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Wallace & the Labor Draft

IN POLITICS a year ago Walter Oakes put forward his thesis of a "permanent war economy." His idea was that capitalist crisis and mass unemployment in postwar America could and would be prevented until World War III (at the expense of the workingclass's liberties and living standards) by the expenditure of around \$15 billions a year on the equipping and maintaining of a vast naval and military establishment. The economic theory behind such a policy would be the same Keynes-Hansen government-spending policies as tided American capitalism over the crisis in the early New Deal period—but with military installations replacing public building projects, the Army replacing WPA, etc. The political theory would be a kind of militarized New Deal based on the integration of labor unions and other class groups into governmental apparatus, which would be used to plan and guarantee full employment at home and to protect America's imperialistic interests throughout the world.

In the past month, as the war moves into its final phase, the Roosevelt Administration has taken two important steps towards such a Permanent War Economy: (1) Roosevelt has come out finally for compulsory peacetime military training, and he has greatly intensified his efforts to get Congress to pass at once a National Service Act, or labor draft; (2) he has replaced—subject, of course, to Congressional confirmation—the oldstyle conservative banker, Jesse Jones, with the crusading New Dealer, Henry Wallace, in the key economic posts of Secretary of Commerce and head of the Federal Loan Agencies. At first glance, these seem to be steps in opposite directions; certainly, the liblabs and their PAC are as strongly for Wallace as they are against a labor draft. And in traditional political terms, conscription of labor and a peacetime military service law are "reactionary" measures, while Wallace's planned economy proposals are considered "progressive." If, however, we abandon the traditional concepts in favor of the P.W.E. idea, it is possible to see the two moves as harmonious and in fact complementary. This is what I want to attempt in what follows:

1.

Perhaps the most immediately striking thing about the campaign that is now reaching a crescendo to put through Congress a compulsory military training act is that the measure is not seriously opposed by organized labor or by such liberal groups as the American Civil Liberties Union and the Federal Council of Churches. The liblabs have for the most part avoided taking any stand on the principle itself and have confined themselves to objecting to the passage of the law now, in wartime. They object, quite rightly, for the same reason the military authorities and the President are anxious to get action now: because the popular mood is now much more bellicose than it probably will be after the war. An implication of opposition to the law itself is in this stand, but on such an issue one might expect more than an implication from people who call themselves progressives and liberals—unless one

is aware how deeply the P.W.E. psychology has already penetrated.

Roosevelt's handling of the issue shows all his usual skill. One of his first acts, after being handsomely re-elected by the Forces of Democracy, was to send up a trial balloon. He was going to ask Congress, he told his press conference, to pass a law requiring that henceforth all young persons of both sexes between the ages of 18 and 23 serve one year in government training camps. Queried as to whether he meant military training, he turned coy and talked about the desirability of every one learning to brush their teeth properly. He evaded a question as to his attitude toward the Wadsworth-Gurney bill, then and still pending, which provides for one year's compulsory peacetime military training for all males who reach 18. (The same day the Argentine government decreed universal military training—which, of course, is one more indication that it is fascist and that Roosevelt's State Department is quite right to have nothing to do with it.)

The trial balloon was successful. Organized labor grumbled a little but showed no real fight; most of its leaders, after all, were just as keen on "national defense" as Roosevelt himself. And the War Department, from the other flank, on December 22 issued a circular to all officers which endorsed a specifically *military* training program (as against Roosevelt's seminars in care of the teeth), stating bluntly: "Universal military training will be our preparation for the next war." In his message to the new Congress on January 6, therefore, Roosevelt came out clearly for the first time for a compulsory *military* peacetime training law. This may well prove to be the most significant action of his entire Fourth Term. The implications hardly need be labored here: the extension for the first time to the USA of the military service laws which were hated by so many generations of European youth; a great step forward in the militarization and state regimentation of our society; the recognition of war as not a "mistake" or "accident" which better management may hope to avoid "next time" but as a permanent feature of The American System.

The arguments advanced against peacetime military service are for the most part as feeble and halfhearted as the organized opposition to it. The American Civil Liberties Union has shown its usual conservative timidity: its Board has taken no stand one way or the other, but has contented itself merely with urging that passage of a law be post-

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poned till after the war. So, too, the Federal Council of Churches—on the grounds that (1) we can't tell how big an army we'll need "when there shall have been established a general system of international security," and (2) people won't take seriously our plans for a peaceful world if such a law is now enacted. Only a clergyman could believe there is going to be a "system of international security" except in the sense that each big power will damned well see that *it* is secure—which means the more security, the bigger army. As for (2), who (except the Federal Council of Churches) takes our peace plans seriously now anyway?

It is equally infantile to argue, as liberal isolationists like Oswald Garrison Villard and Norman Thomas do, that peacetime conscription is "not in the national interest" and not "necessary." Of course it's in the national interest, of course it's necessary—unless one assumes, as they do not, a radical change in our institutions. In the interwar period coming, the USA must play the part of a great imperialist power—or go under. A big army, fed from universal service by the youth, will be necessary partly for reasons of domestic policy—to keep millions of men out of the labor market, to provide a market for goods, to integrate the citizen more closely into the coercive political structure—partly for external reasons: to guard and man air and sea bases all over the world, to protect trade routes and spheres of commercial-political interest, to deal with revolutionary threats in Europe and elsewhere, and above all to get the jump on the future Enemy Power or Powers of World War III. That there will be a World War III in a generation or two is so likely—given, always, the continuation of our present institutions—that an American political leader who did not now prepare for it would be indeed a traitor to those very "national interests" which certain liberals talk so foolishly about. And, if we acquiesce in a system which makes such a war probable, then we must grant the logic (nay even the humanitarianism!) of arguments like that of Secretary of the Navy Forrestal: "I hope that the discussion of universal military training will be kept focussed on the fact that the weapons of modern warfare can be operated only by trained men. A novice is helpless and vulnerable. . . ."

Here, as in so many other departments of modern life, one's opposition must be thoroughgoing if it is to have any solid basis. And the only two general viewpoints from which it seems to me possible to oppose peacetime conscription are those of pacifism and of revolutionary socialism. Nothing short of those extremes will be effective—or is, indeed, reasonable.

2.

It is just about a year since Roosevelt first endorsed a national labor draft. In the February, 1944, issue, I pointed out that his main argument—that a labor draft was necessary to increase production—"has been denied by almost all the engineers, business managers, and labor leaders that have testified before Congressional committees on the subject; they tend rather to think a labor draft would impede production because of the conflict and con-

fusion it will cause." The President's real motive I guessed was "an attempt to extend the State power over labor relations . . . Nor is it just a question of weakening the unions. It is significant that both the U. S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers are on record as opposed to a national labor draft. (The only backing comes from the Army and Navy—and Roosevelt.) Business evidently fears the strengthening of State control of industry even more than it welcomes a blow at unionism. It is precisely to extend that control that Roosevelt plays with the idea of a labor draft, despite the political and economic dangers involved. This is the road towards a native totalitarianism which would conflict with very little in Roosevelt's political personality."

All of the above is as true today as a year ago. As Walter Oakes' letter in this issue shows, the argument for a labor draft as a production panacea is no better grounded today than it was then. The opposition to a labor draft is still powerful: the NAM at the recent hearings on the May-Bailey bill took the same general line as the AFL and CIO and Farmers Union—that better use of existing agencies, more effective planning of production, and labor-management-Government cooperation at the local level would be more effective than legal compulsion. Roosevelt, still supported only by the armed forces and military authorities, opened an all-out campaign for a labor draft in his January 6 message to the new Congress. He endorsed specifically the pending May-Bailey "limited national service" bill—apparently this is the most he thinks he can get at present—which brings all males between 18 and 45, and especially the four million 4-F's, under State control. With this impetus behind it, the May-Bailey bill at once was moved up to the stage of hearings. And when the hearings brought forth what threatened to be an overwhelming flood of testimony from farm, labor and business organizations showing in detail why a labor draft would retard rather than speed production, Roosevelt acted with the swift decision he shows on an issue he considers really important.

On January 16, as the CIO-AFL barrage was rising to its peak, a reporter at the Presidential press conference, observing that Phil Murray and other CIO officials were at that moment "knocking the bottom out of the arguments for national service" up on Capitol Hill, asked Roosevelt his opinion of Murray's labor-management cooperation as a solution to production problems. With unwonted bluntness, Roosevelt replied it wouldn't be sufficient, and that only a national service act was enough. The next day he sent a letter to Representative May, co-author of the May-Bailey bill and chairman of the House committee that was then in the midst of hearings on the bill, suggesting "prompt action" by Congress and appending strong letters from General Marshall and Admiral King. Taking the hint, Chairman May at once called off the hearings, and put the bill through his committee in a few days. It has passed the House and is now before the Senate, where it has a good chance of getting turned down. But not because of any general concern about its totalitarian implications—the even more threatening peacetime military service bill will probably be passed—but simply because both organized labor and the business community, for reasons of immediate self-interest which are not operative in the case of postwar military training, are strongly opposed to it.

3.

The ousting of Jones in favor of Wallace is the most drastic change in Roosevelt's economic policy in years. I must admit I expected nothing of the sort; either the PAC is stronger or Roosevelt is even more devious and subtle a politician than I had thought. Taking the change at its face value—though, as we shall see, it has many other values—it is an even greater victory for the liblabs than Wallace's renomination for the vice-presidency would have been.

The main prize is not the Department of Commerce but rather the Federal Loan Agency which Roosevelt put under the control of the Secretary of Commerce in 1942. The FLA includes the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and a dozen other huge government corporations. Ever since the Roosevelt Administration took over the RFC from Hoover in 1933, Jesse Jones, the hardshell Texas banker, has been running these agencies; in that period he has authorized loans and investments of \$45 billions, a large sum even for these times. At present, the FLA has an authorized spending power of \$14 billions, of which about half has not been spent. It operates 125 war plants, five pipe lines, etc., etc. A bill is now before the Senate to separate the FLA from the Commerce Department (to prevent Wallace getting the FLA, of course). At the hearings in this bill, Jones gave a good description of the FLA's scope—and its philosophy under his rule:

"It is bigger than General Motors and General Electric and Montgomery Ward and everything else put together and you don't hear much about it because it is being run by business men, by men experienced in business, by men who haven't any ideas about remaking the world. (*Laughter and Applause.*) Plodders—not smart, just plodders, trying to do a job honestly and constructively. . . ."

"Have you ever used your powers," asked Senator Bailey, "for the purpose of determining the economic character or the social character of this country?" "I certainly have not," replied Jones. "But you have undertaken to preserve the American economy?" "Yes . . ."

In the lengthy prepared statement which Wallace submitted to the committee, he made it clear that he had plenty of ideas about remaking the world and that, if Congress approved his nomination, he would use the FLA's vague and extensive powers most definitely to determine the country's social character. He showed in detail how he would dish out the Federal funds to implement the "economic bill of rights" outlined in Roosevelt's January 6 message to Congress: prevention of unemployment, maintenance of wages (he even endorsed the guaranteed-annual-wage plan now being pushed by the CIO), support for farm prices, financing of small business, expanded social security, Federal "plans" for housing, medical care, education. At the end, the conservative Senator George summed up the Jonesian reaction: "I think you gave us a statement that was very desirable and—I hope I don't offend you when I say—idealistic." Even more explicit was Senator Bailey: "He disclosed not only a program but a method. [*The naivete of the reactionary Congressmen who are leading the fight on Wallace appears wonderfully in this phrase—their prejudice in favor of the unconscious, unplanned traditionalism of Jones' 'plodders . . . who haven't any ideas about re-*

making the world."]—DM] There was nothing I could see but borrowing and lending money. I am against money spending, and I think this Government is in great danger from it. I am not going to vote to put any man in charge of a department of this Government who is going to bring in the millenium by handing out money in all directions."

The usual liblab reaction to this attitude is angry denunciation—and there is no question that social progress will hardly be served by such a philosophy. But the real point, it seems to me, is not so much that Jones and his many Congressional supporters are reactionaries as that their economic philosophy is inadequate, to say the least, to run a highly industrialized capitalist nation today either in peace or in war. The result in the one case would be economic breakdown and social revolution, and in the other, military defeat. The issue is really not so much one of "progress" vs. "reaction" as of how American capitalism can survive the terrible economic stresses and strains of the present and future. In reality any president, Republican or Democrat, Roosevelt or Senator Bailey himself, would find himself forced to "hand out money in all directions" either to finance a war or to avert an economic catastrophe after the war. In his budget message of Jan. 10, Roosevelt showed he understands this. The significant passage was that on "Demobilization and Postwar Full Employment" at the end, where, to the dismay of the conservative press, he stated that at least 60,000,000 jobs would have to be provided in the postwar period, and that, if necessary, Government spending would have to maintain the masses' purchasing power at a level high enough to provide them. The political issue is not whether to spend Government money or not, but rather *how* to spend it. On December 17 last, the liberal Senator Murray made public a proposal for a new kind of Federal budget, which would start off by estimating the number of jobs "needed during the ensuing fiscal year to assure continuing full employment," would then estimate the probable national income and investment, and would finally propose the expenditure of whatever sum, if any, was needed to bring the national income up to a figure high enough to provide the number of jobs required for full employment. This "job budget" is a great innovation, putting as it does the emphasis on employment instead of on finances. Wallace came out publicly for it on December 27. Thus in replacing Jones with Wallace, Roosevelt at least indicated that he had no very deeprooted objection in principle to such innovations.*

4.

There are those who will say that Roosevelt has no deeprooted principles at all, and that he gave the job to Wallace for no other reason than, as he wrote in his letter to Jones, the former "gave of his utmost toward the victory" last fall. Far be it from me to impute any principles to Roosevelt, and it is true that a strong case can be made out for his action here being simply intra-party politics. His letter

* And yet, is it really an innovation except semantically? (Not that *that* is not politically important.) As Crider of the *N. Y. Times* noted, in his story on the "job budget" proposal: "Experts who have been following the various postwar full-employment plans felt that the subcommittee was seeking to make mandatory a system which the force of political events during the last decade had made almost into a rule of government, at least as far as the present Administration has been concerned."

to Jones, the only public statement he has made, praises Jones' record, says nothing at all of any policy reasons for making the change, and is frank to the point of crudity about rewarding Wallace for political services rendered. Roosevelt is rarely crude unless he wants to be, and the tone of his letter seems almost deliberately provocative. He must be well aware of Jones' great popularity, and Wallace's equally great lack of it, with Congress. His calculation, therefore, may have been that the Senate would reject Wallace's nomination; or, failing that, at least Congress would separate the Federal Loan Agency from the Commerce Department and allow Wallace to hold only the latter and relatively unimportant post.

Wallace, with his usual pliability, has stated he will accept the Commerce post even if the FLA is split off from it, and this now looks like the best he will get. (The worst, by no means unlikely, is to lose Commerce as well.) But rejection of Wallace won't end the matter. Will Roosevelt veto the rejection? If not, will PAC and Wallace be satisfied? If so, will Congress muster enough votes to repass it over the veto? If the FLA is taken away from Wallace, who will Roosevelt put in the job, a conservative or another New Dealer?

The maneuver is thus far from completed as yet, and it is premature to say definitely what it all means. But it seems at the least reasonable to suppose that even Roosevelt, lighthearted as he is in such matters, would hesitate to replace Jones with Wallace—considering the complex variables involved and the possibility of a Wallace victory—if he thought that Wallace's economic program was seriously incompatible with his own plans for a militarized postwar America. This is the least that can be said. The most is that Roosevelt appointed Wallace to signalize his commitment to a full Permanent War Economy program.

Regardless of Roosevelt's calculations and motives, it is hard to see how the Government can ease the nation into the authoritarian and imperialist pattern it is evolving without the lubricant of full employment and social and economic planning. In his article in the March *POLITICS* on "The Coming Tragedy of American Labor," Daniel Bell described the "New Deal" businessmen "who think in world terms, of foreign markets and foreign investments, of a planned economy at home and cooperation with one or the other two great powers overseas. They are 'friendly' to labor, if labor will cooperate; they are willing to bear a relatively high labor cost, hoping to make it up through foreign exploitation." This kind of thinking seems to be increasingly dominant both in business and in the Administration. Note, for example, how careful Roosevelt was to keep the liblabs out of the reorganized State Department: of the five key officials recently appointed, four were reactionaries (including the able Mr. Clayton, an intimate associate of . . . Jesse Jones!) while the solitary liblab, MacLeish, got a new-made post whose very creation is a sign of the totalitarian streamlining of the Department—his job is to manufacture propaganda ("handle information"). So conscious is Roosevelt of the necessity for keeping foreign policy in "safe" hands that he even rejected Secretary Stettinius's proposal that Benjamin V. Cohen, one of the early New Dealers and reputed to be an honest and principled liberal, be made counsellor to the Department. Since Stettinius

is hardly a leftwinger, the role Roosevelt has in mind for the Department is not hard to deduce.

5.

As this goes to press, the Senate is about to open debate on a motion to reject Wallace for the Secretaryship of Commerce, while the House is about to consider the labor-draft bill. The author of both measures is, by one of those historical coincidences which seem to be more than coincidences, the same person, Senator Bailey. In the one case, he is opposed by Roosevelt, in the other he is strongly supported by him. It is enough to make an honest Southern reactionary's head spin. It is also enough to cause most liblabs to feel slightly dizzy.

For Roosevelt's policy cannot be fitted into the old "progressive-conservative" categories. It is directed toward a Permanent War Economy, in which labor will get stabilized wages and jobs at home (even a guaranteed annual wage if it behaves itself) in return for its acquiescence in an imperialist foreign policy; in which all classes will be conditioned to accept as part of "The American Way" military service for youth and a big army and navy; in which our rulers will make money, keep their power and prestige, and sidetrack political opposition by first preparing and finally waging the Third World War.

War is the one great issue, war and only war. And on that issue, as Roosevelt well knows, the liblabs are "sound." Throughout this war their chief spokesman has not only failed to criticize any aspect of American imperialism abroad, but has even far outstripped Roosevelt himself in lying about the war. Even at this late date, when the last faint hopes of the liblabs for a better world to arise out of the interminable massacre are flickering out, even now Henry Wallace can preface the program of domestic reforms which so shocked his Senatorial critics with words like these: "Thus has America met the challenge of war—with boldness, courage and determination. Thus has America become the symbol—the world over—for the dynamic force of a free people fighting for a free world."

Postscript: The following three items come to hand (or to mind) too late for incorporation above, but deserve to be noted:

(1) The uproar over Wallace obscured another significant new White House appointment: the naming of Aubrey Williams, left New Dealer and onetime head of the National Youth Administration, to run the Rural Electrification Administration. In postwar economic planning, REA will be a key agency.

(2) The Communists have come out for the May-Bailey bill, both in the *Daily Worker* and in a resolution lately passed by their stooge New York City CIO Council (to the high indignation of Phil Murray). Last spring, when Curran, Bridges and other Stalinist CIO chieftains came out for a labor draft, Murray was able to bring enough pressure to force the Party to reverse itself and instruct Curran & Co. to back down (which they did). But the logic of the Party's commitment to a postwar totalitarian society for America (see Browder's *Teheran* for a blueprint) has now proved too strong. The Commies also support Wallace, of course. Thus only the White House and the C.P. at present seem to understand the full implications of the PWE program.

(3) A friend notes that the song everybody is whistling today is "Don't Fence Me In." Whistling in the dark, perhaps?

The Greek Tragedy (2)*

"The city of Athens, when we went in last October, was decked out with Greek and British flags. Across the street people had strung large banners which said, 'WELCOME TO OUR LIBERATORS.' I admired their guts because for perhaps the first time in history a people had not waited until the Germans had gone out before they put up their flags and banners but had put them up for the Germans to see. . . . There was no doubt, too, about the people's feelings for the British Army. Everywhere one saw signs which said, 'SALUTE TO GLORIOUS ENGLAND.' One of them delighted me particularly: 'SALUTE TO GLORIOUS ENGLAND, THE SECOND COUNTRY OF BYRON.'"

—Wing-Commander Robinson, M. P., speaking in Commons, Dec. 20, 1944.

"At night the Athenians scrawl under Scobie's name on British military proclamations: 'FELD KOMMANDANT.' . . . After RAF Spitfires began to strafe ELAS forces in Athens, people said to me: 'The Nazis never used planes.'"

—Dispatches by Constantine Poulos from Athens, Dec. 5 and 7.

On January 11, twelve American correspondents in Athens sent a petition to Washington. They asked the State Department to intercede with the British Government so that the American public might be permitted "to hear occasionally part of the EAM view on the present conflict." They specifically asked that they be allowed to interview EAM leaders when they came through the British lines for negotiations. "General Scobie," they noted, "has forbidden all contact with the 'enemy'—even interviews supervised by his own officers." (My emphasis—D.M.) To this may be added three more items: (1) British Ambassador Leeper in Athens, who thinks EAM is "a silly little band of Communists," is said to abhor talking to American correspondents because "I can speak to British Empire correspondents more freely" (*Dispatch from Constantine Poulos, Dec. 5*). (2) Churchill's comment on Scobie's refusal to permit interviews with EAM leaders: "I am always doubtful about correspondents who go from one side to the other, writing articles." (*Debate, House of Commons, Jan. 16*.) (3) Edgar Ansel Mowrer cabled the *N. Y. Post* from Athens: "Don't believe anything of the news we are allowed to cable regarding Greek affairs."

Considering this censorship, unparalleled in this war except in Russia and Germany, it is truly remarkable how many facts have come out supporting the thesis that the struggle is over a British attempt to restore the monarchy and destroy a strong popular movement, and how few—in fact, literally none—have come out supporting Churchill's thesis that it is over a Communist attempt to make a bloody putsch. If this is the impression an investigator gets at present, working entirely on materials that have been strained through the British censorship filter, and without any direct access to EAM sources, what may we expect when the other side is heard from later on?

1. The Story to Date

Last month's narrative ended with Churchill's dramatic Christmas Day plane trip to Athens. I called this "the first 'people's victory' of the war," and such it was insofar as it showed the unexpected strength of the popular resistance. It was no victory, however, in its results. For Churchill made his trip not to come to terms with EAM, but on the contrary to perfect a new strategy for wiping it out and (ultimately) restoring the king. Why did he go, after all? Not to form a new compromise Greek government, nor to get the EAM into a peace conference, nor to set up the Damaskinos regency, since all these steps had been long since agreed on by both sides and had only been checkmated by British opposition; nor did he have to go to Athens to get the king to agree to a regency, since the king was in London. He went (1) to appease the increasing hostility of public opinion at home; (2) to force on the Greeks as the new government's premier the conservative General Plastiras; (3) to instruct General Scobie to intensify the warfare on EAM until it cracked open politically. In all three aims, he was successful.

On December 29, Churchill returned to London, summoned King George II, and "urged" him to agree to a regency. The next day George appointed Damaskinos regent. At the Cairo Conference in 1943, at the Lebanon Conference in 1944, and steadily after that the EAM had proposed a regency; it had continued to propose it all through the fighting, and the entire Papandreou government early in December had recommended it. No soap—the king in London sat tight. Churchill, however, changed the king's mind in one day. The arguments he used are suggested in a telegram, summarized in the *London Tribune* for January 12, which was sent by the king to his supporters in Athens:

"He says that before he agreed to a regency, he received assurances from the British (presumably Mr. Churchill) that

"(1) The regency is only a temporary measure and that he will return to the Throne.

"(2) The regent will act only on royal advice.

"(3) ELAS and EAM will not be included in the new government.

"(4) The British will provide assistance for the removal of ELAS from all positions of power anywhere in Greece."

Whether the king did get these commitments from Churchill cannot yet be finally determined. But the course of events since then suggests he did.

On January 3, General Plastiras (who had been a few weeks earlier transported in an RAF plane from the French Riviera, where he had spent the last ten years in exile) formed a cabinet of upperclass conservatives, garnished with a few liberals. (A modern Greek liberal would be a Dewey Republican over here.) The general—whose progressive reputation rests on the fact that in 1922 he led a military revolt that threw out King Constantine—at once began to take a line so openly and naively reactionary that even Churchill, questioned on it in Commons, had to disavow responsibility for "the day to day utterances of the present head of the Greek state." His first day in office produced this gem: "The situation in Greece is tragic because the dark figures of internationalists and anarchists inspired from abroad have intervened in our public life.

FOOTNOTE: * See "Greece: the Rottenest Episode of a Rotten War" in last month's *Politics* for the general background of the Greek civil war and for an analysis of events up to Churchill's plane trip to Athens. Reprints of this article are available, free, on request.

I don't see how we are going to solve the present problem without bloodshed. . . . Fortunately, thanks to our British allies, order will soon be restored and the Greeks will enjoy democratic institutions once more." On his second day, he asked "those who have been misled and turned their arms against their country" to "return to duty." He promised nothing—no place in the government for EAM, no disarming of royalist troops, no elections (he confided his personal opinion that they should not be held until after the defeat of Germany and Japan), not even amnesty for the ELAS soldiery. Fifth day: "The situation in Greece is purely military. . . . If the rebels respond to my invitation to lay down their arms, trusting my word that I will not allow establishment of a dictatorship, then my job as War Minister will be confined to the creation of a first-class army. If not, then I naturally will be compelled to head the clearing of the situation by force." (Naturally.) Seventeenth day (Jan. 19): EAM is "a small minority" which attempted a "coup d'etat," and whose "purpose is to bathe thousands of innocent persons in blood for no other reason than that they do not agree with a particular doctrine." His own regime, in happy contrast, he described as "democratic" and "Leftist," adding: "Isn't it fair to take our word for it until we have had our chance to prove it?"

The good general clearly has no head for politics; he should never have left the Riviera. (Or perhaps he should have left it three years earlier: Aneurin Bevan charged in Commons on Jan. 19 that Plastiras tried to make a deal with the Germans in 1941 to return to Greece and head a Quisling government—another Quisling government, I should have said.) The regent, Archbishop Damaskinos, another fine type of Greek liberal, backs up Plastiras completely. On January 13th, he gave a lavish cocktail party for the foreign correspondents, the effect of which was slightly marred by the holy man's refusing to answer even written questions. He did confide his view that the civil war had no political or social significance but was "due exclusively to the wish of armed bands to take over all power."

Scobie Breaks the EAM—for the Present

But the antics of this soldierly buffoon are unimportant except as indicative of the kind of "democratic constitutional government" the Greeks are getting now that their British allies have liberated them from the bloodthirsty EAM-ELAS. It was not the Plastiras "government" but Scobie's troops that smashed EAM (for how long?). On January 4, six days after Churchill got back to London, Scobie launched his biggest drive to date against the ELAS positions. By the next day, ELAS was in retreat from the Athens area; militarily, the turning point in the war had come. On January 6, as ELAS completed its withdrawal from the Athens area, Scobie, whose original peace terms had been centered on this withdrawal, suddenly discovered that ELAS had been taking hostages, became publicly indignant, and announced that completely new negotiations would now have to be opened covering the hostage issue. He sent his troops in pursuit of the retreating ELAS forces. The EAM began to go to pieces politically. On the 7th, the Socialist Party and the ELD (a white-collar and small shopkeeper group) in the key port of Salonika—the EAM's chief urban stronghold—handed the British Ambassador a statement deploring the alleged anti-British policy of EAM (of which they were still members). Fighting ceased with a truce on the 11th; ELAS was anxious to sign because of its recent military and political reverses, while Churchill needed a truce before Parliament reconvened a few days later. The terms were that ELAS withdrew from most of

Greece, but still held Salonika, and that it released all military prisoners and entered negotiations with the Plastiras government about releasing civilian hostages. The spirit of this truce is poignantly conveyed in *Time's* eyewitness report:

"It was late at night. In the austere conference room of the British military headquarters in Athens, stood four dejected Greeks. Three were dressed in ragged civilian clothes. The fourth wore the dirt-stained uniform of the guerilla forces (which included a turtle-neck sweater). All were haggard and unshaven. They were the delegates of the ELAS central committee. No one spoke."

"Suddenly the door opened and Lieut. General Ronald MacKenzie Scobie, tall and trimly military, entered briskly and sat down at the head of a long, polished table. Without a word or a glance at the Greeks, Scobie began rapidly affixing his signature to documents his chief of staff handed him. When he had finished, he rose abruptly and left the room."

"Still silent, the four Greeks sat down at the table and one by one added their signatures."

Three days after the truce was signed, the Greek Chamber of Commerce, with some assistance from the British Embassy, staged a big demonstration in Athens (which was not fired on by the police). The crowd, estimated at from 50,000 to 70,000, was described as "well-dressed." Royalists were much in evidence, carrying huge banners with George's picture and shouting: "Death to the Communists!" and "He is coming! He is coming!" General Napoleon Zervas, the adventurer whose pro-monarchy EDES troops the British had supplied generously with arms and money since the spring of 1943 (when they cut off all support to ELAS), appeared with some followers. (Not very many, since in December most of his troops had gone over to ELAS.) "Long live Scobie!" shouted the crowd in front of the British military headquarters—and Scobie appeared on a balcony and addressed a few words of encouragement to them. "I am particularly happy," confided the general, "to see the working class represented." (An allusion to the new handpicked executive committee of the General Confederation of Workers which Plastiras had installed. "Horny-handed sons of toil" as a British press spokesman felicitously put it.)

As this goes to press, EAM has not yet even had a conference with Plastiras, let alone gotten any representation in the cabinet. The British game seems to be to stall while Plastiras strengthens his military position and economic-political pressure further disrupts EAM. Meanwhile, a constant atrocity-story barrage is pounding away at ELAS. Hundreds of bodies of alleged victims of ELAS executions are being exhumed, and harrowing stories of brutal mistreatment of women, children and old people are circulated. It seems all too probable, especially considering the Communist strength in ELAS, that many, if not most, of these terrible charges are true. Nor is it just a matter of the Stalinists: in civil wars, especially in backward nations, we know that both sides commit atrocities. But, without in any way condoning these horrors, one can point out that even through British censorship some evidence has leaked out showing similar actions by the other side. Descriptions of the police massacre of the December 3 EAM demonstration; little items like this from the *N. Y. Times* of Dec. 29: "An American correspondent witnessed this afternoon the out-of-hand shooting of a prisoner, an alleged Communist, by a Greek regular army officer in the center of Athens." And if the ELAS took, by Churchill's own estimate, "between 5,000 and 10,000 civilian hostages" (all

but 100 of whom are now reported to have been set free), what about the "approximately 10,000 persons" whom Supreme Court Judge Kioussopoulos recently (Jan. 20) revealed are still "detained" by the Athens police?

2. The Historical Pattern

The present conflict in Greece is part of a historical pattern that has repeated itself for over a century and that is compounded of popular revolution, monarchist reaction backed by the British, and rightwing coups when the democratic forces get too strong.

The Communist issue is now part of the pattern, but to try to reduce the present struggle to a Stalinist attempt to set up a puppet government (as with the Lublin government in Poland) is to do violence to reality. The situation is much more like that of Spain at the beginning of the Civil War, when the long-time antagonism between popular and reactionary forces burst out once more, not because of any Stalinist maneuvers but entirely for reasons connected with the internal class struggle. That the Communists in EAM have already slaughtered revolutionary opponents and massacred hostages is true, just as they murdered thousands of POUMists and Anarchists in Spain. That they—or their leaders, at least—have their own totalitarian ends in view is also true, just as it was in Spain. But, also as in Spain, a revolutionary socialist would be ill-advised if he therefore supported the other side, or took a "hands off" attitude, since the fact is that, *for the present*, his enemy and the Communists' enemy is the same, and his allies and the Communists' allies are the same—the great mass of workers and peasants. A rapid historical survey will perhaps expose the deep roots of the present conflict in Greece—indigenous roots that go far below the momentary power-struggle between Britain and Russia.

An article by D. Christophorides in the *Greek-American Tribune* for December 22 last shows the historical pattern in the last century. In 1831, after the Turks had been expelled, the British Tories set up Otto of Bavaria as absolute monarch in Greece, against the decisions of all Greek national assemblies during the revolutionary period. When the people revolted against Otto a decade later, the Tories intervened to keep him on his throne, their Foreign Secretary of the moment, Lord Aberdeen, cynically remarking: "But it is manifest that if Greece desires to be exempt from external control, she must place herself in a position to discharge her own financial obligations without having recourse to the aid of guaranteeing powers." In 1886, the British fleet blockaded Greece to help Turkey put down a revolution in Crete. In 1897 and 1900 British warships went into action to save King George I from the wrath of "his" people. (There is one variation on the pattern today: the 19th century British liberals, notably Canning and Gladstone, opposed the Tories' Greek policy and, when in office, supported the democratic forces in Greece; today the so-called "British Labor Party" backs up the Tories on Greece and its ministers in the Government share full responsibility with Churchill. Compared to the British liblabs of today, even a Gladstone looms up like a moral giant!)

In World War I, the parallel to the present situation became positively uncanny. (See "The Hours of Greece," by L. Graikos, in the *London Tribune* for Dec. 22.) The two Greek political groups of that day were the Liberal party led by Venizelos, representing the rising bourgeoisie, and the court clique of Constantine XII, backed by the big landowners and the backward sections of the peasantry. When war came, Constantine leaned toward Germany, the

Venizelists toward the Allies. In 1917, Venizelos established a parallel Greek government in Salonika. "The generation that volunteered to fight with Venizelos in Macedonia and later on in Asia Minor preserved a hatred against the reigning king which proved fatal to monarchy as an institution." In 1922 the Venizelist General Plastiras overthrew Constantine in a military coup. Despite Constantine's pro-Germanism during the war, he was supported against the Venizelists by the British Government of Bonar Law and was rescued, after the Plastiras coup, by a British warship. Some of the main EAM-ELAS leaders played important roles in the new government: General Serafis, Commander-in-Chief of ELAS, was Plastiras' Chief of Staff; Professor Svolos, chairman of EAM, wrote the republican constitution of 1924; Colonel Bakirdzis, another prominent ELAS leader, also figured in the Plastiras coup. After overthrowing Constantine, General Plastiras handed over his powers to an elected Parliament, which eventually proclaimed the Greek Republic. This survived until the depression of the thirties, which it proved as incapable of surmounting as the Weimar republic. The results were similar: the bourgeoisie, fearing a revolution from the left, installed a "strong man," General Kondylis (unsuccessfully opposed by a few die-hard Venizelists led by General Serafis). Kondylis rigged up a fake plebescite, on the Nazi model, which showed a 98% majority in favor of the restoration of George II to the throne. Less than a year later, on August 4, 1936, King George consolidated his position (and showed that the unpopular monarchy can survive in modern Greece only through dictatorial repression) by smashing the parliamentary republic and installing the Metaxas dictatorship.

In the abortive Greek "popular front" of 1936 (which the King countered with Metaxas), the Venizelist liberals were the chief force. But liberalism in Greece today is politically insignificant: the Venizelists have either gone to the left, to EAM, or to the right, to the British-supported conservative clique now led by Plastiras and Sophoulis. EAM is a continuation of the 1936 Popular Front; it stands for a New Dealish parliamentary republic; nothing in its program or its actions justifies (unfortunately) Churchill's fears of socialist revolution to be expected from it in any near future. It is a New Deal party, however, and not a conservative one—which means it is of necessity anti-monarchy and anti-British; and in a backward country like Greece, God knows what may happen once the door is opened even a crack to social reform (cf. Spain). An excellent article on "Greek Political Parties" in *The Economist* for December 23 last sums up the political dynamics of the present situation:

"In all probability, the Republic can only be revived as a Republic of the Left. The alternative is not a Republic based on the Center or the Right (*i.e., what is now being attempted by Churchill and Plastiras—D. M.*) but the restoration of Monarchy. The Monarchy must base itself on forces that have come to be regarded as anti-national. It can, therefore, reassert itself only as the dictatorship of a minority. . . . Under such conditions, the fears of the Right and the Left have inevitably become feverishly violent. The Right is haunted by the spectre of a Republic which may no longer be Venizelist but 'Red.' The Left's fear of the Monarchy is based not only on Republican sentiment, but also on the foreboding, based on recent experience, that the Monarchy will soon become a tyranny.

"Against this background, the appeals to the Left that it should express its will 'through the ballot and not the bomb' might have been effective in one case only: if the forces of the Right were disarmed simultaneously with

those of the Left. The Republicans in Greece know well that in their country the contraposition of the ballot box and the bomb has been somewhat unreal. In the past those who had the bombs 'managed' the ballot box; and as recently as 1936, Royalism asserted itself through force against an anti-Royalist parliament."

3. Was It an EAM Putsch?

In his speech of January 19, Churchill elaborated the theory that his Government's intervention in Greece was only to frustrate an imminent coup d'état by EAM-ELAS: "On the night of Dec. 4-5 a series of telegrams arrived showing that advancing ELAS forces were about a thousand yards from the Greek Government and . . . the British Embassy in which our women folk of the cipher department and others had been gathered, and seemed to be over-running the place. . . . At 2 o'clock in the morning orders were given to General Scobie to take over command of Athens and restore order. . . . For three or four days or more it was a struggle to prevent a hideous massacre in the center of Athens in which all forms of government would have been swept away and naked, triumphant Trotskyism installed."

We cannot, unfortunately, take Churchill seriously about Trotskyism; there is no evidence that the Trotskyists played more than a minor part in ELAS, certainly nothing compared to the Communists. Churchill's use of the term (while interesting as indicating that Trotsky's name still symbolizes popular revolution) is to be considered rather a diplomatic circumlocution adopted—not without a little malice—to avoid criticising his mighty war ally. He goes on to say as much: "I think 'Trotskyism' is a better definition of Greek Communists and certain other sects than the normal word. It has the advantage of being equally hated in Russia."

This is not the first time Churchill has fabricated a Communist putsch to justify armed intervention against an ally. When British troops and tanks came to the rescue of the reactionary Pierlot regime in Belgium last November, Churchill also spoke of "bloody revolution" being nipped in its loathsome bud. No newspaper correspondent on the spot could discover a trace of this monster, and several wrote circumstantial denials. See also the Dec. 19 Commons debate, when three liblab members—Acland, Shinwell and Bevan—baited Churchill unmercifully about this phantasmal uprising, which they reduced, with copious documentation, to two truckloads of Resistance members en route to surrender their arms, and who turned back quietly when stopped by General Erskine's tanks. Although he was unable to adduce a single piece of counter-evidence, Churchill stuck to his guns. The bulldog breed!

His evidence for an EAM putsch proves only that, four days after General Scobie's provocative ultimatum and two days after the brutal massacre of an unarmed EAM demonstration by the Athens police (the same force the Germans had used against EAM), ELAS had begun to fight for its life. He is unable to show any evidence of EAM-ELAS aggression prior to Dec. 4 because, as I showed last month, EAM's "Teheran" line was to make any compromise short of suicide for the sake of "national unity," whereas the British line was to put the EAM in a military and political position where it would be forced to take up arms, and be battered to pieces by British planes, tanks and guns.

Why, after all, were British forces sent to Greece this fall in the first place? Last summer the Germans began withdrawing their forces from Greece, which they obviously could not hold in the face of the Russian advances in the

Balkans. The ELAS helped speed the parting guest. Philip Jordan, in *The New Statesman and Nation* for December 23 states that on August 21, Papandreou talked with Churchill in Rome. He refused to produce minutes of this momentous conversation when he returned to his cabinet in Cairo, saying merely that they had "reviewed every aspect of the Greek situation and found themselves in complete agreement." (Ominous words.) But whatever Papandreou and Churchill chatted about, one thing is known: at the end of September, when there were almost no Germans left in Greece, the Papandreou government formally requested—the five EAM members dissenting—that Allied forces be sent to occupy Greece. Early in October, therefore, British forces began arriving in Greece—to supervise the distribution of relief, according to Eden's explanation, delivered with a straight face, to his government's parliamentary critics. What these troops actually were sent in for is revealed in the casualty lists. According to official British figures (*Parliamentary Debates*, Dec. 14 and Jan. 16), total British casualties in Greece between the October landings and December 3 were 300; between December 4 and January 6, they were 2,101. That is, seven times as many British soldiers and sailors were killed, wounded, or captured in the one month they were fighting the Greeks as in the two months they were fighting the Germans. Which was the real battle?

The importance attached by the Churchill-Labor Government to crushing the Greek Resistance movement is also indicated by the fact that the British Field Marshal Alexander, the supreme Allied military commander in the Mediterranean theatre, was taken away from the trivial job of fighting the Germans in Italy and sent to Athens for several weeks to direct operations against ELAS. The Greek Mountain Brigade (100% royalist and commanded by an officer who served in the Ministry of Defense of the first Quisling government formed by the Germans in Greece—*Debate in House of Lords*, Dec. 21) was taken out of the line in Italy—where its military record had been excellent, including the capture of Rimini—and packed off to Greece in November. On December 3, 1,000 British storm troops were sent by air to Athens, to be followed shortly by several thousand more, all drawn from the Italian front. Even the conservative *Army and Navy Journal* was moved to note: "Since D-Day in France, greater preoccupation has been shown . . . by Great Britain in Italy, Greece and Albania to protect her lifeline through the Mediterranean than in the achievement of the prime objective of our armies—prompt defeat of Germany." The *Journal's* assumption about the "prime objective of our armies" is surely a little naive. Even a West Point plebe knows what Clausewitz said about war and politics.

Speaking in the House of Lords on December 21, the Earl of Huntingdon pointed out that the Churchill Government talked much of a Leftist seizure of power, not at all of a Rightist coup. Yet since EAM had majority support, one would expect, as in Spain, the *Right* to attempt a putsch to forestall a peaceful electoral victory by the Left. He quoted a radio speech by Papandreou made on November 28, just before the fighting began, in which that statesman "accused the Right—what he then called 'the Ruling Class'—of provoking civil war." (The Huntingdon speech, delivered in support of a motion by Lord Faringdon to "regret" the Government's "shameful" policy on Greece, is a masterly, detailed and damning summary of events in review of British policy up to that point. The noble lord, it might be noted, is a Tory.)

If a Rightist putsch, in short, was not in the offing after the Germans left Greece, it was simply because (1) EAM,

the only political movement with mass backing, lacked the programmatic clarity (largely because Teheran-minded Communists were too strong in it) to attempt, in the period after the German forces withdrew and before the British arrived, precisely that "bloody revolution" Churchill talks so much about; and (2) the British made any Rightist action of the sort unnecessary by taking the offensive against EAM themselves.

Inside Britain

The most shameful part of the whole business is not Churchill's policy—what else would Tories be expected to do?—but the behavior of his collaborators, the British "Labor" Party. Those in the Government with him, like Bevin, actually planned the destruction of the EAM and publicly accepted responsibility for it. Those in Parliament made indignant speeches—and voted for the Government. The mere fact that British military operations against EAM were suspended on January 11 (because, as we have seen, their objective had been attained) was enough to cool down these fire-eaters. When Churchill faced the Parliament on the 16th, after the recess, he was cheered loudly from all sides. He delivered a scurrilous and mendacious broadside against EAM and he got away with it. Various Labor members, it is true, made some more indignant speeches; but when it came to a vote, Churchill won, 340 to 7. The fiery Aneurin Bevan was among the 340. (When he was elected to the executive committee of the BLP last month, some feared that he might be a bull in that genteel china shop; his action on Greece indicates that, if he is a bull, his name is Ferdinand.) That there was any vote at all on the Greek issue is due to Sir Roger Acland, leader of the Common Wealth party, who felt so strongly about it that he dared to move a reduction in the war budget in order to force a vote. The political apathy and feebleness of the organized British workingclass, and the consequent necessity of looking elsewhere for socialist leadership today, is suggested by the fact that no labor member, however "left," but rather the aristocratic leader of a middleclass Christian group had the guts to get up and oppose the Churchill-Labor Government on the Greek issue.

But British labor has not forgotten the Greek people! Byron went to fight for them, and now Sir Walter Citrine, head of the Trades Union Congress, is touring Greece with a labor delegation . . . "investigating."

"I have just come back from Athens, the saddest city in Europe. . . . Day and night, the man-hunt continues. The police cram the jails with those suspected of belonging to ELAS or of being Leftist. . . . In Athens' bitter street fighting, somewhere between 2,000 and 5,000 people were killed or wounded. Hundreds of buildings were destroyed, with losses estimated at \$250 millions. . . . I talked with upperclass Athenians. They were almost hysterical in their fear of ELAS and the Communists. . . . They all looked prosperous; they obviously had had plenty to eat during the German occupation. . . . From all sides, including American and British officers who were with the ELAS guerillas long before liberation, you get one overwhelming verdict: the ELAS resisted the Germans more, and more consistently, than any other group in Greece. . . . I talked with Greek editors who were old friends. I asked one of these, 'Were many upperclass Greeks active in resisting the Germans?' The editor paused. Then he looked me in the eye and said: 'Yes, there were several.'"

—Leland Stowe, overseas broadcast on the Blue Network, Jan. 20, 1945, 7:15 P. M.

Rear-Views (1)

Uncle Sam's Uncle

My friend is a liberal. The last time I saw him in his office—it was right after Roosevelt had revealed it was only an Atlantic Chatter after all—he said to me: "But you should have listened to me, my boy, when I told you three years ago that no government on earth can do anything good. They are all bad, bad, bad." I didn't reply. There are some things one does not, can not reply to. For my friend, who is so daringly contemptuous of all governments when he talks to me, sounds very different in print. He is constantly lecturing them, admonishing them like a patient and understanding uncle talking to his inexperienced, hot-headed nephew. He is in fact the Uncle of Uncle Sam. (Uncle Sam also has aunts, whom I hope to describe some time.) His publication is known for the seriousness of whatever it allows to appear in print. Not a thing that will ever make you smile, not the shadow of libel. Politeness above all. All criticism safely held within the confines of the Theory of Errors. This theory is well-known to liberals and even more familiar to a former fascist like myself, for it was the theory which governed public opinion under Mussolini. "How could Our Leader have made such a mistake? . . . How could he associate with such stupid people as Ciano or the illiterate Alfieri? . . . He is badly advised, badly informed. If we could only make him hear the Voice of Reason. . . ." As fascism grew stronger, Mussolini became less and less accessible to the Voice of Reason. What a tragedy! My friend's magazine applies the same theory to the Big Three. Errors, errors, errors constantly, interminably, errors everywhere. Ah what a thorny crown that of Presidency, Marshalry, Primeministry, and how very difficult it is for those who wear it to avoid committing one mistake after another. What is then the duty of a devoted liberal editor? To warn them, of course. "Look out, O my Leader, don't step on that, it's cowdung. And there is a precipice, kindly keep closer to the wall." At times, Uncle gets a little impatient. You should hear him then: "Tut tut tut," he says, and then repeats in a thundering voice: "TUT TUT TUT TUT!" What ARE you doing there, playing in the street with that awful Franco child? Back inside and finish your Atlantic Charter. Why don't you play with Joseph, or even Winston?" Uncle has a job on his hands, I can tell you. But he feels well repaid when the kids play nice games together, like at Teheran. (Was *that* a party!) To reward them, Uncle had a nice cover made for his magazine. It read in big letters: FOUR MEN RESHAPE THE WORLD. The kids played ghosts at that party. Whenever any one said a naughty word about power politics or secret deals, out they came in bedsheets yelling "Wow wow here comes the spirit of Teheran!" They scared every one so much that hardly a naughty word was said. Uncle was more scared than any one else.

I once took a German refugee around to see Uncle. This German was a professor of social sciences and he was

intensely, painfully loyal to America and whenever he spoke of his loyalty, which was very often, he spat through his teeth, right in the faces of those he was extolling as Americans and therefore civilized people. He was sincere and believed in calling a spade two spades, in case the Americans failed to see one. Brought into the presence of Uncle, my German began to insult his own country with such violence that every one present—several of Uncle's colleagues were also there—was happy he was not a German, and we only feared that at the end the professor would commit suicide bloodily over Uncle's glasstopped desk to give us an idea of how Germans should be treated. He said that "If ve vood beliff thett chermny kenn be reddicated ve vould be full"—by which he meant foolish—and he explained how some 2,000 years ago the Germans had done things that the F.B.I. should have been informed about. I could see that Uncle was tremendously impressed—a little disturbed, but mostly impressed. He fancies that he is a bit of a scientist himself and writes articles about The Wonder-World of Modern Science which are at least no worse than his political articles. So now he spoke up in his plaintive piping voice: "What would you say is the *scientific* explanation of this phenomenon, Mr. X? Do you think there may be some chemical agent in the German soil which makes for violence and aggressiveness? Because with the Advancement of Science it might be an interesting field of investigation, and suppose our Modern Scientists could isolate that agent, then we might see Germany permanently reclaimed and ready to join the family of Peaceloving Democratic Nations." There was a deadly silence—not even Uncle's newest Bright Young Man could think of anything to say—during which the pleading eyes of Uncle rolled from one end of his glasses to the other like the yolk of a raw egg in a spoon. But my German saved the situation; he had evidently been pondering in his social scientific way this concept of my Uncle's and now he thundered his conclusion: "I beck to dissegree viz yoo. Iff ve vould beliff diss, dese chemical cherms vould mekk annodder nazism egenst uss by pretending dey are cured." Uncle answered that it was not so easy to fool scientists and that was the end of the argument.

I used to write for Uncle only I didn't like the way he treated my stuff. He once cut out all the best phrases from a review and then wrote me: But my dear fellow, this isn't long enough. Another time I sent in something and when it appeared in print all I recognized was the punctuation. Commas, semicolons, question marks were all mine, all at the same distance from each other, but the things I had said between them, those were no longer there. These experiences made me curious about Uncle's own methods of literary composition. What is it he has before his eyes while he writes? I asked myself. Because every writing creature sees some image. Poets see the woman of their heart, mystics see the holy virgin or god himself. I decided that Uncle sees those old gentlemen exhibited in the show windows of the Union League Club or the University Club who snooze away their last years with a newspaper in front of their closed eyes. His language is all directed to them, and it says, with a little forefinger stiffly raised: Now look out, it is in our mutual best interest to promote justice, decency, democracy, fair play, etcetera. With a special emphasis on the etcetera.

Philosophically, Uncle belongs to the school that believes that everything is interrelated and that only Universal Knowledge can cope with such a devilishly complicated state of affairs. If you want to say, for example, "To me the whole business of the Atlantic Charter stinks to heaven," he will not permit it, partly because such abusive language is undemocratic, but above all because, to be admitted to Uncle's forum, you must have a Cosmology. They ask you at the door: "Where is your Cosmology?" And if you have none, you are not admitted. "Go to Dwight Macdonald," they say. "We will not receive a man without a Cosmology." There are good reasons for this caution. There are, as I have said, aunts to Uncle Sam, who go to all the forums, round-table discussions, conferences, and such. And when they hear a fellow complain that the British are reestablishing fascism in Greece, they first make sure that Greece exists, then they ask about the flora and fauna, including some queries about bird life if they are members of the Audubon Society. Then, having established the geographic identity and reality of Greece, they ask the speaker (who is a trifle groggy by now): "You say that Greece is the testing ground for a new fascism. But we have heard many reputable authorities deny this. Would you explain?" The poor devil explains and they ask him: "But isn't it all due to the fact that they don't have vitamins in Greece?" "A druggist could answer your question better than a revolutionist." They then ask him if he is a revolutionist for the good or for the bad. The man says for the good. This pleases them no end. But here comes Mrs. X, who belongs to the Foreign Policy Association, and says: "What would you do about foreign trade? I am told that the trade in hairpins between Greece and Italy was very profitable once and that it stopped because they didn't listen to Mr. Hull. Why do you suppose they didn't and do you think that was a very democratic way to treat our Secretary of State?" At this point the young man admits he knows nothing about the hairpin trade and his reputation sinks so low that his assertion that the world stinks, which normally would have come in after the sixth day of debate, has no chance at all to come up.

Uncle knows all this only too well and that is why he takes precautions. In fact, every now and then they call him to Washington and give him hell for his revolutionary extravagance. This always sets him up no end. Like the time he greeted me with: "These are sad times, bad bad times, my dear fellow. Imagine—I have just heard that a girl who was coming to work with us here is not coming after all because her father told her that if she worked for me, a dangerous radical, she would never find another job. Imagine calling me a dangerous red!" he said, and laughed. I began to laugh with him and went on laughing after he had stopped, and while my laughter was getting more and more hysterical, he was getting more and more uneasy and looking at me with those big egg-yolk eyes. But Uncle didn't have any hard feelings about it. I suppose he really cannot afford such luxuries in his position. I bet you he will be delighted—but it's really *delicious*, my dear fellow—positively delighted to read this article.

A Note on Max Weber's Politics

I

The authors of the note on Max Weber in the October *POLITICS*, C. Wright Mills and Hans Gerth, say of the great sociologist: "In the eighteen-nineties, Weber had set out as a monarchist; he ended as a sceptical liberal for whom democracy was a mere technique for selecting efficient leaders." The following dialogue between Weber and General Ludendorff will make somewhat clearer what he meant by democracy. It took place in the spring of 1919 and is recorded in the biography of Weber by his wife. (Marianne Weber: "Max Weber, Ein Lebensbild." Tuebingen, 1926, pp. 664, 665.)

L: "There's your fine democracy! You and the *Frankfurter Zeitung* are responsible for it! What good has come of it?"

W: "Do you believe then that I consider the mess we are in now democracy?"

L: "If that's how you talk, perhaps we can come to an understanding."

W: "But the mess before was also no monarchy."

L: "What do you understand then by democracy?"

W: "In a democracy the people elects the leader (Fuehrer) whom it trusts. Then the elected one says: Now shut up and obey. People and parties must no longer butt in."

L: "Such 'democracy' is all right with me!"

W: "Afterwards the people can judge—if the leader has made mistakes—to the gallows with him!"

It would surely be wrong to identify Weber with Hitler; his whole nature was firmly against Nazi barbarity and anti-Semitism, and as a sociologist he rejected racist explanations of culture. But as an intense nationalist for whom the final question in politics was the interest of Germany as a world-power, he judged different political systems accordingly. We can easily understand how, with his fear of the left and his respect for the strong leader with "charismatic" qualities, capable of inspiring an irrational devotion, he came to speak in a way that anticipates the Nazis. Russia, whether Czarist or Bolshevik, was for him the great menace to Western civilization. He justified the last war as a defense of the West against Czarism; even after the defeat he was satisfied that Germany had saved the world from the Russian knout, although he dreaded the possibility that Russia might become powerful again and share the world with the victorious Americans. Had he lived after 1920, it would have been a cruel dilemma for him whether to accept or reject the man who was re-establishing German power and preparing for a war against the national enemy.

II

Mills and Gerth also make much of Weber's prophetic insight into the coming of "bureaucratic collectivism". "In 1906," they say, "he predicted bureaucratic socialism for Russia in a brilliant essay on the first phase of the Russian

revolution." That democracy and socialism *must* lead to a stranglehold of the bureaucratic state over the individual is a banality of nineteenth century liberalism; you will find it in most critics of the left since the 1840s, and especially in the writings of that sour defender of freedom and inequality, Herbert Spencer ("The Coming Slavery"); earlier, in the time of Napoleon already, the state was compared to a factory in which men were reduced to mechanical instruments. To hold such views implies no unusual historical profundity. What is remarkable and less often mentioned is that those who dread the authority of the state are the first to call for its repressive action when the masses demand a little freedom. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that anyone who could foresee in 1905 the present outcome of the revolutions in Russia, as Weber supposedly did, had a truly prophetic mind. We should regard his premises and observations with a considerable respect. But I do not know where the translators of Weber have found this remarkable forecast. During the revolution of 1905, Weber wrote two long studies of several hundred pages on the events and social movements in Russia, which he followed with a passionate interest (*Archiv fuer Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*. Vols. 22, 23, 1906). These studies are a test of his insight into political affairs. He predicted that Czarism would be strengthened by the reaction against the revolution, but would have to admit certain reforms. Nowhere in the articles does he foresee the ultimate victory of the Bolshevik party which he treats with condescension as a group of foolish and fanatical putschists. If he anticipates the increasing bureaucratization of Russian society, that is not because he expects it to turn socialist, but because of the introduction of capitalism which necessarily limits freedom in subordinating individuals to its organizing and rationalizing functions. Hence he reassures "those who live in constant dread that there might in the future be too much 'democracy' and 'individualism' and too little 'authority' and 'aristocracy' and respect for the official. History inexorably brings forth, according to all experience, new 'aristocracies' and 'authorities' to which anyone who finds it necessary for himself or for the 'people' can cling. If it depended only on 'material' conditions and the constellations of interests directly or indirectly 'created' by them, any sober consideration would have to say: all economic signs point in the direction of increasing lack of freedom. It is extremely ridiculous to ascribe to present high capitalism, as it is imported now into Russia and as it exists in America—this inevitability of our economic development—affinity with democracy or even with freedom, in any sense whatsoever." (*op. cit.*, Vol. 22, pp. 346 ff.) (The quotation marks are Weber's, a characteristic of his style, significant for his self-conscious neutrality in dealing with value terms in science: the people are the so-called "people").

It appears from this (and from other writings) that Weber believed in the inevitability of a further bureaucratization of society and restriction of freedom not so much as a consequence of the need to maintain the power

of a class or a dictatorial group under unstable conditions, but as inherent first of all in the very nature of society as shown in the past, and secondly, in the special requirements of a complex modern economy and technology. At times he also seems to say that Western civilization is founded on a "rationalizing" spirit (already visible in the Middle Ages) which creates all these forms of enslavement and alienation in practical life and culture; but he is hardly clear or consistent on this point. The same factors would in any case operate to limit freedom in a socialist society. If individual rights and culture existed under contemporary capitalism, it was in spite of the economic order rather than because of it. The conditions which had made them possible had long ago vanished; freedom and culture were now merely survivals from an older stage of society and their maintenance required a special resolution and effort.

Yet in writing of the Russian uprising of 1905, he could say: "The Russian struggle for freedom shows few 'great' features that appeal directly to the 'pathos' of the outside spectator. This is due to the circumstance that, except for the unintelligible agrarian program, the goals of the struggle have long ago lost the charm of the new for us Westerners: they seem to lack the originality which they had in the time of Cromwell and Mirabeau. . . . They are, for most of us, trivial—like daily bread. Besides which, there is another circumstance: both sides lack truly 'great leaders' to whom an emotionally interested outsider can attach himself." The whole show is for Weber a movement of epigones; the ideas of the revolution, on all sides, seem to be merely "collective products." It is therefore impossible, for an outsider, to distinguish among the common ideas and actions the "mighty pathos of individual destinies", the idealism and energies, the hopes and disillusionments of the fighters. The revolution, he says, is too much like modern war: all technique and nerves.

When the Czar was overthrown and a republic established, Weber refused to consider it an advance toward democracy in Russia. In an article published in April, 1917, he wrote: "There has not yet been a revolution, but simply the removal of an incompetent monarch." As a bourgeois nationalist, Weber understood very well that the bourgeois leaders of the Russian regime in April, 1917, were imperialists who were not at all inclined to encourage democracy; and he recognized also the chauvinism of the Russian social-democrats of the right. But beyond this, in all that concerned the mass of the people, his insight was blind and grossly wishful. He reasoned that since the industrial workers were earning high wages in the war plants, they could not possibly be sympathetic to revolution or to peace or ever ally themselves with the peasants who were calling for land and the cessation of the war. "Wherever in the whole world socialist workers have controlled the government (as in the Sicilian cities), they have shown themselves conscious promoters of the capitalist development that gives them the opportunity for work." A revolution of the workers, he was certain, would not succeed in any case, since the masses could not obtain the financial credits indispensable for a stable regime. Weber nevertheless feared these socialist workers and his article is in part addressed to the German socialists whom he

warns against the Russian example. The Russian socialists want their German comrades to stab Germany in the back when the fatherland is beset by an army of "Negroes, Ghurkas and the barbaric riffraff of the whole world. . . . It is absolutely necessary that the German workers know that one cannot in any sense speak today of a true democracy in Russia. With a really democratic Russia we would always conclude an honorable peace. With the present Russia, presumably not, for the rulers need the war for their own power." But "with absolute certainty the moment will naturally come" in a few months when the bourgeois elements in Russia will create the order necessary for a decent peace. And he concludes his article on one of the most fateful events in modern history with these words: "From the present pseudo-democracy we, for our part, have nothing at all to learn, except this one thing: that one ought not to endanger the moral credit of a crown through such a swindle as the present voting right of the Duma" ("Russia's Transition to Pseudo-Democracy", in *Gesammelte politische Schriften*, 1921, pp. 107 ff.)

What did he say when the impossible happened and the workers and peasants overthrew the bourgeois order?

His thoughts on the October Revolution may be found in a lecture on socialism, delivered before an audience of Austrian army officers in Vienna in the spring of 1918. He called it a "military dictatorship of the corporals" and doubted the ability of these Bolshevik corporals, even with the help of experts and army officers of the old regime,

KROPOTKIN

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to survive or to maintain the economic life of the country. "It seems to me questionable whether the officers, once they have the troops again in hand, will let themselves be led forever by these intellectuals." In this view of the transitoriness of the Bolshevik power, Weber did not anticipate armed intervention from without. On the contrary, he spoke for a hands-off policy towards Russia, in the following words: "This is the first and only great experiment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in history. And one can say with assurance and complete sincerity: the negotiations in Brest-Litovsk were conducted on the German side in the most loyal fashion in the hope that we would obtain a real peace with these people. That happened for various reasons: those with a bourgeois standpoint were for peace, because they said to themselves: For heaven's sake, let these people make their experiment, it will surely go under and will then be a horrifying example; we others, because we said: If this experiment succeeds and we see that culture is possible on this soil, then we will be converted. The one who stood in the way was Mr. Trotsky, who wasn't satisfied to make this experiment in his own house and to hope that if it succeeded, it would mean an incomparable propaganda for socialism throughout the whole world, but with the typical vanity of a Russian litterateur, he wanted still more and hoped to unloose civil war in Germany through verbal battles and the misuse of such words as "peace" and "self-determination" . . . (*Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Soziologie und Sozialpolitik*, 1924, pp. 492 ff.).

Weber was less naïve about the German aims at Brest-Litovsk than would appear from the lecture. The letters he wrote to his wife during the negotiations express anxiety over the effects of German military and diplomatic policy at Brest-Litovsk.

It is unmistakably evident from these judgments of Weber on the course of events in Russia from 1905 to 1918 that his forecasts were hardly remarkable for prophetic intelligence. They reflect throughout the incapacity of a German academic enemy of socialism, no matter how astute and gifted as a sociologist, to grasp the significance of events which only a few of the very ablest revolutionary theoreticians understood clearly.

III

Yet in reading the lecture of 1918, one is struck by the sober, objective tone of Weber's account of socialism for the information of army officers who may soon have to deal with uprisings of the workers. As a German nationalist he was bound to oppose a movement that was avowedly internationalist, and which he feared might bring about a catastrophic downfall of his country. But he was also attracted by the idealism and intellectual character of the socialist movement. In the same talk, he said of the *Communist Manifesto* that it was a scientific achievement of the first order and that no scholar could honestly deny this. Marx was an example of the successful fusion of scientific study and political leadership, of objective research and the prophetic spirit, to which Weber himself vainly aspired. He once speculated on the possibility of

his joining the Social-Democratic movement, in which he might play a role. He thought it would be inconsistent, however, with his bourgeois commitments and his dependence on inherited property (which gave him the means to write his books). In general, it may be said that his attitude to the Left was ambiguous and opportunist, according to events, just as this convinced nationalist often dissociated himself from the bourgeoisie even in proposing a thoroughly bourgeois policy. On the one hand, he despised the parliamentary politics of the Social-Democrats whom he described as petty-bourgeois, impotent and bureaucratic—a ridiculous spectacle beside true revolutionists like the Russians of 1905. On the other hand, in fighting these revolutionists and their German Spartakist comrades, he adopted the revisionist criticism of Marx that sustained the mediocre, philistine Social-Democrats, and he appealed more than once to their standpoint and support against the Bolshevik revolution and the programs of socialization in Germany, denouncing both of these as un-Marxist and contrary to the principles of "loyal" and "honest" socialists. He argued among other things that the business cycle was being ironed out, that crises were becoming progressively less severe, contrary to Marx's prediction, and therefore need not entail the catastrophic conditions favorable to a socialist overturn.

When the revolution of November, 1918, swept out the Kaiser and for a moment threatened to repeat the Russian events, Weber attacked the party of Luxemburg and Liebknecht as "parasites who wish to live not for the Revolution, but from the Revolution, unemployed idlers who feed on society and serve as spies and informers. For this and nothing else is the essence of Bolshevism in Russia as of the related movements in Germany, however honest may be the litterateurs and idealists who stand at their head." The proposals for socialization, very much in the air when he wrote at the end of 1918, Weber also discounted as utopian; a revolutionary proletarian Germany would not obtain the necessary credits from America, nor could a union or party officials take over successfully the administrative functions of the big capitalists, the leaders of heavy industry. Only by using the latter "is progress to socialization possible today. Every educated socialist knows this; if he denies it, he is only a swindler. The resentment and caste instincts of academic litterateurs against men who are not their pupils and yet earn money and exercise power, would be the worst of all possible counsellors to the economically progressive workers." (*Gesammelte Politische Schriften*, pp. 341ff.).

IV

I have not brought together these sayings and writings of Weber in order to characterize him as a sociologist. His researches into religion, law, and social and economic history are an immense work of the highest value that cannot be judged by his practical political views, although they were perhaps influenced by his particular standpoint. But it is necessary to consider these views when admirers of Weber try to present him as a major prophet for our time and set him beside Marx and Trotsky, men of an altogether different and much greater historical significance. In general, writers about Weber—and there are

many—disregard his concrete political judgments. These opinions had little effect in his day, yet they should not be ignored by anyone who wishes to understand Weber's teaching as a whole or who is concerned with the problematic relations of social science and social action, and with the part of class attitudes in both.

If Weber is so attractive a figure today to sociologists who have not known his volcanic personality directly and do not share his political views, it is largely because of the weight he gave to ethical and religious ideas and to inspired, spiritually energetic individuals in his account of the development of institutions, at the same time that he insisted on the hard realities of power—sometimes with a complacent dig at powerless reformers and utopians—and declared force to be the decisive factor in political history. This, and also his passionate seriousness which is legendary in a profession that risks little and tends most often toward a servile justification of things as they are. Weber had a great and outspoken sympathy for individuals who live and suffer disinterestedly for a high cause. It is known that he intervened to save Ernst Toller in court after his part in the Bavarian Soviet Republic, although Weber was horrified by the revolution, which he stigmatized as an utter disgrace to the German nation. He defended Toller as a sincere man, who had acted from conviction alone.

Yet when we read more of Weber and reflect on his ethical judgments, we see how much they were limited by his nationalist and class attitudes. His admiration for idealists and martyrs often seems to us the applause of an earnest, chivalrous onlooker, who enjoys the spectacle of intransigent conviction almost as a performance and condemns a subversive disorder wherever he finds it, without noting the necessary connection between the two. In defending Toller, he characterized him as a man who let himself be misguided by the hysteria of the masses, as if the masses did not also consist of individuals no less courageous and ready to sacrifice themselves for freedom, and as if Toller's sympathy for the people could be separated from their actual condition. But these anonymous, uncultured individuals acted from self-interest, whereas Toller was a pure idealist.

Weber is always drawing a line between the leaders and the people, (until his exasperation with the former overflows and he attacks them as "litterateurs", motivated by vanity or personal resentment). By detaching the ethical qualities of revolutionary leaders from the content of their actions, he is able to respect them and to preserve his own honor as a high-minded man who can rise above parties. By detaching the action of the masses from their human dignity and needs, he is able to justify their repression and the power of his own class. Through an obvious mechanism, his double ethical standard for the individual and the people becomes in practice a single standard, favorable to the capitalist order, when he has to judge revolutions and wars. During World War I, which he welcomed with enthusiasm, he accepted the terrible losses of his country as a necessary price for the maintenance of German power. On the other hand, the incomparably less destructive revolution of November, 1918, he condemned as a "bloody carnival." In spite of his conviction that force is the ultimate means in social and national struggles, he was un-

easy in its presence and like many others who support the violence of the state against the working-class, he laid the responsibility on the victims. He could say of the brutal assassination of Liebknecht: "The dictatorship of the gutter has come to an end that I would not have wished. Liebknecht was undoubtedly an honest man. He called out the gutter to battle—the gutter has struck him down." How would he have spoken had he known that this murder was contrived from above? Only a few weeks before, Weber had written in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*: "Given the character of the Left, revolutionary patches are inevitable; we must wait and see whether the socialist regime, including the Independents, will have a strong enough hand to render the militants harmless by harsh, energetic, and yet humane methods".

Having no sympathy for the people, his idea of freedom was not a positive action or right which transforms social life as a whole through its humane democratic content, but a breathing-space of private existence, separate from the giant institutions which enslave man in the office or the factory. In raising the question (without seriously attempting an answer) what "one could oppose to this machinery in order to preserve a remnant of our humanity from this parcelling of the soul, this complete domination of bureaucratic life-ideals", he did not have in mind such commonplace things as oppression, poverty, unemployment and wars, but the spiritual malaise of the successful cultured bourgeois, who feels the incompatibility of modern professional routine and the inherited norms of a creative personal life. When it came to a choice between what he considered the highly moral and enlightened German officialdom and the great bureaucracy of business, he favored the latter as more free, although ethically inferior; his chief argument, however, was that national interest was more important than ethics—the corrupt officials of the democracies contributed more to the national power than did the honest German bureaucrats.

This ultimate criterion of national power was for Weber something beyond rational criticism. One could examine its logical consequences, but it could neither be justified nor invalidated by any evidence. The social sciences provided theories and facts for considering the means; the ends were above science, like acts of faith, and conflicts of ends could be resolved only by force. Weber therefore strictly forbids value judgments to science and insists constantly on the neutrality of social science in dealing with matters which he regards as of the highest human importance. This sharp separation between the neutral, professional character of social science and the aims of social life permits a man to reconcile a scientific expertness in the service of the bureaucratic state with an inner hostility to that state, since for Weber the spiritual value of science and the freedom of the scientist rest on their common detachment from special interests. It is a further example of that rationalizing of life through the extreme division of labor and "parcelling of the soul" which Weber laments as baneful to the human spirit. It may seem that by exempting ends from scientific criticism, Weber is protecting a realm of instinctive, ultimate values from the dessicating rationality which everywhere weakens the life of the emotions and the sensitiveness to the irreducible and personal in experience. But in practice, where alternative aims

conflict, this dogmatic neutrality of social science preserves the ruling doctrines and aims from critical consideration and delivers the weak into the hands of the strong. We are not surprised that Weber abandons this strict neutrality and objectivity of science when he is faced by revolution, nor that he resorts to the abuse of opponents that disgusted him in the Russian Menshevik press in 1905. Then the causality that he formerly admitted with the greatest prudence and subjected to searching criticism becomes an obvious and unquestionable inevitability; that socialism or any fundamental change in society is impossible or undesirable at the moment is for him an axiomatic truth as well as a consequence of the few poor facts that he can muster, facts that now appear to us as straws to which clings a desperate man.

Weber has been described as a man whose genius was frustrated because of the conflict between his intellectual calling and his passionate nature, his desire to be scientist and political leader, a master of expediencies in a game of power and also a man of absolute ethical conviction. I think it is evident that the conflict was not only between these opposed aims, but within them, in the principles he held to. In writing on contemporary society, he proceeded from assumptions about its character which kept him from understanding the war and its effects. He was often taken by surprise and was possessed in the end by the desire for a dictatorial leader to control the masses—which could only mean the destruction of much that he held dear, including the freedom of science and culture. In his account of the history of capitalism, he was unable to establish a convincing *rapport* between his two conceptions of capitalist

life as the product of specific economic and social conditions and also of a prior spirit of rationalization operating independently in the ethical and religious fields. His basic class loyalties provided no adequate goals for his rich emotional nature; this impetuous, intellectually inspired man, of enormous energy, eager for social life and heroic leadership, supported a class that could offer him only a perspective of decay and repression. Although he recognized in general the conflict between ideals and everyday conditions, he failed to perceive how deeply incompatible were his personal values and his more ultimate social or national ones. In the moral sphere, he admired courageous and disinterested individuals, but misjudged their relation to events and to the groups to which they belonged. He could not see out of what repression and exploitation came his own dignity as a loyal German, who accepted the integrity of the army as an unquestionable axiom of social well-being, even if it meant suffering for millions of people.

The tragedy of Weber is the tragedy of German culture during his period: a culture based upon ideals of creative freedom, inherited from the period of the formation of modern Germany, from its philosophers and poets and scientists, but also a culture attached to a status quo which Weber himself perceived as the fated destroyer of those values. The lesson of aristocratic harmony taught by this culture has been so well-learned that any radical effort to overcome the decaying society excites alarm and scepticism in the defenders of that culture because of the necessary destructiveness of any popular movement. It disposes them to a melancholy, high-minded moralism in which they feel themselves to be above all parties, while most energetic in fighting the party of freedom.

MEYER SCHAPIRO

Can American Politics Be Socialized?

Arthur W. Calhoun

OVER against Harold Laski's nasty pontifical article in the *Chicago Sun*, wherein he gloats over the inanity and futility that he describes in the American Socialist Party, may well be placed the seasoned and competent judgment of a foremost American economist, who, after a year in Britain in the late thirties, said: "The Conservative Party is impregnable, and the Labor Party is a trap for Labor." Is there, however, no middle ground between American Socialist futility and British Labor Party fatuity,—that "unconscious dullness;—often with a sense of self-complacency", which seems to characterize Mr. Laski's party?

1.

Well, it is as certain as anything can be that hardly any Americans (or Britishers) can be interested in principles; nearly all are governed by momentary, superficial interests justified as expediency, which is always short-sightedness. Indeed the quality of political action is such that mere expediency is bound to have the upper hand. Major political parties in the very nature of the case are certain to be devoid of principles, and a minor party adhering to prin-

ciple is not a party at all but a school. If by any chance such an educational device should become in effect a party, that is to say a major party, it would lose in the process any principles it had, and somebody would have to start the job over again—the thankless task of the Independent Labor Party even now in Britain.

But politics can not be socialized unless through the emergence and ascendancy of a decisive principle transcending the political state. Therein lies the unmistakable strength of the Socialist Labor Party, which is no good at tactics or strategy, but does manage to keep alive and active a central conception of Labor principle and policy very much neglected by such as become infatuated with power politics,—namely the supersession of the political state by a workers' industrial order, and dependence on this ultimate demand as a sufficient party line. Holding this ground the S.L.P. retains, moreover, its strength and vitality better than does its opportunist rival, the Socialist Party.

Perhaps those that are disheartened by the defection of erstwhile S.P. politicians ought to ask whether such defec-

tion is not the logical consequence of the attempt to combine principles with politics. It will not do to be blandly critical of even the time-serving P.A.C. unless one is prepared to choose absolutely between expediency and right in the realm of social action, realizing fully that "expediency" is one of the weasel words that fatally trap the unwary, as it has now entangled the Communist Party to the point of making it the most sinister factor in American life, possessing a diabolical power to be used to confirm all that is worst in American culture.

If the question is one of how to get control of the United States government, it needs to be observed that in the United States no party ever started small and became big. The Democratic Party started full-grown and captured the country the second time it tried. The same is true of the Republican. Americans indeed have never taken to heart the scriptural injunction, "Despise not the day of small things!" Their psychology is amply illustrated by the fact that the nearly five million votes LaFollette got in 1924 did not seem worth while to his partisans, who evaporated immediately after the election. It is safe to say, in fact, that unless some circumstance of major dramatic power launches full blown a new major party, the United States will never have one.

2.

The seeming strength accumulated by the Socialist Party before the first World War, impressive enough as it was to warrant the projection of curves that would predict the day of triumph, was largely illusory, a mere conjuncture of random elements of discontent really pointing in diverse directions and just happening to coincide superficially for a fleeting moment. To use the War as an explanation of the fading of that evanescent harmony is superficial.

For one thing there was the convergence of all sorts of meaningless and pointless episodes that made Socialist votes for no good reason and that contributed nothing to the furtherance of Labor politics. Such for instance was the situation in Florida about 1910, as illustrated by the old judge from New Hampshire, who was still a Republican, but in order to be in politics at all voted in the Democratic primary. In the general election, however, he voted Socialist unless the Democratic nominee suited him. "For", said he, "we need two parties in Florida, and I know that while it is impossible to build the Republican Party, we can build the Socialist Party."

Of no more significance was the Mississippi election of 1911, when the genteel wing of the Democratic Party, in a desperate attempt to defeat Bilbo, who had carried the Democratic primary, did their utmost to elect a Socialist Lieutenant-Governor and did in fact swing to the Socialist candidate a third of the vote.

Or take the case of the little Iowa village in a typical conservative farming area, where in 1911 the younger element, disgruntled at control of taxation by the old gang, went to the handful of Socialists and incited them to run a ticket, promising to elect it; which they did. There was nothing, however, for the new administration to do in the way of subverting the social order!

That is to say, in the heyday of the Socialist Party, many people regarded it as a catspaw. In St. Petersburg, Florida,

for instance, while some knew that the Socialists were averse to political trading, the groundless talk nevertheless went around that there was a conspiracy between the leader of the booster interests and the leader of the Socialist Party whereby the former was to get the Socialist votes to elect him to the School Board and the latter to get the Chamber of Commerce votes to elect him mayor. To be sure, the aspirant to the School Board was free to say that "the difference between the Socialists and us Republicans and Democrats is that they know why they are and we don't", but he could not keep the gossip from running beyond the facts.

There was, to be sure, in the Socialist strength prior to 1916 a more meaningful element of "public ownership" interest, partly a carry-over from Populism and partly the normal expression of contemporary petty middle-class resentment at the narrowing of opportunity by Big Business. Without meaning to impugn the integrity of these "popular" interests, it seems not too much to say in the light of what we know now that these were the preliminaries of fascism, which of course had then no well-defined vehicle of its own. Moreover there was in the Socialist Party of that day too little awareness of the dangers of "stateism" and too little alert insistence that government ownership is not socialization.

Furthermore, the Socialist strength in the first part of the century consisted to a considerable degree of generous sentimentalism, much of which was focused in the Christian Socialist Fellowship, but a good deal of it random. Thus, dropping into a Tennessee Presbyterian prayer-meeting in the summer of 1911, I heard a mature elder say impressively, "I have come to the conclusion that Socialism represents the best element in the current protest against social injustice." If socialism was presented to a church congregation, someone would perhaps greet the speaker after the service with some such words as, "I never knew before that I was a socialist, but I am." Of course the party took advantage of such possibilities by nominating and electing preachers to office. The fact that the leading light of the Christian Socialist Fellowship broke with the party on the war issue and took his journal with him and that the organization did not survive the first World War is not without significance in this connection.

3.

The Socialist Labor Party was never, at least after 1900, afflicted with such dubious support as flocked to the banner of the Socialist Party; so for the time it seemed as if the Socialist Party had the answers and the S.L.P. the loss. Very likely, indeed, even from the standpoint of basic Marxian education, the S.P. did a thorough job with a larger number of people than the S.L.P. was able to reach; for there was no limit to the number of substantial S.P. papers, pamphlets, lectures, and a large proportion of these taught essential Marxism. The illusion, however, of growing party strength served to divide attention and to distract from fundamentals, so that the results were diffused into space, and have gone, no man knows whither.

The fact is that before the rise of fascism, economic education was a simple matter, for the teacher did not have to wonder whether the economic foundations laid might as likely as not support a superstructure of fascism. Of

course the divisive trend was present, but there was no way of guessing what it meant, and much energy was lost on unfocused name calling between "reds" and "yellows", neither of which groups corresponded definitely to the present socialist vs. fascist cleavage. Jack London in *The Iron Heel* amazingly predicted the coming of fascism—but he was a writer of romances!

Cleavage on the issue of World War I did not follow the previous line of discord, nor is it correct to assume that that war or the communist split was the death of the Socialist Party, which in fact committed suicide in 1924 by endorsing LaFollette, who did happen to be at about the same point of immediate policy as the S.P. but was headed in the opposite direction. The fiasco of that year and the later fiasco of the Progressive Party launched largely to take care of Phil is sufficient to point the moral. After all, principles do matter; and when it comes to playing politics, the weaker group is pretty sure to "get it in the neck". It takes resources and prestige to beat the game.

And how much good would it do to have in the United States the equivalent of the British Labor Party as the trap for American Labor? In all probability, the Canadian Commonwealth Federation will soon give us the answer, as approach to "success" will gradually render this new "socialist" party commonplace. For the world is now committed to state capitalism, for which fascism has been the mad curtain raiser, and the most urgent thing for enlightened people will be to try to limit somewhat the self-aggrandizement of the political state, reinforced as it will be by the supreme economic power. The labor movement is already helpless to withstand the general drift, and while the Socialist Party seems to sense the need of resisting stateism, it is doubtful whether it can find a tenable ground of even an obstructive nature.

Presumably there will still be some opportunity to carry on basic economic and social education, but what difference will be left between a reduced and chastened S.P. and a dogged and confident S.L.P. save a contrasting attitude on co-operatives? Certainly a large part of the time of both will have to be spent in pointing out that economics and politics are not in process of being socialized and that the state is not society.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED

Unless this grossly improper action [Gen. Scobie's support of a Royalist demonstration in Athens] is promptly reprimanded by his government, world opinion will pay little further heed to British protestations of neutrality in Greek politics.

—Editorial in "The Nation", Jan. 20, 1935.

WHAT, NO CELLOPHANE?

Let us consider the "dynamics" of this sentence in order the better to see its senselessness. The Soviet Union is here transformed into a bureaucratic conservative "aim-in-itself", a "totalitarian police state", "a stifling parasite on the foundations of October . . . without any historical perspective".

Not a trace of dialectic! Any bourgeois writer could have said this.

—from a polemic in the "Fourth International" for November, 1944.

NO HIDING PLACE UP THERE

Even if a Conscientious Objector dies, it apparently does not remove him from General Hershey's jurisdiction—as cf. the following entry in the Federal Register:

"A registrant placed in Class 4-E who has been separated by death from work of National Importance . . . shall be retained in Class 4-E."

—"N. Y. Post", November 27, 1944.

Popular Pierlot

"M. Pierlot has the support of all the other (non-Communist) Parties who represent the overwhelming majority of the nation."
—Churchill.

Who is the Leader of Belgium's choice?
Pierlot, of course, Pierlot!
Belgium cries with a single voice:
"Pierlot must not go!
He is the man to see us through
And save the State from a Left-Wing coup"
Collaborators like him, too—
Popular Pierlot!

Where others fail Pierlot succeeds,
As everything goes to show.
Belgians follow when Pierlot leads
Back to the *status quo*.
The Banks, the Rexists and the Court
Are overwhelming in support,
"Everyone for Pierlot!"

Backed and chosen by all alike,
Though parties ebb and flow,
Workers say as they go on strike:
"We must have Pierlot!"
The Belgian Cabinet may divide,
But the Premier's faith is fortified,
For the Foreign Office is on his side—
There's nobody but Pierlot.

The Left is banned and the Right re-arms
To fight the common foe,
And the route is lined with State gendarmes
When Brussels cheers Pierlot.
The crowds are out on the boulevards,
To see him pass in his armoured car,
But he hasn't been seen out much, so far,
Dear Papa Pierlot.

Pierlot governs by decree,
Approved by high and low,
He led the fight for liberty
While running to and fro.
And Belgians of all parties note,
As he pins the medals on the patriot's coat,
That the Communists, if they had the vote,
Would also choose Pierlot.

Right and left in the Belgian State
Make Pierlot's party grow—
All they ask is to demonstrate
How much they love Pierlot.
His hold is firm and his line is strong,
They're all behind him as they march along;
Eight million Belgians can't be wrong,
And all of them want Pierlot!

—Roger Service
in "Tribune" (London) for Dec. 8, 1944.

YEP, THERE OUGHTA BE A LAW!

Miss Jessie Sumner, Congresswoman from Illinois, on December 6 urged Congress to stop the Administration's "appeasement" of Russia, which she charged is helping the Soviet Union to dominate small nations in violation of the Atlantic Charter. To halt such "appeasement", Miss Sumner introduced a bill to make it unlawful for the United States or its representatives to aid other nations in violating the Charter's principle of respect for "the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live".

—"Human Events", Dec. 7, 1944.

WITH THE MARXICOLOGISTS: OPEN MIND DEPT.

The mere fact that Shachtman has undoubtedly revised Marxism does not necessarily mean that his revision is incorrect. Despite the fact that we Marxists have seen a hundred revisions fail in the face of objective reality, it is quite true that the 101st revision could be correct. We, therefore, approach the question . . .

—"International News", September, 1944.



War as an Institution (4)

Reflections on War

Simone Weil

WAR is once more a problem on the order of the day.* We live in constant expectation of it. The danger is perhaps imaginary, but the fear is real and is itself a factor of importance. The only word for it is "panic", not so much the dread of physical massacre as psychological anxiety before the problems posed by modern warfare.

Nowhere is this anxious bewilderment more marked than in the workingclass movement. Unless we make a serious attempt at analysis, we run the risk, sooner or later, of finding ourselves powerless not only to act but even to understand. The first step is to draw up a balance sheet of the traditional theories that have guided us up to now.

Up to the period following the last war, the revolutionary movement, in its various forms, had nothing in common with pacifism. The revolutionary stand on war and peace has always found its inspiration in the memories of the years 1792-3-4, the cradle of the revolutionary trends of the 19th century. In absolute contradiction with historic reality, the war of 1793 appeared as a victorious outburst, which, by ranging the French people against all foreign tyrants, was going to break with the same blow the domination of the Court and the upper bourgeoisie and hand over the power of the representatives of the laboring masses. From this legendary belief, perpetuated by the song *Marseillaise*, flows the conception that a revolutionary war, defensive or offensive, is not only a legitimate form but one of the most glorious forms of the struggle of the toiling masses against their oppressors. This idea appeared to be common to all Marxists and almost all revolutionaries up to about fifteen years ago. When it comes to other types of wars however, the socialist tradition offers not one but several contradictory theories, which have never been clearly compared with each other.

In the first half of the 19th century, war seems to have had a certain prestige in the eyes of the revolutionaries. In France, for example, they vigorously rebuked Louis-

Philippe for his peace policy. Proudhon wrote an eloquent eulogy of war. The revolutionaries of the period dreamed not only of insurrections but of war waged in order to liberate oppressed peoples. The war of 1870 forced the proletarian organizations—that is to say, the International—to take, for the first time, a definite stand on the question of war. By Marx's pen, the International invited the workers of the two combatant countries to show opposition against any attempt at conquest, but it also advised them to participate resolutely in the defence of their country in opposition to any attacking foreign adversary.

It was in behalf of another idea that Engels, in 1892, evoked the memories of a war of exactly one hundred years before when he called on the German social-democrats to fight with all their might in the case of a war of Germany against allied France and Russia. According to him, the matter was no longer one of defence or attack. It was now a question of preserving, either by an offensive or by defence, the country where the working class movement was most powerful. It was a question of crushing the country that was most reactionary. According to this outlook (and it was also that of Plekhanov, Mehring and others) the stand to be taken in a war could be determined by calculating what result would be most favorable to the international proletariat. Sides were to be taken accordingly.

Diametrically opposed to this position was that taken by the Bolsheviks and the Spartacists: that in all wars — Lenin excepted revolutionary wars and wars of national defense, Rosa Luxemburg excepted revolutionary wars only — each workingclass should will the defeat of its own country and should sabotage the war effort. But these positions, based on the notion that all wars (save the mentioned exceptions) are imperialist in character and may be compared with quarrels of bandits over the division of their booty, also have their difficulties. For they seem to break the unity of action of the international proletariat by engaging the workers of each country to work for the defeat of their own country and favor at the same time the victory of the imperialist enemy, which, on the other hand, the workers in the opponent country must endeavor to prevent.

Liebnecht's famous formula: "The main enemy is at

* This article originally appeared in the November, 1933, issue of *La Critique Sociale*, a magazine published in Paris and edited by Boris Souvarine. It appeared, translated from the French, in the No. 1, 1938, issue of the American monthly, *International Review*. The present text is a revised version of that translation.

home," clearly brings out the chief difficulty when it assigns to the various national fractions of the world proletariat a different enemy and thus, at least in appearance, opposes one section of the proletariat against the other.

It is obvious that on the question of war the Marxist tradition presents neither unity nor clarity. One point was common to all the Marxist trends: the explicit refusal to condemn war as such. Marxists — notably Kautsky and Lenin — willingly paraphrased Clausewitz's formula, according to which war merely continues the politics of peace times. War was to be judged not by the violence of its methods but by the objectives pursued through these methods.

The postwar period introduced into workingclass politics not a new idea — for the workingclass organizations, or those so-called, of our time cannot be accused of developing ideas on any subject whatsoever — but rather a new moral atmosphere. Already, in 1918, the Bolsheviks, who were hot for a revolutionary war, had had to resign themselves to making peace, not for doctrinal reasons but under the direct pressure of the common soldiers, who were no more aroused by the "spirit of 1793" when it was invoked by the Bolsheviks than they had been when Kerensky had spun orations around it. Likewise in other countries, so far as agitational slogans went, the war-battered masses forced those parties which called themselves proletarian to speak in purely pacifist terms — which didn't prevent some from toasting the Red Army or others from voting war credits. This new tone of propaganda was, of course, never explicitly defended in terms of theory. Indeed, no one seemed to notice that it *was* new. But the fact is that instead of attacking war because it was imperialist, people began to attack imperialism because it made wars. As a result, the so-called Amsterdam movement, directed in theory against imperialist wars, was obliged, in order to be heard, to present itself as being against war in general. In its propaganda, the pacific inclinations of the U.S.S.R. were emphasized rather than the proletarian character — or that called such — of contemporary Russia. The formulae of the great theoreticians of socialism on the impossibility of condemning war as such were completely forgotten.

The triumph of Hitler in Germany brought to the surface, so to say, the entire inextricable tangle of the old conceptions. Peace appeared less precious now that it permitted the unspeakable horrors under which thousands of workers were groaning in the German concentration camps. The idea expressed by Engels in his 1892 article reappeared. Is not German fascism the principal enemy of the international proletariat just as Tsarist Russia was in those days? This fascism, spreading like a blotch of oil, can only be erased by force. And since the German proletariat is disarmed, it seems that only the might of the remaining democratic countries can clear away the stain.

Moreover, people said, it is not important to stop to decide whether we are dealing here with a war of defense or a "preventive war." Did not Marx and Engels at one time try to force England to attack Russia? The coming war can no longer be thought of as a struggle between two imperialist combatants. It is a struggle between two political régimes. And just as was suggested by old Engels in

1892, when he recalled what happened one hundred years before, so it is suggested now: that a war will oblige the State to make serious concessions to the proletariat. Especially since the impending war will necessarily bring a conflict between the State and the capitalist class and, undoubtedly, also advanced measures of socialization. Who knows but the war may automatically carry to power the representatives of the proletariat?

All these considerations are beginning to create in the political circles seeking support among the propertyless a current of opinion that is more or less explicitly in favor of an active participation of the workers in a war against Germany. This current is still relatively weak, but it can easily swell. Others stick to the distinction between aggression and national defence. Still others hold fast to Lenin's conception and others, as yet quite numerous, remain pacifists, for the most part from the force of habit. The confusion is great.

The existence of so much uncertainty and obscurity may be found surprising, and almost shameful, considering that we are dealing here with the most characteristic phenomenon of our time. It would be more surprising, however, if we arrived at anything better in face of the persisting influence of the absolutely legendary and illusory tradition of 1793 and in view of the very defective common method of evaluating each war by its supposed ends rather than by the character of the methods employed. And it would not be preferable to put the blame on the practice of violence in general, as does the pure pacifist. In each epoch war constitutes a clearly determined species of violence, the mechanism of which we must study before we can form any opinion. The materialist method consists above all in the act of examining all social acts in accordance with a procedure that seeks to discover the consequences necessarily implied in the working out of the methods employed instead of taking the avowed ends of the human acts in question at their face value. One cannot solve nor even state a problem relating to war without first taking into account the mechanism of the military struggle, that is, without first analyzing the social relationships implied by war under the given technical, economic and social conditions.

We can speak of war in general only abstractly. Modern war differs absolutely from anything designated by that name under previous régimes. On the one hand, war is only a projection of the other war which bears the name of competition and which has made of production a simple form of struggle for domination. On the other hand, all economic life now moves toward an impending war. In this inextricable mixture of the military and economic, where arms are put at the service of competition and production is put at the service of war, war merely reproduces the social relationships constituting the very structure of the existing order—but to a more acute degree.

Marx has shown forcefully that the modern method of production subordinates the workers to the instruments of labor, which are disposed of by those who do not work. He has shown how competition, knowing no other weapon than the exploitation of the workers, is transformed into a struggle of each employer against his own workmen and, in the last analysis, of the entire class of employers against their employees.

In the same way, war in our days is distinguished by the subordination of the combatants to the instruments of combat, and the armaments, the true heroes of modern warfare, as well as the men dedicated to their service, are directed by those who do not fight. And since this directing apparatus has no other way of fighting the enemy than by sending its own soldiers, under compulsion, to their death—the war of one State against another State resolves itself into a war of the State and the military apparatus against its own army.

Ultimately, modern war appears as a struggle led by all the State apparatuses and their general staffs against all men old enough to bear arms. But while the machine used in production takes from the worker only his labor power and while employers have no other weapon of constraint than dismissal—a weapon that is somewhat blunted by the existence of the possibility for the worker to choose among different employers—each soldier is forced to sacrifice his very life to the needs of the total military machine. He is forced to do so under the threat of execution without the benefit of a trial, which the State power holds over his head. In view of this, it makes little difference whether the war is offensive or defensive, imperialist or nationalist. Every State is obliged to employ this method since the enemy also employs it.

The great error of nearly all studies of war, an error into which all socialists have fallen, has been to consider war as an episode in foreign politics, when it is especially an act of interior politics, and the most atrocious act of all.

We are not concerned here with sentimental considerations or with a superstitious respect for human life. We are concerned here with a very simple fact, that massacre is the most radical form of oppression and the soldiers do not merely expose themselves to death but are sent to death. And since every apparatus of oppression, once constituted, remains such until it is shattered, every war that places the weight of a military apparatus over the masses, forced to serve it in its manoeuvres, must be considered a factor of reaction, even though it may be led and directed by revolutionists. As for the exterior effect of such a war, that is determined by the political relationships established in the interior. *Arms wielded by the apparatus of the sovereign State cannot bring liberty to anybody.*

That is what Robespierre came to understand and that is what was verified so brilliantly by the war of 1792, the war that gave birth to the notion of revolutionary wars.

At that time, military technique was far from reaching the degree of centralization of our days. Yet, after Frederick II, the subordination of the soldiers, charged with carrying out the war operations, to the high command, charged with coordinating these operations, was quite strict. At the time of the French Revolution, war was going to transform France, as Barrere put it, into a vast camp, and as a result give to the State apparatus the power without appeal usually held by military authority. And such was the calculation made by the Court and the Girondins in 1792. For this war—which a legend so easily accepted by socialists has made appear as a spontaneous outburst of the mass aroused against its oppressors and at the same time against the foreign tyrants menacing the mass—was

in fact a provocation on the part of the Court and the upper bourgeoisie, united in a plot against the liberties of the people. They miscalculated, since the war, instead of creating that "National Unity" they hoped for, sharpened all conflicts, brought first the King and then the Girondins to the scaffold, and gave dictatorial power to the Mountain. All the same, on April 20, 1792, the day war was declared, every hope of democracy vanished, never to return; and the second of June was followed only too speedily by the ninth Thermidor, which in turn speedily produced the eighteenth Brumaire. What price power for Robespierre and his friends? Their aim was not simply to seize power, but to establish real democracy, both social and political. By the bloody irony of history, the war forced them to leave on paper the Constitution of 1793, to forge a centralized State apparatus, to conduct a murderous terror which they could not even turn against the rich, to annihilate all liberty—in a word, to smooth the road for the bourgeois, bureaucratic and military despotism of Napoleon.

But the revolutionaries of 1792 at least remained clear-headed. On the eve of his death, Saint-Just wrote this profound sentence: *"Only those who are in battles win them, and only those who are powerful profit from them."*

As for Robespierre, as soon as he faced the question, he understood that war, powerless to free any foreign people ("one does not bring liberty at the point of the bayonet"), would hand over the French people to the chains of State power, a power that one could not attempt to weaken at the time when it was imperative to struggle against the foreign enemy. "War is good for military officers, for the ambitious, for money-jobbers . . . for the executive power . . . The condition of war settles for the State all other cares; one is quits with the people as soon as one gives it a war." He foresaw the coming military despotism. He never ceased to point this out despite the apparent successes of the Revolution. He again predicted it in his death speech and left this prediction after him as a testament to which those who have since made use of his name have unfortunately paid no attention.

The history of the Russian revolution furnishes the same data, and with a striking analogy. The Soviet Constitution met the same fate as the Constitution of 1793. Like Robespierre, Lenin abandoned the democratic doctrines he assumed at the time of the revolution to establish the despotism of the apparatus of a centralized State. He was the precursor of Stalin, just as Robespierre was the precursor of Bonaparte. There is a difference. Lenin, who had prepared this domination of the State apparatus by forging a strongly centralized party, deformed his own doctrines in order to adapt them to the needs of the hour. Moreover, he was not guillotined, but became the idol of a new State religion.

The history of the Russian Revolution is the more striking because war constitutes its central problem. The revolution was made, as a movement against war, by soldiers who, feeling the government and military apparatus go to pieces over them, hastened to shake off an intolerable yoke. Invoking, with an involuntary sincerity due to his ignorance, the memory of 1792, Kerensky appealed to the soldiers to continue the war for exactly the same reasons as were given by the Girondins before. Trotsky has ad-

mirably shown how the bourgeoisie, counting on war to postpone the problems of interior politics and to lead back the people under the yoke of State power, wanted to transform "the war till the exhaustion of the enemy into a war for the exhaustion of the Revolution." The Bolsheviks then called for a struggle against imperialism. But it was war itself and not imperialism that was in question. They saw this well when, once in power, they were obliged to sign the peace of Brest-Litovsk. The old army was then broken up. Lenin repeated with Marx that the dictatorship of the proletariat could tolerate neither a permanent army, police or bureaucracy. But the white armies and the fear of foreign intervention soon put the whole of Russia into a state of siege. The army was then reconstituted, the election of officers suppressed, thirty thousand officers of the old regime reinstated in the cadres, the death penalty, the usual discipline and centralization reestablished. Parallel with this, came the reconstitution of the police, and the bureaucracy. We know what this military, bureaucratic and police apparatus has consequently done to the Russian people.

Revolutionary War is the grave of revolution. And it will be that as long as the soldiers themselves, or rather the armed citizenry, are not given the means of waging war without a directing apparatus, without police pressure, without courts martial, without punishment for deserters. Once in modern history was a war carried on in this manner—under the Commune. Everybody knows with what results. It seems that revolution engaged in war has only the choice of either succumbing under the murderous blows of counter-revolution or transforming itself into counter-revolution through the very mechanism of the military struggle.

The perspectives of a revolution seem therefore quite restricted. For can a revolution avoid war? It is, however, on this feeble chance that we must stake everything or abandon all hope. An advanced country will not encounter, in case of revolution, the difficulties which in backward Russia served as a base for the barbarous regime of Stalin.

But a war of any scope will give rise to others as formidable.

For mighty reasons a war undertaken by a bourgeois State cannot but transform power into despotism and subjection into assassination. If war sometimes appears as a revolutionary factor, it is only in the sense that it constitutes an incomparable test for the functioning of the State. In contact with war, a badly organized apparatus collapses. But if the war does not end soon, or if it starts up again, or if the decomposition of the State has not gone far enough, the situation results in revolutions, which, according to Marx's formula, perfect the State apparatus instead of shattering it. That is what has always happened up to now.

In our time the difficulty developed by war to a high degree is especially that resulting from the ever growing opposition between the State apparatus and the capitalist system. The Briey affair during the last war provides us with a striking example. The last war brought to several State apparatuses a certain authority over economic matters. (This gave rise to the quite erroneous term of "War Socialism.") Later the capitalist system returned to an almost normal manner of functioning, in spite of custom barriers, quotas and national monetary systems. There is no doubt that in the next war things will go a little farther. We know that quantity can transform itself into quality. In this sense, war can constitute a revolutionary factor in our time, but only if one wants to give the term "revolution" the meaning given to it by the Nazis. Like economic depression, a war will arouse hatred against capitalists, and this hatred, exploited for "National Unity", will benefit the State apparatus and not the workers. Furthermore, to realize the kinship of war and fascism, one has but to recall those fascist tracts appealing to "the soldierly spirit" and "front-line socialism". In war as in fascism, the essential "point" is the obliteration of the individual by a State bureaucracy serving a rabid fanaticism. Whatever the demagogues may say, the damage the capitalist system suffers at the hands of either of these phenomena can only still further weaken all human values.



This is What Liebknecht Meant

Photograph taken at the Navy Day Dinner last fall at the Waldorf-Astoria. Left to right: The Commander-in-Chief of the U. S. Fleet; a former Democratic Presidential candidate (also a topflight Wall Street corporation lawyer); the Chief of Staff of the U. S. Army; the British Ambassador to the U.S.A. (also an eminent friend of Hitler — pre-1939 vintage, of course); and the head of the great Wall Street banking firm of Dillon, Read & Co.

The absurdity of an anti-fascist struggle which chooses war as its means of action thus appears quite clear. Not only would this mean to fight barbarous oppression by crushing peoples under the weight of even more barbarous massacre. It would actually mean spreading under another form the very régime that we want to suppress. It is childish to suppose that a State apparatus rendered powerful by a victorious war would lighten the oppression exercised over its own people by the enemy State apparatus. It is even more childish to suppose that the victorious State apparatus would permit a proletarian revolution to break out in the defeated country without drowning it immediately in blood. As for bourgeois democracy being annihilated by fascism a war would not do away with this threat but would reinforce and extend the causes that now render it possible.

It seems that, generally speaking, history is more and more forcing every political actor to choose between aggravating the oppression exercised by the various State apparatuses and carrying on a merciless struggle against these apparatuses in order to shatter them. Indeed, the almost insoluble difficulties presenting themselves nowadays almost justify the pure and simple abandonment of the struggle. But if we are not to renounce all action, we must understand that we can struggle against the State apparatus only inside the country. And notably in case of war, we must choose between hindering the functioning of the military machine of which we are ourselves so many cogs and blindly aiding that machine to continue to crush human lives.

Thus Karl Liebknecht's famous words: "The main enemy is at home" take on their full significance and are revealed to be applicable to all wars in which soldiers are reduced to the condition of passive matter in the hands of a bureaucratic and military apparatus. This means that as long as the present war technique continues, these words apply to any war, absolutely speaking. And in our time we can not foresee the advent of another technique. In production as in war, the increasingly collective manner with which forces are operated has not modified the essentially individual functions of decision and management. It has only placed more and more of the hands and lives of the mass at the disposal of the commanding apparatuses.

Until we discover how to avoid in the very act of production or of fighting, the domination of an apparatus over the mass, so long every revolutionary attempt will have in it something of the hopeless. For if we do know what system of production and combat we aspire with all our heart to destroy, we do not know what acceptable system could replace it. Furthermore, every attempt at reform appears puerile in face of the blind necessities implied in the operation of the monstrous social machine. Our society resembles an immense machine that ceaselessly snatches and devours human beings and which no one knows how to master. And they who sacrifice themselves for social progress are like persons who try to catch hold of the wheels and the transmission belts in order to stop the machine and are destroyed in their attempts.

But the impotence one feels today—an impotence we should never consider permanent — does not excuse one from remaining true to one's self, nor does it excuse capitulation to the enemy, whatever mask he may wear.

Whether the mask is labelled Fascism, Democracy, or Dictatorship of the Proletariat, our great adversary remains The Apparatus — the bureaucracy, the police, the military. Not the one facing us across the frontier or the battle-lines, which is not so much our enemy as our brothers' enemy, but the one that calls itself our protector and makes us its slaves. No matter what the circumstances, the worst betrayal will always be to subordinate ourselves to this Apparatus, and to trample underfoot, in its service, all human values in ourselves and in others.

A Note on Simone Weil

Simone Weil died in England in August, 1943, at the age of 34. She was thus only 24 when she wrote "Reflections on War." And she was only 20 when she published her first articles in L'Ecole Emancipée, the organ of the teachers' union, and later in La Révolution Proletarienne, a syndicalist review—articles whose intellectual quality at once made a great impression on her comrades. We can only lament, in this victim of the war, the loss of an exceptional being.

As a pupil of that Ecole Normale Supérieure which produced, under the Third Republic, an intellectual elite that included Jaurès, Péguy, Bergson (to name only three of the most recent examples), Simone Weil was already distinguished among her classmates by a personality in which the moral and the intellectual were inextricably united. She assimilated as her everyday mental fare the highest products of art and science. When she was graduated and began to teach philosophy, mathematics and Greek language and literature, she continued to broaden her culture, going always to the great primary sources, whether it was Homeric poetry, Euclidian geometry, Vitruvius' rules of architecture, Vieta's algebra, or the laws of the pendulum discovered by Huygens. But even more than her encyclopedic knowledge, tirelessly striving to capture the inmost essence of things, it was her personal honesty and her delicate sense of human relations that won the admiration and love of her pupils. Outside the academic world, also, this girl of insignificant appearance and unassuming manner, with a frail body and a fiery spirit, made a deep impression on all who came to know her.

Her temperamental bent led her to communism, when she was about 20, at a time when the Communist Party was already in full crisis due to the Stalinist counter-revolution. She frequented the Opposition groups, which themselves split and disintegrated one after another, involved in the same theoretical and moral crisis. Instinctively uniting herself with the poor and suffering, she preferred to associate with workers rather than with the political militants, and with trade unions rather than with more politicalized groups. In theory as well as in daily practice she came to know Communism, Trotskyism, Syndicalism, outgrowing all of them rapidly through experience and through her own intellectual efforts. She lived in Germany with the Wandervogel during her vacations from the University, and the first shots of the Civil War drew her to Spain, to seek out the humblest tasks, to share the trials of her comrades in misery and battle. Fascinated by the problem of the effect on the worker's psychology of modern technology and mechanization, she gave up teaching for two years in order to work in the Renault works and other Parisian metal plants and to live among the workers.

Her articles appeared in the two magazines noted above,

and also in *Les Livres Propos* and *Les Nouveaux Cahiers*—writing devoid of all rhetoric, of all literary “effects,” whose close-knit style and breadth of thought reveal her growing intellectual mastery. These articles have stood the test of time remarkably well. Their author’s honesty and scrupulousness are expressed in sceptical nuances marking the fine restlessness of a mind that was never satisfied with itself. Simone Weil approached the most distressing modern problems with the missionary’s calm courage; her unassuming pedagogy might serve as a model. To see how she could relate the burning realities of today with eternal themes, one might read her splendid study of “*The Iliad, Poem of Force*,” written after the French collapse in 1940 and published in *Les Cahiers du Sud* at Marseille. Here, also, one finds passages translated from Homer with close fidelity to the Greek and in a style of great beauty—translation such as no one before her had achieved.

The ten years of her militant life in today’s “monde inhabitable,” (Saint-Exupéry) were years of unspeakable tortments: physical suffering from headaches which no doctor could cure, and moral suffering at the thought of the cruelties inflicted by the totalitarian regimes and of the hideous foreshadowings of total warfare. She bore it all with a stoic serenity, buoyed up by an ardent religious feeling which grew increasingly strong in her and which brought her ever closer to Christianity. (It is hardly necessary to add that her transcendental concept of Christianity had nothing in common with the various business enterprises which go under that name.) It is hard to describe in a few lines this aspect of her intense spiritual life. In respect to her memory, we must await the publication of the writings in which she expressed herself: the admirable letters kept by her relatives and friends, the unedited manuscripts which they plan to gather and print in a memorial volume.

This brief note may conclude with a few words on Simone Weil’s life during the war. After she was dismissed from her university post because of the racist laws imposed by the Germans, she accompanied her family to the United States in 1942—reluctantly, with death in her soul. She was determined to go back again to take part in the struggle—for her attitude toward the war was not that outlined in the 1933 article printed below. She soon sailed for England, where she entered the Gaullist organization, about which she had no illusions—with the determination to get back into France by any means. But the trip in the dead of winter, under wartime conditions, was disastrous for her health, already undermined by her quasi-ascetic way of life; the quarantine imposed by the British on travelers weakened her still more; the efforts she made to be useful aggravated her illness; and, finally, she would not eat more than the meagre rations the French themselves were then getting in France. Tuberculosis caused her death in a few weeks and consummated her futile sacrifices.

CANDIDE

’T WAS A FAMOUS VICTORY (1)

Washington, Jan. 3: The Seventy-ninth Congress convened today. . . . The House departed unexpectedly from routine business to vote, 207 to 186, to make permanent the Special Committee on Un-American Activities (the “Dies Committee”). . . . Seventy Democrats, sixty-three of them from Southern states, voted in favor of the committee.

—N. Y. Times, Jan. 4, 1945.

EUROPEAN NEWSREEL

Retreat in France

Last September, the Limoges radio, controlled by the FFI, broadcast the most radical program yet proposed by the official Resistance movement. (See p. 291, *POLITICS*, November, 1944.) On January 3, George Lamousse, spokesman for the Liberation Committees, said on the same station: “We were going to increase the food supply—but people are hungry and cold while food and fuel go to waste nearby. We were going to purge the collaborationists—but the big ones escape and traitors are still at large, ready to do more harm. We were going to build a clean and unselfish community—but the same men still take advantage of positions to look after their own interests or to win votes just as before.” Only three months, and yet the atmosphere in France has changed completely. The State apparatus has succeeded in imposing its will. De Gaulle has come out temporarily victorious in his struggle with the Resistance movement.

Let’s examine a few of original Resistance proposals:

(1) *Decentralization of the administration and Abolishment of the Prefect-system*, which the Third Republic had inherited from Napoleon. Now the Paris correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* writes: “When the commissioners and the new prefects took office during the period of liberation, they shared power with committees formed by the resistance groups. There is not the slightest doubt that today the Ministry of the Interior has full control and that the prefects and not the Committees are the centers of authority. . . . It can be said that the French prefectural system has successfully survived the sternest test.”

(2) *Democratic Control of Production*. In the first weeks of liberation, workers’ committees had been set up in many of the bigger factories of Southern France and also of some other regions. These committees controlled the factories and maintained production. Now the Minister of Labor has stated that Labor-Management Committees will be created and will be made a legal institution. But these Committees have no real power. Says the statement: “In the social sphere, the committees will cooperate with the management for the improvement of working and living conditions. In the economic sphere they will first have a consultative role, and later a part in management. . . . In the case of corporations, the accounts must be made available to them and all reports sent to the stockholders’ meeting.” In other words, these committees will have a say as to the proper location of washrooms and toilets and no influence on actual management. As to the right to receive financial statements, the Paris left-socialist weekly *Liberté* says rightly: “They will know as much about the financial status as the stockholders—that is nothing.” The Consultative Assembly has adopted a modified version of this project which attempts at least to put some teeth into the financial control section of the proposed law. There is, however, no reason to believe that the government will incorporate even these moderate demands into the law. The Minister of Labor tersely assured the Assembly that “the government would study its text before publication of the ordinance.”

(3) *A People’s Militia* as a permanent defense guard against reactionary attempts. First the government dissolved the existing militia units, and then went on to create a new police force: the Republican Security Companies. Says

Pour La Victoire: "This special police will be placed under the direct authority of the Central Government; it will dispose of the most modern armament and motorized engines which will allow it to be shifted rapidly to wherever the local police are unable to maintain order." The article then enumerates incidents in the provinces where local groups had opposed the forces of the central authorities and continues: "The creation of these new troops is aimed at remedying this dangerous situation in the spirit of the chiefs of the Provisional Government." And . . . supreme cynical irony: "Former members of the Patriotic Militia can join these troops . . .; if they have enough police experience they will be integrated into the police just as the FFI were integrated into the army."

(4) *Purge of all those who had accepted Petain's 'National Revolution'*. On December 27, the following exchange ensued at the Provisional Assembly: "Mr. Noguères, Socialist deputy, expressed his astonishment at the presence of Jules Jeanneney in the Resistance government, since Jeanneney, together with Edouard Herriot, had accepted Petain's government in June, 1940." General De Gaulle rose immediately and firmly stated: "With respect to the tragedy of 1940, there were many differences then between men and groups. . . . Is there a man who, when things became clear—and they were not so at the time—did not serve his country and the Republic? . . . In 1940 one may have had different conceptions on the manner of serving one's country. . . ." (Ministry of Information, Paris, Dec. 28, 1944.)

Four months ago I wrote here: "Too many in the Underground still fight the enemy of yesterday: liberal capitalism; too few see clearly the enemy of tomorrow: authoritarian national-socialism." And Dwight Macdonald, quoting a friend, said: "They do not yet know who their enemies are." This lack of political theory and understanding of the real character of De Gaulle's program has been the main reason for the temporary defeat of the French Resistance movement. During the first weeks they took initiative in their hands, but never did they even dream of having to defend their local organs of power against the Central Government. Wasn't this government 'their' government? The lack of political insight and ideological homogeneity has allowed De Gaulle to liquidate step by step the organs of Resistance and to re-install the Central Authority.

Another main reason is, of course, the fact that the spectre of war lies heavily over the country. Not only do material scarcities, lack of food, etc., turn people's energies toward the immediate goals of finding enough to eat for the next day, diverting them from political activity, but the ideological pressure is great also: "We can't do anything that will hamper the war effort, all political issues must be postponed till after the war." Another major factor is the disorientation and confusion brought about by the recent shifts in CP policies (I propose to deal in the next issue with the whole pattern of current Stalinist policy in Europe).

Correspondents relate that people in France now say: "Under the occupation we could at least look forward to liberation—but what now?" . . . A modified version of the famous "Que la République était belle sous l'Empire."

Yet I am convinced that what is happening in France is rather a temporary set-back than a defeat of progressive and revolutionary forces. De Gaulle has succeeded in postponing decisions, yet his regime is by no means firmly installed. In this connection it is important to realize that up till now communication difficulties have been so great that there could be no real country-wide exchange of ideas, no real crystallization of political thoughts. A friend, just

arrived here from Southern France, says: "You don't realize over here that economically and also ideologically France is once more a feudal land, each region isolated from the others. While in one town people may receive their full rations, a few miles away there may be real hunger. Correspondingly, while in Bordeaux the Communists have practically no influence, they dominate in towns not very far away. Real political clarification will only come in the process of time. As yet, different committees are led by those who have taken the most active part during occupation, political issues have not yet fully penetrated into local groups."

And Anne O'Hare McCormick, by far the acutest observer of European trends, cables the *N. Y. Times*: "Large-scale violence is not yet excluded in France, because great decisions are suspended. . . . In the regions which the FFI still rule by force of arms they balk at joining the national army. Everywhere they cling to the means to attain power, because everywhere they seek to take government into their own hands."

LOUIS CLAIR

"The Manpower Shortage Fraud"

Sir:

I was sorry to see *POLITICS* fall for the heavy propaganda from Washington that manpower shortages in the form of a drift from war to civilian industries are responsible for the present crisis in war production. In the December issue you wrote: "In the last few weeks the manpower situation seems to have become crucial. Workers have been leaving war jobs in great numbers to take jobs in civilian industries, often at lower pay." There is absolutely no evidence to support any such generalization. The entire campaign appears to be fabricated out of whole cloth and represents a bureaucratic attempt to shift responsibility for ill-conceived policies by the top production authorities.

It is true, as I pointed out in my article in the November issue, that munitions employment has been declining at the rate of about 100,000 a month. But there has been no resulting increase in civilian employment. In fact, total civilian employment (excluding agriculture) shows a net decline during the past year of about 100,000 employees. The significant data are those showing trends in manufacturing employment. During the past year—this brings my table on this subject up to date—employment in munitions industries has declined by over 12%, while employment in all other manufacturing has declined by 5%. Workers are leaving munitions industries—yes; but they are either being drafted into the armed forces or retiring from the labor force. They are not, except in a very few cases, seeking secure berths in civilian employment. Moreover, most of the workers voluntarily leaving war jobs are apparently women and "abnormal" entrants into the labor force, i.e. those normally considered either too young or too old to work. Their motives for quitting appear to be twofold: cutbacks are in prospect or have actually occurred (this was especially true last summer and fall when the collapse of Germany was momentarily expected); in the face of the rising cost of living, their incomes do not provide sufficient incentive to work.

The real reasons for the crisis in war production have little, if anything, to do with lack of manpower. To be sure, if a few hundred thousand additional workers were suddenly to turn up in war factories, there would be an increase in output—but there would still be a crisis in war

production! Manpower is a limiting factor in production only in the very general sense that, given our present institutional setup and relatively full employment, over-all increases in production beyond the fourth quarter, 1943 peaks require a reallocation of productive resources, including manpower, and an increase in efficiency (less waste). The situation may be compared to that which would probably have occurred in the last war had the war lasted into 1919. Organic inefficiencies in government and business have placed a tremendous strain on the economic mechanism. If the government were not subsidizing profits, there would undoubtedly be a sharp falling off in production instead of a generally level trend during 1944.

The chief factor in producing the present crisis in war production is clearly the miscalculation of German powers of resistance by the military leadership. As a result, military requirements for 1945 have already been increased by 10 per cent over forecasts of a few months ago. Further increases are in prospect. In addition, the development of the battle for the Philippines into a protracted struggle instead of the anticipated quick victory has placed a further strain on certain critical military programs. The timing of the war has been way off. The Pacific phase was not supposed to move into high gear until the European phase was virtually over. If, on top of this, a land campaign should be undertaken in China prior to the end of the European war, then there will really be a production crisis.

On the whole, production has been up to schedule—missing by 3% or 4% in 1944. The difficulty is that the added requirements fall most heavily in those categories already lagging such as heavy artillery and ammunition, tanks, heavy trucks, tires, etc.—mostly ordnance items. These reflect not only an underestimation of the enemy, but also an underestimation of the role of the Ground Army in this war.

The consequences of improper programming by the military authorities have been reinforced by the inadequacies of the production authorities, both military and civilian (WPB). Unfortunately for these people, most of the critical programs involve long production cycles, nine months or more from order dates to delivery. Production cannot be increased by frantic yelling about manpower shortages and the necessity for forced labor. It requires intelligent and careful planning, something notably lacking in Washington. In contrast to the aircraft program, which was on the whole carefully handled in all details from top to bottom, the ordnance programs have been bungled. Chaos and lack of coordination and information reign supreme from the foundries through all the parts manufacturers right on through General Motors, Ford and Chrysler, the principal prime contractors involved.

Mismanagement takes various forms. Orders are not placed sufficiently far in advance for a critical machine tool—this is said to be the principal cause for the lag in the shell program. Manufacturers and the War Labor Board combine to keep wages at substandard levels in such key segments of industry as some of the foundries. Some government officials, especially in the War Department and WPB, have considered their chief task to be that of representing the corporations from which they have come in preventing wartime expansions that might threaten their peacetime competitive positions—this seems to have been particularly true in the case of tires and storage batteries, among others. Entrenched monopolies, such as the big three automotive concerns, do not have sufficient confidence in the ability of government agencies to handle confidential data with the necessary care; consequently, they refuse to furnish important data concerning their production operations and plans. In addition, many cases can be found

where increased manpower referred to critical plants has not resulted in any increase in military programs, but instead has been diverted to civilian programs and black market operations.

Much more could be said on the crisis in war production and why it is likely to get more aggravated, but enough evidence has been presented to show that the government's campaign is a real phony. The important thing is that POLITICS and labor in general should become more aware of the facts of life and act accordingly. The totalitarian conscription of labor proposed in Roosevelt's recommendation for National Service Legislation cannot solve the production crisis. This POLITICS has pointed out, but you have missed the major point that the reason given—the alleged shift of workers from war to civilian industries—is totally false and merely serves to cover up the mistakes and crimes of those on top.

NEW YORK CITY

WALTER J. OAKES

EASTMANIA

Note: In the Jan. 13 issue of The New Leader, Max Eastman printed an article on POLITICS entitled: "A Cerebral Revolution Busts Loose! A Literary Marxist Shows His Hand." After elaborate sneers at the magazine because it speaks for no group and only expresses the personal views of its editor and contributors (oddly intermingled with flattering remarks about its high intellectual quality), Eastman gets down to business. His point is that, in supporting the EAM in Greece against the British, POLITICS is taking "battle orders from Moscow". At last it is showing "its colors in the real world"—the colors of Stalinism. "Dwight Macdonald," he writes, "knows quite well what it means when the Communists are 'the main leaders of a rebellious people'. It means that under the deliberately deceitful slogan of the United Front for Democracy, a Moscow-controlled party is using the naive elements of the population in order to overthrow the government by armed force and to establish its totalitarian power." (If I know "quite well" that EAM's victory would mean this, by the way, then I am obviously a scoundrel.) He also charges that I have "in more than a figurative sense, joined their (the Stalinists') ranks and placed himself under their commanding staff"—which seems pretty silly even for Max Eastman.

His own line on Greece should be preserved in these pages: "The issue is between constitutional government as such and armed rebellion against it . . . The struggle is between a well-based and real hope of democratic life in Greece and a certainty of totalitarian dictatorship . . . That the defeat of these forces (the EAM) happens to be to the advantage of the British Empire against Russia, as well as of civilization against totalitarianism, is a piece of rare good luck, for which those interested in civilization, and above all in the proletariat, should give profound thanks."

My reply to Eastman's article follows; it is also to appear in The New Leader.

Something Busts Loose—And It Ain't Cerebral!

To the Editor of *The New Leader*:

It's interesting to have one's portrait done in vitriol by such an old hand as Max Eastman (though I think his wife really gets a better likeness with oils). Interesting, but not very instructive. Sometimes one learns a lot from criticism. But Eastman has drawn a portrait not of me but of himself

and his obsessive concern with (a) intellectuals (he's agin 'em), (b) revolutionary socialists (ditto), (c) Stalin, the Prince of Darkness (ditto, ditto).

1.

Max Eastman's sketch of me as a Marxist sectarian is fantasy. For almost ten years now I have been conducting, in print, a campaign against precisely the kind of "orthodox" optimism Eastman attributes to me when he writes: "He still thinks there is a proletarian revolution coming; it is due just after the war; and it is going to be super-democratic". He calls me "a man convinced that a comparative millenium is about to be established". Actually, I don't recall ever having used the badly shopworn phrase, "proletarian revolution"; my notion of modern revolution is something much broader in class terms—and we are already seeing in Europe, I am glad to say, the first tender shoots of such revolutions. Whether they will be nipped in the bud or not, I don't know—and I have no surety they will be "super-democratic". (I have always objected strongly to the "inevitability" business in orthodox Marxism.) I do confess to "faith in the future" in the sense of having faith in common humanity's capacities and aspirations for a more decent way of life. I think there is a *chance* of a democratic socialist order emerging in the future, though God knows (if Eastman doesn't) I have never proclaimed it "about to be established" or "due just after the war".

Eastman thinks I *must* have the kind of blind sectarian faith he attributes to me, or else I couldn't "flay the vanity and crooked baseness of this real world with the ruthless logic it deserves". Why not? There are many examples of critics who drew on sources deeper than some doctrinaire ideology for their fire: Swift, Tom Paine, Voltaire, Diderot, Herzen, for that matter Marx himself (not Eastman's caricature). Could it be that here again Eastman is painting himself?

Likewise, what is the point of all the sneers at my political ideas because they express my own thinking and not the program of some group ("enlarging his own head sufficiently to contain a full-armed proletarian revolution"). This is odd coming from one who constantly praises individualism and denounces collectivism as the Devil's work. The criticism has been made before—by Trotskyists.

2.

So much for defense, a dull business when the attack is on this level. The really interesting, and possibly enlightening, job is to examine Max Eastman's own ideas a little bit. Perhaps I may be allowed to try my hand at the *argumentum ad hominem* so well-loved by Eastman. He is kind enough to say that he finds *POLITICS* "a remarkably able magazine . . . stimulating and cleansing", and he implies that my own stuff is "hard and sparkling" in a putrescent sort of way. I wish I could return the compliment. Alas, not for many years has Max Eastman written anything I could honestly call either hard or sparkling. For the apostle of "tough-mindedness", he is a flabby specimen. He presents a pitiable spectacle similar to that of persons in an advanced state of alcoholism, in which all emotional and cerebral responses have atrophied and there remains only a reflex reaction to alcohol. Eastman's drink is anti-Stalinism. His political ideals and ideas have eroded away leaving only an anti-Stalinist reflex. He should remember Nietzsche's warning: "Gaze not too deep into the abyss, lest the abyss gaze into you." (I quote from memory.)

3.

The gist of Eastman's criticism of *POLITICS* is that it was

an attractive infant so long as it played with its intellectual toys, but that it must now be spanked for getting hold of matches (taking a stand, and the "wrong" stand, on a real issue: the Greek civil war).

The main point, however, is that Eastman, and *The New Leader*, frightened by the growing strength of Soviet Russia (as all of us must indeed be), and lacking the courage and intellectual clarity to conceive of any way of fighting Stalinism except lining up with British and American imperialism, are now developing a new kind of sectarian orthodoxy, even worse than the old kinds in that it has no general theory, no principles, and no hopes or aspirations but is based wholly on simple anti-Stalinism. This new orthodoxy turns out to be alarmingly like the very thing it fights. *POLITICS* has criticised and exposed Stalinism as persistently as *The New Leader* itself. All this counts for nothing. We are not PURE! With the crudeness of a Party commissar, Eastman warns me that no deviations from the line will be tolerated, that in any situation in which Communists take part one must embrace the opposite side with the automatism of a plant turning towards the sun.

I only regret Eastman didn't hold his fire until he could have read my six-page documentary survey of the Greek situation in the January number of *POLITICS*. (I spent a week digging up the facts, so I have a great advantage in this argument: I know what I'm talking about.) It would be interesting to know what difference it would have made. On the one hand, it comes out even more strongly than the preceding month's paragraph in favor of EAM; and so would have stimulated his reflexes even more rudely. But on the other, the facts it amasses (mostly from parliamentary debates and official sources) are overwhelmingly against Eastman's interpretation of the conflict.

I don't want to recapitulate that article here, but just to indicate that its data shows

(1) Stalin observed his Teheran agreement on Greece and the Greek C. P. did all in its power to avert fighting;

(2) the British Government deliberately provoked the fighting by insisting on disarmament of ELAS while refusing to allow the disarmament of various pro-royalist regiments, and then on two occasions (dates and details specified) intervened to prevent a settlement arrived at by the Greeks themselves;

(3) EAM is supported by from 75% (Anthony Eden) to 90% (*London Times*) of the Greek population;

(4) the issue is not "armed rebellion" v. "constitutional government", not Communist dictatorship v. democracy, but simply king v. no king.

Eastman's discussion of the beauties of constitutional government (to think of reading such infantilities in a left-of-center paper at this late date!) and the horrors of unauthorized throat-cutting (as against the legalized kind going on in World War II, of which Eastman heartily approves)—all of this is quite beside the point.

4.

It occurs to me, finally, that Eastman himself is not pure on this Stalinist business. In fact, he has enthusiastically lined up on the same side as the Kremlin in an infinitely bigger and more significant struggle than the one in Greece: namely, World War II. Doesn't he know that "the only way to fight totalitarians is to fight them at the start and all the way down the line". Doesn't he realize that: "If you lack the guts and clarity of mind to do that, it makes no difference whether you carry in your head a bucket of mush or a private proletarian revolution"? Why, then, doesn't he come out for the Axis in this war and stop taking battle-orders from Moscow?

I don't ask these questions seriously, because Eastman could make the following devastating replies: (a) several other nations beside Russia are fighting against Germany; (b) the issues at stake in this war are much broader than Russia's own aims and than her gains or losses; (c) I continue to criticise Russia and expose her misdeeds even though she is at the moment on the same side as I am; (d) to support Germany would be to play into Stalin's hands, since it would enable him to pose as the savior of the world from Nazism. This is what Eastman could retort, were I foolish enough to make such charges, and this is what I do retort (substituting "British imperialism" for "Nazism") since he has been foolish enough.

Of course, the role of the Communists in the European resistance movements poses very difficult political problems to all who oppose Stalinism from a progressive point of view. (This problem is being discussed in *POLITICS*, and I'd be glad to discuss it in *The New Leader* in a more serious frame-of-reference than Max Eastman's reflexes can provide.) Eastman has solved the problem by giving up the point of view. I prefer to solve it by supporting those popular movements abroad which are in healthy revolt against the rotten old order. The Eastman-*New Leader* line of propping up with Allied bayonets unpopular reactionary regimes in Europe seems to me well calculated to enable the Communists to pose as the real tribunes of the rebellious people. I see no reason to let the Communists take over the popular movements of Europe, as they assuredly will if the socialist and liberal parties line up with Roosevelt-Churchill.

DWIGHT MACDONALD

Periodicals

"Race-Thinking Before Racism", by Hannah Arendt. *The Review of Politics*, April 1944. (Notre Dame, Ind.; single copy—75c; one year—\$2.50.)

An intelligent and richly documented exposition of the idea of race, with many insights into its use as an instrument of political ideology. It is very warming intellectually to come across a scholarly article that does not suffer from either the presentation-of-facts trend in historical writing, or the other extreme of seeing history as an illustration of one's preconceptions.

Arendt establishes racism as the ideology of imperialism (not simply Nazism); she is very convincing here, and the idea demands much greater currency than it has received. Racism is the latter-day, degenerate form of race opinions or race-thinking, which go back to the start of the bourgeois era. "The 'idea' of race does not belong in the history of ideas, and not until the end of the last century were dignity and importance accorded it as though it had been one of the major spiritual contributions of the Western world." Race-thinking was opinion, largely serving early 19th Century nationalism; but racism is ideology, an increasingly important weapon of imperialism since the days of the "scramble for Africa".

Opinion, writes Arendt, operates within free, rational discussion. Ideologies are arguments *ad hominem* and are said "to possess either the key of history, or the solution of all the 'Riddles of the Universe'". Of the latter, two predominate: "the ideology which interprets history as an economic struggle of classes, and the other that interprets history as a natural fight of races." But the anomaly is

that the first race-thinker, the Comte de Boulainvilliers, a French aristocrat of the early 18th Century, was also the first class-thinker. He "interpreted the history of France as the history of two different nations", one of Germanic origin, the other "Gaules". This notion was a defense against the nationalism of the newly-rising bourgeoisie, which the king supported, and a justification of the aristocracy even in opposition to the king. Boulainvilliers, and later thinkers of the emigration who based themselves on him, predicated the superiority of the aristocracy on the supposed fact of its Teutonic origin. "Frenchmen earlier than Germans or Englishmen were to insist on this *idée fixe* of Germanic superiority."

So in its inception, race-thinking was an anti-national technique of the aristocratic classes in France. But in Germany, where it "did not develop before the defeat of the old Prussian army by Napoleon", race was offered as a form of unity in substitute for actual national emancipation. Also, but later, German bourgeois liberals used doctrines of innate prestige and privilege to compensate for the social superiority of the aristocrats. "In its feverish search to summon up some pride of its own against the caste arrogance of the Junkers, without, however, daring to fight for political leadership, the bourgeoisie from the very beginning wanted to look down not so much on other lower classes of their own, but on other peoples."

These two ideas—"common tribal origin as an essential of nationhood" and the notions of the Romantics concerning "innate personality"—were welded by a second French nobleman, the Comte de Gobineau, into the substance of racism as such. To explain the fact that the "best men" no longer ruled society, Gobineau posited a law of the decline of civilizations, a "new key to history", namely that only under the rule of an elite of Aryans did civilization progress. "In 1853, Count Arthur de Gobineau published his *Essai sur l'Inégalité des Races Humaines* which, only some fifty years later, at the turn of the century, was to become a kind of standard work for race theories in history."

French race-thinking differed from English and German in being consistently anti-national and, especially after 1870, even pro-German. "It is significant for English as it was for German race-thinking that it came from middle-class writers and not from the nobility, that it was born of the desire to extend the benefits of noble standards to all classes and that it was nourished by trends of true national feelings." In England, race-thinking had its beginning with Edmund Burke, arch-enemy of the French Revolution. Burke considered English liberties as based on feudal inheritance, rather than the historical prerogatives of conquest or revolution; they were the "rights of Englishmen", not the "rights of men". There is not space to enter into a number of minor questions of interest concerning England—that the emphasis on inheritance led to the concentration of British thinkers on eugenics, that radicals first used race-thinking to support their nationalism (the Empire was christened "Saxondom" by a radical, in order to hold it together with nationalist cement.) The main point is that in both England and Germany race-thinking began as an adjunct of nationalism and ended up as racism, the ideology of imperialism.

Perhaps the only important criticism of this excellent article would be of the author's claim that race-thinking was innocuous as a support of nationalism—harmless because nationalism was based on *Liberté-Egalité-Fraternité*. She even says that "Imperialism would have necessitated the invention of racism as the only possible 'explanation'".

and excuse for its deeds, even if no race-thinking ever had existed in the civilized world." It would seem better to view nationalism and imperialism as intimately connected in a developmental sense. Both are products of capitalist organization, but simply at different stages. It is more probable to assume that elements in their ideologies are also necessarily connected. This would afford a longer perspective. What is the value in harking back to the better days of bourgeois society, when its body held at least growth, if not revolution?

DAVID T. BAZELON

Popular Culture

A Plug for America*

This poem is very difficult to read, but it is easy to describe, and so many people must have wanted to do the same thing Mr. Davenport has done (20,000 copies) that I think it ought to be described so that they will understand that the thing has been done properly and they needn't bother. It is in four sections. The burden of the first section is "Hurrah"; its subject is America (the United States) and how we love it and how "The breed of freedom is a breed of strife, / Restless and rude, / Reared to the earthy struggle of its time." Among those specially praised are the "go-between" and the "salesman",—"The priests of the Pursuit of Happiness"—"Strong men these are, whose hearts can never rest." The versification is a little monotonous; but one hears Mr. Davenport counting his syllables, and there are few real mistakes.

The second section explains that we must fear what we believe in, that we do fear it, and that what we fear is "Nothing", called also "the beast". This is a gloomy section, relieved only by the search for God which Mr. Davenport starts on page 18. The search continues until page 49 and thus occupies much of the third section also, of which the real subject however is the death of an American soldier, and the theme "Larry has passed you the ball. Don't let him down!" God, or what passes with Mr. Davenport for Him, is discovered at last "in our hearts", where His position (following on the "brotherhood of men" which everyone in the poem realizes after the death of the American soldier) is that of a "Brother"—a striking and not accidental decline from the Deity's older position as Father. This third section is hysterical from time to time, although it does not succeed in communicating any emotion except an intermittent sympathy with Mr. Davenport in his desperate attempts to express intelligibly, without relying in any way upon the methods of poetry, the ideas which he has picked up.

The fourth section is a general paean to Science, Progress, Freedom, Destiny, Home-cooking, and the American Flag ("O flag, most beautiful, most versatile"—seventy lines on the flag). Here, as earlier in the poem, there is a certain amount of continual reliance upon MacLeish, Cummings, Eliot (*horresco referens*), radio advertisers, Whitman, Hemingway, *Fortune*, *Life* magazine,—and apparently W. H. Auden, since Mr. Davenport's pathetic speeches for Larry's Teacher summon exactly the tone Auden was using ten years ago in his English public-school parodies:

"I think of him as thrusting forward with that amazing

confidence of his; I think that is the way it must have been, giving everything he had:

He was a very generous boy."

Mr. Davenport however seems to be in earnest. He seems to be in earnest everywhere; this production is not in my opinion the fraud it appears. Mr. Davenport is a real man, and if he has not written a real poem it is only because his sensibility is vague and weak, his style unformed, and his taste the taste of an account executive. He did his best. But he has no personal voice, no tone—he sounds like an announcer. A poet has nothing to do with the sentiments of a sponsor.

"I see the constructiveness of my race," says Whitman, flatly enough, explaining more, feeling more, enforcing more, in one line, than our announcer has been able to do in sixty pages,—and you hear a voice.

I intended to discuss the politics of the poem, but that is not possible. When Mr. Davenport is fearing things ("The Jewish threat the Catholic the Black / Bureaucrat labor leader pacifist / Tycoon appeaser egomaniac / And nihilist") he fears everything equally; and then he takes it all back. The objects of his adulation have already been mentioned. In general it can be said that all the opinions are orthodox Radio City opinions, wise-after-the-fact, "clean" "bright" and "strong", to use this author's favourite epithets. Mr. Davenport is for every popular side, or says he is, impartially and simultaneously. There is nothing in the poem to offend anyone except mature readers.

Mr. Davenport has had a distinguished career as an editor of *Fortune*, the personal representative of Wendell Willkie, and chief editorial writer for *Life*. His poem has been widely advertised, positively bought, and highly praised by various leaders of American thought, including Louis Untermeyer and Mr. Spyros P. Skouras, who is the president of a film-producing company called 20th Century-Fox.

JOHN BERRYMAN

The Intelligence Office

Stalinism and the Resistance—A Letter from Serge

Sir:

POLITICS has become remarkably interesting. Articles like Bettelheim's "Behavior in Extreme Situations," MacDonald's "On the Psychology of Killing," and Max Weber's (to whom I hope you will return—we have much to learn from him) strike a note that is unique and of capital interest. They indicate the road we must take to recreate our ideological life. The editor's "comments" are unequal, but stimulating and bold—they make one think.

This is not to say, of course, that I always agree with the magazine; but I think that today a classic harmony is less important than realistic and penetrating inquiry on some kind of cultural level. Louis Clair's articles, for instance, seem to be notably inadequate (despite some excellent passages, especially the conclusions). Let me indicate why.

Everything I can find out leads me to conclude that the French Resistance is completely dominated by the Communist Party. The French Socialists are coming to realize that, although they have a majority on the left, they have no armed organization (except in the Northern mining district), which puts them at a great disadvantage vis-a-vis

* MY COUNTRY. By Russell W. Davenport. Simon and Schuster. \$1.50.

the C. P. Many of them don't dare say a word on any differences between socialism and totalitarian-communism, and Vincent Auriol went so far as to say, in Algiers, that there were no longer any important differences between the two "workers'" parties! . . . Clair writes about French authors without noting that most of those he mentions as having been active in underground work are Communists or fellow travellers: Aragon (GPU), Malraux, Paul Eluard, Vildrac, Jean Cassou, Jean Guehenno, Jean Paulhan. I know from personal experience in the Popular Front period that an anti-totalitarian socialist writer found it almost impossible to break through the C. P. boycott. After the Russian victories, it is possible only for individuals of the eminence of Duhamel, Mauriac, Valery, Claudel, Giraudoux. . . .

The Belgian events seem to me extremely significant. I know a good deal about Belgium. Before the war, the C. P. had hardly a thousand members and was unimportant. The Workers Party of the British Labor Party type had a half million followers and a great tradition. The country was fairly evenly divided between Catholics and Socialists. In the Resistance movement, the Communists gained several thousand members, while the Trotskyists practically disappeared. (The Trotskyists had had some 800 followers in one mining district, the fruit of a split in the local Socialist organization, and a score in the rest of the country. Their best leaders are reported to have died—Lesoil in prison, Walter Dauge shot by the Nazis.) The Communist Party wanted to keep its arms and staged a cynical provocation. In the center of Brussels there is a "neutral zone" around the Royal Palace and the Parliament, where demonstrations are forbidden, and where, because of the absence of street crowds, there is no point to them anyway. But the Communists invaded this zone, knowing perfectly well that (1) if the government, which includes the Socialists, permitted the demonstration, it would be discredited; (2) if it prevented it, there would be blood spilled. . . .

In general, the situation seems to me to be tragically complex. The workingclass and the socialist movement are hopelessly divided: the arms and the organization, based on a major power, are all on the side of the communist-totalitarians . . . while the socialists—unarmed, numerous, including the best spirits of the masses—are not even clearly aware of the danger. About these two poles the masses fluctuate, prone to idealize the USSR, to follow the stronger party, and driven by their needs. . . . To evaluate this situation as simply 1871 or 1917 over again is to blind one's self to catastrophic weaknesses. The only thing to do, in my opinion, is to gain a breathing-spell by restoring basic liberties (which now have a value they lacked in 1939) and by reconstructing a conscious and energetic socialist movement that will not allow itself to be manipulated by the CP. The communist-totalitarians would certainly not shrink from reenacting the Warsaw betrayal on the social level if they saw any gain to be made for them.

Macdonald writes: "One should not make the mistake of attributing to Russia a godlike omnipotence even in dealing with its own foreign Communist movements. China shows . . . that the degree of effective control from Moscow is in inverse proportion to the size of the Communists' mass base." I am convinced he is mistaken on this point. (Allow me, by the way, to correct a slip of the pen: "Russia" is not in question, since it is never consulted by the Kremlin that rules it.) I am convinced, or rather I know that the Communist apparatus controls inexorably

and completely all the movements it influences, including peripheral organizations. This formidable apparatus is a new historical fact whose enormous significance is not yet appreciated enough. POLITICS exists in too free an environment for this to be clearly realized.

In France, for example, there is not the slightest sign of dissidence in the CP ranks. The Party turned from pro-Nazism to anti-Nazism without losing its trained cadres or its discipline. Savants like Joliot-Curie, Henry Wallon (and he a psychologist!), and Langevin have followed it unflinchingly through these dangerous acrobatics, often risking their own necks to do so. The "red belt" around Paris remained docile—and yet there is the flower of the French workingclass! . . .

As for China—I know that the Communist regions since 1928 have undergone the same kind of bloody purges as the mother country has; the GPU there is efficient; and China has never had any tradition of free thought, as Russia has. I did not know personally Mao-Tse-Chung, but we had mutual friends when he was in Moscow in 1926-7. He sympathized deeply with the Opposition, but he ended up by adopting the cynically pragmatic formula: Who can give us the arms and money? Since then, he has shown remarkable talent and energy, and is probably one of the greatest political leaders of our times, so far as his personal ability goes. But today no "loyalty" is more devoted than that which is based on pragmatic cynicism, as the Moscow Trials demonstrated. In a word, until proof has been presented to the contrary, I must believe that Chinese communism is completely docile, completely "on the line," with only the feeblest rebellions which the GPU handles without any difficulty.

We shall soon see, I fear, in many lands, the rise of Stalinist *condottieri* chiefs like Mao-Tse-Chung or Tito, at once cynical and fanatical, who will be "revolutionary" or counter-revolutionary—or both at once—entirely according to the orders they get from Moscow.

MEXICO CITY

VICTOR SERGE

EDITORIAL

Sir:

The *N. Y. Post* is offering prizes for one-line editorials. I submit one for POLITICS:

Teheran read backward spells nature.

NEW YORK CITY

DANIEL BELL

"INTER-ENEMY ETHICS"

Sir:

An article like "Inter-Enemy Ethics" properly belongs in Harper's Bazaar or Science and Society. The author's suggestion that "If we could understand how international ethos is being generated on such a small scale, we might know much better how to generate a great deal more of the same thing in the service of international peace" has nothing to do with this particular life.

The Hague convention and Geneva convention and other international rules of war ("international ethos on a small scale") are generated by the necessity of lowering the masses' resistance to war. The new League of Nations, or whatever, that is being cooked up has the same function—in relation to both this war and the next. The statesmen who are responsible for Geneva conventions, Leagues of Nations, and other international confections are motivated by the same kind of good intentions that motivate philanthropy. The more-or-less unconscious motivation—pres-

ervation of the status quo—is the stronger, and shrewder.

The author's marvelling at the extension of the "in-group ethic" to the "out-group" is another mechanistic mystification. The rules of war are most ignored in civil ("in-group") wars, where the combatants have a hatred for the enemy that, for example, the American soldier does not have for his Nazi adversary. And in civil wars the niceties are ignored most by the reactionaries (the Whites in Russia, the Francoists in Spain)—that is, by the class that makes international wars and shapes their etiquette.

The full flavor of this scholarly article can be gotten only by mulling its last sentences: "Considerable study has been given to the causes of war. Something might be learned now by studying the causes of peace. Not all of the international body politic is diseased. There are some shreds of health persisting even through war. *How, then, does self-interest become enlightened self-interest? And how does "sympathy" arise and expand?* The social scientists have here a vast and practical problem."

Social "scientists" have here an inexhaustible subject for PhD theses and for articles in political, sociological, psychological, and anthropological weeklies, monthlies, and quarterlies.

Rousseau observed that a man placed in a situation where self-interest compels him to be a son-of-a-bitch will probably be a son-of-a-bitch. The sympathy in whose rise and expansion the author of "Inter-Enemy Ethics" is interested hasn't got much chance in this world. Raising phoney issues and expanding them into lengthy articles—and inviting even lengthier treatments of the same non-existent theme—is no small contribution to keeping the world in its present happy state.

NEW YORK CITY

ARTHUR STEIG

Sir:

That's an interesting bit of datum Arthur Steig has there from Rousseau. It must be relevant to something, and might even be relevant to "Inter-Enemy Ethics" if all section 6 were not given to "self-interest" and if the ethic-limiting role of "military necessity" and technology were not given full credit in section 5.

Of course Mr. Steig really wants me to quote in unison with him the C.P. catechism about "exploiters" and "exploited". I have given that either implicit or explicit notice in section 1, paragraphs 2-5; 3:1 and 6:6. But it has nothing to do with the stressed thesis of the article. The problem of "Inter-Enemy Ethics" is not who formulates the ethic but why any ethics must be formulated at all.

The ethics are formulated partly to break down "the masses'" fear of being barbarously treated. But they are also formulated to meet the popular dislike of being or appearing to be barbarous. If this latter factor is not operative, why must all governments maintain a front of justice and humanity before their own nationals and neutrals? Conversely, if fear is the only factor behind the ethics, why do governments not tell the people that the enemy is really a sporting fellow who will hurt them no more than is necessary, rather than the reverse propaganda which depicts him as the despoiler of international ethics? Steig says the ethic I call "sympathy" "hasn't got much chance in this world." But apparently realistic propagandists know better.

The correspondent's "ingroup-outgroup" discussion says nothing. It is surprising that one so stocked in C.P. clichés should call "civil wars" "ingroup" wars. For him civil wars should represent the most dynamic in-outgroup struggle in society, e.g., "exploiter vs. exploited". As to his mention of the well known barbarity of civil wars, I

have covered that under the discussion of wars between "value-systems".

"Inter-Enemy Ethics" is a small study in a larger body of renewed social study which aims to get at the causes of what's right as well as what's wrong in society. Mr. Steig finds the "scholarly" flavor of such a study irritating, and I'm sorry about that. . . . But lacking the apocalyptic insights granted both the doctrinaire Left and Right, I must continue this stodgy method of setting up hypotheses and asking others to test them with me. I thank POLITICS for letting me set one up in its pages.

NEW HAVEN, CONN.

LLEWELLYN QUEENER

The Russian Question — Rebuttal by Mr. Taylor

1. It is precisely because I try to distinguish between people and their governments that I refuse to join POLITICS in deifying a reactionary, incompetent, militaristic, and unrepresentative government merely because it claims to be Polish.

2. The point in connection with "Oppositional Thinking" is that when an allegedly rigorous Marxist analysis leads one to adopt the reactionary position on fundamentals, I suspect that the analysis is neither rigorous nor Marxist. (Eric Johnson and Thomas Lamont have not accepted Communist fundamentals—they have merely seen a chance to sell soap. You, on the other hand, seem to have embraced wholeheartedly the Nazi contention that Communism is a greater menace than Fascism.)

3. Argument on "Half-a-Loafism" would, of course, be impossible if POLITICS were really consistent in its "Whole-Loafism": since it is obviously impossible to find perfect contributors, you should logically refuse to publish any magazine rather than issue one containing misleading errors.

More fundamentally, my quarrel with "Whole-Loafism" is that it is the root of the two traditional curses of radical thought: the tendency to excuse eternal inaction and habitual indecision by demanding impossible perfection as the price of action or decision, and the tendency to exhaust all of the energies of a movement in quibbling over details of dogma and hunting heretics within the movement. You can have it. Logically, it should lead you to support British policy in Greece, Italy, and Belgium: everyone knows that the Fascists are bad, so it is a waste of time to fight them, and the really important thing must be to exterminate those of our allies who are not 99.44% pure.

4. Regarding the "Historical Fallacy," please note that I did not attempt to present Russia as an Utopia: my point was that its defects were due to circumstances which would have produced the same defects or much worse ones—and that whether Stalin or Dwight Macdonald had guided Russia's destiny. To say that a thing was inevitable may be to justify it—but not in the sense that you are using the word. (As you correctly note, a very fundamental difference in our premises lies in your assumption that there were historical alternatives to Stalin's attempt to build socialism in one country. I simply do not agree with you that such alternatives existed. Consequently, it seems to me that you are simultaneously damning Stalin for imposing heavy burdens on the Russian people and for not embarking on a course that would have imposed far heavier burdens on them.)

I certainly agree that progress towards such goals as those you outline is the test of progress. I as certainly do not agree that Russia has been moving away from these goals since 1929. While it is obviously possible to select

individual incidents to support this—or any other—view, the over-all evidence does not seem to me to justify your conclusion. I have recently been confirmed in this opinion by the fact that I know fairly intimately a gentleman who worked in a Moscow factory for three or four years—between 1935 and 1939. He started with a strong anti-Soviet bias and finally changed his mind because he became convinced that steady progress was being made toward exactly those goals which you claim were then receding into the far distance.

As for Stalin's post-war plans, he hasn't confided in me and I doubt that he has in you. I refuse to see anything sinister, though, in the fact that he was bored after a three-hour talk with Eric Johnson.

And as for Stalin's failure to divide Finland by making them envy the Russian standard of living, I thought that the whole point under discussion was whether or not Stalin or anyone else could have raised the Russian standard of living to that point by that time under those circumstances. This is where I came in. . . .

HAMILTON, O.

WILLIAM PALMER TAYLOR

"The New Leader" and the Jews

Sir:

Your criticism of the salute to Hull in *The New Leader* seems amply justified. But I think you did *The New Leader* an injustice by failing to mention that the offending article was not an expression of that paper's editorial policy but was a signed article by a contributor, Jonathan Stout.

STATEN ISLAND, N. Y.

TERENCE DONAGHUE

— I should have mentioned this and apologize for the oversight. In partial justification, however, I might note that (1) Stout is not an occasional contributor to *The New Leader* but its Washington correspondent, whose articles appear on page one every week; and (2) considering this fact plus the editorializing nature of Stout's piece plus its vicious misrepresentation of an issue of great moral significance—considering all this, one would have thought that *The New Leader's* editors, who constantly denounce revolutionaries for their alleged moral insensibility, would have been impelled to state editorially their repudiation of Stout's article—if, indeed, they did repudiate it. But the only comment on Stout's scandalous piece was a side remark buried in Liston Oak's column which expressed mild disapproval and failed even to mention the Jewish refugee issue.—ED.

Query

Sir:

Could you secure me a sponsor for "Good News from Heaven National Morale Hour" based on: Lo! Behold! this is a choice land & whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be freed from bondage & captivity & war & strikes & fire & invasion & earthquakes & flood & drought & disease & famine ONLY AS LONG AS THEY SERVE THE GOD OF THE LAND WHO "IS" JESUS CHRIST the covenant given by God to my great, great, great, great grandfather who (510 BC) led Israel to be the Americas' only very first settlers—Columbus (not by accident, as there is no such thing as accident, fate, luck) discovered the remnant, from which, of Pocahontas' child's child—Bowkins—came mother?

Yours in Christ,

MT. STERLING, KY.

REV. DR. FRED RICHARDSON

No.—ED.

To Our Readers

Five thousand copies of the article on Greece in last month's issue have been reprinted and are being distributed nationally, mostly in Greek-American circles. We have 500 copies left at the office, which we shall be glad to mail, either singly or in bundles, to any "Politics" readers who think they can make good use of them. Just drop us a card. They're free.

CONTRIBUTORS

Niccolo Tucci, a regular contributor to *POLITICS*, lives in New York City; he is working on a novel. . . . Meyer Schapiro is in the Department of Fine Arts and Archaeology of Columbia University. . . . Arthur W. Calhoun is Dean of Sterling College in Kansas. A sociologist, he is best known for his "Social History of the American Family," shortly to be reissued in one volume by Barnes & Noble. He taught economics for six years at A. J. Muste's Brookwood Labor College. Incidentally, he is the father of Don Calhoun, whose article on Conscientious Objection in the July *POLITICS* aroused much interest. . . . John Berryman, whose poetry has appeared in *New Directions*, *Partisan Review* and elsewhere, lives in Princeton, N. J., where he is preparing a new edition of "King Lear."

Correction: In the last issue, through an editorial mix-up, "Gallicus" was incorrectly described as the pen-name of an American newspaperman. Since this seems to have led to confusion with another person, it should be stated here that it is the pen-name of a refugee journalist.

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