LIVING MARXISM

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This magazine consciously opposes all forms of sectarianism. The sectarian confuses the interest of his group, whether it is a party or a union, with the interest of the class. It is our purpose to discover the actual proletarian tendencies in their backward organizational and theoretical forms; to effect a discussion of them beyond the boundaries of their organizations and the current dogmatics; to facilitate their fusion into unified action; and thus to help them achieve real significance.

LEON TROTSKY

With Leon Trotsky there passed away the last of the great leaders of bolshevism. It was his activity during the last fifteen years that kept alive some of the original content of the bolshevik ideology — the great weapon for transforming backward Russia into its present state-capitalistic form.

As all men are wiser in practice than in theory, so also Trotsky by his accomplishments achieves far greater importance than through his rationalizations that accompanied them. Next to Lenin, he was without doubt the greatest figure of the Russian Revolution. However, the need for leaders like Lenin and Trotsky, and the effect these leaders had, brings to light the utter helplessness of the proletarian masses to solve their own real needs in face of a merciless unripe historical situation.

The masses had to be led; but the leaders could lead only in accordance with their own necessities. The need for leadership of the kind practiced by bolshevism finally indicates nothing else than the need to discipline and terrorize the masses, so that they may work and live in harmony with the plans of the ruling social group. This kind of leadership in itself demonstrates the existence of class relations, class politics and economics, and an irreconcilible opposition between the leaders and the led. The over-towering personality of Leon Trotsky reveals the non-proletarian character of the Bolshevik Revolution just as well as the mummified and deified Lenin in the Moscow Mausoleum.

In order that some may lead, others must be powerless. To be the vanguard of the workers, the elite has to usurp all social key positions.

Like the bourgeoisie of old, the new leaders had to seize and control all means of production and destruction. To hold their control and keep it effective, the leaders must constantly strengthen themselves by bureaucratic expansion, and continually divide the ruled. Only masters can be leaders.

Trotsky was such a master. At first he was the masterly propagandist, the great and never tiring orator, establishing his leading position in the revolution. Then he became the creator and master of the Red Army, fighting against the *Right* and the *Left*, fighting for bolshevism, which he hoped to master too. But here he failed. When leaders make history, those who are led no longer count; but neither do they disappear. Trusting in the force of grand historical spectacles, Trotsky neglected to be the efficient opportunist behind the scenes of bureaucratic development that he was in the spotlight of world history.

Today, great men are no longer necessary. Modern propaganda instruments can transform any fraud into a hero, any mediocre personality into an all-comprehending genius. Propaganda actually transforms through its collective efforts any average, if not stupid, leader, like Hitler and Stalin, into a great man. The leaders become symbols of an organized, collective, and really intelligent will to maintain given social institutions. Outside of Russia, Trotsky was soon reduced to the master of a small sect of professional revolutionists and their providers. He was "the Old Man", the indisputable authority of an artificial growth upon the political scene, destined to end in absurdity. To become the master of a *Fourth International*, as his adversary Stalin was master of the *Third*, remained the illusion with which he died.

There is here no need to re-trace Trotsky's individual development; his autobiography suffices. Neither is it necessary to stress his many qualifications, literary and otherwise. His works, and most of all his *History of the Russian Revolution*, will immortalize his name as a writer and politician. But there is a real need to oppose the development of the Trotsky legend which will make out of this leader of the Russian state capitalist revolution a martyr of the international working class — a legend which must be rejected together with all other postulates and aspects of bolshevism.

Louis Ferdinand Celine has said that revolutions should be judged twenty years later. And in doing so, he found only words of condemnation for bolshevism. To us, however, it seems that a present-day re-evaluation of bolshevism could well do without any kind of moralizing. In retrospect it is quite easy to see in bolshevism the beginning of a new phase of capitalist development, which was initiated by the first World War. No doubt, in 1917, Russia was the weakest link in the capitalist world structure. But the whole of capitalism in its private property form was already on the verge of stagnation. To erect and expand a workable economic system of the laissez-faire type was no longer possible. Only the force of complete centralism, of dictatorial rule over the whole of society, could guarantee the establishment of an exploitative social order capable of expanding production despite the declining world-capitalism.

There can be no doubt that the bolshevik leaders by creating their state-capitalistic structure — which has, within twenty years, become the example for the further evolution of the whole of the capitalist world — were deeply convinced that their construction conformed to the needs and desires of their own and the world proletariat. Even when they found that they could not alter the fact that their society continued to be based on the exploitation of labor, they sought to alter the meaning of this fact by offering in excuse a theory that identified the rule of the leaders with the interests of the led. The motive force of social development in class society — the class struggle — theoretically was done away with; but practically, an authoritarian regime had to be developed masked as the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the creation of this regime, and in the attempt to camouflage it, Trotsky won most of his laurels. He rested on those laurels to the very last. It is only necessary to reflect on the paramount role which Trotsky played in the first thundering years of Bolshevik Russia to understand why he could not admit that the bolshevik revolution was able only to change the form of capitalism but was not able to do away with the capitalistic form of exploitation. It was the shadow of that period that darkened his understanding.

In the general backwardness that prevailed in Czarist Russia, the intelligentsia had little opportunity to improve its position. The talent and capacities of the educated middle classes found no realization in this stagnating society. Later this situation found its parallel in the middle class conditions in Italy and Germany after Versailles and in the wake of the following world crisis. In all three countries, and in both situations, the intelligentsia and large layers of the middle classes became politicized and counter-poised to the declining economic system. In the search for ideologies useful as weapons, and in the search for allies, all had to appeal to the proletarian layer of society, and to all other dissatisfied elements. The leadership of the bolshevik as well as of the fascist movements was not proletarian, but middle class: the result of the frustration of intellectuals under conditions of economic stagnation and atrophy.

In Russia, before 1917, a revolutionary ideology was developed with the help of western socialism — with Marxism. But the ideology served only the act of revolution, nothing more. It had to be altered continuously and re-fitted to serve the developing needs of the state-capitalist revolution and its profiteers. Finally, this ideology lost all connection with reality and served as religion, a weapon to maintain the new ruling class.

With this ideology, the Russian intelligentsia, supported by ambitious workers, were able to seize power and to hold it because of the disintegration of Czarist society, the wide social gap between peasants and workers, the undeveloped proletarian consciousness, and the general weakness of international capitalism after the war. Coming to power with the help of a russified Marxian ideology, Trotsky, after he lost power, had no choice but to mainain the revolutionary ideology in its original form against the

degeneration of Marxism indulged in by the Stalinists. He could afford this luxury, for he had escaped the iron consequences of the social system he had helped to bring about. Now he could lead a life of dignity, that is, a life of opposition. But had he suddenly been brought back to power, his actions could have been none other than those of Stalin's which he so despised. After all, the latter is himself no more than the creature of Lenin's and Trotsky's policies. As a matter of fact, "Stalinists" as a particular type are, so long as they are controllable, just that type of men which leaders like Lenin and Trotsky need and love most. But sometimes the worm turns. Those bolshevik underlings elevated into power positions understand to the fullest that the only insurance for security lies in imprisonment, exile, and murder.

In 1925 oppressive methods were not far enough advanced to secure absolute power for the great leader. The dictatorial instruments were still hampered by the traditions of democratic capitalism. Leadership remained after Lenin's death; there was not yet the Leader. Though Trotsky was forced into exile, the unripeness of the authoritarian form of government spared his life for fifteen years. Soon both old and new oppositions to Stalin's rule could easily be destroyed. Hitler's overwhelming success in the "night of the long knives", when he killed off with one bold stroke the whole of the effective opposition against him, showed Stalin the way to handle his own problems. Whoever was suspected of having at one time or another entertained ideas unpleasant to Stalin's taste and absolute rule, whoever because of his critical capacities was suspected of being able in the future to reach the willing ears of the underdogs and disappointed bureaucrats, was eliminated. This was done not in the Nibelungen manner in which the German fascists got rid of Roehm, Strasser and their following, but in the hidden, scheming, cynical manner of the Moscow Trials, to exploit even the death of the potential oppositionists for the greater glory of the all-embracing and beloved leader, Stalin. The applause of those taking the offices emptied by the murdered was assured. To make the broad masses happily accept the miserable end of the "old Bolsheviks" was merely a job for the minister of propaganda. Thus the whole of Russia, not only the leading bureaucratic group, finished off the "traitors to the fatherland of the workers".

Though secretly celebrating Trotsky's death at studio parties, the defenders of Stalinism, affecting naivete, will ask why Stalin should be interested in doing away with Trotsky. After all, what harm could Trotsky do to the mighty Stalin and his great Russia? However, a bureaucracy capable of destroying thousands of books because they contain Trotsky's name, re-writing and again re-writing history to erase every accomplishment of the murdered opposition, a bureaucracy able to stage the Moscow Trials, is certainly also capable of hiring a murderer, or finding a volunteer to silence the one discordant voice in an otherwise perfect harmony of praise for the new ruling class in Russia. The self-exalting identification with his leader of the last pariah within the Communist Party, the idiotic fanaticism

displayed by these people when the mirror of truth is held before their eyes, permits no surprise at Trotsky's murder. It is surprising only that he was not murdered sooner. To understand the assassination of Trotsky, it is only necessary to look at the mechanism and the spirit of any bolshevik organization, Trotsky's included.

What harm could Trotsky do? Precisely because he was not out to harm his Russia and his workers' state was he so intensely hated by the ruling bolshevik bureaucracy. For the very reason that the Trotskyites in countries where they had a foothold were not out to change in the least the party instrument devised by Lenin, that their spirit remained the spirit of bolshevism, they were hated by the proprietors of the separate Communist Parties.

The swift steps of history make possible any apparent impossibility. Russia is not immune to the vast changes the present world experiences. In a tottering world, all governments become insecure. No one knows where the hurricane will strike next. Each one has to reckon with all eventualities. Because Trotsky insisted on defending the heritage of 1917, because he remained the bolshevik who saw in state capitalism the basis for socialism and in the rule of the party the rule of the workers, because he wanted nothing but the replacement of Stalin and the Stalin-supporting bureaucracy, he was really dangerous to the latter.

That he had other arguments, such as that of the "permanent revolution" against the slogan of "socialism in one country", etc., is rather meaningless, because the permanence of the revolution as well as the isolation of Russia, is dependent not upon slogans and political decisions, but on realities over which even the most powerful party has no control. Such arguments serve only to disguise the quite ordinary interests for which political parties struggle.

It was the non-revolutionary character of Trotsky's policies with regard to the Russian scene that made him so dangerous. The Russian bureaucracy knows quite well that the present world situation is not given to revolutionary changes in the interests of the world proletariat. Dictators and bureaucrats think in terms of dictatorship and bureaucracy. It is pretenders to the throne they fear, not the rabble of the street. Napoleon found it easy to control any insurrectionary crowd; he found it far more difficult to deal with the machinations of Fouche and Talleyrand. A Trotsky, living, could be recalled with the help of the lower layers of the Russian bureaucracy whenever an opportune moment arose. The chance to replace Stalin, to triumph finally, depended on Trotsky's restricting his criticism to Stalin's individual, brutal moroseness, to the sickening, newly-rich attitudes of the Stalin satellites. He realized that he could return to power only with the help of the greater part of the bureaucracy, that he could take his seat in the Kremlin again only in the wake of a palace revolution, or a successful Roehm putsch. He was too much of a realist — despite all the convenient mysticism of his political program — not to realize the

silliness of an appeal to the Russian workers, those workers who must have learned by now to see in their new masters their new exploiters, and to tolerate them out of fear and necessity. Not to tolerate, and not to approve the new situation means to surrender the chance to improve one's own situation; and as long as Russian economy is expanding, individual ambitions and individual apologia will rule individuals. The suckers make the best of a situation which they feel is beyond their power to alter. Precisely because Trotsky was not a revolutionary, but merely a competitor for leadership under existing Russian conditions — ever ready to follow the call of a bureaucracy in re-organization should a national crises demand the abdication of Stalin — he became increasingly more dangerous to the present ruling clique engaged, as it is, in new, vast imperialistic adventures. Trosky's murder is one of the many consequences of the re-birth of Russian imperialism.

Today Bolshevism stands revealed as the initial phase of a great movement which, expected to perpetuate capitalistic exploitation, is slowly but surely embracing the whole world and changing the no longer functioning private property economy into greater state capitalistic units. The rule of the bolshevist commissar finds its logical conclusion in fascistic dictatorships spreading over the globe. Just as little as Lenin and Trotsky knew what they were actually doing when they were fighting for socialism, just as little do Hitler and Mussolini know today what they are doing in fighting for a greater Germany and the Roman Empire. In the world as it is, there is a wide difference between what men want to do, and what they are actually doing. Men, however great, are very small before history, which steps beyond them and surprises them always anew with the results of their own surprising schemes.

In 1917, Trotsky knew as little as we ourselves knew that the bolshevik revolution would have to end in an international fascistic movement and in the preparation and execution of another world war. If he had known the trend of development, he would either have been murdered twenty years ago, or today he would occupy Stalin's place. As it is, he ended as a victim of the fascist counter-revolution against the international working class and the peace of the world.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that Stalin murdered Trotsky, despite the displacement of all forms of bolshevism by fascism, a final evaluation of Trotsky's historical role will have to place him in line with Lenin, Mussolini, Stalin and Hitler as one of the great leaders of a world-wide movement attempting, knowingly and unknowingly, to prolong the capitalist exploitation system with methods first devised by bolshevism, then completed by German fascism, and finally glorified in the general butchery which we are now experiencing. After that — the labor movement may begin.

PRELUDE TO HITLER

THE INTERNAL POLITICS OF GERMANY: 1918-1933

As the period under discussion begins and ends with a revolution, our first and main concern will not be the particular problem, however important, that arise and are solved from day to day and from year to year in the normal development of a political unit. Our main concern is rather the basic problem of government itself. The crucial question that faced the so-called Weimar Republic during most of its life-time was the question whether this republic existed at all, and what was its real political structure.

From a formal point of view that question seems to be easily answered. When the empire had been finally defeated and its ruler, the Kaiser,— or more correctly the twenty-odd kings and arch-dukes and dukes who had been the collective sovereign of imperial Germany — had formally abdicated, the German people after a comparatively short period of turmoil and strife gave itself a new republican constitution by its chosen representatives at Weimar in August, 1919. That constitution remained valid until the advent of Nazism, and in a sense remains valid even today, as the state power was seized by the Nazi party in a perfectly legal manner. Hitler was made Chancellor, that is Prime Minister, by the President of the German Republic, Field Marshall Hindenburg, on January 30, 1933. He was confirmed in that position by the overwhelming majority of the Reichstag and by a number of practically unanimous plebiscites. The same procedure was observed when later, after Hindenburg's death in 1934, the office of president was abolished, and Hitler, in his new position as "Leader and Chancellor", united in his person and thereby in the office of Chancellor both the powers of the presidency and of the chancellorship. Even the transfer of all legislative powers from parliament to the Leader, including the power to further change the constitution itself, was performed in a perfectly legal manner. These powers were formally delegated from the Reichstag to Hitler's cabinet by the device of two "enabling acts" presented to the first and second Reichstags of 1933, and invariably accepted by majorities much greater than the two-thirds required by Article 76 of the Weimar constitution.

This formal record of the constitutional development does not, however, give a real answer to the basic problem of that fourteen years' interlude between two revolutions and two world wars that was the German Republic. There is even some doubt whether in the continuous flux and incessant struggle between progressive and reactionary, revolutionary and counter-revolu-

tionary forces there ever was any tangible condition or state of affairs sufficiently stable to be described as the German Republic or as a government based on the Weimar constitution.

For the purpose of a realistic interpretation the history of the fourteen years preceding the victory of Nazism in Germany must be divided into at least five totally different periods. The first period is marked by the struggle for and against the so-called Workers' Councils which lasted from November, 1918, to August, 1919. This was, according to a particularly intelligent and understanding British observer,* "the critical period for Germany and for Europe. It was the formative and creative stage for a new Germany and for a new Europe." Locking backward, we may say indeed that this was the last chance for the survival of a genuine democracy under conditions of a rapidly increasing monopoly and state capitalism in post-war Europe.

The form of government during that initial period can be described under various aspects: According to the then generally accepted opinion, both the legislative and the executive powers were vested in a so-called *Council of People's Commissaries* which derived its authority from other and more democratic instances of the revolutionary *Workers' and Soldiers' Council* organization. Yet the six leading members of the two fractions of the *Social Democratic Party,* who composed that so-called Council of People's Commissaries, actually regarded themselves as an anticipated cabinet of the parliament-to-be. These Commissaries were, in fact, replaced as early as February, 1919, by a *coalition cabinet* and a *president* elected by the *National Assembly,* which had convened in January. The "coalition cabinet" thus created, which was to recur again and again in the future development of the German Republic, represented the three parties which had been the only ones to accept unreservedly the new state form of a parliamentary republic on the Western model. The three parties were: (1) the moderate Social-democrats, (2) the catholic Center, and (3) the newly formed democratic State Party. They were opposed from one side by the two monarchist parties which differed from the traditional conservative and National-liberal parties of pre-war times by a change of name only, and from the other side by the new revolutionary parties emerging from the war and the ensuing collapse of the old regime. These new parties were the left wing of the formerly united Social-Democratic Party which now called itself the *Independent Socialist Party,* and the revolutionary *Spartakus Bund* which had just re-baptized itself as the *Communist Party.*

However, the real form of government prevailing during this first period did not conform to either of those two theoretical patterns. During this time there was not any generally accepted authority either in the form of a revolutionary rule of the working classes nor in the form of an effective rule by parliament. A temporary eclipse of all state power in November,

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* George YOUNG, *The New Germany,* London and New York, 1920

1918, was followed by a violent struggle for power between the revolutionary workers' council movement on the one hand and a secretly growing counter-revolutionary form of government which can be most adequately described as a *"government by Freicorps"* on the other. This state of affairs was in no way changed by the formal enactment of the new republican constitution on August 11, 1919. It was the tragic fate of the German Republic that its first official government chose to lean more and more heavily on the power of the military. After a first unsuccessful attempt to find effective support in the remnants of the old imperial army, it turned for help and alliance to the newly formed military organizations (Freicorps) which were later to join in every reactionary assault on the constitutional government and which represented in fact the first important kernel of the future military organization of the counter-revolutionary Nazi power.

We now turn to the second period of the Weimar Republic which was inaugurated by the total defeat of the first reactionary onslaught on the new state made by the very powers which it had allowed and even helped to grow up for the purpose of its own defense. This was the monarchistic putsch of Generallandschaftsdirektor *Kapp* of East Prussia, or rather of the Reichswehr General *von Luettwitz*, the close friend of the first social-democratic War Minister *Noske*.

The Reichswehr marched into Berlin through the Brandenburger Tor and the Weimar government fled in terror to Stuttgart where it was joined by the National Assembly. Nevertheless, the enterprise of Kapp failed utterly for two very different reasons. First, he had relied merely on military action and had neglected the task of building up a new political organization and a new political ideology — an experience which was not lost on later putschists. Yet even their later and better prepared actions were for a long time defeated until they had learned by experience and had finally built up that tremendously efficient and recklessly unscrupulous modern counter-revolutionary movement which was to deal the death blow to the Weimar Republic in 1933.

The second and much more important reason for Kapp's failure was not of a technical nature. The mass of the German workers, called upon by their government, rose in a unanimous general strike for the defense of republic and democracy. This was a kind of *second revolution*, though not in the direction of an increased radicalism — like that of the Jacobin Convention of 1792 or that of the Russian October Revolution that followed upon the first revolution of February, 1917. Rather, it was a falling back from the utopian dreams of the first attempt of November, 1918, to the realistic aims of the socialist movement that had developed during the preceding fifty years.

This time the workers fought for what they really wanted and they got what they had fought for. Up to then the Weimar constitution had enjoyed only a precarious existence. The official republican government had been barely tolerated by its own backers, i. e., by the reactionary army

and the ultra-reactionary Freicorps. It had now won a certain degree of stability. March, 1920, rather than August, 1919, is the birthday of the German constitution. Even so, this was not a republic triumphant, but at the most a republic mildly militant — as shown later by the feeble reaction of the public against the murder of the Catholic minister Erzberger in 1921 and the Democratic minister Rathenau in 1922. The republican revolt exhausted itself in empty street demonstrations and culminated in a never constantly applied *Statute for the Protection of the Republic.*

As a detailed discussion of the foreign politics of the Weimar republic is outside the scope of this paper, I propose to pass over the new deep crisis of 1923 which was mainly caused by the impact of foreign coercion: Versailles, reparations, occupation of the Ruhr, separatism, Hitler's beer-hall putsch in Munich, revolutionary rising of the German workers in defense against the Hitler threat, and military expeditions led by Hitlerite and neutral Reichswehr generals against all anti-Hitlerite movements of the people in various parts of Germany.

From this chaos there emerged a new phase of the German Republic, the parliamentary government of the so-called *Stresemann era.*

The nine cabinets of the six-year period from 1925 to 1929 were of a widely different political composition, varying from the so-called bourgeois bloc which included the Nationalist Right, to a government headed by a social-democratic chancellor. Yet they were in fact all dominated by the undisputed leadership of one and the same minister of foreign affairs. Herr Stresemann represented those strata of German industrial capital which had by then resolved to accept for the time being the republican form of the state as a given fact and to comply with the reparation demands of the Versailles treaty by a carefully elaborated policy of "tactical" fulfillment. At the same time, the impossible burden which had been placed on the German nation after the 1923 crisis by the so-called *Dawes Plan* was gradually undermined until the Dawes Plan could be replaced by the *Young Plan* of 1929, which cut down the obligation of Germany to annual payments decreasing from 2½ to 1½ billions in 1988. It was in the violent campaign for a plebiscite against the acceptance of this plan that the new counter-revolutionary forces led by Hitler first joined hands with the old reactionary forces of traditional nationalism and conservatism, thereby foreshadowing the combined action of the two unequal partners in 1933. Yet against all such disturbing elements, the Stresemann policy of fulfillment and conciliation prevailed, paving the way for the final annulment of all reparation payments which was to be achieved, one year before Hitler's advent, by the *Lausanne conference* of 1932.

It was during this Stresemann era — and this era alone — that it might be possible to speak of an existing Weimar Republic.

This was the time of an exceptionally mild political climate, economic prosperity, and a comparatively undisturbed international situation.

It was the time when there was peace on earth and *Locarno* in Europe. Germany entered the League of Nations and under the leadership of the United States and the French minister *Briand*, more than sixty nations agreed under the *Kellogg Pact* to ban war as an instrument of national policy.

Thus, the stability shown by the German Republic during this six-year period was stronger in appearance than it was in fact. It was not exposed to any real trials. The republic survived, yes, but only during the closed season. All apparent stability disappeared when the economic and political climate changed under pressure from the world crisis beginning in 1929. For the sake of brevity I shall describe this change by quoting from a recent article by the English historian *G. P. Gooch:*

"The Weimar Republic was unwittingly destroyed by American speculators. The economic blizzard crossed the Atlantic and burst on Europe in 1930. In Germany the number of unemployed doubled, banks collapsed, old firms shut their doors. At the general election of September the Nazis jumped from 12 to 107 deputies, which made them inferior in number to the socialists alone.

From this point there developed what must be described as the decay and fall of the Weimar Republic, and what might be called even more appropriately the rise and victory of the fully matured counter-revolution.

It would be a mistake to look at the three governments following upon the Stresemann era (the government of *Bruening, von Papen, Schleicher*) as being republican and parliamentary governments at all.

None of these governments could ever count on a majority in parliament. A note of censure which was passed at the end of the von Papen government late in 1932 (when Herr von Papen had the presidential decree for the dissolution of the Reichstag already in his pocket, but did not succeed in reading it before the vote was taken), showed that of the 600 members of the Reichstag only 40 were prepared to back the government.

Thus all the governments of the German Republic after September, 1930, represented a *presidential regime* rather than a parliamentary government. They ruled by *emergency decree* and not by normal parliamentary procedure. This tremendous growth of the emergency power was, of course, in flagrant contradiction to the spirit of the constitution, though perhaps it did not go against its letter as it was formally based on *Article 48 of the constitution* which entitles the president of the Reich "in case of severe disturbance of public safety and order to take all necessary measures to restore public safety and order, and, if necessary, to intervene with the aid of the armed forces of the realm".

Before we deal with this last fateful period when all principles of republican and parliamentary government and the rights of man as embodied in the constitution were utterly destroyed, we must point out in fairness that with all its abuses this indiscriminate recourse to Article 48 was not an entirely new practice.

Government by martial law and by emergency decree was rampant in Germany during the rule of the Social-democratic president, Ebert, from 1919 to 1924, and there was no misuse of the emergency power during the later period of 1930-1933 and beyond for which a precedent could not be found among the hundreds of emergency decrees issued during that earlier phase.** The much indicted replacement of the socialist government in Prussia by a Reichskommissar under von Papen in June, 1932, finds its precedent in the "imperial executions" of October and November, 1923, against the socialist governments which had attempted to fight the threatening march of Hitler to Berlin by the organization of a workers' militia in Saxony and Thuringia. Nor was it a novelty when the most unpopular economy measures of Bruening and von Papen were decreed by the government under Article 48 with the formal justification that " according to the statements of the party leaders acceptance by the Reichstag could not be expected". The machinery of Article 48 had been used for the purpose of normal financial and economic legislation as early as 1923 and 1924 under the presidency of Ebert. Even the "enabling acts" of Herr Hitler in 1933 had been preceded by the "enabling acts" of Herr Stresemann in 1923.

Thus while the whole history of the German Republic from 1918 to 1933 could be described as the history of the growth of martial law and emergency power, yet there are some important differences between the earlier and later periods. First of all, there had been that intervening period from 1924 to 1929 during which the application of Article 48 had become increasingly rare and had finally been discontinued. The return to those rough and ready improvisations after a time of comparative stabilization gives in itself a new significance to the use of the same method in the later period.

Another difference arises from a consideration of the main function fulfilled by Article 48 before 1924 and after 1929. During the first phase it had served mainly to invest the existing authorities with extraordinary powers for the suppression of what was rightly or wrongly considered as threats or dangers to the newly created order of the republic. This was, indeed, the time when all the forces which might have later resisted the victory of the fascist counter-revolution were most cruelly suppressed by an unchecked use both of the military and the civil executive power, by extraordinary courts, and by a general eclipse of the administration of justice in the ordinary courts whenever a crime could be excused on account of a pretended national interest. Even if the criminal was formally tried, he would escape without punishment because political murder from the Right was

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** *The number of decrees issued under Article 48, Section 2, by the government of the Reich alone during the first five years of the republic amounted to 135. To this number should be added the decrees issued under Article 48 during the same period by the governments of the states, the uncounted number of emergency measures enforced by civil and military authorities before Augut 11, 1919, and the 110 decrees issued under the "enabling acts" of October and December, 1923.*

forever protected by the strong hands of the semi-legal and the wholly illegal, yet officially tolerated, organizations of the secretly recruited new army.

The later period of emergency government since Bruening showed an entirely different character. This time the ordinary business of parliamentary legislation was totally superseded by legislation through emergency decrees. There was a permanent discontinuance of all genuine parliamentary government and a deliberate attempt to replace it by the principle of leadership.

Article 48 became the most important part of the Weimar constitution.*** After five years of non-application of Article 48, Chancellor Bruening on July 16, 1930, enacted his whole program of financial reconstruction in the form of two decrees based on Article 48, and when a majority of the Reichstag revoked his decrees, he dissolved the Reichstag and re-enacted the decrees on the same basis before a new election. Article 48 was in the end used even for the purpose of decreeing the whole of the imperial budget for the parliamentary year 1932 — the last year of the Weimar Republic.

We shall not deal in detail with those last phases of German republicanism that preceded its ultimate overthrow by the temporarily combined forces of the old nationalist and militarist reaction on the one hand and the new and incomparably more vigorous, reckless, and efficient forces of the Nazi counter-revolution on the other. A closer study of the various phases of this final period would only further corroborate the fundamental result already reached in this paper. It would show that from the grim beginnings to the bitter end all the internal developments of the German Republic are not to be contrasted with the later Nazi development, but rather regarded as its first and preparatory phase.

The main points made in this paper are the following:

I have tried to explode two common fallacies:

1) that there ever was a "German Republic";

2) that there ever was a "German Revolution".

In opposition to those two fallacies I assert:

That the so-called "German Republic" that filled the gap between the old imperialist Germany of the Kaiser and the new Nazi Germany of Herr Hitler was forever a "republic without republicans"; that the so-called "German Revolution", which is supposed to have taken place during the first years after the war, was neither a social revolution of the proletarian class nor a democratic revolution destroying the old reactionary powers. It was a "revolution without revolutionaries".

Yet, although there never was a real revolution, it can be shown that there was — and there still is going on — a very real counter-revolution. Those forces which conquered the German state for the Nazi dictatorship in 1933 arose and grew simultaneously with the development of that political

***The comparative number of emergency decrees based on Article 48 as against normal parliamentary legislation rose from 5:95, in 1930, to 42:35, in 1931, and to 59:5, in 1932.

system which was generally assumed to be a modern republican and democratic state. Although Nazism is neither socialist nor democratic, yet by feeding upon the failures and omissions of the so-called "system politicians" it enrolled in the long run the support of the majority of the nation, and in both the economic and political fields solved a number of concrete problems that had been neglected or frustrated by the unsocialist attitude of the socialists and the undemocratic behavior of the democrats. Thus a certain part of the tasks that "normally" would have been fulfilled by a genuinely progressive and revolutionary movement were fulfilled in a distorted, but nevertheless realistic manner, by the transitory victory of a non-socialist and undemocratic but plebeian and anti-reactionary counter-revolution. Nor is this a thing of the past. The Nazi counter-revolution that began in Germany, 1918-1933, is continuing today on an enlarged European scale.

Karl Korsch

WHICH SIDE TO TAKE?

The second World War has presented grave and fateful problems to the socialist workers' movement. Again it is faced with a situation similar to that which confronted the old labor movement at the outbreak of the first World War. There is a danger that the mistakes which brought doom to social-democracy will be repeated.

The question confronting us today is whether Liebknecht's slogan: "The enemy is at home!" is as valid for the class struggle now as it was in 1914. When Liebknecht voiced his slogan class-struggle conditions were relatively simple. In Germany, for instance, the semi-feudal government was undoubtedly considered a greater foe of the proletariat than the democratic governments of the Entente. Today, too, the fascist government of Germany is apparently a more dangerous enemy of the workers than is England. Liebknecht's slogan would therefore have today an even greater validity for the German working class than it had in 1914.

It would seem, however, that today the workers in the democratic countries are faced with a different situation. Bourgeois democracy confronts them in their struggle for political and economic emancipation. Nevertheless, being at war with the totalitarian states, primarily with German fascism, the democracies cannot be regarded as the arch-foe of the proletariat.

Because of their political structure and their class-struggle mechanics, the democratic countries are forced to grant certain liberties to the proletariat which enables it to carry on its struggle in its own manner. In the totalitarian countries this is no longer possible. Within the framework of dictatorship, even when it calls itself socialist, the proletariat has no liberties,

no rights or possibilities to fight its own struggles. There is no doubt that totalitarianism is the greater, the more vicious and dangerous foe of the proletariat. It would appear then that Liebknecht's slogan has thus lost its validity for the proletariat in the democratic countries.

In the face of this situation working-class movements of democratic countries shift in a direction which sets aside the struggle against democracy as long as the latter is engaged in a war against the totalitarian countries, in a great crusade against its arch foe, against monopoly, fascism, bolshevism — the totalitarian system in general.

It is this situation which gives rise to the present confusion, debate and controversy within the working-class movement. To understand the present tactical shifts, however, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the situation preceding the shift in policy in 1914. Laws, principles, programs and slogans have only a transitory validity, are determined historically by time factors, situations, and circumstances, and are to be viewed dialectically. Thus what may have been the wrong tactic then may be the right one today, and vice versa. Let us apply this to the present tactical shift.

When German Social Democracy in 1914 capitulated to the Kaiser and voted war credits, the proletariat of the whole world branded this act as a shameful betrayal of socialism. Until then it had been an established policy of socialists in parliaments to oppose military appropriations. In the case of war credits it was taken for granted that the socialists would act in accordance with the established policy. Therefore, when the socialists did vote the war credits they disrupted an established tactic and betrayed an established principle.

This act was universally condemned and aroused heated disputes within the entire socialist movement. The opportunists justified it on the grounds that they were exchanging "cannons for social reforms". The radicals, on the other hand, urged a more vigorous struggle against the government in order to turn the war into a civil war and to prepare for the final struggle — the coming revolution.

For present day fractions this struggle has become meaningless, mainly because socialist parties and parliamentary functionaries have become meaningless in many countries. And in those countries where they are still tolerated their voices have become mere patter. Either they are not consulted at all about whether they will grant war credits, or they themselves are its staunchest supporters. Without deliberation and without struggle they are on the side of their governments. If formerly they were allies of the bourgeoisie they are now its servants and lackeys, without being in the least aware of their role of betrayers. In England, France, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Switzerland and Czechoslovakia — in fact everywhere — the Socialists were and are siding with the bourgeoisie. And the "Communists", once the fiercest critics and opponents of the Social-Democrats, for whom the especially invented the term "Social-fascist", bowed

to the bourgeoisie even before their political degeneration and betrayal which culminated in the capitulation to Hitler and fascim.

How shall we account for this shift? Is it because the representatives of Socialism and Communism have all become knaves and blackguards? To assume that would be too simple. No matter how many rascals and blackguards there may be among them, the reason for this shift lies deeper. It must be sought in the changed conditions of party organizations, in the changed times. These changes have become apparent and obvious.

The old social-democratic movement arose during the first phase of the capitalist era, the one we can refer to as the phase of private capitalism (laissez-faire). From it social-democracy received the impulse of its origin, the conditions for its growth, the structure of its mass-organizations, the field, tactic and weapons for its struggles. Its substance was derived from the substance of the system in which it lived and fought, and which it hoped to vanguish. Though striving to be the opposite, it could not help but be like it in every way.

This system entered its last phase with the first World War. It is now in a life-and-death struggle against the ascending new phase, which we describe as state-capitalistic. Just as the first one found its ideological and political expression in Liberalism and Democracy, so the second finds its expression in Fascism and Dictatorship. Democracy was the state form of capitalist ascendency, of its struggle against feudalism, monarchism and clericalism, of the unfolding of all individual powers for the victory and rise of the capitalist economic system, for the social setting and cultural endowment of the bourgeois order. This ascending period ended long ago. Democracy becomes more and more inadequate and unbearable for present day capitalism, for the capitalistic interests can no longer live and grow under it. They demand new social and political conditions, a new ideology and a new state form — a new ruling apparatus. The democratic phase is discarded and demolished in order that fascism can take its place. For only under fascism can state-capitalism develop and thrive.

When democracy ceases to be the valid and dominant state-form, that movement which received its impetus, its right to and form of existence from democracy, also ceases. It cannot continue to live on its own power. Its parliamentarism, its party-machine, its authoritative-centralistic organization methods, its agit-prop technique, its military strategy, its compromisory tactic, its rationalizations as well as its metaphysical-irrational illusions—all these it received from the rich arsenal of the bourgeoisie, all of it was part and parcel, flesh of the flesh of the bourgeois-democratic-liberal world. Because all this has ended, the movement has collapsed, becomes but a shadow of its former self. It can only toss and groan under the cover of the torn and tattered cloak of dying democracy until its own death overtakes it.

Private capitalism—and with it democracy, which is trying to save it—is obsolete and going the way of all mortal things. State capitalism — and with it fascism, which paves the way for it — is growing and seizing power.

The old is gone forever and no exorcism works against the new. No matter how hard we may try to revive Democracy, to help her once more stand on her legs, to breathe life into her, all efforts will be futile. All hopes for a victory of democracy over fascism are the crassest illusions, all belief in the return of democracy as a form of capitalist government has only the value of cunning betrayal and cowardly self-delusion. Those labor leaders who today are on the side of the democracies, and are trying to win the workers' organizations to that side, are doing only what their particular governments and general staffs are doing; namely, recruiting workers and homeless, hopeless emigrants into their armies to hurl them against fascist fronts. These volunteer recruiting officers, hirelings of the democracies, are gentlemen no finer than those kidnappers who supply death-ships with shanghaied sailors. Sooner or later even the democracies will be forced to rid themselves of them, for it becomes more and more obvious that the democratic governments do not desire a real and serious war against fascism. They afforded no real help to Poland. No serious attempt was made to save Finland. They sent badly armed soldiers to Norway. They sign economic pacts with Russia, the accomplice and camp-follower in the service of Hitler. Everything they are doing is only calculated to force Germany into such a difficult and untenable position that she will be willing to enter into a capitalist-fascist business partnership which will enable both sides to enslave the whole world. Both methods of government are getting more similar every day. What real democracy was there in Czechoslovakia? in Poland? What democracy did the Spanish refugees and other emigrants find in France where all human rights and human dignity have been thrown to the dogs? And how democratic is the rule of monopoly capitalism in the U.S.A.? All democracy is practically dead. And all the hopes of workers to revive it through their efforts are sheer illusion. Are the experiences of the Austrian, German and Czechoslovakian social democracies not frightful enough? It is the misfortune of the proletariat that its obsolete organizations based upon an opportunistic tactic make it defenseless against the onslaught of fascism. It has thus lost its own political position in the body politic of the present time. It has ceased to be a history-making factor of the present epoch. It has been swept upon the dungheap of history and will rot on the side of Democracy as well as on the side of Fascism, for the Democracy of today will be the Fascism of tomorrow.

Hope for the final uprising of the proletariat and its historical deliverance does not spring from the miserable remnants of the old movements in the still-democratic countries, and still less from the shabby fragments of those party traditions that were scattered and spilled in the emigration of the world. Nor does it spring from the stereotyped notions of past revolutions, regardless of whether one believes in the blessings of violence or in "peaceful transition". Hope comes rather from the new urges and impulses which will animate the masses in the totalitarian states and will force them to make their own history. The self-expropriation and proletarianization of the bourgeoisie by the second World War, the surmounting of

nationalism by the abolition of small states, the state-capitalistic world-politic based on state federations, the spreading of the class concept until it fosters a majority interest in socialism, the shift of gravity from the typically laissez-faire form of bourgeois competition to the unavoidable collectivization of the future, the transformation of the class-struggle from an abstract-ideological category into a practical-positive-economic category, the automatic rise of factory councils after the unfolding of labor democracy as a reaction to bureaucratic terror, the exact and rational regulations and directions of human activities and conduct through the abolition of the power of the impersonal, unconscious and blind market economy — all these factors can make us aware of the enormous upsurge of energies made free when the primitive, mechanical, raw and brutal beginnings of a social collectivism, such as fascism presents, are at last overcome.

As yet we do not see by what means fascism will be overcome. We feel, however, justified in assuming that the mechanics and dynamics of revolution will undergo fundamental changes. The familiar concept of revolution stems primarily from that period which saw the transition from the feudal to the bourgeois world. This concept will not be valid for the transition from capitalism to socialism. The effect and success of the revolution may be perceived from the fact that the present forced collectivization, which is even now bursting its bureaucratic fetters, develops its own dynamics toward a higher and wider balance, consolidation, and distillation. The final sublimation must lead to an orientation based upon the principle of liberty, equality and fraternity so that the free development of every individual will become the precondition for the free development of all.

This is by no means a Utopia, but an aspect of a very real development within the next historical epoch, which the second World War is ushering in. To focus attention upon this development, to reckon with this basically universal and profoundly revolutionary process, to help strengthen this process by one's conduct and action, to defend it against hindrances and distortions is the revolutionary task confronting us today. In the second World War both fronts, the democratic as well as the fascist, are likely to be defeated — the one militarily, the other economically. No matter to which side the proletariat offers itself, it will be among the defeated. Therefore it must not side with the democracies, nor with the totalitarians. For class-conscious revolutionaries there is only one solution, the solution which breaks with all traditions and all remnants of organizations of the past, which sweeps away all the illusions of the bourgeois-intellectual epoch and which really learns from the lessons of discouragements and disillusionment suffered during the infantile stage of the working-class movement.

Otto Ruehle.

WHY PAST REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS FAILED

Thirty years ago every socialist was convinced that the approaching war of the great capitalist powers would mean the final catastrophe of capitalism and would be succeeded by the proletarian revolution. Even when the war did break out and the socialist and labor movement collapsed as a revolutionary factor, the hopes of the revolutionary workers ran high. Even then they were sure that the world revolution would follow in the wake of the world war. And indeed it came. Like a bright meteor the Russian revolution flared up and shone over the earth, and in all countries the workers rose and began to move.

Only a few years later it became clear that the revolution was decaying, that social convulsions were decreasing, that the capitalist order was gradually being restored. Today the revolutionary workers' movement is at its lowest ebb and capitalism is more powerful than ever.

Once again a great war has come, and again the thoughts of workers and communists turn to the question: will it affect the capitalistic system to such a degree that a workers' revolution will arise out of it? Will the hope of a successful struggle for freedom of the working class come true this time?

It is clear that we cannot hope to get an answer to this question so long as we do not understand why the revolutionary movements after 1918 failed. Only by investigating all the forces that were then at work can we get a clear insight into the causes of that failure. So we must turn our attetion to what happened twenty years ago in the workers' movement of the world.

II.

The growth of the workers' movement was not the only important nor even the most important fact in the history of the past century. Of primary importance was the growth of capitalism itself. It grew not only in intensity — through concentration of capital, the increasing perfection of industrial technics, the increase of productivity — but also in extensity. From the first centers of industry and commerce — England, France, America, Germany — capitalism began to invade foreign countries, and now is conquering the whole earth. In former centuries foreign continents were subdued to be exploited as colonies. But at the end of the 19th and at the

beginning of the 20th centuries we see a higher form of conquest. These continents were assimilated by capitalism; they became themselves capitalistic. This most important process, that went on with increasing rapidity in the last century, meant a fundamental change in their economic structure. In short, here was the basis of a series of world-wide revolutions.

The central countries of developed capitalism, with the middle class — the bougeoisie — as the ruling class, were formerly surrounded by a fringe of other, less-developed countries. Here the social structure was still entirely agrarian and more-or-less feudal; the large plains were cultivated by farmers who were exploited by landowners and stood in continous, more-or-less open struggle against them and the reigning autocrats. In the case of colonies this internal pressure was intensified through exploitation by European colonial capital that made the landowners and kings its agents. In other cases this stronger exploitation by European capital was brought about by financial loans of governments, which laid heavy taxes upon the farmers. Railways, introducing the factory products that destroyed the old home industries and carried away raw material and food, were built. This gradually drew the farmers into world commerce and aroused in them the desire to become free producers for the market. Factories were constructed; a class of business men and dealers developed in the towns who felt the necessity of better government for their interest. Young people, studying at Western universities, became the revolutionary spokesmen of these tendencies. They formulated these tendencies in theoretical programs, advocating chiefly national freedom and independence, a responsible democratic government, civic rights and liberties, in order that they might find their useful place as officials and politicians in a modern state.

This development in the capitalistic world proper took place simultaneously with the development of the workers' movement within the central countries of big capitalism. Here then were two revolutionary movements, not only parallel and simultaneous, but also with many points of contact. They had a common foe, capitalism, that in the form of industrial capitalism exploited the workers, and in the form of colonial and financial capitalism exploited the farmers in the Eastern and colonial countries and sustained this despotic rulers. The revolutionary groups from these countries found understanding and assistance only from the socialist workers of Western Europe. So they called themselves socialists too. The old illusions that middle class revolutions would bring freedom and equality to the entire population were reborn.

In reality there was a deep and fundamental difference between these two kinds of revolutionary aims, the so-called Western and Eastern. The proletarian revolution can be the result only of the highest development of capitalism. It puts an end to capitalism. The revolutions in the Eastern countries were the consequences of the beginning of capitalism in these countries. Viewed thus, they resemble the middle class revolutions in the Western countries, and — with due consideration for the fact that their special

character must be somewhat different in different countries — they must be regarded as middle class revolutions.

Though there was not such a numerous middle class of artisans, petty bourgeois and wealthy peasants as there was in the French and the English revolutions (because in the East, capitalism came suddenly, with a smaller number of big factories) still the general character is analogous. Here also we have the awakening out of the provincial view of an agrarian village to the consciousness of a nation-wide community and to interest in the whole world; the rising of individualism that frees itself from the old group bonds; the growth of energy to win personal power and wealth; the liberation of the mind from old superstitions, and the desire for knowledge as a means of progress. All this is the mental equipment necessary to bring mankind from the slow life of pre-capitalist conditions into the rapid industrial and economic progress that later on will open the way for communism.

The general character of a proletarian revolution must be quite different. Instead of reckless fighting for personal interests there must be common action for the interests of the class community. A worker, a single person, is powerless; only as a part of his class, as a member of a strongly connected economic group can he get power. Workers' individualities are disciplined into line by their habit of working and fighting together. Their minds must be freed from social superstitions and the must see as a commonplace truth that once they are strongly united that they can take the productive apparatus into their own hands, they can produce abundance and liberate society from misery and want. This is part of the mental equipment necessary to bring mankind from the class exploitation, the misery, the mutual destruction of capitalism into communism itself.

Thus the two kinds of revolution are as widely different as are the beginning and the end of capitalism. We can see this clearly now, thirty years later. We can understand, too, how at that time they could be considered not only as allies, but were thrown together as two sides of the same great world-revolution. The great day was supposed to be near; the working class, with its large socialist parties and still larger unions, would soon conquer power. And then at the same time, with the power of Western capitalism breaking down, all the colonies and Eastern countries would be freed from Western domination and take up their own national life.

Another reason for confusing these different social aims was that at that time the minds of the western workers were entirely occupied by reformist ideas about reforming capitalism into the democratic forms of its beginning and only a very few among them realized the meaning of a proletarian revolution.

III.

The world war of 1914-18, with its utter destruction of productive forces, cut deep furrows through the social structure, especially of central

and eastern Europe. Emperors disappeared, old out-moded governments were overthrown, social forces from below were loosened, different classes of different peoples, in a series of revolutionary movements, tried to win power and to realize their class aims.

In the highly industrialized countries the class struggle of the workers was already the dominating factor of history. Now these workers had gone through a world war. They learned that capitalism not only lays claim on their working power, but upon their lives too; completely, body and soul, they are owned by capital. The destruction and impoverishment of the productive apparatus, the misery and privation suffered during the war, the disappointment and distress after the peace brought waves of unrest and rebellioussness over all participating countries. Because Germany had lost, the rebellion of the workers here was greatest. In the place of pre-war conservatism, there arose a new spirit in the German workers, compounded conservatism, there arose a new spirit in the German workers, compouded of courage, energy, yearnings for freedom and for revolutionary struggle against capitalism. It was only a beginning, but it was the first beginning of a proletarian revolution.

In the Eastern countries of Europe the class struggle had a different composition. The land-owning nobility was dispossessed; the farmers seized the land; a class of small or middlesized free landowners arose. Former revolutionary conspirators became leaders and ministers and generals in the new national states. These revolutions were middle class revolutions and as such indicated the beginning of an unlimited development of capitalism and industry.

In Russia this revolution went deeper than anywhere else. Because it destroyed the Tsarist world power which for a century had been a dominating power in Europe and the most hated enemy of all democracy and socialism, the Russian revolution led all the revolutionary movements in Europe. Its leaders had been associated for many years with the socialist leaders of Western Europe, just as the Tsar had been the ally of the English and French goverments. It is true that the chief social contents of the Russian revolution — the land seizures by the peasants and the smashing of the autocracy and the nobility — show it to be a middle class revolution, and the Bolsheviks themselves accentuated this character by often comparing themselves with the Jacobins of the French revolution.

But the workers in the West, themselves full of traditions of petty bourgeois freedom, did not consider this foreign to them. And the Russian revolution did more than simply arouse their admiration; it showed them an example in methods of action. Its power in decisive moments was the power of spontaneous mass action of the industrial workers in the big towns. Out of these actions the Russian workers also built up that form of organization most appropriate to independent action — the soviets or councils. Thus they became the guides and teachers of the workers in other countries.

When a year later, November, 1918, the German empire collapsed, the appeal to world revolution issued by the Russian Bolsheviks was hailed and welcomed by the foremost revolutionary groups in Western Europe.

These groups, calling themselves communists, were so strongly impressed by the proletarian character of the revolutionary struggle in Russia that they overlooked the fact that, economically, Russia stood only at the threshold of capitalism, and that the proletarian centers were only small islands in the ocean of primitive peasantry. Moreover they reasoned that when a world revolution came, Russia would be only a world-province — the place where the struggle started — whereas the more advanced countries of big capitalism would soon take the lead and determine the world's real course.

But the first rebellious movement among the German workers was beaten down. It was only an advanced minority that took part; the great mass held aloof, nursing the illusion that quiet and peace were now possible. Against the rebels stood a coalition of the Social-Democratic party, whose leaders occupied the government seats, and the old governing classes, bourgeoisie and army officers. While the former lulled the masses into inactivity, the latter organized armed bands that crushed the rebellious movement and murdered the revolutionary leaders, Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

The Russian revolution, through fear, had aroused the bourgeoisie to greater energy than it aroused the proletariat through hope. Though, for the moment, the political organization of the bourgeoisie had collapsed, its real material and spiritual power was still enormous. The socialist leaders did nothing to weaken this power; they feared the proletarian revolution no less than the bourgeoisie did. They did everything to restore the capitalist order, in which, for the moment, they were ministers and presidents.

This did not mean that the proletarian revolution in Germany was a complete failure. Only the first attack, the first rebellion had failed. The military collapse had not led directly to a proletarian rule. The real power of the working class — clear consciousness on the part of the masses of their social position and the necessity for fighting, eager activity in all these hundreds of thousands, enthusiasm, solidarity and strong unity in action, awareness of the supreme aim: to take the means of production in their own hands — had to come up and grow gradually in any case. So much misery and crisis was threatening in the exhausted, shattered and impoverished post-war society that new fights were bound to come.

In all capitalist countries, in England, France, America as well as in Germany, revolutionary groups arose among the workers in 1919. They published papers and pamphlets, they showed their fellow workers new facts, new conditions, and new methods of fighting, and they found a good hearing among the alarmed masses. They pointed to the Russian revolution as their great example, to its methods of mass action and its soviet or council form of organization. They organized into communist parties and groups, associat-

ing themselves with the Bolshevist, the Russian Communist party. Thus the campaign for world revolution was launched.

IV.

Soon, however, these groups became aware with increasingly painful surprise that under the name of communism other principles and ideas than their own were being propagated from Moscow. They pointed to the Russian Soviets as the workers' new organs for self-rule in production. But gradually it became known that the Russian factories were again ruled by directors appointed from above, and that, the important political position had been seized by the Communist Party. These Western groups promulgated the dictatorship of the proletariat, which in opposition to the parliamentary democracy embodied the principle of self-rule of the working class as the political form of the proletarian revolution. But the spokesmen and leaders which Moscow sent to Germany and Western Europe proclaimed that the dictatorship of the proletariat was embodied in the dictatorship of the Communist Party.

The Western communists saw as their chief task the enlightening of the workers concerning the role of the socialist party and the unions. They pointed out that in these organizations the actions and decisions of the leaders were substituted for actions and decision of the workers, and that the leaders were never able to wage a revolutionary fight because a revolution consists in this very self action of the workers; that trade union actions and parliamentary practice are good in a young and quiet capitalist world, but are entirely unfit for revolutionary times, where, by diverting the attention of the workers from important aims and goals and directing them to unreal reforms, they work as hostile, reactionary forces; that all the power of these organizations, in the hands of the leaders, is used against the revolution. Moscow, however, demanded that communist parties should take part in parliamentary elections as well as in all union work. The Western communists preached independence, development of initiative, self-reliance, the rejection of dependence on and belief in leaders. But Moscow preached, in ever stronger terms, that obedience to the leaders was the chief virtue of the true communist.

Western communists did not immediately realize how fundamental was the contradiction. They saw that Russia, attacked from all sides by counter-revolutionary armies, which were supported by the English and French governments, needed sympathy and assistance from the Western working classes; not from small groups that fiercely attacked the old organizations. but from the old mass organizations themselves. They tried to convince Lenin and the Russian leaders that they were ill-informed about the real conditions and the future of the proletarian movement in the West. In vain, of course. They did not see, at the time, that in reality it was the conflict of two concepts of revolution, the middle class revolution and the proletarian revolution.

It was only natural that Lenin and his comrades were utterly unable to see that the impending proletarian revolution of the West was quite a different thing from their Russian revolution. Lenin did not know capitalism from within, at its highest development, as a world of enlarging proletarian masses, moving up to the time when they could seize power to lay hands on a potentially perfect production apparatus. Lenin knew capitalism only from without, as a foreign, robbing, devastating usurer, such as the Western financial and colonial capital must have appeared to him in Russia and other Asiatic countries. His idea was that in order to conquer, the Western masses had only to join the anti-capitalistic power established in Russia; they should not obstinately try to seek other ways but were to follow the Russian example. Hence flexible tactics were needed in the West to win the great masses of socialist and union members as soon as possible, to induce them to leave their old leaders and parties that were bound to their national governments, and to join the communist parties, without the necessity of changing their own ideas and convictions. So Moscow tactics followed logically from the basic misunderstanding.

And what Moscow propagated had by far the greatest weight. It had the authority of a victorious against a defeated (German) revolution. Will you be wiser than your teachers? The moral authority of Russian Communism was so undisputed that even a year later the excluded German opposition asked to be admitted as a "sympathizing" adherent to the Third International. But besides moral authority, the Russians had the material authority of money behind them. An enormous amount of literature, easily paid for by Moscow subsidies, flooded the Western countries: weekly papers, pamphlets, exciting news about successes in Russia, scientific reviews, all explaining Moscow's views. Against this overwhelming offensive of noisy propaganda, the small groups of Western communists, with their lack of financial means, had no chance. So the new and sprouting recognition of the conditions necessary for revolution were beaten down and strangled by Moscow's powerful weapons. Moreover Russian subsidies were used to support a number of salaried party secretaries, who, under threat of being fired, naturally turned into defenders of Russian tactics.

When it became apparent that even all this was not sufficient, Lenin himself wrote his well known pamphlet "Left-Wing Communism — An Infantile Disease". Though his arguments showed only his lack of understanding of Western conditions, the fact that Lenin, with his still unbroken authority, so openly took sides in the internal differences, had a great influence on a number of Western communists. And yet, nothwithstanding all this, the majority of the German communist party stuck to the knowledge they had gained through their experience of proletarian struggles. So at their next congress at Heidelberg, Dr. Levi, by some dirty tricks, had first to divide the majority — to exlude one part, and then to outvote the other part — in order to win a formal and apparent victory for the Moscow tactics.

The excluded groups went on for some years disseminating their ideas. But their voices were drowned out by the enormous noise of Moscow propaganda. They had no appreciable influence on the political events of the next years. They could only maintain and further develop, by mutual theoretical discussions and some publications, their understanding of the conditions of proletarian revolution, and keep them alive for times to come.

The beginnings of a proletarian revolution in the West had been killed by the powerful middle class revolution of the East.

V.

Is it correct to call this Russian revolution that destroyed the bourgeoisie and introduced socialism a middle class revolution?

Some years afterwards in the big towns of poverty-stricken Russia special shops with plate glass fronts and exquisite, expensive delicacies appeared, especially for the rich, and luxurious night clubs were opened, frequented by gentlemen and ladies in evening dress — chiefs of departments, high officials, directors of factories and committees. They were stared at in surprise by the poor in the streets, and the disillusioned communists said: "There go the new bourgeoisie". They were wrong. It was not a new bourgeoisie; but it was a new ruling class. When a new ruling class comes up, disappointed revolutionaries always call it by the name of the former ruling class. In the French revolution, the rising capitalists were called "the new aristocracy". Here in Russia the new class firmly seated in the saddle as masters of the production apparatus was the bureaucracy. It had to play in Russia the same role that in the West the middle class, the bourgeoisie, had played: to develop the country by industrialization from primitive conditions to high productivity.

Just as in Western Europe the bourgeoisie had risen out of the common people of artisans and peasants, including some aristocrats, by ability, luck and cunning, so the Russian ruling bureaucracy had risen from the working class and the peasants (including former officials) by ability, luck and cunning. The difference is that in the U.S.S.R. they did not own the means of prooduction individually, but collectively; so their mutual competition, too, must go on in other forms. This means a fundamental difference in the economic system; collective, planned production and exploitation instead of individual haphazard production and exploitation; state capitalism instead of private capitalism. For the working masses, however, the difference is slight, not fundamental; once more they are exploited by a middle class. But now this exploitation is intensified by the dictatorial form of government, by the total lack of all those liberties which in the West render fighting against the bourgeoisie possible.

This character of modern Russia determined the character of the fight of the Third International. Alternating red-hot revolutionary utterances with the flattest parliamentary opportunism, or combining both, the 3rd

International tried to win the adherence of the working masses of the West. It exploited the class antagonism of the workers against capitalism to win power for the Party. It caught up all the revolutionary enthusiasm of youth and all the rebellious impulses of the masses, prevented them from developing into a growing proletarian power, and wasted them in worthless political adventures. It hoped thus to get power over the Western bourgeoisie; but it was not able to do so, because understanding of the inner-most character of big capitalism was totally lacking. This capitalism cannot be conquered by an outside force; it can be destroyed only from within, by the proletarian revolution. Class domination can be destroyed only by the initiative and insight of a self-reliant proletarian class: party discipline and obedience of the masses to their leaders can lead only to a new class-domination. Indeed in Italy and Germany this activity of the Communist Party prepared the way for fascism.

The Communist Parties that belong to the Third International are entirely — materially and mentally — dependent on Russia, are the obedient servants of the rulers of Russia. Hence, when Russia, after 1933, felt that it must line up with France against Germany, all former intransigence was forgotten. The Comintern became the champion of "democracy" and united not only with the socialists but even with some capitalist parties into the so-called Popular Front. Gradually its power to attract, through pretending that it represented the old revolutionary traditions, began to disappear; its proletarian following diminished.

But at the same time, its influence on the intellectual middle classes in Europe and America apparently began to grow. A large number of books and reviews in all fields of social thought were issued by more or less camouflaged C.P. publishing houses in England, France, and America. Some of them were valuable historical studies or popular compilations; but mostly they were worthless expositions of so-called Leninism. All this was literature evidently not intended for workers, but for intellectuals, in order to win them over to Russian communism.

The new approach met with some success. The ex-soviet diplomat Alexander Barmine tells in his memoirs how he perceived with surprise in western Europe that just when he and other Bolshevists began to have their doubts as to the outcome of the Russian revolution, the Western middle class intellectuals, misled by the lying praises of the successes of the Five Year Plan, began to feel a sympathetic interest in Communism. The reason is clear: now that Russia was obviously not a workers' state any more, they felt that this state-capitalistic rule of a bureaucracy came nearer to their own ideals of rule by the intelligentsia than did the European and American rule of big finance. Now that a new ruling minority over and above the masses was established in Russia, the Communist Party, its foreign servant had

to turn to those classes from which, when private capitalism collapsed, new rulers for exploiting the masses could arise.

Of course, to succeed in this way, they need a workers' revolution to put down capitalist power. Then they must try to divert it from its own aims and make it the instrument for their party rule. So we see what kind of difficulties the future working class revolution may have to face. It will have to fight not only the bourgeoisie but the enemies of the bourgeoisie as well. It has not only to throw off the yoke of its present masters; it must also keep free from those who would try to be its future masters.

VI.

The world has now entered into its new great imperialistic war. Cautious though the warring governments may be in handling the economic and social forces and in trying to prevent hell from breaking loose entirely, they will not be able to hold back a social catastrophe. With the general exhaustion and impoverishment, most severe on the European continent, with the spirit of fierce aggresiveness still mighty, violent class struggles will accompany the unavoidable new adjustments of the system of production. Then, with private capitalism broken down, the issues will be planned economy, state capitalism, workers' exploitation on the one side; workers' freedom and mastery over production on the other.

The working class is going into this war burdened with the capitalistic tradition of Party leadership and the phantom tradition of a revolution of the Russian kind. The tremendous pressure of this war will drive the workers into spontaneous resistance against their governments and into the beginnings of new forms of real fight. When it happens that Russia enters the field against the Western powers, it will re-open its old box of slogans and make an appeal to the workers for "world revolution against capitalism" in an attempt to get the rebellious-minded workers on its side. So Bolshevism would have its chance once more. But this would be no solution for the problems of the workers. When the general misery increases and conflicts between classes become fiercer, the working class must, out of its own necessity, seize the means of production and find ways to free itself from the influence of Bolshevism.

Anton Pannekoek.

THE FASCIST COUNTER REVOLUTION

What hope have we revolutionary Marxists, remnants of a past epoch, inheritors of its most advanced theories, illusions, ideologies — what hope have we left for a revolutionary turn of the sweeping counter-revolutionary movement of victorious fascism? The fate of France has finally proved that the old Marxist slogan of "world revolution" has in our epoch assumed a new meaning. We find ourselves today in the midst not of a socialist and proletarian but of an ultra-imperialistic and fascist world revolution. Just as in the preceding epoch every major defeat — the defeat of France in 1871, that of Russia, Germany, Hungary in 1905, 1917, 1918 — resulted in a genuine revolution, so in our time each defeated country resorts to a fascist counter-revolution. Moreover, present-day war itself has become a revolutionary process, a civil war with an unmistakably predominant counter-revolutionary tendency. Just as in a horse race we do not know which horse will win but we do know that it will be a horse, so in the present war the victory of either party will result in a further gigantic step toward the fascisation of Europe, if not of the whole European, American, Asiatic world of tomorrow.

I.

There seem to be two easy ways for the "orthodox" Marxist of today to handle this difficult problem. Well-trained in Hegelian philosophical thought, he might say that all that is, is reasonable, and that, by one of those "dialectical" shifts in which history rejoices, socialism has been fulfilled by the social revolution implied in the victory of fascism. Thus Hegel himself at first followed the rising star of the French Revolution, later embraced the cause of Napoleon, and ended by acclaiming the Prussian state that emerged from the anti-Napoleonic wars of 1812-1815 as the fulfillment of the philosophical "idea" and as the "state of reason" corresponding to the given stage of its historical development.

Or, for that matter, our orthodox Marxist might not be willing, for the present, to go so far as to acknowledge the fascist allies of Stalin as the genuine promoters of socialism in our time. He would then content himself with feeling that the victory of fascism, planned economy, state capitalism, and the weeding out of all ideas and institutions of traditional "bourgeois democracy" will bring us to the very threshold of the genuine social revolution and proletarian dictatorship — just as, according to the teachings of the early church, the ultimate coming of Christ will be immediately preceded by the coming of the Anti-Christ who will be so much like Christ in his

appearance and in his actions that the faithful will have considerable difficulty in seeing the difference.

In so reasoning, our orthodox Marxist would not only conform with the church but would also keep well in line with the precedents set by the earlier socialists and "revolutionary" Marxists themselves. It was not only the moderately progressive bourgeois ex-minister Guizot who was deceived by the revolutionary trimmings of Louis Napoleon's coup d'etat of 1851 and, when he heard the news burst out into the alarmed cry, "This is the complete and final triumph of socialism". Even the leading representative of French socialism, P. J. Proudhon, was taken in by the violently anti-bourgeois attitude displayed by the revolutionary imperialist, and he devoted a famous pamphlet to the thesis that the coup d'etat of the Second of December did in fact "demonstrate the social revolution".*

Indeed, in many ways that counter-revolutionary aftermath of 1848 is comparable to the infinitely more serious and more extended counter-revolutionary movement through which European society is passing today after the experience of the Russian, the German, and the other European revolutions which followed in the wake of the first world war. Every party and every political tendency had to go through a certain period of bewilderment until it had adapted itself to a totally changed situation. Marx himself, although he utterly despised the imperialist adventurer because of his personal inadequacy, was inclined to believe in the revolutionary significance of the counter-revolutionary coup. He described the historical outcome of the two years of revolutionary defeat from 1848 to 1849 by the paradoxical statement that "this time the advance of the revolutionary movement did not effect itself through its immediate tragi-comic achievements but, the other way round, through the creation of a united and powerful counter-revolution, through the creation of an antagonist by opposing whom the party of revolt will reach its real revolutionary maturity".** And even after the fateful event he most emphatically restated his conviction that "the destruction of the parliamentary republic contains the germs of the triumph of the proletarian revolution".*** This is exactly what the German communists and their Russian masters said 80 years later when they welcomed the advent of Nazism in Germany as a "victory of revolutionary communism".

This ambiguous attitude of Proudhon and Marx toward counter-revolution was repeated ten years later by Ferdinand Lasalle, a close theoretical disciple of Marx and at that time the foremost leader of the growing socialist movement in Germany. He was prepared to cooperate with Bismarck at the time when that unscrupulous statesman was toying with the idea of bribing the workers into acceptance of his imperialistic plans by an apparent

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* *Oeuvres Completes de Proudhon, vol. VII, Paris 1868*

** *First article on Class Struggles in France, Neue Rheinische Zeitung, January 1850*

*** *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, February 1852*

adoption of the universal franchise and some other ideas borrowed from the 1848 revolution and the Second Empire. Lassale did not live to see Bismarck at the end of the 70's, when he had subdued the liberals and the ultramontane catholic party, revert to his old dream of enforcing a kind of "tory-socialism" based on a ruthless persecution and suppression of all genuine socialist workers' movements.

There is no need to discuss the wholesale conversion of internationalists into nationalists and proletarian social democrats into bourgeois democratic parliamentarians during and after the first world war. Even such formerly Marxists as Paul Lensch accepted the war of the Kaiser as a realistic fulfillment of the dreams of a socialist revolution, and the about-face of the socialists they themselves glorified as a "revolutionization of the revolutionaries". There was a "national-bolshevist" fraction of the German Communist Party long before there was a Hitlerian National-Socialist Party. Nor does the military alliance that was concluded "seriously and for a long time" between Stalin and Hitler in August 1939 contain any novelty for those who have followed the historical development of the relations between Soviet Russia and imperial, republican, and Hitlerian Germany throughout the last twenty years. The Moscow treaty of 1939 had been preceded by the treaties of Rapallo in 1920 and of Berlin in 1926. Mussolini had already for several years openly proclaimed his new fascist credo when Lenin was scolding the Italian communists for their failure to enlist that invaluable dynamic personality in the service of their revolutionary cause. As early as 1917, during the peace negotiations in Brest Litovsk, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht had been aware of the dreadful danger that was threatening the proletarian revolution from that side. They had said in so many words that "Russian socialism based on reactionary Prussian bayonets would be the worst that still could happen to the revolutionary workers' movement".

It appears from this historical record that there is indeed something basically wrong with the traditional Marxian theory of the social revolution and with its practical application. There is no doubt, today less than at any former time in history, that the Marxian analysis of the working of the capitalist mode of production and of its historical development is fundamentally correct. Yet it seems that the Marxian theory in its hitherto accepted form is unable to deal with the new problems that arise in the course of a not merely occasional and temporary but deep-rooted, comprehensive, and enduring counter-revolutionary development.

II.

The main deficiency of the Marxian concept of the counter-revolution is that Marx did not, and from the viewpoint of his historical experience could not, conceive of the counter-revolution as a normal phase of social development. Like the bourgeois liberals he thought of the counter-revolution as an "abnormal" temporary disturbance of a normally progressive

development. (In the same manner, pacifists to the present day think of war as an abnormal interruption of the normal state of peace, and physicians and psychiatrists until recently thought of disease and more especially the diseases of the mind as an abnormal state of the organism.) There is, however, between the Marxian approach and that of the typical bourgeois liberal this important difference: they start from a totally different idea about just what is a normal condition. The bourgeois liberal regards existing conditions or at least their basic features as the normal state of things, and any radical change as its abnormal interruption. It does not matter to him whether that disturbance of existing normal conditions results from a genuinely progressive movement or from a reactionary attempt to borrow revolution's thunder for the purpose of a counter-revolutionary aggression. He is afraid of the counter-revolution just as much as of the revolution and just because of its resemblance to a genuine revolution. That is why Guizot called the coup d'etat "the complete and final triumph of the socialist revolution" and why, for that matter, Hermann Rauschning today describes the advent of Hitlerism as a "revolt of nihilism".

As against the bourgeois concept, the Marxian theory has a distinct superiority. It understands revolution as a completely normal process. Some of the best Marxists, including Marx himself and Lenin, even said on occasion that revolution is the only normal state of society. So it is, indeed, under those objective historical conditions which are soberly stated by Marx in his Preface to the "Critique of Political Economy".

Marx did not, however, apply the same objective and historical principle to the process of counter-revolution, which was known to him only in an undeveloped form. Thus, he did not see, and most people do not see today, that such important counter-revolutionary developments as those of present-day Fascism and Nazism have, in spite of their violent revolutionary methods, much more in common with *evolution* than they have with a genuine revolutionary process. It is true that in their talk and propaganda both Hitler and Mussolini have directed their attack mostly against revolutionary Marxism and Communism. It is also true that before and after their seizure of state power they made a most violent attempt to weed out every Marxist and Communist tendency in the working classes. Yet this was not the main content of the fascist counter-revolution. In its actual results the fascist attempt to renovate and transform the traditional state of society does not offer an alternative to the radical solution, aimed at by the revolutionary communists. The fascist counter-revolution rather tried to replace the reformist socialist parties and trade unions, and in this it succeeded to a great extent.

The underlying historical law, the *law of the fully developed fascist counter-revolution of our time,* can be formulated in the following manner: After the complete exhaustion and defeat of the revolutionary forces, the fascist counter-revolution attempts to fulfil, by new revolutionary methods and in widely different form, those social and political tasks which the so-

called reformistic parties and trade unions had promised to achieve but in which they could no longer succeed under the given historical conditions.

A revolution does not occur at some arbitrary point of social development but only at a definite stage. "At a certain stage of their development the material productive forces of society come into contradiction with the existing production-relations (or property-relations) within which they hitherto moved. From being forms of development, those relations turn into fetters upon the forces of production. *Then a period of social revolution sets in.*" And again Marx emphasized, and even to a certain extent exaggerated, the objectivistic principle of his materialist theory of revolution according to which "a formation of society *never* perishes until *all* the forces of production for which it is wide enough have been developed." All this is true enough as far as it goes. We have all seen how evolutionary socialism reached the end of its rope. We have seen how the old capitalistic system based on free competition and the whole of its vast political and ideological superstructure was faced by chronic depression and decay. There seemed no way open except a wholesale transition to another, more highly developed form of society, to be effected by the social revolution of the proletarian class.

The new historical development during the last twenty years showed, however, that there was yet another course open. The transition to a new type of capitalistic society, that could no longer be achieved by the democratic and peaceful means of traditional socialism and trade-unionism, was performed by a counter-revolutionary and antiproletarian yet objectively progressive and ideologically anti-capitalistic and plebeian movement that had learned to apply to its restricted evolutionary aims the unrestricted methods developed during the preceding revolution. (More particularly, both Hitler and Mussolini had learned much in the school of Russian bolshevism.) Thus, it appeared that the evolution of capitalistic society had not reached its utter historical limit when the ruling classes and the reformistic socialists — those self-appointed "doctors at the sick-bed of capitalism" — reached the limits of their evolutionary possibilities. The phase of peaceful democratic reforms was followed by another evolutionary phase of development — that of the fascist transformation, revolutionary in its political form but evolutionary in its objective social contents.

The decisive reason that the capitalistic formation of society did not perish after the collapse of the first world war is that the workers did not make their revolution. "Fascism", said its closest enemy, "is a counter-revolution against a revolution that never took place."**** Capitalistic society did not perish, but instead entered a new revolutionary phase under the counter-revolutionary regime of fascism, because it was not destroyed by a successful workers' revolution, and because it had not, in fact, developed all the forces of production. The objective and the subjective premises are equally important for the counter-revolutionary conclusion.

**** *Ignazio Silone, School for Dictators, 1938*

From this viewpoint all those comfortable illusions about a hidden revolutionary significance in the temporary victory of the counter-revolution, in which the earlier Marxists so frequently indulged, must be entirely abandoned. If counter-revolution is only externally and superficially connected with a social revolution by its procedures, but in its actual content is much more closely related to the further evolution of a given social system, and is in fact a particular historical phase of that social evolution, then it can no longer be regarded as a revolution in disguise. There is no reason to hail it either as an immediate prelude to the genuine revolution, or as an intrinsic phase of the revoltionary process itself. It appears as a particular phase of the whole developmental process, not inevitable like revolution yet becoming an inevitable step within the development of a given society under certain historical conditions. It has reached its up-to-now most comprehensive and important form in the present day fascist renovation and transformation of Europe, which in its basic economic aspect appears as a transition from the private and anarchic form of competitive capitalism to a system of planned and organized monopoly-capitalism or state-capitalism.

III.

It would be the greatest folly and, for people even slightly imbued with the great discoveries of Marx in the field of the social sciences, a total relapse into a pre-materialist and pre-scientific manner of thought if one were to expect that the historical progress from competitive capitalism to planned economy and state-capitalism could be repealed by any power in the world. Least of all can fascism be defeated by those people who, after a hundred years of shameless acquiscence in the total abandonment of their original ideals, now hasten to conjure up the infancy of the capitalist age with its belief in liberty, equality, fraternity, and free trade, while at the same time they surreptitiously and inefficiently try to imitate as far as possible fascism's abolition of the last remnants of those early capitalist ideas. They feel a sudden and unexpected urge to celebrate the French Revolution's 14th of July and at the same time dream of destroying fascism by adopting fascist methods.

In opposition to the artisan and petty-bourgeois spirit of early Utopian socialism, the first word of scientific and proletarian socialism stated that big industry and the machine-age had come to stay, that modern industrial workers had to find a cure for the evils of the industrial age on the basis of a further development of the new industrial forces themselves. In the same manner the scientific and proletarian socialists of our time must try to find remedies for the wrongs of monopoly-capitalism and fascist dictatorship on the basis of monopoly and state-capitalism itself. Neither free trade (that was not so free for the workers after all) nor the other aspects of traditional bourgeois democracy — free discussion and free press and free radio — will ever be restored. They have never existed for the suppressed and exploited class. As far as the workers are concerned, they have only exchanged one form of serfdom for another. There is no essential differ-

ence between the way the New York Times and the Nazi press publish daily "all the news that's fit to print" — under existing conditions of privilege and coercion and hypocrisy. There is no difference in principle between the eighty-odd voices of capitalist mammoth corporations — which, over the American radio, recommend to legions of silent listeners the use of Ex-Lax, Camels, and Neighborhood grocerys, along with music, war, base-ball and domestic news, and dramatic sketches — and the one suave voice of Mr. Goebbels who recommends armaments, race-purity, and worship of the Fuehrer. He too is quite willing to let them have music along with it — plenty of music, sporting news, and all the unpolitical stuff they can take.

This criticism of the inept and sentimental methods of present-day anti-fascism does not imply by any means that the workers should do openly what the bourgeoisie does under the disguise of a so-called anti-fascist fight: acquiesce in the victory of fascism. The point is to fight fascism not by fascist means but on its own ground. This seems to the present writer to be the rational meaning of what was somewhat mystically described by *Alpha* in the spring issue of *Living Marxism*[*****] as the specific task of "shock-troops" in the anti-fascist fight. *Alpha* anticipated that even if the localized war-of-siege waged during the first seven months of the present conflict were to extend into a general fascist world war, this would not be a "total war" and an unrestricted release of the existing powers of production for the purpose of destruction. Rather, it would still remain a monopolistic war in which the existing powers of production (destruction) would be fettered in many ways for the benefit of the monopolistic interests of privileged groups and classes. It would remain that kind of war from fear of the emancipatory effect that a total mobilization of the productive forces, even restricted to the purpose of destruction, would be bound to have for the workers or, under the present-day conditions of totally mechanized warfare, for the shocktroopers who perform the real work of that totally mechanized war.

This argument of *Alpha's* can be applied more widely and much more convincingly. First of all we can disregard for the moment (although we shall have to return to it at a later stage) the peculiar restriction of the argument to the "shock-troops" and to the conditions of war. The whole traditional distinction between peace and war, production and destruction, has lost in recent times much of that semblance of truth that it had in an earlier period of modern capitalistic society. The history of the last ten years has shown that ever since, in a world drunk with apparent prosperity, the American Kellogg Pact outlawed war, peace has been abolished. From the outset Marxism was comparatively free from that simple-mindedness which believed in an immediate and clear-cut difference between production-for-use and production-for-profit. The only form of production-for-use under existing capitalistic conditions is just the production-for-profit. Pro-

[*****] *Vol. V. No. 1; pp. 44—58*

ductive labor for Marx, as for Smith and Ricardo, is that labor which produces a profit for the capitalist and, incidentally, a thing which may also be useful for human needs. There is no possibility of establishing a further distinction between a "good" and a "bad", a constructive and a destructive usefulness. The Goebbelian defense of the "productivity" of the labor spent on armaments in Germany by referring to the amount of "useful" labor spent in the United States for cosmetics had no novelty for the Marxist. Marx, who described the working class in its revolutionary fight as "the greatest of all productive forces" would not have been afraid to recognize war itself as an act of production, and the destructive forces of modern mechanized warfare as part of the productive forces of modern capitalistic society, such as it is. He, like *Alpha,* would have recognized the "shock-troops" in their "destructive" activity in war as well as in their productive activity in industry (armament and other industries — war industries all!) as real workers, a revolutionary vanguard of the modern working class. Historically it is a well-established fact that the soldier (the hired mercenary) was the first modern wage-laborer.

Thus, the old Marxian contradiction between the productive forces and the given production relations re-appears in the warlike as well as in the peaceful activities of modern fascism. With it there appears again the old contrast between the workers, who as a class are interested in the full application and development of the productive forces, and the privileged classes, the monopolists of the material means of production. More than at any previous time the monopoly of political power reveals itself as the power to rule and control the social process of production. At the same time this means, under present conditions, the power to restrict production — both the production of industry in peace and destructive production in time of war — and to regulate it in the interest of the monopolist class. Even the "national" interest that was supposed to underly the present-day fascist war waged by Hitler and Mussolini is revealed by the war itself and will be revealed much more clearly by the coming peace as being ultimately an interest of the international capitalist and monopolist class. Much more clearly than at the end of the first world war it will appear that this war is waged by both parties — by the attacking fascists as well as by the defending "democrats" — as a united counter-revolutionary struggle against the workers and the soldiers who by their labor in peace and war prepared and fought this truly suicidal war.

What, then, is the hope left for the anti-fascists who are opposing the present European war and who will oppose the coming war of the hemispheres? The answer is that, just as life itself does not stop at the entrance of war, neither does the material work of modern industrial production. Fascists today quite correctly conceive the whole of their economy — that substitute for a genuine socialist economy — in terms of a "war economy" (Wehrwirtschaft). Thus, it is the task of the workers and the soldiers to see to it that this job is no longer done within the restrictive rules imposed upon human labor in present-day capitalist, monopolist, and oppressive society.

It has to be done in the manner prescribed by the particular instruments used; that is, in the manner prescribed by the productive forces available at the present stage of industrial development. In this manner both the productive and the destructive forces of present-day society — as every worker, every soldier knows — can be used only if they are used *against* their present monopolistic rulers. Total mobilization of the productive forces presupposes total mobilization of that greatest productive force which is the revolutionary working class itself.

K. K.

DISCUSSION

Some Questions concerning K.K.'s *"The Fascist Counter-Revolution"*

As I see it, K. is emphasizing that Marx did not fully understand the counter-revolution, which he, K., finds to be "closely related to further evolutionary process of a given social system under certain historical conditions". Counter-revolution is therefore, not an abnormal disturbance, but occurs under objective historical conditions as does revolutionary development.

K. then goes on to say that Fascism, though revolutionary in its technique (a technique which it picked up from the genuine revolutionary forces it defeated) is evolutionary in its aims. Fascism, that is, is a further development of capitalism; the basic economic aspect of the fascist renovation is the transition from competitive private capitalism to planned monopoly or state capitalism.

Now it is the knitting together of these two aspects of K.'s thought that I do not follow completely. It is even difficult for me to phrase my objections, but I want to try because that is the only way to understand a point of view, to crystallize one's doubts.

K. quotes Marx: "A formation of society never perishes until all the forces for which it is wide enough have been developed." Capitalism therefore, did not perish because it contained yet another type of development, that embodied in the transition Fascism is carrying out. But, K. also quotes Silone's "Fascism is a counter-revolution against a revolution that never took place". The workers, he says, did not make their revolution...hence capitalist society did not perish after the first world war.

My question is this: on what grounds does K. formulate the basic historical law, "the law of the fully developed Fascist counter-revolution of our time"? Is this an induction from the single instance, "of our time"? On the one hand it seems to me to be an intellectual manipulation based on Marx's premise that a society must expand fully before it perishes; on the other, it redefines a "counter-revolution" on the basis of analyzing a movement which is labelled beforehand as a counter-revolution. If capitalism did not perish because the workers did not revolt, and if, also, it did not perish because it contained the seeds of further transition, are we to understand that the workers did not revolt **because** of this Marxian law? And is that why K. is justified in calling Fascism a counter-revolution, the latter defined in terms of this evolutionary process?

You can see that my doubts are perhaps fundamentally inspired by either insufficient knowledge or insufficient belief in the validity of the Marxian system. But it is people like me whom K. has to convince, and so it may be well to listen to the voice of the ignorant, even though the ignorance is painful.

My whole feeling about this analysis is that it is an interpretation presented as if it were a science, with premises as acceptable (relatively speaking) as those of our observational procedures in science. There are many single points which I appreciate for their insight, but

the systematization is a bit harder to see.

The conclusion I find very disconcerting and vague. That the war is waged by both parties as a united counter-revolutionary war against the workers is a consideration not new to me. But the "theoretical" points which follow I cannot interpret or fit into my head in order.

K. enlarges the scope of "Alpha's" arguments, to point out that the worker must fight Fascism "not by Fascist means, but on its own ground", forcing an unrestricted release of the existing powers of production for the purpose of destruction (since the production of a war-worker is as "good" as the production of any worker, and one must treat even the soldier as a real worker). That is, K. points out that the same Marxian contradition between the productive forces and the controllers of production, the restriction of the former by the latter, occurs in war-like as well as in peaceful activities, and that fighting Fascism on its own ground involves breaking this **restriction in warlike activity**, just as it would in peace.

What does this mean? I confess I am at a loss. A literal interpretation of any argument which complains that a war has not been total enough, and which urges a break in the restrictive forces in order to achieve the social revolution — well, it is fantastic.

And yet the last sentence of the Analysis contains an idea in addition to the above: "In this manner both the productive and the destructive forces of present day society, as every woker, as every soldier knows, can only be used if they are used **against** their present monopolistic rulers." How does this much more acceptable point fit into the logical sequence which precedes it?

M. R.

ANSWER

I have nothing to say against my critic's description of my little study as an attempt to present an interpretation of a contemporary movement "as if it were a science, with premises as acceptable (relatively speaking) as those of our observational procedures in science". This is indeed the aim of any critical Marxian investigation.

Yet in the discussion of what he calls the "two aspects" of my thought, my critic, it seems to me, gets caught in a self-made trap. He errects a Chinese wall between the objective and the subjective aspects of the Marxian theory of revolution (of which my study was meant to be a kind of further theoretical elaboration). It is quite true that Marx sometimes defined his terms in an apparently too objectivistic manner of speech, e. g., when he stated that "a formation of society never perishes until all the forces of production for which it is wide enough have been developed." An orthodox Marxist might indeed conclude from such a statement that in any case in which the workers did not embark in a revolutionary fight when there seemed to be a fighting chance this fact must be explained by objective economic necessity. It would then be possible to "knit together" the two apparently contradictory statements contained in my analysis (that capitalist society did not perish after the collapse of the first world war because it was not destroyed by a successful workers' revolution, and because it had not, in fact, developed all the forces of production for which it was wide enough), by the conceptual link tentatively suggested by my critic, i. e., by stating that "the workers did not revolt **because** of this (objective) Marxian law."

All these highly sophisticated intellectual manipulations, however, become entirely superfluous as soon as we base our theory not on a verbal repetition of a few isolated phrases of Marx but on the whole of his work. As I pointed out in my recent book on Marx (and as Lenin pointed out in his criticism of the "objectivistic" Marxian theory of Struve), Marx presented a history of society both objectively as a development of material production, and subjectively as the history of a class struggle. There was for him no contradiction between those two

sets of terms, and there need not be for us so long as we use the new scientific concepts of Marx not as so many dogmatic prescriptions but as new tools for our unbiased empirical investigation of historical facts. Marxism, properly understood, "is nothing but a wholly undogmatic guide for scientific research and revolutionary action. Whatever a future historian or philosopher may have to say about the degree of revolutionary maturity that had been reached by capitalistic society in Marx's time or at the present time, there is no doubt that from the scientific viewpoint of Marx's revolutionary theory the workers must, by their own conscious activity, finally prove the objective (economic) maturity of a given historical phase for a successful proletarian revolution.

The same holds good, as I tried to show in my paper, for the counter-revolution. A counter-revolutionary movement will not prevail seriously and for a long time unless there is still some objective possibility for a further evolutionary development of a given type of society, though there is no longer any chance to achieve those evolutionary steps through the traditional methods hitherto applied by the so-called reformistic parties and trade unions. On the other hand, a counter-revolution will succeed only after the complete exhaustion of the revolutionary forces. The counter-revolution is, as it were, contemporaneous with a potential genuine revolution. Both become possible only when the traditional forms of evolution by evolutionary methods are no longer workable and an objectively revolutionary situation has thus arisen. In this situation when society seems to have reached an absolute impasse, the forces working for a genuine revolutionary solution of the existing crisis will either triumph over the forces of the status quo, or they will be met in battle by the new forces arising from the revolutionary conditions themselves, the forces of the counter-revolution.

But, my critic will say, how does the Marxist know that the present-day Fascist movement is a counter-revolutionary movement? Does he not attach his counter-revolutionary label **beforehand** to a historical movement, as yet unexplored, and afterwards re-define a "counter-revolution" on the basis of analyzing that same movement, and thus, in fact, derive his whole "law" by way of an induction from the single instance of "our time"?

I confess that I see so many reasons for describing the present-day Fascist and Nazi movement as a "counter-revolution" that I am at a loss to fully understand my critic's objection. First, there is no other way of making a definition (scientific or otherwise) of any term but to define it — although it must be understood that in formulating his definitions the scientist does not proceed haphazardly but is (as most aptly expressed by Henry Poincare) "guided by experience". Starting from this principle I think that as soon as a distinction between a genuine revolution and a "counter-revolution" is introduced at all, there can be no doubt of the reasonableness of defining as "counter-revolutionary a movement, that is either directed against a preceding "revolutionary movement, or, in a critical (objectively revolutionary) historical situation, aims at preventing a threatening revolution. There is no doubt, furthermore, that the movements led by Mussolini and Hitler represent just that kind of a movement. As Hitler himself said when he stood on trial for his Beerhall-Putsch in Munich, 1923: "If I stand here today as a revolutionary, it is as a revolutionary against the revolution."

With my critic's permission I should like to further elucidate this point by quoting from an article published in Vol. XI. No. 2 of The Modern Quarterly (Winter, 1939):

> *"More than any preceding period of recent history," I wrote then, "and on a much vaster scale, our period is a time not of revolution, but of counter-revolution. This is true whether we define that comparatively new term as a conscious counter-action against a preceding revolutionary process, with some Italians and their ideological forerunners in pre-war France, we describe it as an essentially 'preventive revolution'. It is counter-action of the united capitalist class against all that remains today of the results of that first great insurrection of the proletarian forces in war-torn Europe which culminated in the Russian October of*

1917. It embodies at the same time a series of 'preventive' measures of the ruling minority against such new revolutionary dangers as have been most conspicuously revealed by recent events in France and Spain, and which are actually contained in the whole European situation, be it in 'red' Soviet Russia, Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, or any of the old democratic countries."

During the two years that have passed since this was written, historical experience has furnished further reasons for describing our time as a time of counter-revolution, and for deriving from its scientific analysis the historical laws of the modern counter-revolution. Yet I will let my critic into secret. Through an extensive study of former epochs of great social transformations I have indeed found, far back in remote historical periods, many striking instances of events that seem to be very closely similar to those connecting the p r e s e n t - day Hitler - Mussolini - Stalin counter-revolution with the deep crisis of the existing capitalist system and with the last 20 years of threatening and at times successful, outbreaks of a genuine revolutionary movement. A closer study of those various historical forms and types of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary developments seems to me extremely useful for the proper understanding of the phenomena and laws of the revolutionary cycle of our time. I do not think, however, that a scientific theory of the revolution (or, for that matter, of the counter-revolution) of our time could be improved by applying it to social transformations of all epochs and all countries. Rather, it would be diluted and would lose all of its scientific and practical value in the process of that dilution. Thus, what my critic is inclined to regard as a scientific deficiency of the Marxian approach (the emphasis on strict historical specification), seems to me its very scientific advantage, its dearly-bought materialistic sobriety and its greatest glory.

Last but not least my critic regards as "fantastic" any argument that would "complain that a war has not been total enough" and would "urge a break in the restrictive forces in order to achieve the social revolution". Yet he allows for the possibility that neither **Alpha** nor myself even indulged in that fantastic idea, and calls attention to the "much more acceptable" conclusion found in the last sentence of my paper according to which, in both war and peace, the productive (and destructive) forces of modern society can be turned to their full and unfettered use only if they are used **against** their present-day monopolistic rulers.

I am afraid that here I must disappoint my polite and amiable opponent. It is true that the two statements just quoted do belong together. If we indulge for a moment in the philosophical slang of Hegel, we might even say that they are "dialectically" identical. Yet this does not mean that we can forget the unpleasant first statement and concentrate on the "much more acceptable" second one.

Of course, we all agree with the proposition that war, even in its fully developed form ("total war"), belongs to the capitalist system and will in any future socialist society worthy of the name be remembered only as an almost-forgotten atrocity of the barbarous past. For the purpose of the present discussion, however I must insist on the fact that so far we have not reached that glorious goal of the future but live in an epoch of victorious fascist counter-revolution. In this epoch the workers have been deprived of their former right to withdraw from cooperation in capitalist production in time of peace. In this epoch, the good advice given to those same workers (disguised as soldiers) to withdraw from cooperation in the capitalist war and to turn the mighty weapons of modern mechanized warfare against the ruling classes themselves amounts only to an empty phrase. Yet the same phrase assumes a realistic meaning if it is read in connection with those other sentences which point to the inability of counter-revolutionary fascism to fully develop the gigantic forces of modern industrial production (even for the purpose of destruction, and which, to my critic, seem too "fantastic". To grasp the meaning of those other propositions, we must remember the

arguments that were used in pre-fascist times by the revolutionary workers and their theoretical protagonists in their "materialistic" criticism of the existing capitalist system. From scientific socialism's materialistic point of view it is not enough to attack the capitalist system on the ground that socialism is better than capitalism (or, for that matter, that socialist peace is better than capitalist war). The more intelligent argument of the socialists against capitalism was that the ruling classes showed themselves increasingly unable to apply and to develop the productive forces of society even in their existing capitalist form. They used to admit that capitalism had fulfilled a progressive historical task in the past, but they insisted that in its further development capitalism had become unable to fulfill even that restricted historical task.

It is easy to see the importance of this argument in a discussion of the capitalist war and, more particularly, in a discussion of the present fascist war. During all previous phases of capitalist society, warfare had been one of the indispensable forms of capitalistic progress. If it can be shown that under present conditions of monopoly and state capitalism war no longer performs that comparatively progressive function, it is for the workers and the soldiers to point to this evident failure of the ruling classes to attend properly to their own business.

In spite of possible further increases of violence and atrocities before it is ended, this second world war has already revealed the fact that the so-called totalitarian powers are quite as unwilling as the so-called "democratic" powers to unleash the furies of that "total war" which they formerly regarded as the ultimate solution of all their tremendous difficulties and loudly proclaimed as the glorious compensation for all the tortures they have inflicted upon their suffering peoples. It is the great secret of the present war — a secret as carefully guarded by the fascist aggressors as by the democratic defenders — that a totally unrestricted war would result in a gigantic increase of the social and political power wielded by the workers in uniform and thus by the working class in general. By revealing this secret, a Marxian analysis of the fascist counter-revolution does not (as my critic suspects) complain that war has not as yet been total enough for the purpose of the social revolution. It points only to the new impasse from which capitalism cannot escape even in its present rejuvenated fascist and counter-revolutionary form. Only in this context, and not as an isolated statement, will the urge to break the restrictions that impede the full development of the productive forces of present-day society in peace and war transform itself at a given historical moment into the urge to use those unrestricted powers **against** their rulers for the purpose of a genuine proletarian revolution.

K. K.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF LIVING MARXISM:

Dialectical Materialism in Thought and Society.

Discussion on Lawrence Dennis's "The Dynamics of War and Revolution".

AMERICA, ASIA, EUROPE and the Problems of the Pacific.

Economics of State Capitalism.

LONG LIVE THE WAR

One year of war has changed quite a number of things, but as yet not enough to allow a convincing prognostication of further trends and the eventual outcome. Of course, the general lines of development may be vaguely predicted, just as it was possible to forecast the outbreak of the war by a serious consideration of fundamental capitalistic contradictions.

Predictability is limited. Questions that bother people most can be least satisfactorily answered. It means very little to them to know that eventually capitalist war production will exhaust itself as did peace production; that in the end some kind of re-arrangement will have to be forced or agreed upon by the rulers of the war-tired populations or by the people themselves. Assurance that out of the present there will evolve new social and productive forms, creating different problems and situations from those which led to the war and determined its character, is easily accepted, but without enthusiasm. To be aware of the obvious, to know that what exists today will not endure, is not particularly consoling.

The people are far more eager to know whether or not Hitler will invade England before the onset of winter; whether America will or will not within a short time enter the war, and what situations they will have to face in the immediate future. Though H. G. Wells in his recent book "The New World Order" called the present war — with a nowadays rather rare objectivity — merely incidental, and the thing of real importance the great need for socialist re-construction of the world, it will, nevertheless, be quite diffiicult for people crouching in air-raid shelters to balance the terror of scream bombs with this longview historical attitude. If the war is only incidental, so also are the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. The present chaos, not its final meaning interests those who see curtains of death being daily lowered from the skies. The great historical perspectives they gladly leave to the historians; they question the next morning, and the greater the chaos the less visionary and the more narrow-minded they become.

And this is as it should be: otherwise there would be no hope. It is an often observed fact that any war for unfamiliar interests, foreign ideals, and abstract concepts eventually contracts to a mere struggle for a bare existence. When large and decisive masses realize through the bitterest experience that no escape is open, that not some but all must suffer, then the revolt against death sets in. There were gladiators in ancient times and today there are suicide squads; but there never was a whole population determined to end its existence. The war will change its course towards peace if it really and decisively affects the greater part of the masses.

However, after one year of warfare, and despite all that has happened in Europe, it seems that this war has been kept within boundaries controlled

by the ruling classes of the world. What would certainly have meant an end of the war twenty-five years ago indicates today only its serious beginning. Bringing the larger part of continental Europe under German control, or in some form of coordiation with her, has not weakened the German war machine, but has rather increased its striking power and its resources. The defeat of France has not limited the theatre of war, but only shifted the scenery. The more restricted the war will be in Europe, the more it will expand in other parts of the world.

At this writing the most dramatic acts of war consist of the bombing of English cities, harbors, railway-junctions, depots and factories. No one knows whether the German invasion of England will follow, and what chance it will have. Such things are much more quickly decided upon and undertaken nowadays than, for instance, it takes a group like ours to write, print and ship a magazine. The question as to the further turn of the war depends on military-economic considerations, evaluations and gambles over which no individual, particular group, state nor power-bloc has any decisive control. Hitler's boast that he alone is going to decide when the war will end is an empty propaganda gesture. His own decisions, as well as those of his adversaries, even if made by them, have also, nevertheless, been forced upon them.

II

There can be no doubt that at present the invasion of England will be a costly and difficult enterprise. It would in all probability please the Germans better if they could reach a peace favorable to themselves without the destruction of the Island. It is by no means out-of-the-way to assume that Germany's momentary advantage in air-power and air-bases (provided this advantage can be maintained), the continuous disruption of shipping, production and distribution, the loss of world-trade, and the demoralization of the population may sooner or later force England to see in a a Hitler-peace the lesser evil. However, it seems that the opportunity for a compromise solution has already been passed up, and that any attempt to steer the ship around would presuppose a political revolution of the greatest magnitude. The forces for such a revolution are not visible.

The question as to what is going to happen further in Europe is closely associated with America's attitude towards the war, for the present struggle between England and Germany is now only a part of the struggle between Germany and the United States. Present procedures in the U.S. House and Senate are certainly strange. Strange are the quarrels about the different draft-bills proposed and enacted. Strange also is the behaviour of the press. While one part feigns an anti-war sentiment, the other sees Hitler's armada already crossing the Atlantic; but both know quite well that all their gibberish is absolutely meaningless, and neither deals at all with questions of the war, but only with the coming election fight. The war, despite all the talk about it, and the character of the war, despite all the political bargaining connected with it, are already decided upon and

arranged for. It is only a question of convenience as to when to enter the conflict openly. The fake-isolationists hope only that formal peace lasts long enough to defeat the New Dealer. But Mr. Willkie doesn't dare to speak any other than Mr. Roosevelt's language. He knows that the question of war is independent of the outcome of the elections, or of the will of the people. Whoever doesn't know it will soon be made to.

Because of this situation, because of the fact that this war is America's as much as it is Germany's, England is already defeated in more ways than one, long before the first Nazi barges have touched her shores. After the fall of France there remained for England no other choice than that between two masters; she chose the more familiar. Since then she has been in the same relation to the United States that France formerly was to England. And as England was quite willing to "fight to the last Frenchmen", so America is not reluctant to fight to the last Englishman.

III

Illusions are nourished not by dreaming of the future but by thinking about the past. England's long rule, her present status and remaining opportunities, make it very difficult to imagine that she is doomed, that the Empire is breaking up. It is nonsense to blame her age for the present troubles; England is as little "decaying" as Germany is "rejuvenated". She loses her proud position in the frame-work of world-trade and world-power not because of any senility on her part, but because the old frame-work of world-economy is collapsing. The power centers of yesterday lost their force because the weapon of competition has lost its strength in a declining capitalist world. All foreign policy based on traditional successes has become meaningless. New power constellations arise no longer based on, or forced to obey, the rules of yesterday (i. e., free-trade, and the balance-of-power policy which secured England's rule), but based rather on political-economic forms and activities designed to secure capitalist exploitation by breaking, if necessary, all capitalist rules hitherto held unassailable.

England entered this war much stronger than she was in 1914. Everything seemed to favor her cause; the future could only be one of increasing military and economic strength. By 1941-42 she would have been powerful enough to enforce upon Europe an English peace. The German offensive, as soon as it had spent its force, would then be broken with a powerful counter-offensive. Money-diplomacy would meanwhile encircle Germany and secure the force of the blockade. England, despite all her stagnation since the beginning of the century, was still the richest country in the world and controlled the greatest Empire.

But, though England could justifiably feel quite secure, she could do nothing to prevent the approaching Armageddon brought about by the never-ending depression in many countries, especially in Germany, in the wake of the last war. She could do nothing because she could act only in her own interest; she could succeed only in keeping what she had. As long

as the whole world economy was expanding, English privileges, though they hindered the development of other countries, did not hamper them enough to force them to challenge English dominance. The power that England possessed allowed her a dominant influence on world politics. She drove other nations into war and defeat, but secured peace and success for herself. But eventually the unsolvable world crisis of capitalism proved to be the unbeatable enemy of English capitalism.

IV

If, however, Hitler today blames England for all the evils in the world, as yesterday he blamed the Jews, and if he gets especially excited over the British conspiracy which prevents Germans from drinking their coffee, he is nevertheless, blaming the wrong cause. He has to state false reasons for the miseries of the German workers because he would not be Hitler if he pointed in the right direction. Hitler and the war are there because the people will not and cannot see the real reasons for their troubles, and hence find the right solutions. Previous history has created institutions, social, economic, and national, which force people in their practical, direct activities to proceed as if these social, economic, and national institutions were unchangeable and beyond their power to alter.

There is no choice: "While airplanes whirled in combat over London," reported the *Chicago Tribune* (9/10/40), "the directors of the Decca Record Company, Ltd., met in air raid shelter and declared an initial dividend of twenty-five per cent on the company's ordinary shares". There is no choice: Their homes in ashes, their children blinded, their wives hysterical, nevertheless the workers, today as yesterday, march to work to produce more instruments for their enslavement and destruction. There is no choice: The editors and the artists of *Punch* and *Lustige Blaetter* have to keep on making jokes in order to live, and it makes no difference to them whether people laugh over collapsing buildings or over spilled milk.

There is no choice for the workers, the bosses, the soldiers, the priests, because capitalist society is not social; because for each individual altering things means risking his profits, his income, his wages, his life. Each one must, if only to keep what he has, fight mercilessly and continually for more — and against others. In such a society there can be no common interests, there can be no peace, but only different forms of warfare. The fight against hunger may change into one with guns and poison gases, the struggle of all against all may change into struggles of groups of nations against other groups of nations — nothing has changed. What asserts itself here is still the only thing that is "social" in capitalist society.

Even if this truth is understood it cannot be acted upon. As individuals, people can only act as they do regardless of what they may think. Their "capitalistic individuality" cannot be destroyed, unless capitalism is first done away with. "We can cease being completely swinish only when some catastrophe strikes us." The magnitude of the catastrophe necessary may

be guessed by a mere glance at the European scene. The people continue to work and die for a cause they cannot really understand, because the real hysteria of suffering has not as yet displaced the artificial hysterias of current slogans and beloved symbols. The war goes on, though nothing can be gained. It goes on for the sole reason that, under present conditions, it cannot be stopped.

But capitalism is tottering. The governments may guarantee replacement of the workers' possessions destroyed by bombers, they may insure capitalist property, conscripted and used up, with the profits of the future; they may promise whatever they like, they will not be able to make good on any of it. People fleeing barefoot and in nightshirts from bombed cities only to be machine-gunned by the dare-devils of the air — so favored by the girls — are bound to lose their capitalistic individuality, that is, the ideology which urges them to do to everybody else, what everybody else is doing.

Hundreds of volumes have been written to solve the 1914 war-guilt question. Hundreds more are in preparation — some have even been published — to determine what and who caused the present debacle. In 1914 it was Sarajevo, a Germany misinformed of the contents of an ultimatum to Serbia and encouraging the Austrian Monarchy into an adventure that released all the war dogs of the world. Today it is Hitler's character the German revenge-idea, fascist aggression, or more directly, Poland's unwillingness to come to terms with Hitler in a stipulated period of time, a memorandum too hastily read by von Ribbentrop to Henderson, and many other things. By such means the war guilt will never be established and one may as well declare that war is not willed but destined.

And it is destiny, though man-made destiny; but it appears as if willed by the gods. For though the social, economic, and national institutions are apparently unchangeable, they nevertheless change continually. But they change, so to speak, behind the backs of the people; that is, they determine the real social process without allowing for the correspondingly necessary conscious adaptation of individuals to altered situations. The atomization of society — where each one has to act against all others—allows for development only at the most enormous sacrifices of life and happiness. As no one wants to fall into the abyss, he tries to push the next one down. Society marches on by way of the incessant struggles of her creators.

V

Things have changed considerably, though the full meaning of the changes are grasped only belatedly. For instance, it is only now, with the second world war raging, that it becomes possible to appreciate fully the significance of the first. Was it an accident, was it the *Lusitania*, was it the foreign-loan policy, was it Wilson's hatred for the enemies of democracy which brought America to the side of the Entente and helped her to win the war? None of this. It was American imperialism pure and simple

attempting to participate in the first great round for the re-division of the world to suit the requirements of an altered situation. In that battle expanding imperialist Germany lost. But the kill was meager and the hunters many. France and England took their share, recognizing quite well that America—old Uncle Shylock—had already pocketed all there was to be pocketed. Out of the war America emerged no longer a debtor nation but a creditor nation, no longer the capital-importing country in the process of construction, but the capital-exporting country looking for profitable imperialistic investments.

The expansion America experienced during the war was still further accelerated by the boom after 1921. Expanding America seemingly had found the answer to all capitalistic problems. It was the more celebrated until 1929 because of the fact that during the same time English economy stagnated, European economy declined. England's attention in Europe centered on France; in the world, on America. England tried to check the growing continental power of France with the support of Germany; she tried to check American imperialism by fostering Japanese interests in the Far East. She fought for both, for the control of Europe and for her old position in the world. But she fought a loser's battle. England, the world's banker, slowly had to make room for the new banker, America.

War debts and billions of other credits could no longer be paid, however, because (among other reasons) America not only lent capital but exported those commodities on whose export the European nations were also dependent. Europe found itself in a continuous crisis; even English profits declined and sometimes disappeared altogether. England could live on her large reserves, but her position as world-financier was slowly lost. With this her political power also declined. The strength of the capital-poor nations such as Germany and Italy increased correspondingly, and by changes of economic policy and political assertions it became possible for these countries once again to challenge England's rule in Europe.

However, what had now become possible by the decline of English power—that is, a European re-organization favoring the capital-poor nations — was no longer of real avail. The economic and therewith the political problems of Europe could no longer be solved by continental re-arrangements, but only by those which had the world for their base. But the European re-organization was a necessary prerequisite to the re-organization of the world. If England could still stagnate—thanks to her enormous wealth accumulated during better times—this was not true of other European nations. The capitalistic necessities of Europe demanded some form of united European economic policy able to operate against the expansion of American capitalism; but private capitalistic interests, and the diverse sources of profit-appropriation in their specific, historically-determined, nationally-oriented, and quite rigid character, excluded the fulfillment of the "real capitalist need". Or rather, what "theoretically" could have served as some kind of capitalist solution, was practically precluded because of the fact that capitalism is capitalism. All that it was possible to reach in

Europe that resembled some form of cooperation was a League of Nations dominated by England and serving exclusively the needs of the nominal victors of Versailles. But even this form of distorted "collectivism" was recognized by America as foreign to her own interests and was consequently sabotaged.

England had the Empire. The Commonwealth of Nations spread all over the globe. She was neither willing nor able, for fear of losing the Empire and her favored European position, to pool her resources with the meager offerings of the impoverished continental nations. At any rate, and for whatever additional reasons, history proved the impossibility of a European economic union. Despite all talk of Pan-Europe, the post-war period was one of increasing national frictions, of plot and counter-plot, of increasing suspicion and fear— with each nation acting like a lone wolf. England, however, as the main obstacle to European unification, was duly rewarded for her services to American capital with promises of support whenever needed and with special tariff considerations that benefited her exclusively.

VI

If anything, the long American depression indicates sufficiently that expansion within the country has reached its barriers. It indicates too that capital export for exploitative purposes is a greater necessity than ever before. But the traditional capital-export policies have come to an end; the commercial imperialism must be replaced by open military conquest. It is true that the old imperialism was also accompanied by military action; colonization was one form of military conquest. As soon as capital is invested, the question of protectorate arises. But the new imperialism "protects" first and invests later, if it invests at all, and does not simply appropriate what is there already.

This imperialistic need is the more pressing because the declining exchange between Europe and America offers no procpects of revival. The decline is not only due to world-wide crisis conditions, but more specifically, to the present economic "dislocations" (relative to pre-war conditions) which, however find their final explanation also in the general over-expansion of capital which brought forth the crisis. If America before the first world war exported mainly agricultural products and finished goods, she has since then become an exporter of everything under the sun. Tariff walls were erected against European competition. Year in, year out, America exported more than she took in return. The capital of the world flowed slowly into her treasury. Though this export-offensive was largely stimulated and made possible by loans and credits, which had later to be re-organized as losses, nevertheless the European economy was thereby increasingly disrupted. It was thereby disrupted, to repeat, because this process was no longer accompanied by a vast general expansion of capital.

American capital exports, helping in the industrialization of backward countries, reduced still further the decreasing opportunities of European cap-

italism. It made the backward countries more independent of European industry, destroyed further the markets for industrial commodities made in Europe. Those "old" capitalistic countries, unable to expand internally, were robbed of their remaining investment opportunities abroad. The same phenomena which had once spelled success and expansion now led to misery and decline. The growth of capital slowed down, that of competition was accelerated. If competition once meant a general increase in the formation of capital, it indicated now no more than its progressive destruction. It meant the growth of American imperialism and her inescapable interest in a Europe that was weak and divided. And though American capital exports also came to an end in the wake of the world crisis, and though credits for lack of security were no longer granted, the situation prior to the general stagnation drove the European economy to the verge of ruin.

This general trend, if not stopped, can lead to nothing but actual starvation in Europe. Europe needs foodstuffs, it cannot feed itself. To get foodstuffs it must export. Hitler's "Export or Die" was not a propaganda slogan; its validity holds good for the whole of industrial Europe. But this export is hampered by the capitalistic needs of America, as, for that matter, it is hampered for each nation by all other capitalistic nations. Only because America, which cannot be checked by European capital, is the most powerful unit it is the arch enemy. Only because American imperialism is a necessity for American capitalism, and because the latter cannot afford a strong Europe, the sharpened general competition as a result of the world-wide crisis had to lead to new imperialistic attempts to solve forcibly the existing contradictions in the interest of the strongest powers.

Separate interests, the greed for profits continually interferes with the economic needs of the world. Coordinating the world economy to the needs and pleasures of the world population has become the most urgent necessity. But its fulfillment is precluded in a society dominated by class interests. The limited planning which can be enforced no longer suffices. The Balkans, under German control, may be easily forced to plan according to the needs of industrial Germany. Russia might be subdued in time and be obliged to coordinate her production with the needs of the Western Europe. Marshall Petain, not believing in any socialist future, has already announced that the slogan for France's salvation is "Back to the land: the peasantry is the real backbone of the fatherland". If Germany wins, it will not allow a further industrial growth of France exceeding German competitive needs and war requirements. India might be frustrated in her industrial development by whoever might rule her. Japan may control China's development according to her industrial requirements. All this goes on as the struggle of all industrial nations against all others. Planning on a national scale cannot compensate for the world planning now necessary, because it has no further meaning except as part of the general preparation for war. Planning merely on a national scale can mean only the further disruption of the already hopelessly disrupted world economy. National planners, so proud of their liberalistic or socialistic attitude with regard to national needs, are

no more than an appendage of the various general staffs of the world preparing for, or already participating in, the new slaughter now in progress.

Continental planning will not help either. It will only make it possible to really prepare for the struggle of continents against continents. A unified Europe does not mean a better world economy; it means only the opportunity for a capitalistic Europe to fight its American adversary efficiently. It means no more than the continuation of the present war or the initiation of another one. Those well-meaning people who today seem to see the solution of all the troubles of the world in a United States of Europe, under either German or English dominance, are only the first earnest advocates for the coming war of the hemispheres.

VII

Without this excursion into some of the fundamental capitalistic contradictions in their present-day appearance, most dramatically displayed by the opposition of Europe to America, it is not possible to understand the full meaning of the present European struggles.* On the verge of the present war two alternatives were given to England. One was to "betray" America and "democracy" and line up with Hitler for the co-ordination of European economy in the interest of strong industrial nations, and for a trade-war against America and the rest of the undominated world. Such a policy would sooner or later have evolved into a new world war, but not immediately. Such a policy, however, would most certainly have led to the co-ordination of the so-called Western hemisphere under the control of the United States, to the loss of the British possessions in this hemisphere, the sacrifice of Canada and possibly even Australia, and to the cutting down of English world trade to an extent that could not possibly be compensated for by the otherwise quite cherished friendship with Hitler.

Such a line of development would have meant the expansion of the Munich agreement. By sacrificing Czechoslovakia, England simultaneously sacrificed Poland, and consequently the whole of the little entente, the French security mechanism, and finally France itself. Under such conditions, Russia faced a war with Germany, unless it bowed down to the German demands, which certainly would have favored German rather than Russian interests. For England to continue Munich could lead only to the absolute German hegemony in continental Europe, which would transform England itself into Hitler's vassal. This course of development Hitler was aspiring to when he begged for English friendship.

This friendship he could not obtain, for all he could offer England was a lackey position within the new German Empire; with a Europe under

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*As this article serves as a sort of continuation of the paper "The War is Permanent", in the spring issue of Living Marxism, it does not deal with all phases of the problems of the present war, but emphasizes those neglected or understated in the previous article, that is, the position of America in the present war panorama. We assume that our readers are aware of the first paper. If not, the spring issue should be read in connection with this article.

German control, the threat of invasion would always hang like the sword of Damocles over Britain's head. At least he could not offer more for a long time to come and nowadays political decisions have to be made for immediate purposes. In an unruly world the far-sightedness of the celebrated empire builders, their patience in consistently following planned lines of conquest is excluded for the present generation of politicians. The rush for the riches of the world no longer involves light-footed runners; it has been "democratized" and now resembles a general rush to the bargain counters of history.

There then remained the other alternative: To prevent in her own interest, and in conformity with America's need, the assembling of any kind of political-economic combination which could serve the urgently needed but unattainable capitalistic continental policy designated to postpone collapse. It is not only that America needs Britain because of the latter's navy (because America has not been able, nor has she found it necessary in view of her friendship with England, to construct a two-ocean fleet), that the collaboration of the two powers was possible and necessary, but that they also have identical interests in Europe proper. This collaboration with England is not forced upon, nor willingly accepted as a windfall, by the United States to serve her defense needs, but is adopted consciously as one method of imperialistis interference in the affairs of Europe. Not only the fear that Hitler, after capturing the English fleet, will hurt American imperialistic interests — leaving aside the nonsense of an invasion in which only idiots believe — dictates the friendship between England and America; but much more so does the American policy of keeping down the possible European competition, which might take on dangerous proportions in the event of the realization of a centralized European economy, or a unified political activity.

It is often said that Wilson was extremely disappointed in the results of Versailles. But there was no reason for it. In politics one must always be two-faced; in bargaining as in poker one must not betray his own feelings. It is quite conceivable however that Wilson was not really aware of what he was doing when he proclaimed and insisted upon the right of small nations for their national independence. The principle of self-determination, of course, was never practised by America south of the Rio Grande, but for Europe to oppose it was a sin against the highest moral of democracy. Just as little as Wilson might have known what really was behind his abstract concepts did the Kaiser, letting others fight for the glory of the greater Germany, know in 1914 that in actuality the first world war was a struggle against American world-rule and for the reconstruction of Europe. The maintenance of an impotent, broken-up Europe, was the sole content of all American policy in Europe. The loan policy too was essentially an instrument to that end. And all the while centralization celebrated triumphs in North America, Dollar Imperialism penetrated deeper and deeper into South America, and millionaires seemed to grow on trees.

VIII

Both England and America, then, were and are the bitterest enemies of a European reconstruction which can only be brought about — because of the many opposing vested interests dependent on the maintenance of given national units — by way of warfare and the hegemony of the strongest power. Germany's position in central Europe, its large population, its highly advanced industrialization, and for all these reasons its greatest expansive need is that power which could successfully dominate and, if at all possible, coordinate Europe to resemble some sort of an economic bloc able to compete with America on a more equal level. Germany not only works in this direction, however haphazardly, but has to, or it must perish as a power nation.

It is true, however, that though America is not the only competitor, it is the most important competitor for European capitalism. It is true also that the deterioration of Europe's competitive position is only one, though the most important, of her problems. All other problems are more generally connected with the difficulties of capitalistic production as a whole; but the line-up in the present war, and its immediate consequences, are most directly related to the rivalries between England and Germany, Europe and America.

Until the time of the first world war there was a kind of international economy with Europe as the workshop, banker, and trade-agent of the world. The income of Europe was continuously and quite decisively augmented by the proceeds of the exploitation of backward nations and colonial people. Declining profit rates were bolstered by banking interests, trade profits, insurance rates and other forms of appropriation. The decline of such incomes through the self-development of South America, Asia and Africa, dependent or independent of the rise of American capitalism, only further accelerated the European difficulties. This decline in profits from abroad must be taken into consideration in any attempt to understand the present European situation. Otherwise it is quite difficult to explain the present impasse, because the decline in industrial production, export and import, as statistically established, is not very great. This relatively stable situation is quite misleading, unless one recognizes that this stability was "sufficient" only when augmented by additional profits derived from the labor of other countries. Furthermore, this stability itself is merely a crisis indicator, because only a progressively expanding capitalist economy can be a prosperous capitalist economy.

England benefitted most from this world-wide exploitation. Europe's special position in the world made England's position secure. The breakdown of this Europe-dominated world economy implies the breakdown of an England-dominated Europe. National politics are thereby ended; the continuation of nationally oriented politics is a swimming against the real stream of events. It finds its end in exhaustion. Though Germany, too, professes to serve nothing more than her national interest, her position in

present-day Europe in connection with the present world situation forces her, so to speak, against her will, to go beyond her national interests by serving them most directly. The bastard-form of a European federation is possible only by way of Germany's success and such a federation would hasten the decline of England.

Yet, it cannot be opposed by England with any measure of success. It is conceivable that Britain might have been able to prevent the new rise of German imperialism, but only by favoring French imperialism, which in that case would have attempted to bring into being some kind of pseudo-federation under French hegemony.. A complete subjugation of Germany would have been necessary in that case, but France was prevented by England from bringing this about. There was no lethargy in English politics which might explain the return of German imperialism. It was the energetic and consistent continuation of her balance of power policy which could not take the altered situation into account, because its sole purpose was to prevent all alterations. Besides, there was Russia, a state-capitalist system in a world of private property interests, showing all backward countries by her very existence that it was possible to escape a colonial or semi-colonial status. German capitalism and militarism could not be extinguished altogether without increasing the imperialistic potentialities of Russia. There were increasing difficulties in Asia, and a number of other problems. To blame English statesmen for her present impasse may be amusing, but it cannot serve as an explanation for the forces that hung the Dead End sign on the country. No longer able to determine the course of European politics, England became an island not only in the geographical but in every sense of the word. The new economy based on bayonets ripped to pieces the trade-web of money and investments.

It is not that capital has lost its power; as a matter of fact, it is the lack of capital which is the basis of the whole dilemna. It was the lack of capital which prevented the needed modernization of European agriculture, which limited the necessary capital expansion, and therewith prevented a relaxing of the tensions which led to the war. No European customs-union can really compensate for that capital shortage which led to the brink of starvation, and yet could call forth no other measures than those which made the bad situation worse. The time when the absence of tariff barriers and other trade impediments could give essential advantages to big industrial nations has already past. A custom-union may help, but it still amounts to no more than a drop of water on a hot stone. It will not solve the real problems. As a drowning man grasps at a straw, so governments too will do what they have to do without questioning the final value of their acts.

The need of and the possibility for alleviating, if only temporarily, some of the economic and social frictions infringing upon the profitability of European economy determines the actions of the new fascist rulers. The "automatism" of traditional capital investment and trade policies did not need to be replaced; it did not work any longer. If investments do not shift

whole populations according to the private requirements of private investors, populations can still be shifted by a mere command of the dictatorial governments. If people can no longer be exploited through the market mechanism, they can be ordered to work at whatever wage the governments see fit to pay. The market mechanism was after all only one mechanism for the successful exploitation of labor; the new fascist mechanism serves this purpose just as well, though it partly eliminates those exploiting elements which were too closely connected with the old system, in favor of new exploiting elements which adapt themselves better and quicker to the new one. It eliminates those people not only in territories where the "new economy" is practised, but also where the "old capitalism" still prevails. The trade between European nations and Europe' trade with the world is the more disturbed the more it becomes "managed". On the basis of "mixed economics", clearing agreements, and barter deals, international trade cannot be enlarged, but can only be prevented from disappearing altogether. It becomes more difficult for the "rich" nations to use their capital to their own advantage. It does not enrich the poor countries, and it eats into the capital of the rich. Totalitarian economics injected into free-trade leads to an economic world mixture much worse in its results than either system could be by itself. "If Marx saw capitalism's hair graying, and its teeth falling out," *Herbert Heaton* remarked recently, "perhaps today he would say that its hair has turned gray overnight from the shocks of the last ten years, and that its teeth have been knocked out in a concentration camp."

What is now needed to bring into the world economy some kind of order which would enable people to speak once more of progress in social development can neither be done by democratic nor by fascist capitalistic methods and goals. The existing disorder has reached a point where only radical solution can help. The whole value production and value exchange has to be done away with, in its monetary as well as its barter form. After all, the fascist production of "use values for use" and exchange by barter agreements, the attempt to clean labor of its commodity character by giving it a modernized slave form has not change one iota the fundamental capitalistic social and economic relations. The production of "use values" serves production for profit as always, the barter system exchanges less for more labor, work is still exploited as before — only more so. Value production and value exchange must and can disappear only with the ending of class relations. Only because of the existence of the latter can the former not be seriously challenged, must the terror increase. Only then, when the fulfillment of the needs of the whole, not the symbolized whole of the state but the whole of society, is considered the pre-requisite for the satisfaction of the needs of the individual — and this in the restricted sense of the social relationship in any particular country, as in the large sense of the territorial relationships in the world economy — will it be possible to speak of the beginning of a new era of social development. Nothing short of this radical solution will help, and because it seems that we are still far away from this solution, it is not possible to find one single optimistic note in the present concert of hell.

Without such a radical solution the war may change its forms; it will not be ended. The only development possible now is the development of warfare. After the defeat of France, the continuation of the war meant the incorporation of England into the new American Empire. Short of the quite improbable occurence of an internal collapse of Germany, there seems to be no possibility of defeating Germany by military means for some time to come. The military aspects of the war between England, Germany and Italy can indicate, if anything, only the military defeat of England. However costly an invasion of England may be, it will be undertaken if it proves to be a necessity for Germany, or if unforseeable occurrences make it opportune. If England restricts herself to mere defense measures, if her aerial and naval tactics do not harm Germany sufficiently, it is not unthinkable that Germany will try to wear England slowly down rather than end her present existence by blitzkrieg methods. Even at this late hour a peace of compromise is not altogether precluded, and such a peace would split at least part of the English interests away from America. To exclude this possibility America must help England to a far greater extent than it has done so far. The greater this help, the greater the need for Germany to attempt the invasion.

It is no longer true that "England expects that every American do his duty". Rather the opposite conforms to the facts. If Roosevelt's frontier was once the Rhine, his shock-troops are now certainly on the Thames. This far-sightedness is the more astonishing because of the prevailing general short-sightedness, which does not see that the Stars and Stripes fly high above the Union Jack. It was rather superfluous to change the colors on the destroyers and tanks that were sent over to Canada.

To increase Germany's difficulties, to keep her occupied in Europe, America must help England — but never decisively. Aside from the question as to whether America is as yet really able to grant decisive support to England, she only hastens the military necessity of invasion by so doing. More than on anything else invasion depends now on American actions, on her possibilities to supply England with war materials, on her desire to keep Germany's striking power bound to the English scene. If America's help is not sufficient to increase England's military potentialities during the coming months to a point where her actions become unbearable for Germany, the latter country might consider it more important to fight England somewhere else than on her own ground. Spain's present attitude that suggests participation in the war on the side of the axis, the Italian offensive in Egypt, the attempts to take the Suez canal and Gibraltar which will follow, the closing of the Mediterranean to English shipping, together with continuous bombing of England proper — these and other tactics might weigh more heavily in the speculation of the axis powers general-staffs than the invasion itself. But any day they might also consider it better to take England first, and thus break up the Empire. The initiative is still on the side of the axis.

Whatever may happen or has happened, the war is already a war between America and the axis powers. The latter might be further strengthened by allying Japan to themselves. The taking of Indo-China by the Japanese army, the final blow against China now in preparation to free Japan's hands for the possible struggle with America, (a struggle which would relieve America's pressure upon Germany), all indicate that any outcome of the struggle between England and Germany will not bring about an end to the war. In case of a successful invasion of England, whatever may be salvaged — parts of the fleet, or the dominions beyond Hitler's reach — will become part of the United States. In case of a compromise solution, implying the formation of a fascist government in England, those forces able to escape the "new England" will continue to fight, but under the Stars and Stripes, just as part of the French Empire and the allied soldiers who escaped now fight under the English flag. In the form of military operations the war will then continue wherever the armies of the axis powers reach English interests; that is, in Africa, Asia, India. Between America, the axis powers, and possibly Japan, a naval, air, and trade war will be carried on.

Under such conditions the destiny of the Balkans will have to be decided between Russia and the axis powers. Russia will either have to continue her present relations with Germany, or fight against her — and hence against Japan, in case she should orientate herself towards the United States. Russia might be further appeased with parts of China, Persia, Turkey, and possibly even India. The Russian attitude towards the continued war will depend largely on the relations between Japan and America, on the progress the war will make in Asia. There are attempts on the part of America to come to an understanding with both Japan and Russia, as there are attempts made to include Russia in the expanding front of the axis powers. The probability of success is greater for the latter than for the former attempt. It is, however, not entirely excluded that at this time a war in the Pacific might still be prevented, if only by postponement, in case this should suit the most immediate interests of both Japan and America better. But as far as one can see right now, there seems to be a much greater possibility that, because America is much more concerned over the problems of the Pacific** than over her need to fight the coming German trade war, the war for the United States will be predominantly located in the Pacific.

Only with the isolation of Russia by reason of the German success in Europe is it possible for Japan to challenge American capitalism in Asia and in the Pacific. America's struggle against Japan is thus at the same time the continuation of her struggle against Germany. Germany's support of Japan is designed to weaken the striking power of the United States, and is thus a part of the as yet unfinished European conflict, as well as a

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**_The next issue of LIVING MARXISM will deal extensively with the relations in the Pacific._

part of the coming trade-offensive. Despite all autarchy, national or regional, world economy has not come to an end; only now it spells world war.

IX

Aside from the question of whether the Nazi regime can sooner or later subdue and incorporate the free-enterprise regimes still existing in Europe, what has happened so far can mean only that America must face a deepening of the existing crisis conditions or adopt totalitarian methods in her internal and external relations. The world-wide economic struggle cannot fail to reduce the existing living standards and the demand for commodities, unless war economy displaces the crisis economy. The intensified efforts in all countries to produce for export enhances this need still further. The "normal" markets for America disappear with the progress of the war.

A victorious Germany will still remain in need of export outlets, in need of capital, foreign exchange and war material. Her economy will face a situation of general scarcity in everything — depleted inventories, obsolete industries, run-down railroads, and the need for more arms. This need cannot be satisfied by confiscations in Europe, nor by mere re-arrangements in distribution. The increasing poverty in the "new" Europe will allow neither Germany nor Europe to rest on the laurels of military victories. Expansion must go on, if only to utilize what has been won. But the further this expansion goes, the more difficult and the less profitable it becomes.

With the defeat of England the question of the re-distribution of Europe's colonial possessions will be opened. What is going to happen to Canada, Newfoundland, Greenland, the Bahamas, Bermuda, the French, British and Dutch West Indies, Honduras, Guinea, the Falkland and South Sea Islands, etc.? America is determined that they shall fall neither to Germany nor to Japan. There can be no doubt that with the defeat of England all European bases and possessions in the Western hemisphere will be seized by America. The enmity between Europe, Japan, and America will be thereby enormously increased.

But the coming Nazi trade offensive demands more than preventing German-controlled Europe from maintaining the old European possessions. South America belongs to the Eastern hemisphere rather than to North America. Its products are needed in Europe more than in America; its possibilities for trade with Europe are greater than with America. Barter agreements will move commodities where money economy has failed. American trade methods and tariff policies have emptied Latin America as well as many European countries of gold and foreign exchange. The German barter system offers a solution, as the gold will not by itself find its way back into countries with unfavorable trade balances.

By way of barter, clearing agreements, blocked currencies, and export subsidies Nazi Germany has been able to double her share in the foreign trade of raw-material-producing countries at the expense of England and

America. As American exports to raw-material-producing countries were of much lesser consequence than her export to industrial nations, the further reduction of the former seems to be of small significance. However, the picture looks somewhat different if one considers the inescapable need of Europe to import raw materials, and her inability to continue to be America's best customer. If there were the chance of a general capitalist expansion all over the world the decline of American exports to South America would be no cause for worry as it would be compensated for by increasing exports to industrial Europe. As it is, however, the possible losses in South American trade will accentuate the decline of American exports all over the world. It is then not so much a question of European competition in South America proper that is behind the present "rediscovery" of the South by the industrial North, but the inescapable need to combat, by combatting European trade in South America, Europe's competitive position all over the globe. Control of the raw materials of South America Canada and the Pacific regions gives America a decisive advantage in the world competitive struggle. By withholding raw materials and foodstuffs from German and Japanese industries, the ability of those countries to take markets away from America by way of new trade methods is considerably reduced. The complete control of the Western hemisphere by America is so powerful a weapon that the German dream of a world reorganization on her own terms becomes quite ridiculous.

The raw material hunger of Germany, Italy, and Japan cannot be satisfied with old trade methods, because those countries lack the necessary gold and foreign exchange to purchase them in the quantities needed by their industries. Nor for similar reasons can the hunger for industrial goods in less-developed countries be satisfied. Trade between Latin America and Europe as well as America declined rapidly with the deepening of the world crisis. However, the total exports of Latin America amounted to over 1.75 and 1.86 billion dollars in 1938 and 1939 respectively. Germany, France and Italy absorbed 15.8 per cent in 1938, and 11 per cent in 1939, 15.9 and 12.8 per cent of all Latin American exports went to Great Britain. In foodstuffs, four nations — England, Germany, Belgium, and Italy — alone took 79 per cent of Argentina's total exports in 1938, while the United States took only 9 per cent. Half of the income that the South American nations derived from exports came from Europe. A serious disruption of trade between Europe and South America makes the existence of both territories quite difficult.

The fact that South America produces what Europe needs, and Europe what South America needs, made barter exchange both possible and necessary. The more this kind of trade flourished, the smaller became the possibility for competition among countries still based on the gold exchange methods. With the decline of economic influence, political influence declines and therewith the value of investments in South America. The increasing independence of South America from its friendly neighbor points in the direction of grand-scale repetitions of the Mexican expropriation acts. Such

a situation, together with the improvement of Europe's competitive position by virtue of better relations between Europe and South America, would force American industry into retreat, strengthen the totalitarian forces now in the ascendency, and bring about alterations in private capitalism. Fighting the German trade offensive in South America, American private capitalism continues the struggle for its very existence, the first round of which has just been lost in Europe. The harder it fights fascism, however, the more totalitarian it will become.

The whole Western hemisphere under the control of the United States means the possesion of war-material resources unequalled in the world — food stuffs, nickel, aluminum, zinc, copper, etc. Partial control of rubber and military co-ordination of the hemisphere puts America in a position where she can dictate the commercial terms in her world relation; that is, where she can demand her share of the world-created profits. Neither her gold nor her industrial advantages, but a militarily-secured monopoly over an important part of the world can now guarantee profit appropriations beyond those spheres under control. The Germans, Italians, and Japanese will no longer be trading with a number of independent countries, but with America, which can take her share from any of the possible transactions. In other words, American imperialism is out to continue to share in the exploitation of all the other workers in the world besides her own, just as the "new" Europe will be out to prevent this muscling in on the part of America, and to create a condition where the bulk of the world-profits move in the direction of Europe.

American trade weapons such as embargoes, monetary control, control of shipping and insurance, of tourist traffic exchange-and-tariff- manipulations, and her gold monopoly — all these weapons are no longer sufficient to secure world-wide exploitation for American capitalism. Nor will the measures taken to co-ordinate South America with American interests, such as have already been realized with regard to Canada, suffice in fighting Europe's trade offensive. An economic cartel of this hemisphere must control its entire production, not single commodities. To be really effective it cannot solve existing problems by bribing South American nations to abstain from trade with Europe and Japan. Loans granted to South America as compensation for losses incurred by the new imperialistic policy of the United States will be accepted, but the committments connected with them will not be fulfilled. Some of the Latin American countries will blackmail America to grant ever-increasing loans which can never be repaid; others will refuse altogether to cooperate, since America could not possibly, in the case of the Argentine for instance, make up for losses incurred by a cessation of Argentine relations with Europe.

To fight Europe and Japan successfully the Good Neighbor Policy of the United States has to become still more neighborly; that is, as one reporter remarked, "The United States will be forced to put a little iron in the hand of the glove it extends to Latin America." And the Catholic

"Register" writes that "our business forces are going to drive our arms south into Latin America when Hitler's barter system starts to kill our trade. Self-defense is making us build up a huge armed forces; but never in history has any nation gone militaristic without also turning imperialistic." The excuse is at hand. Alsop and Kintner in their "American White Paper" say that "the situation is already accute. The immediate danger points are the largest and most important nations — the Argentine and Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and probably Columbia —. The State, War, and Navy Departments unite in believing that if there is an early German victory, it will be followed by German-inspired putsches in at least two and probably more of these countries... This will call for naval and military expeditions sent by the United States... And unless the Germans have obtained the Allied Fleets, the expeditions ought to accomplish their objective." Yes, they ought to, but this means the further militarization of America, and that means the growth of fascism by way of fighting fascim; it means the prolongation and the spreading of the war. For American imperialism, no less than German imperialism, means the further postponement of the only possibility to end continuous warfare — by ending the capitalist system of exploitation. American imperialism in South America, though designed for no other purpose than to make the world safe for American profits, will only diminish those profits still further. It will impoverish both North and South America and so will impoverish the world as a whole. The destruction of South American agriculture in the face of a starving world, the "plowing-under" on a now hemispheric scale of the surpluses created by the divorce of Europe from South America, the use of all industrial raw materials for almost exclusively destructive purposes — all this has to be "paid" for by the labor of American workers north and south of the Isthmus.

X

Though speculations as to the further course of world history are extremely interesting, they are by no means of great importance in so far as they concern the lot of the laboring masses. The question as to who will fight whom, who will be the winner and who the loser can mean little to people who have long since lost all they can lose and who can win nothing regardless of which side may be victorious. For so long as capitalist production relations are not done away with, in winning and defeated countries alike exploitation will be driven to the maximum; freedom and welfare will decline to the lowest point possible.

Also it no longer makes any difference to what policy one may subscribe, for the reality of today determines the actions of all individuals; and this reality no longer allows for any other policy than that fitted to the war-requirements of the various nations. How silly it is to say today that only a socialist America, or a socialist England, will be able to defeat fascism, to oppose Hitler successfully. Neither in England nor in America could a mere change of government, no, not even direct workers' control,

prevent the success of Fascism. To speak of a defense of America through an American socialism is beyond all serious consideration. Movements which could develop in the United States would have no socialist aspirations; they would be fascistic and imperialistic. To them belongs the immediate future.

For England, not a socialist government, but only a greater military power than Hitler's can defeat the latter. Because British socialism could not, merely by being socialistic, create such power socialism will not come to power; it will be defeated. To expect that German soldiers may revolt because of a change in class rule in England means to under-rate the power of the Nazi ideology. A change of class rule in England would mean the immediate defeat of England; it would be welcomed by the Nazis, and be killed in the act of her embrace. The presence of the Nazi force will transform a socialist into a state-capitalist fascist revolution, which will have to ally itself to the fascist imperialistic system dominated by Germany.

Only wishful thinking could assume that the next few years will present the opportunity for the rise of socialistic movements in the warring countries, or that the defeat of one or the other could be prevented by socialistic methods, or could be utilized for socialistic purposes. The anti-fascism practised by the existing labor organizations is in reality no more than the support of private property capitalism against the growing state-capitalist forces. This anti-fascism ends with the defeat of private capitalism. The anti-fascism capable of defeating fascism must be directed also against state-capitalism, it must have a real international basis and must involve the greater part of the world masses.

We are still far away from such a situation. It can, moreover, be created only by the continuation of general warfare, by the further disruption of all essential and vital economic world relations and by an increase in the existing chaos. Those most interested in peace and socialism will have to shout the loudest "Long live the war!"***

***The continuation of this article in the next issue will deal with the revolutionary tendencies inherent in the present world situation, and with the opportunities still left to us to work in the direction of socialism.*

BOOK REVIEWS

THE NEW GERMAN EMPIRE. By F. Borkenau, Viking, New York, 1939 ($2.00)

This little volume is packed with valuable information about the facts and forces behind the German expansion that led to the second world war. The book was written after Munich and before the actual outbreak of hostilities, apparently shortly after Hitler's invasion of Prague in early spring, 1939. For a few years the author had been a right wing member of the German Communist Party, from which he was expelled about 1930. He has since published some interesting books on the civil war in Spain and a critical study of the Communist International. His new book makes even more evident his complete dismissal of any hope for a future victory of the revolutionary cause of the working class, which he had formerly temporarily adopted and tried to pro-

mote by an unquestioning acceptance of Stalin's leadership.

He shows by this book that he saw clearly enough the historical significance of the fascist challenge to "our whole western civilization". He early understood some of the "undeniable facts" that are only today, after overwhelmingly conclusive experience, being grasped by most people. He stated before the war began that an eventual success of the fascist attempt at conquering the world through revolution would be due not to force of arms alone but much more to "the weakness of the moral, religious and political impulses of the opposing side". Yet in his forecast of the possible outcome of the impending war, he allows for no other alternatives than a collapse of the anti-fascist resistance or an unexpected revaluation of what he describes rather evasively as a set of "values which had become somewhat timeworn". Even if, after a sweeping victory over half the world or more, the fascist regime eventually breaks down, this will result, according to Borkenau, not from a genuine workers' rebellion but only from a lack of stability assumed inherent in the fascist regime itself. It will then be followed by "some other regime not yet discernible". Thus, this book both describes the lamentable weakness of the anti-fascist forces today and itself serves, by its own thorough-going skepticism, to illustrate further that same despondent mood which pervades the whole of the so-called "democratic" resistance of the fascist counter-revolution.

There is another objection, this time from a strictly theoretical viewpoint, to Borkenau's otherwise admirable argument. Due in part to the fact that his book was written before the war began, its brilliant analysis of the methods applied by Nazi Germany in a tremendously efficient drive for expansion suffers from an under-evaluation of the essential unity of the different forms assumed by those methods at the various successive stages of their practical application. Here again, the author starts from a clear insight into the characteristic difference between the fascist forms of imperialistic expansion and those applied in the past by Spain, Portugal, Holland, Britain, France, and the United States. The new German Empire of Hitler has never fought for colonies in exactly the same manner that Britain and France did, nor, for that matter, as pre-fascist Germany attempted to do under the Kaiser. Its policy of expansion resembles rather that of Japan and of Russia (both Czarist and Stalinist). Fascist Germany takes her own borders as the starting point of expansion. She aims first of all at conquering her nearest neighbors, and even during subsequent phases of her imperialistic expansion seems to strive for territorial conquest not so much as an end in itself as for the purpose of acquiring indirect control over much more widely extended areas.

So far so good. There have been, there are today, and there will be in the near future many illustrations of this basic feature of new German imperialism — an imperialism aiming not at territorial conquest **per se** but at comparatively small conquest that will yield a larger expansion of Nazi power by indirect control. Yet we must refrain from undue generalization about this particular type of German expansionist policy. From Borkenau's viewpoint, Hitler's occupation of the Sudetenland, the enforcement of a German dominated conservative government in Prague, and the creation of two small vassal states (Slovakia and Ruthenia) had been a correct imperialist policy — true to the new model of fascist expansion. But when, at a later date, Germany decided to strike at Prague and for all practical purposes to swallow the whole of the former Czecho-Slovakian territory, she was forced, according to Borkenau, to break with her tried and successful policy of "indirect rule" and was thrown back to the much more hazardous methods of pre-fascist imperialism. It would not be unfair to carry this line of reasoning further and draw the conclusion that not only was Germany later "compelled", against her own original intention, to invade Poland, to enter into an all-European war and into whatever might result from it in the future, but that the poor creature was also actually "compelled" to conquer the whole world, although she would

have been quite content with a much milder form of economic and political domination. This, by the way, is exactly what Herr Hitler himself would say.

A closer investigation of the facts presented by Borkenau, and of the developments that took place after the publication of his book, seems to show that it is much more appropriate and certainly more in agreement with actual historical events to regard those two forms of the German expansionist policy not as an enforced break with an original plan, but rather as two different yet entirely complementary phases of an essentially identical policy. Fascist Germany, in spite of its racist ideology, aims at a comprehensive expansion by direct as well as by indirect conquest. Though she has been forced in the past, and may again be forced on the wider scale of her future expansionist enterprises, to content herself at first with an indirect expansion of her rule rather than with a direct territorial conquest, she will try to proceed from the early, unsatisfactory form to direct domination as soon as time and circumstances permit.

The present day fascist counter-revolution does not amount to a "true world revolution" as Borkenau and many other bourgeois writers today feel compelled to say. Yet it resembles a genuine revolution in the one respect that it endeavors to disintegrate all existing political forms on a world wide scale. It does so, however, for the ultimate purpose not of world wide emancipation and cooperation, but of world wide oppression and exploitaiton. It is just this small difference that makes the challenge of Fascism today "acceptable" to an increasing number of people all over the world by whom communism and a genuine workers' revolution were regarded only as a danger and an offense. Mr. Borkenau would do well to work out this difference between the "expansionist" tendencies of revolutions true and false as soon as he is freed from his present predicament. According to a recent report in the New York Times, he is at the moment restricted to a study "from within" of the conditions prevailing in a democratic English concentration camp.

K. K.

LIFE AND WORK OF ROSA LUXEMBURG. By Paul Froelich. London 1940. 7/6. German Edition "Rosa Luxemburg—Gedanke und Tat". Paris 1939. 2.50.

Paul Froehlich's **Rosa Luxemburg** is not only an historically accurate and theoretically stimulating account of her life and work, but also a worthwhile contribution to the study of revolutionary tactics and the history of revolution in our time. It is a useful book, rich in learning — one of the few works in the inconsolably vacuous Marxian literature of the present-day which is remindful of the epic days of Marxism. No revolutionary who strives for understanding and clarity in the present economic, political and social crisis of capitalism can fail to benefit from this work.

The only criticism one can offer is that the book lays too much stress on the past and too little on the present and future. But it is doubtful whether this can be considered a shortcoming in an historic-biographical work. It would have been exceedingly difficult to intersperse it with the newer historical developments without distorting the perspective of Rosa Luxemburg's contributions. When Froehlich, however, does deal with incedents and literature of the post-war period he does so inadequately, chosing his material badly, and failing to evaluate it in the spirit of Luxemburg. For instance, it is insufficient to present onesidedly Luxemburg's "Accumulation Theory", her most important contribution to the science of Marxism, in the light of Sternberg's "Correction" and Bucharin's "Criticism".

We would like to stress three points especially: 1.) It seems that Froehlich has deliberately and consciously softened and weakened the specific difference and divergences

between the Luxemburgian and Leninist conceptions. This is especially obvious when he deals with the co-called "Questions of Organization", (Spontaneity Theory, Role of the Party, Centralism, Uprisings, etc.) It is of course true, that though there were differences between Luxemburg and Lenin on these points, there were many points of agreement. It is also true that these disagreements were exaggerated in a senseless manner by even better men than those Froehlich enumerates (Yaroslavsky, Arkadiey, Maslov). But neither fact would justify the author in presenting these differences, which sprang from different historical backgrounds as well as from different political tendencies, not exactly as if they were non-existent, but as if they were finally dissolved in an harmonious and peaceful manner.

2.) In dealing with certain problems of great importance, the book fails to give them the emphasis they deserve. In its exposition of the historical and theoretical significance of Luxemburg's work "Reform or Revolution" this inadequacy is apparent not only in the chapter specifically devoted to the pamphlet, but also in succeeding chapters. This work of Luxemburg's is praised very highly, but its real substance is not sufficiently made clear to the reader; the vast difference between Luxemburg's conceptions and those of other social- democratic tendencies, and the polemics of decisive historical significance are also not elucidated enough.

In this respect Froehlich's greatest shortcoming is in his interpretation of the "Accumulation Theory". It is remarkable how at one place he swallows Bucharin's superficial criticism hook, line and sinker, and at another he celebrates Luxemburg as the true genius who solved the problems unsolved by Marx. A little later he voices the need for modification of the Luxemburg solutions, but at the same time presents Bucharin's "one solution" as an "indirect proof of the decisive theses of Luxemburg"; and finally, to circumvent the whole controversy, he admits the "theoretical" possibility of a new capitalist advance.

3.) The great political question of the time, the fundamental problem of proletarian revolution and dictatorship, are not dealt with in full proportion to their importance; whereas the purely personal takes up far too much space and is handled too often in a sentimental and un-Luxemburgian manner. This is true not only of those chapters specifically devoted to Luxemburg's personality, but, throughout the book, there are scattered such subjective passages unconvincingly overpersonalized. It seems to us that the necessary confutation of the "Bloody Rosa" caricature delineated by her enemies and false friends could have been accomplished more realistically and convincingly.

All these objections however, do not change the fact that here a great historical theme is being presented for the first time with competence and with a historical fidelity to the present struggles.
