CONTENTS:

REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM.

THE NEXT WORLD CRISIS, THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND THE WORLD REVOLUTION.

... A Thesis ...

Discussion on Thesis by:

KARL KORSCH

Capturing The A. F. of L.

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UNITED WORKERS' PARTY
To Marxism, the determining contradiction in present-day society lies in the contradictory development of the social forces of production within the existing relations of production, or, otherwise expressed, between the increasingly socialized character of the productive process itself and the persisting property relations. In all forms of society, the general advance of humanity has been expressed in the development of the productive forces, i.e. the means and methods of production, enabling ever greater amounts of use articles to be produced with an ever diminishing amount of direct human labor. This process is divisible into historical periods. In it, each stage simply mirrors the attained level of the continuously increasing forces of production and develops for them corresponding social relations. And as soon as a given set of social conditions no longer sufficed, without giving rise to great maladjustments in the social, economic and political spheres, to satisfy the demands of the new and growing forces of production, those conditions were overcome through revolutionary action.

All social development is based in the last instance on the process of interaction between social man and nature. The contradiction arising through human labor between being and consciousness, nature and man, leads to further and further development and change in nature, society, man and consciousness. Within this great contradiction evolve, in the process of development, narrower social contradictions, which in their turn propel the progressive social movement along the path of revolution.

Since the development of the productive forces has throughout the past been bound up with the rise and decline of classes, past history must necessarily be regarded as a history of class struggle. Thus the development of manufacture under feudalism had to lead, at a certain level, to the overcoming of feudalism and to the birth of capitalist society; a transition which took a revolutionary expression in all the social domains.
The statement of contradiction, the materialist dialectic, the philosophic theory of Marxism and at the same time the law of all real movement, seeks in all contradictions their unity - without, however, for that reason, confusing those contradictions as such and isolating them from one another. Only after the abolition of the universal contradiction, which remains for all time in a third form, which again produces and must overcome its contradiction. Since the Marxist analysis takes capital as its starting point, capital becomes the thesis of which the proletariat is the antithesis. The materialist dialectic sees in the contradiction of the dialectic law - negation of the negation leads to the synthesis. This can only be the communist society, which knows neither capital nor proletariat, since it has taken up or resolved them both in their concrete forms. This is merely the falling husk, that part of historical property relations, it is only in capitalism that this husk can possess concrete reality. History, like all reality, is dialectical, hence limitless. Each problem possesses no more than historical character. Marxism does not present itself as something absolute, but is the theory of the class struggle within capitalist society.

Not only, from the standpoint of Marxism, is the contradiction between capital and labor the beginning as well as the end of present-day society, but the progressive development of that society is to be seen only in the growth and sharpening of that contradiction. Capital being the result of exploitation of labor power, so with the growth of capital, that is, in the course of the human progress under way in this historical period, the exploitation of the workers must of necessity become more and more intensified. If the possibilities of the exploitation of labor power are unlimited, there would be no reason to expect an end of capitalist society. But with the growth of the proletariat, the class struggle also increases, since at a certain point of development the productive forces of the workers are no longer be applied in the form of capital, of its own accord, develops into a revolutionary force, which strives for and brings about an overthrow of the existing social relations.

Marxism, which perceives in the existence of the proletariat the realization of the dialectical movement of society, bases its theoretical justification mainly on the laws of economic development in general, and of capitalism in particular. Capitalist relations of production are not only determined by nature (land as a basis for labor) and human activity, but those natural conditions are also subordinate to the dialectic relations of society. The concerns of human beings are not seen from the point of view of their needs as human beings, but from the point of view of capitalist needs for profits. The decisive factor in capitalist society is not the production of use values but of capital; the latter is the motive power of the productive machine. This dependence of human welfare upon the private interests of the capitalists is made possible through the separation of the workers from the means of production. The workers cannot live except through the sale of their labor power. The buyers of labor power, who are the owners of the means of production, buy this power only in order to further their private interests as capitalists, without regard to social consequences.

We have seen that in all forms of society, progressive development is illustrated in the continual growth and improvement of the means and methods of production, enabling the output of an ever greater quantity of products with over loss labor. In capitalism, this same process expresses itself in a more rapid growth of the capital invested in means of production as compared with labor power. That part of the capital which is invested in means of production we call constant capital, since as such it enables no changes of magnitude; and that portion which goes in the form of wages to the working class we call the variable capital. As the workers, through labor itself, now values to those already present. In this way it is shown that the development of the social forces of production under capitalism is expressed in a more rapid growth of the constant capital relatively to the variable.
the needs of accumulation, lies idle and seeks in vain for profitable possibilities of investment. We are faced with the paradox that a shortage of capital gives rise to a superfluity of capital lacking room for investment. There is no lack of purchasing power, yet, in the capitalist sense, no use can be made of this purchasing power, since from this point of view it is meaningless, because unprofitable.

If accumulation is not continued, the situation must of necessity give rise to a general tie-up of human activity. The commodities destined for further accumulation can find no buyers. Their production result in a general over-production of commodities; a circumstance which expresses itself in the closing and paralyzing of enterprises in all spheres of social life and hence in an enormous increase of unemployment.

The crisis also brings with it certain tendencies working to overcome it. The organic composition of capital is lowered by capital being destroyed through bankruptcies and devaluation. The workers are forced to produce means of production in the interests of further accumulation. This results in an enormous increase of unemployment.

This permanent crisis, or the death crisis, of capitalism is bound to become absolute, general and permanent. In the permanent crisis forms the objective basis of a revolutionary labor movement. The class struggle grows sharper and sharper. On the other hand, the means of suppression employed by the ruling class are adapted to this new condition. While in the upgrade period of capitalism, "fiscal democracy" sufficed to permit the smooth operation of the social mechanisms, in the permanent crisis the "democratic" dictatorships arise, at a rather high stage of development, a political condition which today is called fascism. The fact that the ideological basis of fascism is formed by the impoverished middle classes, the fact that the fascist movement operates only in the interest of the now monopolized capital. Capitalist concentration, which goes on even in the permanent crisis, necessarily impoverishes also the middle strata of capitalists. The energies thus aroused within the middle class are engaged by monopoly capital for its own purposes. Parts of the petty bourgeoisie are granted concessions at the expense of the workers, though these concessions are only of temporary character.

By destroying the organizations and doing away with the limited "democratic" political liberties of the workers with the aid of the corrupted middle class unions and the petty police, the bourgeoisie hopes to bring about its new form of the old form of the labor movement, new forms necessarily arise and since these forms are deprived of other means of expression, they must express themselves on the job itself, whereby their strength is increased a thousandfold. The workers-owes an ideological basis of fascism is formed by the impoverished middle classes themselves, and the class consciousness in order to live they are forced to take up the fight against capital. And when they fight for their existence under the conditions of the permanent crisis, this fight, regardless of its ideological quality, is a fight which can only turn in the direction of overthrowing the capitalist system. Until the successful revolutionary overthrow, the proletariat lives in barbarism, constantly worsening conditions, and the only possibility of getting away from that is communism; that is, the overcoming of capitalist relations of production, the abolition of private property in the means of production, which is identical with the abolition of wage labor.

Marxism is not only a theory which sprung from the existence of the proletariat and its position in society; Marxism is the actual class struggle between capital and labor, that is, a social condition in which the workers, whether they will or not, whether they are conscious of it or not, whether they know Marx or not, are unable to act producled, their portion was less and less. In the permanent crisis, their real living conditions are bound to grow worse, absolutely and uninterruptedly.

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otherwise than in accordance with Marxism, if they wish to maintain themselves and thereby at the same time to serve the general progress of mankind. While Marx himself actualized the Hegelian dialectic, that is, recognized the real, concrete movement as dialectical, Marxism can be actualized only by means of the fighting proletariat. A Marxist is not one who has mastered the Marxian theories; a Marxist is one who strives to actualize those theories. In a word: Marxism is not only a view of the world; Marxism is the living, fighting proletariat.

The article above will be available in printed pamphlet form after May 1, 1936. It is being printed by the Council Communist Press of Chicago. Order from the United Workers' Party.

We are pleased to announce that the pamphlet on the "OUTLINE OF PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION IN COMMUNISM" by The Group of International Communists of Holland is now in the print shop and will be announced for sale soon.

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THE NEXT WORLD CRISIS, THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND THE WORLD REVOLUTION.

(Theses)

(The following Theses are written by a comrade not belonging to our group. Without completely approving them in their present form, we find them interesting and important enough to bring them up for discussion. Our readers are invited to take part in this discussion, which is begun in the present issue with a contribution by Karl Korsch.)

- Editorial Board -

1. - The next world crisis is very likely to coincide with the second world war. We must at any rate be prepared for this possibility.

2. - The second world war will again place the working class face to face with a world-revolutionary situation. We are shocked to realize that the forces of revolution assembled in the revolutionary crisis of 1880-1917 are used up and that the new efforts in that direction are weak. It is our task to promote the organizational and ideational preparedness for the world revolution, to make clear what steps in this connection are ineffectual, which activities are purely laborious actions for the sake of action (Scheinaktionen), and what possibilities of action are really open under the new conditions, and for our part to really make the most of each of these possibilities.

3. - We have been able since the beginning of this century to gain ample experience with regard to capitalist crises, capitalist wars and revolutionary convulsions of the capitalist world-system in its entirety. It is high time to bring order into this experience. We have mostly contended ourselves with explaining the causes of capitalist wars; an attempt must be made, however, to understand the capitalist structure of the World War, its function in the whole social process, in order that the process itself, its course, its action, its result may become clear.

The world-war crisis of 1913-1919 represents a combination of world crisis, world war and world revolution. It was shown that between capitalist States the immortal alternation of war and peace—which in itself goes on in other connections—is involved in the industrial cycle. The industrializing of warfare brought it about that the industrial war has become a special form of crisis: the world-war crisis. That is true of any capitalist crisis whatsoever, namely, that it lays bare the disorderly and inhuman character of bourgeois society and
The over-production, in that it produced war, had apparently become home, an inhuman, capitalistic meaning. Fantastic war profits flowed as if formed the special work of any crisis: destruction of value which cannot be turned to account. In this way the crisis overleaped itself. Competition assumed an heroic character. Literally eut-throat competition notes the revolutionary tendency of the workers' class' battles and there flew away with the gas clouds over the shell-torn national-state system resting on wage labor and capital. This break through of the productive forces took place with the blind elements through of the productive forces taking place with the blind elementary power of a natural catastrophe has often been interpreted as the world revolution itself. There is no need for such arts of interpretation, which do away with the clear distinctions. For after the exhaustion of the military energies of capital, there came forward the true bearer of the productive forces, the working class itself, with the attempt at a world-revolutionary action. As it was only after the unvictorious exhaustion of the revolutionary energies of the working class that the gigantic efforts undertaken in this crisis, in this war, in this revolution, had again lost both their bourgeois and their proletarian meaning, it became plain that the question had merely been one of over-production and destruction of value which could not be turned to account, the working class, that the world-war crisis could be met only by world revolutionary action, that when anything less is attempted in such a situation the class, as an army of millions, simply ceases to function in its history-making role.

It was only with difficulty that the new productive forces could again be forced into the capitalist world system for peaceful business. But as the productive forces increased, destructively let loose in the first world war and since that time further increased, had been in motion for a fashion for a few years.
under individual responsibility of the various shop leaders: bolshevist state capitalism. 2. Creation of special authoritarian organs of political economy, subordinating the individual and independent initiative is required to the state-national capitalist "economy steering" (Wirtschaftssteuerung). 3. Corporative self-discipline of the capitalists under national control: fascist "systematic intervention". 4. The amortization of N.R. also, through the circle of a different sort, reveals related features: etc., etc. In the place of private-economy profitability there enters national-economy profitability. The state-subject Capital organizes the domestic market, regulates (a national "general cartel") the price: then, at the same time, the capitalist state sharpens the international competition. The international trade policy has become the vital question of the States, ("Twilight of Autarky"). The new monopolistic forms have accordingly not only not held up the cyclical course of world economy, they also fail to withdraw their own sphere of influence from the "natural law" of capitalism. As regards crises, these forms can only bring about with in the state economy (insofar as they do away with the automatic nature of the process) a different distribution of the over-production, periodically setting in and of the hunger with which it is bound up, (cf., Italy and Russia in the latest crisis).

5. - The productive forces released in war at the beginning of the present period and since then further increased, can no longer come to unfoldment in the given framework of politics and economics otherwise than by way of crisis in a second world war. That is what is at the bottom of the present world unrest. It becomes ever clearer that the anti-capitalist National Socialistic state economies have at the same time the character of preparedness measures. More and more military preparedness the awareness of that very industrial energy by which the world is driven forward (not-revolution, etc.). The destruction plans, explosive material is being heaped up and stowed on a large scale. Likewise the social pacification policy is preparation for war. The disarmament ideology is being replaced by vita militante, solidarity spirit and security. (The Labor Party, in its "Memorandum" the calls into the war front: "punitive war against peace breakers" packed in the apocalyptic ideology of the League of Nations. The Comintern is entered in the war preparations through the Franco-Russian alliance.) The tendencies to conflict are numberless, the most important being the Japanese expansion in the Far East, the central focus of the second world war. Thus this war is being prepared partly in conscious planning, partly behind the backs of the participants.

And here we have the contradictory drama that these very forms of state and economy which are characteristic of the present period actually need and want peace-in part because their preparation for war is incomplete, in part because they are frightened by the vague suspicion that the state system resting on wage labor and capital will not survive in its most modern form, outlines the second world war and that it is in the very states which are preparing the war most actively. They reveal themselves more and more as transitional forms to this second world war, which in all probability will coincide with the next world crisis.

6. - It must be understood to what extent the new monopolistic forms render the workers' world revolution easier and what are the real difficulties of the new situation.
This state of things serves to explain the peculiar bolshevist-fascist twi1ight lying over the world today. Revolutions win counter-revolutionarily, counter-revolutions revolutianarily. Something completely unexpected occurred: the workers having been worn out in the struggle, the bourgeoisie shaken in its self-confidence through unprecedented world crises, the Third Estate, raised up by war and crisis, “sawk.” To it, the twilight between the great decisions is the most becoming illumination. It develops the “new activism,” has visions, speaks in tongues. It discovers that one really belongs to no class at all, but to an estate of giants, carrying the spirit of revolution for the coming of the industrial apparatus, which still exists, and which bears on itself the easily legible trade-mark “World War.” It becomes the preacher and banner-bearer of the only thing possible in the given framework: the new monopolistic reorganization of capital, which corresponds to the special task of political economy in the present period. With the aid of the inscription of the middle elements it rises in great numbers into state positions, and thus in part interprets itself personally with the state-subject capital.

To monopolistic capital this personnel supplement comes in very handy. For the worker revolutionists the new condition is gratifying; the fascist third estate as chancellor or minister of monopoly capital is better than the Socialist a la Seizing or Norman Thomas. Now that the political revolution and the only possible social reform has won against the workers, and turns out to be their complete lack of freedom, the workers have at least won the negative freedom for their own gigantic ends. No Kautsky and none of his Russian disciples can still entertain the notion of “liberating the masses from the outside” what their “historical illusion” truly is. No Bernstein and none of his English teachers can still make it appear to the workers that taking up their interests in the state apparatus is a “growing into socialism.” One has only to bring out the dusty portraits of the Marxist turns and the change becomes clear at once. The unbridgeable gulf between bourgeois and proletarian revolution is severed. The world-revolutionary overthrow of Capital and State has become a palpable concrete task.

The genuine difficulties of the new situation, however, all spring from the circumstance, that the revolutionary movements of the working class, in spite of embittered struggles in all countries throughout the world, must still begin all over again at the beginning while at the same time, with the approach of the second world war, a world-revolutionary situation already enters the range of vision.
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years,
is said to be already accomplished.

In the same way, everything that is said in these Theses regarding the situation, tasks, prospects and difficulties of the labor movement of our time is nowhere related to the present, but to the "next world crisis", the "economic war", (along with socialist-reformist and (only) political-
revolutions are meant by this does not become clear). The attempt of Trotzkism to set in place of the real world revolution its mere "ideo-
logical revolution" (interpreting the series of national revolutions of the present period as the "permanent revolution" is expressly waves aside. And all those "proletarian-revolutionary under-currents" which in the previous period "transcended" the limited character of the ther labor movement, "tied up with social-reformist and (only) political-
revolutions, are denoted without exception as mere "utopian" tendencies which leave unchanged the actually intra-capitalist wage-
workers movements of that time, but were able to furnish them "merely a further "helpful" image of the working class revolution--"the class, as an 
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beginning. Though in Thesis 2, after the constatatlon of the used-up 
next sentence (Thesis 4) the "acute crisis" has already become no more than a thing of the past, from which the transition into the "depres-
sion", with a "breathing spell" following at the latest within a few years, is said to be already accomplished.

While the connection between such hithere always too isolatedly re-
garded phenomenon as world crisis, war and revolution, or Capital and 
Gamma, in modern monopoly-capitalist society, has been demonstrated 
in these Theses with much force from the objective side and represent-
ted in striking and sometimes new and original formulations, the prac-
tical task springing from this objective connection for the working 
class has been proclaimed only in abstract manner. The author contents 
ímself in this respect with the simple repetition of the well-known 
"world revolution", which now, however, from this subjective side, re-
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itive avowal, namely, that as a revolutionary activity the 
workers in the present "achieved" something "less" than this 
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directly and as a whole, and the organizational and ideational prepar-
derations of which the preceding "sluggishness which had settled over the labor 
movement" had formed the precondition. What is other ridiculous when 
of which the preceding "sluggishness which had settled over the labor 

Council Correspondence.
Council Correspondence.

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freedom, i.e. of an absolute nothingness through the mere "approach of the second world war" and the "second world-revolutionary situation to which it gives rise, to that highest reality and determinateness of a direct and total truly proletarian, truly class-befitting, truly world-embracing genuine workers' revolution for which alone, in the view of the author of these Theses, the throwing off of the proletarian forces, after the bitter experiences of the past, is still at all worth while and without the final attainment of which any new militant activity of the workers will lead merely to another and still more deplorable decline into slumberousness. As a matter of fact, it is not the rousing call to action (that is to say, to the directly world-revolutionary action of the workers in connection with the next world-war crisis "around 1920") but the mere form of world revolution set on the agenda, to follow this last warning—it is this publishing which forms the real content of the prospects expressed in these Theses. The author says in effect: there is offered to the workers once more—at a period now lying only a few years in the future—that incomparable opportunity of which they failed to make full use at the end of the "first world war". "In the second world war it will become evident that there is only one convincing program: world order of labor, and that the emancipation of the workers is the precondition for its actualization. if the workers then fail, however, to win their freedom, then the new means of mastery which the ruling class today has constructed on a national scale will be extended by it internationally on ruins and blood and the productive forces of mankind subject to a still sharper discipline. This will lead rather to the "international extension" of the new (fascist) means of mastery then to the "emancipation of the workers" and rather to a "still sharper (fascist) discipline" than to the "free unfolding of the productive forces". At this place we come up against a point from which it becomes imperative to attack not only the subjectively practical content of these Theses, but at the same time their theoretically objective content: that is, the theoretical analysis which they gave of the historical development and of the objective developmental tendencies coming to light therein. The question arises whether there is not concealed even in the construction of world crisis, in the crisis of world crisis, what it is given in these Theses twice (once retrospectively for the first world-war crisis 1913-1919, the other time prospectively for the impending new crisis of a new future), some capitulation another before the violent attack of the capitalist-fascist opponent, an attack which at the present moment is obviously felt as over-powerful. With such capitulations, defeatist states of mind and prison ideological views the labor movement is today beset with the revolutionary tendency within the labor movement shows some of the same affliction. If from this critical point of view one examines the objective theoretical content of the present Theses, at first everything appears here in the best, revolutionary order. It is a revolutionary attack on the enemy capital and no capitulation, when the catastrophe 1917) alternation of war and peace—union again and again, as stated in the Theses with a too far-going adaptation to the opponent's ideas, in itself) "goes on in other connections"—is recognized as "im-
double mode of existence as genuine forms of production and forms of destruction, both of which under capitalist relations combine to form an indivisible whole and of which only the two together represent the history of capitalist alienation. The negative side of capitalism is kept on growing stronger and must continue to grow still stronger in the future. The present development of the capitalist mode of production is thus heading, in one and the same process, both toward the new crisis and the new war, and toward the combining of both in a new world-war crisis though which, for the class of real producers uniformly suppressed and exploited in war and peace, the presuppositions for a new world-revolutionary situation are from the objective side by no means fully supplied. The Marxist clarification of this objectively revolutionary situation is tantamount to a genuine, and in its consequences for the preparation and carrying out of the revolutionary struggle of the workers, also practically important further development of our insight into proletarian revolution.

And it is likewise a revolutionary attack on the enemy position, and no capitulation, when in the Theses the line of separation is so drawn by the old marxist theory between economics and politics, Capital and State, as in tendency blotted out and the "State" converted from the merely 'ideational' to the actual "Total Capitalist", and the state "subject 'united'" with the sponsor "State". The organ is smelted to a "unified total-subject Capital". The struggle against the capitalist State today, as a matter of fact, become a quite different, more direct manner a component of the revolutionary proletarian struggle against capital than it was in the earlier period when the socialist labor movement actually (as admirably represented in the Theses) continually moved about within the (on both sides unsatisfactory) contradiction of social reform and (only) political revolution. And consequently the workers were unable on either field to arrive at the full concrete reality of their social-revolutionary struggle. It is also a revolutionary criticism which strikes at the heart not only of the present-day enemy, but also of the earlier and present-day false friends of the labor movement; when it is stated in the Theses that through the seizure of power by the Hitlerian National Socialists the political revolution and the only possible social reform against the workers has won simultaneously in the inadequate "national" framework, and the workers are "unified" and "subject" "united" in the union of the proletariat is converted as a general necessity of the development of human society into the private affair of an isolated class or even only of an interested band of Jewish or other racially foreign agitators.

The ambiguity brought into the Theses through this formulation regarding the presently given economic possibilities of social development is still further strengthened by the fact that the State-subject capital in the given framework is in the present being fulfilled. Let us recall in this connection also the preceding thesis in which the present world economic crisis was proclaimed as a thing of the past and which, on the contrary, held that the world crisis was kept on growing stronger and must continue to grow still stronger in the future. The present development of the capitalist mode of production is thus heading, in one and the same process, both toward the new crisis and the new war, and toward the combining of both in a new world-war crisis through which, for the class of real producers uniformly suppressed and exploited in war and peace, the presuppositions for a new world-revolutionary situation are from the objective side by no means fully supplied. The Marxist clarification of this objectively revolutionary situation is tantamount to a genuine, and in its consequences for the preparation and carrying out of the revolutionary struggle of the workers, also practically important further development of our insight into proletarian revolution.

By the side of these real revolutionary intensifications of the proletarian attack on all the old and new forms of incorporation of the capitalist state and economic power there is, however, in these Theses also a series of formulations through which the one struggle which lies open to the workers in Germany, the struggle against what there today is the only incorporation of the State, that is to say, rule, is rendered vague and ambiguous. It is a dangerous tendency, in its consequences for the revolutionary emfolding of the proletarian force of attack in the present historical period of development, that in these Theses the line of separation between the new monopolistic forms of State and Capital the task of attaining "at least the highest measure (?) of unfoldment (?) of the transcending (?) productive forces in the given framework" is in the present being fulfilled. It is likewise a revolutionary attack on the enemy position, and no capitulation, when in the Theses the line of separation is so drawn by the old marxist theory between economics and politics, Capital and State, as in tendency blotted out and the "State" converted from the merely 'ideational' to the actual "Total Capitalist", and the state "subject 'united'" with the sponsor "State". The organ is smelted to a "unified total-subject Capital". The struggle against the capitalist State today, as a matter of fact, become a quite different, more direct manner a component of the revolutionary proletarian struggle against capital than it was in the earlier period when the socialist labor movement actually (as admirably represented in the Theses) continually 'moved about' within the (on both sides unsatisfactory) contradiction of social reform and (only) political revolution. And consequently the workers were unable on either field to arrive at the full concrete reality of their social-revolutionary struggle. It is also a revolutionary criticism which strikes at the heart not only of the present-day enemy, but also of the earlier and present-day false friends of the labor movement; when it is stated in the Theses that through the seizure of power by the Hitlerian National Socialists the political revolution and the only possible social reform against the workers has won simultaneously in the inadequate "national" framework, and the workers are "unified" and "subject" "united" in the union of the proletariat is converted as a general necessity of the development of human society into the private affair of an isolated class or even only of an interested band of Jewish or other racially foreign agitators.

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demonstrates, say, that the fascist State—bound up in the closest manner with large capital and, through formally set over the individual capitalist, yet in its general material existence unconditionally dependent on capitalists' own initiative to carry on, in the form of an expanded formula, "on behalf of the State", that monopolized class struggle against the workers. Finally, from a truly dialectical, i.e., practically materialistic and revolutionary marxist conception, there would be added that the fascist State, the capitalist, for the continuing, expanding and sharpening of the class struggle which it has "monopolized", is at the same time on its own part exposed to the continued, expanded and sharpened class struggle of the workers. Instead of talking about a class struggle, one which really is in the widest sense the paltry formula of the "monopolization of the class struggle by the fascist State" is based on a different conception, as the very next following sentences prove. The author of the Theses entertains the idea that in this "monopolization of the class struggle" in its two antagonistic forms as a struggle of wage-labor against capital and of capital against wage labor, the fascist State is, as a matter of fact, at least temporarily and on a national scale being successful. "A ruthless socio-specification action with the aim of the 'organic' fitting of that part of capital represented by wage labor into the new State is introduced. At the same time, a far-flung reorganization of the capitalist class is undertaken, in order to adapt it to the special task of political economy in the present period. . . . In the place of private-economic profitability there arises national-economic profitability. The state-subject capital organizes the domestic market, regulates (i.e., national general cartel) the prices..."

All these tasks, then, according to the statements here quoted from the Theses, are fundamentally being accomplished by the fascist State in the manner in which they could exactly be accomplished by revolutionary workers' state proceeding from a genuine workers' revolution, insofar as this State should remain limited to the national framework, or should later on be broadened so limited. It is expressly declared that between such different forms and degrees of the fusion of State and Capital as, on the one hand, "bolshoist state capitalism" and, on the other, the fascist "systematic intervention" and the national-socialist "economy steering" there is no difference of a fundamental nature. In reality, with this failure to make distinction between historically oppositely directed developments, and with the whole supporting undialectical appraisal of the economic and political tasks of the fascist or national-socialist system, the fundamental conception of the fascist State's development, commonly referred to as German fascist, hitlerian National Socialism and the mussolinian Fascism having to day 'salzed' was not laid claim to even by the revolutionary dictator Lenin for his revolutionary "workers and peasants' State" in the war communist development of the year 1919. In the same State waged at that time, prior to the transition to "NEP", regarding the future character of the soviet-russian trade unions, the quot that Lenin had ventured that in substance that the workers' unions were to protect themselves in future to the ordinary class struggle for the purpose of safeguarding the workers' direct interests within the framework of the soviet economic and state system and should henceforth renounce the revolutionary intensification of this struggle, now that the further extension of the revolution had become the immediate task of the soviet State. In the later development of Russian state socialism and national-socialist fascism, it is plain that this right, at first granted by Lenin, to the ordinary class struggle for the workers' immediate interests was, as we know, again denied to the workers. Finally, from a truly dialectical and revolutionary marxist conception, there would be added that the fascist State, the capitalist, yet in its general material existence unconditionally demonstrated that the fascist or national-socialist "economy steering" has this ideological "monopolization" of the class struggle in the hands of the State even for a time and within the national framework has been actually realized. Just as according to the international principle of revolutionary Marxism, proletarian socialism cannot be constructed "in one country" either whether in part, either permanently or for a time, so also according to the same principle the class struggle in its two antagonistic manifestations cannot be done away with "in one country" or converted into a simple component of the economic and political ruling functions exercised without contradiction within the national boundaries—by the State.

To the two tasks of the fascist economic and state power which in these Theses are recognized as capable of accomplishment of national framework, the author himself sets a limit. In the single plane where he thinks "dialectically", i.e., truly materialistically and practically, he declares that "the state-subject Capital", in that as a general cartel it regulates the prices, "thereby at the present triumphant fascistic capitalist..." has the vital question of States ("Twilight of Autocracy"). The new monopolistic forms have therefore not only failed to hold up the cyclical course of world economy; they fail also to withdraw their own sphere of action from the 'natural law' of capitall
struggle of the proletariat in each country and on an international scale against the here and now present form of capitalist mastery, and all its expressions, as the single genuine content of the proletarian "world revolution."

The development of the American labor movement has been different from that of Europe and England in several respects. The trade union movement here not only refrains from independent political action, but actively supports the capitalist parties. Repeatedly the socialist and communist movements have tried either to capture or to destroy the American Federation of Labor. These tactics have fluctuated between "boring from within" to outright organization of dual unions. The history of these efforts is interesting.

The developments of trade unions during and since the world war necessitate a complete revision of the earlier conceptions by Marxians. The expectations of the Communist Manifesto have not been fulfilled. Hopefully, as the unions were greeted in 1848 and as lately as 1870 in the days of international, they have now definitely assumed a reactionary character.

Although the American movement shows considerable differences in development from that of Europe, the trade unions of Europe and America alike demonstrated their reactionary character. The Socialist unions of Europe were no less enthusiastic in their support of the mass slaughter than Gompers and his cohorts in America. The reaction of both sprang out of the inherent qualities, from their preferred positions in capitalist society, from their fear of losing their treasures and "achievements", from their general satisfaction with the status quo.

The trade unions of Germany were as conservative an influence on the German labor movement as were the revisionist Bernstein, and the agrarian Vollmar. They insisted on and established the principle that they be not expected to come into action for any revolutionary purpose, and were as autonomous of the German workers' political movement as the A.F. of L. was of the American Socialist movement. Opportunism of the German Social Democracy winked at and even encouraged the reaction of the unions. The Socialist concessions to the unions ensured Pyrrhic parliamentary victories, and the lesson so clear to American revolutionists at an early date—that the predominant unions were reactionary and hopelessly wedded to their "socially-legal" dualism that ever after stamped the De Leonite S. L. P. as essentially counter-revolutionary force. Its form of organization is not susceptible to change. It is so removed from rank and file control that even a severe crisis arousing the members of the unions composing it would keep them helpless and powerless. It is essentially an organization of officials whose comfortable, well-paid jobs and political connections have reconciled them to the capitalist system, and who would fight to the bitter end against proletarian victory as a direct threat to their positions. A real proletarian victory is possible only after this bulwark of reaction has been destroyed.

While history is but the recounting of the dead past, the history of the attempts to change, reform, and displace the A.F. of L. will enable us to judge at what rate of advance the perception of the necessity for the formulation of the position of revolutionary workers in relation to it.

These attempts may be roughly divided into four major actions: first, the organization of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, 1895; second, the organization of the I. W. W., 1905; third, the Great Steel Strike, 1919, and the subsequent organization of the Trade Union Educational League; and fourth, the organization of dual unions by the Communist Party from 1928 onwards.

The first major conflict between the A.F. of L. and the Socialist movement occurred in 1890. At the Detroit convention of the A.F. of L. in that year, the Central Federation of New York was refused a charter because it admitted delegates of the Socialist Labor Party to its deliberations. Bitter conflicts continued at succeeding conventions until the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance was organized. This was in effect a dual union in opposition to the A.F. of L.; but it never prospered. It never developed beyond the stages of a propaganda organization. Within the S.L.P. it engendered a conflict that split it in 1899 and resulted in the organization of the Socialist party in 1901. The S.L.P. (De Leon) carried on a vigorous campaign against the A.F. of L. while the Socialist Party (Hillquit, Berger, Debs) hoped to win over the Federation by education and propaganda.

It was believed at first that the corruption of the (then declining) Knights of Labor was a main factor in the organization of the S. T. & L. A. The Socialist Labor Party's National Executive Committee's report—"A Program of the American Socialists"—was written in the "socialist-economistic" dualism that ever after stamped the De Leonite S. L. P. Its declaration reads in part:

"The pure and simple union is no longer an organization that even pretends to better the condition of its members by
fighting the boss . . . it is content to fight the poor devil of a fellow worker who happens to be out of work . . .

"But the class antagonisms in modern capitalist society will sometimes bring about collisions between the opposing forces. When they do, the political supremacy of some capitalist class created and backed up by the votes of the workers soon asserts itself with disastrous effect . . .

"But there has appeared a silver lining in these black clouds; the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance is born. To the superficial observer it may seem that this organization was formed only because of the reeking corruption among the top officials of the once powerful Order of the Knights of Labor.

"Yet this was only an incident, the lever, as it were, to re-lease and set free the pent-up disgust of so many workers with the inactivity, the impotence of the fakir-ridden older organizations.

"It is to be hoped . . . our party will give notice to the labor fakir that he had better stand from under, thus making it clear to all that the Socialists and new trade unionists have joined hands and are coming . . . to put an end to . . . that artificial barrier between the economic and political phase of the American labor movement . . ."

The Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance was endorsed in the following resolution introduced by De Leon:

"WHEREAS, Both the A.F. of L. and the K. of L., or what is left of them, have fallen hopelessly into the hands of dishonest and ignorant leaders;

"WHEREAS, These bodies have taken shape as the buffers for capitalism, against whom every intelligent effort of the working class for emancipation has hitherto gone to pieces;

"WHEREAS, The policy of propitiating the leaders of these organizations has been tried long enough by the progressive movement, and is, to a great extent, responsible for the power which these leaders have wielded in the protection of capitalism and the selling out of the workers;

"WHEREAS, No organization of labor can accomplish anything for the workers that does not proceed from the principle that an irresistible conflict rages between the capitalist and the working class, a conflict that can be settled only by the total overthrow of the former and the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth; and

"WHEREAS, This conflict is essentially a political one, needing the combined political and economic efforts of the working class; therefore be it

Resolved, That we hail with unqualified joy the formation of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance as a giant stride towards throwing off the yoke of wage slavery and of the robber class of capitalists. We call upon the Socialists of the land to carry the revolutionary spirit of the S.T. & L.A. into all the organizations of the workers and thus consolidate and concentrate the proletariat of America in one irresistible class-conscious army equipped with the shield of the economic organization and the sword of the Socialist Labor Party ballot".

This action of the S.L.P. was the forerunner of the organization of the I.W.W. The resolution laid down that peculiar and distorted interpretation of political action that typifies the S.L.F. to this day. The overrated De Leon could never understand the class struggle as anything else than a "class struggle reduced to economic action". The comic-tragic element of his interpretation appears when it is realized that his "economic action" was adopted by the syndicalist wing of the I.W.W. instead of being all sufficient—a direct reaction to confusing parliamentary action as the sole form of political action.

But it was not yet the time for the organization of the I.W.W. De Leon and Gompers both were stationed in New York. The center of industrial activity was farther west. Both had their major followings among the "genteeel" trades. The Horned handed, sweating and crude industrial workers in mines, mills and other basic industries were outside the influence of either.

The railroad brotherhoods were outside the A.F. of L. and Socialism became known to them considerably later.

In 1877 Eugene Debs attended his first convention as delegate to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen. In 1880 he accepted the position of secretary-treasurer and editor-in-chief of the magazine at a time when the order was in a strait of no more conventions were expected by most. By 1892 he faced the B. L. F. now a strong, vigorous organization, with his resignation. Despite a loyal following and a splendid reputation as an organizer, he felt that organization was lacking in true solidarity and hampered by craft prejudices. He differed too much with the organization to remain any longer at its head.

Following his resignation, Debs organized the American Railway Union. It was to embody all railway workers, - engineers, firemen, switchmen, brakemen, shopmen and track-walkers. Within one year the A.R.U. had 150,000 members. In April, 1894, trouble broke out on Jim Hill's Great Northern Railroad and the A.R.U. had its first test. By May 1st they had wrung practically all their demands from the road.

On May 11, 1894 the workers in the Pullman shops at Chicago came out on strike. They called upon the A.R.U. for support and got it in the form of a boycott on Pullman cars. Twenty railroads and 1,000,000 workers were affected. Chicago-wide traffic was paralyzed. Grover Cleveland sent federal troops to break the strike, the federal courts cited and sentenced Debs to jail for contempt of court, and the A.R.U. passed from view on the heels of this defeat.

Debs served six months in jail and upon his release tried to restore the wrecked A.R.U. He failed in this, but he was surer and more toward Socialism. By 1897 a convention of the A.R.U. wound up
its affairs and reorganized as the "Social Democracy".

Debs' entry into the Socialist movement is significant because he represented no white-collar intelligentsia, but came fresh from contact with the workers of a basic industry. He carried into that section of the Socialist movement which had broken away from De Leon and the S.T. & L.A. the idea of fighting the old craft unions. Hardly had the "safe and sane" socialists rid themselves of De Leon, than they were saddled with Debs. And the latter was much more formidable at that time than De Leon. He was illogical, sentimental and un-scientific -- the direct opposite of De Leon. But he was fiery, aggressive, and had a tremendous reputation and following. The Socialist Party had to reckon with him.

It was a strange combination that later materialized in the I.W.W. - Debs, De Leon, Haywood, A.M. Simon, Mother Jones, Unterzmann, Hagerty, Sherman and Buh. It probably never would have been organized but for Debs' venture with the A.R.U. and De Leon's efforts to fight the A.F. of L with the S.T. & L.A. These two efforts represent the prelude to the I.W.W. The S.T. & L.A. represented the theoretical differences of the Socialist movement with the A.F. of L., the realization that the limitations of craft unions and the narrow viewpoint arising therefrom were inimical to Socialist interests. Debs' movement represented the revolt of workers in industry who saw themselves betrayed and forsaken by the labor aristocracy. Both elements fused for a time in the organization of the I.W.W.

(In future issues, the I.W.W., the T. U.E.I., and the communist unions will be discussed.)