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Fascism or Socialism in Post-war Britain

By *ANDREW SCOTT*

We make no apology for returning to the question of the revolutionary change that is taking place during the war in Britain's world position. For this change is so charged with portent for not only the British but also for the world workers, that its importance cannot be overestimated. Apart from anything else, it is not every day that a world-wide empire crumbles about the ears of its builders. But when to this is added the fact that the very collapse of the empire opens the way to, and the necessity for, a direct struggle for power on the part of a working class whose specific weight in the country is the highest on earth, then the outstanding importance of the question cannot be doubted. And this is without adding the further vital fact that this working class is still organised in unions and parties, has sustained no major defeat such as those of the German workers in 1933 or the Italian workers in 1922, and is growing in consciousness as to its position in relation to the capitalist class. In other words, the British workers stand in a highly favourable position for the coming clash with the forces of capitalism. Favourable except insofar as they are without a leader-

ship capable of rising to the heights demanded by the struggle. But it is from that very angle—the angle of building such a leadership—that we approach the question of Britain's changing position. Hence the vital importance of getting a clear understanding of the direction of events.

In the first article the growing domination of the United States was dealt with, together with the catastrophic change in Britain's trading, financial and production position. It is proposed here to deal mainly with the plans of the capitalists to try to overcome their difficulties, and the directions in which they will be pushed by the irresistible pressure of world economic and social forces.

And it can be said immediately that even within the course of a month they have taken not a few steps forward in revealing how different their real perspectives are from those that were held out while the war was going against them. Now that Russian resistance has altered the whole balance of the war and brought its end within measurable distance the British capitalists are becoming more outspoken about the future. Even

a month ago we could say that their realistic discussions about the future were being conducted in private. But already they are venturing more boldly into the open. Their promises are becoming less rosy. Their warnings more solemn. The special two day Debate in Parliament on "Economic Policy" was notable for the sombre tone of most of the speakers. And the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, speaking for the Government uttered the following warning:

"The economic position of this country will indeed be far from easy; and it could become dangerous. No new economic theory or financial manipulations, however ingenious, can displace or alter this hard but inescapable fact. We should be living in a fool's paradise if wishful thinking led us to believe that a great and cruel war brings in itself better and happier days. . . . In many respects these days after the war will be very much like those of the war itself, and in some cases even more difficult."

The other Conservative speakers advanced the same sort of idea. Sir Granville Gibson said that the "post-war world will be a very hard world."

In the course of the Debate one example after another was given of the swift change that is taking place in Britain's economic position. At the risk of repetition we quote some of these, for the deep-going and catastrophic nature of that change cannot be over-emphasised.

COMMONS DEBATE REVEALS IMPASSE

Earl Winterton pointed out right at the beginning that "as a result of events in China long before this war, the British investor lost something like £400,000,000 of investments in that country." Following him came Mr. Lewis Jones with the statement that "Canada, which in the early days of the war produced about 3,500,000 tons of steel per annum, is now producing 6,000,000 tons." Mr. Jones added that "the Lend-Lease measures have practically driven us from certain export markets." For instance, the American Government forbade British manufacturers to use lend-lease steel for the making of tinsplate for export. "The result was," said Mr. Jones, "that the whole of the export industry of the tinsplate trade dried up, and the Americans said, 'We will look after your export trade.'" According to the same speaker, the American Government "are encouraging their traders, even during the period of the war, to expand their trade interests in South America, and they are encouraged to prepare for the post-war period."

Sir Granville Gibson revealed that he had "heard it said by a civil servant who is secretary of the Post-War Trade Export Committee that after the war it will be necessary for us to increase our exports by £150,000,000 to £200,000,000 a year above the 1938 figure to meet the loss of dividends on investments abroad. It will be a very difficult task, for at the end of this war the financial position of this country will not be by any means as sound as it was before the war. I think that we can say without hesitation that we shall become a debtor instead of a creditor country, and if we fail to increase our exports our standard of living and the level of wages will be adversely affected." Later, Sir Granville Gibson indicated the dangers of the industrialisation of the colonies. The Minister of Industry in South Africa had told him that "during this war they had in South Africa set up certain factories mainly for the production of manufacturing chemicals, and he said that it was only reasonable that after the war they would desire to continue to manufacture those goods." And of India the same speaker said: "Again, from India, the 1½d. and 2d. an hour country for skilled workers, they are exporting to this country goods of the industry with which I am connected (leather). I am not com-

plaining that during the war they are increasing their exports, because we want these goods at this time. I can, however, foresee by the way in which their exports are going up by leaps and bounds to the extent of millions of pounds that there will be a terrible amount of competition with India after the war, particularly as their goods come in free and our goods going into India have to bear a 25 per cent duty."

And, to give a last example, here is what Sir George Schuster said a prophet in 1913 would have had to foresee to indicate the state of Britain twenty years later:—"The National Debt rising from £700,000,000 to £8,000,000,000, and the service on that debt, increasing from £24,500,000 to a peak of £378,000,000; our expenditure on social services going up from about £62,000,000 to something like £500,000,000; our export trade being reduced in total from about one-third of the net industrial output to something not much more than one-seventh; our cotton piece-goods exports reduced from over 7,000,000,000 yards to 3,000,000,000 yards; our coal exports from 73,000,000 tons to 39,000,000 tons, and so on."

Both the facts and figures given in this Debate as well as the sombre tone in which it was carried on gave an indication of the decline in Britain's world position which will be made manifest after the war. But the bankruptcy of the Government, of the Labour Party and of imperialism itself was made particularly clear in the attempts at finding a solution of the problem.

Some speakers tentatively suggested emigration to the Dominions and Colonies as a solution. Dr. Russell Thomas, for instance, said that "another thing we must think of in order to meet our difficulties is a policy of emigration. Our people probably will not want to emigrate, but we shall have to encourage them by co-operative schemes with our Dominions, in order to fill the wide open spaces." Sir Granville Gibson agreed with the need for emigration but pointed out that "when I have been in New Zealand, Australia or Canada I have noticed a definite disinclination to take immigrants from this country, except those possessed of reasonably substantial means." And truly the hon. Members were wise to skip lightly over this solution, for they know that the Dominions are faced with trade struggles and unemployment no less than is Britain. The frontiers of capitalism have ceased to expand.

IMPERIALISM HINDERS

INDUSTRIALISATION OF COLONIES

Another proposal was that Britain should use its influence to reverse or prevent the process whereby the agricultural and raw material countries are becoming industrialised. This thoroughly reactionary suggestion was not pressed strongly, for the chaining of the major part of humanity to a sub-human standard of living is not the sort of thing that is freely discussed in Parliament. But it is clearly taken seriously by a section of British capitalism. Dr. Russell Thomas introduced the matter by indicating its difficulties: "If you are to dictate to a country how much primary production it should go in for, you are seriously interfering with national sovereignty, and that is not an easy matter to get over. But, nevertheless, now is the time to consider schemes in that regard." And in the matter of exactly how pressure should be used, he pointed out that: "primary producing countries will be compelled to sell their primary products and therefore this fact should be used to our advantage as it might well control the degree of industrialisation they indulge in. That is where we should always be ready to get in and we must prepare the ground now." In other words, the doctor has the fantastic idea of perpetuating for all time a position that existed last century, but has now gone—the position of Britain being the workshop of the world. It was Britain's very position as the

workshop of the world that played a major role in starting the rest of the world on the road of industrialisation. The doctor will find in the coming period that the dialectics of Britain's position are by no means simple.

Shinwell, supposedly a left Labourite but in reality a staunch supporter of imperialism, chipped in with a suggestion to use strong-arm methods to prevent Canada getting too powerfully industrialised. "It is true that in Canada they are developing secondary industries. The question they have to consider is whether they can afford to develop secondary industries, which means not taking manufactured goods from us, if we say, 'We are sorry, but we cannot take your butter and your cheese.' They have to make up their minds equally with us."

It is clear that one of the outstanding features of a capitalist post-war world would be the attempt to halt the process of industrialisation. And when the old methods of currency manipulation, tariffs, etc. proved unavailing, then recourse would have to be made to methods not dissimilar from those which were planned by Hitler and Co. for operation in the New Order. Attempts would be made not only to prevent industrialisation but also to thrust already advanced countries back into the position of suppliers of agricultural produce. For the moment we merely note this "solution" as one factor of the world peace and pass on.

"CLUTCHING AT STRAWS"

Perhaps the dizziest heights to which this Parliamentary Debate aspired were in the suggestions that salvation lay in developing as exports those specialised products which they could make better than any other country. Cutlery and Pottery were mentioned as examples. But for how long will other countries lag behind Britain in the production of these things? There is a classic story of how the Japanese succeeded in copying the highly "individual" Harris tweed. The Scottish manufacturers fell back on their last defence—that you could tell the original article by its distinctive smell. But Japanese chemistry came up to scratch. Within a few months they had also manufactured the smell. Even if Britain ultimately fell back on exporting astronomical quantities of its most distinctive and individualistic production—Scotch whisky—where is the guarantee that the task of manufacturing an exact copy of the water of Highland mountain streams that gives the whisky its flavour will remain for long beyond the reach of American chemists?

The bankruptcy of these proposals is clear. They are the merest clutching at straws. And they are confined to the solution of purely economic problems. But Britain's problems will by no means be only economic. Political problems of the most grandiose sort will arise at the end of the war, and perhaps before it. And the economic problems themselves will raise great political issues. The approach of Parliament to these questions is the approach of last century. It is the sort of approach that might have got by when British imperialism was expanding. But the outstanding feature of the present period is that expansion has ended, and contraction has set in. Future actions, future politics, future standards of living, future participation in world affairs will be based not on a growing empire and increasing power but on a shrivelling empire and declining power. The empire that expanded from 2,500,000 square miles in 1860 to 13,270,793 square miles in 1936 has reached a standstill, and is even shrinking. And the economic might of that empire is shrinking a hundred times faster than its physical boundaries. Economic and political contraction became universal after the last war. America which in 15 years had admitted thirteen and a half million immigrants closed its gates in 1923.

The clanging of those gates marked the end of an entire historical epoch. Expansion had ended; contraction had begun. And with expansion there ended at the same time the politics of expansion. Italy and Germany, were unable to find a place in world economy which could permit the full flowering of capitalist democracy. Spain found itself in the same position. With the lack of a real workers' leadership Fascism came in these countries. The period of the contraction of world economy expressed itself in Fascism. Only able to offer low standards, low wages, little work, capitalism in these countries could not achieve the sort of stability achieved by Britain in the period of expansion; that is, the stability of bourgeois democracy. Instead, in order to safeguard its position it had to achieve stability another way—by smashing the workers' organisations—and then preparing in its own way to get a position in world economy. That way could only be by war. Internally, the period of contraction meant a retreat from the capitalist democracy that had flourished during expansion. Internationally it meant a retreat from the "self-determination of nations" and an advance toward the open exercise of force by the most powerful nations over the less powerful.

SOCIALISM OR FASCISM

Unless Britain's position is studied within the framework of world economic (and political) contraction it is meaningless. And unless the coming political perspective is related to the coming economic retrogression it has no reality. During last century world economic expansion permitted Britain the luxury of laissez faire in business and Parliamentary democracy in politics. The possibilities of great internal expansion permitted America also to achieve a great measure of bourgeois democracy. What, then, will be Britain's politics in the period of shrinking world trade, ever-falling financial power and declining imperialist domination? Whoever thinks that they will be the politics of democracy and of Parliamentary oppositions is living in another world. The choice will be squarely placed before the masses of Britain—either Socialism or Fascism.

As yet the leading section of the capitalists has not accepted the necessity of Fascism. They are unwilling to face up to that while any other possibility remains, for it is a high overhead expense. But at the same time they are under no illusions that a return to the old system as it existed before the war will be possible. Desperately they are seeking around for a middle road. They discuss the 'need to continue with controls after the war'; the advisability of a 'Third Party' which will rise above the 'vested interests' of both the Tory and Labour Parties; the continuation of 'national unity' in peace as well as in war. Professor Carr, leading theorist of British capitalism puts it that "the new faith . . . will proclaim its independence of these organisations . . . of big business, of trade unions and of the great political parties—and aim at the emancipation of society from the vested interests which they have come to represent."

But not for long will matters be left in balance and allow the capitalists the luxury of indecisiveness. For so many forces, and such powerful forces, are working to transform the situation in Britain that crisis will come upon crisis like great waves beating on the shore. With even more speed and intensity than in Italy, Germany or Spain will all the inessential be swept away and the direct choice be posed—capitalists or workers, Fascism or Socialism. In the case of Italy and Spain these were backward countries with a large peasantry, striving to achieve a modern economy and a civilised standard of living. In Germany's case a modern economy and industry had been achieved but it could not find a place on the contracting world market. In all three cases a slow process forward from dull, grinding poverty was

halted. But in Britain's case it will be a matter of a sudden and catastrophic descent from comparative affluence to one of penury, starvation, and mass unemployment. The political consciousness and the political needs of both workers and capitalists will accordingly express themselves more sharply, more powerfully and more rapidly.

For what will Britain's position be after the war? A tiny island off the west coast of Europe. A population which expanded almost magically from 9 million in 1800 to 47,000,000 today. This population could only find jobs and a reasonable standard of living, on the basis of Britain being the leading World Power. But with the reduction to a third rate power under the domination of America this country will be grossly over-populated. It has only four raw materials in any quantity—coal, salt, fish and the sea. And the most abundant of these, the sea, it does not even attempt to use. While America has already built a "sea-factory" which in 1942 extracted 72 million pounds of magnesium from the Atlantic, Britain has not even conducted a measurable amount of research into the question. With the loss of the greater part of her markets complete sections of British industry will be redundant. After the last war there were coal and textile areas where unemployment assumed the proportions of a terrible, wasting disease, where over a quarter of the working population was out of work. After the present war it is not a quarter but half or three-quarters of the workers in these and other industries that will find themselves unemployed. For instance, in regard to shipping, Maxton has pointed out in Parliament that "one year's labour and material on the present scale can reproduce the whole of the merchant fleet of the world. A ship once in the water can reasonably be given a 25 years' life . . . what are the shipyard workers on the Clyde and the steel men who stand behind them going to do for the other 24 years?" Lancashire's textile industry will be in a similar plight. All the world now makes textiles. With engineering, the same. Even backward India is building up an engineering industry during the war. And, in general, what will not be lost through the industrialisation of the backward countries will be lost to American competition. Parallel with unemployment will go drastic decreases in imports, and particularly of the foodstuffs on which this great population depends. Of Britain's total import in 1938, valued £850,000,000, about £418,000,000 consisted of food.

THE FUTURE LIES WITH THE WORKERS

And let it never be forgotten that the very features that made the phenomenal growth in Britain's population possible also conditioned the social make-up of that population. Whereas Spain's working class never rose above 10 per cent of the population, Italy's 30 per cent, and even Germany's 50 per cent, Britain's, on the other hand constituted 65 per cent of the population before the war and has increased during the course of it to about 80 per cent, with only 7 per cent gaining their livelihood from the soil.

This does not mean that the smaller proportion of workers in the less advanced countries makes the task of the revolution more difficult. On the contrary, the opportunity presented to the workers of providing a lead to the peasants assures them (provided they have a correct policy) of the support of overwhelming millions. The success of the Russian Revolution with a working class amounting to only about 15 per cent of the population indicates this clearly enough. But it does mean that there is only the tiniest petty bourgeoisie in Britain, completely inadequate to provide any sort of stable social basis for a British Fascism.

On the other hand the workers, that is the vast and overwhelming majority of the people, will be revolution-

ised at an unprecedented rate by the sudden changes in their position. And the war itself is emphasising what will occur when it is ended. For, in spite of everything, there has been the certainty of work during the war for millions who never experienced that certainty before. Far from being able to provide that same certainty during peace the capitalists will only be able to offer the certainty of unemployment. So much the greater therefore will be the shock of post-war disillusionment.

Were this the full tale of the influences that will affect the British workers in the coming period we could claim with certainty that they would become the most revolutionary section of the entire world working class. But, in addition, there has to be taken into consideration the fact that there will be the terrific impact of revolutions in other countries. The bankruptcy of world capitalism will inevitably express itself in revolutions on every Continent. And these will have an influence which will overshadow even the great influence of the Russian Revolution.

To be sure British and American imperialism will exert every effort to quell these revolutions by force. But by that very fact they will add oil to the fires of revolution at home. The soldiers will be affected by the same forces as the workers. And they will not allow themselves to be used for counter-revolution. The attempts to smash the Russian Revolution had to be called off for this very reason. But even supposing, owing to slow reactions on the part of the soldiers, the imperialists succeeded in smashing a revolution in one place or another, that does not represent victory for them, or even the beginnings of victory. For they would have to transfer their forces to another place, and another, to quell further revolutions. And all the time they would have the workers and soldiers of the home country being more profoundly affected by events. Truly, the programme of Anglo-American imperialism is fantastic. It amounts to nothing less than the attempt to hold down, not by persuasion but by force, the peoples of the entire world. Equally truly the opportunities for the workers of Britain are in the highest degree favourable. The conditions at home against which they will have to struggle, and the influences abroad which will encourage them in the direction of a struggle for power will work together to convert the British working class into the most dynamic and revolutionary force in the world.

The capitalists are aware that the coming revolutions will not be confined to countries across the seas, and occasionally they reveal the fact that they are preparing to deal with it. A Conservative M.P., for instance, writing to the "Sunday Times" stated:

"Britain must maintain a strong Army, a strong Navy and a strong Air Force. Only a strong Britain and a strong America can maintain the peace of the world and keep down not only the danger of aggression but the smouldering fires of revolution which may yet set Europe aflame, and from which perhaps even our own country may not remain immune."

And recently Lieut.-Gen. Sir Arthur Smith, G.O.C. London district Home Guard has indicated the hope of the capitalists that the Home Guard can be used as a counter-revolutionary force:

"Quite apart from the responsibilities of the Home Guard during the war, I would remind you of the great task members will have afterwards, for when the Armistice is signed, human nature being what it is, there may well be an inclination for the discipline of the country not to be as steady as it should."

But this sort of programme is completely without foundation. The British capitalists will not be faced with a tribal revolt against which the proverbial "whiff of grapeshot", or even a squadron or two of bombing planes would suffice. On the contrary, millions of people will be involved, and what affects the workers will also

affect the soldiers. The moods and actions of one will be the moods and actions of the other.

It can be unhesitatingly asserted—the coming period in Britain will be favourable in the extreme for the working-class. One of the most important political laws of our period was laid down by Trotsky—that Fascism is only successful after the workers have been first of all faced with the opportunity of power and have failed to take it. Not until the proletarian wave has receded can reaction place the Fascist guardsman in charge of its security. And in Germany, let it be remembered, it was not until several favourable proletarian waves had been smashed back that Hitler could come to power. How much more so, then, in Britain where the workers are fresh, have such an overwhelming superiority in numbers, will be moved by such gigantic forces and have such a tradition of organisation and militancy? Not once but many times would the British workers have to be defeated before the chains of Fascism could be fastened to them. And even then, so little stability can capitalism achieve that such a regime could not hope

to last as long as Italian Fascism, or even as long as the German variety.

Even a temporary victory of Fascism is, however, unlikely. The first wave of revolution may catch the proletariat unready, and without a thoroughly prepared party to stand at its head. But the very experiences of an initial defeat will contain the most valuable lessons for the next favourable wave, and it will come quickly. The defeat of 1905 prepared the way for the triumph of 1917. Similarly in Britain, but with as many months between the two as there were years in Russia.

It is necessary to understand first of all the profound change that is taking place in Britain's world position. It is necessary to grasp the nature of the changes that this will bring about in mass consciousness and political expression. It is necessary above all to prepare now a conscious leadership which will assure that the mighty mass movement which is inevitable in Britain will not fritter itself away without result, but will be guided confidently into the channels of workers' power and Socialism.

Our Tasks under the Nazi Boot

By MARC LORIS

Nazi oppression passed over Europe like a steam-roller. Throughout the continent there now remains, between the Nazi power and the population, no legal organisation in which the masses can take shelter and regroup themselves. After the political parties and the trade unions, the work of destruction has been extended even to the most neutral and most insignificant organisations, for the Nazis feared—and with good reason—that even the slightest of them might become a crystallisation-point of resistance. Into the tiniest groups the Nazis introduced their own men, who proposed adherence to the "New Order"; even stamp-collectors' organisations were "gleichgeschaltet".

What remains of the workers' organisations had to pass over into illegality and to new methods. The traditional bourgeois and petty-bourgeois organisations have given way to underground groups, of a new character, not directly stemming from the old parties. Small illegal groups which often do not extend beyond the limits of a city or of a region are appearing everywhere, only a few can maintain contacts—and even those very irregularly—on a national scale. Innumerable little newspapers spring up and disappear. Liaisons are established and broken again. On the whole, there is to be observed, with the passing months, a certain progress toward centralisation, but very slowly, and often interrupted as a result of the severe conditions of illegality. Even that political movement which was best adapted to underground work, Stalinism, is suffering greatly: in spite of a powerful apparatus and abundant resources, relations between the centre and the regional organisations are often broken—a situation which cannot fail to create favourable occasions for discussion and united action between the Communist Party members and the Trotskyists.

Of all the working-class organisations, however, the Stalinist parties remain the most powerful and the most active—and by a large margin. The Stalinist propaganda is, of course, completely chauvinist in character, and is very careful not to speak of socialism. Apart from the Stalinists, the two most noteworthy centres of

resistance of the working-class movement are formed by the Left Socialist groups in Poland (some of them close to Trotskyism and all hostile to the Government-in-Exile) and by what remains of the Norwegian trade union movement, which the Nazis have been unable to wipe out entirely. Of the Second International but little remains. Lately there could be noted a certain renewal of activity by the official Socialist groups in Belgium and in the north of France; but it retains an extremely fragmentary character.

THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS MOVEMENTS

Broad layers of the petty bourgeoisie have lost their economic and social balance. The German occupation has caused, on the whole, an enormous pauperisation and even, to a certain degree, proletarianisation, of the petty bourgeoisie. This social crisis finds its political expression in the formation of the innumerable groups and movements which reflect all the rainbow colourations of the petty bourgeoisie.

At the reactionary end of this spectrum are to be found the traditional chauvinist groups, such as the Gaullist organisation in France. One must carefully distinguish between the masses' very widespread but rather vague sympathies for the "democratic" camp, including De Gaulle, and the Gaullist organisation itself. The latter is made up above all of former military men and functionaries. They have no feeling for activity by the masses to whom, for that matter, they are incapable of speaking. Most of them are nearly as terrified of a movement of the masses as of the German occupation. Their principal activity in the military field is espionage on behalf of England and, in the political field, waiting for an Anglo-American debarkment.

At the other extreme of this rainbow arc to be found some organisations which are honestly looking for a way out of the intolerable situation of the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie. The elements most suited to become the spokesmen of these lawyers are the youth and the intellectuals. Thus among their leaders are often to be found students, teachers and writers. Violently repelled by fascism, these social strata are turning

toward socialism in search of a solution for their misfortunes. They willingly concede that the bourgeois system is coming to its end, and accept the programme of the federation of peoples, but they have not yet overcome all their distrust of the workers. Their leaders often keep hunting for a rosier path than that of the "dictatorship of the proletariat," and accuse Marxism of being "narrow." Between these extreme types of groupings are to be found, of course, all intermediary forms.

In the terrible conditions of illegality, there are inevitably, among the various underground groups, frequent practical agreements: for printing newspapers, for transporting literature and people, etc.—even finding paper is a serious problem. Without such contacts, it would be simply impossible to exist; and they involve, needless to say, no compromise in programme.

Even now in the occupied countries, especially in western Europe, occasions for public demonstrations are not infrequent: housewives' demonstrations against the lack of foodstuffs, demonstrations against those restaurants which serve food to the rich without ration cards, demonstrations against the "collaborationists," public demonstrations on various national holidays (Bastille Day, etc.). These demonstrations are organised by illegal groups of every kind, and the question of our participation arises. It is difficult to give a general answer. The important point for determining whether we participate is not so much the nature of the occasion or of the initiators of the demonstration, but the political situation and the possibilities of the given moment. If certain demonstrations are repeatedly held, mobilising an increasing number of demonstrators, it is the duty of the revolutionary party to call on the workers to participate in them, even though organised by petty-bourgeois national groups. Of course, it is also the task of the party to appear in them with its own slogans. After the crushing of all organisations, the disappearance of all organised political life, every manifestation which "restores the feeling of collective action" however modest or confused its objectives may be, is extremely progressive, and the task of the revolutionary party is to aid, and if possible, to broaden it.

Obviously, while taking advantage of every possible step forward, we cannot limit our freedom to criticise reactionary and utopian programmes. Now as always, the Marxists carry on their work of explaining and clarifying. They must especially denounce the falsity and the hypocrisy of all the chauvinist groups who desire nothing but revenge and who, although demanding the freedom of their own nation, do not hesitate and will not hesitate to participate in the oppression of other nations. Thus, all movements which find their inspiration in London and Washington (governments-in-exile, General De Gaulle, etc.) must be characterised not as national movements, but as imperialist movements by their aims as well as by their methods (alliance with Anglo-American imperialism, exploitation of Belgian colonies, of a part of the French, Dutch colonies, etc.). These groups attempt to chain the popular national revolt to one of the imperialist camps. In new circumstances they fill the traditional role of the bourgeois parties that have their base in the petty bourgeoisie. One such party was the defunct Radical-Socialist Party of France which rested on the democratic aspirations of the French peasant the better to chain him to big business. Now the Gaullist movement exploits for imperialist aims the aroused national sentiment. Its programme and those of like groups can bring only new catastrophes to Europe.

As for the various petty-bourgeois groupings which are turning in the direction of socialism, we must have a much more patient and pedagogical attitude toward them. These groups, rebelling against the present op-

pression, go so far as to blame the system of imperialist trusts and monopolies, but they always retain, as we have indicated, some apprehension toward the workers' programme. Their general programme, vaguely speaking, is the most consistent formal democracy. In discussions with these groups the main task is to show the reality behind the forms of pure democracy, and patiently but firmly point out to them that a choice is inevitable, for there is no "third way."

In the present situation all democratic demands are charged with an enormous revolutionary potentiality; for in the epoch of the disintegration of the capitalist regime only the proletarian revolution can bring reality to democratic principles. Therefore the Marxist parties must be the most resolute champions of these demands, knowing well that their fulfillment leads society to the threshold of socialism. But this is also the reason that democratic demands become a lie when separated from the socialist programme, for without this programme they cannot materialise. Not only is bourgeois democracy merely a formal democracy covering up the real inequality between capitalist and proletarian; but in our epoch even this formal democracy can exist only at brief intervals, in anemic form and will soon give way to Bonapartist and fascist dictatorships or to socialism. To speak of freedom now, and to remain silent about the only means of attaining it, by the proletarian revolution, is to repeat an empty phrase, is to deceive the masses. Joint action with democratic petty-bourgeois groups, often unavoidable and moreover desirable, can never stop us from criticising their programmes before the masses and from trying to win the best part of their organisation.

The programmes of nearly all the underground groupings, Stalinists included, contain the "demand for a Single National Assembly, elected by universal suffrage. For some of these groups, that is their only programme for the day following the fall of the Hitlerian empire. In the French section of the Fourth International, especially in the occupied zone, a discussion has been taking place on this slogan of a National (or Constituent) Assembly.

The arguments in favour of its adoption are reduced, in general, to this: If we are ready to fight for democratic liberties how can we fail to write into our programme the demand which crowns all these freedoms, the National Assembly? This reasoning is not correct. We fight with the masses for even the smallest democratic liberties precisely because this fight opens the road to the proletarian revolution; at the same time we explain that this revolution is the only assurance against the return of oppression, of dictatorship, of fascism. The National Assembly is by no means the crowning of democratic demands. The real meat of these demands can come into existence only through the development of workers' and peasants' committees. When separated from the question of power—bourgeois or proletarian—the slogan of a National Assembly at the present moment in Europe is nothing but an empty form, a shell without revolutionary content. Under today's conditions of illegality, the slogan does not correspond to any real experience of the masses, while every group covers different political programmes with this formula; the slogan thus takes on a ritual character and becomes a piece of democratic charlatanism.

Will we not pass through a "democratic" stage after the collapse of Nazi power? This is very likely. But it is also very likely that in this period we will already be seeing the formation of workers' committees, embryo soviets, transforming the "democratic stage" into a more or less long dual power. It is possible that at that time the slogan of a National Assembly may become filled with a certain revolutionary content. General De Gaulle's movement officially declared, some months ago, that at

the downfall of Nazism, the power will come into the hands of a single Assembly elected by all the French in the most democratic manner; but in articles and conversations Gaullist representatives are already explaining that between the collapse of the Nazi tyranny and the convoking of the National Assembly there will elapse an inter-regnum necessary to save the country from chaos and to re-establish order, and that during this time democracy will be quite limited. We can easily imagine what this means. It is possible that at that time the cry for immediate convoking of the Assembly will correspond to the real experience of the masses and will have an offensive character against the provisional government. However, that is the music of tomorrow.

TERRORISM AND SABOTAGE

The criticism of the petty-bourgeois and Stalinist programmes should be followed, of course, by a critique of their methods. Nazi oppression has already aroused in Europe multiple forms of resistance: passive demonstrations of all kinds, attempts on the lives of German officers, wiping out "collaborationists," explosions, train wrecks, fires, production slow-downs in the factories, damaging of machines, strikes, street demonstrations, hunger riots, guerrilla activity—the last of these becoming almost full-fledged war in the Balkans. The very variety of these activities reveals the diversity of the social strata that have been drawn into the movement. The difficulties of the present moment, the participation of petty-bourgeois layers therein, and the deliberate policy of Stalinism, have aroused a wave of adventurism.

Individual terrorism has become common throughout the entire continent. The Stalinists in particular have combined a vulgarly chauvinist opportunism in their programme with a stupid and criminal adventurism in action. The revolutionary party can only repeat all the classic arguments of Marxism against individual terrorism; they still retain today all their original validity: In discussions with workers under Stalinist influence, we must in particular point out the connection between terrorism and bureaucratism. The terrorist hero and the bureaucrat both want to act for the masses, apart from them. Both terrorism and bureaucratism reflect contempt for the incompetent masses who must be pulled out of their difficulties by the individual. We repeat: Nothing can be gained by individual attempts; they merely sacrifice precious devotion uselessly and delay the action of the masses. Of course, our criticism of terrorism does not arise from any moral indignation. We must constantly emphasise that we are on the side of the terrorists in their struggle against the oppressors, but that as against terrorism we are for more efficacious methods.

Certain forms of sabotage which are the action of individuals or of tiny isolated groups are scarcely to be distinguished from terrorism and are often nothing more than explosions of rage and despair, without any real efficacy. But, ever since the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1939, the Czech workers have undertaken to sabotage production *inside* the factories. Their example is now followed throughout all Europe.

Sabotage was a means of struggle of the youth of the labour movement, at a time when capitalism had to impose the discipline of the modern factory on the handicraft or peasant masses. It was then that there appeared the Scotch "ca'canny" anarcho-syndicalism in France, the I.W.W. in America. These movements represented only a brief passing tendency of the class struggle. The workers found in the strike a weapon which was both more effective and less costly.

Nazi oppression has rendered strikes extremely difficult in the Europe of today. Hence the workers have been obliged to have recourse to sabotage, which bears the relation to the strike that guerrilla warfare does to

regular warfare. There is no doubt that throughout the entire continent the workers have often undertaken to slow down production and lower its quality on their own initiative, without awaiting the summons of illegal organisations, thus demonstrating that this method has at present nothing artificial about it and that its "abnormal" character simply corresponds to "abnormal" conditions.

The revolutionary party must of course work to extend sabotage inside the factories in the occupied countries. The task is, above all, to interest in this the bulk of the workers of the plant and not to consider this work a technical job reserved to a few isolated "experts." This is equally important from the practical as well as the political point of view. Repression is rendered infinitely more difficult, and the collective nature of the struggle helps to overcome the atomisation of the working class brought about by the crushing of its organisations. The first months of the German occupation were, in general, characterised by a disappearance of collective consciousness, each thinking only of saving himself, in his own way. This state of mind has already been overcome at least partially, precisely by the movement of national resistance. The revolutionaries must always endeavour to restore to the workers the consciousness of their collective power.

The collective forms which can be taken by sabotage within the factories are: the slowing down of production, the lowering of its quality, the rapid wearing out of the machines. Everywhere that they can, revolutionaries must bring about the formation of a committee inside the factory—illegal, obviously—which organises and supervises the work of sabotage and protection against stool-pigeons. It is this collective sabotage, which re-groups the workers around a common goal and against which repression can only with difficulty operate, which represents the greatest danger for Hitler. Sabotage, when conceived of as a direct aid to the Soviet Union, does not exclude isolated acts against particularly sensitive points in the economic and military apparatus (power plants, tunnels and railroad bridges, etc.). But all that can be done in this field will always remain relatively limited. Only by taking on a mass character can sabotage really threaten the German military machine, and it can acquire this character only at the centre of the collective strength of the workers, in their places of work.

"But," a Stalinist might say, "do not the interests of the defence of the USSR not justify individual terrorism? Aren't you yourselves for the defence of the Soviet Union? The European masses are engaged in a war against the Nazis behind the front—and in war all methods are good! Of course, Marxists are right in opposing terrorism considered as a means of 'exciting' the masses to struggle, but now the killing of German officers by revolvers or bombs is a simple war measure." This reasoning, which reflects the present policy of the Stalinists in the occupied countries, betrays an ignorance of military art as well as of revolutionary policy. It is precisely in a serious struggle that all methods are not good. The task of the military chief or of the revolutionary militant consists in choosing the means which lead to the end and putting aside those which are sterile or even harmful.

Terrorism, by its very nature, always retains an individual character. "Mass terrorism" would be the revolution. All the terrorism today is, when all is said and done, scarcely a pin-prick for Hitler. But, on the other side of the ledger, the liabilities are enormous. The best working-class blood is shed without counting. The disproportion between the sacrifices and the results obtained can engender nothing but discouragement and passivity. It is not easy to judge from afar, but it seems that the movement of resistance suffered a serious

set-back in Czechoslovakia after the assassination of Heydrich.

We have always maintained that the defence of the USSR is indissolubly linked with the class struggle of the international proletariat. This principle has direct consequences for the defence of the workers' state. Stalin sacrificed the revolutionary interests of the international proletariat for alliances with the imperialist bourgeoisies. After the successive defeats of the European proletariat, engendered by Stalinism, the catastrophe was inevitable. Today, Stalin tries to jump over the consequences of his fatal policy of hurling the workers of occupied Europe into the adventure of terrorism. He thus not only blocks their revolutionary future, but also does a disservice to the military interests of the USSR.

The sabotage of production within the factories can produce infinitely greater results than can the murder of a few hundred or even a few thousand German officers or collaborationists. Awakening the collective initiative of the working class instead of paralysing it, sabotage of production can attain a scope which no wave of terrorism can ever reach. At the same time it accelerates the regroupment of the working class, recreates its collective consciousness, and prepares it to enter its revolutionary future. The last few months have revealed that Hitler is struggling desperately to keep up his armament production. Sabotage in the factories represents for him a mortal danger. But one of the most important conditions for its spread is turning our back on individual terrorism and all forms of adventurism. Even in the Europe of today the USSR's immediate military requirements and the interests of the European proletariat's revolutionary future completely coincide.

We must further note that individual terrorism is an obstacle to fraternisation with the German soldiers. It tightens the bonds between soldiers and officers instead of breaking them. The German military authorities take the greatest precautions to prevent contact between troops and inhabitants. Every attempt to spread propaganda among the German soldiers is punished with extreme severity, for this is a mortal danger to the Nazi generals. This is also why the task of fraternisation can never be abandoned by revolutionists.

THE GUERRILLAS

In central and south-eastern Europe geographic and social conditions have permitted the appearance of guerrillas. They have sprung up especially in regions where the population is spread out, where railroads are scarce, where communication is difficult. They are principally peasant movements. But not entirely. Whenever they were able, groups of workers have joined the bands. It has even been noticed that in Czechoslovakia guerrilla bands have been formed directly by workers. It is reported that "densely wooded areas are furnishing a place of safety to the hundreds of saboteurs from the mines and the iron and steel plants of Kladno, to organisers of passive resistance, and leaders of strikers. After a recent clash which occurred between the Nazi police and Czech miners who were found to be in possession of dynamite, the Germans undertook to drive the refugees from this territory; but the fugitives, having full support of the population, successfully eluded the members of the Gestapo." In various parts of Poland the peasants have formed guerrilla bands, which are now aided by Soviet partisans who have succeeded in filtering through the Nazi lines. Guerrilla bands are also very active in Ruthenia.

But it is in the Balkans that the movement has taken on the greatest proportions, and especially in what was yesterday Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was a product of Versailles, financially support by France as a bastion of her hegemony in Europe. The fact that the Belgrade government ruled over at least five different nationalities

was one of the reasons for the quick German victory. The country was occupied by the Germans and Italians. The Yugoslav state was destroyed. Under the weight of unprecedented oppression, the peasants have started to gather together in the mountains to resist. The imperialist war was succeeded by a national struggle, half revolt, half war, against the German and Italian oppressors, as well as against the governments they set up in Belgrade and Zagreb. This struggle is going through many vicissitudes. Bands are entirely dispersed only to form again later on. Villages revolting prematurely are crushed. Officially, several hundred villages have already been reported razed by the Germans and Italians.

Moreover, the movement is widely divided. Information is scarce and often rather dubious, nevertheless it is clear that various bands operate separately. They are separated by national differences: Serbians, Slovenes, Bosnians, Montenegrians, etc.; they are also separated politically and socially. The Chetniks, a Serbian organisation under the direct control of Mikhailovich, seems to be the most reactionary. It opposes any social change and thinks only of re-establishing the previous regime. Other bands have set up "Communist" or "Soviet" regimes. What is the reality behind these words? It is rather difficult to tell. These bands are composed, it seems, of peasants; mine workers have joined many of them and now form a substantial proportion of some bands. At any rate, the differences are great enough to have provoked armed conflicts among the various bands, and Mikhailovich has undertaken repressions against these "Communists."

Thus, as soon as the weight of oppression is somewhat lightened, the national struggle immediately raises the social question. The example of Yugoslavia shows, although on a limited scale, the extremely unstable character of the movement of national resistance in Europe today and how it leads immediately to the class struggle. Of course, we are entirely on the side of the bands of poor peasants and workers in their conflicts with the reactionary elements. But that does not mean abandoning the ground of national independence. Criticism of Mikhailovich and other conservative groups should proceed on the basis of liberating the country: Mikhailovich's repressions sabotage the resistance; in order to arouse the peasants we have to open up a social perspective for them, etc. However, temporary military agreements between the revolutionary groups and Mikhailovich are still entirely possible in the future.

Cannot the movement of resistance completely merge with the imperialist war? This is possible and would be nothing new. Many national wars have ended up as imperialist wars. If the Anglo-American camp should open a new front in the Balkans, the national character of the struggle would disappear immediately. But this is tomorrow's possibility, not today's reality. At the present time, the struggle in the Balkans is a link in the whole movement of resistance of the European peoples to Nazism, and it thus takes on great importance. The guerrillas, being principally a peasant movement, create the greatest danger for the states where quasi-feudal relations still prevail in the countryside (especially Hungary, but also Rumania, Bulgaria and Slovakia). Revolution in central and south-eastern Europe, where the agrarian problem has never been resolved even in the bourgeois manner, will kindle large peasant revolts, and the present movement of resistance is their direct preparation.

Four months ago the Hungarian government officially announced the arrest of three hundred officers and non-commissioned officers of the Hungarian army for having helped guerrilla bands in Yugoslavia, Poland and the USSR by transmitting arms and information to them. We can measure the importance of this incident if we

recall that Hungary is one of the countries where the landlords' rule over the peasants is most brutal. The resistance in Yugoslavia has called forth revolt in all the neighbouring countries. Guerrillas have appeared in Greece, Macedonia, Rumania and Bulgaria. Even in Croatia, to which Hitler gave formal independence, the peasants are starting to form guerrilla bands against the Italians. It would be imprudent to exaggerate the present political consciousness of these movements or to build too great hopes on them as long as they have not found a leadership in the urban proletariat. But to deny their importance for the revolution and to remain indifferent toward them would be blind passivity.

FROM NATIONAL RESISTANCE TO THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

Exactly what role will the demand for national liberation play in the preparation and development of the European revolution? Only the historian of the future will be able to answer this question precisely and to him will fall the lot of definitively measuring the place occupied by national revolt in the great torrent of hatred, of anger, of despair and of hope, which carries the peoples of occupied Europe toward the revolution. To us falls the lot of giving an answer for action. This answer is: The slogan of national liberation has played up to the present, and will continue to play for some time, an important role in regrouping the masses, overcoming their atomisation and drawing them into the political struggle. This is more than enough for it to appear on our banner.

Through what concrete forms of struggle will the movement of resistance in the various European countries pass? How will it connect with the proletarian revolution? The answer to these questions depends on the relationship of the contending forces, in particular the unfolding of the imperialist war. If Germany should maintain a firm grip on the European continent for many years, it would be difficult for the movement to raise itself above its present political level, which is still primitive, and would threaten to take an increasingly narrow national character. But the perspective of a long German domination over Europe must now appear to be more and more illusory even to Hitler himself.

The resistance of the Soviet workers and "kolkhozniki" shows more and more clearly the limits of the German military machine. The progressive weakening of German imperialism will bring with it not only a quantitative multiplication of revolutionary actions throughout the continent, but will give a new character to the struggle. Terrorist attempts will be superseded by the action of the masses.

During recent weeks the first signs of this transformation have appeared. Athens has seen a general transport workers' strike lasting several days. The workers of the Renault factories, heart of the Parisian proletariat, have threatened to go out on strike several times. The Belgian miners of the Borinage have recently unleashed several strike movements, and even, it is reported, obtained the liberation of hostages from the German authorities by threatening a general strike of miners. Above all, the present movement of the French workers of the unoccupied zone has aroused great masses.

These are the first signs of profound changes in the situation. Its principal causes are the weakening of the German oppressor and the rebirth of the collective consciousness of the masses. The renewal of activity of the masses will cause the wave of individual terrorism to

recede by giving more reality each day to the perspective of the revolution. Mutinies have already broken out, it appears, among the German soldiers in Norway and among the Italian troops. It is hard to determine the amount of truth in this information. However, it is at least plausible and, if premature, the future will give it truth. The mutinies will lead directly to the fraternisation of German soldiers with the oppressed peoples. The common struggle against common oppression will unite the masses around the programme of the Socialist United States of Europe.

The demand for national liberation and participation in the present movement of resistance do not in any way imply that we must expect new bourgeois national revolutions or some revolution of a special character which would be neither bourgeois nor proletarian, but "national," "popular" or "democratic." Any large revolution is "national" in the sense that it carries along the great majority of the nation, and the "popular" and "democratic" character of any revolution worthy of the name is apparent at first glance. But we cannot transform this sociological description, essentially superficial, into a political programme without turning our backs on the realities of the social classes, that is, abandoning Marxist ground. Both the French revolution of 1789 and the Russian revolution of 1917 were national, popular and democratic, but the first consolidated the reign of private property while the other ended it. That is why one was bourgeois and the other proletarian. As for the coming European revolution, its proletarian character will be apparent from its very first steps.

But will we not pass through a transition period after the fall of the Hitlerian empire? To those who pose this question, we must reply with another question: Of what transition are you speaking? A transition from what to what? A transition from the bourgeois revolution to the proletarian revolution? Or a transition between the Nazi dictatorship and the dictatorship of the proletariat? These are two very different things. Naturally, the proletarian revolution will pass through many vicissitudes, pauses, even temporary retreats. But the first thing to understand, if one does not wish to commit error after error, is that it will be a proletarian revolution struggling with the bourgeois counter-revolution.

Is a "democratic" stage, that is a renewal of bourgeois parliamentarianism, possible after the collapse of Nazism? Such an eventuality is not excluded. But such a regime would not be at all the fruit of a bourgeois revolution or of a non-class "democratic revolution"; it would be the temporary and unstable product of a proletarian revolution which has not yet been completed and still has to settle accounts with the bourgeois counter-revolution. He who has not completely penetrated this dialectic has nothing to offer to the European masses.

The present situation in the occupied countries is still profoundly reactionary. The task of the revolutionary socialists is still propaganda work, the gathering together and the formation of cadres. It is our duty to show, everywhere and always, the necessity of organised action of the masses. To all forms of adventurism flourishing at present, we must counterpose the organisation of revolutionary violence. In the face of every carefully organised action, on a large or small scale, the Nazis will be disconcerted. They have no "secret weapon" against revolution. They were victorious in Germany only thanks to the incapacity of the workers' leaders and never have had to face real actions of the masses. When these multiply, the Nazis will know how to answer them only with that combination of violence and imbecility which characterises all regimes condemned by history.

Labour's Opportunity in Southern Ireland

By TOM BURNS

To the dictates of allied policy, newspapers in Great Britain and America have had occasion to deliberately whip up campaigns against the neutrality of Eire. Isolated instances are seized upon and magnified a thousand times over, twisted, distorted, and moulded for the presentation of "truth" to the public. The Sunday capitalist rags usually feature a contribution from a writer—"just back from Eire." This special department for propaganda sets out deliberately to confuse the minds of the British and American workers over the position of Eire, and can be said to incite them against the Irish working class. Here we propose to give an objective review of the economic and political situation in the 26 countries.

The Second World War has undoubtedly affected the political and social life of Eire. Being an agricultural country, exporting in the main livestock and farming products, the cutting down of her exports to Britain by the British Government, gravely affected internal conditions. This market was responsible for 11/12ths of Eire's agricultural exports. The drop which took place can be thus seen:

Exports	1939	...	14,256,785
"	1941	...	8,119,444

The *Irish Times*, Oct. 28th, 1941, speaking in general on the adverse balance of trade estimates that as the result of it, 12-15 million in capital is being invested abroad each year.

The lack of the following vital imports is resulting in mass unemployment and hunger: wheat (Eire imports 2/3rds of her wheat consumption), animal feeding stuff, artificial manures, coal, petrol and most of her raw materials for her industries. The attempts by the new Government sponsored Irish Shipping Co. to buy ships abroad has brought poor results. The Minister for Supplies stated in the Dail (Parliament) that this Committee had only been able to buy 5 ships. It recalls the fact that when Frank Aitken, Minister for Co-ordination and Defence went to America in 1941 both for arms and ships he received a cold rebuff from Yankee Imperialism. No arms were given and it was only after a lot of wrangling, that the American democrats sold him a dilapidated ship. Despite the present hullabaloo and the many committees that the American capitalist class are setting up today, to feed Europe after the war, as we are told, the hunger of the Irish masses today is readily ignored. The 'paternal' Roosevelt, representative of big business in America, is once again unmasked.

Many industries have closed down in Eire, and others are carrying on, on a 2 to 3 day basis per week. The rise in unemployment despite the drawing into the National Army of an average of 50,000 men each year, the forcible transportation of the unemployed into rural areas to dig turf, the compulsory enrolment into Government Construction Corps, plus emigration, is symptomatic of a deep crisis which is developing.

Unemployment in 1942, numbered 102,000, being 6,000 more than Jan. 1939. Emigration has increased in war

years to 40-50,000 of a yearly average. According to the Secretary of the Irish Labour Party, without the above mentioned sources, unemployment would have reached 250,000. When we take into consideration that the total workable population, on their own farms and elsewhere is 1,339,085, unemployment ravaged every home.

As the unemployed man only receives 10/6 per week from the Unemployment Assistance, 5/- for his wife and with a total maximum amount of 29/- per week, no matter how many children there are, poverty is more widespread as the cost of living leaps up. In mid-November 1942, the index was 273, being 100 points over the 1939 figure. The increase is around 48 per cent. The *Irish Times* points out that the £1 is today worth 11/-.

STEEP RISE IN COST OF LIVING

The food prices as they affect large purchasers was shown in a table in the Irish Labour Party paper '*Torch*'. A hospital which buys direct from the wholesaler, increased its expenditure on food in Jan. 1942 in comparison to 1939 thus: Beef 25 per cent, Mutton 29 per cent, Eggs 150 per cent, Oatmeal 97 per cent, Sugar 55 per cent, Tea 74 per cent, Margarine 30 per cent, Condensed Milk 8 per cent, Rice 912 per cent, wholemeal 104 per cent, steam coal 77 per cent, coal 77 per cent, gas coke 192 per cent. Coal for instance when bought by the worker costs 6/- per cwt. For the unemployed worker who can only buy in quantities of stones and half-stones, a cwt. would eventually cost 10/- or so. And such coal is practically unuseable, coming from poor seams in Wales and containing a big percentage of stone. The Dublin Gas Company is today forced to lower further the already poor pressure of gas because of the damage to the plant, by using poor quality coal. The alternative supply of turf and firewood is definitely inadequate and completely fails to meet a fraction of the people's needs.

The poverty, which Engels described as unbelievable on his visit to Ireland in 1868 has been brought up to date by an Irish Capitalist Government. The very rich and the very poor live side by side. The national income of the nation shows that 11 per cent of the population owns 35 per cent of the wealth of the country. 2,652,565 people have therefore an average income of £36 per head per year. 22 persons have an income of £20,000 or over per year.

Data issued by the Government shows that 37.3 persons per thousand are in receipt of public assistance. In Dublin alone, the astronomical figure stands at 33.6 per thousand. The amount received ranges around 1/- to 5/- per week and in many cases is the only income received. Young workers who will not be coerced into the army or the Construction Corps are ruthlessly deprived of all assistance.

The St. Vincent De Paul, which handles most of the charity rackets issued a statement in October 1942 which states:

- " a Poverty and destitution are widespread in Dublin.
- b Many of our men and women are so weak from under nourishment that, even if employment were offered them, they could not undertake any kind of heavy work.
- c Thousands of people are without sufficient personal and bed clothing.
- d The never-ending struggle to provide food and clothing often results in non-payment of rents and constant fear of eviction.
- e The poor have no reserve of food or fuel for the winter."

The Fianna Fail Government planned to meet the increasing unemployment rate by at first sending young unmarried men to the bogs to dig turf. With poor barrack accommodation and meals, the pay was only 4/- per week. The scheme collapsed in a few weeks. A well organised campaign by the Dublin unemployed workers resisted these slave camps. Despite the fact that the alternative was to be cut off the dole and destitution, the courage shown was great; especially as added to this was the tremendous campaign carried on by the press, pulpit and the police assault. Peaceful unemployed demonstrations were broken up by the police with batons and the leaders arrested and interned without trial.

CONSTRUCTION CORPS ON MAYO MODEL

The introduction of the Construction Corps, in 1941, by the Government meant that unemployed youth were forced, at the penalty of losing the dole—to join this organisation. Work was to be of 'national importance'; military discipline was enforced and the members were attired in the ordinary soldiers' uniform. Wages were only half those of the soldiers, being 7/- per week. It was readily called by the unemployed "the scab army."

Both in the press and elsewhere no opposition to the Construction Corps was tolerated. For bringing out a leaflet explaining the reactionary nature of such a movement and explaining in short why capitalism brought the Construction Corps into being; and how the Government would utilise this force to break strikes and drive down wages, a Secretary and Chairman of a Labour Party branch in Dublin, were arrested and interned without trial. The open air meeting called for the next day was banned. Only after 10 days were they released due to pressure from the labour movement.

Even with compulsion, the Construction Corps only enrolled a tiny section of the backward unemployed. The Government for a long time, dodged giving the total figure of recruits, but in later months it was stated at 700. This was quite an exaggeration, hopeless as the amount was, as a parade was held and only 250 took part. The prestige of James Connolly, the great Irish revolutionary socialist, is so high amongst the working class, that the demagogue De Valera attempted to delude them when he renamed the military barracks which house the Construction Corps: "The James Connolly Barracks".

In an Irish prototype of 'Hansard' in 1942, it was stated by a Government speaker in answer to a Labour T.D. (M.P.) that 36 members of the Construction Corps had been interned in Cork Jail without trial for refusing to scab on a building strike. The censorship in Eire is so severe that such an item never had the slightest hope of being reported to the public. It is interesting too that in September 1939, when the Government introduced the Emergency Powers Act, allegedly against the I.R.A., De Valera in reply to Mr. Norton, leader of the Labour Party in the Dail, stated that this order will not be used against the workers seeking to improve their economic standards.

DICTATORIAL POWERS USED AGAINST WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS

The growing dictatorial powers now being assumed by the State are used openly to smash all working class opposition. An outspoken Labour Party M.P., Mr. Murphy, of Cork, was arrested and detained without a trial or charge being brought forward. His house was ransacked. He was later released without any explanation being given. The *Irish Press*, Organ of the Government, advocates the suppression of parliamentary questions.

The rapid lowering of the standard of living of the working class and the small farmers has revolutionised political thought. The inevitable failure of the Fianna Fail Government, representative of the young Irish capitalist class, to improve social conditions has become apparent to the masses. The stupid blunders committed by the Government Ministers to build up ample supplies of necessities has taught the working class a sharp lesson.

The most important element in the radicalisation of the industrial workers, was the introduction of the Trade union Act, 1941. This measure was aimed to discipline the trade union movement and prevent them seeking increases in wages by independent means. The workers called it 'Green Fascism'. It was a revelation to see and discuss with workers, who were one day trying to defend De Valera's policy, in a confused way, although not wholeheartedly, as the price to keep out of war—and the complete change the next day when the news appeared that the T.U. rights were to be smashed by the Government. The brilliant tradition of struggle of the Irish organised workers continued once again: this time directly against the reactionary capitalist state machine. Mr. E. Childers, M.P. and Secretary of the Irish Manufacturers Federation openly boasted to the press that thanks to their influence the Government introduced and passed the T.U. Act. A new demand of this organisation—made to the press—is that strikes be prohibited.

The T.U. act, came into operation in May 1942. Future negotiations by the T.U. can only be carried out under Government license; this license to be obtained with the consent of the Government. Also a Trade Union must, in applying, deposit £2,000 into the High Court, and such money can be forfeited by even an isolated strike. The Government has powers to inspect the membership books of the unions. The unions must maintain at their offices the names, and addresses of members, date of commencement of joining the union—including same for all former members in the last 5 years. If he has ceased to be a member, reasons must be given. Failure to do this job is an offence and subject to a court trial. A Wages Standstill Order No. 83 was brought into force under the **Emergency Powers Act** and forbids unions to obtain increases in wages. (Note. This order was not discussed in the Dail). Flowing from these two orders, negotiations for wage increases could only be contracted through a Tribunal, set up by the Government. A new Amendment (Order 166) allows a maximum bonus of 2/- to be obtained when there is a sharp rise in the cost of living.

The Tribunal is elected by the Government Minister for Industry and Commerce, with the usual bosses stooge in the Chair, the Committee to consist of 5 members.

This Act assists the growth of company unions and already a body known as the **Federated Employers Ltd.** is to register as a T.U. and apply for a license. The Secretary Mr. J. O'Brien, in an interview with the *Irish Times*, stated that in 3 years they had brought together 45 employers organisations and are attempting to centralise the Employers Federation. He too boasts of his

movement having collaborated with the Government in the T.U. Bill.

WORKERS RALLIED BEHIND COUNCILS OF ACTION

The T.U. bureaucratic leaders envisaging a peaceful existence within capitalism were stunned at their Government friends running out on them and refused to carry on a struggle against this menace. Opposition to the bill was organised by the Dublin Trades Council. A monster parade was held in August 1941 (reported in August 1941 "Socialist Appeal"). Councils of Actions were set up throughout Dublin and the surrounding areas. For the first time, the Dublin T.U. had acceded to a united front with the Dublin Constituency Council of the Labour Party. Local Labour Party branches were in the main the rallying centres of the Councils of Action. The old sectarian ideas held by the T.U. leaders, of industrial action without political action was for the first time trampled underfoot. An energetic campaign was carried out demanding the withdrawal of these two Orders, linked with a programme dealing with fuel, food, unemployment, housing etc. The Government tried to damp down this enthusiasm by meeting the slogan of "Remove McEntee", (Minister responsible for presenting the Act) with his replacement with another figure.

When the appeasement policy of the T.U. leaders failed, only then did they oppose the Bill as such. Their policy is still today trying to get the 'best' out of the Bill, and attempting to take full charge of the opposition. 40 unions have registered, under protest. (This is about the total number of unions in Eire). The militant Irish Women Workers Union refused to take out a licence. Their position is not known today.

The railway workers at Dundalk resigned en masse from the Local Security Force (Home Guard) as a protest against the two Acts. Similar happenings were recorded throughout the country. At the August demonstration, the response was so widespread that a Dublin A.R.P. demonstration had to be called off. Soldiers in uniform marched alongside their fellow unionists. The Government had readily foreseen such an occurrence and the Military Police present tried, with no success, to eject the soldiers from the parade. Nation-wide demonstrations are still going on. In Dublin on October 25th, 1942, 25,000 marched. At least 30,000 attended a rally immediately after. In Killarney recently, a large meeting was attended by 5,000 local workers and small farmers from the surrounding areas.

PHENOMENAL GROWTH OF LABOUR PARTY

The growth of the Irish Labour Party has proceeded accordingly and the recent Municipal and County Council is an important symptom. A total of 215 seats were won by Labour. Both Fianna Fail and Fine Gael lost considerably, finishing the contest with 245 and 127 respectively. When it is taken into consideration that the Labour Party was practically an unknown entity up to 1941, the results are amazing. In Dublin, Labour gained a sweeping majority and now have 13 representatives. Prior to this election, they only numbered 3. In many other areas they captured power. In Co. Kildare, F.F. lost 8 seats and the L.P. polled more than all the other parties and groupings combined, gaining 11 seats, and control of the Council. The manoeuvre by F.F. throughout the country to have their candidates masquerading as 'Independent' failed in a good many instances.

Turf workers and isolated farm workers have entered the struggle and in the National Organiser of the L.P.'s weekly reports, shows, turf workers on strike are being organised into the T.U. movement by the L.P.

Direct negotiations for wage increases are entered into by the L.P. on the spot with the County Councils. Many victories have been won. The Government records that 7,493 turf workers in the counties of Cork, Donegal and Kerry went on strike in 1941 for higher wages. 1941 was comparatively peaceful. In May 1942, 1,000 turf workers struck for higher wages in Co. Westmeath. The dispute was organised by the L.P. Similar large disputes occurred in Co. Kildare, Cork, Co. Longford, Donegal and Roscommon. The Government wage for bog workers are atrociously low—6½d. per hour. Cork Co. Council, as the result of the struggles, has increased the rates to 10d. per hour. The workers have started to turn to the Labour movement for a solution to their problems.

L.P. branches have grown 250 per cent from last year. The "theory" held by the leaders of the L.P. and recently put forward as party policy is a hotch potch of confusion. The party has always been a reformist organisation of the typically Social Democratic type and recently it has turned in the direction of the theories of Douglas Social Credit. It maintains that by a better control of currency, workers would get a suitable standard of living, unemployment would be abolished, security for everyone, etc. would be achieved. The early weakness of the leaders showed itself some years ago when the Catholic Church via the National Union of Teachers demanded that the aim of the party be changed, from fighting to attain a Workers Republic as envisaged by Connolly, to a watery and meaningless Irish Republic. The policy today is therefore an attempt to find a poor substitute and has never been thought out. An opposition is increasingly growing for a clear cut programme. At one stage the Labour and T.U. leaders began a whispering campaign amongst the T.U. delegates prior to National Conference and directed against this opposition, declaring it is Trotskyist controlled. They generally play on the backward religious views of the country delegates and falsify the role of the Dublin and supporting branches.

DE VALERA FEARS ELECTION

According to law, a General Election should be held in June 1943, although the Government can take advantage of a loophole which can give it office for a further 2 years. It is not impossible that an election would show a majority for the L.P. The reactions of the Government to the elections clearly suggest that they fear a fresh poll. The various views put forward by Government ministers, although contradictory, show one aim—to avert the Elections. Mr. Little, Minister for Post and Telegraph shows a sympathy for a Coalition Government De Valera says, "if the people show a desire for a change we will have election". The Fianna Fail Ard Fheis (National Convention) has not met for two years, the internal friction over policy being so great. Branches have mostly disintegrated. It can be said that little is left of this, the greatest popular movement that Ireland has ever known.

Gen Mulcahy, prominent member of Fine Gael, favours a National Government, Gosgrave, leader of the Fine Gael, puts the same idea, but wants his party to win power first. The *Irish Times*, the reactionary conservative organ of British capital and to some extent the leading policy-former for the Irish capitalist class, speaks about the raving lunacy of an election during war-time and reminds F.F. and F.G. of what happened in the municipal elections. Tailing behind this gang are the British and Irish so-called "Communist" Parties who demand that the labour movement enter a Coalition Government. The Stalinist objective, is the agitation for a National Government in Eire and in company with the demand put forward by the Communist Party of Great Britain which urges that Britain and Eire make a trade agreement and so facilitate Eire's entry into the Imperialist war. Any trade agreement entered into

which would mean that Eire received the various necessities of life and important raw materials would be a way of relieving, to a **limited extent**, the unemployment problem. For such a concession, the Stalinist horse-dealers desire that Eire break her neutrality and become a "partner" in World War No. Two.

STALINISTS STRENGTHEN PRO-BRITISH CAPITALISTS

In many ways, the Stalinists carry on their vile propaganda. The **Irish Freedom**, which has very little in common with its title, adopts a more subtle line. In the Sept. issue, 1941, they featured an article on the front page under the non-de-plume of Donnybrook. This Stalinist hack declared that those who do not want Eire to enter the war are Hitler's friends, and concluded by stating that Ireland must choose between Germany and the Allies. This was the Stalinist line being presented openly. The Editorial made no political contribution against such an Imperialist policy. The series which Donnybrook promised was so unpopular that it only lasted two issues. The reformist L.P. paper **Torch** condemned outright such an article and declared in an editorial that labour wants neither an old master nor a new one. Mr. P. Musgrove, Editor of the **Irish Freedom**, who recently utilised J. Connolly's writings and published them in book form, with a long preface, attempts to confuse the Irish and British workers over Connolly's socialist position, making out that it is necessary to support the present war—as being a continuation of the revolutionary principle of Connolly. This is one extra lie to the long list of Stalinist distortions. Connolly in the last war stood violently opposed to the gang of social democrats who betrayed the international movement and gave support to World War No. 1. In his many writings and in the model slogan—"Neither King nor Kaiser", Connolly advocated the complete independence of the working class movement and declared that it is the duty of the socialist movement, to organise the oppressed against the native and foreign capitalist forces who dominate Ireland entirely.

The Eire C.P. before folding up in July 1941, urged in their paper **Irish Workers Weekly** that a General Election should be averted and called for a strengthening of the Fianna Fail Government with the introduction of labour representatives (Sept. 27th, 1941). Such an attitude was put after the proposed introduction of the vicious anti-Trade Union Act of the Government. It is not surprising that the Irish workers remain hostile to Stalinism. The destroying of the Irish Republican Congress, was achieved by the Stalinists. Following out the disastrous policy of Popular Frontism, they split the Congress and by a narrow majority opposed the policy of Congress having as its aim the achieving of a Workers Republic. The resolution for a Workers Republic was moved by Roddy Connolly, son of James Connolly and seconded by the fearless militant, Mick Price. This movement, under Stalinist domination broke into smithereens after pursuing a class-collaboration policy, thus disillusioning many hundreds of young revolutionary workers from city and the countryside.

The decision taken by the C.P. to dissolve, met with the immediate hostility of the few active members. No prior discussion took place. The resolution was just presented at an ordinary branch meeting. Voting was 11 for and 9 against. The attempts by the leaders to overwhelm the young opposition by long arguments failed. Even then, it was only by the votes of non-members that the resolution was successful. Demoralisation was so widespread that it was customary to allow the elderly social committee workers to be present during party business. Their votes were cast for the resolution. The **Irish Workers Weekly** was voluntarily taken out of circulation some months after. Mr. P. Musgrove is the latest leader to be sent to Eire to raise the corpse of

Stalinism and at the present day they are working as a small faction in the Irish L.P. pushing a concealed pro-war line.

THE SLOGAN FOR IRISH REVOLUTIONARIES—LABOUR TO POWER

In the bosses' business pamphlet "Irish Industry", the editor, Mr. McEvoy states: "Wages in this country are far higher than in Japan for instance. Can our Irish manufacturers produce commodities to meet the products of Japan in price? The hours of working in this country per week are shorter than in many countries from which we might import commodities. Social industrial insurance, holidays with pay, etc., add considerably to the cost of production." (December 1942).

The Irish capitalist class can offer no way out of the present chaos, but only a dreary future of even worse conditions, with the loss of the existing democratic rights. Mr. Lemas, Fianna Fail Minister, stated in the Dail on Budget Day 1942, that there must be a lowering of the standard of living after the war. Dr. Ryan, Minister of Agriculture, states that the British market is likely to collapse after the war so far as dairy produce is concerned and that livestock trade is not likely to be remunerative. The intentions of the ruling class are made plain enough by the following statement by Mr. W. O'Reilly, President of the Irish Manufacturers Federation: "Compulsory military service has certain evils, but provides a greater degree of good in the completion of character formation and the securing of a sound training in some branches of industry, combined with the inculcation of that greatest of all virtues, discipline." (January 1943).

The absence of a revolutionary socialist party in Ireland which continues the socialist traditions of Connolly has resulted in many of the most serious and self sacrificing of the Irish youth joining the I.R.A. This has been facilitated by its pose as a "revolutionary" body which continues the best traditions of struggle for Irish freedom. It has also been facilitated by the false policy and treachery of the Stalinists, and the policy of tail-ending behind the capitalists pursued by the leadership of the Irish Labour Party. The bureaucratic "military" attitude of the I.R.A. and their refusal to participate in the recent struggles of the working class; the sacrifice of the best members of the "army" in individual adventures, while failing to produce a radical programme to face up to the tremendous events which are ravaging the lives of the Irish masses; all these have resulted in the tendency to break with the I.R.A. in the South and seek for a solution in the working class labour and trade union movement.

The general disillusionment of the masses in Fine Gael and the Fianna Fail and their turn towards the Labour Party opens up the possibility of harnessing this youthful energy, courage and enthusiasm to the socialist revolution. This is the task of the left wing in the Labour movement. A task which can be achieved only by a serious and bold struggle around a revolutionary socialist programme:

Against a coalition with the parties of the Irish capitalist class such as is being mooted by the Stalinist fakers, For the complete and unconditional class independence of the Irish labour and trade union movement; Break with the reformist and reactionary Social Credit policy of the leadership of the Labour Party; For the unity of the Irish workers, North and South, through a united Irish Labour movement—For a United the widest socialist measures in Industry and Land can Irish Socialist Republic; Labour to Power in a Labour-Farmer Government; Only solve the problems of the Irish people.

These are the central ideas which must motivate the struggle of the revolutionary socialists in the 26 counties, of the South and the 6 counties of Ulster.

The Permanent Revolution

By LEON TROTSKY

The theses published below are taken from the concluding chapter of Trotsky's book on the "Permanent Revolution." Next month we will print an article by Trotsky on the three different theoretical conceptions of the Russian Revolution, held by outstanding Marxists.

Despite the fact that these theses were written almost a decade and a half ago they still retain their freshness, and the basic ideas retain their validity as a theoretical guide to the problems of world development at the present time.

The evolution of world history since this work was written has tragically confirmed in a negative way, the analysis which is made therein. The defeated revolutions in Spain, France and other countries, the rise of Hitler and the present bloody war — all can be traced to the theory of "Socialism in One Country." The idea of a peaceful co-existence of capitalism with a workers' state has been rudely shattered by the onslaught of German imperialism. All the ideas and methods of Stalinism have been shattered by the impact of events.

Meanwhile the second world war, linking the whole world in a stream of blood, poses the problem of the permanent revolution as the only way out of the impasse into which world capitalism has plunged humanity. Meanwhile more and more, the bourgeoisie is forced by the development of world ties to recognise the basic unity of world economy. Churchill and Roosevelt vie with one another in proclaiming the inter-dependence and the essential unity of world economy. The leader columns of the "Times" moralises every day on the economic

I hope that the reader will not object if, to end up this book, I attempt, without fear of repetition to formulate briefly the most fundamental conclusions.

1. The theory of the permanent revolution now demands the greatest attention of every Marxist, for the course of the ideological and class struggle has finally and conclusively raised this question from the realm of reminiscences over the old differences of opinion among Russian Marxists and converted it into a question of the character, the inner coherence and the methods of the international revolution in general.

2. With regard to the countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks, **democratic and national emancipation**, is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses.

3. Not only the agrarian, but also the national question, assigns to the peasantry, the overwhelming majority of the population of the backward countries, an important place in the democratic revolution. Without an alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry, the tasks of the democratic revolution cannot be solved, nor even seriously posed. But the alliance of these two classes can be realised in no other way than through an intransigent struggle against the influence of the national liberal bourgeoisie.

4. No matter what the first episodic stages of the revolution may be in the individual countries, the realisation of the revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry is conceivable only under the

necessity of international co-operation... The mighty development of world aviation presaged by the war will further underline this trend. So obvious is this that even shortsighted bourgeois politicians can see the problem while utterly incapable of finding a solution to it.

The fate of the Soviet Union is still bound up with the fate of the wave of revolutions in Europe and Asia which will be unleashed by the catalysms provoked by World War II. Meanwhile the degeneration of the Stalinist bureaucracy and the Communist International has reached abysmal depths. Starting from the utopian theory of Socialism in One Country, they have finished up by capitulation to imperialism and social chauvinism. The differences between Stalinism and Bolshevism (i.e. Trotskyism) have long passed the stage of differences in theory. The Stalinists and the Comintern have long thrown away any pretence to act on the basis of Marxism theory. These theses provide an understanding for the theoretical basis of the Stalinist degeneration and betrayal. But not this alone. The theory of the Permanent Revolution acquires an even greater importance for the coming epoch. The revolution in India, in China, the coming upheavals in Europe and America, the fate of the Soviet Union are all tied together in a single knot.

The Fourth International, by an application of this theory will inevitably become the greatest conclave historical force in the world in the coming decades. It will tie the tangled skeins of the development of world events firmly together in a single knot.

Ed.

political direction of the proletarian vanguard, organised in the Communist party. This in turn means that the victory of the democratic revolution is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat which bases itself upon the alliance with the peasantry and first solves the problems of the democratic revolution.

5. The old slogan of Bolshevism—"the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" expresses precisely the above characterised relationship of the proletariat, the peasantry and the liberal bourgeoisie. This has been confirmed by the experience of October. But the old formula of Lenin does not settle in advance the problem of what the mutual relations between the proletariat and the peasantry inside of the revolutionary bloc will be. In other words, the formula has unknown algebraic quantities which have to make way for precise arithmetic quantities in the process of historical experience. The latter showed, under the circumstances that exclude every other interpretation, that no matter how great the revolutionary role of the peasantry may be, it can nevertheless not be a leading one. The peasant follows either the worker of the bourgeois. This means that the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" is only conceivable as a **dictatorship of the proletariat that leads the peasant masses behind it.**

6. A democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, as a regime that is distinguished from the dictatorship of the proletariat by its class content, might be realised only in case an **independent** revolutionary party could be constituted which expresses the interests of the peasants and in general of petty bourgeois democracy—a party that is capable of conquering power with this or that aid of the proletariat and of determining

its revolutionary programme. As modern history teaches—especially the history of Russia in the last twenty-five years—an insurmountable obstacle on the road to the creation of a peasants' party is the economic and political dependence of the petty bourgeoisie and its deep internal differentiation, thanks to which the upper sections of the petty bourgeoisie (the peasantry) go with the big bourgeoisie in all decisive cases, especially in war and in revolution, and the lower sections—with the proletariat, while the intermediate section has the choice between the two extreme poles. Between the Kerenskiad and the Bolshevik power, between the Kuo Min Tang and the dictatorship of the proletariat there cannot and does not lie any intermediate stage, that is, no democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants.

7. The endeavour of the Comintern to foist upon the Eastern countries the slogan of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, finally and long ago exhausted by history, can have only a reactionary effect. In so far as this slogan is counter-posed to the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat, it contributes to the dissolution of the proletariat into the petty bourgeois masses and in this manner creates better conditions for the hegemony of the national bourgeoisie and consequently for the collapse of the democratic revolution. The introduction of this slogan into the programme of the Comintern is a direct betrayal of Marxism and of the October traditions of Bolshevism.

8. The dictatorship of the proletariat which has risen to power as the leader of the democratic revolution is inevitably and very quickly placed before tasks that are bound up with deep inroads into the rights of bourgeois property. The democratic revolution grows over immediately into the socialist, and thereby becomes a **permanent** revolution.

9. The conquest of power by the proletariat does not terminate the revolution, but only opens it. Socialist construction is conceivable only on the foundation of the class struggle, on a national and international scale. This struggle, under the conditions of an overwhelming predominance of capitalist relationships on the world arena, will inevitably lead to explosions, that is, internally to civil wars, and externally to revolutionary wars. Therein lies the permanent character of the socialist revolution as such, regardless of whether it is a backward country that is involved, which only yesterday accomplished its democratic revolution, or an old capitalist country, which already has behind it a long epoch of democracy and parliamentarism.

10. The completion of the socialist revolution within national limits is unthinkable. One of the basic reasons for the crisis in bourgeois society is the fact that the productive forces created by it conflict with the framework of the national state. From this follow, on the one hand, imperialist wars, and on the other, the utopia of the bourgeois United States of Europe. The socialist revolution commences on the national arena, is developed further on the inter-state and finally on the world arena. Thus, the socialist revolution becomes a permanent revolution in a newer and broader sense of the word; it attains completion only in the final victory of the new society on our entire planet.

11. The above outlined scheme of the development of the world revolution eliminates the question of the countries that are "mature" for socialism in the spirit of that pedantic, lifeless classification given by the present programme of the Comintern. In so far as capitalism has created the world market, the division of labour and productive forces throughout the world, it has also prepared world economy for socialist transformation.

The various countries will go through this process at different tempos. Backward countries, under certain conditions, can arrive at the dictatorship of the proletariat sooner than the advanced countries, but they come later than the latter to socialism.

A backward colonial or semi-colonial country, whose proletariat is insufficiently prepared to unite the peasantry and seize power, is thereby incapable of bringing the democratic revolution to its conclusion. On the contrary, in a country where the proletariat has power in its hands as the result of the democratic revolution, the subsequent fate of the dictatorship and socialism is not only and not so much dependent in the final analysis upon the national productive forces, as it is upon the development of the international socialist revolution.

12. The theory of socialism in one country which rose on the yeast of the reaction against October is the only theory that consistently, and to the very end, opposes the theory of the permanent revolution.

The attempt of the epigones, under the blows of our criticism, to confine the application of the theory of socialism in one country exclusively to Russia, because of its specific characteristics (its extensiveness and its natural resources) does not improve matters but only makes them worse. The break with the international position always leads to a national messianism, that is, to attribute special prerogatives and peculiarities to one's own country, which would permit it to play a role that other countries cannot attain.

The world division of labour, the dependence of Soviet industry upon foreign technique, the dependence of the productive forces of the advanced countries of Europe upon Asiatic raw materials, etc., etc., make the construction of a socialist society in any single country impossible.

13. The theory of Stalin-Bucharin not only contrasts the democratic revolution quite mechanically to the socialist revolution, but also tears the national revolution from the international path.

This theory sets the revolution in the backward countries the task of establishing an unrealisable regime of the democratic dictatorship, it contrasts this regime to the dictatorship of the proletariat, thus introducing illusion and fiction into politics, paralysing the struggle for power of the proletariat in the East, and hampering the victory of the colonial revolution.

The very seizure of power by the proletariat signifies, from the standpoint of the theory of the epigones, the completion of the revolution (to "nine-tenths", according to Stalin's formula) and the opening of the epoch of national reform. The theory of the kulak growing into socialism and the theory of the "neutralisation" of the world bourgeoisie are consequently inseparable from the theory of socialism in one country. They stand and fall together.

By the theory of national socialism, the Communist International is degraded to a weapon useful only for the struggle against military intervention. The present policy of the Comintern, its regime, and the selection of its leading personnel, correspond entirely to the debasement of the Communist International to an auxiliary corps which is not destined to solve independent tasks.

14. The programme of the Comintern created by Bucharin is thoroughly eclectic. It makes the hopeless attempt to reconcile the theory of socialism in one country with Marxian internationalism, which is, however, inseparable from the permanent character of the world revolution. The struggle of the Communist Left Opposition for a correct policy and a healthy regime in the Communist International is inseparably combined with a struggle for a Marxian programme. The question of the programme in turn is inseparable from the question of the two mutually exclusive theories: the theory of permanent revolution and the theory of socialism in one country. The problem of the permanent revolution has long ago outgrown the episodic differences of opinion between Lenin and Trotsky, which were completely exhausted by history. The struggle is between the basic ideas of Marx and Lenin on the one side and the eclectics of the Centrists on the other.

Constantinople, November 30, 1929.

Police Regime in Northern Ireland

BY BOB ARMSTRONG

Below we reproduce part of a letter from Bob Armstrong who was detained without charge or trial for 18 days by the Belfast police and then released. The letter was posted by Air Mail on January 23rd and only reached our London office on February 11th. No doubt the police hesitated about allowing this letter to be transmitted at all, for the conditions which it reveals under the Regime in Northern Ireland are a picture of the worst type of police dictatorship known only in the most backward countries of Europe.

CRUMLIN ROAD JAIL

There are approximately 600 prisoners in Crumlin Road jail about 300 of whom are serving sentences—probably two-thirds of these sentenced prisoners being I.R.A. men. The remaining 300 are interned, and there are more than 200 other internees in Derry Jail. It is estimated that tens of thousands have been detained since the war. All internments are made under a clause in the Special Powers Act stating that such and such a person has given grounds for reasonable suspicion that he or she has acted or is about to act in a manner prejudicial to the peace. This is the Stormont equivalent of the Japanese "dangerous thoughts" Act. Not a few of the internees assert that they have never belonged to a political organisation in their lives.

THE I.R.A.

It was during my sojourn in Crumlin that the Chief of Staff of the I.R.A. and three of his associates staged their spectacular get-away from the most heavily guarded prison in the British Isles. The drama of this escape was heightened by a black-type R.U.C. advertisement in the press offering £3,000 reward to anyone supplying information leading to the arrest of any one of these men. The greatest man-hunt in Ulster history is under way. The relentless, unending war between the R.U.C. and the I.R.A. has provided all the highlights in Ulster politics during the past twenty years. The fearlessness of martyred republicans such as Tom Williams has almost legendary fame. The I.R.A. is almost 100 per cent proletarian in composition, its great reservoir of strength being the Belfast Falls Road area. The more petit-bourgeois Eire section is but a feeble reflection of the Northern movement. Yet it advocates no social policy whatsoever, for it considers itself to be not in any sense a political party, but purely and simply, an army. Its sole aim is to expel foreign imperialism

from Ireland. In 1939 it declared war on Britain. When the world war began it welcomed Germany as an ally in the common struggle.

The prevailing cult of national-socialist ideology within the I.R.A. would vanish like a cloud of smoke at the first signs of a British-German concord. All nations and movements are judged in accordance with their attitude to Britain. Yet for all that not a single British soldier has suffered injury at the hands of the I.R.A. since the war began. The reason is clear enough. Despite its pretentious claims the I.R.A., being incapable of invoking an appeal outside the nationalist areas, cannot rise beyond small-scale skirmishing tactics. To deal with this the R.U.C., one of the most highly trained police forces in the world, is adequate. Even if, by a miracle, it succeeded in overcoming its immediate enemy, it is madness to believe that the I.R.A. could defeat the British army, and most certainly Britain would not passively surrender the right to garrison Ireland.

To refute this argument republicans cite the successful outcome for the South of the Black-and-Tan war. But this struggle succeeded only because the revolutionary ferment in the British working class prevented the Lloyd George Government from embarking upon a large-scale regular war against Ireland. The great Russian revolution had kindled a flaming love of liberty throughout the world, and not least in Britain. Without this the heroism of the Irish people in 1921 would have proved unavailing. Only the revolutionary movement of the British and Irish working class can finally free Ireland from imperialist rule. But the I.R.A. as yet cannot understand this. Nor is this accidental. For the amazing virility of a historically outmoded form of struggle is due, not mainly to the dead weight of tradition, but to the shameless collaboration with imperialism of parties masquerading as socialist, the Stalinists and the Labourites, who compromise working class methods at every step and engender a contempt for socialism.

Discriminated against at every step, the Catholic working-class youth are forced into the struggle. More than a third of the Six-County population belong to the so-called "minority". The Stormont Government sits on a powder magazine. If it released its weight it would be blown sky-high. But, so long as it sits tight, the weight of the R.U.C. is adequate; and kept under control the I.R.A. has great uses. For the protestant workers, conscious though they be of their mem-

bership of the downtrodden class in the general capitalist set-up, are also keenly aware of their privileged caste position. They fear, and with good foundation, that a victory of the I.R.A. would place them in the position of a persecuted minority: for, no matter how much the I.R.A. declaims sectarianism, the fact is that, basing itself on the degenerate capitalist system, it could not prevent the unleashing of anti-protestant pogroms at the first signs of mass unemployment.

WHY THE TROTSKYISTS ARE UNDER FIRE

It is axiomatic to Marxists that the weaker a government's mass basis is, the stronger its apparatus of repression must be. The R.U.C. is the real government of Northern Ireland, and D. I. Moffatt, reputed by some to be the most astute police chief in Europe, occupies the unique position outside the purely fascist countries and the U.S.S.R., of being better known, at least in the national areas, than most cabinet ministers. It is the tremendous material and legal powers enjoyed by the Ulster police that enables them to move with such swiftness and arrogance against legal working class parties.

Yet the Trotskyist movement has not been singled out for attack on account of its smallness, but because its programme is feared. A movement threatening to disturb the caste rift upon which the Stormont regime uneasily balances, is to be feared above everything else. The Stormont regime fears not an alliance between the I.R.A. and the Trotskyists, but the passing over of the glorious Falls Road proletariat from I.R.A. ultranationalism to a revolutionary socialist programme.

For that we will not require to pander to the illusions of the I.R.A. or any other organisation which stands apart from and against the programme of the revolutionary working class. We need no catspaws. We turn to the dauntless working-class youth of the Falls Road and strive to win them, not by nursing outworn prejudices, but by proclaiming the power of proletarian methods of struggle to you and your class. The Irish League of Workers' International League demands:

1. That the internees be released or brought to trial.
2. The repeal of the Special Powers Acts.
3. A united front of all working class organisations against the arbitrary rule of the police.

Robert Armstrong,
18 Brookvale Ave., Belfast.

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There are approximately 600 prisoners in Crumlin Road jail about 300 of whom are serving sentences—probably two-thirds of these sentenced prisoners being I.R.A. men. The remaining 300 are interned, and there are more than 200 other internees in Derry Jail. It is estimated that tens of thousands have been detained since the war. All internments are made under a clause in the Special Powers Act stating that such and such a person has given grounds for reasonable suspicion that he or she has acted or is about to act in a manner prejudicial to the peace. This is the Stormont equivalent of the Japanese "dangerous thoughts" Act. Not a few of the internees assert that they have never belonged to a political organisation in their lives.

THE I.R.A.

It was during my sojourn in Crumlin that the Chief of Staff of the I.R.A. and three of his associates staged their spectacular get-away from the most heavily guarded prison in the British Isles. The drama of this escape was heightened by a black-type R.U.C. advertisement in the press offering £3,000 reward to anyone supplying information leading to the arrest of any one of these men. The greatest man-hunt in Ulster history is under way. The relentless, unending war between the R.U.C. and the I.R.A. has provided all the highlights in Ulster politics during the past twenty years. The fearlessness of martyred republicans such as Tom Williams has almost legendary fame. The I.R.A. is almost 100 per cent proletarian in composition, its great reservoir of strength being the Belfast Falls Road area. The more petit-bourgeois Eire section is but a feeble reflection of the Northern movement. Yet it advocates no social policy whatsoever, for it considers itself to be not in any sense a political party, but purely and simply an army. Its sole aim is to expel foreign imperialism

from Ireland. In 1939 it declared war on Britain. When the world war began it welcomed Germany as an ally in the common struggle.

The prevailing cult of national-socialist ideology within the I.R.A. would vanish like a cloud of smoke at the first signs of a British-German concord. All nations and movements are judged in accordance with their attitude to Britain. Yet for all that not a single British soldier has suffered injury at the hands of the I.R.A. since the war began. The reason is clear enough. Despite its pretentious claims the I.R.A., being incapable of invoking an appeal outside the nationalist areas, cannot rise beyond small-scale skirmishing tactics. To deal with this the R.U.C., one of the most highly trained police forces in the world, is adequate. Even if, by a miracle, it succeeded in overcoming its immediate enemy, it is madness to believe that the I.R.A. could defeat the British army, and most certainly Britain would not passively surrender the right to garrison Ireland.

To refute this argument republicans cite the successful outcome for the South of the Black-and-Tan war. But this struggle succeeded only because the revolutionary ferment in the British working class prevented the Lloyd George Government from embarking upon a large-scale regular war against Ireland. The great Russian revolution had kindled a flaming love of liberty throughout the world, and not least in Britain. Without this the heroism of the Irish people in 1921 would have proved unavailing. Only the revolutionary movement of the British and Irish working class can finally free Ireland from imperialist rule. But the I.R.A. as yet cannot understand this. Nor is this accidental. For the amazing virility of a historically outmoded form of struggle is due, not mainly to the dead weight of tradition, but to the shameless collaboration with imperialism of parties masquerading as socialist, the Stalinists and the Labourites, who compromise working class methods at every step and engender a contempt for socialism.

Discriminated against at every step, the Catholic working-class youth are forced into the struggle. More than a third of the Six-County population belong to the so-called "minority". The Stormont Government sits on a powder magazine. If it released its weight it would be blown sky-high. But, so long as it sits tight, the weight of the R.U.C. is adequate; and kept under control the I.R.A. has great uses. For the protestant workers, conscious though they be of their mem-

bership of the downtrodden class in the general capitalist set-up, are also keenly aware of their privileged caste position. They fear, and with good foundation, that a victory of the I.R.A. would place them in the position of a persecuted minority: for, no matter how much the I.R.A. declaims sectarianism, the fact is that, basing itself on the degenerate capitalist system, it could not prevent the unleashing of anti-protestant pogroms at the first signs of mass unemployment.

WHY THE TROTSKYISTS ARE UNDER FIRE

It is axiomatic to Marxists that the weaker a government's mass basis is, the stronger its apparatus of repression must be. The R.U.C. is the real government of Northern Ireland, and D. I. Moffatt, reputed by some to be the most astute police chief in Europe, occupies the unique position outside the purely fascist countries and the U.S.S.R., of being better known, at least in the national areas, than most cabinet ministers. It is the tremendous material and legal powers enjoyed by the Ulster police that enables them to move with such swiftness and arrogance against legal working class parties.

Yet the Trotskyist movement has not been singled out for attack on account of its smallness, but because its programme is feared. A movement threatening to disturb the caste rift, upon which the Stormont regime uneasily balances, is to be feared above everything else. The Stormont regime fears not an alliance between the I.R.A. and the Trotskyists, but the passing over of the glorious Falls Road proletariat from I.R.A. utopianism to a revolutionary socialist programme.

For that we will not require to pander to the illusions of the I.R.A. or any other organisation which stands apart from and against the programme of the revolutionary working class. We need no catspaws. We turn to the dauntless working-class youth of the Falls Road and strive to win them, not by nursing outworn prejudices, but by proclaiming the power of proletarian methods of struggle against you and your class. The Irish section of Workers' International League demands:

1. That the internees be released or brought to trial.
2. The repeal of the Special Powers Acts.
3. A united front of all working class organisations against the arbitrary rule of the police.

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