

The COMMUNIST

VOL. VIII

MAY, 1929

NO. 5

K. McGary



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Earl Browder

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of the Communist Party of the U. S. A.

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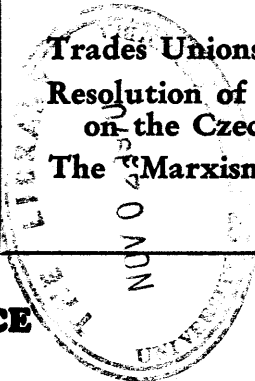
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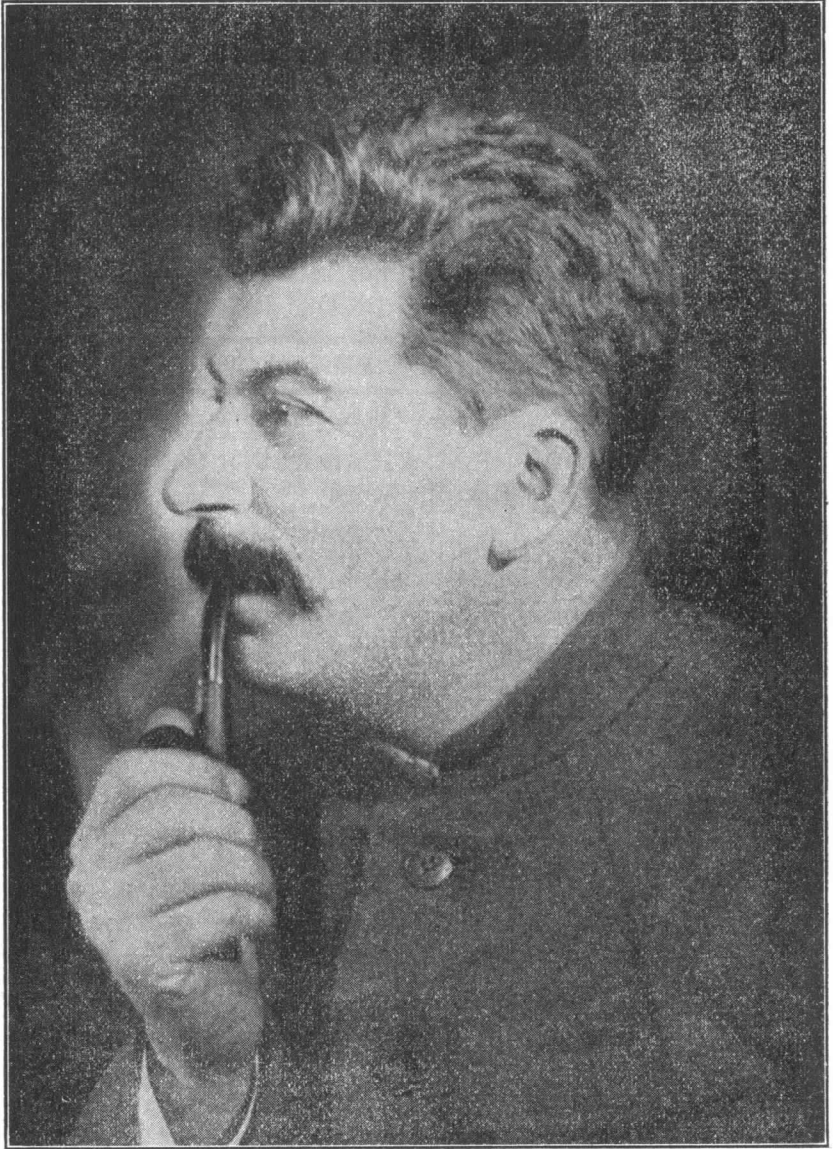
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JOSEPH STALIN

Secretary of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R.

A New Stage of the Mexican Revolution

by EARL BROWDER

THE events of March and April in Mexico have emphasized the fact that the Mexican revolution has passed to a new stage of its development. The uprising of the reactionary landlord-clerical forces, which began on March 3rd with the mutiny of the troops of General Aguirre at Vera Cruz, disclosed the changing alignment of class forces within Mexico, their relations internationally, and the greater maturity of all the class forces engaged in armed struggle. Precisely what are the changes in the relation of class forces becomes a life and death question for the Mexican workers and peasants, for upon the estimation, correct or false, of these forces depends the direction in which guns are turned.

THE PASSING STAGE OF THE REVOLUTION

That stage of the revolution out of which Mexico is now passing was given its characteristic features in the Calles-Obregon regime, which emerged as a petty-bourgeois government, basing itself upon mass support of workers and peasants while engaging in struggle against foreign imperialism (United States and Great Britain) and against native landlord-clerical reaction, at the same time making compromises and concessions to its enemies and putting off the workers and peasants largely with promises.

Torn between conflicting forces and tendencies within itself, the Mexican revolutionary government pursued a zigzag path. But its course, on the whole, was directed against imperialism and feudal-clerical reaction until 1928. During this period the inner contradictions, the antagonistic class interests, were maturing and accumulating. In 1928 they broke through the old policies and alignments, and ended that phase of the Mexican revolution in which the leadership lay with the petty bourgeoisie.

The anti-imperialist policy of the Mexican petty bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie, in its earlier stage of development, required that it rally the support of the worker and peasant masses. This was accomplished under the slogan of "Land and Liberty," which signified for the peasantry the demand for distribution of the land and breaking up of the great estates, and for the workers freedom of organization, right to strike, etc., with the reclamation of national resources from foreign imperialism.

The government had purchased the support of the masses by means of promises which it could only carry out by making uncompromising war against the native landowners and foreign imperialism. But it felt itself too weak for such a struggle, especially because its own special class foundation is weak. Its economic basis is undeveloped and its strength is sapped by its inter-penetration with the feudal elements. It was fearful of the growing organization, consciousness, power and aggressiveness of the workers and peasants. It searched feverishly for formulae of compromise, for "some way out" other than that of uncompromising struggle. Therefore the peasantry was cheated of the promised distribution of land; the confiscation from foreign imperialism of Mexican natural resources was abandoned; the rising organizations of the workers were systematically corrupted through the Morones-Labor Party-CROM leadership. And finally, in the same series of developments, inevitably came in 1928, the complete surrender of the Mexican government of Calles-Obregon to Dwight L. Morrow, Ambassador from Wall Street for the U. S. Government.

During the past period, when the Mexican petty-bourgeois government was conducting a struggle against American imperialism, and when it was serving as a rallying center for the national revolutionary movements of all Latin America, it received the support of the masses of workers and peasants, including the conditional support of the Mexican Communist Party. This policy was correct so long as there existed its foundation; namely, the anti-imperialist struggle of the government. But with the surrender to Wall Street by Calles-Obregon, together with the decisive sections of the petty bourgeoisie and all the commercial, banking, and small "modern" capitalists, such a policy of support, even though conditional and modified by sharp criticism, was no longer a revolutionary policy.

The government of Portes Gil, successor to Calles and Obregon, which openly depends for its existence upon the favors of American imperialism, is definitely a government of counter-revolution. It reflects in its transformed role the changing role of the petty bourgeoisie, which abandons its attempts at an independent line and accepts the leadership of the native bourgeoisie and foreign imperialism. Where the passing period of the Mexican revolution was under the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie, the new period now opening finds that class deserted to the enemy, on the other side of the firing line. The only forces now capable of carrying forward the revolution are those of the workers and peasants.

THE ANGLO-AMERICAN RIVALRY IN MEXICO

Undoubtedly the hastily consummated surrender of the Mexican government to the United States was motivated by a double fear:

first, of the threatening feudal-clerical reaction which grew bold with the secret but effective aid of Great Britain, and second, of the workers and peasants who were beginning to press more and more their demands.

In order to defeat the reactionary rising, the government had to find support—*either* by mobilizing and arming the masses, *or* by coming to terms with Wall Street. It chose the latter. Thus the civil war alignment in Mexico fitted itself into the pattern of the world struggle between Britain and America. And there can be no doubt that, while the civil war has its specific Mexican roots and causes which cannot be explained by international forces, the rivalry of the two giants of imperialism has played and is still playing a tremendous role in stimulating events and determining their forms. The civil war in Mexico, just as the civil war also in China, becomes one of the preludes to the world war.

This fact is overlooked by our comrades in Mexico, an oversight which contains the possibility of serious mistakes in the future. Thus the Thesis of the Mexican Communist Party says in its first paragraph:

“ . . . American investment ousts and subordinates to its interests the rest of the invested capital, attaining thus a united front of bankers and foreign exploiters, under the direction of American government.”

It is true that American imperialism is strengthening greatly its hold over Mexico, and gaining new positions against its rival, Britain. But this fact sharpens, rather than eliminates, the imperialist rivalry. The very aggressiveness and growing domination of Yankee imperialism are precisely factors which, all over the world, sharpen the resistance of British imperialism and bring ever closer the inevitable armed conflict between them. Properly to understand this basic fact, and concretely to study in all detail the resulting effects in Mexican political development, is necessary in order to fortify the revolutionary perspective, to guard against falling into subjection to either group of imperialist agents, and to strengthen the independent policy of the worker-peasant mass movement. The Mexican revolutionists must open their eyes to the role being played within their country by world forces, in order to correctly evaluate the internal situation.

AN INDEPENDENT WORKER-PEASANT POLICY

The present new period of the Mexican revolution is characterized by the emergence of the workers and peasants as an independent force, carrying through the revolution no longer *with* but *against* the

petty bourgeoisie which has surrendered to the bourgeoisie and imperialism.

This essential feature of the new period is recognized by the Mexican Communist Party in its Thesis (paragraph 11) when it says:

“The first task of the Party must consist in separating the working and agrarian masses from the leadership of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie. The second, to organize these masses within one organization which will unify them for action. This task the Party must undertake with all energy. The Comintern at our April conference has fixed the method and the organization. The method is a class program which should mark clearly the difference of the objectives between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and peasant class. The organization is the workers’ and peasants’ bloc.”

The project of a workers’ and peasants’ bloc was materialized in the great January conference in Mexico City, which demonstrated a high degree of consciousness and fighting spirit among the masses. The conference adopted a program to develop the independent role of the workers and peasants against feudal-clerical reaction and against the Mexican bourgeois lackeys of U. S. imperialism, the Portes Gil government. This program included the arming of the masses, nationalization of the land, confiscation of the industries with workers’ control, and the setting up of workers’ and peasants’ councils, etc. This program is clearly based upon a perspective of a sharply revolutionary situation in which the leadership must be assumed by the working class.

Within a few weeks (on March 3rd) this perspective had been confirmed by the outbreak of the reactionary rising. And the course of the Gil government fully confirmed the judgment of its counter-revolutionary nature. Turning away still more definitely from the masses, the Gil government relied entirely upon the aid, in arms, munitions, and political support, of the United States. Toward the workers and peasants, the government intensified its already sharply hostile policy, using the war mobilization in order to proceed to the violent liquidation of the organizations of the masses.

During the events of March and April there is no doubt that the mass movement of workers and peasants, under the leadership of the Mexican Communist Party, has made progress towards its necessary independent role. It has made some successes in breaking the masses from the petty bourgeoisie and directing them toward an independent policy. But at the same time it is also evident that some confusion of a serious nature exists on this question. Thus the heroic peasant detachment which defeated the rebels at Vera Cruz, found the fruits of their victory calmly appropriated by the government forces which did none of the fighting, while they them-

selves were dispersed and disarmed as their reward. The independent policy had not been adequately prepared, the leadership of the struggle against the rebellion had been again resigned to the petty bourgeoisie as in the past.

That this was not entirely the mistake of the leaders in the field, but represented (at least partially) some continued confusion in the very center of the Party, is shown by the Manifesto of the Party published in *El Machete* on March 9th, in which is to be found the following:

“Demand from the executive federal power, and from all local powers, that all available arms and military equipment be turned over immediately to the worker and peasant organizations which together with the federal forces remaining loyal to the government shall insure protection to the territories and cities attacked by the reactionary troops.”

This formulation of the demand for arms is quite clearly not directed toward independent action; in fact, it is a pledge of “loyalty” to the Gil government and an acceptance of its leadership. The “demand” was not of course agreed to by the government, which instead proceeded (as in Jalisco) to the arrest and deportation of worker leaders, breaking up their organizations, and even violating the Parliamentary immunity of a communist Deputy. If the workers and peasants still have illusions about “cooperation” with the petty bourgeoisie, the Portes Gil government does not suffer in the same way.

IS THERE A MEXICAN BOURGEOISIE?

One of the sources of difficulty in developing the independent policy of workers and peasants in Mexico, lies in the failure of the revolutionary leadership to properly appraise the role and influence of the bourgeoisie. Indeed, it is even questioned that there exists a bourgeoisie in Mexico, the formula being put forth that “the U. S. imperialists are the bourgeoisie of Mexico,” and that “in Mexico we have only a petty bourgeoisie with a tendency to become a bourgeoisie.”

This is a confusion of size (the Mexican capitalist is certainly small—therefore “petty”—compared with U. S. capitalists) with social and economic function and class interests (from which angle it is wrong to class these elements as “petty” bourgeois). The fact is, that out of the revolution itself in its first phase there has emerged a “modern” bourgeoisie, whose influence and power has been continually growing, and which is precisely the power which today has hegemony in the government.

It is the supreme task of the revolutionists in Mexico at this time to separate the masses (and to some extent also part of the petty bourgeoisie) from the leadership of the bourgeoisie. But how can this task be effectively carried out when the very existence of the bourgeoisie is brought into question? It is evident that the denial of the existence of the bourgeoisie is not a method of struggle against it.

The same mistake was made by revolutionists in China during 1925-1927. Under the formula "There is no native bourgeoisie," there took place in reality a dragging at the tail of the bourgeoisie on the part of the revolutionary forces. The underestimation of the influence of the bourgeoisie, the classification of the bourgeois elements as "petty bourgeois" and, by that fact, a part of the anti-imperialist forces even if wavering and unreliable—these are dangerous errors, whether made in China, India, or Mexico.

"The Mexican revolution . . . led to the formation of a government of the petty bourgeoisie. . . ."

"The national emancipatory struggle against American imperialism which has begun in Latin America is taking place for the most part under the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie." Thesis, Sixth World Congress).

These quotations, placed opposite the statement that "The Portes Gil government of Mexico is a petty bourgeois government," may lend an appearance of justification to continued conditional support of the Gil government by the revolutionary forces. This is a great danger.

The Mexican government originated as a petty-bourgeois government engaged in struggle against imperialism; *but it has transformed itself into an instrument of U. S. imperialist rule.* Inside of Mexico it bases itself upon the bourgeoisie and those sections of the petty bourgeoisie and landed interests which have subordinated themselves to the bourgeoisie and to American imperialism. It is therefore no longer correct to speak of this government as "petty bourgeois" in the sense of "national emancipatory," as terms in opposition to "bourgeois" and "national reformist." The Mexican government is incorporated into the forces of counter-revolution.

TOWARDS A WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' GOVERNMENT

It is not the slightest ground for pessimism that the workers and peasants stumble a bit, and make a few mistakes, in their first steps toward their independent struggle for power. Mistakes are not fatal, provided they are recognized and corrected. And as against these mistakes, there must be recorded the successful and highly important steps of the January conferences and the actions since then.

The formation of the workers' and peasants' bloc, by its very existence, forces the masses on to the field of independent action, and raises the question of a workers' and peasants' government. And the establishment of the Unitary Confederation of Labor of Mexico, with a large affiliated membership, weakening thereby to that extent the treacherous CROM leadership of Morones and Co., and the imperialistic Pan-American Federation of Labor, is an enormous gain for the Mexican workers.

While the Mexican workers and peasants are thus entering upon the road of the struggle for power, for a workers' and peasants' government, the revolutionary workers of the United States must more sharply than before realize their own special tasks in this regard. We in the U. S. must really begin the agitation and mobilization of the Mexican immigrant workers in the U. S. for practical help to the Mexican revolutionary organizations. These are among the first duties of the Communist Party of the U. S. A., as the most conscious representative of the American working class as a whole.



Organization Report to the Sixth Convention of the Communist Party of the U. S. A.

by J. STACHEL

(Continued from *April Communist*)

SHOP COMMITTEES

I want to talk about the organization of the unorganized and the shop committees. Comrades, we have at the present time very few shop committees organized by our factory nuclei. Up to a year ago Detroit did not have a single shop committee. At the present time we have shop committees in a number of industries,—auto, steel, packinghouse, shoes, etc. How can we organize the unorganized workers, how can we mobilize these masses, organize them into unions, without shop committees? The shop committee is an instrument for the organization of a union and then becomes the basic unit of the union. Take the automobile industry for example. We have the Auto Workers Union there. You can talk to the workers for years to join the Auto Workers Union; they are afraid to join the union. Because, if it is organized as it was up to recently, every worker that comes to the open meeting of the union knows that his job is endangered, and because they know that, they do not come. The factory committees organizing the workers in each department through a delegate system; the captains of all departments into a central bureau or committee in that factory; this is the basic unit of the Auto Workers Union. On such a basis we can build up the Auto Workers Union. On such a basis we can build up unions in many other industries. It is impossible to do what some comrades want to do in building shop committees. Some comrades call the workers together in the shop. Once when I explained to one comrade how we build shop committees in the United States, he said: "That is not correct; what you should do is to call the workers in that factory together and elect a shop committee; then it will be representative." That would be very good, but it can't be done now in the United States. It is not very practical. It could be done, but it would be good for the bosses. The shop committee must be built up on a department basis.

I will take a concrete example. We have a factory, let us say of 5,000 workers. Let us say there are twenty departments. It is wrong to just sign up everybody for a shop committee and then call all together in one meeting, about fifty, seventy-five or one hun-

dred. If you do this you defeat your own purpose of getting any foothold among them. All the workers would be known immediately to the boss and of course blacklisted and fired. If we organize on a department basis, that would mean we have, let us say, five or six or seven, later on more, in each department. What do we do about that? Do we do away completely with the possibility of victimization? That is nonsense. The only time we can do away with victimization is by remaining inactive. When Mr. Lore criticized the reorganization on the basis of shop nuclei, he wrote in his famous article against reorganization, that this means loss of jobs. For that matter, if you were not organized on the shop nucleus basis, but if you are a communist working in a factory, you may be victimized. The only time to be safe from victimization is not to be a communist, not to be a militant worker, not to carry on the class struggle. But what we can do and must do is to minimize, to reduce that victimization to the possible minimum. That is accomplished by the proper organization of shop committees on a departmental basis.

Naturally when we are ready for open struggle, then, of course, it is different. Then we enroll all the masses, all the workers who are in struggle into the organization; then we have open organization. But until we are ready for open organization, every care must be taken to prevent victimization, to reduce it to a minimum; at the same time to put to the forefront the struggle in the factories. Caution must be practiced to carry on work, but at no time is caution to be substituted for activity in the factory.

We will not be able to carry on our campaign to organize the unorganized without our Party increasing many times the number of factory nuclei in the basic industries and seeing to it that they become living units in the life, in the struggle of the masses in those factories. With the organization of our factory nuclei, with our taking the initiative in the organization of the shop committees, our Party will organize the great bulk of the unorganized masses of the workers in the United States.

FACTORY PAPERS

A few words about factory papers. We have at the present time about forty factory papers. Some of them are assuming almost the character of a newspaper, as for example the *Ford Worker* (Detroit). Quite a number of our papers are printed, others are mimeographed, others are multigraphed. Altogether our papers have a circulation of between 60,000 to 70,000. And all of our papers are in the basic industries, again with the exception of one in the needle trades, where we have a needle-trades nucleus. Our papers are in the automobile, steel, mining, railroad, lumber and packing

houses. These papers, comrades, are a very great instrument for our Party. They reach the masses, taking up the struggles and the grievances of the workers in the factories.

I want to say a few words about the political content of our papers. When we began publication of factory papers, there were some peculiar notions among some of the comrades, including leading comrades. Some had the idea that these papers were to appear not openly as organs of the communist nuclei but as organs of shop committees, and the character of the papers corresponded to that confused idea. These papers are organs of our Party in these factories. When you make that clear, then you make clear what the political content of the paper should be. We went through certain stages in the evolution of the content of factory papers. In the first stage, the papers were merely trade-union organs, nothing else. For example, some papers in the auto industry did not differ much from the *Auto Workers' News*, organ of the union. That was the stage where we can say that our comrades did their best to hide the face of the Party. That was the period in which we made many mistakes, and in which the work was so carried on that it did not bring organizational results for the Party, because we could not get results when the workers did not know that the Party was carrying on the work; and the contents of the papers had a trade-union character, and not a communist character.

Then we had a reaction—after much criticism by the Organization Department of the Comintern and by the C.E.C. Our comrades began to improve and brought in much political content into the papers; and we had a period where we had much material in these papers of a political character. But what was the matter with it? The political material had nothing to do with the struggle in the factory—absolutely nothing at all. If it had, the average worker in the factory could not see it. Now we are engaged somewhat successfully in solving that problem, so that we now come across articles which combine in correct communist form the struggle of the workers in the factories with the political slogans of our Party. Of course, we are far from completely accomplishing this, but we are on the right road. Our papers generally can be criticized as being too little international; in fact, they do not even sufficiently deal with the problems of the Soviet Union; do not sufficiently bring the example of the Soviet Union to the exploited workers in the United States; do not sufficiently deal with war, war preparations. All these shortcomings must be corrected.

PARTY COMMITTEES

I want to come now to the question of Party apparatus and Party committees. It is a fact that many of our nuclei

do not even have executive committees or bureaus. It is a fact that very little attention is being given by our Party to the training of functionaries in the nuclei and sections. This is responsible to a large extent for the chaotic condition of the work in many units and local party organizations. This we attempted to solve recently. We have met with some success. We have built up section committees in some districts. We have begun the process of building up the nuclei executive bureaus, and have begun to give them some direction as to how to conduct their work. We cannot, comrades, underestimate this problem. It must receive a great deal of attention. Otherwise we appear to be sitting on top giving directions, which fall on deaf ears and are not carried out into life. Even where the nuclei read communications, the organizer brings the communication from the center to the meeting, the comrades are tired and do not listen much, no concrete tasks are worked out, and the directions—if anything good is in them—are lost. Many times the communications are too long, the directions too abstract.

PROLETARIANIZATION OF COMMITTEES

I want to talk about the proletarianization of the Party committees. One of the organizational proposals made by the Comintern delegation, which we accepted, was that a minimum of 50 per cent of the CEC shall consist of workers in the factories, principally from the basic industries. If any comrade were to look upon this proposal as a concession to the Comintern, such an opinion would be absolutely not the opinion of our Party and would be an anti-Party position. This proposal is welcomed by our Party because this proposal means drawing in factory workers who can and will contribute to the leadership of our Party, and not, as some comrades believe, merely be fixtures. Such a position is an anti-communist position.

We have already had sufficient experience to know that factory workers on leading committees are the best guarantee that the Party will maintain the proper contacts with the awakening masses and will know the mood of the masses; that the Party will be able to avoid to the maximum all the deviations to the right and to the left; that our Party—particularly in the present situation, in the present period of imperialist war preparations—will be able, through the help of bringing in these new elements fresh from the factories into the highest bodies in the Party, to fight against the right danger which is a reality in our Party.

This danger we have spoken about in this Convention, spoken of in our discussions, and this danger has its objective roots, and it means that we must take every measure to overcome those tenden-

cies in our Party that make for such mistakes, that make for deviations from the correct line of the Comintern. It is in this sense that we approach the entire question of proletarianization of committees from top to bottom, and if this is true about the CEC, so much more must it be true about the district committees and section committees and in the nuclei. In the New York district, for example, the biggest district in the country, we had last year no more than three factory workers on the entire district committee of 38. The present district committee in New York, of course, has been selected in line with the draft organization adopted by the Polbureau, and is a tremendous improvement over what we had a year ago.

The present make-up is that probably 95 per cent are of proletarian origin and about 50 per cent are factory workers.

Comrades, we must stabilize our Party committees—the districts and the sections. You will note in the draft thesis that we have done away with what we called sub-sections and sub-districts. Of course that means that a section consists of either a part of a city or a city itself or a number of cities, with a central city as the headquarters of the section. The section committees have in the past merely existed. They were not vital parts in the life of the Party. The districts would conduct all the work directly through the units, the section would merely be a sort of committee in between, always trying to find out why it had to exist.

Take New York, for example. The sections had no political direction over the units, no organizational direction. Once in a while we gave them permission to call a mass meeting. We have done away with that now. The sections will become real political bodies, exercising as well organizational responsibility in their territory so that they can become actual living forces leading the workers in their territory under the direction of the district committees.

BUILDING PARTY APPARATUS

A few words about Party apparatus. We have begun the process of building up departments. That we did even after the 1925 convention, where we for the first time had an Organization Department and Agitprop Department. We always had an Industrial Department. Some of these departments, comrades, are doing good work. Some do not yet understand their tasks, and I can also say that in some districts we have entirely too many departments—too many on paper, and you can tell as a rule that in proportion to the number of departments there is an inverse quality in the functioning of departments. The Kansas district, with about 200 members, at one time had nine or ten departments.

Our plan at present is to concentrate on the building up of the Trade Union, Organization, Agitprop, Negro and Women's Departments. In some districts, where it is necessary, we also build an Agrarian Department, as, for example, in Minnesota.

(Crouch: How about Anti-Imperialist Department?)

My opinion is that we should not have an Anti-Imperialist Department in the districts. This work should be conducted by the entire Party through its sub-divisions. At the present time it looks too much like a private little sub-division when in reality it deals with the most important work of the whole Party, the war danger.

PARTY FRACTIONS

I want to speak next on the fractions in mass organizations. First of all in the trade unions. In our Party the trade-union department is made responsible for the fractions. My opinion is that this is not entirely correct. In my opinion, the work of the fractions should be placed under the direction of the Organization Department. But let us speak about the condition of the fractions. I think, comrades, between 1925 and 1927 we had made great progress for the first time in building up fractions in the trade unions. Between 1927 and 1929 we have taken quite a few steps backwards. Why? In my opinion, it is not enough to explain this by lack of sufficient attention.

I want to recall that immediately following the last Party convention, at the national fraction meeting of the delegates to the Third Congress of the TUEL, this question came up and some comrades, in my opinion, by taking a wrong position, contributed to the disintegration of the trade-union fractions. It is true these comrades made some correct criticisms, as, for example, when they pointed out that one of the reasons that the TUEL did not grow was due to the fact that those non-Party workers whom we had drawn into the TUEL found that everything was cooked up for them, and it was useless to go to a meeting because everything was decided in advance. And it is a fact that some of our fractions decided even how to open and close the door. That is not the job of our fraction. The job of our fraction is to lay down general policy and tactics, but it is not necessary to define every step from A to Z.

That was a correct criticism, but the conclusion was wrong. Some comrades concluded, therefore, that we did not need fractions where we had the TUEL, and because of that, in my opinion, not only the fractions but the TUEL disintegrated.

There was no central direction for the fractions in the last year. The comrade appointed by the CEC was given some other work,

most of the time being across, and certainly he could not lead the fractions from there. I do not blame that comrade because it is not his fault, but the Trade Union Department and the Central Committee as a whole are responsible for this. I feel certain that the comrade who up to a week ago bore the name of fraction secretary cannot tell us how many fractions we have, where they are, or what they do. I have some figures I have tried to compile. I am not the fraction secretary, but I can give you some figures.

We have in Boston approximately 125 comrades organized in trade-union fractions; in New York about 1,800; in Philadelphia about 130, Buffalo 40, Cleveland about 100. These I believe exclude the miners. Detroit has 175, Chicago 450, Minnesota 40, Seattle 30, California 75, Connecticut 50. Our fractions are in the following industries:

Building trades, carpenters, plumbers, painters, etc.; needle trades, shoe and leather, machinists, jewelers, textile, mining, auto, rubber, engineers and draftsmen, barbers, musicians, teachers, dental mechanics, printers, upholsterers and a number of fractions in the Central Labor Unions.

I say, comrades, that the incoming Central Committee, whether it decides to continue to have the fractions under the direction of the Trade Union Department or Organization Department, will have to see to it that the comrade placed in charge of fraction work devotes his time to this work, which requires the time of a full-time functionary. We must again revive these fraction organizations and see to it that all our Party members who are in the unions are organized in fractions and carry out the Party line, and those of our members not yet in the unions are drawn into the unions as rapidly as possible. How many Party members are in unions today? Forty-six per cent of our membership today is in trade unions. In 1925, 32 per cent were in the trade unions.

I want to speak a few words about fraction work in the language organizations. Comrades, it is an indisputable fact that although the federations no longer exist, the federation spirit does exist. For example, the Organization Department of the Comintern on the 9th of July, 1928, in drawing up a basis for a report from the American Party, says, under the heading "Liquidate Ideological. . ."

"a. Survivals of federationism, failure to reorientate the work of the new units after changing their names, survival of language federationism after the liquidation of the federations."

This is very mild, comrades, very mild. The fact of the matter is our membership, which consists of a majority of foreign born, has still a great tendency towards federationism. Not only that, the bureaus that are sub-committees of the CEC for Party work

in their languages, who are instruments really of the Party, sort of sub-committees of the Agitprop, sometimes even take upon themselves the right to discipline Party members, which shows to what extent they do not understand their true role.

In the draft thesis we have had much to say about this and we will not only have to say what we said in the thesis, but sharpen the criticism here, and what is more important, carry it out in the quickest possible time. Does this mean that we will stop working among the language workers? Of course not. We have already explained that in considering the workers' composition in the basic industries; but even mass organizations—we have at the present time fractions organized in mass organizations comprising, I believe, something like one and one-quarter million workers. In other words, we have Party members working in mass organizations comprising about one and one-quarter million workers where we come in contact with them.

For example, you take the work among the Jugoslavs, the South Slavs. We have, all told, 793 Party members working in the various fractions. They have 8,000 sympathizers and are working on three different organizations, which consist of 70,000 members, a national organization which consists of 68,000 members and one of 10,000 members. And we have respectively Party members in these organizations: 400, 100 and 30. Shall our comrades not work in these organizations? I think that would be wrong. Of course, if our comrades were to spend the major portion of their time working in these language organizations, rather than where they must work first in the factories, secondly in the trade unions, then that would be absolutely wrong. But, at the same time, we will not abandon these mass organizations that consist of the great bulk of workers in the basic industries to the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leadership of these organizations.

If you study our membership on the basis of language composition, you will find that on the basis of about 14,000 members or 13,000 members, about 8,000 or 9,000 are registered in the various languages. Out of these only one-fourth are active in the language mass organizations. That is, only about 2,000 to 3,000 probably at most, are active at all in these organizations. Because many of them merely attend a meeting of this organization once a year, many of them pay their dues by mail once a year or once in three months and do not function at all. It would not be correct, therefore, to say that our membership, most of them, are active in these so-called language mass organizations. That is not correct. However, even here I agree with Comrade Schmies that in every district certain comrades can devote their time, a very small number of

comrades, to certain of these organizations, but the great bulk of our membership must spend their time not in these organizations, which are secondary and tertiary organizations, but must devote their major time in the factories in the first place and in the trade unions secondly.

Our language press, of course, suffers from the same evils that our language bureaus do. Of course, comrades, it would be wrong if I failed to state that we are gradually improving that condition through frequent conferences of our Party press. I believe on the average, at least of once a month, the Agitprop and the Org Department call the press together and take up with them the Party campaigns, and we can say there is going on an Americanization of our language press.

There was a time when many of our language papers might as well have been printed in the country of their origin. Today I think that is changed. You will find today that most of our language papers are very active in the revolutionary struggle of the Party, in the most basic campaigns, as for example the mining campaign. We could never have conducted that campaign so successfully without the South Slav Radnik, the Vilnis, Uj Elore, and the others that operate among the miners. We feel the need of these papers and we are glad to record that while here and there may be some fluctuation, in the main there has been an increase in circulation of these papers since the Party reorganization, which shows that the Party gained and did not lose in mass influence as a result of the reorganization.

I want to say in conclusion that we find the way the bureaus are constituted today, that although they have no organizational rights, in my opinion we must still make further changes to make them correspond more to the actual task which they must perform for the Central Committee. Maybe we will not call them bureaus any more. We may abolish them. But we will have to have some sort of sub-committees as now. No more conferences of language fractions, but bureaus to carry on certain tasks among the masses in their language; and then define their work and bring it more and more into harmony with the Party's main tasks.

PARTY CAMPAIGNS

I want to speak for a few minutes on Party campaigns and systematic organizational work. Our Party campaigns, comrades, many times do not hit bottom. That is, we proceed with a manifesto, communications to the units, publicity in the press, but we do not mobilize the masses. Why? Principally because our comrades have not learned that we cannot conduct campaigns of the Party without bringing these campaigns, these slogans, to the masses in the

factories. We call conferences of a united-front character, and what do we do? . . . Lately we are changing this. The last few conferences we have shown some improvement. But until recently we would call the trade unions and the language organizations. What would that mean? The bureaucracy of the American Federation of Labor would see to it that the unions did not come. Only those we have control of, and these are very few in the American Federation of Labor, would come and send delegates. And even when they did, the local union meetings, we must say, even among the miners, were not real meetings of the membership—in unions of 1,000 miners, how many attended these meetings? 50 or 60, sometimes only 20 or 15. So even if we have the best of conditions where we have a left wing working, a communist coming to the conference and reporting back to the union, only a small fraction of the workers can know about our campaigns and struggles.

Then with the language organizations, the same thing is true. A comrade comes representing a certain fraternal organization which meets once in three months, and then merely to pay dues. The trouble is that we do not see that particularly in the United States, where the great bulk of the workers are unorganized and where practically all of the workers in the basic industries are semi-skilled and unskilled and are unorganized, we cannot conduct campaigns without going right to the factories, that we cannot mobilize the masses without going to the factories. When we want a united front conference today, we have to call shop committees and shop delegates and then see to it that our Party nuclei in all these shop committees and among these delegates bring back the message to the workers in the factories, and with our nuclei in the factories, factory papers, etc., carrying the principles and policies of our Party to the masses.

Another point. Our campaigns are not well prepared. I told you at the outset that I would speak only about our shortcomings and not about our achievements, because I don't want to burden you at this time and because we haven't the time to pat ourselves on the back. We never prepared our campaigns well enough. During the election campaign we made some improvement. In a certain sense we did begin to plan the campaign very early, and we made some mistakes very early, and you will all remember them. But we began to overcome the so-called . . . approach toward Party campaigns, and I think we can report progress. Those who have followed our press and bulletins will remember that long before certain action was to take place we had everything explained to the membership; we had even divided up the campaign into stages—first mobilize the Party, then mobilize the organizations close to the

Party; and then we had a long period where we concentrated on mobilizing the masses under the Party slogans. But much more must be done. In the future they must be planned over a long period and better prepared and more basic in character, so far as reaching the masses. We do not secure the necessary organizational, or, I should say, adequate organizational results from our mass campaigns. Take the mining campaign. In the mining campaign which lasted over a long period I think we recruited something like 1500 Party members throughout the country. And out of these I believe no more than 300 or 400 actually remained in the Party. Perhaps it was a little more, but not much more. Take the Pittsburgh district, where we recruited something like 700 or 800 members. These were the reports. We find today that practically no more than 200 actually remained in the Party. In the Ohio district, on the other hand, where we recruited a much smaller number, the great bulk remained in the Party. We haven't time to go into a study of the approach. But I know in Ohio the new miners that joined the Party were taken care of, while in the Pittsburgh district the D.O. himself did not have sufficient help and time and did not pay attention, so these miners dropped out. Some comrades give the argument that we recruited some miners under false pretenses—that they thought they were joining the Miners' Relief. I do not take that seriously. There may be one or two, but the great bulk joined because they believed in our Party, saw our Party in struggle. Some dropped out because they were not mature enough and particularly because we did not do sufficient to train them and to keep them and draw them into our Party work.

Many times, comrades, we conduct campaigns and get no results at all. For example, during the election campaign we did not recruit any new members into the Party, although from an agitational viewpoint the campaign was a success. This situation is very bad. The influence of our Party, which we can measure in terms of our press, is around 225,000 readers of our press of various papers—our influence in the trade unions, our influence among the unorganized. All this is not reflected in the growth of the Party organization. And this problem we will have to tackle. The recruiting of Party members must not be looked upon as a special task for a certain period but must be organically linked up with every campaign of our Party. And at the present time, when we will be engaged immediately after the convention in the campaign against the war danger, which is a campaign not for a moment, but one which will go into every other activity of the Party, will touch upon and embrace the campaign to organize the unorganized, must be linked up with the building up of the factory nuclei in the first

place, with the recruiting of members, with the building of the Party, with the building of factory papers. The recruiting of members hitherto has not been systematic. We must not merely be happy to go on the street corners, or hold mass meetings and recruit members. Most of these never really get into the Party. The only time when we really recruit members is when we recruit them direct from the factories as a result of activity and struggle on the part of our comrades. Does this mean that we should not recruit members from the unions, in the clubs, in every mass organization? We must recruit members everywhere. But the main place to recruit members is right in the factories. And we must concentrate on the basic industries and pay particular attention to those industries connected with the war preparations.

DISTRIBUTION OF PARTY LITERATURE

Just a few words about literature. I will not speak much except to say that what is true about our organization work in general is true about literature. We can record some progress both in publication and distribution of literature, but not yet sufficient, not even a good fraction. Every Party member must consider it his duty every day to sell the Party organ, to distribute it, to sell Party pamphlets (how to sell we have spoken of many times in *The Party Organizer* and the *Daily Worker*, and we will speak some more). We must find methods of selling our papers, bulletins, leaflets and pamphlets in the factories as well as outside. These methods must be found and this work must become the everyday work of our Party. A very small fraction of our Party sells the Party pamphlets. What does it mean when we publish a pamphlet or so of 10,000 copies? What does that mean with our workers? It is a joke. It is a good joke. And take our press. It is true that we have 225,000 readers of various papers, both daily and weekly, but our central organ, the *Daily Worker*, is in circulation I believe, I do not want to give the figure, I do not know the exact figure, but I am afraid it is not more than 20,000, most likely much less. I do not want to argue on the *Daily Worker* whether it is 13,000 or 18,000, but even 20,000 with our working class, with 10,000 dues-paying party members, with 13,000 party members, we will find a circulation of almost as much as our membership, a little more. That is absolutely impossible. And if we are serious to build our Party, to conduct the war campaign, to organize the unorganized, how are we going to do it if we do not build our Press? I think, comrades, that this problem, which is still looked upon as a sort of special problem to raise finances now and then, must become a central problem. We have worked very hard to maintain the *Daily*

Worker. We must work even harder to increase the circulation so that it can really become a mass organ of the American working class.

WORK AMONG THE NEGROES

A few words about work among women and young workers and Negro work. I have spoken much longer than I expected to and for that reason I will of necessity be short now. Take the Negro work. First of all the Negro departments must be built up. I know that for a time we did not have the proper comrade at the head of the Negro department and that hampered the work, but this has been overcome and with the cooperation of the districts we can really begin to build our work among the Negro masses. It is necessary that this work shall not be confined merely to the Negro comrades. That is nonsensical. Such a conception is a wrong conception. Likewise we must not merely limit the Negro comrades to Negro work, but they must be drawn into the actual leadership and leading committees of our Party in all fields of Party work. I would like to see some districts with Negro Agitprop directors and industrial organizers and we must see to it to have Negro district organizers, to demonstrate that Negro work does not mean carrying on work among the Negroes, that the Party must carry on work among the Negroes and the Negro comrades work in the Party. The Negro Departments must be built and the Negro press, the *Negro Champion*, must be built. I know that many districts receive a bundle of the *Champion* and if we would take a tour throughout the country we would find many copies lying around the office; also of the *United Farmer*. There is not a district in the country that cannot produce a couple of hundred copies of the *United Farmer* and the *Negro Champion*. This is bad. We must change our course in this respect. I don't want to speak any longer on this except to emphasize, as the organization thesis does emphasize, the importance of the entire Party concentrating on Negro work.

Likewise work among women. We had made some mistakes in some districts because of the social composition of the women; most of them being housewives, the work was limited or primarily was work among housewives. This must be changed and I am glad to say has already been changed not in all districts but in the policy of the Central Committee.

The policy is to concentrate our work among the factory women. To build the work we must dwell on questions of concrete issues, on basic issues, on issues such as the war danger, such as unemployment, on issues such as the various struggles in relation to the various neighborhoods that come up from time to time, local issues.

And, of course, we must also carry on our activities in the trade

unions, building up women's sections, women's auxiliaries; and, finally, we don't want to neglect—although we don't give it primary importance—work among housewives. This latter work must not be kept distinct but must be linked up, as it is in most districts, with the work among the working women, so that the work of the working-class housewives becomes an auxiliary force to strengthen our work in general and also our work among the working women in the factories, and also help in every work in which we engage.

The Women's Department must be built up. The organization of the March 8th meetings, Women's Day, in most districts is the work of a women's committee. This is wrong. It must become the work of the entire Party, just like the Paris Commune or May Day.

We will have to establish a press to reach the women, a special press. We are working on this question now, and the incoming C.E.C. and the Polbureau will pay attention to this.

THE YOUNG WORKERS

On the Young Workers League: We have to register the fact that the Y. W. L., though making progress, even in proportion to the size of the Party, is very backward—talking about size now. It has a very small membership, and the composition, also, in some districts is not good. The Party has had for a long time the slogan: "Wherever there is a factory nucleus of the Party, there should be a factory nucleus of the League." But the actual policy seems to be: Wherever there is a factory nucleus of the Party, there should not be a factory nucleus of the League, and there is none. This must be changed, comrades. Perhaps we should have less slogans and more work. The slogan is correct, however; and, while we all know that the social democrats underestimate the youth, we also do it, from the C. E. C. down. The Party representative doesn't attend the League meetings. We don't know what the League is doing, don't guide them, help them neither organizationally, nor politically, nor—certainly Comrade Zam will bear me out here—financially. Perhaps something is wrong with the League. We must give greater attention to the Young Communist League.

As the Sixth Congress pointed out, the basic problem in work among the youth is that the youth organizations are not growing very rapidly, and this is true about our section. We may have to change many things, draw in more of the younger elements, change the form of our activity, as indicated by the Y. C. I. in the letter received from the Y. C. I. which we sent to all districts but which the districts have not yet given attention to. This must be done. The letter we sent and the letter of the Y. C. I. for work among

the youth to help the League must be put into practise, not merely accepted as a formal letter.

I forgot to speak about one point in one of the other matters I referred to and that is about mass demonstrations. Comrades, our Party has had a number of good demonstrations in the past period. Yet there is some confusion on this question. Many times we confuse a picket demonstration with a mass demonstration. Do you know what I mean by picket demonstrations? For example, when we send a few dozen or a hundred or so in front of, let's say, Morgan's or the Navy Yard, or some place in Washington to demonstrate and dramatize certain events—that is a picket demonstration. And many times our comrades don't understand the difference between this and a mass demonstration. So what arises? Some comrades say when we call a demonstration a picket demonstration we must publish it in the press. Well, if we publish it in the press, that means we expect to face the difficulties that arise from that. That means we must make it a mass demonstration. We don't want to publish in the press that there will be 100 pickets. If the authorities know in advance, we will never get to that place with that small group. The police, who know of our aims, will be so situated that we will never accomplish our aims. When we have a picket demonstration we must accomplish our aim, and to do that we cannot publish it in the press. When we have a mass demonstration we must organize the workers for it as well as publish it in the press. We must use different methods according to whether it is a mass demonstration or a picket demonstration.

I have merely indicated our problem. Our demonstrations will increase in number and size. Also the authorities when they see our strength and know of our aims will want to say something, and we will have to answer them, and only with the masses can we give the proper answer.

THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION

I want to say now, comrades, a word about the draft constitution.

The first thing we must note, comrades, is the proposal that we will make, which reads as follows: "The name of the organization shall be The Communist Party of the United States of America, Section of the Communist International." (Applause). This means, comrades, that we are changing, as we have done in 1925. You remember in 1925 we changed from Workers Party of America to Workers (Communist) Party of America. Now we are changing from Workers (Communist) Party to the Communist Party of the United States of America, and you will realize why we say the United States of America. Because the Latin-American Parties

have objected to our calling ourselves the Communist Party of America, and rightly so.

Why do we make this proposal? First of all, because we believe our name should be Communist Party. Secondly, comrades who were in the campaign will remember that many workers were confused. There was a labor party in some states on the ticket, and we could not go on as Workers (Communist) Party, we could go on as Workers Party, with the result that our main slogan was "Vote Communist" on posters, leaflets and stickers. By the way, the last time Comrade Gitlow and I were in Pittsburgh, a few weeks ago, we walked over a number of bridges and we found that the bridges were still covered with red signs, "Vote Communist." Comrades will remember that during the campaign we instructed all districts to cover the streets with "Vote Communist." In New York, Pittsburgh, and other districts, they did very well, so that practically all the workers read our slogans. Our main slogan was "Vote Communist," but when the workers came to the ballot box they saw *Workers Party*. Many workers were confused. Comrades, this is another reason why we must change the name as we have done.

The other changes in the draft thesis that we have made are of a minor character, except, for example, we have brought the constitution in line with the proposed changes, abolition of sub-sections and sub-districts and then we have laid down guides for action. . . .

Comrades, I conclude. I have merely indicated some of the propositions; some I have not had sufficient time to touch, as for example, the need for building up the I. L. D., but it is clear at the present time that our main task is to orientate to the factories, change the Party composition, proletarianize the Party; more women, Negroes, native-born; building up factory nuclei, giving real life to them; building factory papers, strengthening the Party apparatus, building the leading committees, building fractions; guiding the work in the trade unions and mass organizations; more systematic work in the Party campaigns, more systematic recruiting of workers into the Party.

These are the chief tasks that flow from our political tasks. These we must carry out if we carry out the decisions of the Sixth World Congress and the Open Letter of the Comintern. We hope that this convention (where we had hoped to have at least two days on organization, but unfortunately could not) — we hope the Party members, the Party functionaries, will see to it that these tasks will be carried out into life so that we can report the doubling of our membership, 500 new factory nuclei, and at least 200 new factory papers, at the 7th National Convention of our Party. (Applause).

Negro Revolutionary Hero — Toussaint L'Ouverture

By CYRIL BRIGGS

THE IMPERIALIST ideology of white superiority, by playing to the vanity of the undeveloped white workers, enables the imperialists to carry out their policy of aggression and oppression abroad and working-class disruption at home. In the south it is utilized to prevent cooperation between white and black workers and to win the acquiescence of the latter in the brutal treatment accorded the Negro masses by the white ruling class. Every precaution is taken to keep the black and white workers apart. There are separate schools for their children, separate entrances to railway stations, separate parks, Jim-Crow sections in theatres, street cars, etc., separate wash rooms, separate restaurants. And not only are Negro workers barred from parks and other public places of recreation in the white sections of most southern cities, but white workers found frequenting the dilapidated sections where Negroes are forced to live soon become unpopular with the white ruling class.

In support of this policy of racial separation, the press, the schools, the stage, the church, all available instruments of the capitalist class are utilized for the purpose of poisoning the minds of the white workers with the virus of race hatred and prejudice. North and south, the capitalist class in its text books and newspapers, in its literature and art, takes great pains to depict the Negro race as a race of savages, hopelessly backward and depraved. Every prostitute capitalist editor, every prostitute "intellectual" adds his lying quota to the sum of libel against the Negro. Tons of books, and miles of articles are printed in the effort to impress the white workers with the lie, a thousand times repudiated by science, that the Negro race is inferior. Conveniently forgetful of the white slaves of Rome and the indentured white laborers shipped by England to the American colonies, white bourgeois writers continuously harp upon the three hundred years of Negro slavery in America, at the same time indulging in the most malicious mendacity in the effort to make the Negro out as something apart, something different, from the general run of humanity. In their inverted sense of justice they place the stigma of slavery on the victims of the system rather than on the white Christian ruling class which instituted it, in off moments from worship, and thrived on slavery and the slave trade, building out of its profits huge cities and edifices of worship to the glory of god.

It is the aim of these bourgeois writers to impress their readers

with the suppositious servility of the Negro, so they maintain a discreet silence on the heroic slave insurrections, on the glorious daring of Denmark Vesey, of Ben Turner and scores of other Negro revolutionaries. When they speak of the emancipation of the Negro from chattel slavery they say nothing of the heroic contributions of Negro soldiers to the victory of the Union forces and therefore to their own emancipation—such as it is.

A gigantic conspiracy of silence is maintained by the bourgeois writers as to the achievements and revolutionary traditions of the Negro peoples. Historical facts are distorted or soft-pedaled to suit this purpose. Bourgeois pseudo-scientific writers go to ridiculous lengths to malign the Negro and to conceal all evidence of the revolutionary role played by the race they designate as servile and slavish. One particularly amusing instance sticks in my memory. One of the multitudinous fly-by-night authors of books on Africa, essayed the following description of an East African tribe, noted for its warlike disposition: "these people are black, with woolly hair, but, of course, they are members of the great white race." In addition to being ready to defend themselves against imperialist aggression this tribe had retained a high culture, unaffected by the disruptive violence of the slave trade which had destroyed numerous other native civilizations. So the bourgeois gentleman felt it necessary to deny that they were Negroes.

While the imperialist ideology of white superiority and its concomitant of Negro inferiority finds ample repudiation in the sciences, it is also overwhelmingly refuted in history — perhaps nowhere more strikingly than in the Haitian Revolution. Here was the first and only successful slave rebellion in history—a rebellion of Negro slaves against the might and power of the French counter-revolution under Napoleon. Negro soldiers, freed from chattel slavery by their own hands, defeated and conquered the flower of Napoleon's armies long ere Napoleon met defeat at the hands of rival imperialists! These same Negroes had previously destroyed several Spanish armies sent against them by the Spanish imperialists in the east of the island and had sent skulking back to Jamaica a British army which, in traditional British imperialist manner, sought to take advantage of the confusion in the island to plant the Union Jack in Haiti. Wendell Philips, one of the leading abolitionists, said in a speech delivered in Boston in December, 1861:

"There never was a slave rebellion successful but one, and that was in St. Domingo (Haiti). Every race has been, some time or other, in chains. But there never was a race that, weakened and degraded by such chattel slavery, tore off its own fetters, forged them into swords, and won its liberty on the battle-field, but one, and that was the black race of St. Domingo."

Even Spartacus and his brave legions were finally defeated. Only the Negro race in Haiti ever succeeded, unaided, in freeing itself from chattel slavery.

The principal leader of the Haitian Revolution was Toussaint L'Ouverture — named by his soldiers L'Ouverture, *the opening*. Toussaint L'Ouverture was fifty years old when he appeared on the scene as the leader of the revolutionary slaves. There had been several slave insurrections before he openly took a part in the struggle, although it is believed he secretly encouraged the liberation movement, holding himself in the background until it had gathered sufficient momentum.

The island was torn with strife between various groups and classes. On one hand the revolutionary slaves, numbering some 500,000, at last in motion and grimly determined to wrest their liberty from the white and mulatto slave holders; opposed to the thirty thousand white planters, whose class interests had led them to repudiate the revolutionary regime in France, divided in their allegiance between the British and Spanish imperialists, with some of them gesturing toward the slave power of the United States; and opposed by and opposing the other two groups, the twenty-five thousand mulattoes who owned one-third of the real estate of the island and held many slaves, but who were now in retreat in the mountains, following a vain attempt to have applied in Haiti (for the benefit of their own group, not for the slaves) the slogan of the French Revolution of "Liberty, Equality;" the Spaniards on the east triumphant; the British on the north entrenched.

Within seven years, the blacks and the mulattoes, now fighting shoulder to shoulder under the leadership of Toussaint, Christophe, Dessalines, Francois, and others, had smashed the Spanish forces and consolidated the island for the first and only time in its history. They had defeated the British and sent them skulking back to their base at Jamaica.

So far, the self-emancipated slaves had made the mistake of holding the island in the name of France. They had also made the blunder of limiting the revolutionary demands to the abolition of slavery and had not included a demand for the land. The leaders of the revolution even went further in this mistaken policy, issuing a proclamation to the refugee white planters to "come home and occupy your lands and houses." But, fortunately, the master class was not to be satisfied with such magnanimity. Nothing less than the re-enslavement of their former chattel property would satisfy them. And, finally they thought they saw the opportunity.

The French Revolution had definitely turned into bourgeois channels. The few radicals who had striven to win the revolution for

the proletariat had been murdered, with the connivance of "The Mountain." Robespierre and others of this group later paid with their own lives for this folly. Finally, Napoleon had risen to power. Victorious in Europe and determined to crown himself emperor of France, this military adventurer deemed it necessary to find work outside of France for the best of the Republican troops. Thirty thousand French troops, with a tradition of unbroken victories were sent to re-enslave the Haitians.

The imperialist world joined whole-heartedly in the conspiracy. The imperialists of Holland lent Napoleon sixty ships for the transportation of his troops. England, by special message, promised to be neutral. The self-emancipated people looked out upon a hostile world, upon all the forces of imperialism arrayed against them. L'Ouverture, when he saw the mighty armada nearing the Haitian shores, turned to Christophe with the words, "all France is come to Haiti; they can only come to make us slaves; we are lost!"

But the Haitians were in no mood to submit to the plans of the French bourgeoisie for their re-enslavement. Withdrawing to the hills, L'Ouverture issued his famous proclamation, instructing his people to "burn the cities, destroy the harvests, tear up the roads with cannon, poison the wells, show the white man the hell he comes to make." The Haitians met the attempt to re-enslave them with war to the hilt. They exhausted every means at their command, seized every weapon, to turn back the tyrants with a vengeance as terrible as their own. They opposed the French landing, fighting hand-to-hand battles in the streets of the city, and driving the French back to their boats.

Failing to accomplish their dastardly purpose by force of arms, the French command resorted to treachery. They offered peace with liberty. Toussaint L'Ouverture made the mistake of believing them. He called upon the Haitian revolutionaries to lay down their arms. As soon as this was done, L'Ouverture was invited to a conference with the French command, tricked and seized and placed on board ship and taken to France. There the brave son of the tropics was imprisoned in an underground dungeon in a chateau in the Alps. Not dying fast enough to suit Napoleon, that monster instructed his jailor to take a vacation in Switzerland, taking with him the key to the dungeon. Upon the jailor's return he found Toussaint L'Ouverture dead of starvation. But if Napoleon and his class hoped to break the spirit of the revolution by the murder of its outstanding leader, he was soon to discover his mistake.

From the moment Toussaint L'Ouverture was betrayed, the Haitians began to doubt the French and rushed to arms. And the strife became bloodier than ever. The revolution took on a new

aspect. Napoleon sent over thirty thousand more of his best troops. But nothing could daunt the Negroes determined upon defending their newly won liberty. The French planters and officers exhausted every form of cruelty. They went to the Dark Ages of the Christian Inquisition for examples and even invented a few which would cause those priestly inquisitionists a thrill of sadist joy. They chained to rocks in the desert sixteen officers of the revolutionary army, leaving them to be devoured by poisonous reptiles and insects. They sent to Cuba for bloodhounds. When they arrived, the daughters and wives of the planters went down to the wharf, decked the hounds with ribbons and flowers, kissed their necks, and then went to the amphitheatre to applaud as Negro prisoners of war were thrown to these dogs, made mad with hunger. But the Negroes besieged this city so closely that these same women were forced to eat these very hounds they had welcomed as weapons of savage blood-lust against the Haitians. The French commander in his chagrin sent word to Dessalines that when he captured him he would whip him to death like a slave. Dessalines chased him from battlefield to battlefield, and finally permitted him to leave the island with his shattered forces under cover of the British flag.

Wendell Philips, from whose Boston address I have quoted above, made the following eulogy of Toussaint L'Ouverture:

"You think me a fanatic tonight, for you read history, not with your eyes, but with your prejudices. But fifty years hence, when Truth gets a hearing, the Muse of History will put Phocion for the Greek, and Brutus for the Roman, Hampden for England, Lafayette for France, choose Washington as the bright, consummate flower of our earlier civilization, and John Brown the ripe fruit of our noonday, then, dipping her pen in the sunlight, will write in the clear blue, above them all, the name of the soldier, the statesman, the martyr, TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE."

Wendell Philips appraised Toussaint L'Ouverture according to the standards of his class and day. Today with the proletariat in power over one-sixth of the globe and steadily moving forward, under the guidance of Marxism and Leninism, there are different standards and the great Negro revolutionary takes his place with the revolutionary heroes and martyrs of the world proletariat. Not with the men of the bourgeoisie, but with the heroes of the working class. To the black and white revolutionary workers belong the tradition of Toussaint L'Ouverture. We must see to it that his memory is not wrapped in spices in the vaults of the bourgeoisie but is kept green and fresh as a tradition of struggle and an inspiration for the present struggle against the master class.

For the full emancipation of the Negro masses of the U. S.!
For the liberation of Haiti from the heels of United States Marines!

The Mass Migration of American Farmers

by A. G. RICHMAN

THE movement of over ten million persons from American farms during the last five years makes up one of the greatest migrations of recent history. Rationalization and the agricultural crisis (the scissors, etc.) which began in 1920 and still continue, are resulting in the evolution of the American farmer among those who remain on the farms, at the same time that they are driving millions away.

The relative distribution of the agricultural working population as compared with the gainfully employed population (workers, employees, employers, etc.) in the various industries has been as follows during the fifteen years ending with 1925:

	In Millions					
	1910		1920		1925 ¹	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Total gainfully emp'd						
10 years and over	38,167	100.	41,614	100.	42,910	100.
Agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry	12,659	33.2	10,953	26.3	10,500	24.5
Manufact'g and mechanical	10,629	27.8	12,819	30.8	12,820	29.9
² Non-industrial	11,277	29.6	13,689	32.9	15,160	35.3

This data shows that between 1910 and 1925 the agricultural population has not only declined absolutely but relatively as well, whereas the proportion of industrial workers has declined only slightly, and that of non-industrial workers has increased greatly both numerically and proportionately. This is but one of the results of the U. S. becoming to an ever increasing extent a rentier and commercial nation, at the same time that it remains the greatest industrial nation in the world.

Of the farm population, about one-third are gainfully employed on the farms, the rest being small children and women. Of those gainfully employed, about 40 per cent are farm laborers (4,200,000), of whom over one-half are hired laborers and the rest family labor; 30 per cent are tenant farmers; 20 per cent mortgaged owners, and only about 10 per cent owners free of mortgage.

¹Estimate of National Industrial Conference Board.

²Includes trade, clerical, public service, professional, domestic and personal service.

Source: Conference Board Bulletin, January, 1927.

The bulk of child labor is in farming. In 1920, 61 per cent (650,000) of all children gainfully employed between the ages of 10 and 15 worked on farms, and 81 per cent (330,000) of all children between 10 and 13 worked on farms. One-tenth (,040,000) of all persons gainfully employed in agriculture were women.

During the past five years (1924-1928), 10,203,000 persons have left the farms: 1928—1,960,000; 1927—1,978,000; 1926—2,155,000; 1925—2,035,000; 1924—2,075,000. On January 1, 1929, the farm population of the country was 27,511,000, a net loss of 4,103,000 as compared with 1920, and the poorest point in 20 years. (1909 was the peak year, with a farm population of 32,000,000).

The former head of the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Tenney, has characterized this migration as follows.

"It is a tragic readjustment, and no one will ever fathom the human misery it means. Long continued, it might result in a deplorable degradation of the rural population as well as its numerical reduction." (*Magazine of Wall Street*, April 21, 1927, p. III.)

This was a remarkable admission from a government official, whose task seemed to be to hide or explain away the social significance of the statistics gathered.

Lenin summed this up well, when he said about migration from American farms:

"The investigators do not even seem to suspect what amount of need, oppression and desolation is hidden behind these routine figures." (*New Data on the Laws of Capitalist Development in Agriculture.*)

A typical example of this we shall refer to shortly. The decrease, small though it is, in the number leaving the farms in 1928 and 1927, as compared with 1926, was due, according to the Department of Agriculture, to the decrease in industrial employment in the cities. But such questions are not asked. Beyond the official routine conclusion: the agricultural population declined during 1900-1910 from 59.5 per cent to 58.7 per cent, investigation does not venture. . . . The bourgeois and petty-bourgeois economists refuse to take note of the obvious connection between the desertion of the farm and the bankruptcy of the small producers.

Taking the various geographical divisions of the country, we find

³(From mimeographed release of Dept. of Agric., Mar. 14, 1929.)

that migration from the farms was general throughout the country in 1928:

Geo. Divisions	Pop. as of Jan. 1, 1928 (in thousands; i. e., 000 omitted)	Arrived at farms	Departed from farms	Pop. as of Jan. 1, 1929
U. S.	27,699	1,632	1,960	27,511
New Eng.	634	60	65	633
No. Atlantic	1,754	93	119	1,740
E. No. Cent.	4,274	218	299	4,227
W. No. Cent.	4,644	232	372	4,560
So. Atlantic	5,431	190	266	5,469
E. So. Cent.	4,518	167	253	4,527
W. So. Cent.	4,535	204	327	4,485
Mountain	923	95	135	898
Pacific	986	103	124	972

The above table shows that every geographic division in the country showed a net loss in farm population during the past calendar year, except the south Atlantic and the east south central states (the "Old South"). As stated before, however, net movement to or from farms is far more significant than net loss, which includes births and deaths and complicates economic with natural causes. Every division in the country shows a movement away from greater than the movement to farms.

In the western states the movement from the farms was very large, nearly 15 per cent leaving from the mountain states, and nearly 13 per cent from the Pacific states. In New England, which is a decaying economic section of the country, 10.2 per cent left. Even in the sections which show net increases, 4.9 per cent (south Atlantic) and 5.6 per cent (east south central) left. For the whole country, 7.1 per cent of the agricultural population left the farms last year.

The most recent data the Department of Agriculture has on the causes and character of this migration from and to farms, is a mimeographed analysis dated October, 1927, which is a study of 2,745 farmers who left the farms between 1920 and the summer of 1927, and of 1,167 who came to farms from towns and cities. While the number is small, it seems to represent a cross section. At any rate it represents beautifully the methods of the government statisticians referred to by Lenin.

The table in the study which gives the ages at which farmers left the farms shows that owner farmers of various ages left in about the same proportion, and not more of the older ones. This indicates that those leaving did not retire, and other information available on taxes, mortgages, tenancy, etc. shows that they are being forced off. This is further reinforced by data on tenants leaving, who do so mainly in the younger age groups.

The table of present occupations of former farmers is interpreted in a deliberately misleading way. Of the 1,326 answering the question on their present occupations, 25.6 per cent are grouped indiscriminately under the heading "all other occupations," so that we cannot tell what their present class status is. Another 23.3 per cent are grouped as "no occupation," with the note "retired." We would assume rather that a goodly number of these are unemployed, or in a transition stage, not yet having found work in the cities. Fifty per cent of the rest are laborers, workers in industry, etc.; 32 per cent are government and city employees, teachers, salesmen, real estate agents, etc.—mainly "white collar slaves," as they are popularly called, or the salariat; 13 per cent are merchants, grocers, dealers in coal, feed, etc., and 5 per cent are listed as "garage, service station," though whether they are workers or owners, there is no way of telling.

These figures do not check with the conclusion reached by the author of the study (C. J. Galpin, economist in charge of the Division of Farm Population and Rural Life):

"Not being able to make ends meet, while on the farm, was the chief reason that a full third of these migrants gave for leaving. Financial ability to live in the city counted with one farmer out of every forty."

We have a gross underestimation of the number forced to leave the farms through poverty and bankruptcy, together with the admission that only 2½ per cent who leave are able to retire.

Ex-Secretary of Agriculture, Jardine, corroborates this in his comment on this study: only 2½ per cent "left after having gained a competence." (*U. S. Daily*, Mar. 2, 1918.) His predecessor, H. P. Wallace, stated in his 1923 report that 91 per cent of those leaving the farms did so to better their financial status, 6 per cent because of old age, and 3 per cent for other reasons (the two latter groups delightfully vague as to economic causes).

In the table in this study on the part of present income received from farms by these ex-farmers, we read that 22.2 per cent receive 70 per cent or more of their income from the farms, which they still own, that 9.3 per cent get 50-60 per cent of their income, etc. But if we look further, we find that of the 1,635 answering this question, 450 or 27.4 per cent did not specify what percentage they now received, and 258 more, or 15.8 per cent said they got none of their income so. If we remember that, as bourgeois economists admit, only 2½ per cent of those leaving the farms can retire, we see the contradiction.

A study by Prof. Zimmerman, of the University of Minnesota

in 1925 and 1926, involving 500 farm families, showed that children of more successful farmers (those with greater incomes) stayed on farms to a far greater extent than those of less successful ones, who migrated to cities to become workers. Of the latter, he found that 38 per cent became unskilled laborers, 23 per cent semi-skilled or skilled workers, 17 per cent clerks or employees, 17 per cent professionals (many of them nurses), and 4 per cent owners of businesses. (*Amer. Journal of Sociology*, July, 1927, p. 241 ff.)

The great employment of child labor on farms, even of children of owners, is another "drawback" with a distinctly economic basis. A conscientious parent who cannot give his children the semblance of an education is likely to want to move. Only one-ninth of 6,440 children of the ex-farmers mentioned in the Department of Agriculture study (by Galpin) had finished more than the first 12 years of school (elementary and secondary schools). More than half (54 per cent) went no further than the first 8 school years, and 13 per cent went no further than the first 4 years. For tenants' children alone, the figures were far worse than those for both owners and tenants. Only one-sixteenth finishing more than the first 12 years, 65 per cent going no further than 8 school years, and over 26 per cent going no more than 4 years.

The causes of the migration described above are, of course, the poverty and bankruptcy brought about by the farm crisis. Rationalization and greatly increased productivity (despite the decrease in the number of farms and farmers, the ravages of disease and pests, the decrease in the acreage of crop lands, and the continuing decline in the number of horses and mules and therefore in the amount of fodder grown) have been contributory factors. Mechanization and other forms of rationalization have made tremendous strides recently, and have forced out many a poor farmer already on the verge of bankruptcy.

One must distinguish between the condition of agriculture as an industry, and the condition of the farmer, for the one is flourishing and continually increasing its productivity, whereas the latter is in extremely bad and ever-worsening straits. A Department of Agriculture economist, A. P. Chew, in an article entitled "Drop in Farm Population Due to Rising Efficiency," (*N. Y. Times Analyst*, Oct. 7, 1927), argues that despite the depression of the last seven or eight years,

"Increased production with less labor and less land is evidence, not that agriculture is failing, but that it is dealing with its problems efficiently. There is no need to worry about the future food supplies."

Here is a deliberate attempt to confuse increased production and capacity to produce, due to greater use of new machinery and other forms of rationalization, with the condition of the farmers themselves. This can be shown by another statement he makes to the effect that the decrease in the agricultural population

“is by no means wholly due to the agricultural depression. While it is part a reaction from the over-expansion of agriculture during the war period, it is to a much greater extent the result of technical progress in farming, which has greatly reduced the number of men necessary to produce a given amount of food for fibres.”

The decrease in population, he continues, is due much more to the use of labor-saving machinery “than to the forced abandonment of agriculture by farm operators.” The contradiction, if not confusion, is obvious. The depression in itself caused a great drop in farm population through the mass abandonment of the farms. But the introduction of labor-saving machinery at this time has been a contributory factor in continuing and deepening the depression, by increasing the productive capacity of the richer and well-to-do farmers and thus crowding out hundreds of thousands of poorer ones who were already at the margin of bankruptcy and unable to afford the cheaper productive methods of the new machinery.

The basic cause for the great migration from the farms has been the economic crisis—the “scissors,” the great and increasing burden of interest and taxation, and the tolls taken by the railroads, grain elevators, banks and trusts generally. With expenses increasing continually, and profits almost at a vanishing point, with the intensely keen competition caused by greater and greater mechanization on the part of the richer farmers and farm corporations, the astonishing thing is that the migration from the farms has not been even greater.

Practically half of all farmers in the U. S. no longer own their farms (they are tenants, managers or part owners) and nearly half of the value of farms belonging to full owners already belongs to bankers, mortgage brokers, local merchants, etc. With farmer's debts amounting to over fifteen billion dollars, and the value of all farm property not much more than two or two and a half times as great, with taxation increasing steadily and bankruptcy of farmers growing very rapidly—we can realize what forces are operating to drive the farmers off the land.

There are two or three times as many farmers in the country as could produce the present quantity of agricultural products by using machinery already invented and proven practicable. The factory farm already exists in the U. S., working acreages of from

40,000 to 100,000 acres successfully. With the new machinery available, the doom of the small family farm seems likely. When one considers these basic factors one realizes why the present migration has taken place, and why it must continue.

The demand for the great agricultural staples has probably reached the limit of consumption in the U. S., except as population grows. During the present century industry has become less dependent on farm and forest products and more so on mineral, metal and chemical products. The food, textile, and leather industries have not grown as fast as the metal and chemical group. As a result of this relatively static demand for such agricultural products, together with the enormous increase in productive capacity and the growing competition of other countries, one need not look very far for one important cause for agricultural depopulation. The basic cause, however, is the deliberate scissors policy of the Wall Street government. The tariff policy, taxation, and mortgage banking laws, the refusal to permit the formation of real agricultural cooperatives and pools, the monopolistic prices of the farmers' consumption goods, high freight and elevator rates, and the absolute denial of any relief legislation (despite the calling of a special session of Congress for that ostensible purpose)—these are some of the reasons for the chronic, one could even say acute, agricultural crisis of the past decade, and for the endless circle of migration from and back to the farms.

Hoover's proposals to the special session of Congress are the creation of a Federal Farm Board, undoubtedly, as is usual, with banker members, and finance-capital in complete control of policies. This Board will "relieve" the farmers as the present Federal Farm Loan Board did in the cotton crisis of 1926, when Wall Street and local bankers got most of the money made available by the government, and the farmers got prices far below the cost of producing their crop.

Trades Unions

By FREDERICK ENGELS

(NOTE: During the two decades that spanned the intervals between 1861 and 1884 there were two principal working-class organs in England, *The Beehive* and *The Labour Standard*. The *Labour Standard*, according to an interesting note by Beatrice and Sidney Webb, was

“a penny weekly established by George Shipton, the secretary of the London Trades Council. It ran from May 7, 1881, to April 29, 1884, and contained articles by Henry Crompton and Professor E. S. Beesley, together with much trade union information.”¹

It is not strange that the Webbs refer to the articles by Henry Crompton and Professor Beesley, for they were all signed and easy to identify. There was one other contributor to this eight-page paper, however, whom the Webbs apparently did not recognize, undoubtedly because his contributions were in the nature of unsigned editorials. That contributor was Frederick Engels. It is true that Engels severed his connections with the *Labour Standard* after the first sixteen weeks, but it is equally true that the leading articles for the first fourteen issues, with the exception of three, were written not by the editor, George Shipton, but by his collaborator, Engels himself.

The bourgeoisification of the British proletariat at this time due to the monopoly position of British industry on the world market was well known to Marx and Engels. But it is an essential characteristic of Marxism to take the proletariat as it is at each stage of its development, and, without giving up its principle, to adjust its tactics accordingly. The basic necessity of the British proletariat at the beginning of the eighties was to free itself from its bourgeois outlook, recognize its own class interests, and organize itself into an independent political party. It had to learn and do over again the first step of independent class existence which its Chartist “forefathers” had so resolutely taken half a century before.

But, while Engels knew that this could only be achieved in the long run by the operation of objective economic forces, he also knew how to evaluate the “subjective” factor in the process, and, acting upon the principle that men make history as much as history makes men, he took advantage of every opportunity to contribute towards breaking down the bourgeoisification of the British working class. This was the primary reason that Engels agreed to contribute to Shipton’s *Labour Standard*. From the first to the last of the twelve articles that constitute his total contribution to the paper, each one is a concentrated attempt to arouse the class consciousness of the British worker, to impress him with the necessity of waging a militant class struggle for the ultimate abolition of the wage system itself.

This collaboration was facilitated by the fact that while Shipton represented a class consciousness unsupported by the guiding perspective of Marxism and incapable of distinguishing between the various tendencies in the labor movement, he still accepted the principle of

¹*The History of Trades Unionism*, London, 1920, p. 298, footnote.

class struggle and the necessity of independent proletarian action. He acknowledged the necessity of breaking with bourgeois illusions and insisted that the workers must fight their own battles. In formulating the "objects and policy" of his paper, he stated unequivocally that it was to express and defend the interests of the working class against the capitalists. Clearly, Engels could not have neglected to influence not only the policy of the paper but also its trade-unionist readers.

Nine years later, in a letter to Sorge dated February 8, 1890, Engels indicated the hopes that he had entertained of influencing the proletarian movement in the direction of socialism. The history of the British working class during those nine years was another proof to him that the labor movement must sooner or later assume a socialist character. Engels did not live to witness the bourgeois role of British "socialism" in the later era of imperialism. But even had he seen how social-democracy had become one of the finest props of the capitalist system, he would not have altered his conviction. The history of the working class is bound up with the development of capitalism and not merely with any one particular working class organization. New conditions compel it to create new organs of struggle, and the working-class movement as a whole is mightier and more fundamental than any one of its passing forms. The bourgeois role of British "socialism" is no invalidation of the Marxian principle, but rather a striking illustration of the complex character of the class struggle and the social forces generated by the capitalist system. To us in America, however, the most interesting feature of this letter to Sorge is the importance which Engels attached to the trade-union movement of the working class. It not only shows why Engels was particularly willing to write for Ship-ton's trade-union paper, but it points to the inescapable necessity of organizing the great mass of unorganized workers into militant trade unions as the material foundation of the independent class movement of the proletariat.

"Here, too," Engels wrote, referring to England, "the ground has been prepared to such an extent by the various agitations of the last eight years that the people (i. e., the trade unionists), without being socialists themselves, will have only socialists as their leaders. Now, without noticing it themselves, they have taken the theoretically correct path; they are driving ahead, and the movement is so strong that I believe it will endure the unavoidable blunders and their consequences, the frictions of the various trade unions and their leaders, without serious damage. I believe that is the way it will happen in America . . . And so, you must begin with trade unions, etc., if it is to be a mass movement; and each further step must be forced upon them by a defeat. But once the first step beyond the bourgeois outlook has been taken, it will move fast"*

Our own basic problem of organizing the unorganized and the coming Trade Union Unity Conference at Cleveland lend special interest to the three articles reprinted in the present number of THE COMMUNIST. As a popular statement of the Marxian theory of trade unionism, these articles make no attempt to contribute anything new of a theoretical nature. Seventeen years before, in concluding his

*Sorge Correspondence, p. 329.

lecture on Value, Price and Profit before an audience of British trade unionists, Marx had already summarized in a few lines what Engels necessarily had to say in several popular articles.

"Trade unions," Marx stated, "work well as centers of resistance against the encroachments of capital. They fail partially from an injudicious use of their power. They fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it, instead of using their organized forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wage system."²

Engels' articles, however, are by no means negligible. But if Marx, speaking to a group of trade-union leaders, openly spoke of the necessity of substituting the *revolutionary* watchword, "Abolition of the wage system" for the *conservative* motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work"—Engels nowhere in these articles even uses the word "revolution." He proves the necessity of conquering political power without drawing attention to the inevitability of bloody civil war and armed uprising. Does this mean that Engels accepted the idea of a peaceful revolution? Such a conclusion would be entirely unfounded. Engels knew his audience. As a dialectic materialist, he also knew that if at a certain historical moment the conditions were present for a peaceful development of the revolution, the next day or the next turn in the course of events might find these conditions gone. Marxism is a guide to action, not an abstract dogma. New conditions require new tactics and new tactics require an understanding of these conditions. We have a concrete example of this situation in the Russian revolution. During the first few months of the March revolution, Lenin persistently reiterated the possibility of a peaceful development of the revolution. The role of the mensheviks and social revolutionists, however, kept the revolution from taking this course, and a few months later the alignment of class forces *compelled* the Russian proletariat to take up an armed struggle for power.

If there have been very rare moments in the history of capitalist society when a combination of circumstances would have permitted a peaceful development of the revolution, had the working class taken or been able to take power without having recourse to arms, the recognition of such moments is neither an indication that Engels had suddenly become an advocate of peaceful parliamentarism nor a refutation of the necessity of conquering power by the use of arms. The conquest of power by means of arms is not the result of "gray" theory, but the practical outcome of the material class struggle. And as a dialectic thinker, Engels would have been the first to adjust his tactics to the necessities of the real situation. Only the bourgeois reformist who does not wish to see the armed preparation of the world bourgeoisie can fail to perceive that the working class will be forced to take up arms by the bourgeoisie itself.

Writing in 1881, Engels was not confronted with the perspective of an imminent revolution. The British working class, for whom he wrote, still occupied a privileged position. They had still their first step to take in the direction of an independent class policy. And Engels' task as a Marxist was to educate the working class to its own

²*Value, Price and Profit*, Chicago, 1908, pp. 127-128.

role in the historical process, to open its eyes to the real nature of the class struggle. As for the idea of revolution, it would take on flesh and blood, it would become a necessary means of class action, not as the exclusive result of verbal propaganda, but primarily in consequence of the material experiences of the working class. Meanwhile, the immediate task was to prepare the workers to act as a socialist proletariat and prevent the revolution from taking any but a socialist path.

Engels did not give up his revolutionary Marxism by speaking in a language that the British worker of 1881 could understand. On the contrary, when he told him that the course of history would show him the necessity of abolishing the entire wage system, he merely described the most basic aspect of the proletarian revolution. Viewed as a process, as a series of acts involving every sphere of social life, the abolition of the wage system not only constitutes the abolition of capitalist production relations, the relations of capitalists and workers to the means of production, hence of the capitalists themselves, but it also involves the political, military, ideological and other actions of the various classes. Only the most arbitrary conception of reality can fail to see that this is revolution. And that it implies revolution by force is made clear even in the present articles where Engels points to the fact that the abolition of the wage system will call forth the most bitter struggle of resistance on the part of the capitalists; that it is primarily for this reason that the workers need a state machine, the whole political power, to crush this resistance and to organize the new economy.

Four months after his first contribution to the *Labour Standard*, Engels indicated his intention of severing connections with Shipton in a letter to Marx of August 11, 1881. As an illustration of Engels character as a Marxist, this letter deserves to be quoted at some length.

"Yesterday morning," Engels wrote, "I informed Mr. Shipton that he will get no more editorials from me. Kautsky had sent me a pale item on international factory legislation in a bad translation,³ which I corrected and sent to Shipton. Yesterday the proofs and a letter arrived from Shipton, who found two passages 'too strong' and one of which, moreover, he misunderstood; would I not modify them? I did and replied, first, what did he mean sending me requests for changes on Tuesday—here Wednesday—, when my reply could be back in London only on Thursday, after the appearance of the paper? Secondly, if *this* is too strong for him, then much more so my articles which are still stronger, whereby it would be better for both of us if I were to quit. Thirdly, my time does not permit me to continue writing editorials regularly each week; and that I had already intended to tell him so *after* the Trade Union Congress (September). Under the circumstances, however, it would surely improve his position towards this congress if I were to quit now. Fourthly, it was his cursed duty to communicate the Max Hirsch article to me *before* it was printed.⁴ I cannot remain on the staff of a paper which lends itself to writing up these German trade unions, comparable only to those very worst English ones which allow themselves to be led by men sold to, or at least paid by, the middle class,

³This was published as an editorial in the issue of August 13, 1881.

⁴Engels is referring to an article that appeared in the August 6th issue of the *Labour Standard* entitled "A German Opinion of English Trade Unionism" in which the Hirsch-Duncker Unions are described.

For the rest, I wished him good luck, etc. He received the letter this morning.

"I did not write him the most decisive reason: the absolute ineffectiveness of my articles on the rest of the paper and the public. If there is any effect at all, it is a hidden reaction on the part of secret free-trade apostles. The paper continues to be the same collection of possible and impossible blockheads, and in its political detail, more or less, but predominantly Gladstonian. The response which once seemed to have been aroused in one or two numbers has disappeared again. The British workingman doesn't want to go further; he must be stirred up by events, by the loss of his industrial monopoly. *En attendant, habeat sibi.*"⁵

A. LANDY

I⁶

IN a previous article we examined the time-honored motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work,"⁷ and came to the conclusion that the fairest day's wages under the present social conditions is necessarily tantamount to the very unfair division of the workman's produce, the greater part of that produce going into the capitalist's pocket and the workman having to put up with just as much as will enable him to keep himself in working order and to propagate his race.

This is a law of political economy, or, in other words, a law of the present economical organization of society, which is more powerful than all the Common and Statute Law of England put together, the Court of Chancery included. While society is divided into two opposing classes—on the one hand, the capitalists, monopolizers of the whole of the means of production, land, raw materials, machinery; on the other hand, laborers, working people deprived of all property in the means of production, owners of nothing but their own working power; while this social organization exists the law of wages will remain all-powerful, and will every day afresh rivet the chains by which the working man is made the slave of his own produce—monopolized by the capitalist.

The trades unions of this country have now for nearly sixty years fought against this law—with what result? Have they succeeded in freeing the working class from the bondage in which capital—the produce of its own hands—holds it? Have they enabled a single section of the working class to rise above the situation of wage slaves, to become owners of their own means of production, of the raw materials, tools, machinery required in their trade, and thus to become the owners of the produce of their own labor? It is well known that not only they have not done so, but that they never tried.

⁵Meanwhile, let him have his way.

⁶Published May 21, 1881 and entitled "*The Wage System.*"—A. L.

⁷This article, the first in the series, was omitted here for lack of space. It does not deal directly with trade unions.—A. L.

Far be it from us to say that trades unions are of no use because they have not done that. On the contrary, trades unions in England, as well as in every other manufacturing country, are a necessity for the working classes in their struggle against capital. The average rate of wages is equal to the sum of necessaries sufficient to keep up the race of workmen in a certain country according to the standard of life habitual in that country. That standard of life may be very different for different classes of workmen. The great merit of trades unions, in their struggle to keep up the rate of wages and to reduce working hours, is that they tend to keep up and to raise the standard of life.

There are many trades in the east-end of London whose labor is not less skilled and quite as hard as that of bricklayers and bricklayers' laborers, yet they hardly earn half the wages of these. Why? Simply because a powerful organization enables the one set to maintain a comparatively high standard of life as the rule by which their wages are measured; while the other set, disorganized and powerless, have to submit not only to unavoidable but also to arbitrary encroachments of their employers; their standard of life is gradually reduced, they learn how to live on less and less wages, and their wages naturally fall to that level which they themselves have learned to accept as sufficient.

The law of wages, then, is not one which draws a hard and fast line. It is not inexorable within certain limits. There is at every time (great depression excepted) for every trade a certain latitude within which the rate of wages may be modified by the results of the struggle between the two contending parties. Wages in every case are fixed by a bargain, and in a bargain he who resists longest and best has the greatest chance of getting more than his due. If the isolated workman tries to drive his bargain with the capitalist he is easily beaten and has to surrender at discretion; but if a whole trade of workmen form a powerful organization, collect among themselves a fund to enable them to defy their employers if need be, and thus become enabled to treat with these employers as a power, then, and then only, have they a chance to get even that pittance which according to the economical constitution of present society may be called a fair day's wage for a fair day's work.

The law of wages is not upset by the struggles of trades unions. On the contrary, it is enforced by them. Without the means of resistance of the trades unions the laborer does not receive even what is his due according to the rules of the wage system. It is only with the fear of the trades union before his eyes that the capitalist can be made to part with the full market value of his laborer's working power. Do you want a proof? Look at the wages paid to the mem-

bers of the large trade unions, and at the wages paid to the numberless small trades in that pool of stagnant misery, the east-end of London.

Thus the trades unions do not attack the wage system. But it is not the highness or lowness of wages which constitutes the economical degradation of the working class; this degradation is comprised in the fact that, instead of receiving for its labor the full produce of this labor, the working class has to be satisfied with a portion of its own produce called wages. The capitalist pockets the whole produce (paying the laborer out of it) because he is the owner of the means of labor. And, therefore, there is no real redemption for the working class until it becomes owner of all the means of work—land, raw material, machinery, etc.—and thereby also the owner of *the whole of the produce of its own labor*.

II⁸

IN our last issue we considered the action of trades unions as far as they enforce the economical law of wages against employers. We return to this subject, as it is of the highest importance that the working classes generally should thoroughly understand it.

We suppose no English working man of the present day needs to be taught that it is the interest of the individual capitalist, as well as of the capitalist class generally, to reduce wages as much as possible. The produce of labor, after deducting all expenses, is divided, as David Ricardo has irrefutably proved, into two shares: the one forms the laborers' wages, the other the capitalists' profits. Now, this net produce of labor being, in every individual case, a given quantity, it is clear that the share called profits cannot increase without the share called wages decreasing. To deny that it is the interest of the capitalist to reduce wages, would be tantamount to saying that it is not his interest to increase his profits. We know very well that there are other means of temporarily increasing profits, but they do not alter the general law, and therefore need not trouble us here.

Now, how can the capitalists reduce wages when the rate of wages is governed by a distinct and well-defined law of social economy? The economical law of wages is there and is irrefutable. But, as we have seen, it is elastic, and it is so in two ways. The rate of wages can be lowered, in a particular trade, either directly, by gradually accustoming the workpeople of that trade to a lower standard of life, or, indirectly, by increasing the number of working hours per day (or the intensity of work during the same working hours) without increasing the pay.

⁸Published May 28, 1881.—A. L.

And the interest of every individual capitalist to increase his profits by reducing the wages of his workpeople receives a fresh stimulus from the competition of capitalists of the same trade amongst each other. Each one of them tries to undersell his competitors, and unless he is to sacrifice his profits he must try and reduce wages. Thus, the pressure upon the rate of wages brought about by the interest of every individual capitalist is increased tenfold by the competition amongst them. What was before a matter of more or less profit, now becomes a matter of necessity.

Against this constant, unceasing pressure unorganized labor has no effective means of resistance. Therefore, in trades without organization of the workpeople, wages tend constantly to fall and the working hours tend constantly to increase. Slowly, but surely, this process goes on. Times of prosperity may now and then interrupt it, but times of bad trade hasten it on all the more, afterwards. The workpeople gradually get accustomed to a lower standard of life. While the length of the working day more and more approaches the possible maximum, the wages come nearer and nearer to their absolute minimum—the sum below which it becomes absolutely impossible for the workman to live and reproduce his race.

There was a temporary exception to this about the beginning of this century. The rapid extension of steam and machinery was not sufficient for the still faster increasing demand for their produce. Wages in these trades, except those of children sold from the workhouse to the manufacturer, were as a rule high; those of such skilled manual labor as could not be done without, were very high; what a dyer, a mechanic, a velvet-cutter, a hand-mule spinner, used to receive now sounds fabulous. At the same time the trades superseded by machinery were slowly starved to death. But newly invented machinery by and by superseded these well-paid workmen, machinery was invented which made machinery, and that at such a rate that the supply of machine-made goods not only equalled, but exceeded the demand. When the general peace, in 1815, re-established regularity of trade, the decennial fluctuations between prosperity, over-production, and commercial panic began. Whatever advantages the workpeople had preserved from old prosperous times, and perhaps even increased during the period of frantic over-production, were now taken from them during the period of bad trade and panic; and soon the manufacturing population of England submitted to the general law that the wages of unorganized labor constantly tend towards the absolute minimum.

But in the meantime the trades unions, legalized in 1824, had also stepped in, and high time it was. Capitalists are always organized. They need in most cases no formal union, no rules, officers,

etc. Their small number, as compared with that of the workmen, the fact of their forming a separate class, their constant social and commercial intercourse stand them in lieu of that; it is only later on, when a branch of manufacturers has taken possession of a district, as the cotton trade has of Lancashire, that a formal capitalists' trades union becomes necessary. On the other hand, the work-people from the very beginning cannot do without a strong organization, well defined by rules and delegating its authority to officers and committees. The Act of 1824 rendered these organizations legal. From that day labor became a power in England. The formerly helpless mass, divided against itself, was no longer so. To the strength given by union and common action, soon was added the force of a well-filled exchequer — "resistance money," as our French brethren expressively call it. The entire position of things now changed. For the capitalist it became a risky thing to indulge in a reduction of wages or an increase of working hours.

Hence the violent outbursts of the capitalist class of those times against trade unions. That class has always considered its long established practise of grinding down the working class as a vested right and lawful privilege. That was now to be put a stop to. No wonder they cried out lustily and held themselves at least as much injured in their rights and property as Irish landlords do nowadays.

Sixty years' experience of struggle has brought them round to some extent. Trades unions have now become acknowledged institutions, and their action as one of the regulators of wages is recognized quite as much as the action of the Factories and Workshops Acts as regulators of the hours of work. Nay, the cotton masters in Lancashire have lately even taken a leaf out of the work-people's book, and now know how to organize a strike, when it suits them, as well or better than any trades union.

Thus it is through the action of trades unions that the law of wages is enforced as against the employers, and that the work-people of any well organized trade are enabled to obtain, at least approximately, the value of the working power which they hire to their employer; and that, with the help of state laws, the hours of labor are made at least not to exceed too much that maximum length beyond which the working power is prematurely exhausted. This, however, is the utmost trades unions, as at present organized, can hope to obtain, and that by constant struggle only, by an immense waste of strength and money; and then the fluctuations of trade, once every ten years at least, break down for the moment what has been conquered, and the fight has to be fought over again. It is a vicious circle from which there is no issue. The working class remains what it was, and what our Chartist forefathers were not

afraid to call it, a class of wage slaves. Is this to remain forever the highest aim of British workmen? Or is the working class of this country at last to attempt breaking through this vicious circle, and to find an issue out of it in a movement for the *abolition of the wage system altogether?*

In the next part we shall examine the part played by trades unions as organizers of the working class.

III⁹

SO far we have considered the functions of trades unions as far only as they contribute to the regulation of the rate of wages and ensure to the laborer, in his struggle against capital, at least some means of resistance. But that aspect does not exhaust our subject.

The struggle of the laborer against capital, we said. That struggle does exist, whatever the apologists of capital may say to the contrary. It will exist so long as a reduction of wages remains the safest and readiest means of raising profits; nay, so long as the wages system itself shall exist. The very existence of trades unions is proof sufficient of the fact; if they are not made to fight against the encroachments of capital what are they made for? There is no use in mincing matters. No milksop words can hide the ugly fact that present society is mainly divided into two great antagonistic classes—into capitalists, the owners of all the means for the employment of labor, on one side; and working men, the owners of nothing but their own working power, on the other. The produce of the labor of the latter class has to be divided between both classes, and it is this division about which the struggle is constantly going on. Each class tries to get as large a share as possible; and it is the most curious aspect of this struggle that the working class, while fighting to obtain a share only of its own produce, is often enough accused of actually robbing the capitalist!

But a struggle between two great classes of society necessarily becomes a political struggle. So did the long battle between the middle or capitalist class and the landed aristocracy; so also does the fight between the working class and these same capitalists. In every struggle of class against class, the next end fought for is political power; the ruling class defends its political supremacy, that is to say, its safe majority in the legislature; the inferior class fights for, first a share, then the whole of that power, in order to become enabled to change existing laws in conformity with their own interests and requirements. Thus the working class of Great Britain for years fought ardently and even violently for the People's Charter,

⁹Published June 4, 1881.—A. L.

which was to give it that political power; it was defeated, but the struggle had made such an impression upon the victorious middle class that this class, since then, was only too glad to buy a prolonged armistice at the price of ever repeated concessions to the working people.

Now, in a political struggle of class against class, organization is the most important weapon. And in the same measure as the merely political or Chartist organization fell to pieces, in the same measure the trades unions organization grew stronger and stronger, until at present it has reached a degree of strength unequalled by any working-class organization abroad. A few large trades unions, comprising between one and two millions of working men, and backed by the smaller or local unions, represent a power which has to be taken into account by any government of the ruling class, be it Whig or Tory.

According to the traditions of their origin and development in this country, these powerful organizations have hitherto limited themselves almost strictly to their function of sharing in the regulation of wages and working hours, and of enforcing the repeal of laws openly hostile to the workmen. As stated before, they have done so with quite as much effect as they had a right to expect. But they have attained more than that,—the ruling class, which knows their strength better than they themselves do, has volunteered to them concessions beyond that. Disraeli's household suffrage gave the vote to at least the greater portion of the organized working class. Would he have proposed it unless he supposed that these new voters would show a will of their own; would cease to be led by middle class liberal politicians? Would he have been able to carry it if the working people, in the management of their colossal trade societies, had not proved themselves fit for administrative and political work?

That very measure opened out a new prospect to the working class. It gave them the majority in London and in all manufacturing towns, and thus enabled them to enter into the struggle against capital with new weapons, by sending men of their own class to Parliament. And here, we are sorry to say, the trades unions forgot their duty as the advance guard of the working class. The new weapon has been in their hands for more than ten years, but they scarcely ever unsheathed it. They ought not to forget that they cannot continue to hold the position they now occupy unless they really march in the van of the working class. It is not in the nature of things that the working class of England should possess the power of sending forty or fifty working men to Parliament and yet be

satisfied forever to be represented by capitalists or their clerks, such as lawyers, editors, etc.

More than this, there are plenty of symptoms that the working class of this country is awakening to the consciousness that it has for some time been moving in the wrong groove; that the present movement for higher wages and shorter hours exclusively, keep it in a vicious circle out of which there is no issue; that it is not the lowness of wages which forms the fundamental evil, but the wage system itself. This knowledge once generally spread amongst the working class, the position of trades unions must change considerably. They will no longer enjoy the privilege of being the only organizations of the working class. At the side of, or above the unions of special trades there must spring up a general union, a political organization of the working class as a whole.

Thus there are two points which the organized trades would do well to consider: Firstly, that the time is rapidly approaching when the working class will have understood that the struggle for high wages and short hours, and the whole action of trades unions as now carried on, is not an end in itself, but a means, a very necessary and effective means, but only one of several means towards a higher end,—the abolition of the wages system altogether.

For the full representation of labor in Parliament, as well as for the preparation of the abolition of the wage system, organizations will become necessary, not of separate trades, but of the working class as a body. And the sooner this is done the better. There is no power in the world which could for a day resist the British working class organized as a body.



Resolution of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. on the Czech Question

Adopted at the Session of the Presidium of the E. C. C. I.
on April 15, 1929

The Presidium of the E. C. C. I. acknowledges the correctness of the decisions of the V. Party Congress of the C. P. of Czechoslovakia, which rendered concrete the line of the VI. World Congress of the Communist International and of the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. in regard to Czechoslovakian conditions. The Presidium of the E. C. C. I. records with satisfaction that the V. Party Congress of the C. P. Cz. has drawn the correct lessons from the defeat of the Czechoslovakian proletariat resulting from the failure of the Red Day. The Party Congress has subjected to an energetic and profound criticism the opportunist mistakes of the former leadership headed by Jilek, and has corrected the line of the Party from the bottom up. For this reason the V. Party Congress of the C. P. Cz. constitutes an extremely important stage upon the path of bolshevization of the C. P. Cz. and of overcoming the social-democratic remnants which still exist in it.

Just as at the time of the Bubnik crisis, the progressive development of the party has encountered the resistance of all the right elements of the Party which in the course of a number of years have hampered as a conservative factor the development of the Party and its fighting capacity. The opportunist Hais-Sykora-Nadvornik group, which had entrenched itself in the International Workers Federation, made use of the textile workers' strike, the first struggle of the Czechoslovakian working class after the failure of the Red Day, in order along with the social-democrats to undermine the strike as strike-breakers, to prepare its defeat in order to compromise the new Party leadership and to saddle it with the responsibility for the defeat. In the course of a number of years this group, against the objections of the Communist Party and the directives of the R. I. L. U., has conducted in the red trade unions an opportunist policy which, in its practical application, could hardly be distinguished from the policy of the reformists. (Renunciation of the strike weapon and the substitution of economic struggles by practical participation in the arbitration system, etc.)

After the Party Congress this group of renegades openly pursued the path of splitting the red trade unions; against the will of the

overwhelming majority of the workers organized in the red trade unions, and supported by the police, this group thievishly took possession of the premises and the funds of the trade unions and attempted to frustrate the trade union congress which was to insure the unity of the trade unions. In spite of the fact that all the actions of Hais have clearly shown that he has broken with the R. I. L. U. and with the Communist Party, the R. I. L. U. quite correctly replied to the putsch of Hais by convening the Vienna Conference in which an authoritative delegation of the R. I. L. U. participated. The far-reaching proposals of the R. I. L. U. delegation, the aim of which was to settle the conflict with the Hais group on the basis of proletarian democracy at the next trade union congress, were rejected by Hais and his followers. The renegade group of Hais has by this step, as is stated in the decision of the R. I. L. U., placed itself outside the ranks of the organized, revolutionary proletariat of Czechoslovakia. The Presidium of the E. C. C. I. fully and entirely approves the energetic struggle of the C. C. of the C. P. Cz. against Hais and confirms the expulsion of Hais and his followers from the C. P. Cz. and their stigmatization as agents of the bourgeoisie and malicious strike-breakers.

The liquidatory attack of Hais and of the other right renegades on the C. P. Cz., the C. I. and the R. I. L. U. not only did not encounter any resistance on the part of such elements as Jilek, Bolen and Neurath, who in the past pretended to conduct the struggle against the "historic rights," but enjoyed their most active support. These elements, who in the course of the discussion before the Party Congress revealed a conciliatory attitude towards the rights and thereby developed opportunist views, have recently openly sunk down to liquidatory opinions and are coming forward in a united front against the C. P. Cz. and the E. C. C. I.

The proposal of the E. C. C. I. that a delegation be sent to Moscow in order to settle their differences with the Party in the presence of representatives of the C.C. of the C. P. Cz. by inner-Party means and upon the basis of proletarian discipline, was rejected by Jilek and his followers. In the newspaper *Svoboda*, which is inspired by Jilek, Bolen and Neurath, there was published an unheard-of cynical declaration to the effect that this group is prepared to meet an authoritative commission of the E. C. C. I. on "neutral ground" in order to negotiate with the E. C. C. I. as "equal" partner. Soon afterwards Jilek sent a letter to the E. C. C. I. in which he declared that he refuses to come to Moscow and proposed that the C. I. should send a delegation to Czechoslovakia for the purpose of negotiating with him and his followers. The Presidium of the E. C. C. I. rejected this discreditable manoeuvre of the Jilek group,

which aimed at deceiving the Czechoslovakian communist workers and concealing from them the true intentions of Jilek. The Presidium of the E. C. C. I. leaves it to all members of the C. P. Cz. to judge for themselves the inadmissible, anti-Party declaration of the Jilek group in *Svoboda*, which proves that its authors are pursuing a dangerous path of transition from the positions of the revolutionary class struggle and communism to the "neutral" camp of all enemies of the communist movement.

The Presidium reminds all members of the C. P. Cz. that the relations between the C. I. and its sections are not relations between two partners who are negotiating with each other but are based upon the principle of international proletarian discipline. The Presidium of the E. C. C. I. calls upon all the followers of Jilek, Bolen and Neurath who do not wish to break with the Comintern, to sever immediately openly and unequivocally from this group, which in fact is working hand in hand with the open liquidators who have been expelled from the C. P. Cz.

The Presidium of the E. C. C. I. calls upon all the members of the C. P. Cz. to rally round their Central Committee which is fighting under the most difficult conditions for the bolshevization of the Party. The Presidium makes it incumbent upon the C. C. of the Party not to make any fundamental concessions to the right liquidatory elements in defending the positions of the VI. Congress of the C. I. and of the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U. At the same time it instructs the C. C. to carry out the consolidation of the Party upon the basis of the decisions of the V. Party Congress and to rally all the elements who are ready to fight against the liquidators and renegades, without regard to their former groupings. The C. C. of the C. P. Cz. and the local Party organizations must adopt all measures in order to mobilize all the Party members for the struggle against the rights and liquidators. This work will at the same time serve to test the degree of preparation of the local Party organizations for their capacity to mobilize quickly the whole mass of members and sympathizers; it will also test how far all Party members are real communists, prepared to respond to the first call of their leading organs.

The Presidium of the E. C. C. I. is prepared to give careful consideration to any communication pointing out possible mistakes of the Party. This is also the duty of the new Central Committee. The C. C. is bound to guarantee the most energetic and broadest self-criticism for the purpose of consolidating the connection between the Party and the working masses. Only such a self-criticism insures for the Party the most rapid overcoming of the social-democratic traditions and helps the Party to steel itself in a bolshevist manner.

But the Presidium cannot and will not permit that, under the flag of self-criticism, an attack is made on the bolshevist line of the C. C. of the C. P. Cz. for the unity of the Party.

The Presidium of the E. C. C. I. states that the anti-communist action of Hais, which is supported by the Jilek-Bolen-Neurath group, is a part of the process of the defection of the right opportunist elements (Brandler, Thalheimer) from the organized communist world movement. The Presidium assures the C. C. of the C. P. Cz. that in its struggle against the right liquidatory elements it will meet with the most energetic support of the whole communist international.

Long live the unity of the C. P. Cz.!

THE PRESIDUM OF THE E. C. C. I.

Resolution of the C. C. of the C. P. of Czechoslovakia of
April 21, 1929

The Central Committee, at its meeting of April 21, 1929, after hearing the report of Comrade Gottwald and after carrying out a discussion on the international situation, records the following:

The political standpoint of the anti-Party Jilek-Bolen-Touzil-Neurath bloc is developing at an unusually rapid rate to liquidation in all important questions of the revolutionary movement. In judging the present situation the liquidatory bloc holds the view that the stabilization of capitalism is firm; it does not see the increasing class and international antagonisms nor the intensification of the class struggles, and denies the fact of the radicalization of the working masses. In the question of the danger of war the liquidators accuse the Party and the Comintern of exaggerating this danger, and in regard to the fact of the rapid growth of antagonisms between the capitalist world and the Soviet Union they admit the possibility of a peaceful solution of this conflict, thereby diverting the attention of the workers from the present great danger of a war against the Soviet Union. The liquidatory bloc wrongly judges the social-democracy as being a workers' party, denies the pronouncedly bourgeois character of the corrupt reformist apparatus and consequently defends the necessity of a united front from above and does not recognize the indispensability of the new strategy and tactics in economic struggles. The approval by the liquidators of the pronouncedly strike-breaking activity of the Hais clique in the strike of the West Bohemian ceramic workers and of the textile workers in Sudkov proves that the bloc of the liquidators has sunk into the morass of open strike-breaking. The political platform and the practice of the liquidators stand in sharp contradiction to the standpoint of the Party

and of the Comintern and obviously approaches the standpoint of the social-democracy.

This anti-Party political platform of the liquidators corresponds to its method of fighting against the Party and the Comintern. The conduct of the above-mentioned liquidatory bloc has been right from the first moment a chain of heinous crimes against the principles of bolshevik organization and discipline. The liquidators opposed outside of the Party the decisions and directives of the Party, created a new deputies' and senators' club, with the aid of the authorities ejected from the Senators' Club the comrades who remained true to the Party, seized the payment over to the Party of extra allowances received by Communist Party deputies, purloined the Party press organs for a time, and issued anti-Party leaflets. They are sending out anti-Party material, sending their speakers to all meetings and conferences of the Party, actually organizing within the Party a new leadership, are in open connection with the expelled renegades Hais, Kovanda, Ecer and Skala, are in contact with Brandler and Thalheimer. These renegades on an international scale, reply with a refusal to the demand of the Executive of the Comintern that they come to Moscow in order to answer before the highest forum of the revolutionary proletariat for their crimes against the Party, and cynically call for "negotiations" on "neutral ground." All these acts are a clear proof that the bloc of the liquidators has not only departed ideologically from the communist movement, but that it has also severed the last organizational connection with the Communist Party and the Comintern and has gone over to the other side of the barricade.

The strike-breakers' platform of the Hais group of the red trade unions inevitably led to social-democracy, to the liquidation of the revolutionary movement. The liquidatory Jilek-Bolen-Touzil-Neurath bloc is taking over this platform in its entirety and conducting an anti-Party fight in order to carry it out, thereby proving that it has adopted the path of open breach with the Party and the Communist International, the path to reformism, the path to the enemies of the working people.

The C. C. of the C. P. of Czechoslovakia records with satisfaction that the broad strata of the party membership have repelled the first attack of the liquidatory bloc on the Party just as successfully as the membership of the International Workers' Federation repulsed the attack of the Hais renegades on the revolutionary unity of the red trade unions. The result up to the present of the campaign against the disruptive bloc of Jilek, Bolen, Touzil and Neurath is not only the complete isolation of the liquidators within the Party, but a definite disintegration within the liquidatory bloc it-

self. This is expressed in the retreat of the Kladno wing of the liquidators, who were forced to beat a retreat under the energetic pressure of the Kladno working class, without however abandoning their liquidatory views.

The C. C. of the C. P. Cz. declares that the struggle against the social-democratic views must be continued until they are completely exterminated. The C. C. of the C. P. Cz. fully and entirely approves of all the measures of the Politbureau in the struggle against the disruptive bloc of the liquidators.

At the same time the C. C. of the C. P. Cz. states that the struggle against the right liquidatory danger is revealing serious weaknesses and shortcomings. Thus it is a fact that in spite of the growth of the activity of the Party, in spite of the fact that an unusually great portion of the Party membership has been mobilized against the liquidators, another portion of the membership has not up to now participated in the inner-Party campaign. It is therefore indispensable to increase and deepen the ideological campaign and to bring more to the forefront the questions of the fundamental ideological and political differences between the liquidatory platform of the disruptors and the standpoint of the Party and Comintern. A further shortcoming of the inner-Party campaign is its inadequate connection with the preparation, organization and conduct of mass actions of the working people. The C. C. of the C. P. Cz. insistingly draws the attention of the whole Party membership to these weaknesses, and instructs the Party organs to do everything in order to overcome them. The consistent realization of bolshevist self-criticism increases the fighting capacity of the Party and renders it capable of overcoming the liquidatory danger.

The C. C. of the C. P. Cz. welcomes the decision of the Executive Committee of the Comintern regarding the Czechoslovakian question, which is of great assistance to the Party in its hard struggle against the liquidatory disrupters. The C. C. will carry out these decisions to the last consequences. So far as the liquidators still possess some influence upon some honest working-class elements within the Party and the red trade unions, this is only possible because they endeavor to conceal their true aims from the workers and because they deny that they are waging a fight against the Party and the Comintern. The clear standpoint of the Comintern renders it more easy for all honest Party members to perceive the true meaning of the actions of the splitters and facilitates their return to the Party.

The C. C. records that, not only in the struggle against the Hais splitters of the red trade unions, but also in the struggle against

their liquidatory allies within the Party, all elements who are faithful to the Party have now gathered around the Party, no matter whether they formerly belonged to any group. Whilst the liquidatory leaders have rapidly developed into enemies of the Party, the mass of the comrades, especially the workers, are fighting together with the Party leadership against the liquidators. The slogan of the concentration of all forces was a hypocrisy on the part of the leaders of all opportunist groups at the V. Party Congress of the C. P. Cz. and it only concealed the endeavor to rule the Party by means of a bloc, without principles. It was only in the struggle against the liquidators and splitters that it became obvious who is honestly going with the Party. Against the bloc of all opportunist tendencies which developed to liquidators, there was formed a broad united front of the revolutionary working-class members of the Party, a real concentration of all elements faithful to the Party in the struggle against the liquidators and splitters. In order to give expression to this circumstance and at the same time to strengthen the connection between the C. C. and the trade-union organizations, the C. C. of the C. P. Cz. resolves:

1. To co-opt Comrades Nosek, Jonas, Harus and Dobrovlny into the C. C.
2. To co-opt into the Polbureau three further workers who are working in factories.
3. To bring Comrade Zapotocky into the secretariat.

Those members and functionaries of the Party who are waging a struggle against the Party and are guilty of disruptive tactics have, according to the decision of the Party and of the Comintern, to be placed before the alternative, either unconditionally to abandon their liquidatory platform and their activity which is hostile to the Party and the Comintern, or to follow the path of Hais, which is the path of social-democracy. The Polbureau is instructed to draw the necessary organizational consequences against all those who are persisting in their struggle against the Party.

In regard to the further conduct of the inner-Party campaign against the liquidatory danger the C. C. resolves:

1. To deepen the ideological campaign, to expose completely and to discredit the liquidatory platform of the splitters and to develop within the Party a large scale propaganda and popularization of the decisions of the V. Party Congress of the C. P. Cz., the VI. Congress of the Comintern and of the IV. Congress of the R. I. L. U.
2. To connect the inner-Party campaign closely with the preparation, organization and conduct of the economic and political mass struggles of the working people and to apply the new decisions in connection with this struggle within the Party.

3. To adopt all measures in order to mobilize and to render active all the Party members in this struggle, in order that all Party organs carry out a severe control of all the members and also ascertain the standpoint of those members who up to now have not taken up a definite standpoint in the inner-Party struggle, to convince this portion of the members of the correctness of the policy of the Party and of the Comintern and of the necessity to take active part in the struggle for its realization.

4. To open up a great campaign for the actual transference of the centre of Party work to the factories, a great action for the recruitment of new members for the Party and the red trade unions, especially from the ranks of young revolutionary workers and working women, and to adopt all measures for achieving a mass edition of the Party press.



The "Marxism" of V. F. Calverton

By A. B. MAGIL

THE April *New Masses* contains an impressively titled article by V. F. Calverton, "Revolt Among American Intellectuals." The author of this article performs an important service—he effectively punctures the pretensions of V. F. Calverton to the role of Marxist literary critic.

Calverton, as editor of the *Modern Quarterly* and as the author of a number of books, has acquired (in the eyes of the bourgeoisie and deluded workers) a sort of official status in this country as *the* revolutionary critic of America. He has been able to achieve and maintain this position as a result of a remarkable talent for exploiting and capitalizing a shallow, pseudo-revolutionary approach to literature and to society, an intellectual insolence that passes for audacity and a card index system that supplies him with appropriate quotations and historical allusions at a moment's notice. Calverton has become the high priest of what almost amounts to a "school," where, surrounded by faithful and admiring acolytes, he dispenses oracular "Marxian" wisdom on a variety of questions, social, economic, literary, moral, philosophical—his range is wide.

The article in the *New Masses* is significant because it reveals, in the exposition of its major thesis and in the general confusion of its thinking, that Calverton differs in no fundamental way from other less pretentious bourgeois critics.

"American intellectuals," he begins, "on the whole, are so superficial that their revolt is seldom revolutionary." On the other hand, Calverton tells us, European intellectuals are profound, their thinking digs below the surface. Whether or not this makes their revolt more frequently revolutionary, Calverton conveniently forgets to say. At once, however, we see the bourgeois mold in which Calverton's thinking is cast. American intellectuals and European intellectuals are conceived as socially homogeneous groups. Note that he doesn't say "*bourgeois* intellectuals." And throughout the article, though he occasionally flings in terms like "radical" and "conservative," his comparison is essentially one between some "classless" animal, the American intellectual, and another "classless" animal, the European intellectual. That every literature has specific, important national characteristics no one will deny. But to a revolutionary critic such characteristics must at all times be secondary; they are important chiefly in so far as they affect the *class* character of a

literature. To present the problems of literatures and cultures merely as national problems, to ignore or gloss over the essential class anatomy—this is to think not as a Marxist, but as a petty bourgeois.

"The American outlook creates little men with small vision," says Calverton. "There is no incentive for the creation of big men with large vision." Again the "classless" approach. What sort of "big men"? "Large vision" for what, towards what? In the interests of what class? Calverton, the "revolutionary" critic, doesn't ask. "Vision" for him is some divine afflatus, rising above class. This is an old, characteristic social-democratic vulgarism—or worse. Instead of Kautsky's "pure democracy" we have the Calvertonian "large vision" for which his soul thirsts so ardently. And evidently he doesn't care whether this vision is for the capitalist class or against it so long as it is "large" and not "small," so long as it is possessed by "big men" and not "little men." An American Spengler or an American Lenin? It's all the same.

Were this petty-bourgeois whining about America's cultural barbarism at least new, one might be patient. But Calverton simply rehashes wearisome banalities that have been long since squeezed dry. Most of his article was written some years ago by a bourgeois critic, Van Wyck Brooks. Brooks, in fact, wrote it many times—with such eloquence and penetration as Calverton will never command. And if you turn to a slender little volume, "Letters and Leadership," published over ten years ago, you can read Brooks in the original instead of denatured by Calverton.

Calverton's article also contains two fundamental confusions: 1. He can't seem to make up his mind whether to denounce the American intellectuals because they aren't profound enough or because they aren't revolutionary enough. 2. He confuses esthetic revolt with social revolt and uses them interchangeably. Most of the time he seems to be speaking of revolt against social evils. Thus: "Dreiser . . . is certainly in revolt against many of the forms of capitalism and against the system of society itself." Yet note this passage: "It is in the work of such American intellectuals as Waldo Frank, Van Wyck Brooks and Lewis Mumford that the sharp disparity between revolt and revolution is most tragically apparent. While the reaction of Mencken *against the older literature* never rose above a spirited and vigorous protest, the reaction of these men has always risen to an *eloquent and moving revolt*." (Emphasis mine.—A. B. M.) Which revolt is which? And to show just how eloquent and moving the revolt of these men has been Calverton cites passages from their work in which they reveal themselves as—sensitive literary critics!

All of which shows that even on his own non-Marxian, petty-

bourgeois plane, Calverton is unable to think logically. What he fails to understand (or pretends not to understand) is that all these gifted gentlemen are intellectual representatives of the bourgeoisie and have never been anything else. If they seemed to be more "liberal" a dozen years ago, it need only be remembered that a dozen years ago the American bourgeoisie was using "liberalism" (Woodrow Wilson) to dupe the masses into supporting the war "to make the world safe for democracy." The work of the writers of that period was a reflection of the ideological physiognomy of American capitalism's political and economic policies. Today, in the more frank reactionary era of Coolidge-Hoover imperialism, there has come not only greater polarization of wealth, but greater polarization of ideas and intellectual trends. Most of the intellectuals who voted for Debs in 1920 were found on the Hoover and Smith bandwagons at the last election.

In two articles published in *THE COMMUNIST* several months ago Joseph Freeman ably analyzed the period in American intellectual life represented by writers like Brooks and Frank. He pointed out that this period has come to a close, that the new leaders of the American intelligentsia are men of a very different stamp. In place of the confused rhapsodical mysticism of Waldo Frank we have the cold, formal, slightly arid, but admirably disciplined intellectualism of T. S. Eliot. Gorham B. Munson, who once wrote an entire book in which he extolled the virtues of the one and only, the incomparable Waldo Frank, has now repudiated Frank; his heart now beats (temperately, it is true, without wasteful emotionalism) around academicians like Professor Paul Elmore More. Writers like Eliot, Munson, Professor Irving Babbit and Allen Tate are sworn enemies of impressionism, expressionism, imagism, vorticism, dadaism and all the other apotheoses of the willful, glorious "T" that reached their fine fruition during the war and post-war periods. Upon their banner are placed such watchwords as science, discipline, objectivity; they stand aloof from the vulgar present and point to the aristocratic past for "standards," not merely artistic, but ethical as well. These writers are, in fact, as Freeman points out, the fore-runners of the new intellectual fascism. Though they don't call it that, actually they are seeking to introduce rationalization (the new fetish of imperialism) into the intellectual sphere. And they are the *characteristic* representatives of the present political reaction.

And lest anyone think that this intellectual fascism (as yet in an incipient stage) is confined only to the field of the arts, turn to the man who is probably the most formidable of these new prophets, T. S. Eliot. Eliot, who in 1921 sounded the first note of the reaction against liberal confusionism in his remarkable poem, "The

Waste Land," has announced himself in his latest book an Anglo-Catholic in religion and a royalist in politics!

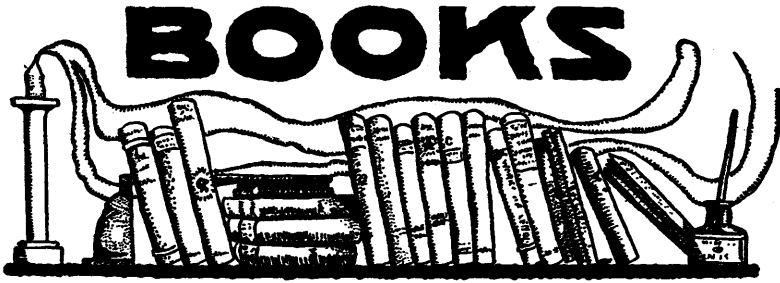
All this seems to have escaped the great Marxist, V. F. Calverton. His article makes no mention of this most significant trend among the American intellectuals. He is sore at poor muddled Waldo Frank, who has become so accustomed to the fog of metaphysical shibboleths that he announces apocalyptically that the most profound vision is blindness. This bourgeois intellectual, Waldo Frank, who is already an anachronism, agitates the soul of V. F. Calverton because he (Frank) will not, forsooth, "revolt!" As we have seen, it is uncertain just what Calverton means by "revolt." Calverton is very cautious. He must not unequivocally condemn the radical intellectuals for failing to fight capitalism. Such recklessness for one who also is failing to fight capitalism might jeopardize one's bread and butter.

Were it not for the fact that Calverton exercises considerable influence among many uncritical workers, I shouldn't spend so much time and space discussing his latest effusion. His magazine, the *Modern Quarterly*, has become a rallying point for all sorts of enemies of the Communist Party—Trotskyites and other breeds—who volubly profess their "revolutionary" fervor, at the same time graciously pointing out the "errors" and "stupidities" of the American communists. Calverton also gives many lectures and wields influence through his editorial connections with a bourgeois publishing concern and the recently formed Book League. Though he shows considerable agility in sleeping in several beds at the same time—communist, "socialist" and big bourgeois—actually he is bound by a thousand ties, economic and otherwise, to the bourgeois class.

And to those workers who are impressed by Calverton's great "erudition," it need only be pointed out that actually his is an immense talent for using encyclopedias and other people's researches as bludgeons to knock you mentally cuckoo. It is the weapon of a man who cannot teach because he has nothing but contempt for the working class.

* * *

There appears to be a healthy improvement in Calverton's style in the *New Masses* article. Though there are quotations from two reasonably obscure authors in the very second sentence and occasional phrases like "the philosophic aspects of radical reconstruction" (whatever that may mean), the article as a whole is free from the usual Calvertonian pomposities. But he still has a weakness for stringing together impressive names of authors he has apparently never read.



Otto Ruhle: Karl Marx, His Life and Work. Vanguard Press, New York, 1929.

RUHLE'S book is not only not worth reading but it is not even worth reviewing. The fact, however, that it has been hailed and heralded in head-line reviews by the capitalist press, that such "authorities" on social questions and Marxism as Zimand and Laidler have written whole columns of adulation without recognizing a single error, subscribing to the page-length discoveries that "Marxism" has its origin in an "inferiority complex," the further fact that many workers and others eager to learn more about Marx's life and work will read this volume, makes it necessary to combat Ruhle's vulgarization at least in a few words.

It is in itself a matter of suspicion when the bourgeois press takes to running long publicity reviews on a book dealing with Marx. The secret is to be found in the fact that Ruhle's book, the only bulky biography in English besides that of Spargo which was first published in 1910, is not only an embodiment of Philistinism of the purest kind, but makes a special appeal to the Philistine mentality which wishes to see its own image in the great figures of history.

The bourgeois reviewers of Ruhle's book have made much of the "fact" that Ruhle is an orthodox Marxist. For, if Ruhle's Marxism is orthodox Marxism, then there is no better refutation of orthodox Marxism than Ruhle's own book. This is the objective logic of the bourgeois reviews; and it is well founded, except for a tiny little error.

Any British shopkeeper, Marx once said, knows that you do not judge a man by what he says of himself but by what he does, a fact which seems utterly incomprehensible to our German historians. But this inability to distinguish between words and deeds, Marx might have added, is characteristic not only of the Germans but of all bourgeois ideologists in general.

Ruhle claims to be an orthodox Marxist; he claims to be applying historical materialism to the subject of his biography—*therefore*, his claims must be correct, particularly if they have the appearance of the bona fide article and are thus capable of serving as an excellent refutation of Marxism. Never mind the facts nor the contradictions!

In Germany, every one knows that Ruhle has degenerated to the level of a social-democrat, and as such, has left the ground of orthodox Marxism. In America, that tiny little fact is of no importance to our bourgeois reviewers. In 1919-1920, when Ruhle was a "left" communist, he attacked the revolutionary utilization of bourgeois parlamentarism by the Communist Party. Today, Ruhle finds the essence of Marx's teaching on the Commune in the "fact" that "this struggle, the political struggle, can only be waged within the bourgeois national states on the platform of bourgeois politics, in

parliament, the approach to which must be conquered by electoral struggles." The profound knowledge of our bourgeois reviewers and the orthodoxy of Ruhle's Marxism is instructively manifested when it is recalled that Marx's *Civil War in France*, which deals with the Paris Commune, not only says nothing of electoral struggles, but finds the basic lesson of the Commune in the necessity of shattering the existing state apparatus and replacing it by the dictatorship of the proletariat, the "ultimately discovered" form of which Marx saw in the defeated Commune.

Ruhle's biography is not only a compilation based upon second and third-hand knowledge, accepting unfounded statements from Spargo and rehashing his material in tautologic monotony, but it is even worse than Spargo's worthless compilation, which at least has the merit of being an excellent collection of Marx-photographs. Ruhle's short bibliography indicates the sources of his information, the chief of which is Franz Mehring's life of Marx.

According to Ruhle, three facts must be kept in mind, if we are to understand Marx as a human being, apart from his work. First, bad health; secondly, a Jewish origin which Marx felt as a social blot; thirdly, the role of being the oldest child. The utter absurdity of Ruhle's pyramidal structure is revealed when we find that his third point is based upon a careless reading of Mehring's work. Instead of being the oldest child, as Ruhle unhappily assumed, Marx turns out to be the "younger than the oldest." The Marx "authorities," Zimand and Laidler, may be interested to look on page three of Mehring's biography where he refers to Marx as "next to his sister Sophie, his parents' oldest child."

The full significance of this "slight" error, which constitutes such an integral part of Ruhle's psycho-analytic edifice, becomes apparent when we consider his claim to be applying historical materialism to Marx. Historical materialism applied to masses, says Ruhle, is sociology; applied to the individual, it is psychology. Ruhle's biography, therefore, is a study in psychology. How does Ruhle understand historical materialism as a psychology? Perhaps by applying the method of historical materialism to the life history of an individual? Not Ruhle! Historical materialism in words, psycho-analysis in deeds. Only here we are dealing with words and nothing but words. And the mere fact that one of Ruhle's chief assertions is incidentally a wrong assertion is of no material consequence to him. Instead of facts, we are treated to a series of verbal constructions.

An historic materialistic psychology which ignores the material conditions of human behavior, which interprets the behavior of an individual in purely subjective terms, which reduces the relation between historic trends to mere personal relations and fails to clear away the subjective appearance in order to find the objective reality beneath it, such a psychology is a complete contradiction in terms. And yet, the essence of Ruhle's method is a Philistine subjectivism which cannot see beyond the individual and his subjective desires. Hence, to Ruhle, the relation between Marx and Hegel is exhausted by Marx's impelling desire always to be first, always to do things better than others, and therefore to surpass Hegel, "the giant in the sphere of thought."

Marx becomes a communist, in Ruhle's imagination, for essentially the same reason, the desire not only to learn communism better than the *Augsburg Gazette*—a controversy with it having driven Marx to the bitter acknowledgement of his ignorance of this subject—but better than all other socialists and communists. Marx simply had to howl down every one else's opinion according to Ruhle, because of his recurrent illusion that he would be left without adherents. He could not tolerate a single rival because of the torturing anxiety lest his rival and not he prove to be the most clever

and capable among the revolutionists. That was the reason for Marx's mortal struggle against LaSalle and Bakunin; and for the same reason the struggles in the First International were nothing but personal quarrels. Now, the source of all this is to be found in Marx's "inferiority complex" arising out of the three causes mentioned above.

Gently, in the approved social-democratic manner, we therefore pass from the promise of an objective historic materialistic analysis to the meaningless subjectivism of the psycho-analytic complex theory. Class struggles and class forces, the historical conditions of Marx's life history give place to subjective complexes as the basic criteria of Rühle's psychology.

Marx, who of all people, was so thoroughly bound up with the general, historical forces of bourgeois society, is viewed through the perverted glasses of an individualistic, Philistine outlook! It is superfluous to insist on the worthlessness of Rühle's claims of being an orthodox Marxist. He would have been more honest had he acknowledged his Philistinism from the outset.

The character of a Marx and Lenin will always remain a mystery to the Philistine. The bourgeois cannot understand the undeviating and all-sacrificing devotion to the cause of the revolution manifested in the life of a Marx; hence the search for the "causes" of this "abnormal," "inhuman" conduct. Hence the invention of psycho-analytic complexes which exist only in the imagination of the "pscho-analysts."

The great hatred and fear of Marx on the part of the bourgeoisie is due not to Marx as an individual, but to the fact that he represents the reality of the proletarian class struggle. Nothing, therefore, could be more welcome to the bourgeoisie than a "biography" which would "expose" the bogey of the class struggle, show Marx as a "simple human being" with a tremendous but ordinary inferiority complex, in no way bound up with those horrible class forces which are even beginning to trouble the editorial writer of the *New York World*.

By "humanizing" Marx, Rühle has made Marx "acceptable" to the bourgeoisie, and hence has earned the right to front-rank reviews in the bourgeois press. May they enjoy their Rühle. The real Marx, however, belongs to the proletarian class struggle from which no pious wish or Philistine "biographer" can ever separate him.

A. LANDY.

With Mehring's Marx still to be translated the best study on Marx in English at present is D. Riazanov's *Marx and Engels*, International Publishers, New York.

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