

Workers

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International



News

*Theoretical
Organ of the
Revolutionary
Communist
Party*

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IMPERIALISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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REPORT FROM
RUSSIA

STALINISM AND DEMOCRACY

TWO ARTICLES by LEON TROTSKY

December 1945

WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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Manager's Column

READERS will have noticed that the pages of volume 6 are numbered consecutively and not separately for each issue. We plan to run volume 6 until the end of 1946 and thereafter to commence a new volume at the beginning of each calendar year. It is our intention to produce an index of the articles contained in each volume, hence the continuous numbering of the pages. It will thus be easy for readers to file their copies of W.I.N. and have them bound at the end of each year, complete with index.

IT is still necessary to stress the need to expand and stabilise the circulation of the magazine. The festive season is approaching, why not take a subscription for W.I.N. for 1946 for yourself and a friend? It is a gift that will be appreciated by anyone interested in the struggle for socialism.

ANOTHER suggestion for readers of the magazine is the formation of discussion circles. These could revolve around any of the articles or around the Editorial Notes, and thus create a

forum in your town or district for the discussion of topical questions from the angle of revolutionary Marxism. We would like to hear of any such discussion circles being commenced. If there is any way in which we can help in this connection, please let us know.

THE response to the issues of the magazine, which have appeared in the new format, has been most encouraging. We appreciate your comments, and hope that more of our readers will send us their ideas. From more than one source the suggestion has been made that one article should be featured more prominently than the rest on the front cover. Beginning with this issue, we are adopting the suggestion. This will, undoubtedly, make it easier to distinguish the current issue from previous numbers. It should also prove advantageous as a selling feature.

Orders are being received from all parts of Britain and from abroad. Keep it up! Spread the influence of our ideas. Help to expand the circulation of W.I.N.

WORKERS INTERNATIONAL NEWS

VOLUME 6.

DECEMBER, 1945.

NUMBER 3.

Editorial Notes

AFTERMATH OF IMPERIALIST WAR

A momentous year draws to its close. A year in which mighty events have changed the social vista of our planet. These twelve short months have witnessed the grinding into dust and shambles of the erstwhile masters of Europe and Asia. German and Japanese imperialism have been reduced to nothing. The remaining remnants of the Nazi regime, which was to last for a thousand years, play out their ignominious **finale** before the footlights of Nuremberg. 1945 has witnessed a new era of scientific development. The age of coal and electricity gives place to the atomic age, the era of the development of nuclear energy. This year has also seen the end of a social epoch and the beginning of a new era of social development. The epoch of imperialist war has become transformed into the era of civil wars, colonial uprisings and social revolutions.

The social upheavals, the struggles which are now taking place from Manchuria to Bengal, from Java to the Balkans, are part of a general pattern. The world over, and above all in Europe, the tendency is clearly to be seen as a mass movement away from bourgeois politics; a trend towards Socialist and Communist politics. Unfortunately at this stage behind the venal and treacherous leaderships of classical Social-Democracy and its new variant, Stalinism.

* * * * *

THE NEW BALANCE OF FORCES

A new balance of forces is appearing on the national and on the world social arenas. The most striking and unpredictable result of the war now ended is the emergence of the Soviet Union as a victorious and mighty world power casting its shadow over

Europe and on to the Asiatic Continent, to the astonishment and dismay of the world bourgeoisie.

A new relationship exists between the Workers' State and the once omnipotent British Empire. The one has expanded in stature, the other has declined, its glory is a thing of the past. Britain is, beyond doubt, the smallest of the Big Three powers, or, as the bourgeois **OBSERVER** expressed it: "the biggest of the small powers," which is another way of saying a second-rate power.

Her decline can be measured in terms of sterling and dollars, an indisputable yardstick. The possibilities of re-establishing British trade in the world market in face of American competition can hardly be said to exist. Britain is now the biggest debtor nation in the world, her external financial obligations are now approaching the astronomical total of £4,000,000,000, and by the time these lines appear in print a further loan of £1,100,000,000 will most probably have been added to the burden of debt. In the field of industrial competition, British manufacturers are now staggered and panic-stricken to learn that American factories are turning out motor cars to sell at one third and one quarter of the selling prices of comparable British products.

ASIA IN REFORM The war has revealed the weaknesses of world imperialism to the subject peoples of Asia who have suffered the yoke of European oppression for decades and centuries. The decline of French, Dutch and, above all, mighty British imperialism, is having its effects far beyond the confines of the metropolitan centres. Asia is awakening from centuries of indolence and backwardness; the peoples of the East are demanding for themselves concrete expression of the ideals of "freedom" for which the war was allegedly fought. They are demanding the elementary right of self-determination for the nations.

British imperialism's declining fortunes have not gone unnoticed among these Colonial and Semi-Colonial peoples. Even the Egyptian bourgeoisie no longer feels the need to tolerate the benevolent protection afforded by London, by whom it is owed over £300,000,000 sterling. Pandit Nehru, one of the prime spokesmen of nascent Indian capitalism, publicly opines that there are now only two world powers: America and the Soviet Union—to which will soon be added India and China. Whilst this is part of Nehru's window dressing in preparation for driving a better bargain with British imperialism, it can be stated with assurance that despite the Congress leaders, a large scale mass struggle lies ahead.

In the recent London Conference of ill-fame, Foreign Minister, Molotov, demanded that Britain relinquish Mediterranean mandates in favour of the Soviet Union which would "cut across the throat of the British Commonwealth," as Bevin piously expressed it. In the field of diplomatic manoeuvre, Attlee naively asks for a verbal declaration of Moscow's territorial demands in return for a discussion about the atom bomb. The Kremlin contemptuously replies with deeds in Northern Persia. Bevin's angry announcement of the "intention" of His Majesty's Labour Government "to safeguard British interests in whatever part of the world they may be found" hardly finds an echo outside the four walls of the House of Commons. Certainly it does not cause any consternation in the Kremlin. Britain's stock is low in all aspects of imperial foreign policy. By way of compensation "intentions" are converted into very tangible deeds when the issue concerns a struggle for independence on the part of a practically unarmed native people in the Dutch East Indies.

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THE BLIND ALLEY OF REFORMISM

Reformism is no solution to the problems of our epoch. What is more, the struggle of opposing social forces will not confine itself to the East. British economy is in an impasse. The comparative motor car prices already quoted are a sufficient indication of the lack of correspondence between the pretensions of British capitalism and the capacities. Only drastic social changes can increase the national wealth and better the lot of the British workers. But the rag-patching reformist policies of the Labour Government are designed to leave the present economic structure intact. The nationalisation of a few basic industries, which thus become burdened with indemnities, the retention of a measure of economic control over certain aspects of commercial policy, will not of themselves produce a better standard of living for the workers. On the contrary, it means rather that the apparatus of state repression and coercion will be used to help the bosses drive down the living standards of the toilers in order to make capitalism work, that is, in order to guarantee the tribute drawn from the sweat of the masses by capital. For profits cannot be made except by the exploitation of the labour power of the workers. And if British capitalism is to survive, is to continue to provide the profits and privileges demanded by the British capitalists, then it can only do so in competition with the mass-producing colossus beyond the Atlantic Ocean. And it can only compete at all, and then not very successfully, with the United States

by driving down the standards of the British workers to coolie level. All means will be employed: wage cuts, inflation, speed-up, intensification of labour, increased taxation, there are no other methods available to capitalism. So the vicious circle begins with its recurring slumps and mass unemployment.

But it is not for this that the masses have toiled in the mines and factories and shipyards during the past six years, it is not for this that the workers in uniform have bled and died on the battlefields, in the skies and on the seas. They have emerged from a successful war in which they were told the stakes were freedom and economic security, and they have never been in a more confident mood than now. The British workers will not sit quietly down and allow new burdens and miseries to be inflicted upon them, even though in the name of Labour. They will resist, as the dockers and gas and transport workers are already resisting. A period of bitter conflicts lies ahead.

And in the coming social struggles, when the British bourgeoisie can no longer afford to bribe the workers at home from the super profits extracted from the exploitation of the colonies, they will not hesitate to display towards the workers here all the ruthlessness and brutality hitherto reserved for the "subject" races.

At the present time the ruling class is in no position to pursue such policies. Weakened and demoralised by blows of fate, disoriented by the radicalisation which is sweeping across the continents, they are compelled to lean for support on the reformist leaders and the Stalinists, in the hope of weathering the storms in the immediate period ahead.

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THE MECHANICS OF THE STRUGGLE

We are living in a pre-revolutionary epoch. All the objective factors necessary for the introduction of a new social system have long since matured. The main subjective factor is lacking: the instruments of struggle—the revolutionary parties. The logic of events will be the major contributing factor to the former. The masses will learn from their own experiences the need for social revolution.

In Britain, as elsewhere, the forces of reaction are in retreat. But behind the scenes they bide their time, hoping to take advantage of Labour's difficulties. Though tempos differ, here and in Europe, we have entered an era of Kerenskyism. The "Kornilovists" lurk in the "dim conclaves" hoping that Labour's adversity will become their opportunity. Only the Leninists can prevent such a catastrophe.

At present there is no stable basis for reaction anywhere, particularly in Europe. In France a tragic situation prevails. The power is literally lying in the streets waiting for the masses to take it. But they are leaderless. De Gaulle strives to mobilise the forces and prepare for a Bonapartist coup, but the reaction has no forces. A handful of demonstrating students was the best he could muster during the first fracas with the "Communists." In France, as in the rest of Europe, the most determined of the reactionary elements exposed themselves at the time of Hitler's apogee. As quislings they attempted to ride on the crest of the wave of Nazi triumph. In consequence they have been engulfed. There will be military adventurers here and there who seek to suppress the bourgeois-democratic regimes which have sprung up across the face of Europe, but any resultant dictatorships will not be of long duration. To-day the masses could take power all over Europe, and here in Britain with the capitalists hardly capable of resisting. The historical crisis which paralyzes the struggle of the toilers is the crisis of the leadership of the proletariat.

But the new leaderships are emerging. The fog and smoke of battle have scarcely cleared. The yoke of national oppression has not yet been lifted from the neck of the toilers of large sections of Europe, in particular Germany, where

the occupation forces are still deployed as forces of national and social repression. Despite this, the old organisations have been, and are being, revived, and bourgeois-democratic regimes are primary forms of political development. Within this framework a 'crystalization' of the vanguard forces is taking place under the banner of the Fourth, the Revolutionary Communist, International.

In small measure, but no less determinedly, the workers are coming to the realisation that the programme of Trotskyism alone offers a solution to the problems of our epoch. In France, in Italy, in Greece, and in the Low countries, to say nothing of the countries of the East, parties of the Fourth International are being created or revived, and are participating in the struggles of their countries.

OUR TASKS During the coming period the task of the class-conscious vanguard is to transform the existing groups into mass revolutionary parties.

This will necessitate the employment of correct methods and tactics, in particular the correct application of transitional and minimum demands to the needs of the moment and the prevailing mood of the masses.

The events now developing are giving positive meaning to our programme from day to day. Our slogans are being transformed from propaganda and agitational demands into demands of political action. On the soil of Europe, in particular France and Italy, the demand for the ending of coalition politics and for the formation of Socialist-Communist governments retains its validity. In Britain a new stage has already been reached. "Labour to Power" has become a living reality, to be developed into mass support for a programme of positive socialist demands which will operate to serve the interests of the toilers. It is of no small significance to note that our demand for the democratisation of the unions and the replacement of the venal bureaucracies by fighting leaderships, took on flesh and blood in the first serious struggle with the Labour Government in power, the struggle of the dock workers.

THE U.S.A. AND THE REVOLUTION The capitalist class of the United States is the only ruling class in the world which does not feel its regime crumbling under its feet. Uncle Sam has emerged from the war as the mightiest power in the world. Wall Street has now become the financial centre of world capitalism. U.S. industry has been developed and technique improved at an incredible tempo while the shackles of the world market have been taken off production and the war has provided a limitless market for American goods. But things have changed now.

So far as world trade is concerned, the United States can outstrip all her rivals, particularly her biggest and nearest competitor, British imperialism. But herein is contained the contradiction. For if American industrial capacity is to be fully absorbed, then there will be no export market left for Britain or anyone else. And, by the same token, there will be little left in the way of a world market. For if the industrially developed countries have no export markets of their own, then they cannot import. The U.S. will be forced to allow Britain to operate to some degree, and in so doing will create her own unemployment and economic crisis. Such a prospect faces them whichever way they turn.

Already struggle has begun in the U.S.A. Large scale strikes have shut down the important port of New York, and the automobile workers' struggle against the bosses attacks on their living standards is moving towards the crisis. An interesting feature of the struggle in the auto industry is the demand which

the C.I.O. is raising for the opening of the companys' books for trade union inspection. How far the union leaders will pursue this will only be determined by the workers. It is a transitional demand from the programme of the Fourth International which has far-reaching implications. From such a demand logically flows the issue of workers' control; for the abolition of "business secrets" is the first step along the road towards **actual** control of industry.

The lift workers and dock workers of New York, the auto workers, the lumber workers, in short the workers of America, are on the march. The war has shown to the masses what can be achieved in the field of production, why, then, should they tolerate scarcity in the midst of plenty? That is the question posing itself right now. A question on which the fighting U.S. workers are heading for a showdown with their capital rulers. It is a striking fact that in the citadel of capitalism the industrial struggles reach the highest pitch of ferocity, and the American workers display militancy not equalled anywhere else. The great shocks which will rock the social structure of the Western Hemisphere must inevitably burst the bounds of industrial struggle and take on a political expression in the period ahead.

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THE STORM IS BREWING

Right now the crisis is sharpest in Europe and Asia. The struggles of the British and European and Colonial toilers are interlocked. In its fight against the masses, the British ruling class will be compelled to avail itself of U.S. support in increasing measure. But this in turn can only accentuate the contradictions of capitalism. The British workers, on the other hand will be driven inexorably to base their struggles on the struggles of the European and Colonial masses, all of which form a part of the general struggle for the Socialist United States of Europe and for a Federation of Socialist Asiatic Republics.

It goes without saying that the struggles of the toiling masses of the East for national and social emancipation are one and the same thing, which, in the final analysis, resolves into a single whole expressed in the term "Permanent Revolution." The battles now taking place on the social and national arena in China, in Indo-China and in Malaya, the skirmishes in India and Burma, are but the herald of the approaching storm.

Just off the Press!

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IMPERIALISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST—I.

By T. CLIFF

(Translated from Hebrew by R. Bod)

The events of the last few weeks in the Middle East have drawn the attention of the whole world to what is happening in this region. The terroristic acts of Zionist military organisations, the strikes and demonstrations of the Arab masses in Cairo, Alexandria, Damascus, Beirut and Baghdad against Zionism, and the concentration of British troops in Palestine has aroused numerous questions the answer to which will demand an uncovering of the socio-economic roots of the tangle in which this part of the world is involved.

Let us begin, then, with a discussion of the factor which until now has the last word in the Middle East—imperialism.

THE IMPERIALIST STAKE IN THE ARAB EAST

The Arab East is important to the imperialist Powers for four main reasons—firstly, as a route to other regions—India, Australia, China, etc., secondly, as a source of raw materials, thirdly, as an important market for manufactured goods, and fourthly, as a field for capital investment. It is self-evident that there is a close connection between the four aspects.

The importance of this region as a route is well known. The Suez Canal shortens the way from Europe to the East tremendously and through it vital products pass (90-100 per cent of the total British import of jute, tea and rubber, 70-90 per cent of hemp and manganese ore, 40-65 per cent of rice, wool, coffee, zinc ore, lead, etc., and so on).

The Arab East constitutes also a region through which land routes pass. Germany, under the Kaiser, planned to construct a railway which would connect her with the Persian Gulf, the Berlin-Baghdad railway. This plan was one of the main immediate causes of the first world war. Germany's defeat put an end to it. Instead Britain constructed a long railway route connecting nearly all the British colonies in Africa (the Cape-Cairo line) which links up with a network of railways connecting the countries of the Arab East: the Cairo-Haifa line, the Haifa-Beirut-

Tripoli line (this line connects up with Anatolia and Istanbul), the Haifa-Hedjaz and Haifa-Baghdad lines. These railways constitute an iron hoop which consolidates and binds together the British Empire.

With the rise of the aeroplane, the ownership of bases in the Middle East becomes an important weapon in the struggle for air supremacy. The air route from London to Bombay, Singapore, Hong Kong and Australia passes through Haifa. The beginning of the air route which passes through the length of British East Africa to Cape Town starts in Cairo. The French air route to Saigon before the war also passed through this region: Marseilles-Beirut-Baghdad-Bombay-Saigon.

The great importance of the Arab East as a route was one of the main reasons for the struggles between the European Powers during the last century—Napoleon's expedition, the war against Turkey in 1832, the Crimean War, and the conquest of Egypt were all connected with this—and also one of the main immediate causes of the first and second world wars. Transport routes connecting countries and peoples are not, under capitalism, means for international co-operation, for peace, but for imperialist rivalry, for war. Renan was most decidedly correct when he mentioned the classic saying, "I come not to bring peace, but a sword," when welcoming Ferdinand de Lesseps,

builder of the Suez, to the Academy in April, 1885: "This saying must frequently have crossed your mind now that you have cut through it, the isthmus has become a defile, that is to say, a battlefield. The Bosphorus by itself has been enough to keep the whole civilised world embarrassed up to the present, but now you have created a second and much more serious embarrassment. Not merely does the Canal connect two inland seas, but it serves as a communicating passage to all the oceans of the globe. In case of a maritime war, it will be of supreme importance, and everyone will be striving at top speed to occupy it. You have thus marked out a great battlefield for the future."

The digging of the Canal turned the Arab East into a large battlefield, but the growth of air transport has thrown and will throw fuel on the fire of the struggle between the Powers.

As far as raw materials in the Arab East are concerned, the most important is petroleum. Until now only a tiny portion of the oilfields has been investigated, and it seems as if all estimates regarding oil reserves in the Middle East tend towards minimisation. In a report prepared for the United States Petroleum Resources Corporation the oil operator, E. De Golyer, says: "The centre of gravity of world oil production is shifting from the Mexican Gulf and Carribean area to the Middle East-Persian Gulf area and is likely to continue to shift until it is firmly established in that area."

The verity of this belief is borne out by estimates of Middle East oil resources, one of which says that Saudi Arabia alone can satisfy the total world demand for fifteen years. It is assumed that the quantity in Iran and Iraq is not smaller than that in Saudi Arabia.

At present England has a decisive position in oil production in the Middle

East, as may be seen from the following figures of its distribution among the different interests (in 1,000 barrels)*

There is no doubt that with the increase in the exploitation of the oil-fields in Saudi Arabia and Bahrein, the weight of the American Companies in the production of oil in the Middle East will grow tremendously. And Harold Guise, writing in "The Wall Street Magazine" (3/3/45) is not blind to reality when he says: "The whole Middle East area today resembles a huge chess-board for economic and political manœuvre seldom matched anywhere else. . . . The complex struggle for postwar economic and political power is nowhere potentially so disrupting as in that part of the world."

Another important raw material which this region supplies is cotton. In face of the USA's nearly complete monopoly of the world cotton supply (producing about two-thirds of world cotton and manufacturing only half of her production) and in face of the ousting of Lancashire by the industries of India, Japan, Canada, Brazil, etc., especially in the field of cheaper cotton goods, it became vitally necessary for the English capitalists to keep a monopolistic hold over Egyptian cotton which is of high quality and as such vitally necessary to Lancashire which produces better class goods.

Other raw materials such as potash, bromine, magnesium ore, etc., are produced in large quantities in this region. The potential value of these chemicals is much greater even than their actual value has been, as according to monopolistic international agreements a policy of "organising scarcity" has been ruthlessly followed in the East.

The importance of the Arab East as a market is also not to be overlooked, and despite the advance in industrialisation, its import before the war

*	Iraq	Bahrein	Saudia	Egypt	Iran	Total	per cent
Britain	13,067	—	—	9,125	75,000	97,192	79
U.S.A.	6,533	7,300	5,475	—	—	19,308	16
France	6,533	—	—	—	—	6,533	5
Total	26,133	7,300	5,475	9,125	75,000	123,033	100

amounted to £70-80 millions—a substantial sum.

But the greatest importance of this region is its being a wide field for investment of capital.

IMPERIALIST CAPITAL DOMINATES THE ARAB EAST

Seeing that Egypt contains the majority of the Arab inhabitants of this region and that it is till now the richest country in this region, imperialist capital's attention was drawn especially to it. For dozens of years the main investments were the loans to the Egyptian State which kept its formal independence. This was a very tidy source of plunder. Thus during the years 1883-1910 the interest alone on a debt of £95 millions amounted to £105,600,000. It is interesting to note that Egypt received only £60 millions of this debt, the rest being taken by different financial manipulations, so that for £60 millions Egypt paid interest of £105,600,000 and after this had a debt of £95 millions. During the same twenty-eight years, the Egyptian fellah paid a sum of £30 millions in order to maintain the occupation army in Sudan for the sake of the English plantation companies. At the same time English, French, Italian, Belgian, German and other contractors were wringing millions of pounds out of the Egyptian people by the construction of works at very exaggerated prices. Thus, for instance, the Assuan dam, which according to the estimate of Sir William Willcocks, the British irrigation expert, should have cost £2.5 millions, actually cost £7 millions, excluding the £1,200,000 for repairs. During these same twenty-eight years when foreign capitalism sucked out of Egypt a sum of about £200 millions, the Egyptian Education Department received the almost infinitesimal sum of £3,600,000 (less than £130,000 a year) and the Ministry of Health, £3,400,000. Is there any better proof of the civilisatory role of imperialism!

In the last few decades there has been a change in the direction of imperialist capital investment. The place of state loans has been taken by

investment in railways, trams, light and power, water, banks and industry, etc. Today all key positions of the economy of the Arab East are in the hands of foreign capitalists.

In Egypt, according to an estimate made by French circles ("*L'Egypte Indépendante par le Groupe D'Études de L'Islam*," Paris, 1938, pp.144-5) foreign capital in 1937 amounted to £450 millions, the entire wealth of the country being estimated at £963 millions, which means that foreigners owned 47 per cent of it.

According to another estimate, capital investment, besides land, in the same year amounted to £550 millions (A. Bonne, "*The Economic Development of the Middle East*," Jerusalem, 1943, p.73). Seeing that the price of land is estimated at £500-600 millions (and according to another estimate £670 millions) the total property of Egypt amounts to £1,000-1,100 millions. According to another estimate of 1937 based on English calculations, foreign capital invested in Egypt amounted to £500 millions. Thus the property of foreigners constitutes 40-50 per cent of Egypt's total property, which sum does not differ from that arrived at by the French experts.

As far as land is concerned, foreign capitalists have direct proprietorship over 8 per cent of the cultivated land of Egypt, i.e., land worth £50,000,000. If we deduct this sum from the total of foreign capital invested in Egypt, we get, according to one estimate, £400,000,000, and according to the other, £450,000,000.

Taking Bonne's estimate of capital investment, besides land, we see that foreign capital accounts for 73-81 per cent.

Thus foreign capitalists own nearly half the total property of Egypt and about three-quarters of all property besides land.

The situation in Palestine is not different. Here, too, imperialist capital has overwhelming weight. This is revealed clearly by the census of industry of 1939. This showed that the concessions had 53.2 per cent of all the capital invested in industry and 74.9 per cent.

of the motor power, despite the fact that some of the biggest enterprises belonging to foreign capital (such as Haifa Refineries, Steel Bros., etc.) were not included. If all enterprises belonging to foreign capital were included, it would be clear that at least three-quarters of the industrial capital of the country is imperialist capital, and at least nine-tenths of the motor power is concentrated in its enterprises.

In Syria foreign capital owns a slightly smaller proportion of the wealth of the country. In Iraq practically 100 per cent of the industry is in its hands.

With the realisation of the giant American petroleum plans in the Middle East—to build pipelines, refineries, etc.—which according to the most conservative estimates will demand the investment of at least £300,000,000. the subjugation of this region will be very substantially increased.

IMPERIALISM STRIVES TO KEEP THE ARAB EAST BACKWARD

Seeing that imperialist capital desires to monopolise the markets of the Arab East for its manufactured goods, and the raw materials produced there for its industries. it strives to hinder industrial development there and especially the rise of a machine industry which would make for economic independence. Seeing that the profits of imperialist capital are dependent on the low wages paid to the Arab workers and the low prices paid for the products bought from the peasant, imperialism is interested in keeping the countryside in the most backward conditions, so that it will be an inexhaustible reserve of labour power and cheap raw materials. Imperialism is further interested in this for socio-political reasons; firstly because only backward, illiterate, sick masses dispersed in tiny villages far away from one another can be ruled easily, and secondly because the imperialist fifth column in the colonial countries, its most faithful agents, are the feudal landlords. Thus imperialism is intricately involved in the agrarian question.

THE AGRARIAN QUESTION

Three-quarters of the Arab population lives in the country, subjugated to a tiny handful of big landowners. In Egypt 0.5 per cent of the landowners have 37.1 per cent of all the land, while 70.7 per cent have only 12.4 per cent of the land. Three hundred and thirty-one men have three times more land than 1½ million poor peasants and there are more than a million land cultivators who have no land of their own whatsoever. One plantation company alone owns such a large area of land as to employ 35,000 workers. The king's estate covers a similar area, and maintains about 30,000 small peasants. A calculation of Emile Minost, Director General of Credit Foncier Egyptien, a bank connected by every fibre with the existing economic and social order, and therefore not likely to exaggerate the extent of exploitation of the masses, gives the division of the net income from agriculture as follows:—

	per cent
To taxes	6.3
„ large landowners	56.6
„ merchants	12.1
„ fellaheen	25.0
	100.0

Thus a few thousand landowners receive twice the sum that three million fellaheen receive. On an average, a poor peasant before the war did not earn more than £7-8 a year. During the war his nominal income rose, but the cost of living rose more, and his real income therefore decreased. The income of the agricultural worker was even lower. The daily wage of a male agricultural worker before the war was 3 piasters (7 1/5d.); of a female .2; and of a child 1-1½, and they were sentenced to extended periods of unemployment every year as the season of work lasts 6-8 months. Even a foreman did not receive more than £2 a month, a clerk £3, and a cart driver £1 to £1 4s. 0d. Although during the war wages about doubled themselves, the cost of living rose by much more; and there are places where, even to-

day, the wage of a male agricultural worker does not reach 1/- a day.

With such low incomes, the food position is obviously terrible. As a matter of fact it is comparable only with that of the Indians. It has been calculated that the consumption of the average Egyptian, which is of course much higher than that of the poor peasant worker, is only 46 per cent of the optimum in wheat, 25 per cent in sugar, 23 per cent in meat and fish, and 8 per cent in milk products. Furthermore, the nutritional position is not improving, but steadily deteriorating.

The hard economic conditions of the masses impair their health very much and cause terrible mortality, as the following table shows (1938):—

	Mortality per 1,000
England	11.6
Belgium	13.0
Poland	13.8
India	24.3
Egypt	26.4

	Mortality of infants below a year to every 1,000 born alive
England	52
Belgium	73
Poland	140
India	167
Egypt	163

Only India reaches the death rate of Egypt!

Besides "normal" deaths, famine and epidemics take their toll of life. Thus during 1944, malaria managed to wipe out tens of thousands of fellaheen in Upper Egypt, whose bodies, weakened by continued hunger, were susceptible to the disease in its severest form. According to one estimate which we may be sure is not exaggerated, 140,000 died of the malaria ("Al-Ahram," April 14, 1944). Five hundred workers of the land company Kom Ombo alone, died. ("Al-Ahram," March 1, 1944.)

Because of the poor conditions of health, the expectation of life is very low, males 31 years, and females 36.

In the United Kingdom the expectation of life is 60 years for a male and 64 for a female. Those who live to be adults are very weak. Among those conscripted from the villages in 1941, only 11 per cent were medically fit for army service. 90 per cent of Egypt's population suffers from trachoma, 50 per cent from worm diseases, 75 per cent from bilharzia, 50 per cent from ankylostoma. **The number of people who are afflicted with tuberculosis exceeds 300,000.**

Poverty is inevitably accompanied by ignorance, which in Egypt reaches fearful dimensions. Some idea of its extent may be gained from the very succinct remark of el-Mussawar when discussing the results of the 1937 census (August 28, 1942): "We have 30,000 holders of diplomas as against 14 millions who know neither how to read or to write."

Ignorance is the product of the existing social system, and also one of its pillars, and the ruling class knows very well that the illiteracy of the masses is one of the greatest assets of the regime. Thus a certain Egyptian senator thanked God that his country took first place in ignorance. ("Al-Ahram," July 7, 1944.)

Riches, pleasures and hilarity of some tens of thousands of Egyptians and foreigners on the one hand, and hunger, disease and ignorance of the millions on the other—this is the picture of agricultural Egypt!

The agrarian problem in the other Arab countries is not substantially different from that in Egypt. Thus in Palestine about half the lands are in the hands of 250 feudal families. The feudal lords, being at the same time the usurers, have tremendous power, as has been exemplified by a British official in these words: "In one Area Officer's charge, extending over three sub-districts, there are fourteen government tax collectors; one moneylender alone in one of these sub-districts was said to employ twenty-six mounted debt collectors." (L. French, "Report of Agricultural Development and Land Settlement in Palestine, Jerusalem, 1931-32," London, p. 77.)

According to the "Report of a Committee on the Economic Condition of Agriculturists in Palestine" commonly called the Johnson-Crosbie Report, only 23.9 per cent of all the product of the fellah remains in his hands, while 48.8 per cent goes in taxes to the government, rent to the landowner and interest to the usurer. In order to understand how low the standard of living of the Arab cultivator is as a result of the backwardness of his economy, his exploitation by different parasites (who constitute the main hindrances to the development of the economy), I have made the following comparison between the diet of a fellah and that which the government is supposed to give to convicts. (Actually a large amount of this goes into the pockets of the prison officials.) I assume that a fellah and his wife are sitting in prison, and that four of his children are in a "Boys' Reformatory School":*

(As prices in Egypt are much lower than in Palestine, the figures cannot be used as a basis for comparison between Egypt and Palestine.)

Although such a calculation cannot be compiled accurately, and is only approximate, it nevertheless gives some indication of the terrible conditions endured by the mass fellaheen in Palestine.

Conditions in Syria and Iraq are not different. In the latter country there are feudal lords whose estates cover areas of tens of thousands of hectares. Thus the major part of Muntafiq district, which covers an area of 6,260 sq. kms., is owned by one family. The income of the fellah in this area is £7-8 a year.

The conditions of the urban masses are not less difficult than those of the agricultural population.

THE CONDITIONS OF THE MASSES IN THE TOWNS

Under the double pressure of concentrated imperialist capital and feudalism, because of the small development of industry and the low standard of living of the agricultural toilers in the villages, open and hidden unemployment is very widespread and the conditions of the town workers are very bad. This will be exemplified by describing the conditions of work in one big industry. Let us take the spinning and weaving works of Hahalla el Kubra, which employs 26,000 workers and 3,000 clerks, inspectors and managers. Beginners receive 1/6d. a day, experienced workers 2/7d., skilled workers £10 a month. The workers have one day of rest a fortnight and work a ten hour day. There is no social service and the doctor is there only to give permission for sick leave. Discipline is kept according to a military system. There are also constant fines which cut into the workers' incomes. As far as the housing conditions of this enterprise are concerned, fifteen workers live in one room sleeping in three shifts on five mattresses. ("Al-Ahram," Dec. 12, 1944.) In other industrial enterprises the conditions are the same.

Obviously the low wages and high prices seriously impair the health of the workers. Thus it is revealed that of 6,000 printing workers in Egypt, 62 per cent suffered from diseases of the digestive system, 85 per cent from anaemia, 45 per cent from lead poisoning. ("Al-Ahram," June 14, 1943.)

	Family Sitting in Prison	Fellaheen
Wheat and millet	£ 15.1	£ 10
Olives and olive oil	3.8	3
Vegetables, lentils and dairy produce	12.9	4
Rice, sugar and other products bought by the fellah outside his plot	4.7	1
Meat	6.7	Almost nothing
Total	43.2	18

*

The lot of those who are not lucky enough to find a place in industry and are unemployed is much worse. A special conference, convened in Egypt, to solve the problem of homeless children, drew the following wretched picture. Half a million homeless children roam the streets of Cairo, climb up the electric poles, pinch and steal, seek food or rags among the garbage, and "hide their crimes behind a screen of polishing shoes or selling lottery tickets." "The homeless children of to-day are the criminals of to-morrow." The speakers in the conference also gave the reason for this: "Eighty per cent of the crimes are the fruit of poverty." ("Al-Ahram," February 23, 1944.) Two incidents bear witness to the extent of poverty in Egyptian towns: In September, 1943, four people were trampled to death when alms were being distributed; and in March, 1944, an Egyptian woman sold her daughter to a merchant immediately after birth—for £20.

The conditions of the masses in Jaffa and Haifa, Damascus and Beirut, Baghdad and Basra, is a little, but not much, better than in Cairo and Alexandria.

THE RELATION OF THE RULING CLASSES TO IMPERIALISM

Imperialism could not fortify its domination over the colonial millions if it did not find support in the upper classes of these nations. From what has been said above, it is clear what causes the feudal class to be the fifth column of imperialism. What is the relation of the Arab bourgeoisie to imperialism?

In order to answer this question, it must first be stated that the Arab bourgeoisie is not a homogeneous class. Commercial and banking capital intertwines with different modes of production. In the colonies the major part of this capital is connected with the feudal mode of production, enterprises of foreign capital, or the import of commodities from abroad. All these sections of the bourgeoisie identify themselves with feudalism and imperialism.

The minor part of the Arab bourgeoisie is the industrial bourgeoisie. It rises at a time when the world economy, ruled by concentrated finance capital, is in decline, and it cannot build up its industry, stand in competition with the industries of the "mother" country, accumulate sufficient quantities of capital and so on, except by the harsh exploitation of the workers and peasants and the purchase of cheap labour and raw materials, which is made possible for them as the result of the existence of feudalism and imperialism. This frame-work of the rule of finance capital on the background of declining world capitalism, together with the existence of feudal property relations, also determines the weakness of the colonial industrial bourgeoisie and its dependence to a major extent on foreign capital. This is shown in partnerships of foreign and local capital and the dependence of local enterprises on being financed by foreign banks. The existence of the colonial bourgeoisie, the industrial bourgeoisie included, is therefore conditioned by the **super-exploitation** of the workers and peasants—which is the result and the **sine qua non** of imperialism—and by direct economic dependence on foreign capital and imperialism. The colonial bourgeoisie is not the antipodes of imperialism and feudalism, but the antipodes of the workers and peasants. The connection of the colonial bourgeoisie with foreign capital and feudalism on the one hand and the class struggle of the proletariat and peasantry on the other (which two factors are mutually dependent) determine the limits of the struggle of the colonial bourgeoisie for concessions from imperialism.

The Arab bourgeoisie in Palestine is in a special, peculiar position. Here the junior partners of imperialist capital are not the Arab bourgeoisie but the Zionist bourgeoisie. The secondary positions of the economy—such as light industries—are not in the hands of Arab capital as in Egypt or Syria, but in the hands of Zionist capital. Thus according to the 1939 census of industry, the industries of Palestine were distributed thus:—

	Value of capital investment per cent	Horse power of engines per cent
Arab and other non-Jewish	6.5	2.2
Jewish	40.3	22.9
Concessions	53.2	74.9

As has been stated the concessions exclude some of the important enterprises of foreign capital. On the other hand some enterprises belonging to non-Arabs are included in the first item. If we correct the table, therefore, we find that foreign has at least three-quarters of the capital invested in industry, Jewish capital a fifth and Arab capital only 2-3 per cent.

But this position of the Arab bourgeoisie in Palestine does not make it

anti-imperialist. On the contrary, it urges it to make efforts to oust the Zionist bourgeoisie in order that it may become the agent of imperialism.

The Arab bourgeoisie cannot and will not wage the anti-imperialist struggle. Despite its wrestling with imperialism for some concessions for itself, it is clear that the fate of the bourgeoisie is bound up with that of imperialism.

To be continued.

REPORT FROM RUSSIA

As the title indicates, this is not a theoretical article drawing sociological conclusions, it is a report. It is simply the observations of an eye-witness of conditions in the Northern part of the U.S.S.R. The writer is a sailor. He has made more than one voyage and more than one landing on Russian soil during the war. He has spent some weeks ashore, and being familiar with the Russian tongue, has been able to make the most of the opportunities to observe which have been presented to him. —Ed.

We were the last wartime convoy into Russia. What had formerly been the most dangerous run had become in the last weeks preceding the German collapse, as safe as your own backyard. But although the sea had become aware of the end of the war, the White Sea ports in the Arctic had not. In the month of May, 1945, we came to the port of Molotovsk, about 30 miles West of Archangel, a port which is almost entirely a phenomenon of the war, having been mostly constructed since 1941, for the purpose of receiving the Arctic convoys from Britain and America. Built up mostly on an Arctic waste of sand without vegetation, it consists of a scattering of houses, some old some new, some solidly built, some jerry-built. There is the ubiquitous Intourist

Hotel for the quartering of the upper bureaucrats, army officers and Allied personnel, and the equally ubiquitous public loudspeaker that broadcasts from dawn till dusk (24 hours service in the summer), or until 1 a.m.

A working battalion of soldier-dockers came on board to unload our cargo—mostly railroad equipment, locomotives and heavy industrial machinery. But they were not Russians. They were from Bessarabia. At another port along the line—Bakaritsa—another group of workers came on board—women, not in army clothing—from Eastern Poland. At a third port an analogous situation, although more cosmopolitan: men and women from the Urals, from the South and natives of Archangel. The population is apparently suffering shifts that are at once wide and far-reaching, thousands at a time, and in movement from one end of the country to the other.

To a great extent, this was a result of wartime necessities—displacement of populations from those regions which were in the centre of front-line battles in Northern Rumania, Eastern Poland and the Ukraine. Demands of housing and feeding in those areas undoubtedly demanded such shifts of non-military elements to regions not directly in-

volved in the war, where nevertheless they could be of use still. However, these people are not being returned to their native soil, nor is there any intention or practice of doing so; which means that at least to a limited extent, the Soviet Union is not particularly interested in the rebuilding of the lands immediately bordering on Russia, and may mean that for the future they intend to have a self-created cordon sanitaire, a magnified system of defence in depth for anti-invasion purposes than even they had in June, 1941.

Strolling around the docks at Molotovsk and Archangel and the various lumber ports in the Dvina River delta, at whose mouth is Archangel, one observes the almost absolute equality of men and women. The women do the heaviest work required by stevedoring, handling cranes, winches, standards of wood, and share the foremanship of stevedore gangs, although for the most part over groups of women only. They are not spared, but work 12 hours in a row with an hour's break for meals at noon and 6, working where necessary in two shifts round the clock.

And for this they get, what? It is impossible to speak of money wages, for if it were said that the rouble is worth just under a shilling, or 18.8 cents or 9.5 francs, this would take into account neither the chaotic and for the moment meaningless status of international exchange nor—more important—the fact that the rouble can neither be exported nor foreign currency imported. In fact, it is only in the last few months that the Russians themselves assigned any value to a gift of a few roubles. Allied personnel permanently stationed in the U.S.S.R., get a favoured rate of exchange of about 4 roubles to the shilling or 20 to the dollar, but they claim that this is still a hardship for them. And for a reason: the almost complete lack of consumers' commodities in Russia. What does a Russian worker get, other than a rouble wage? 600 grams (a half-pound, English) of black bread per day. What else? Practically nothing. A bit of meat which comes irregularly, infrequently and in bits no larger than a mouthful; tea, the national drink, a bit more regularly,

but never in such amounts or intervals that it can be regarded as a staple; occasional discoveries of potatoes or cabbages—for their soup—which is then set aside for festive occasions; no butter, or in microscopic amounts and very little lard. Outside of the bread, no figures can be regularly given for their diet.

This is not typical of all Russia, and it is likely that by next spring the situation as regards food will improve. Nevertheless, it is indicative that the present conditions of nutrition in Russia are probably equalled by few places in Europe and surpassed by none in the direction of misery, and any improvement must first lift them from a level which is at present sub-standard by far. It is not for nothing that there is a daily box run in the newspaper "Pravda" with a report compiled nation-wide of the status of bread and grain crops. Overt symptoms of malnutrition are not widespread, but the population in the North is young—probably heavily weighted, as all over in Russia—a statistical fact—in favour of youth.

Wages similarly expressed in terms of housing would also be low, since there is a housing crisis throughout the U.S.S.R., even though dozens of shiploads of timber per month in the last half-year (the limit of my acquaintance with the White Sea area) have left the Archangel region for United Kingdom and Western European ports. But this is a trade phenomenon that promises to dwindle to about one-tenth by next spring when ice-free navigation will again be possible.

The export of what can be ill-spared is in the interest of establishing credits abroad. And this is borne out in the matter of fish exports as well. Fishing is a great industry in the White Sea and Barents Sea regions; one sees fishing smacks and yawls heading in and out continually. Yet fish is also a luxury among the people. All for export.

Roubles are plentiful in Archangel. Hordes of children, for the most part in tattered clothing and blue with cold; swarm around the seamen as they leave the ship, begging for cigarettes, candy,

gum, anything. And they are willing to pay fabulous prices for what they cannot obtain by begging: 30 roubles for twenty cigarettes, sometimes 40 roubles.

A black market does not exist in Russia—to the best of my knowledge. There is, on the other hand, a market place generally near the centre of any town where exists the Skol'ka Marke—the "How Much" Market. Here the peasant from the country, from the kolkhoz, takes the produce he has grown over and above the quota established for him to the town and sells, not for what he can get, but for prices in terms of primitive barter, which is supervised by the state Economic Police. For example, one egg changed hands for two packets of 20 cigarettes each. By comparison, a novel may sell for 15 to 20 roubles, a textbook on economics for a similar amount, in the state-owned bookstores; a gramophone record for 6 roubles.

A Stakhanovite worker, or a bureaucrat with influence may get supplementary rations and this is in lieu of extra pay. He takes a note to the local Skolka Market entitling him to so much butter at a reduced rate, and with fewer or no ration stamps. But there is extra pay as well, and savings are enormous in the state banks. War-bond floatations, I am told, have been over-subscribed, especially by peasants and factory workers—certainly by bureaucrats and functionaries—and the bank deposits have risen commensurately during the war. All deposits are guaranteed by the state and pay an interest rate of 2 per cent, as compared to $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent for private deposits in English banks and 1 per cent for American banks.

The children who inundated us as we left the ship were for the most part in rags. Their boots had holes, their coats were out at the elbow—and Archangel is Arctic in weather. They begged, demanded, wheedled and tricked, all for a piece of candy, for a cigarette—for papa, comrade, not for me. They tried to sell medals, home-made knives, rings, ornaments, a bit of coloured glass, in exchange for the cigarettes, etc. But there were some of these

ragamuffins who had it a little better than most. The poorer ones worked in the sawmills around the docks from 14 years onward, possibly even younger, but certainly at that age. The others, the luckier ones, possibly who had made higher marks at an elimination examination, or whose fathers had influence, or a good record, for any reason, kept on in school, entered the Pioneers, then the Komsomol—Y.C.L.—then the party. Excelsior.

I had an opportunity to see some of the school texts used; these were not far different from those in any other country—the familiar barnyard animals in the book of an 11 year old, the sly fox, the crow, and the Russian witch and scarecrow, Baba Yega. The history and indoctrination schoolbooks have sketches of Lenin, Stalin, Kalinin, Molotov. The Red Army was founded by Stalin with the connivance of Budyenny, *inter aliter*—no mention of Trotsky, which was to have been expected. There was a universal reluctance to repeat certain key words in recent Russian history (this was true both of children and adults) such as Revolution, the Left and so on.

The Regime—the army officers, the higher bureaucrats—do not like Archangel very much. Those who are there are either on their way up or down. A vodka commissar who was formerly in charge of the Moscow District Vodka Trust and who could not account for certain shortages or superfluities in his line, might be dispatched to Archangel for a while, himself a superfluity. The manager of an Intourist Hotel who had made a good record for himself may be moved to Odessa.

Nevertheless, they have the best the region can afford: quarters with running water, electric light and steam heat, food which is only a little worse than that allotted to foreign seamen coming in (principally in the matter of the butter ration) and the thousand amenities of personal service which are associated with life in a well-run hotel, the best hotel in town.

The attitude of the people toward the regime is extremely difficult to estimate. There is no grumbling, except when there are no witnesses. Those

who are cognizant of conditions abroad are more on the defensive against comparisons with the outside world, the capitalist world. One young fellow, who was a bit better informed than most, a Russian, who was in a position to be, was challenged by a group of us on the question of the one-party system in Russia and the matter of free speech. "Of course we have free speech in Russia." He looked around himself quickly. "But don't tell anybody I told you."

The workers, men and women around docks have it hard, and they know it and they tell you so. Even as in the 19th Century, emigration, especially of the West is a dream for them. But those peasants of Bessarabian origin just want to go back home; and their nostalgia is strong. Yet even this they do not want to speak of very much.

The more intelligent, the college educated, like life abroad very much. Paris means a great deal to the girls still, Socialism has nothing to replace it with. I found one or two sarcastic expressions regarding the change in theoretical tendencies in the regime. Not much, very little in fact. But a slight awareness that things had changed from the days when world revolution was advocated. For the most part a tendency not to think or remember at all, certainly a tremendous reluctance

to express these thoughts and memories to a foreigner who might not know enough to keep his mouth shut.

The Soviet Union is still at a state of war. There are soldier guards along the docks, around vessels of all nationalities. Control of all those who enter the docks and leave is strict, and passes are examined minutely. Russian money found on foreign seamen entering the country is locked up, and the customs (frontier guard) search of the ship as it is preparing to push off, is undoubtedly the most thoroughgoing in the world. Soldiers, when they leave the army, still wear their uniforms. This is because they have no choice, because clothing replacements, even for basic needs, like coats and dresses and suits are almost unobtainable—except for girls of pleasure and those with influence.

The stratification in terms of wealth—not capital—and position is sharp and wide and obvious; and there is no shading off between them, or middle ground. There are more jobs than manpower in the USSR and above all there is a crying need for skilled labour. The dock workers were learning, the entire country is learning. From zero they have built themselves up to a great power but with the whole economy subordinated to the needs of defence. There is no unemployment in Russia, but there is also no butter.

STALINISM AND DEMOCRACY

By HAROLD ATKINSON

A topic of discussion which is very popular at present is the question of democracy. It arose largely in regard to the Soviet Union. In the last weeks the Stalinist regime in Russia and the Stalinist-imposed regimes in Poland and the Balkan countries have been under fire in Labour and Liberal circles for being non-democratic.

The apologists of Stalinism have, of course, rushed to its defence. In so doing they have merely given the capitalist critics weapons with which to beat them. Reg. Bishop, Secretary of the

RUSSIA TODAY SOCIETY, has made, and repeated in various publications, the claim that "the Soviet Union is a democracy." A "different democracy" from that which exists in Britain and

America, but still a "democracy." He does not offer any evidence in support of this. Apparently he considers that adequate repetition will suffice to establish the assertion as a fact. It has been left to William Gallacher, Communist Party M.P., to supply the "theoretical" support. This he attempts to do in a pamphlet just written: "**What is Democracy?**"

Gallacher attempts to clothe his spurious arguments with the cloak of Marx and Lenin, but in tackling this subject theoretically he walks among eggs! He attempts to use Lenin's ideas to defend the political regime in the USSR which long ago became the antithesis of Leninism. He attempts to use Leninist argumentation against capitalist democracy in the abstract without condemning the concrete policy of his own Party towards it here in Britain. And worse, for Gallacher, because his politics are determined not by the interests of the British workers but by the demands of the Kremlin bureaucracy, he is compelled to proceed in such a way as to leave the way clear for a jump either to the left or the right in accordance with the development of the relationships between Moscow and London in the coming period.

As a consequence Gallacher's article is a hotch-potch of contradictions and evasions. It contains almost everything but an unqualified Marxian analysis of democracy and the positive political conclusions stemming from such an analysis.

DEMOCRACY AND EQUALITY

In trying to pose as a Marxist, Gallacher makes a bad start. He defines democracy as "**majority decision, arrived at by men and women who stand in equal relation one to another.**" In fact there can be no such abstraction.

In context, this definition follows an attack on bourgeois democracy, which he correctly characterises as "Government of a class against another class," and a claim that democracy exists in the Soviet Union. It is the latter point which leads Gallacher to his anti-Marxian diagnosis. In what way do his "men and women" stand in "equal

relation one to the other?" Equality is not an abstraction. In fact the first half of his definition excludes the second part. How can there exist equal relationships between groups of men and women who have differences and are divided along majority and minority lines? The one must submit to the will of the other. Perhaps it means that those who make the majority decisions enjoy economic equality. But even Gallacher would not claim that such relationships exist in the Soviet Union between the bureaucracy and the masses, between the peasant woman in her mud-hut with sacking on her feet and President Kalinin with his Kremlin suit and his "ood boots," between the voluptuous Generals and the Red Army rank and file, or between the Stakhanovite leaders and the ordinary workers. What then is meant by this "equal" relationship? Does it mean that each man and woman has one vote? If so it is a barren and meaningless argument for the Stalinist regime and against bourgeois democracy, for that position appertains pretty generally and with only minor exceptions in the Western capitalist countries.

For Engels the question of "equality" in social relationships was bound up with the struggle for the **abolition of classes**. It had no meaning beyond that. But Gallacher applies the expression to the Soviet Union where, he claims, there is Socialism; that is, where classes do not exist. Let us present the Marxian position in a quotation from Engels' classical work.

ANTI-DUHRING:

"The demand for equality in the mouth of the proletariat has therefore a double meaning. It is either—as was especially the case at the very start, for example in the peasants' war—the spontaneous reaction against the crying social inequalities, against the contrast of rich and poor, the feudal lords and their serfs, surfeit and starvation; as such it is the simple expression of the revolutionary instinct, and finds its justification in that, and indeed only in that. Or, on the other hand, the proletarian demand for

equality has arisen as the reaction against the bourgeois demand for equality, drawing more or less correct and more far-reaching demands from this bourgeois demand, and serving as an agitational means in order to rouse the workers against the capitalists on the basis of the capitalists' own assertions; and in this case it stands and falls with bourgeois equality itself. In both cases the real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the abolition of classes. Any demand for equality which goes beyond that, of necessity passes into absurdity." (page 120).

Thus Gallacher's definition of democracy is seen to be an absurdity. In polemicising against the Kautskyians, Lenin put the whole thing in a nutshell when he wrote, in **STATE AND REVOLUTION**: "No, democracy is not identical with the subordination of the minority to the majority. Democracy is a state which recognises the subordination of the minority to the majority, i.e., an organisation for the systematic use of violence by one class against the other, by one section of the population against another." (Lenin, Selected Works, page 75). Gallacher's definition of democracy has nothing in common with Marxism; and it contradicts the preceding passage in his own article in which he states: "Government of a class, against another class, that is the function of Government, the function of the State." How is it possible to write such conflicting postulates in the same article and even in the same section? We will attempt to show the source of the contradiction.

DEMOCRACY AND THE SOVIET UNION

It is precisely because of his false theoretical position on the Soviet Union that Gallacher is prevented from employing the Marxist method in his argumentation. And references to Marx and Lenin are not a substitute. The Stalinist theoretician writes: "There never has been, and never will be, Government 'for the people.' There always has been, and always will be

(while there are governments) Government in the interest of certain people, against the interest of other people."

That is pretty straightforward, especially as he explains the class divisions in capitalist society. But he goes off the rails when he tries to use this generalisation to prove that democracy exists in the USSR. He says: "In the Soviet Union . . . there is government 'for the great mass of the people' workers, collective farmers, and professional people, all united, against the remnants of Czarism, the remnants of Kulakism, saboteurs, wreckers and agents of outside capitalism." And again, "In the Soviet Union the Proletarian Dictatorship is directed against the enemies of the proletariat." The population of the USSR is in the region of 200,000,000. It would have been interesting if Gallacher had given even rough statistics showing the percentage constituted by these "enemies of the proletariat." It seems rather ludicrous, to say the least, that a people and Army who have displayed the determination and valour shown by the Soviet masses in the defence of their country should tolerate in their midst "wreckers and saboteurs and agents of outside capitalism" to the extent that it needs a dictatorship to keep them in check! Especially when we consider the fact that the world Stalinist press has been claiming for years that all these elements have been stamped out. And how proudly the **Daily Worker** has assured its readers, not once but many times, that despite Hitler's tremendous advances, he did not find a single quisting. Where, then, were these "wreckers" and "agents" of outside capitalism" during the war? Why didn't they attempt to take advantage of Hitler's advances? But perhaps the most astonishing of Gallacher's astonishing statements is the revelation of the continued existence of "remnants of Czarism" twenty-eight years after the Revolution and ten years after Stalin announced the "complete and irrevocable triumph of Socialism" in the Soviet Union!

The Soviet journalist, Zaslavsky, broadcasting in English on Moscow radio on September 22nd, told a different story from Gallacher. He sated:

"An opposition is an integral part of bourgeois Parliamentary democracy, for the simple reason that opposing interests are part of the very life of these countries. In cannot but exist in a country which has within it classes with conflicting social interests."

"Under Soviet democracy there is no Opposition, because we have no landlords and no capitalists. Nor could there be any, for the Socialist system destroyed the very basis upon which it could arise." (*News Chronicle*, 27/9/1945). This certainly does not correspond with Gallacher's assertions. Who, therefore, lies? The answer is both of them!

The very existence of the totalitarian regime of Stalin, with its secret police, its prisons and its penal labour camps with their millions of occupants, to say nothing of the recent public statements of Kalinin, testify against Zaslavsky's claim that there is no opposition and no basis upon which one could arise. What he means to say is that the bureaucracy, by means of its ruthless terroristic methods, its frame-up "trials" and purges, managed up to the present to prevent an **organised** opposition from emerging on the political arena. And it is this fact which enables the Gallachers and Bishops to peddle the monstrous slanders concocted in Moscow by which all opponents of the Stalinist regime are branded as "wreckers" and "enemies of the proletariat."

During the days of Lenin, a large measure of economic equity prevailed between the officials and the masses, but that is not so today. The Soviet bureaucrats live like American millionaires, while the masses exist in hovels, ill-clad, and on a diet consisting almost exclusively of black bread. Yet Gallacher talks of "men and women who stand in equal relation one to the other"! And Zaslavsky claims that there is no opposition because there is "no basis" on which it could arise!

"THE PARTY SYSTEM"

A central theme in Gallacher's discourse is that which he terms "the party system." And this is about the

most specious of his theories. He bewails the lack of study of Marx and Lenin. For him it is well that the vast majority of his Party have little or no acquaintance with the method of these giants of revolutionary thought. Otherwise he and the rest of the Stalinist leadership would not dare attempt to dupe the Party members in this fashion.

Our writer claims that the "party system is in itself an admission of the faulty character of our democracy." He claims that it is due to the "party system," i.e., the existence of more than one political party, that the capitalists and landlords have been able to maintain their rule. What is the object of such monstrous sophistry? It is revealed in this passage:

"Now the Liberal Party has gone, never to return, and the stage is held by Labour and Tory. What do they represent? They represent a society of landowners and capitalists and workers. But suppose the Labour Party succeeded in realising its ultimate goal, what then? No landowners, no capitalists, would mean no party of the landowners and capitalists. That would leave only one party, a party of the workers... If we get unity, one party for the workers and professional people, and then put the landlords and capitalists out of business, we'll be left with one party and it would be childish nonsense to look around for another, just for the sake of having two."

This nonsense must be seen to be believed! In the first place the Labour Party has no intention of conducting a struggle for "its ultimate goal." For socialism is to the social democrat only a theme for demagogic speeches. If it is possible to achieve socialism through the medium of reformism and reformist parties then the whole life work and ideas of Lenin stand for nothing.

There is a one-party regime in the USSR. So Gallacher is perforce compelled to pour his ideas on democracy into this mould, and in so doing to present a historico-political schema oversimplified to the extent of absurd-

ity. Such a situation as Gallacher envisages—two classes, two parties—never has existed in history. Nor could it exist outside of the heads of the Stalinist charlatans.

Gallacher's black-and-red schema is as spurious as it is simple. His thesis that the social system, which is determined by the economic foundation of the given society, can be measured in terms of a party for each class is the negation of Marxism, is totally unrelated to historical fact.

In capitalist America there are two main parties of the capitalist class, but no mass party of the working class. In capitalist Britain there is, apart from the remnants of the Liberal Party, a broad Tory Party embracing within itself all bourgeois political shadings from liberals to fascists and which will undoubtedly split at a future period. But in contradiction to the United States, there is also a mass Labour Party and in addition a number of not unimportant parties of the working class including the formidable Communist Party. In France there are two powerful workers' parties and only one impotent, confused, and heterogeneous bourgeois party. Capitalist Germany and Italy existed for quite a number of years with a one-party regime. Spain continues to do so. From this it can be seen that the number of parties is quite irrelevant to the subject under discussion. But, because Gallacher's whole pamphlet revolves around this, it is necessary to argue at length so as to leave no room for illusions.

In the Russian Revolution there was also no question of a simple two-party struggle in which the party of the workers defeated the party of the landlords and capitalists and a single party regime came automatically into being. On the contrary, quite a range of varying political forces constituted the dynamic of the struggle.

One of the broadest and most important parties in Russia was the Social Revolutionary Party, the party of idealist peasant socialism. When the workers took power this party split in two, and the left wing joined with the Bolsheviks in forming the first Soviet

Government. The right wing, on the other hand, together with the Mensheviks (the equivalent of the British Labour Party), who also proclaimed "socialism" as their "ultimate goal," went on to the barricades with the bourgeois liberals (Cadets) and the Kornilovist scum.

Not only was the first Soviet Government a **two-party** regime but during the whole period of the Revolution, legal opposition parties existed. Where does your "one party" schema go from here, Mr. Gallacher? You must be aware that it was only when the political parties representing the deposed **minority** attempted to overthrow the legally chosen regime of the **majority** by violent civil war, that the Bolsheviks were compelled, in self-defence, to outlaw the opposition parties, including the left Social Revolutionaries who had changed sides. It was in these conditions that the one-party regime came into being in the Soviet Union. It is not an eternal law, as Gallacher would have us believe.

Furthermore, the prohibition of opposition parties was regarded by the Bolsheviks as a **temporary** expedient. The Bolshevik Party at that time represented a genuine organisation of the proletarian vanguard and was living a full-blooded inner life. In some measure the struggle of parties was replaced by the struggle of political factions **within** the ruling party. It is true that at a later stage when the Workers' State was fighting for its very existence, it had to relinquish even this measure of democracy. But this was again dictated by the exigencies of civil war, intervention and famine, and was a measure devised for application only while such conditions prevailed. But in the Stalinist era the prohibition of parties and factions has become transformed, from a temporary and necessary evil into a principle for which Gallacher and his fellow scribes now seek theoretical justification.

Gallacher, as we have seen, reduces his equation to two factors—the capitalist class and the working class—or, more precisely, to the two parties allegedly representing those classes. He

then, by eliminating the former, by "putting them out of business" as he terms it, reduces the whole thing to . . . one class and one party! Can any sane person seriously be asked to accept such a ridiculous recipe for a proletarian revolution?

Marx, and after him, Lenin, posed the question in an entirely different manner. For them the emancipation of the working class from the yoke of the capitalists and landlords meant not the existence of a single class but the **abolition of classes**. How can it be otherwise? Classes presuppose social relationships which cannot exist if everyone is a worker, for there will be no other social group to which **worker** can be related, therefore, there can be **no classes** as we understand them. There will be a **classless** society.

The proletarian dictatorship, as understood by Marx and Lenin, was necessary only as a transition phase which ushered in the classless society. Once the transition from capitalism to socialism has been achieved then there can be no basis for the continued existence of the proletarian dictatorship. In becoming the ruling class, in forming itself into a state to abolish those classes whom it deposed, the working class puts an end to itself as a class. It also performs its last act as a state which then begins to "wither away." It is transformed from a government of men to the administration of things. By the same reasoning it becomes clear that Gallacher's argument is false from every aspect. For if we accept the possibility that the two basic classes in the present society can harmonise their entire interests within the framework each of a single party, then it would follow that what should exist after the successful revolution would be, not one party, but none.

But the position is obviously nonsensical. Parties are formed on the basis of differing ideas and interests within the classes, and these will occur even under socialism. Gallacher's position becomes worse the further it is pursued, for if, as he claims, there can be no basis for opposition parties after he has put the landlords and capitalists "out

of business" then they will not arise. Nothing can arise or exist without a basis. In which case why is there any need to **prohibit** opposition parties?

But the whole question is falsely posed by Gallacher. Political parties express not only class interests but differing interests within the given classes; different methods of achieving like objectives, and so on and so forth. The Labour Party, the Stalinist Communist Party, the Revolutionary Communist Party, the Independent Labour Party have all been created and are all sustained by the working class. All claim to have socialism as their objective, but all have differing ideas on what socialism is and how to achieve it. And it is around these issues that the political struggle in the working class movement revolves between the differing parties and between differing factions within the parties. Ideological struggle, around different issues will go on even under socialism when there are no classes. That is inevitable.

DEMOCRACY AND THE TRADES UNIONS

"Just a thought," is interposed into Gallacher's article at this stage, "There is democracy, very much so, in the trades unions of this country and in the great Co-operative movement. Democracy in the sense of which we always speak of it, where majority decisions are made and operated by men and women who stand in equal relation to one another and there is no 'party system' to make it work." This is utterly false, and Gallacher knows it to be so. How long have Gallacher and his party fought the bureaucratic regime of Transport House? How many times has the bureaucratic club landed on their own heads in the past struggles? What of the Black Circular which debarred communists from representing their trade unions on the trades councils or at the Labour Party Conference? As for his references to no "party system," who has done more than the C.P. to convert the trades unions into a battleground for the protagonists of the various workers' political parties? How did Arthur

Horner, Joe Scott, Bert Papworth, and the rest of the Stalinist trade union leaders achieve their positions but for their support for and the support of the Communist Party machine? What is this but the "party system"? Have not the Stalinists had to battle for years against the syndicalist elements who want to exclude "politics" from the T.U.'s

The trade union organisations, far from being democratic, are bureaucratised through and through. It is not a question of a written constitution (and even if it was very few would pass the "democratic" test), it is a matter of living realities. Union democracy depends for its very existence on the struggle of active and intelligent participants. The unions approach a democratic inner life only when they are alive and completely under the control of the majority of those who belong to them. And this position is achieved only during periods of tense social stress. In the ensuing periods, when apathy prevails, and that means most of the time, the leaderships become divorced from the members, are better paid, have different tastes and interests and social positions, are flattered and corrupted by their constant contact with the ruling class with whom they spend so much time "negotiating." They seek security, they consolidate their positions of leadership and life jobs because of the lack of vigilance of the members. During the past decades, the class-collaborationist policy of the unions has brought about a process of fusion with the capitalist state machine. The bureaucratic practices of the leaders are protected by legal sanction. And the same methods are evoked in order that the bureaucrats can deny striking workers access to their own union funds. What kind of "equal relationship" is it which denies the right of fifty thousand striking dockers to speak in the name of their own union but recognises the exclusive right of a tiny unrepresentative clique at the top to manipulate the organisation as they think fit? What sort of "democracy" prevails in unions which cannot even constitutionally remove their leaders because they have life jobs?

It is in the interest of the top leaderships to maintain apathy in the unions and to discourage rank and file interest and initiative, and they are adepts at it; for upon that their jobs largely depend. Far from talking about the "very democratic" state of affairs which now exists in the trades unions, it is necessary for militant workers, above all communists, to recognise, as a primary task, the need to struggle for the democratisation of the unions. To replace the leaders who now betray every struggle, and to restore the independence of the unions from the state machine. The trades unions are in a transitional phase. At present they are moving in the direction of becoming an auxiliary arm of the capitalist state machine for use in mobilising and disciplining the workers in the interests of the ruling class, and if they are to remain as trade unions and not degenerate into a "Labour Front," a decisive struggle must be waged to restore their independence from the state and transform them into militant organs of struggle for the interests of the workers. Such illusions as Gallacher attempts to peddle can only serve the opposite purpose, to say nothing of being the opposite of the facts.

A striking analogy presents itself here. The Workers' State is, in the last analysis, a trade union which has taken power. It, too, is a thoroughly bureaucratised instrument in a transitional phase. It is neither capitalist nor socialist but at present it is moving rapidly in the direction of capitalism. It is degenerating at an alarming tempo. If it is to be saved as an outpost of the world proletarian revolution, then it must be defended not only from the attacks of world capitalism but also from the Stalinist oligarchy. Its defence necessitates an implacable political struggle against the bureaucracy, and for the restoration of Soviet democracy which existed under Lenin. But this again represents but a transitional phase in the struggle for socialism, a struggle inextricably bound up with the world revolution.

No words of Gallacher or anyone else can convert the Soviet Union into a democracy. The question is not one of

a definition into which non-existent "equal relationships" are crammed. Right cannot extend beyond the confines of the economic structure on which the law is based. Marx expressed the matter thus:

"Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and the cultural development thereby determined.

"In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of individuals under division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour has vanished; after labour from a mere means of life, has itself become the prime necessity of life; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be fully left behind and society inscribe upon its banners: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!" (Critique of the Gotha Programme p.14) In this passage is contained all that needs to be said here on the question of equality and right in social relationships.

GALLACHER'S CONCLUSIONS . . . AND OURS

What conclusions does Gallacher draw from his observations and studies of democracy? In his own words: "Bourgeois Democracy," as Lenin so often said, is limited, very, very limited and cannot be any means be presented as a standard for our progressive people." Nowhere in the writings of Lenin will Gallacher find undefined or unqualified references to "progressive people." Lenin thought and spoke and wrote and acted on the basis of **classes and class interests**, not on the basis of nebulous "progressive people," and he qualified his "limitations" similarly. But let us ascribe, for the sake of our argument the highest Leninist motives in the point of contention, it still leaves the issue in mid-air. This conclusion is purely negative and calls forth no positive

demands for political action. Nor can Gallacher and the Stalinist leadership issue such a call to struggle for they long since abandoned the path of communism for the path of social-democratic struggle to influence the government within the confines of the very same bourgeois democracy which Gallacher condemns. No better example need be sought than Gallacher's own speech in the House of Commons on August 15th, when he said, apropos the Address to His Majesty: **"everybody must recognise the fact that as a constitutional Monarch, the King has at all times, sought to serve the best interests of the country."** (Hansard Vol. 413, No. 4).

How can such a charlatan draw the conclusion that it is necessary to replace the capitalist regime which now exists with the dictatorship of the proletariat? True Gallacher smuggles in a reference here and there which might, erroneously, be so interpreted. He talks of getting rid of our "party system" and moving towards a one-party regime with a parliament which merely "registers" the decisions to be made. But this has nothing to do with the dictatorship of the proletariat, or with socialism. Hitler's tyrannical regime fits quite snugly into such a framework.

We could raise and deal with many aspects and details of Gallacher's article which are no less false and contradictory, but time and space do not permit. We have confined our criticism to the central ideas argued by Gallacher on the question of Marxism. Freedom and democracy are by no means absolutes, they cannot be sought as ends in themselves. The process of development is brilliantly summarised by Lenin in the following words: **"The concepts 'freedom' and 'democracy' are usually considered as identical and are often used instead of each other" . . . In fact democracy excludes freedom. The dialectics (process) of development is: from absolutism to bourgeois democracy; from bourgeois democracy to proletarian; from proletarian to none at all."**

In his political report to the recent Congress of the Communist Party,

Harry Pollitt, made the following point: "If the Labour Government is to carry out its policy, it will have to promote real democratic leadership and control in all the decisive positions of the State machine." (*Daily Worker*, 26/11/45). This can have only one meaning: the capitalist state machine can be used by the workers to achieve their objectives; can become the instrument for the establishment of a "democratic" regime which will operate in the interests of the masses. In a recent pamphlet Pollitt actually argues this theoretically, claiming that a peaceful transition to socialism can be achieved through the democratisation of the state machine.

What is the Marxist position on the question. It should already be clear from foregoing arguments of Marx and Lenin, but in our concluding remarks we will remove any possibility of doubt that the ideas presented by the Stalinist leaders have anything in common with Marxism. Here, in a preface to the 1872 German edition of the "Communist Manifesto," is the position taken up jointly by Marx and Engels, "One thing especially was proved by the Commune (the Paris Commune of 1871, H.A.), viz., that the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes." And this constitutes the very core of Lenin's attitude towards the state.

Bourgeois democracy is a phase in

the historical transition from absolutism to socialism. It is an essential stage of development which enables the proletariat to organise itself for the struggle for power. Without the opportunity to establish organs of proletarian struggle—trade unions, workers' councils and political parties—the workers cannot organise and mobilise the majority of the toilers for the establishment of workers' power. Consequently we will defend bourgeois democracy against any attempts of capitalist reaction to replace it with a fascist or military dictatorship which sets out to abolish such liberties as bourgeois democracy affords, and to destroy the organisations of the working class. That is to say we defend bourgeois democracy just as long as it performs a progressive function in contradistinction to regressive, absolutist or totalitarian forms of rule, but not beyond that. When the stage is reached at which bourgeois democracy becomes a brake on historical development by being counterposed by the capitalist class, whose interests it **always** serves, to the establishment of proletarian democracy, i.e. the democracy of the workers' state, then we are for the ending of bourgeois democracy and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is the only method of achieving the socialist classless society towards which Marxism strives. That is the Marxist-Leninist attitude towards democracy.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

BONAPARTISM AND FASCISM

By LEON TROTSKY

THE vast practical importance of a correct theoretical orientation is most strikingly manifested in a period of acute social conflict, of rapid political

shifts, of abrupt changes in the situation. In such periods, political conceptions and generalisations are rapidly used up and require either a complete

replacement (which is easier) or their concretisation, precision or partial rectification (which is harder). It is in just such periods that all sorts of transitional, intermediate situations and combinations arise, as a matter of necessity, which upset the customary patterns and doubly require a sustained theoretical attention. In a word, if in the pacific and "organic" period (before the war) one could still live on the revenue from a few ready-made abstractions, in our time each new event forcefully brings home the most important law of the dialectic: The truth is always concrete.

The Stalinist theory of Fascism indubitably represents one of the most tragic examples of the injurious practical consequences that can follow from the substitution of the dialectic analysis of reality, in its every concrete phase, in all its transitional stages, that is, in its gradual changes as well as in its revolutionary (or counter-revolutionary) leaps, by abstract categories formulated upon the basis of a partial and insufficient historical experience (or a narrow and insufficient view of the whole). The Stalinists adopted the idea that in the contemporary period, finance capital cannot accommodate itself to parliamentary democracy and is obliged to resort to Fascism. From this idea, absolutely correct within certain limits, they draw in a purely deductive, formally logical manner the same conclusions for all the countries and for all stages of development. To them, Primo de Rivera, Mussolini, Chiang Kai-Shek, Masaryk, Brüning, Dollfuss, Pilsudski, the Serbian king Alexander, Severing, MacDonald, etc., were the representatives of Fascism. In doing this, they forgot: a) that in the past too capitalism never accommodated itself to "pure" democracy, now supplementing it with a régime of open repression, now substituting one for it; b) that "pure" finance capitalism nowhere exists; c) that even while occupying a dominant position, finance capital does not act within a void and is obliged to reckon with the other strata of the bourgeoisie and with the resistance of the oppres-

sed classes; d) that, finally, between parliamentary democracy and the Fascist régime a series of transitional forms, one after another, inevitably interposes itself, now "peaceably," now by civil war. And each one of these transitional forms, if we want to go forward and not be flung to the rear, demands a correct theoretical appraisal and a corresponding policy of the proletariat.

On the basis of the German experience, the Bolshevik-Leninists recorded for the first time the transitional governmental form (even though it could and should already have been established on the basis of Italy) which we called Bonapartism (the Brüning, Papen, Schleicher governments). In a more precise and more developed form, we subsequently observed the Bonapartist régime in Austria. The determinism of this transitional form has become patent, naturally not in the fatalistic but in the dialectical sense, that is, for the countries and periods where Fascism, with growing success, without encountering a victorious resistance of the proletariat, attacked the positions of parliamentary democracy in order thereupon to strangle the proletariat.

During the period of Brüning-Schleicher, Manuïlsky-Kuusinen proclaimed: "Fascism is already here"; the theory of the intermediate, Bonapartist stage they declared to be an attempt to paint over and mask Fascism in order to make easier for the social democracy the policy of the "lesser evil." At that time the social democrats were called social-Fascists, and the "Left" social democrats of the Zyromsky, Marceau Pivert, Just type passed—after the "Trotskyists"—for the most dangerous social-Fascists. All this has changed now. With regard to present-day France, the Stalinist do not dare to repeat: "Fascism is already here"; on the contrary, they have accepted the policy of the united front, which they rejected yesterday, in order to prevent the victory of Fascism in France. They found themselves compelled to distinguish the Doumergue régime from the Fascist régime. But

they have arrived at this distinction as empiricists and not as Marxists. They do not even attempt to give a scientific definition of the Doumergue régime. He who operates in the domain of theory with abstract categories is condemned to capitulate blindly to facts. And yet it is precisely in France that the passage from parliamentarism to Bonapartism (or more exactly, the first stage of this passage) has taken on a particularly striking and demonstrative character. It suffices to recall that the Doumergue government appeared upon the scene between the rehearsal of the civil war by the Fascists (February 6) and the general strike of the proletariat (February 12). As soon as the irreconcilable camps had taken up their fighting positions at the poles of capitalist society, it wasn't long before it became clear that the adding machine of parliamentarism lost all importance. It is true that the Doumergue government, like the Brüning-Schleicher governments in their day, appears at first glance to govern with the assent of parliament. But it is a parliament which has abdicated, a parliament which knows that in case of resistance the government would dispense with it. Thanks to the relative equilibrium between the camp of counter-revolution which attacks and the camp of the revolution which defends itself, thanks to their temporary mutual neutralisation, the axis of power has been raised above the classes and above their parliamentary representation. It was necessary to seek the head of the government outside of parliament and "outside the parties." The head of the government has called two generals to his aid. This trinity has supported itself on its Right and its Left by symmetrically arranged parliamentary hostages. The government does not appear as an executive organ of the parliamentary majority, but as a judge-arbiter between two camps in struggle.

A government which raises itself above the nation is not, however, suspended in air. The true axis of the present government passes through the police, the bureaucracy, the military clique. It is a military-police dictatorship with which we are confronted,

barely concealed with the decorations of parliamentarism. But a government of the saber as the judge-arbiter of the nation—that's just what **Bonapartism** is.

The saber by itself has no independent programme. It is the instrument of "order." It is summoned to safeguard what exists. Raising itself **politically** above the classes, Bonapartism, like its predecessor, Caesarism, for that matter, represents **in the social sense**, always and at all epochs, the government of the strongest and solidest part of the exploiters; consequently, present-day Bonapartism can be nothing else than the government of finance capital which directs, inspires and corrupts the summits of the bureaucracy, the police, the officers' caste and the press.

The "constitutional reform" about which so much has been said in the course of recent months, has as its sole task the adaptation of the state institutions to the exigencies and conveniences of the Bonapartist government. Finance capital is seeking legal paths that would give it the possibility of each time imposing upon the nation the most suitable judge-arbiter with the forced assent of the quasi-parliament. It is evident that the Doumergue government is not the ideal of a "strong government." More suitable candidates for a Bonaparte exist in reserve. New experiences and combinations are possible in this domain if the future course of the class struggle is to leave them enough time.

In prognosticating, we are obliged to repeat what the Bolshevik-Leninists said at one time about Germany: the political chances of present French Bonapartism are not great; its stability is determined by the temporary, and at bottom unsteady equilibrium between the camps of the proletariat and Fascism. The relation of forces of these two camps must change rapidly, in part under the influence of the economic conjuncture, principally in dependence upon the quality of the proletarian vanguard's policy. The collision between these two camps is inevitable. The measuring time of the process will be calculated in months and not in years.

A stable régime could be established only after the collision, depending upon the results.

Fascism in power, like Bonapartism, can only be the government of finance capital. In this social sense, it is indistinguishable not only from Bonapartism but even from parliamentary democracy. Each time, the Stalinists made this discovery all over again, forgetting that social questions resolve themselves in the domain of the political. The strength of finance capital does not reside in its ability to establish a government of any kind at any time, according to its wish; it does not possess this faculty. Its strength resides in the fact that every non-proletarian government is forced to serve finance capital; or better yet, that finance capital possesses the possibility of substituting for each one of its systems of domination that decays, another system corresponding better to the changed conditions. However, the passage from one system to another signifies the political crisis which, with the concurrence of the activity of the revolutionary proletariat, may be transformed into a social danger to the bourgeoisie. This passage of parliamentary democracy to Bonapartism itself was accompanied in France by an effervescence of civil war. The perspective of the passage from Bonapartism to Fascism is pregnant with infinitely more formidable disturbances and consequently also revolutionary possibilities.

Up to yesterday, the Stalinists considered that our "main mistake" was to see in Fascism the petty bourgeoisie and not finance capital. In this case too they put abstract categories in place of the dialectics of the classes. Fascism is a specific means of mobilising and organising the petty bourgeoisie in the social interests of finance capital. During the democratic régime capital inevitably attempted to inoculate the workers with confidence in the reformist and pacifist petty bourgeoisie. The passage to Fascism, on the contrary, is inconceivable without the preceding permeation of the petty bourgeoisie with hatred of the proletariat. The domination of one and the same super-

class, finance capital, rests in these two systems upon directly opposite relations of oppressed classes.

The political mobilisation of the petty bourgeoisie against the proletariat, however, is inconceivable without that social demagoguery which means playing with fire for the big bourgeoisie. The danger to "order" of the unleashed petty bourgeois reaction, has just been confirmed by the recent events in Germany. That is why, while supporting and actively financing reactionary banditry, in the form of one of its wings, the French bourgeoisie seeks not to push matters to the point of the political victory of Fascism, aiming only at the establishment of a "strong" power which, in the last analysis, is to discipline the two extreme camps.

What has been said sufficiently demonstrates how important it is to distinguish the Bonapartist form of power from the Fascist form. Yet it would be unpardonable to fall into the opposite extreme, that is, to convert Bonapartism and Fascism into two logically incompatible categories. Just as Bonapartism begins by combining the parliamentary régime with Fascism, so triumphant Fascism finds itself forced not only to enter into a bloc with the Bonapartists, but what is more, to draw closer internally to the Bonapartist system. The prolonged domination of finance capital by means of reactionary social demagoguery and petty bourgeois terror, is impossible. Having arrived in power, the Fascist chiefs are forced to muzzle the masses who follow them by means of the state apparatus. By the same token, they lose the support of broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie. A small part of it is assimilated by the bureaucratic apparatus. Another sinks into indifference. A third, under various banners, passes into opposition. But while losing its social mass base, by resting upon the bureaucratic apparatus and oscillating between the classes, Fascism is regenerated into Bonapartism. Here too the gradual evolution is cut into by violent and sanguinary episodes. Differing from pre-Fascist or preventive Bonapartism (Giolitti, Brüning-Schleicher, Doumergue, etc.) which reflects the extremely unstable

and short-lived equilibrium between the belligerent camps, **Bonapartism of Fascist origin** (Mussolini, Hitler, etc), which grew out of the destruction, the disillusionment and the demoralisation of the two camps of the masses, distinguishes itself by its much greater stability.

The question "Fascism or Bonapartism?" has engendered certain differences on the subject of the Pilsudski régime among our Polish comrades. The very possibility of such differences testifies best to the fact that we are dealing not with inflexible logical categories but with living social formations which represent extremely pronounced peculiarities in different countries and at different stages.

Pilsudski came to power at the end of an insurrection based upon a mass movement of the petty bourgeoisie and aimed **directly** at the domination of the traditional bourgeois parties in the name of the "strong state"; this is a Fascist trait characteristic of the movement and of the régime. But the specific political weight, that is, the mass of Polish Fascism was much weaker than that of Italian Fascism in its time and still more than that of German Fascism; to a much greater degree, Pilsudski had to make use of the methods of military conspiracy and to put the question of the workers' organisations in a much more circumspect manner. It suffices to recall that Pilsudski's *coup d'état* took place with the sympathy and the support of the Polish party of the Stalinists. The growing hostility of the Ukrainian and Jewish petty bourgeoisie towards the Pilsudski régime made it, in turn, more difficult for him to launch a general attack upon the working class.

As a result of such a situation, the oscillation between the classes and the national parts of the classes occupied and still occupies with Pilsudski a much greater place, and mass terror a much smaller place, than in the corresponding periods with Mussolini or Hitler; there is the Bonapartist element in the Pilsudski régime. Nevertheless, it would be patently false to compare Pilsudski to Giolitti or to Schleicher and to look forward to his being relieved by a new

Polish Mussolini or Hitler. It is methodologically false to form an image of some "ideal" Fascism and to oppose it to this real Fascist régime which has grown, up with all its peculiarities and contradictions, upon the terrain of the relationship of classes and nationalities in the Polish state. Will Pilsudski be able to lead the action of destruction of the proletarian organisations to the very end?—and the logic of the situation drives him inevitably on this path—that does not depend upon the formal definition of "Fascism as such," but upon the true relationship of forces, the dynamics of the political processes taking place in the masses, the strategy of the proletarian vanguard, finally, the course of events in Western Europe and above all in France.

History may successfully inscribe the fact that Polish Fascism was overthrown and reduced to dust before it succeeded in finding for itself a "totalitarian" form of expression.

We said above that Bonapartism of Fascist origin is incomparably more stable than the preventive Bonapartist experiments to which the big bourgeoisie resorts in the hopes of avoiding Fascist blood-letting. Nevertheless, it is still more important—from the theoretical and practical point of view—to emphasise that **the very fact of the regeneration of Fascism into Bonapartism signifies the beginning of its end.** How long a time the withering away of Fascism will last, and at what moment its malady will turn into agony, depends upon many internal and external causes. But the fact that the counter-revolutionary activity of the petty bourgeoisie is quenched, that it is disillusioned, and that it is disintegrating, that its attack upon the proletariat is weakening, opens up new revolutionary possibilities. All history shows that it is impossible to keep the proletariat enchained with the aid merely of the police apparatus. It is true that the experience of Italy shows that the psychological heritage of the enormous catastrophe experienced maintains itself among the working class much longer than the relationship between the forces which engendered the catastrophe. But the psychological

inertia of the defeat is but a precarious prop. It can crumble at a single blow under the impact of a powerful convulsion. Such a convulsion—for Italy, Germany, Austria and other countries

—could be the success of the struggle of the French proletariat.

The revolutionary key to the situation in Europe and in the entire world is now above all in France!

WALL STREET AND THE WORLD REVOLUTION

By LEON TROTSKY

This short article was written in Moscow by Leon Trotsky as a preface to the American edition of his book "Whither England?" These words were committed to print in May, 1925, that is, no less than twenty years ago. The intervening two decades have served only to demonstrate the brilliance of the ideas of this profound thinker. Today it is clear that the author's analysis of Anglo-American relationships is indisputable. No less will Comrade Trotsky's predictions of the revolutionary developments flowing from these capitalist relationships fail to mature. Only by an understanding of the Marxist method can we equip ourselves to understand the historical process as it unfolds before us and to prepare for the revolutionary struggles ahead. Towards such an understanding, and as an example of the Marxist method of analysing events, we produce these lines.—Ed.

THE present work is devoted to a consideration of the ultimate destinies of England, a subject that may be of interest to the American reader for two reasons: first, because England occupies a very prominent position in the world; second, because the United States and Great Britain may be regarded as twin stars, one of which grows dim the more rapidly as the brilliancy of the other increases.

The inference to which I am led by my study is that England is heading rapidly toward an era of great revolutionary upheavals. Of course, the English secret service men and their American disciples will declare that I am engaging in propaganda for a proletarian revolution, as if it were possible for an outsider, by means of pamphlets, to alter the course of evolution of a great nation! As a matter of fact, I am simply attempting, by analysing the most important factors in the historical development of England, to explain the historical path by which that country will be made to encounter obstacles—internal as well as external—to its continued existence. To accuse me of revolutionary meddling in the affairs of foreign countries, on the basis of such statements, would be

almost equivalent to accusing the astronomer of bringing about a solar eclipse because he has predicted its occurrence.

But do not understand me as saying that astronomical phenomena are parallel to the phenomena of society. The former are accomplished outside of us, the latter through our agency. Which does not mean, however, that historical events may be achieved by our mere wish or directed with the assistance of pamphlets. Far more books and newspapers have come out and are still coming out with avowed purpose of defending and maintaining capitalism—including British capitalism—than have ever been published to attack it. Ideas of any kind may be effective only when they are based on the material conditions of social evolution. England is headed for social revolution because she has already entered the stage of capitalist disintegration. If the guilty must be found, if we must ask; what accelerates England's progress on the path of revolution, the answer is, not Moscow, but New York.

This answer may appear paradoxical, yet it is the simple truth. The powerful and constantly growing influence of the

United States on world affairs is rendering more and more impossible the hopeless situation of British industry, British trade, British finances, and British diplomacy.

The United States cannot but tend to expand in the world market, failing which its own industry will be threatened with apoplexy because of the richness of its blood. The United States can only extend at the expense of other exporting countries, which means, particularly, England. In view of the patented Dawes method of harnessing the economic life of an entire mighty nation in the traces of American supervision, it almost provokes a smile to hear people speak of the revolutionary significance of one "Moscow" pamphlet or another. Under the cover of what is called the pacification and rehabilitation of Europe, immense revolutionary and military conflicts are preparing for the morrow. Mr. Julius Barnes, who enjoys the confidence of the Department of Commerce at Washington, suggests that the European debtors of the United States be assigned to exploit such sections of the world market as will not bring the impoverished and indebted European cousins of the United States into competition with the expansion of their creditor across the seas. In aiding to restore the European monetary system, the United States is simply exploding one inflated illusion after the other, by giving the Europeans an opportunity to express their poverty and dependence in the language of a firm currency. By exerting pressure on its debtors, or giving them an extension, by granting or refusing credit to European countries, the United States is placing them in a gradually tightening economic dependence, in the last analysis an ineluctable situation, which is the necessary condition for inevitable social and revolutionary disturbances. The Communist International, viewed in the light of this knowledge, may be considered an almost conservative institution as compared with Wall Street. Morgan, Dawes, Julius Barnes—these are among the artificers of the approaching European revolution.

In its work in Europe, and elsewhere, the United States is generally acting in co-operation with England, through the agency of England. But this collaboration means for England an increasing loss of independence. England is leading the United States to hegemony, as it were. Relinquishing their world rule, the diplomats and magnates of England are recommending their former clients to deal with the new master of the world. The common action of the United States and England is the cloak for a profound world-wide antagonism between these two powers, by which the threatening conflicts of the perhaps not remote future are being prepared.

This brief preface is not the place in which to speak of the fate of America itself. There is no doubt that capital today nowhere feels itself so strong as in America. American capitalism grew marvellously, chiefly at the expense of the European belligerents at first, now by reason of their "return to peace," their "rehabilitation." But in spite of all its huge power, American capitalism is not a self-contained factor, but a part of world economy. Furthermore, the more powerful the industry of the United States becomes, the more intimate and profound becomes its dependence on the world market. Driving the European countries farther and farther down their blind alley, American capitalism is laying the foundation for wars and revolutionary upheavals, which in their frightful rebound will not fail to strike the economic system of the United States also. Such is the prospect for America. In revolutionary development, America does not stand in the front rank; the American bourgeoisie will still enjoy the privilege of witnessing the destruction of its older European sister. But the inevitable hour will strike for American capitalism also: the American oil and steel magnates, trust and export leaders, the multimillionaires of New York, Chicago and San Francisco, are performing — though unconsciously — their predestined revolutionary function. And the American proletariat will ultimately discharge theirs.