

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

III.

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to expect that the historical progress from competitive capitalism to planned economy and state-capitalism could be repealed by any power in the world.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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

K. K.

DISCUSSION

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

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

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

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

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

did not perish after the first world war.

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

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

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

the systematization is a bit harder to see.

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

K. enlarges the scope of "Alpha's" arguments, to point out that the worker must fight Fascism "not by Fascist means, but on its own ground", forcing an unrestricted release of the existing powers of production for the purpose of destruction (since the production of a war-worker is as "good" as the production of any worker, and one must treat even the soldier as a real worker). That is, K. points out that the same Marxian contradiction between the productive forces and the controllers of production, the restriction of the former by the latter,

occurs in war-like as well as in peaceful activities, and that fighting Fascism on its own ground involves breaking this restriction in warlike activity, just as it would in peace.

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

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

M. R.

ANSWER

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

Yet in the discussion of what he calls the "two aspects" of my thought, my critic, it seems to me, gets caught in a self-made trap. He erects a Chinese wall between the objective and the subjective aspects of the Marxian theory of revolution (of which my study was meant to be a kind of further theoretical elaboration). It is quite true that Marx sometimes defined his terms in an apparently too objectivistic manner of speech, e. g., when he stated that "a formation of society never perishes until all the forces of production for which it is wide enough have been developed." An orthodox Marxist might indeed conclude from such a statement that in any case in which the workers did not embark in a revolutionary fight when there seemed to be a fighting chance this

fact must be explained by objective economic necessity. It would then be possible to "knit together" the two apparently contradictory statements contained in my analysis (that capitalist society did not perish after the collapse of the first world war because it was not destroyed by a successful workers' revolution, and because it had not, in fact, developed all the forces of production for which it was wide enough), by the conceptual link tentatively suggested by my critic, i. e., by stating that "the workers did not revolt because of this (objective) Marxian law."

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

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

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

But, my critic will say, how does the Marxist know that the present-day Fascist movement is a counter-revolutionary movement? Does he not attach his counter-revolutionary label beforehand to a historical movement, as yet unexplored, and

afterwards re-define a "counter-revolution" on the basis of analyzing that same movement, and thus, in fact, derive his whole "law" by way of an induction from the single instance of "our time"?

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

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

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

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

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

Last but not least my critic regards as "fantastic" any argument that would "complain that a war has not been total enough" and would "urge a break in the restrictive for-

ces in order to achieve the social revolution". Yet he allows for the possibility that neither Alpha nor myself even indulged in that fantastic idea, and calls attention to the "much more acceptable" conclusion found in the last sentence of my paper according to which, in both war and peace, the productive (and destructive) forces of modern society can be turned to their full and unfettered use only if they are used **against** their present-day monopolistic rulers.

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

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

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

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

In spite of possible further increases of violence and atrocities

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

K. K.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF LIVING MARXISM:

Dialectical Materialism in Thought and Society.

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

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

Economics of State Capitalism.

LONG LIVE THE WAR

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

II

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

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

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

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

III

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

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

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

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

IV

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

V

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

VI

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

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

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

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

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

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

VIII

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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