sense worthy of such a critique. Mattick and Hook are, of course, in agreement on many specific points(omitted as obvious in the present pamphlet), and their differences are sometimes more a matter of emphasis than of fundamental opposition. But Hook, in common with all the other people who have tried to "make sense of Marx" has, we think Mattick clearly shows, merely succeeded in reducing what is essentially science to the 'common-sense' level of understanding and not only abandoned Marxism himself but made it all the easier for liberals and 'nice people' generally to feel that they were perfectly justified in never concerning themselves with the matter or never taking it seriously if they did. Mattick reveals that Marx is more modern than all his critics, whether of the pseudo-scientific radical camp like Max Eastman, or of the purely liberal type like Stuart Chase. Marx is not only the symbol of revolution, which is the only present alternative to world-wide fascism; he is also the man who has provided the most profound understanding of capitalist society, and that insight into economic laws and the movement of social classes which is the only sure guide to pursuing a really radical course of action under capitalism in its stage of decline. And Mattick, in spite or because of his comparative youth, has brought into marxist theory and the political labor movement a freshness of insight and depth of understanding gained in the course of years of experience here and abroad and hitherto lacking in this country.

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For Theory and Discussion

CONTENTS:

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UNITED WORKERS' PARTY

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE

MARCH 1935 No. 6

DANIEL DE LEON

BY-KRISTEN SVANUM

There has of late been a tendency by intellectuals who during the present crisis have discovered the revolutionary movement to join with the Socialist Labor Party in its cult of Daniel De Leon. While these intellectuals remain very skeptical towards the S.L.P. they wax quite lyrical about the revolutionary abilities and potency of De Leon even going so far as to name him an or the American Marx or Lenin. This is quite unjust to the S.L.P. that has ceased to be a factor in the revolutionary movement due to its devotion and loyalty to the theories and personality of De Leon. Such injustice is, of course, a matter of small importance but a distortion of revolutionary theory making a Marx or Lenin out of such shoddy material as De Leon is much more serious; not because De Leon's importance in American revolutionary tradition is heavy enough to allow a reinterpretation of his theories and activity to have any influence on the class struggle, but because it is an index of the confusion existing in revolutionary theory, and if not countered by a correct analysis is a contributary cause towards making confusion twice confounded.

Frederich Engels' conception of De Leon must have been quite different. When Lucien Sanial and De Leon visited him in England, his sole comment to a friend in the United States was, "they did not impress me much."

The alleged greatness of De Leon is usually based on his conception of industrial unionism and his uncompromising stand against any reformist compromise. It is unfortunate for the former premise that the refusal of the credentials committee to seat him at the 1908 convention of the I.W.W. was due to the fact that he was a member of, and a delegate from, a craft local (the clerical workers) and had consistently refused to transfer to an industrial union local in spite of the insistence of the General Executive Board of the I.W.W. that he do so. During the discussion of the credentials committee's report, in which De Leon was permitted to participate, it was brought out by

De Leon himself that this was to him not just a question of expediency - preference for representing a numerically stronger local - but of principle, i.e. that according to De Leon the organization of industrial unions should commence with the organization of craft locals.

This attitude of De Leon amounted, in practice, to demanding that the I.W.W. retrace the steps of the A.F. of L. before starting out on its own proper career, and was the decisive factor swinging many of De Leon's former supporters against him. As Tom Powers, a delegate from New England, put it: "No one but De Leon himself could convince me that De Leon does not understand industrial unionism, - but he has done it."

The idea prevalent that it was the political action clause that was the issue of this convention is merely a deduction from the fact that after the withdrawal of the De Leon supporters from the convention, the political clause was struck from the I.W.W. preamble; but this was merely a result of the anti-political faction being in control after the withdrawal of the De Leonites, not the cause of this withdrawal.

De Leon's second claim to revolutionary fame is even more shaky; to examine it, it is necessary to go back to the time of his entrance in the S.L.P., and the discussion then raging on the "who pays the taxes" problem. On this question, De Leon and his supporters held that the workers do not pay any taxes. This stand was superficially considered more revolutionary. When the opposing faction contended that the question of taxes should furnish one of the main planks in the party's platform and be considered separately, any revolutionist must agree with De Leon that this was only a red herring to draw the workers off the revolutionary trail; but, when examining the grounds on which the De Leonites took this stand, the question then assumes a sinister significance.

De Leon's argument was that under capitalism wages are determined by the law of value of labor power. The workers are therefore unable to improve their conditions under capitalism, and vice versa the capitalists are unable to cut their wages, the law of value overriding all such subjective notions. From a theoretical point of view, this is changing the Marxist conception of the class struggle into a conception of society as ruled by "iron immutable" laws. This is not dialectic materialism, but metaphysical materialism; not the Marxist conception of historical materialism, but the bourgeois conception of economic determinism. It is a complete repudiation of the subjective factor, reducing the human element in the class struggle to nothing; reducing social science to the same elements as natural science. In practice, it means the cessation of all struggle except the struggle with immediate revolutionary results. This degrades the revolution to the level of a miracle; for if the wage level is decided by factors outside the determination of capitalists and workers both, then the struggles, whether defensive or offensive, about wages, hours, etc., must be just that much waste of effort.

Incredible as this may seem, this was the attitude of De Leon; and this is the attitude of the S.L.P. today. The position, briefly stated, is this: nothing short of a revolution can improve the position of the working class. The two methods for accomplishing this were,

according to the S.L.P., political and economic action, but these two concepts were narrowed down to become mere shadows of their original selves.

Political action was, in the main, defined as parliamentarism; but a stern attitude was taken against the Socialist Party program of reforms to be gained by such methods. Elections were simply thermometers registering the "revolutionary temperature". When the proper degree, a majority vote, was gained, the workers would assume power but not through their elected parliamentary representatives. This task was left to their economic organizations: the industrial unions. What were these unions in the meantime to do? Merely organize and keep ir readiness for their historical mission? A program as narrow as this can, of course, not be carried through with perfect consistency; but the S.L.P. came very close to this "ideal". On the whole, S.L.P. candidates have honestly set forth at elections that, if elected, they could accomplish nothing; so, too, the W.I.I.U. organizers hold that unions can accomplish nothing for the workers. The result has, of course, been that there has been very little response from the mass of the working class. Only those very susceptible to revolutionary propaganda can respond to a message as severely academic as this. The only measure of success that the S.L.P. has been able to gain has therefore been to isolate within its ranks a small number of people highly susceptible to revolutionary propaganda, and thereby to restrain them from actively participating in any mass struggle.

Corresponding to these theoretical and strategical shortcomings is an equal deficiency in tactical principle. De Leon's opposition to the anti-political faction with the I.W.W. was not an opposition to opportunism and compromise, but against the "advocates of physical force". To his notion, political (read parliamentary) actionplus industrial unionism made any actual physical struggle unnecessary. The class struggle could therefore be carried on "on the civilized plane" with peaceful electioneering, organization and propaganda work. De Leon's tactical principle therefore became an extreme of legalism and pacifism, and anyone failing to worship these fetiches were simply branded as "enemies of the working class" and agents provocature.

The functions of a revolutionist joining the S.L.P. and adhering strictly to De Leon's principles were limited to a narrow sort of propaganda with no practical participation in the daily struggles of the workers, nay even disdaining these struggles and deprecating the necessary outbursts of violence of an offensive or defensive character incidental to them. The theoretical, strategical and tactical principles advocated by De Leon thus made revolutionists coming under their influence not only abstain from participation in the actual class struggle, but even made them into a counter-revolutionary force trying to canalize the spontaneous struggles of the workers into sterile channels.

The functions of a revolutionary movement is, of course, extremely limited. It does not furnish the motive power of the social revolution but only gives direction to it, and this even within narrow limits. The working class would, even if no revolutionary movement existed, revolt against the oppressive conditions that the capitalist system imposes on it. In the absence of a revolutionary movement such revolts would be empirical, tentative, blundering. The revolutionary

movement furnishes not only a record of such revolts, but, by analysis, establishes not only a connection between them by linking them historically to the past and discerning the relationships between the apparently disconnected struggles of the present, but, more important yet, sees the aim towards which the struggle is leading. The revolutionary movement is thus the central sensory and reasoning apparatus of the working class. And as it is impossible for a man to add an ounce of power to his bodily strength by the use of his mind and senses, so it is likewise impossible for the revolutionary movement to increase the revolutionary force of the working class. But a well-trained mind and perfect coordination of nerve and muscle cannot only utilize the muscular power of a man to ever better advantage, it can even, over a period of time, by suitable training increase bodily strength until tasks hitherto impossible can be conquered. It is likewise impossible for the revolutionary movement to accomplish any immediate increase in the revolutionary force of the working class. What is can do is to lead it into the most useful channels and thereby increase its effectiveness; to change it from a blind, instinctive, spontaneous, into a conscious, reasoned, deliberate struggle, not only for immediate redress of grievances but showing a path to the final aim - the rule of the working class as a transition to a classless society. Under such direction the revolutionary force of the working class would not only be better utilized, but would grow by continuous and rational exercise until it became adequate for its final aim.

De Leon's theory declared the actual class struggle senseless. His strategy would turn it into useless channels, his tactics would offer it as a sacrifice on the altar of legalism. De Leon never ceased to be a university professor in spirit; practical life had to be simplified into simple abstractions; the class struggle to be conducted within an academic, petty-bourgeois frame-work; and before all, no violence; let us be strictly legal. As all other reformists, he forgot that only one thing can make a revolution legal -- its success.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Back numbers of Council Correspondence can be had by sending in 13¢ in stamps for each copy wanted. We have a few copies of each issue except #1 and #2.

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The Council Correspondence will accept for publication, articles containing material which we consider should be brought to the attention of workers, by writers who are not members of the United Workers' Party. These articles are signed to denote that we do not necessarily endorse the views of the writer entirely. All material presented without signature is to be considered the collective work of Party members. We will at all times appreciate suggestions or criticism on the material contained in Council Correspondence.

- Editorial Committee -

--*** C. C. C. ***--

CAPITALISM'S CONSERVATION CORPS.

What stamps the C.C.C. as the most unique experiment inaugurated by Franklin D. Roosevelt is the almost total lack of criticism, - both from capitalist political opponents, and even those self-professing "liberals" admitting a "socialistic" taint. For that very reason, the Civilian Conservation Corps demands close scrutiny. Obviously, any innovation that immediately meets with the unqualified approval of ALL the rival capitalist groups bodes no good for the Proletariat.

The C.C.C. was launched amidst the usual fanfare of idealistic catch-phrases. The boys were to be given an opportunity to do useful work in healthful surroundings; God's Own Country - no less! Of greater importance to the members -- so they were gravely informed -- was the chance to regain that most precious of all possessions, their "morale".

Actually, of course, the Administration was moved by more practical motives. First, it was realized these youngsters, jobless and confronted with the ever-mounting misery prevailing in their homes, constituted a potential menace to Society (read: CAPITALIST Society). By draining off these, potentially, most militant elements into the C.C.C. that danger might be averted and the working class, as a whole, thereby weakened. Second, organization and training of the C.C.C. has been so conducted under Regular Army officers as to allow its conversion into a huge army at short notice. (Present 1935 plans call for an enrollment of over 1,000,000 men! Age limits are to be raised to 30 years, and married men are to be accepted.)

Against the second "alleged" motive the argument has been raised that because the members do not drill or engage in other warlike training the government cannot be accused of militarizing the C.C.C. By advancing this "argument", capitalist apologists either reveal their lying hypocritical role, or else betray an utter ignorance of modern warfare and military organization.

Modern industry requires hardly any specialized skill from the laborer, who today merely acts as an adjunct to the machine. Likewise, with modern warfare, one of Capitalism's greatest industries. Here, too, great development in the mechanization and efficacy of weapons has resulted in a lessened demand for specialized skill on the part of the modern soldier. The deadly accuracy of the machine gun has destroyed the old dependency on the closed formation. With the outmoding of this form of organization went the necessity for extensive drilling en masse. Today, soldiers fight in a loose, scattered formation in bodies of about 200 - 250 men under the command of a captain and several lieutenants. Significantly enough, this is the identical form of organization of the C.C.C. camps! Each camp holds from 200-250 men under the command of a commissioned army captain and two lieutenants. In addition, just as in the regular army, there are non-commissioned officers (corresponding to sergeants and corporals) chosen from the ranks of the C.C.C. seemingly, to judge by report, on the basis of physical brutalness and blind obedience in carrying out orders. These

"straw bosses" known as leaders and assistant leaders receive more than the usual $30. per month, - $45. and $36. per month respectively. It is evident then, that providing the men are thoroly disciplined and unquestioningly obedient, they can be quickly whipped into military shape. Arming them with machine guns, skill in using them can be learned in a few hours, would turn the C.C.C. into a first-class army capable of engaging in regular warfare; or, what is more likely in the minds of Roosevelt and his counsellors, capable of combatting a militant working-class!

Only on this basis can the peculiar ideological training the boys have been subjected to, be explained. This explanation, too, furnishes the rational key to the extreme brutality with which, even, minor infractions of the rules have been punished. Both mentally an physically the men are being prepared for the role they are to play.

A thorough "head-fixing" department has been set up in every camp under the guidance of an "educational advisor" The real purpose was blurted out by a naive educational advisor, who, writing in the New York Times (6-3-'34) said: "This lecturing stuff is out! A regular "bull" session will be started on government affairs, national news, and economics." Evidently a form of the Catholic confessional is being introduced into the camps. Any luckless Corps member who unwittingly reveals a lack of faith in the "New Deal" Trinity, Franklin D. Roosevelt, the United States and Capitalism, will be quickly shown his error.

This touching solicitude for what C.C.C. members read and think was demonstrated still further in the banning of the pamphlet "YOU and MACHINES", written expressly for the C.C.C. by Prof. Wm. F. Ogburn of Chicago University. Robt.Fechner in banning the booklet explained that it was not suited for its audience, and that it was just a bit too gloomy, painting too pessimistic picture of our technological future for the laborer. What Fechner actually objected to were certain stray remarks of Prof.Ogburn's that were REVOLUTIONARY in their implication.

Quoting from the pamphlet: "Machines are forcing our institutions to change; but always they lag behind. .. We can't bring back the good old days...Passing laws will never do it...If they want to stop change, they will have to break up the machine, or, better still, poison all inventors...They (Youth) must learn to adjust themselves to the machine..."

Again: "It is generally believed that not more than one person out of every seven persons unemployed in 1933, perhaps not even 1 in 10, had his job taken away by a machine."

What is Prof.Ogburn sketching in the above statement, if not the Materialist Conception of History? True, in a distorted and almost unrecognizable form. BUT, does he not show the futility of patching Capitalism by means of the New Deal in stating: "Passing laws will never do it". (i.e. "..bring back the good old days..."). Furthermore, isn't this an expression of the necessity of REVOLUTION for the further development of the machine (productive forces) and the progressive development of society? No wonder Robt.Fechner banned the pamphlet! No dangerous ideas were going to be put into the minds

of C.C.C. if he could help it! Fechner, a vice-president of the A.F. of L. International Association of Machinists, has been preaching "harmony" between Labor and Capital all his life. To him, capitalist society is eternal and the best of all societies. It HAS been good to him. The job as head of the C.C.C. was his reward for the fine work he performed during the World War "conciliating" Labor to capitalist oppression.

Humorously enough, Dr. Percy Bidwell, editor of the booklet, in defending it, said the author was "a pillar of society" and a man of "tremendous reputation". To no avail, however. Fechner, acting as censor for capitalist society, had to ban the pamphlet even though written by "a pillar of that society."

The administration cannot relax its regime of iron discipline and unquestioning obedience, for that would spell failure in their attempt to build up a large army. On the other hand, members of the C.C.C., not aware that they are actually being moulded into an army, are rebelling against the seemingly unnecessary and excessive discipline. Discipline, that certainly is out of all proportion to the type of work they have been doing: building roads, planting trees, digging and then filling those same holes, etc. As a result of this contradiction, the spirit of discontent is steadily growing and is manifesting itself increasingly in spontaneous outbreaks.

Secretary Dern of the War Department in summing up the achievements of the first year of the C.C.C. (4-16-'34) said: "No group of men understands Youth so well or holds it in greater affection than does the commissioned personnel of the army".

How the commissioned personnel practically display their "great affection" was demonstrated three months later (7-10-'34) by Lieutenant Gatlin at an Oklahoma C.C.C. camp. The Lieutenant, in an exuberance of affection, "attempted to quiet recruits who were reported to have been drinking" by firing once at a group, slightly wounding private Mc Cullough. This individual, not having heard Secy.Dern's report, evidently mistook the Lieutenant's affectionate action and is alleged to have returned the fire , killing him.

As time went on, the reaction to the restrictions and discipline, which in the beginning manifested itself in sporadic and individualistic acts of protest, took on a MASS character, expressing itself in SPONTANEOUS action on the part of WHOLE camps!

Thus, on Nov. 7, 1934, 250 C.C.C. workers (an entire camp) being sent South from their Maine camp to Virginia and Maryland camps, rebelled against this arbitrary , wholesale transfer. They rose in a mass, badly beat up their officers and then locked them in baggage cars! The government then promptly showed that action on the part of workers, however slight, in this period of the Permanent Crisis, the decline of capitalism, will not be tolerated and will meet with the same reception as the action of class-conscious workers in open revolt! In this particular case, 150 policemen were called to the yards and savagely beat up the boys. Had the police failed, the government stood ready to call upon regular troops.

This is even more strikingly shown two months later (1-8-'35) when

the entire camp at South Mountain Reservation, Orange, N.J. gathered before the camp commandant, Captain Tobin, and served notice through a committee that there would be no work unless the 11 o'clock bed time regulation was abrogated. His reply was to order the men back to work under penalty of discharge; 75 complied, the other 125 men returned to their barracks, refusing to work. The good Captain calle upon Park police to escort the "mutineers" from the reservation. Although the boys went peacefully, they were threatened with tear-gas and clubbings from the police. Near Orange, N.J. the 125 workers hel a demonstration and appointed a grievance committee. To newspaper me this committee revealed that besides dissatisfaction with the 11 o' clock rule, the commissioned officers practiced discrimination, and that there was a refusal on the part of the officers to arbitrate (! mistreatment. Evidently, the boys still took seriously the camp ' school teachings on the glorious "rights" conferred on the workers by the New Deal. They were quickly disillusioned by their own teachers. Captain Tobin and several high ranking officers from the army appeared before the meeting near Orange, made stirring speeches about "duty to their government," etc. etc., and finally ordered the boys back to camp, refusing to meet with the committee. Hemmed in by police, threatened with military law, the boys finally gave in and returned to camp. Capt.Tobin immediately issued a report to the papers stating: "three or four communist agitators had inspired the youths, the situation is now under control". To give the lie to his own words, he immediately "dishonorably" discharged the 12 members of the grievance committee. A regular Catholic Inquisition was then instituted and 28 more "heretics" were uncovered and discharged that evening and the following day. To show his contempt for the boys, the Captain moved up the bed time to 10 o'clock. To a complaint about food, he replied, "The food is the best to be had. I never had anything as good in the army". Evidently he doesn't read the newspapers. For only three months before, the New York Times (8-21-'34) carried an item revealing that 30 C.C.C. members and a Captain's wife and daughter had been stricken with ptomaine poison at Lewes, Del.

Major Morse, who investigated the affair for the government, in his report revealed the same "impartiality and thoroness" that characterizes ALL "New Deal" investigations involving workers. Quoting: "We are not vindictive, we regard the C.C.C. camps as school, not work camps. It is our desire to have you (the members of the camp) return to your homes better citizens". What touching sincerity!

Of great importance to workers in general is the first appearance in this affair of the COMMITTEE of ACTION in embryo. True, it failed in this particular instance; but the fact remains that the C.C.C. workers have discovered that their problems are mass problems, and only as groups , as members of the working class, can their problems be solved. And the form of organization most natural and best suited for this purpose is that which takes the form of the Committee of Action, the only form that cannot be smashed as long as there are workers alive! The only form that can understand their local problem and solve it in conscious action!

Our conclusion (which is almost superfluous) is that as the crisis deepens and the capitalist class forces more and more of the burden of the depression onto the shoulders of the working class, the C.C.C., an integral part of that class, will likewise suffer. Just as the workers will organize in committees of action to gain food, clothing

and shelter, so the C.C.C. will organize in similar groups to combat the ever-tightening bonds of discipline, the attempts on the part of an evermore desperate capitalist class to force them to shoot down their own relatives fighting to live. And in this struggle which MUST culminate in the destruction of capitalist society, the C.C.C. will destroy the necessity for its own existence. With the inception and development of a CLASSLESS society, the members of the C.C.C. will take their rightful places in the ranks of FREE and EQUAL PRODUCERS.

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THE SCUM OF HUMANITY.

Anyone unfamiliar with politics who strolls into a workers' meeting (leaving out of consideration the gatherings of the unemployed) is surprised by the fact that the larger part of those present is not to be numbered among the most impoverished stratum of the proletariat. The best organized workers are, of course, those who belong to the so-called labor aristocracy, which takes a social position between the middle class and the genuine proletariat. These trade-unionist organizations espouse the direct vital interests of their members, bringing to them immediate advantages; and yet they are neither able nor do they attempt to politicise their adherents in the socialistic sense. The radical labor movement, on the other hand, can provide its adherents only with ideological satisfaction; it offers them no direct material advantages. And this is precisely why it is incapable of embracing the truly impoverished part of the proletariat. This part, by reason of its very misery, is compelled to concern itself only with its pressing and direct interests if it is not to abandon life altogether. For this reason the political radical labor movement hovers between the two poles of the working population, namely, the labor aristocracy and the Lumpenproletariat, and is carried on by those elements which, though without illusions on the point that within the present society genuine possibilities of advance are barred to them, nevertheless still maintain a standard of living which permits them to devote money, time and energy to endeavors the fruit of which, in the form of real material advantages for themselves, is deferred to some uncertain future. They set themselves in opposition to the existing society from a recognition of the fact that it has to be changed and because, in spite of this position, it is possible for them to live in it.

The activity of the radical labor movement in times which are not revolutionary is mainly directed to transforming the prevailing ideology. Agitation and propaganda demand material sacrifices; they bring no material advantages. The members of these organizations have time available; they wait for the masses to become revolutionized, even though they seek, meanwhile, to hasten the day of the overturn; they educate, discuss, philosophize. Those elements of the working class which flock to their standard but which, because of their circumstances, are not in a position to wait, are continually repelled by these organizations. The fluctuation in membership within the radical movement is not exclusively the result of a false policy or of the lack of tact displayed by the bureaucracy to members not yet settled in their ideology; it is also the result of the increasingly imperious compulsion, for a growing stratum of the im-

poverished workers, to "restrict the horizon". The activity of the movement from which they expected help gives them only words and something to keep themselves occupied; it does not assist, but hinders them, in their individual struggle for existence--a struggle which becomes ever more difficult, time-consuming and nerve-wracking the more the impoverishment spreads and the deeper the individual becomes submerged in it. However much socialist propaganda they have absorbed, their present existence compels them to actions which stand in opposition to their conviction; and as a result, this conviction itself, sooner or later, again fades out, since it is "practically worthless".

This is also one of the reasons why the political labor movement goes to pieces in periods of economic crisis and functions better in boom times. And accordingly, a large part of the labor movement on the basis of its "experiences" has taken a hostile position to the idea that the impoverishment of the masses is identical with their revolutionizing. To those who hold to the theory of impoverishment, the existence of the Lumpenproletariat is heatedly pointed out as proof that pauperization makes the workers apathetic rather than revolutionary, sets them in opposition to, rather than serves the interests of, the proletariat, since the ruling class frequently engages the Lumpenproletariat to serve the needs of that class. And so the labor movement set about with great zeal to improve the economic position of the workers, considering that precisely in that way proletarian self-consciousness would be raised. As a matter of fact, in the upgrade period of capitalist society the improvement in the workers' standard of living was bound up with a growth in the trade-unionist and political labor organizations and with the strengthening of their political consciousness; but this consciousness, like the organizations themselves, was not revolutionary. So that the theory of raising the proletarian standard of living as a means to revolutionizing was just as much a failure as the rejected theory of impoverishment. This difficulty was gotten over by the unfortunate and meaningless explanation that the reactionary attitude of the organized workers was the result of the reactionary leadership, since the contradiction involved in combatting impoverishment and at the same time holding it to be necessary was recognized as injurious to the existence of the organization; the masses cannot be brought together in organizations without at the same time being made some promises.

The conviction, based on a superficial view of the phenomena, that impoverishment makes the masses reactionary rather than revolutionary, and abhorrence of the Lumpenproletariat as the living manifestation of this "truth", remained for a long while a common property of the political labor movement and is still continually brought up in political arguments when the question is one of explaining the aid recruited by the ruling class from the camp of the proletariat. Just as the defective degree of organization and the relatively undeveloped class-consciousness of the unemployed tends apparently to refute the theory of impoverishment, so also does the role played in society by the Lumpenproletariat. Of course it is the "scum of humanity" which, in alliance with the petty-bourgeoisie and at the order of monopoly capital, fills the fascist ranks. The elements which the fascist movement attracts to itself from working class circles expect and obtain advantages which at any rate are immediate,

however slight they may be. Those elements attach themselves to no movement from ideological motives; these are quite beyond their power to possess. The fact that these advantages are of a merely temporary nature cannot disturb these elements, which of course are constantly in a state of living "from hand to mouth". To reproach them with class betrayal is merely to attribute to them the possibility of a conscience and of a set of convictions,--a luxury which, however, their determinate mode of life precludes. They act on the strength of their most proximate interests, as, for that matter, the mass of workers in general later accepts the fascist movement, passively or actively, in order not to injure themselves. As to who first and who later goes over to the class enemy, that depends on the degree of impoverishment. Apart from this factor, the investigations of social scientists in almost all countries have proved that the decline in revolutionary tendencies is bound up with the impoverishment of the masses. Their conclusions are based exclusively, however, on the last few years and hence can do no more than indicate that impoverishment is at first bound up with the regression in revolutionary tendencies.

II.

The concept of Lumpenproletariat is by no means strictly delimited. Thus the communist groups to the left of the official parliamentary and trade-unionist labor movement have given such broad bounds to the concept that "Lumpenproletariat", become a term of abuse, is made to cover all those elements which, in virtue of their class situation, would naturally be counted among the proletariat but which perform some service or other for the ruling class. In this conception the lumpenproletarian element is made up not so much of the "scum of humanity" as of the so-called flower or top, i.e. of the governing bureaucracy of the labor movement. In this extension of the notion is mirrored the hatred directed at sell-outs; there is consciously left out of consideration the fact that the betrayal is more the product of the whole historical development than of the individual self-interest of corrupted leaders.

Almost the whole of the labor movement includes under the term Lumpenproletariat, the many pillars of present society who are thrown into the struggle directly in opposition to the workers, as, for example, the police, provocateurs, spies, strikebreakers, etc. To the reformist "labor movement" striving for power within the existing society, however, these elements forthwith lose their lumpenproletarian character as soon as the reformist bureaucracy is given a share in the government. The policemen then become the "brothers in uniform", the spies turn into worthy citizens who protect the country from threatening anarchy, and the strikebreakers become the "technical emergency workers." A change of government suffices to take away from these elements the stigma of "Lumpenproletariat".

The bounds of the existing or of any other antagonistic society cannot, however, be properly embraced in the concept of Lumpenproletariat, since they are quite necessary to the social practice. This is not quite true of the strikebreakers; but even they are logically to be excluded, since, to use an expression of Jack London's, "with rare exceptions, all people in the world are scabs." As a matter of fact, the scab can be reproached only from the standpoint of a

social order not yet in existence. Today they act in complete accord with the social practice, which, however much it has socialized production, nevertheless permits no other rule of conduct than private interest. The scab has not yet realized, nor sufficiently experience in practice, that it is precisely his individual necessities which impose upon him collective action. He is not yet sufficiently disillusioned by the fruitlessness of the efforts directed to making his way on the basis of the existing society. He hopes to assure himself advantages from a better fitting into the practice of societ and it is only through the nothingness of his endeavors that he can be convinced that in reality he stands estranged from that society, however much he has striven to do justice to it. However much the workers are forced to oppose the scabs, these latter cannot be denoted as Lumpenproletarians.

Since the capitalistic relations of production serve to advance the general human development during a certain historical period, these working-class "pillars of society", however parasitical and hostile they may be to the workers, must nevertheless themselves be recognized as productive elements. If the productive capacity of society was driven forward at a dizzying tempo by the market and competitive relationship, then the means for the safe-guarding and promotion of this relationship must likewise be understood as productive ones.The means can be properly opposed only by one who stands opposed to the society itself. The function of both groups of the proletariat, the directly productive as well as the indirectly productive, which assures the safety of society, are different only in manner; in principle, they serve the same purposes. The overthrow of existing society would show at once that the concept of Lumpenproletarian is applicable only to those outcasts of society who are taken over by the new society as the successor of the old; the shiftless and criminal elements which, though a product of present society and constantly denied and frequently employed by it, must also be combatted by the new society. These are nothing other than what is regarded as the scum of humanity: the beggars, tramps, bootleggers, prostitutes, pimps, floaters, drunkards, thieves, swindlers, etc.

III

At the time when unemployment could still be denied as a regular social condition, since the temporary booms concealed the fact that it is inseparably bound up with the present system, a large part of bourgeois criminology came to regard all criminal activities and propensities within the lower strata of the population as having their roots primarily in shiftlessness. This attitude was nourished even in working-class circles, and the organized worker with a fairly regular income looked with no slight contempt upon the shiftless canaille of the large cities and highways. The source of this shiftlessness, in cases where the word could really serve as an explanation, was quite a matter of unconcern to the judges. The socialist movement, to be sure, made existing society responsible for it; and yet wherever the socialists had occasion practically to combat the tendency, they also merely reached for the bourgeois criminal code.

Impoverishment, Lumpenproletariat, criminality are not a result of the capitalist crisis; that crisis can only explain the great increase in their manifestations. Unemployment accompanies the whole

development of capitalism; it is necessary to the present system of production in order to keep wages and working conditions at the low level corresponding to the demands of a profitable economy. Even though unemployment alone does not explain capital's mastery over the workers, it yet explains the greater success of that mastery. Apart from the providential effect of the industrial reserve army upon the rate of profit attained by the various enterprises, the very existence of that army has its basis in the economic laws which determine the movements of capitalist society. The tendency of capital accumulation, producing superfluous capital on the one hand and excess population on the other, has become a very painful reality which is no longer deniable. So it comes to be admitted, however reluctantly, that unemployment can never more be entirely eliminated, and efforts are devoted less to setting it aside than to lessening the dangers which it involves for society. Hence also the vigorous discussions concerning reform of the penal system, discussions which only mirror the changes occuring on the labor market. Thus even H.L. Menken, in a recent number of Liberty, raised the demand for Chinese practices in the American penal system: the unrestricted physical destruction of criminals with or without proof of guilt, that is, a form of justice such as is common in countries with chronic overpopulation. In Germany there is talk of introducing the corporeal punishments in vogue during the Middle Ages, since the prisons have ceased to be means of frightening, and the gratuitous labor power of the prisoners can no longer be used. The increased misery resulting from the permanent crisis and large-scale unemployment diminishes the fear of punishment, since life in jail is not much worse than existence on the outside. The criminal elements are multiplying; a fact which compels to the further brutalization of punishment and hence to the impossibility of reforming the inmates. "When we get down to the poorest and most oppressed of our population," says Bernard Shaw, "we find the condition of their life so wretched that it would be impossible to conduct a prison humanely without making the lot of the criminal more eligible than that of many free citizens. If the prison does not underbid the slum in human misery, the slum will empty and the prison will fill." So that legal punishment is not only barbarous and compelled to ever greater barbarism, but its institutions become hothouses of criminality,-- as proved by statistics, which show that the majority of those previously convicted repeatedly find their way back into the jails.

Yet this animalization of human beings, a phenomenon bound up with the development of capitalist society and which finds its most pronounced expression in the growth of the Lumpenproletariat, arises not only from the unemployment and the mass impoverishment by which it is accompanied. The accumulation of wealth at the one pole is not only, to use an expression of Marx's, the accumulation of misery, but also of drudgery, slavery, ignorance, brutalization and moral degration at the other pole. Under capitalistic working conditions labor becomes forced labor pure and simple, however "free" the workers may be in other respects. Even outside the labor process, the worker does not belong to himself; he merely recuperates his labor power for the next day. He lives in freedom merely in order to remain in condition to perform forced labor. The worker becomes completely dehumanized; he has no voluntary relations of any sort to his work. He himself is only a thing, an appendage of the productive mechanism. To expect these workers, under such conditions, to take pleasure in their work

is out of the question. They have to endeavor to get away from it in order to assert themselves as human beings. Such a state of things must, in the long run, animalize them.

With external power, with force and compulsion alone, it is impossible to dispose of the Lumpenproletariat or to bring about a diminuation in criminality. The question is one of maintaining or creating in human beings the psychial readiness to take their place in society and its definite mode of life; and this becomes increasingly impossible. The lack of social conscience and of social adaptability on the part of criminals is susceptible of other explanations in addition to that of "shiftlessness". Of course there are a great number of lopsided theories by which mental and bodily defects are advanced as the essential reasons for the criminal actions of human beings. It is undeniable that biological psychological factors must be taken into consideration if criminal propensities are to be really understood. It nevertheless remains obvious that the theory which has the most to offer by way of enlightenment on this subject is the economico-social-political one. The biological and psychological factors assist in determining the conscious and unconscious actions of human beings, but these factors are in the fullest measure modified and in fact determined, as regards their quantitative and qualitative effects, through the social process. The drives of individuals are subject both to the socio-economic situation and also to that of the class to which they belong. In a society which grants the highest measure of recognition to the rich and propertied, the narcistic impulses, for example (as has been shown by the social psychologist Erich Fromm), must lead to an enormous intensification of the desire for possession. And if, on the basis of society, those propensities cannot be satisfied along "normal" paths, they must seek their fulfillment in criminality. Even if criminality is traced back to bodily or spiritual defects, yet these defects in their turn can only be fully understood in connection with society and the class situation obtaining in it. Those crimes, the majority of which are directed against the laws of property, can be understood only from a consideration of the whole social process; and even the others are partially determined, if not directly, yet indirectly by the social and political situation. Hence also they can be changed or set aside only thru changing the society in which they occur.

There is no better concrete proof of the importance of the economic factor for explaining crime than the fact that it greatly increases in times of economic crisis. As a consequence of depressions, the mentally and corporeally weakest of the poor are hurled onto the road of criminality; frequently, in fact, no other possibility is left open to them. How clearly the socio-political factor is here revealed as the essential one when we consider the fact, for example, that the sexual transgressions of children in families of the unemployed are much more numerous than in families whose economic life is orderly. How can any one attempt to explain the decline of the family--in present society another factor in the increase of criminality--on a biological and psychological basis? How the fact of the rapid increase in prostitution during the crisis? Investigations regarding the influence of the milieu on criminality in the United States revealed that the greater percentage of convicts came from the city slums and from families which lived from hand to mouth. The majority of crimes are those committed against property, the investigations further revealed, and the majority of criminals are of

"normal intelligence". The youthful tramps, who today are roaming planless and goalless through the States and populating the highways are in the best possible position for slipping forever into the Lumpenproletariat. No opportunities knock to them; they are embittered, and resolved to provide themselves with more of the fullness of life by all the ways, i.e. the criminal ways, which still remain open to them. "We will get ours," they assure themselves; and their heroes are not the respectable heroes of present society, but the Dillinger While Jack London could once characterize the tramp as a discouraged worker, most of these youngsters have never yet worked at all. They are discouraged before having begun; and the longer they remain without a job, the more they lose the capacity ever to fit themselves in to the social rhythm of life.

"It is better for society", as William Petty already realized, "to burn the work of a thousand people than to let these thousand people lose their working capacity through idleness." But it is not only from the standpoint of profit, but also from that of social security, that the present system bites into its own flesh when it robs the workers, even though against its will, of the possibility of keeping themselves occupied. It is only through the sale of their labor power that the workers can remain alive as workers. Their whole life depends on the fickle movements of the labor market. To get away from the compulsion and chance of the market is possible only in case they evade the workers lot itself. To him who fails to make the leap into the middle class--a possibility which was always very exceptional, and which today is already precluded--the only remaining way out is into the Lumpenproletariat. This "way out" is sought voluntarily only in exceptional cases, but for an ever growing element of the unemployed it becomes unavoidable. Since it is quite as much out of the question, even if desired, to accord to the unemployed living conditions befitting human beings as it is to do the same for the criminals, since otherwise the compulsion to labor would lose some of its sharpness and the workers' power of resistance in the wage struggle would be increased, so also to the workers on relief there remains no other recourse than to increase their extremely limited means of livelihood by way of crime. Yet even in countries with unemployed relief, a larger or smaller percentage of the workers still remains excluded from its enjoyment, and this portion cannot save themselves, even assuming the greatest moderation on their part, from sinking down into the Lumpenproletariate.

Anyone who has been debarred from the labor process for some time loses also the capacity and the possibility of ever working again. Consider, for example, one who has been unoccupied three or four years; it becomes unspeakably difficult for him not merely psychologically and corporeally to take his place once more in industrial life, but has become impossible for him in many occupations merely by reason of the rapidly progressing rationalization; he is unable to meet the increased demands as performance regards. For this reason employers almost universally refuse to take back workers who have undergone years of unemployment. Toward such workers they have a very skeptical attitude, which is further strengthened by the poor and dilapidated outer appearance of the applicants. Once arrived at a certain stage of impoverishment, there is no further return into the ordinary daily grind. There then remains nothing further than the poor nourishment won by begging and the slow deterioration in the streets of the large cities. There is only the wheedled gin to en-

able one to forget the senselessness of his own existence; or the leap into the ranks of the underworld, which unavoidably leads to prison and violent death.

IV

If the impoverishment taking place among the masses in the course of the capitalist development were a uniform one, and if the entire working class were affected by it in a uniform manner, then it would be identical with the revolutionizing of those masses. The numbers of the "Lumpenproletariat" would be so great that the lumpenproletarian existence would be precluded. The "lumpenproletarian" activity of the individual would in this case be capable of expressing itself in no other way than collectively. The individual parasitic existence, or the individual expropriation, would do away with itself, since sponging or stealing can never be engaged in by a majority without at the same time completely overturning the basis of society. In the fact that the Lumpenproletariat is possible only as a minority lies also its tragic character. As a result of this minority situation there remains to it, in fact, no other than the sponging or criminal form of activity. In countries at war, for example, where increasing scarcity of food, in spite of the diversity of incomes, produces a rather uniform standard of living among the great masses of the population, a revolutionary situation is more likely to result than in times and situations in which the impoverishment takes place by stages and with leaplike impetuosity. Insofar as the Lumpenproletariat arises not only indirectly but also directly from the existing relations, the predominance in the matter of impoverishment must be awarded to the blind law by which it is brought about. The Lumpenproletariat had to take form because the impoverishment first arose simultaneously with the expansion of the economic system and because, with the close of this expansion, it is itself still condemned to remain for a long while a minority, even though an increasing one. Because society grows up too quickly and declines too slowly, a part of the working population is exposed to a measure of impoverishment to which it can respond in no other than the lumpenproletarian way, and to which it must therefore submit. These first "victims" of a slow process of social overturn which does not forthwith affect the individual cannot become a revolutionary, but only a negative force. Instead of revolutionary solutions, there remain to them only the individual and necessarily anti-social ones. So the Lumpenproletariat can free itself from its situation only through its growth, just as this growth is at the same time an index of the revolutionizing process going on throughout society. The lumpenproletarian basis of existence must become the level of life of such a great portion of humanity that there is no possibility for the individual to maintain any sort of life, even among the Lumpenproletariat.

As we have already said, superficial appearances seem to belie the claims of the theory of impoverishment. If one considers only the psychological attitude of the unemployed, not to speak of that of the Lumpenproletariat, one is horrified (unless he deceives himself, as is often regarded proper for agitational purposes) at the spiritual deadness of these elements. Released, to be sure, from the stupefying toil, they are still less capable than before of developing a revolutionary consciousness. Their conversations turn on the most trifling matters: current events and sports. They have no real relations to their own situation. They turn away, almost with fear, from

the recognition of that situation and its political consequences.

The impression made by impoverishment upon the unemployed can be divided into degrees. A small percentage is not at first cast down by the changed situation. They have not yet been out of work long enough, or are protected by savings from the rapid descent. They draw in upon themselves, try with increasing energy again and again to find work and still look hopefully into the future from which they expect an improvement in their situation. The intensity with which they endeavor to keep above water excludes this group more or less from political activity. More than previously, they are obliged to devote themselves to their narrowest interests; they have no possibility of applying their energy to several fields simultaneously. The great mass of the unemployed, however,--those who, as a result of the length of time in which they have been unoccupied, have left this first level,--lives on in the most profound state of resignation and lack of energy. They expect nothing more from life; fancy itself affords them no cause for hope. Nothing suffices to arouse their interest; there is nothing for which they are capable of engaging themselves; they have put off the living features of humanity; they vegetate and are conscious of the fact that they are slowly going under. From this broad, gray mass is still recruited a rather small percentage of the completely desperate who either dive down into the Lumpenproletariat or in a very short time disappear from life. Hopelessness and embitterment here border on insanity; the victims crawl or lash about each other like terrified animals. As rapidly as society is relieved of them, the places they vacated are again filled from the gray mass of the resigned, who in their turn are again replaced from the ranks of the still unbroken.

Whatever may be said against the theory of impoverishment, all the counter-arguments fall down before the impoverishment which is now under way and to which no halt can be put within the framework of present society. If the theory of impoverishment is false, then also is the Revolution an improbability. It is much more probable, however, that the impoverishment has hitherto remained without visible revolutionary consequences only because it always embraced only minorities. A great mass of the impoverished must by reason of its magnitude be converted into a revolutionary force. And this, the abolition of the proletariat as such, is at the same time the end of the Lumpenproletariat, even though it does not thereby disappear forthwith. Only the soil of its development is washed away; the lumpenproletarian ideology arising as a result of the lumpenproletarian mode of existence will still for a long while manifest itself as one of the many undesired heritages of the proletariat, until the new relations have sufficiently changed humanity that the ideological traditions are still to be found only in books of history and no longer in the heads of human beings.

So one need not shrink from holding impoverishment to be a necessary presupposition for the revolutionary overturn while at the same time practically combatting that impoverishment. This is no contradiction; for precisely by reason of the fact that one attempts within the framework of capitalism to diminish impoverishment, one actually increases it. But to enter farther into this paradox would lead us into the field of economics. Let us limit ourselves to the further statement that in the Lumpenproletariat the workers can only see the

face of their own future, unless their efforts to change the existing relations of production proceed at a more rapid rate. It is only petty-bourgeois narrowness which can point the finger of scorn at the Lumpenproletariat; to the workers themselves, the "scum of humanity" is only the obverse side of the medal which is admired as capitalistic civilization. It is only with the setting aside of this latter that the end of the other is bound up.

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A. F. of L. And ADMINISTRATION BREAK.

The pressure of class interests upon government is aptly illustrated by Roosevelt's recent turn to the right in New Deal policies. The president came into office with a reputation for opportunism and vacillation. An astute political engineer, he lacked all knowledge of fundamental social and economic science. As a consequence, his cabinet is the most heterogeneous hodge-podge, running wild in contradictory and conflicting policies.

The liberals, captivated by his radiant smile and the well-meaning platitudes he uttered, as usual placed great hopes in him and were, as usual, disappointed in the end. The president never had a clear policy. He gropes around hoping for "something to turn up", and just because of this lack of decision becomes a most adept executive for the master class of the country. The influences of capital are free to work upon him, and find no resistance such as would characterize a man of firm convictions. Thus, without being fully conscious of it, in spite of humanitarian sentiments, he pursues a course outlined for him by American capitalism with all the accuracy of a man fully conscious of the course.

It was not personal astuteness that caused him, at the outset of NRA, to curry favor with the A.F. of L. Finance and Manufacturing capital were terrorized by the fear of incipient revolution. They needed peace, industrial peace, in order to find their bearings, and N R A could not promise that without the help of the A.F. of L. Thus special inducements were held out to Green and his cohorts; and the A.F. of L. joyously accepted. It felt itself a partner in the Fascist reorganization of America, and would have continued as a partner if it had proved able to deliver.

It was intended that the A.F. of L. was to curb strikes, maintain industrial peace and develop unflinching loyalty to N R A on the part of the workers; but the A.F. of L. was unable to deliver. An unprecedented strike wave swept the country: Toledo, Minneapolis, San Francisco, and the textile strike were the high points of an upheaval that was continuous to the close of 1934. Rank and file rebellions in coal, steel and automobile unions threatened at all times to add to the confusion, and communist elements seemed to be gaining strength in unexpected places. Not that harried and blundering William Green didn't do his best to head off militant action. He and John L. Lewis hastened to quell the miners of Pennsylvania when they resorted to strikes. He pleaded with tears in his eyes to pre-

vent the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Tin and Steel Workers from striking. His membership was kept in line in the auto plants while independent and wild-cat strikes threatened to upset the auto industry. The San Francisco strike was repudiated by him, and the socialistic leaders of the Textile Workers' Union called off its strike before attaining its objective.

One does not receive pay for good intentions. One must deliver; and Green, though his intentions were the best, couldn't deliver. Painfully he limped from place to place trying to remedy conditions when the damage had already been done.

The organization work of the A.F. of L. was hampered by craft divisions. The N R A setup required vertical unions so that the workers, regimented in industrial units, could be effectively handled by their leaders and delivered to their masters. One prominent NRA executive resigned from his post because it was inconceivable to him to use a "craft" A.F. of L., and Gerald Swope of the General Electric voiced determined opposition to organizing his workers on a craft basis.

At its 1934 convention, the A.F. of L. decided to adopt "vertical" unions in some industries. That this was purely an opportunist maneuver was plain, as Charles P. Howard, president of the International Typographical Union, who fathered the compromise proposition on vertical unions, is a bitter enemy of all progressive tendencies in the typographical union, which latter is one of many crafts subdividing the printing industry.

But all of these efforts were belated. It had become obvious to NRA chieftains that the A.F. of L. , though reactionary enough, lacked the force to become the Fascist labor adjunct of our dying capitalism. So the adminstration turned from it in the automobile controversy. The administration decided to continue the automobile code which admits company unions and independent unions into the collective bargaining arrangements until June 16th. This turn of events shows no deviation by the national adminstration from its previous policy of regimenting workers in units that will serve the general fascization of American labor. It merely represents a shift from the A.F. of L. as the instrument of fascism, to the pure company union. It does not signify that the A.F. of L. becomes progressive. It merely means that the latter will act as a minor fascist agent in the labor movement instead of being the main factor.

Green and his cohorts will call no general strikes. They may bluster as they have done in the past, but there will be no action. The A.F. of L. has lost so much ground in the auto industry, as a result of its temporizing policy, that it couldn't call a strike if it would. There is no danger that the A.F. of L. leaders will initiate in any industry a strike movement that very likely would result in rank and file strength which would eventually overthrow the leadership.

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