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For Theory and Discussion

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First Complete English Translation of
LENINISM OR MARXISM?
... by ROSA LUXEMBURG.

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MARXISM: WITHOUT DOCTORS:

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UNITED WORKERS' PARTY
"Sensitive souls will again lament," wrote Rosa Luxemburg at the end of her quarrel with the pseudo-Marxists of the Second International, "that Marxists wrangle among themselves, and that approved "authorities" are combated. But Marxism is not a handful of individuals who confer upon each other the right of "expert judgment" and before whom the great mass of believers is expected to die in a state of blind confidence. Marxism is a revolutionary view of the world which must constantly strive for new insights, which eschews nothing so much as the holding on to forms which have lost their validity, and which best preserves its vital strength in occasional clashes of self-criticism."

These sentiments of Rosa Luxemburg, written in jail during the World War, deserve to be repeated today louder than ever. The cry for unity which is now so much in favor, and which, after the frightful defeat of the international proletariat, serves merely to veil the fact that with the present labor organizations the forming of a genuine proletarian class front is impossible, must be answered by the revolutionary workers with unsparing criticism. The old, outlived labor movement excludes any real united front, which is possible only upon the basis of the genuine class struggle and not upon that of organizations. The unity of the dead form is the death of the fighting spirit of the working class. The proper concern is rather with breaking up the organizations which have become a fetter upon the class struggle. In order to make the working class fit for struggle, and what today must be broken up are not only the wretched remains of the dilapidated organizations of the Second International and of the trade union movement, but also the organizations of the "heirs" of the reformist movement, the Third International and its various "right" and "left" offshoots.
Scarcely had the Russian Revolution put an end to the "expert judgment of the Second International in the matter of class betrayal and murder of workers, when the new "authorities" of the new International were all too ready to begin to betray the revolutionary movement, which found its new form of organization in the workers' councils. The "official" labor movement has never been more contemptible, more treasonable, more nauseating than it is today. The neglect on the part of the International to understand the slogans of the workers which the old labor movement has been peddled for with the blood of its best fighters. The brazenness of the "owners" of the "labor organizations" lived down their betrayal of the working class during the World War, lived down the slaughter of the revolutionary movement of Central Europe after the War, lived down apparently also the defeats suffered at the hands of Fascism in Italy, Germany, and Austria, only in order to make a new attempt to continue the treacherous business and prolong its paralysing existence at the expense of the workers. Though the organizations of both the Internationals are politically done for, they nevertheless still persist as traditions in the minds of the workers and poison the first attempts at the forming of genuine fighting instruments. They must further be shattered even as a tradition, and within the scope of this necessity lies also the destruction of the Lenin legend so artificially built up.

The history of the Leninist, pseudo-communist parties of the Third International is the history of uninterrupted inner crises. Their development could really take no other course; for the whole ideological and tactical baggage of the Third International is a mixture of social democratic traditions and so-called 'experiences' of the Bolshevist Party--combined with the needs of Russian national policy (directed toward making Russia one of the Great Powers), which determine the political line of that International. Yet one of the elementary truths of the dialectical laws means that the methods which are proper to a given period and to a determinate place prove inert when transferred to another period and to other localities and relations. For this reason, the tactics of the Third International did not take account of the necessity of the revolutionary class struggle; and still less in harmony with this struggle is Russian domestic politics.

The upholding of Marxism, from opportunistic considerations, at the hands of Lenin's international, is no less extensive than that which it has suffered through the Second International. Neither of them has any connection with revolutionary Marxism. The un-Marxist character of Lenin's thought, for example, may be glimpsed in the fact that, guided by the ideological backwardness of the Russian workers while at the same time accepting the mechanistic conceptions of Plechanoff and Kautsky, he came to the philosophical conclusion that the working class will never be capable of developing a revolutionary class-consciousness but that such consciousness must be "imposed" on the masses by the revolutionary party, which gets its ideas from the intellectuals. In his pamphlet "What's To Be Done", this view is given the clearest possible expression, and the apotheosis of that without a party, and, here again, a sharply centralized, ascetically disciplined party, a revolutionary movement is possible, no doubt, but can in no case be a successful one. His principle of organization and revolution amounts to simplicity; the objective situation creates revolutionary ferment, which it is the duty of the Party to exploit.
merely seek to restore what has already landed on the junk pile of history. All these formations are haunted by the ghost of Lenin who carried to its logical conclusion what had developed in the Second International; that is, the complete surrender of the working masses to the private needs of the professional bureaucracy in the organizations. "Back to Lenin" as people used to keep on saying today, means to have nothing of the upholding of labor organizations which, of necessity, by reason of their very structure, must become obstacles to the revolutionary movement.

In the current debates on questions of organization of the proletarian movement, it is significant that these are conducted on a level beneath that of 1916—indeed, will be clear from the work of Rosa Luxemburg presented, far beneath the 1904 level. Just let us compare, for example, the political conclusions drawn by Karl Liebknecht from the treason of the Second International with those of the neo-bolshevist movements of 1934, and it becomes clear at once that these latter have forgotten everything and learned nothing. The interest of the professional bureaucracy within the labor movement, writes Karl Liebknecht, ("Nachlass" written 1916 in the house of detention) "aims at nothing so much as the avoidance of any serious discussion, any decisive conflict. It is directed toward official relations, toward the continuance of a labor movement which goes along at an even pace, one which is well tolerated and even looked upon with favor by the ruling classes. The movement must never endanger the 'organizations' and the positions of the bureaucrats. To them, the organization is an end in itself, not a means to the revolutionary end. The struggle of the organizations among themselves, that is, is the source of existence of the professional leaders, who, for the purpose of gaining members, is the one end for which they can be had for anything at all. Struggle within local limits, give their consent reluctantly at the insistence of the masses. They are not revolutionists, but reformists at most; they are completely 'above the battle'—a paradoxically parasitic element attached to the capitalist social order.

"That is the fatal circle in which these organizations move—the great centralized affairs provided with functionaries living on a fixed salary and, considering their previous class level, a very good salary. In this professional bureaucracy they not only produce an element which is absolutely hostile to the revolutionary interests of the proletariat, but convert that element into their leaders with full powers, who easily become their tyrants. Meanwhile the mental and moral independence, the will, the initiative, the personal action of the masses is suppressed or quite eliminated. To this professional bureaucracy also belong the salaried parliamentarians.

There is only one remedy at hand for this evil: removal of the salaried bureaucracy, or its elimination from the forming of all resolution and limiting its functions to technical assistance. To which may be added: No reelection of any official after a certain tenure,—a measure which would serve at the same time to increase the number of proletarians familiar with organizational and technical matters; possibility of recall at any time during the term of office; restriction of the competency of authorities; decentralization; vote of all members on important questions. In the election of officials, the decisive weight must be laid upon their having stood the test of decisive, militant, revolutionary action, of revolutionary fighting spirit, of unreserved self-sacrifice inclusive of taking their whole existence for the cause. The training of the masses and each individual for mental and moral independence, for skepticism regarding authority, for decided self-initiative, for readiness and capacity for free action, forms the only sure foundation for the development of a labor movement equal to its historic task, as well as the most essential presupposition for the eradication of bureaucratic dangers.

That was in 1916. A little later, Liebknecht and Luxemburg, and, with them, all true revolutionists saw with horror that with the consolidation of party rule in Russia, with the degeneration of the dictatorship of the proletariat into the dictatorship of the bolshevist bosses, the real content of the revolution of 1917 was again dissipated. With the putting down of the German revolutionary movement, with the murder of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, everything which had already been won by revolutionary criticism was lost again in the false enthusiasm for the Russian bourgeois socialism. We now have to start again from the beginning.

The collapse of the Third International was first required in order to bring about a real decision in the theoretical struggle which took place between Lenin and Luxemburg thirty years ago. History has decided in favor of Rosa Luxemburg. In laying her criticism of the opportunistic principles of Lenin before the proletariat of today, we are conscious of the fact that her argument might be considerably extended, that her standpoint was not a final one, that her position was still influenced (and necessarily so) by the Social Democracy. But regardless of the extent to which her criticism can no longer be regarded as having more than a historic interest, what she had to say against the Leninist form of organization is more to the point today than when it was written. The need for destroying the Lenin legend, for a complete reorientation of the labor movement, restores to the work of Rosa Luxemburg a contemporary value. This pamphlet will be followed by others in which the question will be taken up at the point where Rosa Luxemburg was obliged to drop it when her life was snuffed out by the capitalist gunfire of the Social Democracy.

NOTICE
A few pages of this pamphlet by Rosa Luxemburg have been published in English before, but this is the first time the whole subject has been covered entirely with but a few sentences omitted; too much today have no meaning or relation.

Ship to the subject. Editor

UNITED WORKERS PARTY OF AMERICA.

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Council Correspondence.

LENINISM or MARXISM?

By Rosa Luxemburg.

Part I.
Organizational Questions of the Proletarian Revolution.

In the Social Democracy, organization too is a different thing from that of the earlier, utopian attempts at Socialism: being not an artificial product of propaganda but an historical product of the class struggle, a product into which the Social Democracy brings nothing more than the political consciousness. Under normal conditions, that is, where the class rule of the bourgeoisie precedes the social-democratic movement, the first political welding together of the workers has in large measure been the work of the bourgeoisie itself. On this plan, says the Communist Manifesto, "the drawing together of workers in mass is not yet the consequence of their own union, but the consequence of the union of the bourgeoisie." In Russia there has fallen to the Social Democracy the task of consciously stepping in and taking over a part of the historical process of leading the proletariat as a fighting class which is conscious of its goal, from political authoritarianism, which forms the foundation of the absolutist regime, direct to the highest form of organization. Thus the organizational question is especially difficult to the Social Democracy of Russia not merely because its work must be done without any previous experience of bourgeois democracy, but especially because it has to create, in a sense, like the good Lord himself, "out of nothing," without the political raw material which is elsewhere ready prepared by bourgeois society. The problem on which the Russian Social Democracy has been working the last few years is precisely the transition from the dispersed, quite independent circles and local organizations, which corresponded to the preparatory and primarily propagandistic phase of the movement, to a form of organization such as is required for a unified political action of the masses throughout the nation.

Since, however, the most prominent trait of the old form of organization, now grown unbearable and politically surpassed, was dispersion and complete autonomy, or the self-sufficiency of the local organizations, it was quite natural that the watchword of the new phase, of the preparatory and primarily propagandistic phase of the movement, to a form of organization such as is required for a unified political action of the masses throughout the nation, should be centralism. The emphasis on this thought was the leitmotif of Iskra in its brilliant three-year campaign for preparing the last and really constituent party congress, and the same thought dominated the entire young guard of the party. However, it was soon to appear at the Congress, and still more so after the Congress, that centralism is a slogan which is far from exhausting the historical content, the peculiarity of the social-democratic type of organization; it has been shown once more that the marxist conception of socialism is not susceptible of being fixed in formulas.

The present book of Comrade Lenin, one of the prominent leaders and debaters of Iskra in its campaign preliminary to the Russian Party Congress (*), is the systematic exposition of the views of the ultra-centralist wing of the party. The conception which has here found expression in a penetrating and exhaustive form is that of a thoroughly going centralism of which the vital principle is, on the one hand, the sharp separation of the organized bodies of outspoken and active revolutionaries from the unorganized though revolutionarily active masses surrounding them, and on the other hand, strict discipline and direct, decisive and determining intervention of the central authorities in all expressions of life in the party's local organizations. It suffices to note, for example, that the central committee, that central organ, is authorized to organize all sub-committees of the party, hence also has power to determine the personal composition of every single local organization, from Geneve and Liege to Tomsk and Irkutsk, to give it a set of self-made local statutes, to completely dissolve it by a decree and create it anew, and finally in this manner to influence the composition of the highest party authority, the Party Congress. According to this, the central committee appears as the real active nucleus of the party, and all other organizations merely as its executive organs.

In the union of such a strict centralism in organization with the social-democratic mass movement, Lenin perceives a specific marxist-revolutionary principle, and has succeeded, in bringing into the field a large number of facts to support his conception. Still, let us look into the matter a bit more closely.

There can be no doubt that a strong centralistic streak is native to the Social Democracy. Having sprung from the economic soil of capitalism, which is centralistic in its tendencies, and confined in its struggle to the political framework of a centralized state under the dominance of the bourgeoisie, the Social Democracy is fundamentally opposed to any particularism or national federalism. Called upon to represent, in opposition to all partial and group interests of the proletariat, and within the framework of a given State, the total interests of the proletarian as a class, it reveals everywhere the natural striving to weld together all national, religious and professional groups of the working class into one united party.

In this respect, there has been and is, for the Social Democracy also of Russia, no question but that it must form, not a federative conglomerate made up of a great number of special organizations on a national and provincial scale, but a unified, compact labor party of the Russian Empire. There is, however, a quite different question also to be considered, namely the greater or less degree of centralization and the detailed structure within a united and unified party.

From the standpoint of the formal tasks of the Social Democracy as a fighting party, centralism in its organization appears a priori as an indispensable condition upon the fulfillment of which the fighting qualities of the party stand in direct relation. More important here, however, than the consideration of the formal demands of any fighting organization are the specific historical conditions of the proletarian struggle.

The social-democratic movement is the first one in the history of class societies which in all its factors, throughout its course, is

calculated upon the organization and the initiative of the masses. In this respect, the Social Democracy creates a quite different type of organization than did the earlier socialist movements; for example, those of the Jacobin and Blanquist type.

Lenin appears to underrate this fact when he states in his book that the revolutionary Social Democrat is, after all, simply "the Jacobin in embryo". Lenin himself, however, recognized that the organization of the Social Democracy was based upon a quite different type of consciousness of the proletariat. In the organization and class consciousness of the proletariat, Lenin perceived the only factors which differentiate the Social Democracy from Blanquism. He forgot, that this difference involves an entire and complete transformation of organizational concepts, a quite new content of the one-sided relation between organization and struggle.

Up to this point we have regarded the question of centralism from the standpoint of the general bases of the Social Democracy and also in part from that of the present-day relations in Russia. But the night-watchman spirit of the ultra-centralism championed by Lenin and his friends is by no means, as concerns him personally, an accidental product of errors but is bound up with a thorough-going opposition to opportunism.

"The question is," says Lenin, "by means of the rules of organization, to forge a more or less sharp weapon against opportunism. The deeper the sources of opportunism lie, the sharper must be this weapon."

Lenin perceives also in the absolute power of the central committee and in the strict holding off of the party by statute the one effective dikes against the opportunistic current and the specific earmarks of which he denotes as the inborn academic predilection for autonomism, for disorganization, and the winning at strict party discipline and at every cost of the petty-bourgeois life. Only in the party life, owing to his innate instability and individualism, can, in Lenin's opinion, oppose such unlimited powers of the central committee; a genuine proletariat, on the other hand, must, even as a result of his revolutionary class instinct, experience a sort of rapture at all the stiffness, strictness and sharpness of his highest party officials, and subjects himself to all the rude operations of party discipline with joyously closed eyes. "Bureaucracy as against democratism," says Lenin; "the organization of the Social Democracy as opposed to the organizational principle of the opportunists." He appeals insistently to the fact that the same opposition between the centralistic and the autonomistic conception in the Social Democracy is becoming noticeable in all countries where the revolutionary and the reformist or revisionist tendency stand facing each other.

First of all, it must be noted that the strong emphasis laid on the inborn capacity of the proletariat for social-democratic organization and the contempt heaped upon the 'academic' elements of the social-democratic movement, is not in itself to be appraised as anything 'marxist-revolutionary'. All that sort of thing can equally well be regarded as bearing a relationship to opportunistic views.

There can, to be sure, be noted in what has hitherto been the practice of the Social Democracy of Western Europe an undeniable connection between opportunism and the academic element, and also between opportunism and decentralist tendencies in questions of organization. But when these phenomena, which arose upon a concrete historical soil, are released from this connection, and converted into abstract patterns with general and absolute validity, such a procedure is the greatest sin against the Holy Ghost of Marxism, namely, against his historically-dialectical mode of thought.

Taken in the abstract, only so much may be definitely stated: that the "intellectual" is an element arising from the bourgeois parliamentarism, by nature foreign to the proletariat, can arrive at socialism not in accordance with his own class feeling but only through overcoming that feeling and by way of the socialist ideology, and is accordingly more predisposed to opportunism than is the enlightened proletariat, who, insofar as he has not lost the connection with his social origin, the proletarian mass, is provided with a sure revolutionary hallmark in virtue of his immediate class instinct. As to the concrete form, however, in which this academic tendency to opportunism appears, particularly in a literal organization, what depends in each case on the concrete social milieu in question.

The phenomena in the life of the German as well as of the French and Italian Social Democracy to which Lenin appeals were the outgrowth of a quite determinate social basis, namely, Bourgeois Parliamantarianism. Just as this latter is in general the specific soil of the present opportunistic current in the socialist movement of Western Europe, so also have sprung from it the special tendencies of opportunism toward disorganization.

Parliamentarianism supports not only all the illusions of present-day opportunism, as we have come to know them in France, Italy and Germany, but also the overestimation of reform work, of the cooperation of classes and parties, of peaceful development, etc. It forms at the same time the soil on which these illusions can be confirmed in practice, in that those intellectuals, who as parliamentarians even in the Social Democracy are still separated from the proletariat, are thus in the sense elevated over that mass. Finally, with the growth of the labor movement, the same parliamentarian makes of this movement a springboard for political upstarts, and accordingly easily converts it into a refuge for ambitious and bankrupt bourgeois existences.

From all these factors results also the definite inclination of the opportunistic intellectual of Western European Social Democracy to disorganization and lack of discipline. The second definite presupposition of the present-day opportunistic current is, of course, the presence of an already high stage of development of the social-democratic movement, hence also of an influential social-democratic party organization. The latter then appears as that bulwark of the revolutionary movement against bourgeois-parliamentarian tendencies—a bulwark which has to be worn down and pulled apart so as to dissolve the compact and active kernel of the proletariat back into the amorphous mass of electors. In this way arises the historically well-grounded and determinate political aims of admirably adapted 'automatic' and decentralist tendencies of modern opportunism; tendencies which, accordingly, are not to be traced back to the inborn slovenliness and looseness of the 'intellectual', as Lenin assumes, but to the needs of the bourgeois parliamentarian—not to the psychology of the academic element, but to the politics of the opportunists.
But all these relations have a considerably different aspect in absolute Russia, where the opportunism in the labor movement is no means a product of the vigorous growth of the Social Democracy, of the decomposition of bourgeois society, but inversely a product of its political backwardness.

The Russian intelligentsia, from which the socialist intellectual is recruited, has naturally a much more indeterminate character, is much more declasse in the exact sense of the word, than the intelligentsia of Western Europe. From this there results, in combination, to be sure, with the youthfulness of the proletarian movement in Russia—general a much wider field for theoretical instability and opportunistic wanderings, which at one time take the form of a complete negation of the political side of the labor movement, at another time turn toward the opposite belief in the exclusive blessedness of terrorism, and finally rest up in the ‘philosophic’ swamps of liberalism or of Kantian idealism.

But for the specific active tendency to disorganization, the social-democratic intellectual of Russia lacks, in our opinion, not only the positive hold in bourgeois parliamentarism but also the corresponding social-psychical milieu. The modern writer of Western Europe who devotes himself to the cult of his alleged ‘ego’ and drags this ‘master morality’ even into the socialist world of struggle and thought, is not the type of bourgeois existence; he is in fact the product of a decadent, corrupted bourgeoisie already hidebound in the worst circle of its class rule. The utopian and opportunistic vagaries of the socialist-intellectual of Russia incline inversely, as is readily understandable, rather to assume the inverted theoretical form of self-mutilation, of self-mortification, of self-flagellation. In fact, that erstwhile ‘going to the people’, that is, among the populists the obligatory masquerade of the intellectual as a peasant, was nothing other than a despairing imitation of the same intellectual, just as is nowadays the clumsy cult of the ‘horny hand’ on the part of the pure ‘Economists’.

The same reflexion also makes clear that centralism in the social-democratic sense is not at all an absolute concept which can be carried over, as a stage of the movement, but that it must rather be regarded as a tendency, the actualization of which proceeds in step with the enlightening and political schooling of the working class in the course of its struggle.

The insufficiency of the most important presuppositions for the full realization of centralism in the Russian movement at the present time may, to be sure, have a very harmful effect. Nevertheless it is false, in our opinion, to think that the still impracticable majority rule of the enlightened workers within their party organization may be replaced ‘temporarily’ by a ‘transferred’ sole-mastery on the part of the central authority of the party and that the lacking public control on the part of the working masses over the acts and omissions of the party organs would be just as well replaced by the inducted control of a central committee over the activity of the revolutionary workers.

The history of the Russian movement itself furnishes many proofs for the dubious value of centralism in this latter sense. The central committee with its almost unlimited authority of interference and control according to Lenin’s ideal would evidently be an absurdity if it should limit its power to the purely technical side of social-democratic activity, to the outer means and accessories of agitation—say, to the supplying of party literature and suitable distribution of agitational and financial forces. It would have a comprehensible political purpose only in case it was to employ its power in the most powerful fighting tactic for Russia and in the release of a great political action. What do we see, however, in the phases through which the Russian movement has already passed? Its most important and most fruitful tactics turned in the last two decades not by any means ‘invented’ by determinate leaders of the movement, and much less by leading organizations, but were in each case the spontaneous product of the unbound movement itself. So was the first stage of the genuine proletarian movement in Russia, when set in with the elemental outbreak of the great St.-Petersburg strike in the year 1896 and which for the first time had inaugurated the economic mass action of the Russian proletariat. Likewise, the second phase—that of the political street demonstrations—was opened quite spontaneously as a result of the student unrests in St.-Petersburg in March 1901. The further significant turning point, by which new horizons were opened to tactics, was the mass strike which broke out ‘all of itself’ in Rostov on the Don, with its ad hoc improvised street agitation, the popular meetings under the open sky, the public addresses—things of which the boldest blusterer among the Social Democrats would not have ventured to think a few years earlier. Of all these cases, we may say that in the beginning was the deed. The initiative and conscious leadership of the social-democratic organizations played an exceedingly small role. This was not, however, so much the fault of defective preparation of these special organizations for their role—even though this factor may have contributed to the contributory factor of the lack at that time, in the Russian Social Democracy, of an all-powerful central committee in accordance with Lenin’s plan. Inversely, such a committee would in all probability only have worked to the purpose of making the indirection of the various party organs lighter, and brought about a division between the storming masses and the procrustinating Social Democracy.

The same phenomenon—the small part played by the conscious initiative of the party leadership in the shaping of tactics—is still more observable in Germany and elsewhere. The fighting tactics of the Social Democracy, at least as regards its main features, is absolutely not invented, but is the result of a process of a long series of real acts in the course of the experimenting and often elemental class struggle. Here also the unconscious precedes the conscious, the logic of the objective historical process goes before the subjective logic of its spokesman. So that the role of the social-democratic leadership becomes one of an essentially conservative character, in that it leads to working out empirically to its ultimate conclusions the new experience acquired in the struggle and sooner to converting it into a besiegbar again and again in the grand style. The present tactical and political wisdom of the German Social Democracy, for example, is generally admired for its remarkable manifoldness, flexibility and at the same time certainty. Such qualities simply mean, however, that our party has adapted itself wonderfully to its daily struggle to the present parliamentary basis, down to the last detail, that it knows how to exploit the whole field of battle offered by parliamentarism and to master it in accordance with given principles. At the same time, however, this specific formulation of tactics already serves to much to conceal the further horizon.
that one notes a strong inclination to eternalize that tactic and to regard the parliamentary tactic as the social-democratic tactic for all time. As illustrative of this mood, we may mention the fact that such an eventuality is viewed by the party leaders in full and bitter seriousness. This inertia is, however, largely explained by the difficulty of giving contour and palpable form to a still inexistent, hence imaginary, political struggle, whatever its weight in the empty air of abstract speculation. To the Social Democracy also, within the party of the right historical appraisal for the then prevalent forms of struggle, a lively feeling for the relativity of the given phase and for the necessary intensification of the revolutionary factors from the standpoint of the final goal of the proletarian movement.

But to desire, as Lenin does, to seek out a party leadership with such absolute powers of a negative character would be only to multiply artificial and in a most dangerous measure in conservatism which is a necessary outgrowth of every leadership. Just as the social-democratic tactic was formed, not by a central committee but by the whole party or, more correctly stated, by the whole movement, so the separate organizations of the party plainly require such elbow-room as alone enables complete utilization of all means offered by the situation of the moment, as well as the unfolding of revolutionary initiative. The ultra-centralism advocated by Lenin, however, is especially in the beginnings of the mass movement, coordination and drawing together instead of regimentation and exclusiveness. For that reason the active members of the organizations were worked out in full detail in advance, fixed and prescribed as a definite plan. For that reason the active members of the organizations were naturally transformed into pure executive organs of a previously determined will existing outside their own field of activity, into tools of a central committee. Thus a definite central authority, the absolute, blind subordination of the different organs of the party to their central authority, and the extension of the decisive powers of this latter onto the outermost periphery of the party organization.

Fundamentally different are the conditions of social-democratic action. This action grows historically out of the elemental class struggle. In so doing, it works and moves in the dialectical contradiction that here the proletarian army is first recruited in the struggle itself, where it also first becomes clear regarding the tasks of the struggle. Organization, enlightenment and struggle are here not separate, mechanical and also temporarilly disjointed factors, as in the case of a blanquist apparatus, but are different sides of the same process. On the one hand--apart from general principles of the struggle--the action grows historically out of the elemental class struggle. In this action, the spirit of the organization, and this spirit proceeds especially in the beginnings of the mass movement, coordination and drawing together instead of regimentation and exclusiveness. If this spirit of political liberty, combined with a sharp eye to stability of principles and to the unity of the movement, has secured a foothold in the party and the eventual reformulation of tactics in case of the abrogation of universal suffrage, in spite of the fact that such an eventuality is viewed by the party leaders in full and bitter seriousness. This inertia is, however, largely explained by the difficulty of giving contour and palpable form to a still inexistent, hence imaginary, political struggle, whatever its weight in the empty air of abstract speculation. To the Social Democracy also, within the party of the correct historical appraisal for the then prevalent forms of struggle, a lively feeling for the relativity of the given phase and for the necessary intensification of the revolutionary factors from the standpoint of the final goal of the proletarian movement.

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on the blind subordination of all party organizations, with their activity, down to the least detail, under a central authority, which alone thinks, acts and decides for all, and on a sharp separation of the organized nucleus of the party from the surrounding revolutionary milieu, as championed by Lenin—appears to us for that reason as a mechanical transfer of the organizational principles of the conspiratorial circles onto the social-democratic movement of the working classes. And Lenin himself has perhaps characterized his standpoint more keenly than any of his opponents could do, in that he defined his "revolutionary social democracy," as the "Jacobin linked with the organization of the class-conscious workers." As a matter of fact, however, the Social Democracy is not linked or connected with the organization of the working class, but is the movement of the working class itself. Social Democracy must therefore effect essentially different construction from the blanquist movement of the organized nucleus of the party from the surrounding revolutionary mechanism. It can be nothing other than the imperious coordination of the will of the enlightened and fighting vanguard of the workers as contrasted with its different groups and individuals; this is an inner or mechanical carrying over of the organizational principles or the character of the leadership more keenly than any of his opponents could do, in that he defined his "revolutionary social democracy," as the "Jacobin linked with the organization of the class-conscious workers." As a matter of fact, however, the Social Democracy is not linked or connected with the organization of the working class, but is the movement of the working class itself. Social Democracy must therefore effect essentially different construction from the blanquist movement of the organized nucleus of the party from the surrounding revolutionary mechanism. It can be nothing other than the imperious coordination of the will of the enlightened and fighting vanguard of the workers as contrasted with its different groups and individuals; this is an inner or mechanical carrying over of the organizational principles or the character of the leadership.

Just from looking into this true content of social-democratic centralism, it becomes clear that the necessary conditions for such a thing are not yet fully realized in Russia. Those conditions are, in the main, the presence of a considerable element of proletarians already schooled in the political struggle and the possibility of giving expression to its maturity through the direct exercise of influence (at public party congresses, in the party press, etc.).

It is clear that this latter condition can only be created with the advent of political activity in Russia. The former condition, however, the forming of a class-conscious, competent vanguard of the proletariat, is only in course of achievement and must be regarded as the primary purpose of the next agitation and also organizational work.

All the more surprising is the effect produced by the opposite assurance of Lenin, according to which all the preconditions for the carrying out of a great and highly centralized labor party are already present in Russia. And he portrays once more a much too mechanical conception of social-democratic organization in optimistic proclamation that even now it is "not the proletariat but a great number of intellectuals in the Russian Social Democracy who lack self-training in the spirit of organization and discipline." The former condition, however, the forming of a class-conscious, competent vanguard of the proletariat, is only in course of achievement and must be regarded as the primary purpose of the next agitation and also organizational work.

Let us not forget that the revolution which we see in the offing in Russia is not a proletarian but a bourgeois revolution, which will greatly change the entire scenery of the social-democratic struggle. Thereupon the Russian intelligentsia also will quickly absorb a strongly pronounced bourgeois content. Whereas today the Social Democracy is the only leader of the Russian working masses, on the morning after the revolution the bourgeoisie, and in the first instance its intelligentsia, will seek to convert these masses into a pedestal for its parliamentary rule. Now the less scope there is given in the present period of the struggle to the self-activation, to the political and economic sense of the awakened element of the working class, and the more that element is politically well-wetted and drilled by a social-democratic central committee, the easier will be the game of the bourgeois dominoes in the revolutionized Russia and the more will the efforts of the Social Democracy turn to the advantage of the bourgeoisie.
On the other hand, it is a thoroughly unhistorical illusion to think that the social-democratic tactic in the revolutionary sense can be preserved intact, without opportunistic side-loops. To be sure, the Marxian doctrine provides effective weapons against all basic types of opportunistic thought. Since, however, the social-democratic movement is in fact a mass movement and the bunglers by which it is managed do not spring from human heads but from the social conditions, opportunism too appears as a product of the labor movement itself, as an unavoidable factor of its historical development. Precisely in Russia, where the Social Democracy is still young, and the political conditions of the labor movement are so abnormal, opportunism might very well at present spring largely from this source, from the unavoidable groping and experimenting in matters of tactics, from the necessity of bringing the present struggle into harmony with socialist principles in quite peculiar and unprecedented relations.

But if that is so, one must marvel all the more at the idea that the rise of opportunistic tendencies can be forbidden in the very beginnings of a labor movement by means of this or that form of rules of organization. The attempt to ward off opportunism by such scraps of paper can, as a matter of fact, do no harm to opportunism but only to the Social Democracy itself, and, by restraining within the party the pulsating of a healthy blood, weakens its powers of resistance not only against the actual opportunists, but also against the very people—which might be of some importance—against the existing social order. The means turns against the end.

In this frightened effort of a part of the Russian Social Democracy to preserve from false steps the aspiring labor movement of Russia through the guardianship of an omniscient and omnipresent central committee we seem to see also the same subjectivism involved by which socialistic thought in Russia has frequently been imposed upon in the past. Amusing, in truth, are the somersaults which the revered human subject of history loves to perform at times in his own historical process. The ego which has been beaten down by Russian absolutism takes shape in the form of an abstracted thought-world and declaring itself omnipotent--as a conspiratorial committee in the name of a non-existent "popular will". The 'object' shows itself stronger, however: the knot soon triumphs, in that it proves itself to be the 'legitimate' expression of the given stage of the historical process. Finally there appears on the scene, as a more legitimate child of the historical process--the Russian labor movement, which makes a splendid beginning to shape, for the first time in Russian history, a real popular will. Now, however, the ego of the Russian revolutionary quickly stands on its head and declares itself once more to be an almighty ruler of history--this time, in the direction of the social-democratic working masses. In so doing, the bold acrobat overlooks the fact that the only subject to which this role the new fallen is the mass-ego of the working class, which everywhere insist on venturing to make its own mistakes and learning historical dialectic for itself. And by way of conclusion, let us say openly just to ourselves: our party leaders are, in historical perspective, immeasurably more fruitful than the infallibility of the very best "central committee."
and a selected group of the workers is invited to meetings from time to time to applaud the speeches of the leaders, and to approve by unanimous vote the resolutions laid before them. What we have, then, at bottom, is a clique economy--a dictatorship, to be sure, but not the dictatorship of the proletariat. Rather, the dictatorship of a handful of individuals, as the sense of the Jacobins--in a word, increasing the interval between the soviet congresses from three to six months! And what is more: such conditions must be a symptom of the barbarization of the public life.

The basic error of the Lenin-Trotskyist theory is simply this: that they set dictatorship, just as Kautsky does, over against democracy. "Dictatorship or democracy"--that is the question both for the Bolsheviks and for Kautsky. The latter decides, naturally, for democracy, and for bourgeois democracy at that, since he views it precisely as the alternative to the socialist overthrow. Lenin and Trotsky decide, inversely, for dictatorship in opposition to democracy and, in so doing, for the dictatorship of a handful of individuals, that is, for dictatorship after the bourgeois fashion. Two opposite poles, both equally far removed from the true socialist policy. When the proletariat seizes power, it can never more follow Kautsky's advice and renounce the job of carrying through the socialist transformation, under the pretext of the "graspiness of the country", and devotes itself merely to democracy--without committing treason to itself, to the international and to the revolution. It is bound to and must proceed at each step with the active participation of the masses, in unlimited democracy. "As Marxists, we have never been idolaters of formal democracy," writes Trotsky. Certainly, we have never been idolaters of formal democracy. Nor have we ever betrayed the proletariat, nor do we follow Kautsky or Marxists, onto the scrap-heap when we find it uncomfortable? Trotsky and Lenin are the living negations of this question. We have never been idolaters of formal democracy; which simply means that we have never distinguished the political form of bourgeois democracy; we have always uncovered the bitter kernel of social inequality and constraint under the sweet shell of formal equality and freedom--not in order to reject these latter, but in order to urge the working class not to content itself with the shell but rather to win the political power in order to fill it with new social content. It is the historical task of the proletariat, when it comes to power, to create in the place of bourgeois democracy, Socialist democracy, not to go away with democracy itself. Socialist democracy begins, however, not in the promised land after the substructure of socialist economy has been formed, as a ready-made Christian present. For the good people who in the meantime have loyally supported the result of socialist dictators. Socialist democracy begins simultaneously with the tearing down of class rules and the building up of socialism; it begins with the seizure of power. It is nothing else than the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Yes, dictatorship! But this dictatorship consists in the manner in which democracy is employed, not in its abolition; in vigorous, defined intrusions into the well-established rules and economic relation.

THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND THE PRESENT CRISIS.

With the beginning of 1935 such rumors are heard about a possible major offensive by the A.F. of L. in a number of basic industries. Some superficial observers already see the threat of a nation-wide general strike to be initiated by textile, steel and automobile workers' unions. Vague statements about Labor's awakening, uttered by the pious Baptist who heads the A.F. of L., further alarm the backwoods shopkeepers, and 1935 opens with generally evil forebodings to the middle class and small business men.

We say middle class and small business men, because big business does not fear the A.F. of L. It knows that no general strike will be countenanced. Chief executives of the leading industrial leaders are more and even such dangerous consequences as might arise from a textile or steel strike will be curbed before reaching their objective.

It is not merely that Green, Wall & Co., are cowardly, vacillating and reactionary that leads to this conclusion -- it is that the A.F. of L., as an organization, lock, stock and barrel, is not by its nature inclined to take any risks.

The structure and history of the A.F. of L. are such that it can never engage in any struggle that endangers the existing order -- and in these times any major action by the workers will have just that effect.

Organized in 1881, the A.F. of L. represented at that time the revolt of the skilled aristocracy of labor against the contemporary primitive labor organizations. The Knights of Labor, most powerful organization in the eighties, with all its faults had crystallized a potentially powerful movement of unskilled workers. Reactionary officials were unable to stem the tide. "Orderly" strikes developed into major revolts of gigantic proportions. The workers, despite the pious pleadings of reactionary leaders, fought as only the completely disenchanted could fight - with any and all means at their command.

The Gould strike, waged by the Knights of Labor in 1886 in which they whipped the most powerful railroad combination in the United States, was an example of working class revolt that involved skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled laborers on the basis of the slogan "An Injury
The element of the movement which swamped the Knights of Labor is borne out by the membership figures during the growth and decline of the eight-hour agitation. For this period the membership figures for the Knights of Labor and the A.F. of L. were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Knights of Labor</th>
<th>A.F. of L.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>19,422</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>42,517</td>
<td>65,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>60,811</td>
<td>76,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>104,066</td>
<td>105,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>702,924</td>
<td>125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>810,351</td>
<td>136,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>259,576</td>
<td>160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>220,607</td>
<td>175,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The slow but steady growth of the A.F. of L. shows the substantial development of a movement of skilled workers, whose preferred position was not conducive to radical, revolutionary sentiment. They had banded together to take advantage of that position to secure further concessions - concessions that an expanding capitalism could well afford to grant; as they consolidated their position they became less inclined to risk it on any "wild revolutionary or socialist schemes".

The American Federation of Labor represented above all things the "effort of the well-to-do white man" to break away from the lower strata of labor. They were unwilling to submerge their interests in those of the whole. They wanted to occupy a preferred seat at the capitalist table at the expense of their less fortunate fellows. Thus, while the growth of the A.F. of L. was slow, it was predicted virtually upon a property interest. Its growth was more substantial, making up in essence what it lacked in numbers. The Knights of Labor disappeared from the field, the eight-hour movement, fought courageously by the rank and file and betrayed miserably by the leaders came to a bloody conclusion in the murder of the Haymarket "Anarchists"; but the A.F. of L. succeeded in keeping its hands unsoiled by any radical activity at that time.

By 1894 Eugene Debs had organized the American Railway Union and in the Pullman strike of that year the class struggle flared anew, only to be suppressed with federal troops. The A.F. of L. repudiated the A.R.U. strike.

The Western Federation of Miners at this time developed a militant movement which broke away from the A.F. of L. and by 1905 resulted in the organization of the I.W.W. Until shortly before the world war the I.W.W. represented the best and most militant elements of the labor movement. The ignored and submerged unskilled workers saw reason for new hope, but the A.F. of L. kept its hands off except where it was possible to break "Wobbly" strikes and assist vigilante mobs in lynching-bees.

When the United States entered the world war, the A.F. of L. entered into an industrial peace pact with the master class and concentrated on sending American workers into the European slaughter. The I.W.W. was destroyed; its leaders sent to jail by the hundreds, and the A. F. of L. exulted with the rest of the jingoes at 20 year sentences handed out to "Wobbly" organizers.

With the close of the war, the revolutionary upsurge in Europe had its reflex in America in the growth of radical sentiment. Heeding reluctantly the insistent demands from below, the A.F. of L. entered upon a campaign to organize the steel industry. The steel workers responded enthusiastically only to be attacked on two fronts - by the old forces of the national, state and local governments, and by the old-guard A.F. of L. union of skilled workers, the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Tin and Steel Workers, who sabotaged the strike to the extent of scabbing. Jurisdictional disputes between the affected crafts played a good part in making the strike ineffective. The strike was lost.

When the present depression broke, the A.F. of L. had no plans to offer. The bureaucracy at the top was out of touch not only with the broad masses, but it was out of touch with its own membership as well. Its membership fell off. Already the possibility of complete collapse appears when Roosevelt II saved the tottering structure. The decline in membership had been going on at a terrific pace. In 1917, it declined to a half million in 1920, it declined to a total of one-half million by 1936. By the end of the NRA, workers were again herded into the A. F. of L.

The president's attitude may have been surprising, but there was nothing strange about his action in view of the conditions. The world was in chaos threatened by the never-ending depression left its mark on American politics as it did on those of Europe. The capitalists of each country, as well as the world are preparing for two events - war and revolution. In each country they prepare for this in their own way: Italy with Mussolini, Germany with Hitler, and the United States with Roosevelt and NRA. The differences of approach and method do not alter the fundamental nature and purpose of this movement. In each case the capitalist class of each country consolidates its forces against the coming war and revolution, and in each case that process of consolidation may accurately be called the process of fascism. This process calls for the utmost concentration of the forces of the national capitalist class as a whole. This accounts for its nationalism, individualistic and reckless capitalists must be curbed, subordinated to the interests of the whole class, thus the socialism of fascism.

The workers must be controlled or their organizations destroyed, and since working class organization can never be entirely destroyed, under capitalism; machinery is set up to control them. Here the A.F. of L. pays itself off, offering itself as the willing and eager henchman of capitalism. No doubt even it will become superfluous or bothersome, or too ineffective in time to be of further use to the masters.
But at this time it is usable. Mr. Roosevelt holds out glowing vistas to the labor skates. Their mouths water as they peer into the promised land. Only one cent per month per member flows into the A.F. of L. from members of affiliated international unions. But there is a chance to organize the unskilled into "Federal Unions" paying 35¢ a month per capita, and the president had practically told them to go ahead and organize to their hearts' content.

Roosevelt's friendly smile and naive radio talks might indicate the good natured clown, but his policies are those of a far-seeing capitalist who uses all methods necessary to prolong the existence of the present order. In this period of chaos and collapse, the most exploited and starving layers of the working class form a distinct menace of revolution. He hands out relief to the starving and lets the present order. In this period of chaos and collapse, the most exploited and starving layers of the working class form a distinct menace of revolution. He hands out relief to the starving and lets the present order. In this period of chaos and collapse, the most exploited and starving layers of the working class form a distinct menace of revolution. He hands out relief to the starving and lets the present order.

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The labor skates have delivered. They throttled the militant miners in the East. They surrendered to the steel industry; they scotched an attempt at an automobile industry strike and joyously broke the 'Prize general strike from within.

With a reactionary history to its credit, a form of organization susceptible to no changes, an officialdom so firmly entrenched as to be immovable, a rank and file that is either impotent or as reactionary as its leaders, the A.F. of L. at this time is much too useful to the master class to be discarded. It is expected to fulfill the work of "insuring the labor of the Nation" in Germany and so far it has realized all the hopes Roosevelt placed in it. Its job is to prevent strikes, to regiment and curb the workers, to duplicate the Fascist labor organizations of Europe.

General strikes are not a part of Fascist routine. So a question whether the A.F. of L. will initiate a general strike movement in 1935 is indeed laughable.

**"MARXISM WITHOUT DOCTORS"**

Review on: The Inevitability of Communism. by Paul Mattick. (6)

It has been the misfortune of Marxism in the United States that its greatest development took place under the influence of the Russian Revolution. Our native radicals have displayed a pig-headedness almost equal to that of the bourgeoisie itself in continuing to regard 'Leninism' or 'Marxist-Leninism', as synonymous with, or at least a logical extension of, Marxist and Bolshevism as synonymous with Communist. Even two such embattled antagonists as Sidney Hook and Max Eastman—the one wanting to be a Marxist and the other a Leninist—are in fundamental agreement on this point, and their heated disputes accordingly reduce largely to a mere matter of words. It has not yet dawned upon the American intellectuals that the Bolshevist Revolution was only a bourgeois revolution directed to overthrowing Czarism and doing away with the vestiges of feudalism in Russia, thus preparing the way for an unrestricted state-capitalist development.

It has been the misfortune of Mattick personally—apart from the circumstances that he brought with him from Germany a philosophical mind and style—that his work is directed to breaking down these illusion and prejudices and to "cleaning Marxist from the filth of eugenics.

He recognizes that Marxism in its pure and original form was impossible of application during the upgrade period of capitalism; that it was necessarily adapted to suit the needs of the governing bureau and that it is only now, in the "permanent crisis" when the objective conditions are ripe for the overthrow of capitalism, that it is really possible for Marxism to come into its own. Which is merely another manner of saying that Marxism can be actualized only through the revolutionary proletariat, filling the place of throwing off the fetters of capitalism. Mattick accordingly rejects all forms of Marxist 'orthodoxy', including particularly those associated with the names of Lenin and Kautsky. Yet, he is an orthodox Marxist himself—but with a difference. In the first place, he makes a distinction between mere lip-service to Marxism, or the use of revolutionary phrases to conceal 'bourgeois' or counter-revolutionary practice, on the one hand, and the practical application of Marxist principles in the proletarian struggle against capitalism on the other. And secondly, to him, as to George Lukacs, orthodox Marxism "does not mean an uncritical acceptance of the results of Marx's investigations, but an acceptance of the results of Marx's investigations, does not mean a 'belief' in this or that thesis, nor the exegesis of a 'sacred book'. Orthodox Marxism in questions of Marxist relations to fact 'labour', the exclusion of the historical experience of the working class, and at the same time one of those who are least lenient in its application. He recognizes the historical character of all the traditional forms of the labor movement, inclusive of parliaments and the political party. The political party, for instance, is just an expression of formal democracy—an instrument which will be permitted to function only so long as the bourgeoisie can afford it. Such a view of orthodoxy enables Mattick to be the most uncompromising of Marxists, whereas the same time one of those who are least lenient in its application. He recognizes the historical character of all the traditional forms of the labor movement, inclusive of parliaments and the political party. The political party, for instance, is just an expression of formal democracy—an instrument which will be permitted to function only so long as the bourgeoisie can afford it.
parties and bureaucracies and hence capable of effecting a real
united front and waging a really common struggle against capitalism
in its final and more or less 'fascist' form.

Ever since fascism first made its appearance in Italy, shortly after
the war, and particularly since the rise of Hitler in Germany and the
communist seizure of the Social Democracy in Austria, a reaction
of the labor movement has been under way. In this process are re-
combatted by Lenin under the name of Left Communism—a position
Ever since fascism first made its appearance in Italy, shortly after
the suppression of the Social Democracy in Austria, a reorientation
of the workers. It is that latter position which is represented by
Mattick, in harmony with the "United Workers' Party" of America and the
"Groups of International Communists" of the various countries
throughout the world. It is essentially the same position as that
combatted by Lenin under the name of Left Communism—a position
which, from the point of view of the Russian Revolution, with its
petty-bourgeois and Jacobinical ideology, was naturally anathema to
the time to any Bolshevick—as it was also to Noske and Zhbret—but
which from the international proletarian point of view is revealing
itself as the one truly revolutionary force in contemporary society.

In the present pamphlet, "The Inevitability of Communism," as well
as in various other writings, such as his critique of the American
Workers Party (\(\text{\textcircled{w}}\)), Mattick has taken pains to show the disastrous
correspondence of compromising attitudes concerning revolution,
in all its phases. He understands that fascism itself is merely
an abberation of Marxist maneuver, an attempt to mistaken the workers by the use
of pseudo-revolutionary or at least pseudo-radical phrases, as ill-
illustrated by the "National-Socialist German Labor Party." Fascism has copied the tactics of the bolshevick movement in Russia
and of the national bolshevik parties controlled by the Third Inter-
national. Fascism too pretends to be aiming at a form of "socialism",
with a vision of a "National-Socialist Germany" which generally
which generally, and especially among the workers and petty-bourgeoisie but even among the so-
called socialists themselves. What wonder, then, that the workers
turn to fascism—a form of "socialism" which can be introduced by the
simple process of voting, without the necessity of a revolution
with all its unpleasant connotations. Thus when the members of
the reformist, petty-bourgeois parties—a term which includes even the
self-styled revolutionary political parties—refuse the workers
with being stupid, they fail to consider that these parties them-
sewre are largely responsible for that 'stupidity', in that they
put reformist notions into the heads of the workers and fail to make
a clear-cut distinction between capitalism (in its fascist form) and
communism (as conceived by Marx, the "society of free and equal pro-
ducers"). Thus reformism in its various aspects, including participa-
tion in capitalist politics, leads logically to fascism, and all the
reformist parties (regardless of their revolutionary phrases or
intentions) conflict in the end. A true front against capitalism and
fascism or be suppressed by it—or even both at the same time, as in

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the case of the German C.P., which had lost all revolutionary char-
acter and become almost a fascist as the Nazis, but which nevertheless
has to be swept aside as unadapted, or at least less adapted
than Hitler's party, to the needs of the bourgeoisie in the permanent

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These two opposed tendencies in the labor movement imply, of course,
differences in theoretical base, involving questions of psychology and
of philosophy and economics. The reformist position is essen-
tially opportunist and undialectical. It is accordingly
superficial, content with momentary successes, however won and with
the aid of whatever elements, without regard for ultimate
on the revolutionary movement and the form of society resulting from
it. It fails to see in the capitalist relations themselves and in
the growth of the forces of production (in particular, the growth
of the proletariat) the circumstance which makes the eventual
of communism inevitable, however long that triumph may be postponed
by fascism and other varieties of reformism. On the other hand, the
truly revolutionary tendency, which sees in the proletariat itself
the antithesis engendered by capitalism, and in communism the syn-
thesis resulting from this antagonism, is not concerned with turn-
ing to the petty-bourgeoisie but with developing the strength and
the consciousness and the self-confidence of the workers, so that
these latter will be capable of leading the petty-bourgeoisie in-
stead of being led by it. In other words, as Mattick makes plain in
the concluding sections of his work, it is not so much a question of
'educating' the workers in communist ideology, but one of de-
veloping their militancy. Education, in the sense in which the word
is employed by socialists and reformists generally—is a
merely to play into the hands of the reactionaries by indulging the
false consciousness of the workers, under workers, under the
its main, forms of pre-revolutionary activity is
merely to play into the hands of the reactionaries by inducing the
socialist to accept the capitalist order as such and to be content
with nothing but a new state of society until they have con-
vincing enough people of the desirability of socialism to vote the
socialist ticket into office. But to promote the militancy and self-
consciousness of the workers, even to the exclusion of communist ide-
ology and what is generally referred to as class consciousness in its
more intellectual form, is to make the collapse of capitalism inevi-
table in the shortest possible space of time. Their economic strug-
gles under existing conditions naturally lead to assume a political
form and acquire a revolutionary character; the workers may not be
Marxists or conscious revolutionists while engaged in these struggles,
but, as Mattick says, "the revolution makes the Marxists."

"One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward". The Modern Monthly, Dec. 1936
sense worthy of such a critique. Mattick and Hook are, of course, in agreement on many specific points (omitted as obvious in the present pamphlet), and their differences are sometimes more a matter of emphasis than of fundamental opposition. But Hook, in common with all the other people who have tried to 'make sense of Marx' has, we think Mattick clearly shows, merely succeeded in reducing what is essentially science to the 'common-sense' level of understanding and not only abandoned Marxism himself but made it all the easier for liberals and 'nice people' generally to feel that they were perfectly justified in never concerning themselves with the matter or never taking it seriously if they did. Mattick reveals that Marx is more modern than all his critics, whether of the pseudo-scientific radical camp like Max Eastman, or of the purely liberal type like Stuart Chase. Marx is not only the symbol of revolution, which is the only present alternative to world-wide fascism; he is also the man who has provided the most profound understanding of capitalist society, and that insight into economic laws and the movement of social classes which is the only sure guide to pursuing a really radical course of action under capitalism in its stage of decline. And Mattick, in spite or because of his comparative youth, has brought into Marxist theory and the political labor movement a freshness of insight and depth of understanding gained in the course of years of experience here and abroad and hitherto lacking in this country.

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NOTICE

The February issue of Council Correspondence will feature an article by Kristen Svanum on "Daniel De Leon". There will be a brilliant article on "Revolutionary Marxism", as well as other very interesting material.--Be sure to get a copy.

Back Numbers of Council Correspondence:

We have some back numbers of Council Correspondence which you can get by sending in to the United Workers' Party:

C.C. #2 - featuring article on Henryk Grossman's Interpretation of Marx's Theory of Capitalist Accumulation.
C.C. #3 - featuring the "Thesis on Bolshevism" by the group of International Communists of Holland.
C.C. #4 - containing a splendid article on "planned Economy" and a critique by Karl Korsch of the American Workers' Party program.

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By KRISTEN SVANUM

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