criminal attempt against a Stalinist leader whom the masses consider a workers' leader.

Masses in Latent Rebellion

We must ask ourselves: Where is this enormous and spontaneously revolutionary movement going? Did the shots fired at the Stalinist leader mobilize the workers or was this act merely an immediate and superficial motive? And does there exist a more profound cause, more powerful forces, which pushed the Italian workers into the streets?

Undoubtedly it is a question of a latent rebellion of the laboring masses against capitalism. The laboring masses of Western Europe are as much in rebellion against the capitalist regime as the masses of Eastern Europe are in revolt against the bureaucratic Stalinist regime.

The new wave of strikes in France and the anger of the Italian masses constitute evident proof of this latent rebelliousness on both sides of the Iron Curtain. They give a living example of the spontaneous international unity of the working class and of the vitality of

the spontaneous socialism of the proletariat.

The general strikes in France and Italy, the splintered and stifled strikes in Poland, the rebelliousness of the masses in Czechoslovakia, and the Tito opposition in Yugoslavia—these represent fragments of the ill-fated European revolution cut in two by the Iron Curtain and shackled by the reactionary capitalist governments in the West and the reactionary Stalinist governments in the East. The movement of the masses is spontaneous, marching blindly against the bulwarks of reaction and tyranny; and the principal factor which checks and retards this movement, which throws it into the arms of the Stalinist counter-revolution in the West and of capitalist restoration in the East, is the crisis of the revolutionary cadres and the lag in the development of Marxist theory.

We cannot say what turn the Italian events will take. For the moment, the De Gasperi government seems to have control both of Parliament and the apparatus of state power.

Needless to say, the Stalinists are politically responsible for this fact. They checked the revolutionary movement of the masses when the Italian bourgeoisie was impotent and power lay in the streets. The present revolutionary surge of the masses seems to be a final eruption, artificially blocked until now, and not at all politically synchronized with the decomposition and demoralization of the ruling class.

Neither Bourgeois nor Socialist

But leaving to one side the political fate of this movement, we ought to ask ourselves: What would the attitude of revolutionary socialists be in the event that the Stalinists conquer the government of Italy? In order to answer this fundamental question, we must draw the analogy with the Russian October of 1917.

The Russian working masses supported the S-R and Menshevik majority, the Bolshevik Party remaining a minority until the eve of the revolution. In Italy the working masses support the Stalinist-reformist majority, but here there is no revolutionary party that can act as a political force as was the case in Russia. This constitutes the fundamental difference in the historical situation.

The second difference has its roots in the character of the Stalinist party

which is not a reformist party but a bureaucratic counter-revolutionary party. The Menshevik Party in Russia attempted to limit the revolution to the bourgeois-democratic stage, opposing the socialist revolution. The Stalinist party of Italy strives neither for a bourgeois nor a socialist revolution, but for a conquest of power in order to install a bureaucratic regime based on nationalized economy, a regime which signifies social and political reaction.

The third difference is that in Italy there do not exist organs of revolutionary workers' democracy, workers' councils. By means of its bloc with the reformists and its control of the trade unions, the Stalinist party bureaucratically dominates the working class. There is no possibility of creating authentic revolutionary and proletarian organs of struggle within this apparatus.

What, then, ought to be the attitude and policy of the revolutionary socialists in Italy? Can they repeat Lenin's slogan "All power to the soviets" when the historic conditions are so completely different, and when there are no soviets?

Clearly they cannot, because Marxist theory is not a dead letter but a living thought which emanates from turbulent life, from its incessant movement. Lenin's doctrine is a product of the Russian Revolution and cannot be transplanted into another historic epoch with altogether different conditions.

CP-SP Slogan in Italy

The slogan "All power to the CP-SP-CTI" would be nothing but a bureaucratic and mechanical modification of the old Bolshevik program and does not correspond to the Italian situation, because it does not correspond to the motor force of the revolution; it would only give power to the Stalinist counter-revolution, which on coming to power would drown all the living forces of the proletariat in blood, as it does in Eastern Europe and as it did in Russia after its Bonapartist coup. Given the actual historical circumstances, the present political conditions in Italy, we cannot propose the slogan "The Communist Party, the reformist party and the trade unions to power" because this would only mean sanctioning the enslavement of the proletariat.

What is our road, then, before this disjunction between Stalinism and capitalism? "To support capitalism, De Gasperi, the Pope, American capitalism, the

real master of Western Europe?" some horrified comrades will ask.

Not at all! As revolutionaries we cannot choose a reactionary alternative. Confronted by capitalist and Stalinist reaction, we, the proletarian revolutionaries, must choose the road (or more precisely the narrow path) of the revolution, which is the program of the socialist third front.

We oppose capitalism, but we cannot for this reason favor Stalinism. We must oppose Stalinism and do so in the name of the socialist revolution. If there is no revolutionary party of significance we must oppose to Stalinism the power of our ideas.

A government of the socialist revolution, yes! A government of the Stalinist counter-revolution, a hundred times no! We are against capitalism and we are also against Stalinism—against Washington and against Moscow. Against De Gasperi's Italy and against Togliatti's Italy. We are against an Italy which is a colony of either Washington or Moscow.

Some comrades will surely adduce the

fact that the slogan is not concrete and provides no immediate solutions. This is most certainly the case! But where history has not prepared the groundwork we cannot create immediate solutions. Where there is no revolutionary party mature enough to take the power and advance the cause of the social revolution, there does not and cannot exist the problem of revolutionary power.

In such a situation, we, the revolutionaries, must oppose both reactionary powers in spite of all the dangers involved for us. The honor of international socialism demands that we capitulate neither to Stalinism nor to capitalism. If the working class cannot understand this today, it must and will understand it tomorrow.

The policy of the third front of the socialist revolution seems to me the only road and the only tactic possible for Italy and all of Western Europe. Stalinism signifies the decline of the proletariat's standard of living, signifies lower wages, greater exploitation and misery. It signifies not only a heightening of exploitation but also greater oppression. Socialism struggles against human

exploitation and oppression. Socialism proclaims the abolition of exploitation and oppression as its ideal.

Stalinism, therefore, signifies historic retrogression for humanity, greater, far greater, for example, than American capitalism. *Stalinist nationalization only serves to increase exploitation and human oppression. It is our duty to say this clearly to the working class and forestall it. It is our duty to oppose the taking of power by Stalinism, in the name of socialism.*

We cannot present any immediate solution where there is neither a revolutionary party nor a revolutionary sector of the working class, in the sense of historic socialist consciousness. In such a situation our only weapon is Marxist doctrine and the policy of the third revolutionary front until the situation ripens, until a sector of the working class takes shape which is capable of resolving the problem of power.

Such are the lessons of the strikes in France and the spontaneous rebelliousness of the Italian working masses.

ANDRZEJ RUDZIENSKI

The Year One of the Russian Revolution

V—Summary of the First Months

The facts presented in this chapter suggest several theoretical observations.

(1) The workers' and peasants' revolution completed its first period in January—completed its triumphal march through the country. Everywhere from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean the masses hailed, defended, and extended the revolution irresistibly. The victory was complete, but it ran up against two belligerent imperialist coalitions — the Central Powers and the Allies. The civil war was to continue, or rather flare up again with the support of foreign intervention. Victorious internally, the revolution came face to face with a capitalist world.

The internal victories of the revolution under different conditions at Petrograd, at the Stavka, in the Urals, the Don, the Kuban, in Bessarabia, the Crimea, etc., were astonishingly easy, despite the stubborn resistance of certain elements. The reasons for this facile conquest were evident: the revolution was the work of the most active, the most powerful, and the best-armed section of the population, the majority of the workers and soldiers. Besides, the revolution benefited from the sympathy of the majority of the peasantry. This remarkable unanimity resulted from the concurrence of the bourgeois revolution, which attracted the rural masses by sup-

pressing the feudal landowners, with the beginning of the proletarian revolution. The proletariat consciously finished the work begun by the bourgeoisie in its struggle with the old order for a free capitalist development.

Having finished this work, the proletariat naturally went further, but at a slower pace. The impossibility of wielding power without owning the means of production became evident only later, in the course of the struggle with the bourgeoisie. The great nationalization decrees came several months later as a result of the civil war, rather than as a planned transition to socialism. Reality overweighed theory, overweighed the proletarian policy which foresaw a more rational and less hasty and brutal conquest of the means of production.

(2) For fear of the proletariat, the Russian bourgeoisie was unable to complete its own revolution, that is, to satisfy the peasants by sacrificing the feudal landowners, and this was one of the main causes of its defeat. For fear of the peasantry, it deferred calling the Constituent Assembly under Kerensky and made a bloc with the landowners, the most reactionary class in Russian society. By following after the big bourgeoisie, the petty-bourgeois parties condemned themselves to loss of their popular support. The revolutionary education

they had received under the autocracy and the powerful influence on them of the proletariat restrained these parties from falling far enough under the direct influence of the bourgeoisie to support it without reserve. Victimized by their own democratic illusions they tried to follow an independent policy and to found a democratic republic on the French model.

The Bourgeoisie and the Petty Bourgeoisie Separated

More farsighted and better aware of the strength of the workers, the big bourgeoisie wanted a class dictator, Kornilov. But at the last moment they lost the support of the petty bourgeoisie, and left to their own small numbers—as usual there was an enormous disproportion between the number of Russian capitalists and their economic power—the Russian bourgeoisie was doomed to defeat. From November 1917 until the spring of 1918 it seemed to be completely vanquished and without forces. It had no leader, no consistent policy, and no serious party. It was completely disorganized. At best a few thousand men, mostly officers led by generals, took up the desperate task of its defense.

The terrified bourgeoisie in the capitals did not even have sense enough to lend any worthwhile support to the

armies of Kaledin, Alexeyev and Kornilov, who, being mistrusted by the democratic middle classes, lost every battle to the Red Guard. The ease with which they were defeated can be largely attributed to the refusal of the "advanced" petty bourgeoisie to support them.

The division between the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie laid bare the powerlessness of the capitalists and landowners when left to themselves. Once overcome, they were unable to re-establish themselves by their own unassisted efforts.

(3) So true was the last that a curious regroupment of social forces took place: the bourgeoisie began to follow the petty bourgeoisie, instead of vice versa, as the latter came into sharper conflict with the proletariat.

During the insurrection, the urban petty bourgeoisie, led by socialists, definitely rallied to the counter-revolution. The rural petty bourgeoisie, composed of the middle and rich peasants who were pacified by the land decree, did not follow this movement. After its defeat, the urban petty bourgeoisie still believed itself revolutionary in its hatred for czarism and its love of democracy, and clung to its governmental illusions without daring to try another passage at arms; the experiences of the period from the end of October to the early part of November were too decisive. The failure of the Constituent Assembly was a register of the total political incapacity of the middle classes,¹ and confirms our conviction that the only two classes which can decide the destiny of modern society are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

VICTOR SERGE

1. On this subject Trotsky wrote in *The October Revolution* (1918): "Who would have supported a ministry formed by the majority of the Constituent Assembly? The upper rural classes, the intellectuals and the officials would have lined up behind such a government; at times it would have had the support from the right of the bourgeoisie. But such a government would have had none of the material apparatus of power. In the political centers such as Petrograd it would have run up against insurmountable resistance. If under these conditions the Soviets had submitted to the formal logic of democratic institutions and handed power over to the party of Chernov and Kerensky, this compromised and futile government would have troubled the political life of the country momentarily, only to be overthrown by a new insurrection at the end of a few weeks."—V. S.

Books in Review

Trotskyist Primer

RISE AND FALL OF THE COMINTERN (From the First to the Fourth International), by K. Tilak. Spark Syndicate, Bombay, 1947, 157 pp., \$1.25.

While it is a commonplace that the history of the Communist International has still to be written (and Tilak's book does not pretend to be any such definitive history), even outline sketches like Tilak's are none too plentiful.

Published by the Indian Trotskyists, *Rise and Fall of the Comintern* obviously does not purport to be more than an outline sketch, briefly summarizing the analyses worked out by Trotsky and the Trotskyist movement of the critical periods and stages of Comintern degeneration.

In reality—like C. L. R. James' *World Revolution*—its subject and center of interest is not the rise and fall of the Comintern but only the latter, the Stalinist counter-revolution. After eight pages on the First and Second Internationals, only seven are devoted to the founding and first four congresses of the C. I.

Then, with Chapter 3 on "The Decline of the Comintern," the main thread of the book begins. The following chapters go through: the German defeat of 1923; the Anglo-Russian Committee of 1925-27; the tragedy of the Chinese revolution; the rise of the Stalinist bureaucracy and the beginnings of Trotsky's Left Opposition; the dispute over industrialization and the Five Year Plan; the "Third Period" of ultra-leftism and dual-unionism; the Popular Front and the Spanish civil war; and the Second World War period from the Hitler-Stalin Pact to the dissolution of the Comintern. Two further chapters—one on the degeneration of the Russian state and a final one on the Fourth International—round off the work.

In actuality, Tilak attempts no more than would be proposed for a mimeographed educational outline; and this task it performs usefully. It is a handbook that every comrade should own.

The point of view from which it is written can best be described as "the Trotskyism of the 1930s." Even the interesting re-evaluations later made by Trotsky himself on a number of points are not touched upon: e.g., his reinterpretation of the significance of Stalin's struggle against the Bukharin right wing, his re-evaluation of the theory of one-party dictatorship, and—most interesting—his several germinal remarks in his article *USSR in War* of 1939. Not

only is the presentation scrupulously "orthodox," it scarcely even gives a hint that any fresh thinking on new problems has taken place since the founding congress of the F. I. in 1938.

It is this approach which also perhaps accounts for a typical lack in the section on the Spanish revolution and civil war against Franco. It has been my own observation that one of the most fruitful political discussions in the movement—the discussion on defensism or defeatism in Spain at that time—is far from familiar to many comrades at the present day.

Tilak does not even pose the problem of the correct revolutionary Marxist position on that historic episode: why did Trotsky and the Trotskyist movement take the position of material and military support to the Loyalist government in the fight against Franco fascism, given the bourgeois-imperialist character of that government? Trotsky's brilliant discussions of this problem in those days shattered some crudely "orthodox" concepts (like: the character of the state automatically determines the character of the war), but this political education is completely absent in Tilak. On the other hand, he does convey a useful précis of the class forces at work and a condensed criticism of the policies of the Stalinists, Anarchists, Socialists and POUM.

The chapter on the nature of the Russian state repeats the "degenerated workers' state" line just as if nothing has happened since Trotsky wrote *The Revolution Betrayed*. We are told that the Kremlin bureaucracy defends statified property and that this is its "progressive aspect":

"The progressive aspect of its work merits the support of the international proletariat, which should not, however, be blind to its reactionary general role. Thus the rule of the bureaucracy reflects in a distorted form the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Orthodox dogma as it is, few even of the orthodox Fourth Internationalists still can thus screw their courage to the point of actually writing in so many words that Stalin's prison-state is still a "dictatorship of the proletariat."

Only in the last few pages, in fact, is there any political evidence that the author is writing in the year 1947. In the final section headed "The Future," there is fortunately none of the Cannon-Germain-Pierre Frank bombastic rhetoric about the world-revolution-around-the-corner. Tilak prefers to remind us of a passage written by Trotsky in 1938:

"Dilletantes, charlatans or blockheads

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incapable of probing into the dialectic of historic ebbs and flows have more than once brought in their verdict: 'The ideas of the Bolshevik-Leninists may, perhaps, be correct but they are incapable of building a mass organization.' As if a mass organization can be built under any and all conditions! As if a revolutionary program does not render it obligatory for us to remain in the minority and swim against the stream in an epoch of reaction! That revolutionist is worthless who uses his own impatience as a measuring rod for the tempo of an epoch. Never before has the path of the world revolutionary movement been blocked with such monstrous obstacles as it is today on the eve of a new epoch of greatest revolutionary convulsion."

And Tilak then poses the historic choices before society:

"On the answer to this question hangs the fate of humanity. We recollect that Marx, while considering socialism to be historically inevitable as the next stage in the evolution of human society, at the same time went on to add that there was another alternative—namely, a return to barbarism. It must be admitted that never did this dread alternative assume before a reality as it has done today."

And Tilak properly adds: "But we, who have faith in the masses and their capacity to achieve, reject the perspective of decline and defeat," and he expresses confidence in the leadership of the Fourth International. But the Fourth International leadership is very much like Tilak's book: it is cognizant of the phenomenal devolution of Stalinism but is completely incapable of drawing from it the lessons for today. However, the book (not the leadership) can still be a useful ABC reader for beginners.

PHILIP COBEN

War Vignette

COMPANY COMMANDER, by Charles MacDonald. Infantry Journal Press, Washington, 1947, 277 pp., \$3.00.

Here is the best portrayal of the war on an individual level that this reviewer has read, real or fictional.

It is the actual story of I and G Companies of the 23rd Infantry as told by the company command, a young man of 22 at the time. It begins in early October 1944 when I Company moves into a static position in the Siegfried Line, and ends in May 1945 in Radcice, Czechoslovakia.

The tale is observed and recorded with remarkable care. It is highly evocative; the prose is functional; there is a minimum of bathos.

It's all there: the thousand and one worries of the company commander—the overstretched company front, the short rounds from the artillery, the com-

pany strength, the phone lines; the self-doubt; the common experiences; the menace of the fir forests; the query "My god! what was that?"; the relief when the P-47s come over for a strafe job; the shooting of German prisoners; the endless weariness; the three-day rest before being committed again. . . .

To know the war as it was at the irreducible end of the chain of command, this is the book.

JAMES M. FENWICK

No Glory, No Glamor

THE NAKED AND THE DEAD, by Norman Mailer. Rinehart, N. Y., 1948, 721 pp., \$4.00.

Maybe this is the war novel of the Second World War—it has the rare combination of art and authenticity which bids fair to make it that. The critics have all been compelled to recognize the indisputable talent of the author, but there has been a certain amount of shuddering at the "crude" honesty of the portrayals. Perhaps the book is on the best-seller list because it has attracted the lascivious and morbid horde in addition to the general reader, like the Kinsey report; but its artistry, its uncommonly faithful recording of war's filth, and its lack of jingoist distortion make it a welcome success.

The author is a young intellectual, product of the Brooklyn slums, wide travel, odd jobs, and Harvard. The novel itself centers around the activity of a platoon in the invasion of the jungle island of Anopopei. The arena of operations is divided into three levels: the bare military aspects on a mass strategic scale; the activities and feeling of the GIs in the platoon; the desires, life and conversation of the officer corps. Mailer shows amazing intimacy with all these aspects.

Mailer's work has its antecedents: Farrell's faithfulness of idiom, though Mailer's language use does not lose its freshness and avoids tedious repetition; Dos Passos's techniques in *U. S. A.* and his biographical flashbacks, though Mailer's are more real, more personal, less artificial. In these flashbacks Mailer undertook a staggering job—to, integrate the pre-war life from childhood to maturity of a score of personalities—but he has carried it off with authenticity, making their actions and thoughts the natural extensions of their civilian lives.

There is Minetta, product of New York's Little Italy slums, the pathetic malingerer trying to escape the war. Martinez, Mexican outcast from San Antonio, to whom the army is a refuge because he has become a sergeant. Gallagher, the Boston Irish Catholic resentful of Beacon Hill and taking it out on the Jews. Polack, the conniver from stock-

yard Chicago. Croft, the unscrupulous, sadistic topkick from the cow country. Wilson, the poor white from the deep South. Roth, the Jew who disavowed his Jewishness only to have it thrust upon him by the platoon anti-Semites. Goldstein, who accepts the burden of discrimination but whose actions under fire undermine the bigotry of some of his comrades. Lieutenant Hearn, educated son of a nouveau-riche midwestern capitalist, who rejects the sordidness of his father's business and wanders a confused searching soul in the world of the intellectual left. General Cummings, West Point career man, whose narrow intellectual acquaintance serves as a bridge from the strategy of war to the philosophy of fascism. Every veteran has seen some of these characters; perhaps that is the key to the book's popularity.

General Cummings, to whom men and matériel are so many pawns on a chessboard, delights in degrading the one intellectual in the officer corps, Hearn, his aide. After a particularly humiliating experience, Hearn is transferred to the leadership of the platoon in an impossible mission to scout the enemy's rear.

The terrible trek of this platoon, through the fetid jungle, the entangling Kunai grass and the treacherous mountain ridges of Anaka, is a gripping story of bitter struggle, heroic cooperation and tremendous hatred of war which strips the characters naked of their pretensions, dreams and ideals, debases them to the near animal level.

The GIs hate and distrust the officers and their privileges, as well as the "brown-nosers" in their own ranks. Mailer's job in describing the molecular disintegration of an intellectual's character who must act the role of an officer is really superb.

It is mainly through Hearn that the author sometimes expresses more general views: "With all its contradictions, I suppose there's an objective right on our side. That is, in Europe. Over here as far as I am concerned, it's the imperialism tossup. Either we louse up Asia or Japan does."—"There's an osmosis in war, call it what you will, but the victors always tend to assume the trappings of the lower. We might easily go fascist after we win."

There is evidence of some contact with progressive ideas, and Mailer's development may be more hopeful than Céline's. Céline also ripped off the scabs of the festering sores of imperialism, only to gravitate toward the politics of despair and fascism. Where Mailer goes is yet to be seen.

In spite of the fanfare, the best-seller figures, and all that sometimes stamp a literary product as suspect, *The Naked and the Dead* deserves to be widely read as a literary document of the war.

CHARLES STEWART

Miscellany on Russia

POLITICS (quarterly magazine), spring 1948 special number on the USSR, ed. by Dwight Macdonald, 72 pp., 75 cents.

Over half of this special number is devoted to a miscellany of articles on Russia, of very uneven interest and rather random in its over-all plan—if there was any. There is a fair amount of interesting material in the lot, however, dealing with special subjects.

The matter of political interpretation or analysis can be disposed of quickly. Fortunately—considering everything—there is none, outside of incidental remarks. An introductory piece by Macdonald ("USA vs. USSR") and a second piece by Anonymous ("The Background") are quite empty, but beyond this point the reading becomes more worthwhile.

Three of the contributions are of particular value: "USSR Today—Documents," consisting of "I Was There" accounts and interviews with Russian prisoners; "Empire or Free Union?" by Walter Padley, an ILPer, on the national question in Russia; and "The Music Purge," by Nicholas Nabokov, a composer.

The first mentioned ("Documents"), offering fragmentary insights into Russian life and reactions, is intriguing—like all the other Russiana of its genre. They become bits of mosaic to be pieced together into an impression of life under Stalin, when taken together with all the rest of its kind that one has read.

Padley's piece has the defect of being slightly rambling but is a good solid summary of facts needed to explode the myth of Stalin's "solution of the national question." He begins with the contrast between Lenin and Stalin on this question, goes through the 1937 purges, discusses Russification and the real face of "cultural autonomy" in the national republics, the evidences of Great Russian chauvinism during the war and after it, and tops off with an intelligently argued demonstration of the correctness of labeling Stalin's Russia "imperialist." He asks:

"And Stalin's speech on May 24, 1945, in which he said that the *Russian* nation was 'the most outstanding of all the nations of the Soviet Union' and as such the 'directing force of the Soviet Union,' adding that it was the confidence of the *Russian* nation in the Soviet government which ensured the victory over fascism—was that imbued with the imperialistic spirit?"

Padley, of course is here affirming the imperialist nature of the Stalinist state with relation to the national republics of Russia itself—a facet of Stalinist imperialism which has tended to become lost in the shuffle of Russia's expansion into Eastern Europe.

Appended to Nabokov's article is the text of the decree on music by the Central Committee of the CP of Russia, reprinted from the *Daily Worker* of March 12. Reading it reminds one to point out that no anti-Stalinist should be without his own personal copy of this document—even if the back number of the D. W. does cost 20 cents.

Vladimir Weidle's "Origins of Soviet Literature" (a translation from the monthly *Critique*) makes an interesting point. On the basis of a literary evaluation, he comes to the conclusion that 1930 marks a watershed in the character of Russian literature; we do not have the space to indicate his train of thought, but the reader will doubtless make the political correspondence himself.

A short piece on "The Varga Episode" by Louis Clair and Sebastian Franck is

good but—short, therefore skimpy. This reader would not have minded if the subject had gotten fuller treatment. And there is another piece by Macdonald, "Bureaucratic Culture: Nicholas I and Josef I." After the slighting remark made above about his introductory article, I wish I could be kinder to this one, merely in order to prove there is no rancor involved (Marxists are suspect, you know, ever since the time when Marx's carbuncles used to get the better of him). It *does* contain some interesting matter, including statistics, and it *does* head toward a point (Stalin's purely political control of all aspects of culture is "something new in the world"), so that it may be our disappointment is based on greater expectations.

PHILIP COBEN

Correspondence

TO THE EDITOR:

The difficulty we have with the article of Homer Paxon (THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, July 1948) is certainly not with its description and analysis of the Marshall Plan as such. Paxon has given us the imperialist essentials of the project and explained its relationship to the development of American capitalism.

What we find lacking is the proper setting of the plan within the context of the world situation as it is today. Just as the relationship between politics (including foreign policy) and national economy has changed considerably since the time of Marx—above all, in this period of absolute capitalist decay—so has the character of imperialism itself.

The Marshall Plan is not "simply" an imperialist plot, motivated by the economic needs of American capitalism. From the point of view of profits as such, the investment of billions in the outmoded, depleted and unproductive economies of capitalism's most ancient home is surely the poorest possible choice. A billion invested in backward India would yield more profits in one year than the \$17½ billion will in Europe over the next five years. We have already indicated the impossibility of repayment.

The point is that now, in 1948, the fulfillment of capitalism's economic goals (which have, incidentally, changed considerably also) is utterly dependent upon and follows political considerations. It is the political problems besetting American imperialism which drive it to behave in such and such a fashion, within the general, long-range context of its economic needs and development.

Thus, for example, Paxon points out that the ERP Act gives the American president the right to shut off aid at will.

This, formally speaking, is certainly the fact. But the reality is far different and American imperialism could no more shut off aid arbitrarily and unilaterally than it could afford to drop its aid program and see Stalinism conquer Europe. The importance of Paxon's formal consideration is lost if it is not qualified by describing the actual relationship of forces. There are many other remarks of Paxon of the same nature that tend to give a distorted and unbalanced picture.

Furthermore, it must be remembered that even the limited success of the plan in operation will tend to create counterforces within Western European economy itself. We are not suggesting that these counterforces will definitely influence the tempo and measures permissible to America.

For example, since the tendency of America is to favor the revival of Western Germany, centering around the Ruhr, as against that of France, it is perfectly clear that at a later stage there must be a counter, self-protective tendency for England, France and possibly Italy to band together within the Marshall Plan bloc and oppose this favoring of Germany.

This is but one of many economic counter-tendencies which will develop and make it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, for America to obtain the economic "straightjacket" stranglehold over Europe which Paxon seems to think will and must come. The spirit of "economic determinism" is much too rife in the Paxon analysis, and should have been replaced by more caution and care in dealing with these complexities where innumerable variants exist.

HENRY JUDD

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