

LENINISM THE ONLY MARXISM TODAY

A DISCUSSION OF THE
CHARACTERISTICS OF
DECLINING CAPITALISM



BY
ALEX BITTELMAN
AND
V. J. JEROME

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LENINISM—THE ONLY MARXISM TODAY

A Discussion of the Characteristics of Declining Capitalism

By ALEX BITTELMAN and V. J. JEROME

PART I INTRODUCTORY

IT is truly a sign of the times when a bourgeois publishing house, in the belief that it is engaging in a sound business venture, publishes an imposing work in which (according to the jacket announcement) "for the first time, the Marxian conception of capitalist economy has been applied to the development of American capitalism". The appearance of *The Decline of American Capitalism** by Lewis Corey offers striking testimony to the fact that Marxism in the United States is becoming popular, not only among the more advanced workers, but also among large sections of intellectuals. It reflects the fact that increasing numbers in the various professional groups are passing through a period of "transvaluation of values", that they are discarding the bankrupt notions of bourgeois social sciences and are reaching out to Marxism for a solution of the basic problems of our epoch. This fact in itself is a symptom of the decline of American capitalism.

To all appearances, the author of *The Decline of American Capitalism* has made a serious effort to give a Marxian analysis of American capitalism. It is, of course, not the *first* Marxian analysis of American capitalism, the assertion on the jacket notwithstanding. The author draws freely, and properly so, upon Marx, Lenin, Stalin, and on Communist literature generally—not only in the general theoretical part of his book, but also in his analysis of the causes of the decline of *American* capitalism. Priority as regards the Marxian analysis of American capitalism is, therefore, not a specific attribute of the book, as Mr. Corey himself, we assume, will readily agree.

For an understanding of the book it is necessary to remember that the first analysis of American capitalism of the post-War period was made by the Communist International while Lenin

* Covici Friede, New York, 622 pages, \$4.

was still alive. It is in the decisions and theses of the Comintern and in the writings of its leaders that we find proof of the Marxist-Leninist proposition that the fundamental laws of capitalist development apply inevitably and with full force to American capitalism. Bourgeois economists in the United States ridiculed this proposition, setting up, instead, the specious theory of American exceptionalism; social-reformism made this theory its own. In the years of "prosperity" Lovestone, the former leader of the Communist Party, defended this bourgeois theory as against the position of the Communist International which, during the very height of the "endless prosperity", pointed out to the American Communists the inexorable operation of the general laws of capitalism in the United States and the imminence of a deep-going crisis for American capitalism. Especially should it be remembered that it was Stalin who led the fight against the theory of American exceptionalism, as far back as 1928, when Lovestone had begun to defend it. Since then the Communist Party of the United States has been waging its main theoretical battles on the basis of Stalin's analysis of American capitalism against all bourgeois and social-reformist theories of American exceptionalism.

These battles have played a decisive role in the process of Bolshevizing the Communist Party and revolutionizing the American labor movement. They have gained for Communism many adherents. They have brought back to the Communist Party many of the followers of Lovestone. They have helped to expose the counter-revolutionary nature of Trotzkyism which also fought the Comintern thesis of the shattering of stabilization in the third period of post-War capitalism.

We must, therefore, welcome the trend among American intellectuals towards accepting the Communist Party position on the crisis of American capitalism, as part of the general crisis of world capitalism. And, though Mr. Corey does not indicate the Communist sources of his theoretical propositions, and, by some peculiar reticence, totally fails to refer to Stalin, the greatest living theoretical and political leader of the working class, whose guidance in exploding the bourgeois theory of American exceptionalism was decisive, and without whose works much that is valuable in Mr. Corey's book could not have been written, the general tenor of the book and its main purpose are to corroborate the Communist Party position on many important theoretical and practical questions. One reads the book with a feeling that it might have been a good Marxist work (the factual supporting material is there), had the author chosen to apply Marxism-Leninism *consistently*, without admixture and traces of ideas foreign and hostile to Leninism. As it is, we have in the book

both Marxism-Leninism and—something which is not that. But the two do not blend; for Leninism, as Stalin characterized it with epigrammatic force, is the only Marxism of the imperialist era. The result is: wherever Mr. Corey adheres to Leninism (as, on the question of the N.R.A.), he handles the factual material correctly and reaches correct conclusions, confirming the Communist Party position. But, as he departs from Leninism by adding to it elements of other theories, he brings about confusion and weakens his proposition that American capitalism is in decline.

ON THE ECONOMICS OF IMPERIALISM

DECLINE BY EXHAUSTION

We shall now examine Mr. Corey's main thesis, stated in the summary of Part One (pp. 56-7). Basing himself on Marx' theory of the growth of the organic composition of capital, the author shows that the contradictions of capital accumulation result in an over-production of capital goods, which is the cause of capitalism's cyclical crises. While capitalism was in the ascendent phase, "every depression was succeeded by a new upsurge of prosperity because of the *long-time factors of economic expansion*" (our emphasis). But as "all the long-time factors of expansion *approach exhaustion*, capitalism begins to decline because it is no longer able to produce and absorb an increasing output of capital goods. The decline of capitalism is an expression of old age, of a crisis in its historical development: one social system grows into another" (our emphasis). Proceeding from this general thesis, which he regards as applicable to all capitalist countries, Mr. Corey concludes:

"The decline of American capitalism is conditioned by the *exhaustion of the inner long-time factors of expansion*. This exhaustion, which is relative and wholly capitalist, was brought to a head by the prosperity of the 'Golden Age' of American capitalism. It assumed the form of overdevelopment of productive forces, saturation of capital plant, monopoly, the export of capital, and imperialism" (our emphasis).

Here then we have Mr. Corey's idea of the economic roots of imperialism. These roots derive from the fact that the "long-time factors of economic expansion approach exhaustion". What are these factors of economic expansion? Mr. Corey lists them as follows: "Mechanization of old industries, development of new industries, industrialization of new regions". According to Mr. Corey, these factors operative within the United States have become exhausted, and this is the economic basis of the decline of American capitalism, the economic essence of its present, imperialist, stage.

The question arises: What is it that causes the long-time factors of economic expansion to approach exhaustion? On the nature of this process of exhaustion, Mr. Corey says, in what we have cited, that it "is relative and wholly capitalist". This, however, does not answer the question: what is it *in capitalist development* that causes that exhaustion?

Mr. Corey comes back to the subject of "exhaustion" time and again. It is the *Leitmotif* of his book. Yet in no place does he answer this question. And without a satisfactory answer his main thesis, which is a statement of the economic roots of imperialism, falls to the ground. Certainly, what he presents as an answer cannot be taken as such. He writes:

"As concentration and combination grow, there is an exhaustion (on a capitalist basis) of the inner long-time factors of expansion, resulting in a decreasing output and absorption of capital goods. Mass markets are still more limited. Excess capacity and surplus capital mount. The rate of profit threatens to fall disastrously. The outward thrust toward foreign outlets is strengthened. Speculation becomes more international. Capitalist production and foreign trade are more and more entangled with the economics of the export of capital and the politics of imperialism, with exploitation of the outer, the international, long-time factors of expansion. Monopoly capitalism and exploitation of economically backward peoples are inseparable." (pp. 416-7.)

Does this answer the question? Not at all. All it does is point out: (1) that the exhaustion takes place *concurrently* with the concentration and combination of capital; (2) that the exhaustion strengthens the urge toward outer expansion, the latter coinciding with the stage of imperialism. This, however, only raises the question: What relationship, *besides* concurrent development, exists between the concentration of capital and the exhaustion of the inner long-time factors of economic expansion? Are these two developments related in any way to some third development? This question also remains unanswered.

Mr. Corey's conception of "exhaustion" *implies of necessity* another, more fundamental, idea. It is, namely, that economic expansion under capitalism (realization of surplus value and, hence, accumulation of capital) is possible only through the penetration of the capitalist mode of production into non-capitalist or pre-capitalist modes of production. As long as there are still to be found capitalistically undeveloped territories, capital accumulation grows and the development of capitalism proceeds upward. But as the capitalist mode of production expands, and the sphere of non-capitalist modes of production begins to disappear, there comes a halt to the accumulation of capital and to further economic expansion. With it begins

the era of the decline of capitalism. This is the implied premise from which Mr. Corey proceeds to the formulation of his main thesis that it is the exhaustion of the long-time factors of expansion that causes the decline of capitalism, the era of imperialism. It is only as it derives from this premise that Mr. Corey's main thesis can make sense; for the implicit premise does offer a *cause* for the exhaustion of the long-time factors of expansion under capitalism: this is, the exhaustion of the spheres of non-capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production.

By "adding" the idea of the "exhaustion" of the long-time factors of economic expansion to the Leninist theory of imperialism, the essence of which is monopoly capital, Mr. Corey has introduced confusion into the question and has weakened the *proof* for the decline of American capitalism. Bourgeois reviewers of his book have not been slow in seizing upon this weakness. Mr. William MacDonald (*New York Times Book Review*, September 9, 1934) is willing to accept Mr. Corey's thesis of "exhaustion" because it does not prevent him from attacking the revolutionary conclusions of the book. It may be true, says MacDonald, that capitalist expansion must cease "when there are no more economic worlds to conquer"; but then we can still have a capitalism without expansion. He concludes from Mr. Corey that "if a return to prosperity is still possible, even with life on a lower level and a less considerable scale, there would seem to be no reason why, in the interval, other ways of escape than communism may not offer, or the alleged virtues of communism come to appear less real". The bourgeois reviewer uses Mr. Corey's erroneous notion, the exhaustion of the long-time factors of economic expansion, to attack Mr. Corey's conclusion, the inevitability of Socialism in the United States. Another reviewer (George Soule, *New Republic*, Sept. 19, 1934), so friendly to Mr. Corey that he takes him under his protection against anticipated criticisms of the book by the Party, also attacks the idea of a Socialist outcome, and precisely from the angle of "exhaustion". He says: "Nor is it entirely clear from Mr. Corey's argument why capitalism has now reached the stage of decline. . . . This thesis seems to assume that all internal resources have now been exploited and that there are no new fields for foreign exploitation that will not lead to imperialist clashes and war. . . . There seems to be no material reason why another burst of accumulation cannot come to pass. . . ."

It is very significant that both these reviewers overlook in Mr. Corey's book those portions which state the *Marxist-Leninist* theory of imperialism and the proletarian revolution, but seize upon his *additions* to Marxism-Leninism. And why do they do so? Because the Marxist-Leninist ideas of the book are invulnerable, while Mr.

Corey's original theoretical "contributions", such as, the idea of "exhaustion", can be easily attacked, and through them, the idea of a Socialist outcome.

LENINISM DOCTORED WITH LUXEMBURGISM

The idea of "exhaustion" is Mr. Corey's "addition" to Lenin. This idea resembles very closely certain features of Rosa Luxemburg's theory of imperialism. Mr. Corey has not developed her full theory; he "merely" adds certain features of it to Lenin. *The result is: Leninism with traces of Luxemburgism.* In other words, not Leninism. This will become clear through a brief survey of Luxemburg's theory, which was first formulated in her most important economic work, *The Accumulation of Capital*, published in 1913. In her attempt to refute the revisionists' assertion that capitalist development is possible without crises, Rosa Luxemburg set up a basically wrong theory of imperialism. "The accumulation of capital", she held, "requires for its existence and further development non-capitalist forms of production as its environment."* Consequently:

"Imperialism as a whole is nothing else but a *specific* method of accumulation. . . . Imperialism is the political expression of the process of capital accumulation in its competitive struggle for those remnants of the non-capitalist world milieu, against which no attachment has yet been levied.** . . . However, the *inner* economic driving forces of imperialism may be more exactly defined: This much at any rate is clear and generally known: its essence consists precisely in the extension of the domination of capitalism from the old capitalist countries to new territories, and in the economic and political competitive struggle among those countries for such territories."***

Luxemburg's theory of imperialism has been shown to be faulty by Lenin, Stalin, and the Communist International on the following main grounds: (1) Her contention that accumulation is possible *only* by the expansion of capitalism into non-capitalist surroundings runs counter to Marx' theory of capital accumulation and reproduction. Marx has proved that surplus value realizes itself (hence, that accumulation proceeds) through dealings between capitalists themselves. For the purpose of expanding production, capitalists buy from one another the commodities which embody the accumulated surplus value. In his analysis of the theoretical errors of the Populist economists in Russia, Lenin points out that "there is nothing

* "Accumulation of Capital," *Collected Works*, Vol. VI, Berlin, 1923, p. 289 (German Edition).

** *Ibid.*, p. 361.

*** *Ibid.*, p. 398.

more nonsensical than to try to deduce from these parts of *Capital* that Marx did not admit of the possibility of the realization of surplus value within capitalist society". (*Collected Works*, Vol. III, p. 32, Russian edition). (2) Luxemburg sees the *essence* of imperialism as the expansion of industrial capital into non-capitalist spheres. In this, she comes close to Kautsky's definition of imperialism as the policy of industrial capital towards non-industrial and agrarian countries. Lenin and Stalin have shown the fallacy of such conceptions. They have shown that the most characteristic feature of imperialism is the domination of *finance* capital (the merger of industrial capital with bank capital), and that finance capital's policy of conquest is directed against all countries, industrial as well as agrarian. (3) According to Luxemburg's theory of accumulation, imperialism is a necessary attribute of capitalism in all its stages. Lenin has shown that imperialism is a *special stage* in the development of capitalism, the stage of monopoly capital. (4) According to Luxemburg, capitalism is preparing its own downfall by the "exhaustion" of the non-capitalist spheres of exploitation (compare Mr. Corey's "long-time factors of expansion"). True, Luxemburg also counted on the "rebellion of the international proletariat". But in her theory the rebellion of the proletariat occurs as a thing apart from the economic factors of capitalist development; it does not follow from the sharpening of the contradictions of capitalism in the imperialist stage. The result is an approximation to the Menshevik position of the automatic collapse of capitalism, a "semi-Menshevik theory of imperialism" (Stalin).

IMPERIALISM—"INNER" AND "OUTER"

From this, it will become clear at what point of the discussion Mr. Corey has introduced definite traces of Luxemburg's theory of imperialism. His thesis of the "exhaustion" of the long-time factors of expansion is explicable only in terms of Luxemburg's exhaustion of the non-capitalist spheres. This is basic. From this follows Mr. Corey's conception of "inner" and "outer" imperialism. He says that the expansion of the capitalist mode of production to the Western regions of the United States "may be conveniently described as *an inner imperialism*" (p. 421), and that by 1910 "a real outer imperialism was definitely and aggressively in operation" in the United States (p. 422). Why does Mr. Corey consider the conquest of the West an inner imperialism? Because the "economics" of this conquest "resembled those of the export of capital" (p. 421). Does not this "resemble" Luxemburg's theory that imperialism is nothing else but "a specific method of accumulation" which realizes itself "in the extension of the domination of capitalism from the old

capitalist countries to new territories"? It bears, in fact, a close resemblance. The very *differentiation* of imperialism into inner and outer is possible only from Luxemburg's premise. Such a differentiation effaces all the distinctive features of imperialism as a special epoch, as the highest and last stage of capitalism.

Mr. Corey resorts to this wrong conception of an inner imperialism in order to explain a certain peculiarity of American imperialism. "American imperialism lagged behind the European, although concentration, combination and finance capital were on the whole more highly developed than in Europe". Mr. Corey does not state clearly in what *particular respect* American imperialism lagged behind the European, but we assume that he had in mind the *disparity* between the high development of monopoly capital in the United States and the relatively few American colonial possessions. He wishes to explain this disparity by an "inner imperialism" (the frontier); but, in so doing, he *explains away* imperialism itself, a la Luxemburg.

The disparity was explained by Lenin long ago as due to the working out of the law of *uneven development of capitalism*. American capitalism is one of the youngest among the big imperialist Powers. Its tremendous and rapid forward leap to a first-rate position in the capitalist world can be understood only in connection with the equally rapid and catastrophic backward slide of British imperialism. These two events are conditioned by uneven development, which becomes especially acute in the imperialist era—the era of monopoly capital. It is due to this law that new imperialist Powers, such as the United States, are able to develop the technique of production with unheard-of rapidity, to cheapen their products, and to conquer markets at the expense of older imperialist Powers. Imperialism, however, needs markets not merely for its goods. It seeks markets primarily for the export of capital; it seeks sources of raw material; it seeks exclusive, monopolistic exploitation. But imperialism is that stage of capitalism in which the division of the world into spheres of exploitation has come to an end. And that was precisely the situation confronting American capitalism in the '90's when it was rapidly maturing into the imperialist stage. It was from then on that American imperialism has waged a struggle for the acquisition of colonies. Lenin considered the Spanish-American War of 1898 (which, by the way, netted American imperialism a considerable colonial empire and great strategic outposts for conquests in the Caribbean, South America, and the Far East) as one of the chief milestones of the imperialist era.

This event apparently means little to Mr. Corey, who insists that a "real outer imperialism" began only with 1910, even though

this contention does violence to historic facts. The reason is to be found in his theory that the "exhaustion" of the "inner long-time factors of expansion" was approaching by 1910 and that this "exhaustion" brought about "outer imperialism". The role of the frontier in the development of American capitalism is not explained but is obscured by the conception of "inner" imperialism. The frontier is correctly explained by what Lenin called the two distinct processes of capitalist development: "(1) the development of capitalism in an old settled country or part of the country; (2) the development of capitalism on 'new land'. The first process expresses the further development of already formed capitalist relations; the second expresses the formation of new capitalist relations on new territory. The first process signifies the development of capitalism in depth, the second—in width" (*Collected Works*, Vol. III, p. 438, Russian edition). Mr. Corey himself makes use of this conception (extensive and intensive development of capitalism) in certain parts of his book when discussing the peculiarities of American capitalism. But he fails to make his theoretical ends meet because of his attempt to add to Lenin admixtures of Luxemburg.

A BASIC ERROR IN METHODOLOGY

Mr. Corey makes a serious methodological error. He ignores two basic principles of dialectics in discussing the factors of economic expansion: (1) the concrete historical nature of the subject, and (2) its dialectical contradictions. Had he applied the first principle, he would have discovered that the factors of economic expansion do not consist in some fixed and predetermined quantity which capitalism "exhausts" in the course of its development, but that they are created by capitalism *itself* in the *course* of its development; and had he applied the second principle, he would have found that, due to its contradictions, capitalism comes periodically into violent collision with factors of economic expansion which it itself creates, that this collision constitutes the fundamental contradiction of capitalism—the contradiction between the productive forces and the production relations. Under imperialism, as defined by Lenin, the contradiction between capitalism and the factors of economic expansion created by itself becomes especially acute.

The substitution of a mechanistic method for dialectics has led Mr. Corey to give a non-concrete, non-historical and, hence, untrue picture of the latest phase of imperialism, dating from the first world imperialist war, which the Communist International has characterized as the *general crisis of capitalism*. Mr. Corey, too, speaks of the "crisis of the system". But with him this crisis is merely a *quantitative* continuation of the process of capitalist decay and decline

which is a general feature of imperialism, the last stage of capitalism. We say this, notwithstanding the several expressions in Mr. Corey's book which might give a contrary impression. Mr. Corey tries to explain the depth and duration of "this depression (and all the European post-war depressions)" as "determined by a qualitative difference of the utmost historical importance" (p. 460). And what is this difference? It is that "former depressions were an aspect of the youth and upswing of capitalism; depression now is an aspect of its old age and decline". The meaning of this is that pre-War depressions took place under the capitalism of free competition while the post-War depressions occur in the era of monopoly capitalism, of imperialism. That Mr. Corey attaches this meaning to his concept of "qualitative difference" is seen from the following: "The qualitative difference expresses itself in two major developments: 1. The cyclical factors of recovery . . . are now hampered by all the 'controls' of 'organized' or monopoly capitalism, intensifying the depth of depression and postponing recovery. 2. The non-cyclical factors of long-time economic expansion are measurably exhausted. . . ." Clearly, Mr. Corey seeks to establish the qualitative difference between pre- and post-War capitalism through the conception that the latter, in distinction to the former, is imperialism. This view involves Mr. Corey in two major errors: he makes pre-War capitalism essentially non-imperialist (on what grounds, then, does he declare the first World War—an *imperialist* war?); and he treats as non-existent (in that he leaves undifferentiated) the general crisis of capitalism ushered in by the first World War and the proletarian revolution in Russia.

THE GENERAL CRISIS—A NEW PHASE OF IMPERIALISM

Mr. Corey has taken from Stalin (Report to the 16th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) the very important idea that the world economic crisis, which has passed into a "special kind" of depression, is made especially painful and protracted by the efforts of the trusts to retain high monopoly prices. Why has not Mr. Corey taken more from the same source—the main idea? Comrade Stalin further pointed out in his report that the peculiarities of the world economic crisis are also determined by the chronic agricultural crisis and by "the *general crisis* of capitalism, which began during the period of the imperialist war, undermining the foundations of capitalism and facilitating the oncoming of the economic crisis". To ignore the fact that, with the first world imperialist war, imperialism entered a *new phase*, the phase of the general crisis of capitalism, can only result in an abstract and scarcely convincing analysis of the decline of American capitalism. Such an analysis cannot be Marxian.

It leads Mr. Corey to declare that in Europe a general *economic* crisis prevailed in the post-War period. He says: "The decline of capitalism was evident in Europe even before the crisis and depression which set in after 1929. A general economic crisis prevailed and cyclical prosperity was on a lower level than pre-War, while capitalism was crushed in the Soviet Union." But this is manifestly incorrect. European and American capitalism, that is, world capitalism, has, since the War, passed through three definite periods in which there were phases of *economic upswing* as well as depression. One of the features of the first years of the present, third, period was that capitalist economy went beyond the pre-War level, developing most rapidly the technique of mass production. This was true, not alone of American, but of world capitalism as a whole. And it was precisely the *contradictions* of this upswing, *in the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism*, that undermined the relative stabilization of capitalism (the second post-War period), leading to the end of this stabilization and to the close approach of a new cycle of wars and revolutions. These processes, stabilization and its termination, were highly uneven in the various capitalist countries (for example, Germany and the United States), demonstrating the correctness of the theory of the "weakest link" in imperialism, fully developed by Stalin. It is only by the law of uneven development and the theory of the "weakest link" that one can correctly explain the differences and peculiarities in post-War American, as compared with European, capitalism.

Mr. Corey sees "*the feature of post-War developments in the United States*" in "*the final transformation of competitive capitalism into monopoly capitalism and of monopoly capitalism into imperialism*" (p. 371). This is confusion, not scientific explanation. What Mr. Corey may have had in mind, seeking the main feature of post-War development in the United States, is *the shift of the economic center of gravity to the United States*. But what explains this shift? Briefly, the law of uneven development as it operates in the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism. Besides, what does Mr. Corey mean by the "transformation" of monopoly capitalism into imperialism? Proceeding from Lenin's theory of imperialism, we assert that monopoly capitalism *is* imperialism, is its *essence*. Mr. Corey would seem to try to invalidate this Leninist idea. He would seem to suggest that there may be monopoly capitalism *without* imperialism.

This is economically and historically incorrect. But it also slides down dangerously near the Kautskyan conception of imperialism as a *policy* that the capitalists may or may not adopt. That Mr. Corey is actually sliding down to this conception can be seen

from the following: "*To avoid the change, which can be nothing else than socialism, monopoly capitalism turns to the export of capital and imperialism*" (p. 434). In other words, monopoly capital *selects the road of imperialism* (a policy) in order to prevent Socialism. Peculiarly, Mr. Corey is moved to make such a declaration in an effort *to refute* the idea that imperialism is a policy. What happens, however, is this: he refutes this fallacy in words but commits himself to it in deed. He becomes entangled, fails to make his ends meet, in the impossible attempt to build up his "own" theory of imperialism by adding traces of Luxemburg to Lenin.

THE ROLE OF THE SOVIET UNION IN THE DECLINE OF WORLD CAPITALISM

The most glaring result of Mr. Corey's eclectic combinations in conjunction with his main methodological errors discussed above, is the total failure to evaluate the role of the Socialist system of the Soviet Union in the decline of American, and of world, capitalism. This failure is astounding on the face of it. How can any one, let alone a Marxist, discuss seriously the decline of American capitalism without evaluating the struggle between the *two worlds*, the dying capitalism and the center of a new world system, the Socialist system of the Soviet Union? Not even bourgeois economists who are serious students of world affairs, not even serious capitalist politicians, fail to discuss the role of the Soviet Union in the fortunes of capitalist world economy. But Mr. Corey manages not to notice the "elephant". Is this an accident? Certainly, Mr. Corey is familiar with the fact that Lenin, Stalin, and the whole Communist International consider the contradictions and antagonisms between the two worlds the *central* antagonisms of the present epoch, the most potent single factor undermining capitalism and accelerating its decline. Mr. Corey undertakes to discuss the decline of American capitalism without taking account of this central contradiction, the struggle between the two worlds. Why? Has not the Soviet Union demonstrated that it is the center of a new world system, the system of Socialism? Has it not been demonstrated, theoretically and in practice, that all world contradictions of today revolve around the contradiction between the growing Socialist world and the dying capitalist world? Is it not clear now, more than ever, due primarily to its Socialist achievements, that the Soviet Union is the greatest revolutionizing factor?

We know of the existence of a contrary "theory". It is that the Soviet Union is economically becoming an "appendix" to the capitalist system, not a counter force, and that politically it has "compromised" the world revolution. This is the counter-revolutionary theory of

Trotsky. We want to assume that Mr. Corey does not share this "theory". But why, then, this surprising failure to see as a factor in the decline of American capitalism the struggle between the two worlds? It is this failure that helps us also to understand why Mr. Corey was able to "overlook" the general crisis of capitalism, its concrete historic characteristics, its phases and contradictions. It also helps to explain some of Mr. Corey's original "additions" to Lenin on the theory of the proletarian revolution.

CERTAIN THEORIES OF REVOLUTION

"THE GENERAL UNITY OF REVOLUTIONS"

Having excluded from consideration the general crisis of capitalism and its three periods—the only basis from which the maturing of the revolutionary crisis can be understood—Mr. Corey sets up the conception of "long- and short-time factors of revolution", evidently as correlatives of his long- and short-time factors of economic expansion. These factors of revolution are integrated into something which has all the appearances of a universal theory of revolutions, something quite akin to the "natural history" of revolutions against which he sets out to polemize. As is to be expected of such a non-Marxian (non-historic, non-concrete) method, the resulting universal theory of revolutions is devoid of all life and dialectical meaning. For, to set up a thesis of "the general unity of revolutions", to say that—"Unity is in the purpose, the conquest of political power and the consolidation of the new order; diversity is in the means adopted to accomplish the purpose and in the forms of the new order" (p. 544)—to say this, and to assume that these words build up a living theory of revolutions, or help in any way toward understanding the present period of a new cycle of wars and revolutions, is to make a joke of the whole affair.

Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin have built up the theory of the *proletarian* revolution. Because they used the method of dialectical materialism, their theory of the proletarian revolution is historical and concrete. Marxism-Leninism therefore distinguishes various types of revolutions *arising in the present epoch*. According to the Program of the Communist International, the world proletarian revolution is being made up of processes that are different both in kind and in point of time. These are: proletarian revolutions, revolutions of the bourgeois-democratic type growing over into proletarian revolutions, wars of national liberation, and colonial revolutions. "Only *in the last analysis* does the revolutionary process bring to the *world dictatorship of the proletariat*" (Program of the Communist International). This gives a true picture of the living dialectical processes

of the proletarian revolution. Of what value, then, is Mr. Corey's "general unity" theory of revolution?

ABSTRACT "ACCELERATION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS"

Let us, however, examine this theory a little further. We read: "One of the most important aspects of the diversity of revolutions is *an acceleration of the revolutionary process*, progressively shortening the intervals between one revolution and another" (p. 545). Despite the abstractness of the italicized phrase, it is possible to see that what Mr. Corey had in mind was the process of development from a bourgeois-democratic revolution to the Socialist. Marx and Lenin, followed by Stalin, had analyzed this process as *a growing over* of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the Socialist. Stalin has shown that Leninism views the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the Socialist revolution in the process of growing over "as two links of one chain". The class factor that unites the two links of the revolution is the *hegemony of the proletariat*; the class factor that differentiates them is the character of the *allies* of the proletariat. In the bourgeois-democratic revolution the proletariat has as its allies all the democratic, *anti-feudal* classes and groups of the population, chiefly the peasantry, the whole of it practically; in the Socialist revolution the proletariat has as its allies all the *anti-capitalist* classes and groups, chiefly the toiling peasantry, excluding the "kulaks", winning over the small, and sections of the middle, peasants, and neutralizing the rest. The rapidity of the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the Socialist is determined in the present epoch, given a certain degree of industrial development in the country, by the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution, by the organized strength of the proletariat and the influence of its Communist Party. In the colonial revolutions (bourgeois-democratic) the anti-imperialist factor assumes a first-rate importance.

Mr. Corey evidently is not satisfied with the adequacy of the Leninist theory of the "growing over". He prefers instead the abstract "acceleration of the revolutionary process" which tends to *gloss over* the role of the hegemony of the proletariat and the *difference* in the composition of its allies in the two links of the revolutionary process. For the hegemony of the proletariat and the leading role of the Communist Party, Mr. Corey substitutes an abstract entity which he calls "an increasingly purposive character in revolution involving a larger awareness of purposes and means" (p. 545). On the decisive question of the allies of the proletariat, he has, in this connection, nothing to say. Why? Certainly he knows of the existence of an anti-Leninist theory of revolution, Trotsky's theory

of "permanent revolution". This theory is distinguished, among other things, by the fact that it discards the peasantry as an ally of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Does Mr. Corey share these views?

Following out his formulation of "the acceleration of the revolutionary process", Mr. Corey develops some peculiar ideas about the objective and subjective prerequisites of the revolution. Again the method is abstract, non-historic and mechanistic. Instead of examining the present phase of the general crisis of capitalism—the new cycle of wars and revolutions—Mr. Corey seeks the *general* objective factors that "accelerate the revolutionary process". This results in a superficial discussion of the general tempo of revolutionary development, and not in a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the maturing of the objective prerequisites of the revolution in the present historical moment. Nor do we get from such a discussion a scientific definition of the objective factors.

LENIN'S DEFINITION OF A REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION

In the Leninist theory of the proletarian revolution we have a precise definition of a revolutionary situation and its objective and subjective prerequisites—a definition that rests on the Leninist theory of imperialism as the epoch of the proletarian revolution.

Lenin lists the following three factors as the objective prerequisites of a revolutionary situation: (1) The ruling classes can no longer rule as of old, a crisis on top; an unwillingness of the masses to live as of old. (2) An extraordinary sharpening of the misery and oppression under which the masses live. (3) A considerable heightening of the activity of the masses forced by these conditions to independent historical action. Wherever all these factors, in totality, exist, there we have a revolutionary situation; the maturing of these factors signifies the maturing of a revolutionary situation.

But not every revolutionary situation results in revolution. For a revolution, the maturity of a definitive subjective factor is necessary. This is "the ability of the revolutionary *class* to engage in revolutionary mass actions of sufficient *strength* to break . . . the old government, which will never 'fall', not even in the epoch of crises, if it is not 'dropped'" (Lenin, *The Collapse of the Second International*).

What does Mr. Corey give us on the question of the subjective factor of the revolution? "Subjectively, the acceleration of the revolutionary process is determined by the constantly more conscious and purposive factors in revolution" (p. 547). This is pale, indeed. And Mr. Corey does not help matters when he adds emphatically that "awareness becomes itself a social force". This only clothes in

vague phraseology Marx' very clear and historic idea that theory becomes a material force when it seizes hold of the masses. The role of the revolutionary *class* is made vague in Mr. Corey's definition.

Wherein lies Mr. Corey's methodological error in this matter? It lies in the same sphere in which his errors on the other questions are to be found. He sees the proletarian revolution as a process; but he views it mechanistically, not dialectically. Here, for example are the five "immediate" (!) factors of the revolutionary crisis, as Mr. Corey sees them: (1) Capitalist decline and decay—imperialism. (2) The upper bourgeoisie "clings to power and attempts to thrust the burden of decline upon the workers. . . . Repressive measures are multiplied and *imperialism is intensified* as a way out of the crisis" (??). (3) The farmers suffer under the agricultural crisis "and must ally themselves" with some more powerful class. (4) Similarly with the middle class, the petty bourgeoisie. (5) The proletarians "emerge as a class conscious of itself and waging war upon capitalism, its awareness of purpose and means constantly broadening and deepening until it engages in the revolutionary struggle for power under Communist leadership" (pp. 548-49).

Will anyone recognize in the above the living process of the *present* maturing of the world revolutionary crisis? Of course not. The description of the revolutionary processes taking place in the proletariat, as given in point 5, would fit the pre-imperialist era as lief as the present, which means that it fits neither. Mr. Corey fails to see that in the imperialist era the question of the proletarian revolution is placed on the order of the day as a task of direct preparation for the struggle for power, which was not the case in the pre-imperialist era. Consequently, he treats the maturing of the prerequisites of a revolutionary situation as a continuous, uninterrupted process (development along a straight line) of capitalist development, instead of giving a complete, all-sided picture of the turns and twists of the maturing revolutionary crisis as it actually takes place in the present phase of the general crisis of capitalism.

THE INEVITABILITY OF SOCIALISM

SOCIALISM "IN THE LONG RUN"

These fundamental errors lead the author inevitably to set up false positions on the most vital principles involved in the revolutionary program of the working class—on the attainment of Socialism, on the Party, on class alliances, on the national question, on democracy, on fascism.

How does Mr. Corey approach the question of the social order

which, according to his thesis, must supplant capitalism? He declares Socialism to be inevitable. He makes clear, too, that he dissociates himself from those who tend to give a fatalistic and automatic meaning to the concept of the inevitability of Socialism. He stresses the subjective role of the revolutionary class and the leadership of the party. But, in bidding us guard against the reformist theory of "growth into Socialism", he qualifies his acceptance of the inevitability of Socialism by counterposing inevitability "in the long run" against inevitability "in the short run":

"Socialism is inevitable in the long run; humanity will not forever endure the oppression and decay of capitalist decline, and socialism is the only alternative. But socialism is *not* inevitable in the *short run*, and this is decisive in the practical revolutionary politics and struggles of the workers."

In this he adduces for his support a statement from Lenin:

"Capitalism could (and very rightly) have been described as 'historically worn out' many decades ago, but this in no way removes the necessity of a very long and very hard struggle against capitalism at the present day. . . . The scale of the world's history is not reckoned by decades. Ten or twenty years sooner or later—from the point of view of the world-historical scale—makes no difference; from the point of view of world history it is a trifle, which cannot be even approximately reckoned. But this is just why it is a crying theoretical mistake in questions of practical politics to refer to the world-historical scale."

Since the author bases himself on Lenin for his thesis of Socialism "in the long run", it is necessary, in examining the thesis, to see with what validity he does so.

THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION—"AN URGENT PROBLEM
OF THE DAY" (LENIN)

The quotation is taken from "*Left*"-Communism: *An Infantile Disorder*, from the section dealing with the question of participating in bourgeois parliaments. Lenin polemizes against the German and Dutch "Left" Communists, who hold to the idea that "parliamentarism is historically and politically worn out". He warns against the infantile notion that because parliament has, in the historical sense, become worn out, it can, therefore, no longer serve the proletariat as an instrument of struggle. He points out further in the chapter that the Russian proletariat participated in bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism a few weeks before the victorious October Revolution—and even after the proletarian victory—in this way facilitating the political wearing out of bourgeois parliamentarism.

Lenin, in speaking here of parliamentarism, has in mind the

necessity of combining legal with illegal work *precisely because* the world proletariat must prepare *practically* for the Revolution. In the same chapter he declares:

"In all civilized and advanced countries, the time is coming speedily when such unification becomes more and more, and, to an extent, has already become, obligatory for the party of the revolutionary proletariat. It is necessitated by the development and approach of the civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, by the furious persecution of Communists, by republican and all bourgeois governments generally, breaking the law in innumerable ways (the American example alone is invaluable)."

One needs no clearer refutation of attempts such as Mr. Corey's to interpret Lenin's criticism of "Leftism" to mean Socialism "in the long run" than the following statement from Lenin's Preface to his *State and Revolution*, written three years before "*Left-Communism*":

"The question of the relation of a proletarian Socialist revolution to the state acquires, therefore, not only a practical political importance, but the importance of an *urgent problem of the day*, the problem of elucidating to the masses what they will have to do for their liberation from the yoke of capitalism *in the very near future*." (Emphasis ours.)

Quite a far cry from Mr. Corey's platonic "humanity will not forever endure . . . "!

What is involved here is the fundamental understanding of the Leninist characterization of the present stage of capitalism as the epoch of proletarian revolution—an understanding which Mr. Corey does not evince because of the fallacies already noted in his work. Lenin's restoration and further development of revolutionary Marxism consisted precisely in that his analysis of the laws of imperialism demonstrated this epoch to be the last stage of capitalism *and the eve of proletarian revolutions*, in that he placed the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat on the order of the day. It is on this issue that Social-Democracy, with its variant theories of Socialism "in the long run", surrendered to the bourgeoisie, substituting class collaboration for class struggle.

This in no way means that we should proceed without realization of the efforts that capitalism will continue to make to maintain itself in power by the most desperate onslaughts upon the living conditions and the elementary rights of the toiling masses, by turning with intensified energies to the preparation of the new imperialist war and the attack upon the Soviet Union. On the contrary, we must recognize that these very onslaughts, developing as they do, revolutionary resistance and unity in the working class, manifest the supreme

necessity for developing the subjective factors of the revolution. Now, more than ever, must we prepare the proletariat for assuming the tasks which the already existing objective preconditions for the revolution place upon it. But the efficacy of this preparation—the capacity to develop the tempo of the struggle, to develop the higher forms of mass struggle, to advance the requisite revolutionary slogans—depends directly upon our ability to see, on the basis of the Leninist law of uneven economic and political development under imperialism, the rapid maturing of the objective factors of the revolutionary crisis, arising from the accentuation of the general crisis of capitalism. In this sense, the E.C.C.I. at its Thirteenth Plenum declared to the world proletariat that we are closely approaching a new cycle of wars and revolutions; in this sense the chief slogan of the Comintern today is: Soviet Power!

ACCELERATED UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM—
THE DECISIVE FEATURE OF THE IMPERIALIST ERA

What is the basic error that prevents the author from grasping the Leninist teaching on the march of the Revolution? Mr. Corey endeavors to base himself on Lenin's analysis of imperialism; but he loses sight of the decisive feature of imperialism, without which the dynamics of the final stage of capitalism cannot be conceived: namely, the pronouncedly uneven economic and political development of capitalism in the imperialist epoch. This is one of the fundamental principles which differentiate Leninism from the various Social-Democratic "theories" of imperialism. True, we find references in the book to uneven development; but these references are to the stage of capitalism when the process consisted of an effort at "levelling up"; for, uneven development is characteristic of capitalism in all its phases. But to pause at such a concept, that is, not to perceive the specific laws of motion operating in the accelerated uneven development during the monopoly-capitalist stage, is to fall into a mechanistic conception of this principle, a conception which denies Lenin's further development and concretization of the Marxian principle of the uneven development of capitalism—the conception held by Trotzkyism.

Because he fails to see the heightened tempo and the increased complexity of the uneven development under imperialism, Mr. Corey does not sense the catastrophic ominousness of this process; does not anticipate the imminent armed clashes between classes and between Powers which must weaken imperialism, and as a result of which, in the words of Stalin, "the world front of imperialism becomes easily vulnerable and can be broken through in some countries".

For the same reason, when we turn to the discussion of the cor-

relation of forces in the class struggle—classes, parties, alliances, agencies—*The Decline of American Capitalism* reveals on this question a lack of clarity that, notwithstanding the author's plea for the Socialist solution of the capitalist crisis, fails to furnish a basis for the revolutionary way out.

ON THE DIALECTICS OF INCREASING MISERY

It cannot be disputed that the Marxist-Leninist teaching on the class struggle and revolution is inextricably connected with the conception of the increasing misery of the working class in the process of capitalist accumulation. The denial or acceptance of this leading conception determines which path the working class shall follow—the way of capitulation to the bourgeoisie, or the road of proletarian revolution. We find, therefore, that this question was central in the struggle waged by revolutionary Marxism against both Bernstein's revisionist rejection and Kautsky's "orthodox defense" of Marxian fundamentals.

Mr. Corey would doubtless protest against the charge that he has either not understood or not accepted Marx' theory of increasing misery. Indeed, he might say: Do I not defend this teaching of Marx and say of it that it was "abandoned by his reformist 'disciples' and ridiculed by the bourgeois economists" (p. 486)? But let us see the construction that Mr. Corey puts on this teaching. The self-same sentence from which we have just quoted concludes with the words:

"[The law of increasing misery] is a dialectical, not an absolute tendency: it does not move in a straight line, but contradictorily and unevenly."

In the first place, we find here the concepts *dialectical* and *absolute* set in opposition to each other, in a manner as to exclude the absolute from the dialectic process* and to conceive increasing misery solely as a relative movement, *a la* Kautsky. It may perhaps be argued that the ensuing words "it does not move in a straight line, but contradictorily and unevenly" render the antithetical employment of the word *dialectical* immune from such an interpretation, in the sense that the term *absolute* as here used implies the metaphysical absolute. The validity of such a contention remains to be proved by further examination of Mr. Corey's treatment of the principle under discussion.

* The absolute is not excluded from the dialectic process but is inherent in that process. Marx, the formulator of materialist dialectics, sums up his analysis of the nature of capitalist accumulation in the words: "*This is the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation.*"

Mr. Corey builds his thesis of increasing misery on the division of the development of capitalist society into three epochs—the industrial revolution, the epoch of the upswing of capitalism, and the stage of capitalist decline, attempting to trace the Marxian law of increasing misery through each of these periods by analyzing the changing relationship of labor's productivity to production. He comes to the following conclusion: Misery grows with the lower levels of employment attending the early stage of the present system and diminishes as production rises, until, when capitalism is in its ascendant period, increasing misery becomes checked, only to resume its tendency, now in full force, when capitalism enters its decline.

Thus, he declares:

"The industrial revolution was accompanied by increasing misery for the workers because the productivity of labor rose more than production. Displacement of labor was absolute, hours rose while wages fell, and a surplus population was created."

But, he argues:

"In the epoch of the upswing of capitalism the tendency toward increasing misery was checked because production rose more than the productivity of labor. Displacement of labor was primarily relative, wages rose while working hours fell, and some of the worst industrial abuses were wiped out. An offset, however, was the growing surplus population and increasing misery in countries being industrialized and in colonial lands.

"The tendency toward increasing misery resumes its full force in the epoch of capitalist decline, because expansion is limited and the productivity of labor moves upward while production moves downward. Displacement of labor is now absolute. Disemployment and the surplus population grow. Wages and standards of living fall. Starvation mounts in the midst of abundance . . ." (p. 486).

In fine, we have here the theory that the law of increasing misery is valid for capitalism at its initial and declining stages, but tends to become inoperative, in fact is checked, when capitalism is at the height of its development and its accumulation progresses apace.

Mr. Corey has here fallen into the error of failing to consider production in the light of the constant reproduction of the capital-relation. He sees the phenomenon of rising wages as denoting for the proletariat purely individual consumption, that is, the increase of the workers' means of subsistence for their own sake and not for their reconversion into labor power for renewed exploitation. In other words, he does not see the rise of wages as a factor in production, in increasing the source of profit for the capitalist; he does not see individual consumption of the worker as wage-slave who consumes productively, *i.e.*, by reproducing his condition as an appendage of capital; he sees the higher wage level only as improved means of

livelihood for the workers' own enhancement. But, as Marx points out:

"The fact that the laborer consumes his means of subsistence for his own purposes, and not to please the capitalist, has no bearing on the matter. The consumption of food by a beast of burden is none the less a necessary factor in the process of production because the beast enjoys what he eats. The maintenance and reproduction of the working class is, and must ever be, a necessary condition of the reproduction of capital." (*Capital*, Vol. I, p. 627.)

Once the rise in the subsistence level of the working class ceases to be considered an independent factor but is beheld in its subjection to the process of capitalist accumulation, it becomes clear that, with the constantly heightened organic composition of capital, the extraction of relative surplus value intensifies the rate of exploitation, thus setting off the higher wage level with a greater intensity and productivity of labor. In this way, the worker is made to pay with increased expenditure of labor power for his higher plane of subsistence, at a rate that far outstrips the gains in the living conditions. Therein lies the source of his increasing misery. If the life of the worker is one long, drab monotone of toil; if he is machine-dominated and sapped of intellectual vitality; if his sense organs are impaired by the working conditions in the factory and his nerves shattered by the complexity and the tension of rationalization; if his productive age is shortened through the intensified rate of exploitation; if his life-span is cut off by unremitting speed-up—if "the instrument of labor strikes down the laborer"—these constitute but some of the forms of the over-compensation forced from him for the "higher" subsistence level.

It is the ruthless physical and mental degradation of the wage-slave in the course of the accumulation of capital that signifies the increasing misery of the working masses—a misery that grows absolutely as an objective process arising out of capitalist production itself. Herein lies the key to the understanding of Marx' words:

"In proportion as capital accumulates, the lot of the laborer, be his payment high or low, must grow worse." (*Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 708-9.)

We see that for Marx the law of increasing misery is distinct from the question of rising or falling wages.

What really is Mr. Corey's error? He falls into the confusion of seeing in the factors making for a rising standard of living, factors that check progressive misery. He confuses the law of increasing misery with the question of higher or lower wages. He believes he bases himself on Marx by saying: "Marx himself analyzed the opposing forces (among them the labor movement)"

(p. 486). But how does Marx conceive of these forces? Let us take his discussion (in *Value, Price, and Profit*) of working class organization as a counter-force to the encroachments of capital. Marx presents his conclusion, basing himself on his analysis of the heightened organic composition of capital:

"The general tendency of capitalist production is not to raise, but to sink the average standard of wages."

As an opposing factor to this tendency, he speaks of the resistance of the workers through their trade-union action. But does he see in this organized resistance, as Mr. Corey supposes, a factor that succeeds in checking increasing misery? Marx cannot mean this, since for him the struggle for raising the wage level is but the struggle against the forward pressure of capital to beat down the given value of labor power. He specifically states in regard to the trade unions that, although they are centers of resistance to the encroachment of capital, they fail to check these encroachments, since they limit themselves to an attack on the effects and not at the roots of the existing mode of production (which, as has been seen, maintains itself by subjecting the working masses to increasing misery).

But, asks Marx, does this mean that these centers of resistance are valueless to the proletariat? No, he answers; they are manifestations of the unceasing struggle of the proletarians against their status as wage-slaves, manifestations of the historic revolutionary character of the proletariat. If these struggles were not carried on, as Marx says, the wage-workers would become "degraded wretches past salvation". Yet, in itself, the purely trade-union level of the struggle is insufficient, in that it does not use its forces as "a lever for the final emancipation of the working class". (*Value, Price, and Profit.*)

Marx, therefore, states emphatically:

"The more or less favorable circumstances in which the wage-working class supports and multiplies itself, in no way alters the fundamental character of capitalist production." (*Capital*, Vol. I, p. 672.)

The fundamental character of capitalist production, involving as it does the general process of capitalist accumulation, brings about, as we have seen, the increasing misery of the working class. Or, as Marx put it:

"But just as little as better clothing, food and treatment, and a larger peculium, do away with the exploitation of the slave, so little do they set aside that of the wage-worker. A rise in the price of labor, as a consequence of accumulation of capital, only means,

in fact, that the length and weight of the golden chain the wage-worker has already forged for himself, allow of a relaxation of the tension of it." (*Capital*, Vol. I, p. 677.)

But—and this Mr. Corey forgets—the chain, regardless of its temporary relaxation of tension, is in no way lessened either in length or in weight.

Yet, the argument may be advanced (and Mr. Corey's thesis advances it): if, as Marx holds, the general tendency of capitalist accumulation is to lower the average wage standard, how then shall we explain the apparent rise of that standard over a protracted period during the gigantic growth of capitalism in the second half of the past century?

The answer to this question, apart from the aforesaid over-compensation by increased expenditure of labor power, lies in the realization that the tendency to sink the average standard of wages took on during that period a temporary form in which extension was more pronounced than intensity—a modification that was soon to resolve itself, on the basis of that extension, into a higher intensity throughout the capitalist world. Marx himself offers the explanation in regard to a temporary improvement in the conditions of the laborers by stating that "the sphere of capital's exploitation and rule merely extends with its own dimensions and the number of its subjects". (*Capital*, Vol. I, p. 677.)

It must be remembered that two main causes contributing to the higher average wage level, particularly of the English working class, during the stated period were, on the one hand, the diminution of the reserve army through the emigrations to new lands, and, on the other, the plundering and terrific impoverishment of the colonial peoples, which brought into being the relatively favored labor aristocracy whose preferred status tended to be considered by bourgeois economists as the barometer of the entire working class level. Through the colonial policy of the capitalist class, however, the colonial peoples were now brought within the orbit of capitalism, and as such belonged to the toiling masses of the capitalist world. Their increased impoverishment more than represented the increased misery of the masses under capitalism. Likewise, Marx' teaching that the general tendency of capitalist production is to sink the average standard of wages, becomes even more evident when we view the capitalist system as a whole.

Mr. Corey mentions the increasing misery in the colonies and in countries being industrialized, but—only as an "offset" to the aforesaid "check" upon the increasing misery of the proletariat in the advanced capitalist countries (p. 486). In so reasoning, he gives evidence of not seeing, as Marx did, capitalist society as a whole,

but of looking primarily and chiefly from the viewpoint of the advanced capitalist countries, in which a section of the working class was relatively better paid through the robbery of the colonial masses. Nor does he see the growth of official pauperism or the miserably underpaid sections of the working class in these very capitalist countries. He sees, indeed, "the epoch of the upswing of capitalism" in the roseate hue of the contemporary bourgeois ideology, which was reflected on the growing labor aristocracy and had begun to penetrate the Socialist parties, anent a community of interests between the classes.

Mr. Corey cannot point to the declining stage of capitalism and say: But in the long run I come to the same conclusion; I recognize absolute increasing misery. For that which he claims to see as increasing misery is not what Marx meant by that term; it is not for Mr. Corey the *inalienable* absolute concomitant of capitalist exploitation. Mr. Corey fails to see that just as there is no check upon the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation, so is there no check upon the law of increasing misery, for the latter is a consequence of the former. Accumulation of capital is the independent factor that conditions the dependent factor, the accumulation of misery. Marx, indeed, speaks of certain modifications that his general law of capitalist accumulation on occasions, like all laws, tends to undergo, subject to various conditions. In this sense, too, we can speak of certain temporary modifications of the law of increasing misery. But does this mean that the law is checked? The very contrary is the case. The law asserts itself through these very modifications. Herein is involved the dialectic unity of the relative and the absolute. Hence it is impossible to speak of a check upon this law through an entire epoch. The modifications in the Marxian sense merely signify a necessary disturbance of the absolute law of capitalist accumulation which asserts itself precisely through this disturbance and which restores its equilibrium on a higher scale, that is, through greater accumulation. Corresponding to this restored equilibrium, the law of increasing misery also asserts itself on a higher scale—that is, catastrophically.

From Mr. Corey's "check" upon the Marxian law of absolute increasing misery in the ascendant stage of capitalist accumulation it would be impossible to understand the development of the class struggle through that entire period of capitalism. For it was in that very period that the proletariat in the process of its augmentation, engaged in forms of colossal struggle whose *material* basis was precisely the increasing misery of the masses. It was through those struggles that the working class was developing its mass trade unions and its independent political parties. The "check" seen by Mr.

Corey is the very "check" that earlier provided the basis, in fact, for the growing opportunist tendency which, basing itself on the interests of the labor aristocracy and the petty bourgeoisie, was soon to manifest itself in open revisionism and, eventually, in the capitulation of Social-Democracy to the revisionist position.

We have dealt at some length with this question because its significance lies in the fact that the recognition of the increasing misery of the masses under capitalism is bound up with the recognition of wage-labor as wage-slavery, with the understanding of the entire class antagonism which arises from the process of capitalist accumulation *in every one of its phases* and which leaves the working class no way out save the overthrow of the capitalist system.

In the light of this discussion we shall be the better enabled to approach the programmatic side of Mr. Corey's work.

PART II

THE DIALECTICS OF IMMEDIATE STRUGGLES AND THE SOCIALIST OBJECTIVE

THE HALL MARK OF SCIENTIFIC COMMUNISM

THE *Decline of American Capitalism* declares the Socialist society to be the sole, inevitable way out of the maze of capitalist contradictions.

In scientific Communism, the Socialist objective is, of course, conceivable only in its inalienable connection with the program for its achievement. In this, scientific Communism is unique, having definitively, through struggle, supplanted all Utopian varieties of Socialism and of Communism, each of which was, through historic necessity, devoid of a scientific program. The Communist ideal has always been an aspiration of the oppressed, whether slumbering or waking intermittently into thought and movement, ever since primitive Communism gave way to class society. But no oppressed class prior to the proletariat was able to emancipate itself from private property; the most that could be achieved on the basis of pre-capitalist modes of production was liberation from a specific form of class ownership. Neither chattel slave nor serf was able to emancipate himself, and with himself all society, from *classdom*. Communism becomes scientific when it becomes both possible and necessary, when it becomes programmatic. It became scientific in that historic stage which brought upon the social scene an exploited class that, operating through a socialized method of production, is therefore, historically, potent to liberate the productive forces from the constriction of private appropriation, to liberate all society with its own liberation.

Hence, Marx declared:

"No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces, for which there is room in it, have been developed; and new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society. Therefore, mankind always takes up only such problems as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions necessary for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation."*

* Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*.

Obviously, unless Communist theory can serve the proletariat as a guiding principle and as a weapon for the realization of the classless society, it cannot lay claim to being scientific. The question of realization, involving as it must, the relationship of end to means, becomes, therefore, the cardinal issue in the theory and practice of scientific Communism. Revolutionary Marxism has had to contend, on the one hand, with the revisionist theory advanced by Eduard Bernstein at the close of the past century, that the road is everything and the goal nothing*—a theory that robs the working class of its Socialist objective—and, on the other, with the theory of the type advanced by the DeLeonist Socialist Labor Party in this country, that the goal is everything and the road nothing.** Each of these views, whether openly revisionist or ultra-“revolutionary”, loses both road and objective by losing either. One would cause the working class to plod along through interminable reformism to no goal; the other, to stand transfixed by the “goal” but make no inroads towards it. Both would condemn the working class to perpetual subjection to capitalism. Marxism-Leninism is a realistic program of revolutionary class action, which guides the proletariat on the basis of its actual economic and political conditions along the road of unceasing day-to-day struggles developed from

* “. . . for me, that which is commonly called the ultimate aim of socialism is nothing; the movement, everything. . . .” (*The Assumptions of Socialism and the Tasks of Social-Democracy*. Stuttgart, 1899; p. 169, German Edition.)

** Impatient with the opportunism of Social-Democracy, DeLeon swung pendulum-like to the opportunist negation of the necessity of the proletarian struggle for immediate and partial demands, referring to all gains short of the revolution itself as “sops” which redound only to the benefit of the bourgeoisie. We cite here two passages which are characteristic of DeLeon’s utterances on the subject:

“The essence of this revolution—the overthrow of Wage Slavery—cannot be too forcefully held up. Nor can the point be too forcefully kept in evidence that, short of the abolition of Wage Slavery, all ‘improvements’ either accrue to Capitalism, or are the merest moonshine where they are not sidetracks.” (*Two Pages From Roman History*, p. 70.)

“The program of this revolution consists not in any one detail. It demands the unconditional surrender of the capitalist system and its system of wage slavery; the total extinction of class rule is its object. Nothing short of that—whether as a first, a temporary, or any other sort of step can at this late date receive recognition in the camp of the modern revolution.” (*Reform and Revolution*, p. 20.)

DeLeon is clearly guilty of mechanically contraposing partial gains and the ultimate objective as mutually exclusive—an either-or relationship of formal logic that has nothing in common with the dialectic unity of goal and means as conceived by Marxism-Leninism and formulated in its program. DeLeonism must inevitably resolve itself into shrivelled academicism and, hence, capitulation to the bourgeoisie.

lower to higher forms, to the climactic act of revolutionary overthrow. In the same manner as there can be no revolutionary overthrow without the objective of Socialism, so can there be no revolutionary overthrow save as the culminating act of continuous struggle, programmatically developed around partial, immediate demands. The revolutionary act, dialectically viewed, is the sudden leap from the cumulative struggles for partial, quantitative changes within the confines of capitalism to the struggle for the qualitatively differentiated change—the destruction of capitalism and the establishment of the political State of the proletariat. It is the day-to-day class struggle brought to its highest expression. As the Program of the Communist International declares:

“The Party must neither stand aloof from the daily needs and struggles of the working class nor confine its activities exclusively to them. The task of the Party is to utilize these minor every-day needs as a *starting point* from which to lead the working class to the *revolutionary struggle for power.*”

The thesis that Socialism is the only way out can therefore be valid only when it postulates the necessity of organizing the daily struggles of the working class for partial demands, for concrete issues. To what extent does Mr. Corey's thesis present this necessity?

ON COMPROMISES

The fact is, Mr. Corey consistently underemphasizes immediate demands in connection with the revolutionary program. His treatment of this vital topic is characterized by a vagueness tantamount to unreality. In no sense can his approach to the subject be considered a contribution to the question of developing the struggles of the American working class for partial demands. To quote one of his few utterances on the question:

“The complications of the proletarian revolution demand the creative initiative and awareness of Marxism. They demand a policy of inflexibility and no compromise on fundamental issues with the class enemy, of balancing immediates and ultimates, of an indissoluble unity of theory and practice. But at the same time the utmost flexibility is necessary in approaching the workers, of moving with them even when their actions are characterized by half measures and weaknesses, of compromising on issues which do not involve fundamental objectives, of maneuvering in the midst of complex class relations, of combining the immediate needs and struggles of the workers with their larger class interests and purposes.” (p. 510.)

The first point to be noticed is the abstractness with which the author reacts to the living actualities of revolutionary program, strategy, and tactics. This elegant “balancing of immediates and ultimates” leaves the masses none the wiser. It would seem that Mr.

Corey has forgotten that Lenin forged the Bolshevik Party into the invincible weapon of the World Revolution precisely through his *concreteness* in approaching the problems of immediate demands and revolution. Therein lay his strength as against the Mensheviks and the Centrists. For Lenin, the substitution of the abstract for the concrete was a stumbling block in the way of proletarian revolution.

But is it abstractness alone which invalidates Mr. Corey's presentation of the question? The cause goes much deeper, as is to be seen from certain theoretical formulations contained in his statement. For, note: What does it mean when Mr. Corey mechanically counterposes "inflexibility on fundamental issues" and "flexibility on issues which do not involve fundamental objectives"? That the connection between the two is not a mechanical "combining", seems to have escaped the attention of Mr. Corey. For he would otherwise know that for the Marxist-Leninist, every issue, however minor, involving immediate needs, is viewed as the starting point leading to the fundamental objective, hence as involving the latter; that every partial and immediate issue of the class struggle can and must be developed so that the workers realize the revolutionary implications of that issue. For the revolutionary leaders of the proletariat there is no compromise *per se* or flexibility *per se*. Compromises in specific instances are entered into due to the necessities of the objective situation which are independent of the will of parties or leaders. The revolutionary flexibility of leaders in regard to compromises reveals itself in wresting from the class enemy the *highest possible* concessions. Here the compromise is a revolutionary compromise. As such it constitutes part of the revolutionary education of the working class and therefore serves "the maturing of the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism" (Stalin).

We will take as an instance the position of the Communist Party on the Saar question. When the Party urged the Saar toilers to vote for the *status quo* in the plebiscite of January 13, it stated clearly that it did this in the interests of the revolutionary slogan it has consistently advanced—the slogan of a Red Saar District within a German Soviet State.

Yet, one might say, was not the advocacy of the *status quo* an abandonment of the objective, a Red Saar? Decidedly not. The Communist proposal to vote for the *status quo* was in no way to be construed as the recognition of the League of Nations regime. It had nothing in common with bourgeois separatism or with the pro-French imperialist policy of Social-Democracy. The Communist Party advocated the *status quo* at the given moment to prevent the nazification of the Saar and the strengthening of Hitler's base. The Communist Party declared that the defeat of Hitler in the Saar

would hasten the revolutionary unification of a liberated Saar with a free Germany. Far from being an abandonment of the objective, a Red Saar, the Communist proposal for the *status quo* represented, in the specific alignment of class forces which did not yet permit of engaging in the battle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, a powerful struggle for a partial demand directly linked in a revolutionary way with the objective, a Red Saar District within a German Soviet State. It was for this reason that the Communist Party characterized its stand in the plebiscite as a *revolutionary compromise*.

Because of his mechanical correlation of "immediates and ultimates", Mr. Corey fails to see the contrast and conflict between compromise which is revolutionary and that which is opportunist. He sees compromise only as an undifferentiated abstraction.

In exemplifying the uses to which flexibility can be put, Mr. Corey informs us that "the utmost flexibility is necessary in approaching the workers, of moving with them even when their actions are characterized by half measures and weaknesses".

What are these "half measures and weaknesses"—and to what are they due? From Mr. Corey's words, one can conclude only that there is something in the proletarian make-up that renders it prone, even if only at times, to weaknesses and half-measures. We shall have occasion to deal with this question at some length in a later section of our discussion. We raise it at this point merely in connection with the present issue.

The course of historical development imposes upon the working class frequent deterrents that turn the progress to its goal into zig-zag processes, sometimes even into temporary recessions. By its very nature, the class struggle confronts the proletariat with enemy class forces which cannot be defeated at one stroke. In addition to coping with the exploiters and their repressive State power, the working class, in its will to struggle, is hampered by the alien class influences in its own midst; by the labor aristocracy, now fast narrowing down, which offers itself as a base for enemy class operations; by the corrupted leaders who stand at the head of the reformist trade unions and the Social-Democratic parties; by the recurrent vacillations of its class allies who, failing at the beginning to realize the historic necessity for proletarian hegemony, struggle to steer the alliance by their petty-bourgeois world outlook.

Certainly, the charge of weakness cannot be levelled against workers when, pitted against great odds, they find themselves compelled in a strike to yield on certain of their demands or even to return without any gains. Nor is it the workers who are prone to half-measures when a Green or a Gorman calls off a strike at the very zenith of its power and submits the demands to "arbitration".

Nor, indeed, are the workers guilty of weaknesses when, in the struggle to win over or neutralize intermediary and transitional class forces, they are obliged to maneuver, temporize, and make concessions *precisely on account of the irresoluteness characterizing their prospective non-proletarian allies.*

An approach such as Mr. Corey has evidenced toward this question can hardly be expected to lead to a robust policy of working class action for the realization of immediate gains.

"REAL" UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Let us take but one important instance. The outstanding immediate demand which is agitating the American working class today is the question of unemployment and social insurance. It is an issue, not only of economic, but of high political importance, which hits at the very heart of the N.R.A. in that it demands the transference of the funds apportioned for subsidizing magnates and building war-craft to meet the needs of the exploited masses. It is the issue which is pre-eminently the basis for the unified action of the millions of unemployed and employed workers. It strikes at the capitalist way out of the crisis. Mr. Corey, in concluding his extensive survey of unemployment in the United States, after discussing critically the attitude of the government and the A. F. of L. Executive Council to the question of unemployment insurance, contents himself with a footnote, a last-minute reminder, so to speak, which presents his program of action for the American working class on this issue:

"Because of this, the working class must demand and struggle for *real* unemployment insurance covering all forms of unemployment and all workers. The 'white collar' workers, whom mechanization and economic decline thrust increasingly into the surplus population, must also demand real unemployment insurance, and become allies of the wage workers." (p. 259.)

The emphasis given to the word "real" will hardly suffice to convince any worker that there is anything real about Mr. Corey's program for unemployment insurance. For, if Mr. Corey were concerned with a program of action that prepares the American workers for seizing power through involving them in militant mass actions for the achievement of immediate demands, he could not have failed to point boldly to that project for unemployment and social insurance which alone is designed to benefit the working class and to put the burden of payment upon the employers and the government, the project sponsored by the Unemployment Councils and the Communist Party, and known popularly as the Workers' Bill (H.R. 2827).

The increasing popularity of this bill among the masses throughout the country; its endorsement by thousands of A. F. of L. locals, as well as by a number of State federations, in defiance of the reformist officialdom; its expression in slogan and legend in nationwide mass demonstrations—cannot have passed unnoticed by the author of so detailed a survey of current conditions as *The Decline of American Capitalism*. To what are we to charge the vagueness in this connection, vagueness which is manifestly more than mere omission, which is obviously evasion?

ALL QUIET ON THE UNITED FRONT

The profound silence on questions of the greatest import to the American working class today is even more marked when we find in the book no reference whatever to the United Front. This question is the burning issue for the working class throughout the world. The advent of fascism in Germany accompanied by the ignominious capitulation of the principal party of the Second International, the February rising in Austria and the collapse of Austrian Social-Democracy, fascist formations and the introduction of the emergency decree system in France, the drive of the Spanish bourgeoisie to fascize its rule in order to crush the rising revolutionary movement of the working class, the Mosley offensive and the introduction of the Sedition Bill in England, N.R.A. fascization in the United States, and the direct preparations for a new imperialist world war, have brought the imperative necessity for the United Front grimly before the working class. The unification of the proletariat is a prerequisite for the revolution. To win the majority of the working class to the banner of the revolution, means, however, to struggle to win them. Never, since the Comintern was founded as the world proletarian vanguard Party to achieve the unity of the labor movement on the basis of the class struggle after that basis had been surrendered by the Second International, have the prospects been more favorable for effecting that unity. The setback sustained by the working class of Germany and Austria has served as a warning to the workers in all capitalist countries that the struggle against fascism must be waged against every manifestation of the fascizing process. As against the constitutionalist illusions fostered by Social-Democracy, the masses are everywhere pressing forward for militant class struggle. Strikes, struggles for unemployment insurance, defense of democratic rights, solidarity actions in behalf of class-war victims, actions against fascism and imperialist war—this is the answer of the workers to the onslaughts of the exploiters and their governments. Without, however, developing, without struggling to develop, common

action around these concrete issues, we cannot speak of solidifying the working class for achieving immediate gains, for defeating the fascist advance, and for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism.

The successful formations of the United Front in France, Italy, Austria, the Saar, and Spain, achieved through the fighting initiative of the Communist Parties, have given further stimulus to the workers in all countries to enter into common action. But that there is opposition to fostering or even permitting the United Front is evidenced by the blocking policy of the Second International. The chairman of the Second International, Emil Vandervelde, made no secret of this in his recent article, "The International and the Communists",* wherein he declared:

"It must at any rate not be kept a secret that before the executive of the Socialist and Labor International things will doubtless not go so smoothly as in the National Council of the Socialist Party of France."

Vandervelde's foreknowledge was confirmed by the action of the Second International Executive at its Paris meeting on November 17. For, while the Executive, confronted with existing United Front formations in a number of countries, decided to lift the ban of March 18, 1933, its rejection of the Comintern offer "to organize immediate joint action in support of the fighting Spanish proletariat" represents the continued refusal of the Second International to build the international United Front against fascism.

The attitude of the Second International leadership is reflected in this country in that the top leadership of the Socialist Party has systematically ignored, rejected, or side-tracked every proposal for joint action submitted by the Communist Party, despite the wide response in the Socialist Party ranks and despite the fact that the present National Executive Committee was manifestly elected with a mandate from the membership to reverse the anti-United Front policy of the Old Guard. That the absence of a United Front facilitates the oncoming of fascism in this country and leaves the hard-won rights of the workers at the mercy of the N.R.A. administration and the various fascist offensives, cannot be denied in view of what we see developing here and in view of the experiences of the working class in Germany and Austria which was kept disunited by the Social-Democratic leaders. The question of achieving Socialism, of defeating the fascist advance by the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, is inextricably bound up with the question of the United Front.

We search in vain through the six hundred pages of Mr. Corey's

* *Le Peuple*, July 22, 1934.

work for a single utterance on this crucial question. What is the author's position on the United Front? What construction are we to put on his silence?

THE NATURE AND ROLE OF THE PROLETARIAN PARTY

"THE PARTY OF A NEW TYPE"

The key to these questions is furnished by the attitude of Mr. Corey to the Party of the working class.

Mr. Corey professes to base himself on the positions of Marxism-Leninism. He appeals frequently to the authority of Marx' and Lenin's writings on a number of subjects. He speaks favorably of Communism and, it would appear, aims to identify himself with the Party of Communism. He demonstrates the indispensability of the proletarian Party as the leader of the working class for the seizure of power. He speaks of "the necessity of an inflexibly revolutionary and disciplined party of the most conscious and militant workers, a communist party which, precisely because it is inflexibly agreed on fundamental purposes and means, can flexibly approach the complex conditions under which the proletariat operates, be both participant in and vanguard of the struggle of the masses, until they rally to the party's final revolutionary program and struggle for power". (p. 510.)

Isolated, this statement might, of course, give the Leninist stamp to the author's concept of the necessity of the Party. Final judgment, however, requires that we read this statement in connection with the more fully developed position on the Party as set forth in the book.

The Party of Bolshevism was characterized by its founder as "the Party of a new type which must by no means be *a la* Second International". Not a quantitative, but a qualitative difference separates the Leninist Party from Social-Democracy. The stage of declining capitalism, which is the era of proletarian revolution, makes necessary the existence of a vanguard proletarian Party that shall be prepared to lead the working class—allied with the toiling farmers and in hegemony over them—to the seizure of power; that shall sound the slogan demanded by the new historic era—Dictatorship of the Proletariat; that shall rouse and lead the masses, under the banner of proletarian internationalism, to struggle against imperialist militarism and that shall call upon the toilers in uniform and at home to transform imperialist war into revolution. The Second International was no such Party. It had served, in its progressive stage, to lay the basis for the expansion of the working class move-

ment; but its growth was attended by the steady submission of its official leadership to the pressure of imperialist ideology until, by 1914, unchecked opportunism had transformed it into a party of social-chauvinism, while the proletarian revolutionary elements within its ranks, enriched ideologically in the revolutionary struggle against the imperialist war, found their expression in Leninism, in the Party of Bolshevism, in the formation of the Third International. The Second International was not, in the true sense, a Party of the proletariat, but, in the words of Stalin, "a bloc of heterogeneous class interests". Neither was it a vanguard Party; for it blurred the line of demarcation between Party and class and left the Party doors open for the free influx of petty-bourgeois elements. Having steadily capitulated to the opportunism which found its social base in the labor aristocracy, the Second International, thanks to Kautskyan Centrism, finally succumbed to the revisionists, surrendering every position of revolutionary Marxism. For the historical-materialism of Marx and Engels, Social-Democracy now substituted mechanico-materialism, leading to the theory of the automatic collapse of capitalism; neo-Kantianism, denying the objective basis, hence the scientific nature, of the Marxian principles; and various brands of philosophical idealism, all negating the essentially revolutionary character of the proletariat as a productive force. For the law of absolute increasing misery, Social-Democracy substituted the concept of relative increase—the Kautskyan support of Bernstein's "democratization of capital" with its corollary, the "community of interests" between the classes. For the Marxian principle of revolutionary overthrow, Social-Democracy now substituted reformist parliamentarism, ministerialism, and the policy of "perfecting" capitalism toward the peaceful "growth into socialism". For the Marxian principle of shattering the bourgeois State and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Second International substituted the concept of the all-class or supra-class State, the acceptance of bourgeois democracy as democracy, and hence, the necessity, not to overthrow, but to safeguard and "improve" the present social order. For the international interests of the proletariat as against the national interests of the bourgeoisie, Social-Democracy substituted the petty-bourgeois outlook of "a stake in the land", in accordance with Bernstein's declaration that it was no longer true that the workers have no fatherland—thus paving the way for the Great Betrayal of 1914.

The Party of the proletariat no longer existed in Social-Democracy. The higher tasks imposed upon the working class in the imperialist era, demanded the "Party of a new type". Lenin, the most consistent Marxist since the death of Engels, founded that Party. He founded the Party of Bolshevism, not as an organization

in any way specifically Russian, but as the Russian nucleus of the world proletarian Party called forth in the era of world imperialism. Lenin declared of Bolshevism that it "has become *world-Bolshevism*, it has produced an idea, a theory, a program and tactics, which practically and concretely differ from those of social-chauvinism and social-pacifism. Bolshevism has vanquished the old, decayed International of the Scheidemanns and Kautskys, the Renaudels and Longuets, the Hendersons and MacDonalds. . . ." *

Is this the Party that Mr. Corey advocates?

THE PROLETARIAN PARTY IS MONOLITHIC AND UNIQUE

In treating of the suppression of working class democratic rights and organizations in his chapter, "The Crisis of the American Dream", he declares as follows:

"State capitalism increasingly restricts the democratic rights of the workers: it 'regulates' unions and 'arbitrates' strikes, moving toward their abolition, and invigorates the persecution of *revolutionary parties* where it does not drive them underground." (p. 522—italics ours.)

Again, in discussing the struggle for power in the same chapter, he states:

"Moderate reformist socialism wants the peaceful, gradual development of the ideals toward a new order [!!], and is, along with them, annihilated by fascism. . . . The communist proletariat wants to transform and realize them in the newer and finer fulfillments of socialism, precisely as it wants to transform and more fully realize the material promise of capitalist production." (p. 538.)

What is the meaning of the Party as the political leader of the working class, and why is the Marxist-Leninist Party that leader? Standing in relation to the one fundamentally revolutionary class as vanguard and the highest form of its organization, synthesizing the universal proletarian experiences into a program of revolutionary action directed toward achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat and consolidating the forces of the revolution for the construction of Socialism, the Party of Marxism-Leninism, by its nature and function, has and can alone have the program for the revolutionary way out, and as such, its establishment as a strong Communist mass Party supported by the decisive sections of the proletariat is the sole guarantee for final victory. The principle which makes this Party monolithic—the expression of the hegemonic class—makes it

* *The Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky*, International Publishers, p. 72.

also unique—the single, exclusive Party of the working class. To share its guiding role with another party would be to denote that Marxism-Leninism is inadequate to serve as the basis for the complete program of revolutionary action; would be to return to the pre-Bolshevik stage of working class theory and organization; would be to fork the road of the working class.

Stalin, in summing up Lenin's further development of Marx' teachings on the Party, lays great stress on this principle. "The dictatorship of the proletariat", he declares, "can be complete only in the event that it is led by one party, the Party of the Communists, which does not and should not share its leadership with other parties." *

END AND MEANS IN BOLSHEVISM AND IN SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

To see between the Communist Party and Social-Democracy, unity in purpose and difference only in method; to see the one as wanting to realize "more fully" and the other through "gradual development", but both as wanting what is essentially the same thing—"socialism", "a new order", is to deny the quintessence of Leninism, is to attempt to disestablish the Leninist Party. The founding of the Communist Party as revolutionary vanguard was determined by the very historic conditions in which Social-Democracy has eventually become transformed into a force against revolution. Mr. Corey, one is impressed, has not given evidence of a clear understanding of the dialectics of end and means. Socialism, which is neither a fixed, predestined idea independent of specific social contradictions, nor a pragmatic working hypothesis, nor a speculative projection, is a scientifically determinable outcome, envisaged as a historic necessity arising from the basic contradiction between the forces and relations of production under capitalism. The Communist program is shaped by the consciousness of this historic necessity, the end giving purposiveness and resoluteness to the means which in turn, of course, function to accelerate the realization of the end. End and means are thus interrelated through dialectic necessity. Hence, Lenin declares:

"The movement itself is to be considered, not only from the viewpoint of the past, but also from the viewpoint of the future."**

Opportunism, which would seek to sacrifice the principle in the objective for a temporary advantage, is not a relation to means which

* *Problems of Leninism*, Russian text, Ninth Edition, p. 267.

** *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, p. 40—Russian Edition.

the Marxist-Leninist program can accept. It is, on the contrary, expelled as abhorrent to Communist strategy. Parliamentaryism as a means in the strategy of Social-Democracy is not the parliamentaryism of the Communist Party. One, proceeding from the theory of ultra-imperialism, converts the votes of its followers into endorsements of the present order; the other, having before it the purpose of shattering the bourgeois State, turns its parliamentary tactics into revolutionary practice, making use of the parliamentary campaigns to wrest concessions from the exploiters, carrying the assault of the working class into the parliamentary citadels of capitalism, and *utilizing parliament itself for the undermining of bourgeois rule*. The method of Bolshevism is *qualitatively different* from the method of Social-Democracy because the goals of the two parties are different.

It is significant that leaders of the Social-Democratic parties repeatedly advance as an argument against the United Front the contention that the programmatic differences are insuperable. Though they would like to pass for "socialists at heart", yet (in a spirit of noble self-sacrifice) they declare themselves ready to forego the Socialist goal, if thereby the programmatic principles can be made to appear insuperable difficulties to the United Front. Or, the contrary argument advanced in such instances may be: "Communist tactics". As for goal, we can get together, but it's the tactics that stand in the way! This demagoguery coincides, of course, with the anti-dialectic separation of means from end, with the theory of "peaceful growth" into the Socialist goal. The Communists, on the contrary, who declare boldly that what distinguishes fundamentally the Communist from the Social-Democratic program is goal and *therefore* means, nonetheless, or rather, for that reason, find in the programmatic differences a basis for the United Front on concrete, immediate issues.

True, in saying Social-Democracy "wants the peaceful, gradual development of the ideals toward a new order", Mr. Corey does not subscribe to the realisibility of the new order by such means. We see here, however, ascribed to Social-Democracy an outlook and a striving toward a new order, presumably Socialism. In this sense, then, Social-Democracy merits being considered a true Socialist Party, a Marxist Party, unless Mr. Corey admits non-Marxist Socialism. Accordingly, the historic split between Bolshevism and Menshevism has not taken place, or, if it has, should not have taken place. The perfidy of Social-Democracy in 1914 and the subsequent twenty years that have left a trail of treachery in the wake of its movements, still leave it essentially a force for Socialism. . . . Such loyalty—were it not to disloyalty!

Is this, however, a true characterization of Social-Democracy? Has not history demonstrated the truth of Lenin's declaration that without Social-Democracy as its main social support, declining capitalism could not maintain itself? Could capitalism prepare to wage its imperialist wars but for its justified confidence that the leaderships of the Second International parties and of the reformist trade unions will deliver the working class to the war lords by drumming up the demagoguery of patriotism; by voting war credits; by officially "calling off" the class struggle; by proclaiming, as did Kautsky, that the International is "an instrument of peace time"; by declaring, as did the war-time creature of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats—the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy: "We recognize in this great struggle at arms a war that is essentially *labor's war*"; by hinting, as did the "Leftized" Norman Thomas* immediately after the famous "anti-war" resolution had been pressed upon the Detroit Convention of the S.P. by the rank and file: "If by some miracle there is a wholly different type of war, there will be plenty of time in the light of socialist principles to change our position."—? Could the capitalists and their governments throttle the giant strikes of the working class, if they had not the Citrines and the Leiparts, the Jouhaux and the Greens, with their "socialist" accomplices *a la* Dubinsky and Emil Rieve, and their shields *a la* Norman Thomas? ** Would a Roosevelt administration be able to put over its fascist-featured N.R.A. but for the ballyhoo of the A. F. of L. leaders, who elicited from the N.R.A. administrator, General Hugh Johnson, the glowing tribute in his address of March 7, 1934, to the capitalist owners of this land: "I want to tell you this for your comfort. I know your problems. I would rather deal with Bill Green, John Lewis, Ed McGrady, Mike McDonough, George Berry and a host of others I could name, than with any Frankenstein that you may build up under the guise of a company union. In fact

* *New Leader*, June 16, 1934.

** We need but remember how, on the very morrow of the betrayal of the San Francisco and Textile General Strikes, the *New Leader* (October 13, 1934) whitewashed the A. F. of L. bureaucracy in headlining the news of its Convention: "A. F. of L. Fights Fascism"(!). This, of course, is quite in keeping with the fact that Emil Rieve, S.P. leader and member of the United Textile Workers' Executive Board, was co-signatory with Gorman to the order which called off and betrayed the strike.

The shielding role of Norman Thomas is shown in this connection by his typical condonement of blackguardism in strike leadership, which appeared in the *New Leader* for September 29: "Gorman and the Strike Committee did a good job with the resources at their disposal, but those resources were woefully inadequate."

—take it from me and a wealth of experience—their interests are your interests.”—? Would a Roosevelt expect to carry through his program as a measure for “the forgotten man”, if in that expectation he did not include the support of the Socialist Party spokesmen who in their “socialist” way would declare of the “New Deal”: “The great hope of the New Deal is that it may make it a little easier for the masses of true workers in farm, mine, factory, school, laboratory, office and wherever the honest work of the world is done to advance toward a truly Socialist society.”*—and who, in consequence would advise the workers: “I think strikes are inadvisable at present.”**—? Could, indeed, capitalism have succeeded in holding back so long the revolutionary assault upon its system? could it have retarded the rallying of the majority of the working class to the banner of revolution?—but for the unfailing service it received through all these years at the hands of the Social-Democratic leaders?

NORMAN THOMAS “DID HIS BIT”

From his evident assumption that the Communist Party and Social-Democracy represent a concordant parallel movement, one thoroughgoing, the other moderate, in the direction of Socialism, Mr. Corey is led to conclude that what he calls “reformist socialism” is, as such, a force against fascism. He is led to confuse such genuine rank-and-file actions as whole Social-Democratic branches including groups of functionaries fighting shoulder to shoulder with Communists against fascist attacks, with the attitude of Social-Democracy as such. Thus, in dealing with the ballyhoo at the initiation of the N.R.A., while he enumerates various representative demagogues—senators and magnates, editors and bankers, General Johnson and Frances Perkins and William Green, with their respective characterizations of the Act, he leaves conspicuously unincluded Norman Thomas, who “did his bit” for the New Deal. The omission is not that of just another ballyhooer, but the foremost leader of the Socialist Party. Certainly, if Mr. Corey is desirous of having his readers recognize the forces making for or against the acceptance of the N.R.A., he cannot honestly have withheld from them Thomas’ avowed approval of the Roosevelt program. If he believes

* Norman Thomas, *New York Herald Tribune*, September 10, 1933.

** Norman Thomas, *New York Herald Tribune*, August 8, 1933.

In declaring that the N.R.A. “is not a step toward socialism”, the Resolution adopted by the Detroit Convention of the S.P. apparently committed Thomas to a reversal of his previous position. But this reversal is reduced to nothing when it expresses itself in whitewashing the N.R.A.-accommodating strike-breaker Gorman. Such action constitutes surrender to the Old Guard.

the N.R.A. to be anti-working class, if he sees it moving "toward the liquidation of labor and government or 'corporate' unions akin to fascism" (p. 496), if he perceives the American imperialist policy making "deliberate use of the N.R.A. to strengthen war preparations" (p. 484), consistency should have made him point to the forces which the working class must overcome to overcome the N.R.A. How, indeed, will he explain the sweeping rank-and-file dissatisfaction with the official S.P. position on the Roosevelt program, as a result of which the Detroit Convention was obliged to declare itself officially opposed to the N.R.A.?

"IT WAS THE RULE BUT NOT THE DICTATORSHIP OF
THE BOURGEOISIE"

The failure to mention the avowed position taken toward the N.R.A. at its enactment by the Socialist Party top leadership is not mere oversight on the part of Mr. Corey; it is to be noted in connection with his treatment of Social-Democracy generally. It is, one may say, a large-heartedness proceeding from the assumption that the Second International parties are, after all, Socialist. In fact, Mr. Corey evinces a tenderness for the very "reformism" of "reformist socialism". Note how he writes of Austrian Social-Democracy:

"Capitalism in decline reacts against reform, as it reacts against progress in general; it moves toward the abolition of reform and its achievements. The workers of Vienna were proud of their model dwellings, built by a socialist administration. This monument to reform was battered down by the cannon of the capitalist state in its efforts to crush the militant workers." (p. 505.)

Fascism came to Austria, according to this picture of pathos, over and against the strivings of Austro-Marxism. Fascism arose, holds Mr. Corey, because Social-Democracy lost in its struggle against it. But what Mr. Corey does not see is that, despite the Left-radicalization of its broad membership, including many of its functionaries; despite the mood for militant revolutionary struggle that characterized the Social-Democratic workers—a mood that translated itself into magnificent heroism in action in the February days—that despite this, Social-Democracy did not—*could not, by its basic ideology*—enter into the struggle against fascism. What he does not see is that Austro-Marxism had painted a picture of Vienna as a Socialist city, of the municipal houses as edifices of Socialism. "To maintain here an island of democratic liberty", was the task Otto Bauer assigned to the Austrian working class at the emergency Conference of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party in 1932. "What failed of attainment in Paris, what no State in the world has hitherto achieved . . . what the Paris Commune desired, the Vienna Commune realized. . . .

The Commune Vienna shows us the way along which international socialism will achieve the world", jubilated Kautsky in 1927 with mole-like Menshevik vision—two months before the Viennese proletariat rose in arms against their "Commune"!*

A "socialist" city dominated by the House of Rothschild and the House of Hengel! A "socialist" Town Council administering for domestic and foreign capital! A city of "socialism" under a State of capitalism!—This was Austro-Marxism. What need then to overthrow the existing State? "It was the rule but not the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie", declared Otto Bauer.** Therefore, the Communists, those who sought to achieve that overthrow, were branded by the Austro-Marxist leadership as destroyers of Socialism. "For me", a Zeinitzer could declare, years before his open desertion, "the United Front with the fascists is ten times more desirable than with the Communists."*** And so, in harmony with the dictates of the decisive section of the Austrian big bourgeoisie which, firmly controlled by French finance capital, worked for the foreign political isolation of Germany, Austro-Marxism taught the Austrian workers that the principal enemy was not within the land, but without; that the fascist menace was in Germany, not in Austria; that to defend their "democratic island", they must unite with the "lesser evil", Dollfuss—must renounce the class struggle at home.****

GROUPINGS AND TENDENCIES IN THE DISINTEGRATION OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

The perception of the present-day character of Social-Democracy is bound up directly with the task of rallying the majority of the working class to the banner of revolution, of winning the toiling farmers and the urban petty bourgeoisie to the side of the proletariat as revolutionary allies. To meet this question adequately, we must, to begin with, view Social-Democracy in the state in which it finds itself at present—in its flux, in the dynamics of its disintegration.

The rejection of bourgeois-democratic constitutionalism by fascism risen to power and its steady breakdown in varying degrees of

* "Die Pariser und die Wiener Kommune," *Arbeiterzeitung*, May 1, 1927.

** *Der Kampf*, July, 1933.

*** Cited by Von Gustav, "Der Austromarxismus und der Februaraufstand", *Rundschau*, Basel, 22 Februar, 1934.

**** "Even after Sunday, Feb. 12, the representatives of the party leadership sought to pacify the indignant workers, and sought to hold them back from beginning the struggle. But the anger of the masses had already reached such a high pitch that the warnings of the party leadership did not help any more."—Otto Bauer, in a dispatch to the *New York Jewish Daily Forward*, March 10, 1934.

rapidity in the bourgeois-democratic governmental systems undergoing fascization, have brought world Social-Democracy to a crisis. On the one hand, Social-Democracy as such—the platform, the apparatus, the leadership in its decisive and traditional sections—clings to the policy of class collaboration, on a basis that it would prefer to be that of “democracy”, which in bourgeois society can, of course, be nothing but bourgeois democracy. To this end it will foster among the masses during the process of fascization the illusions of legalism and constitutionalism, urging the working class to make a United Front with a “lesser evil” which somehow always happens to be the home bourgeoisie and which somehow always turns out in the end to have been meanwhile preparing its fascist rule. German and Austrian Social-Democracy are classic instances of this type of Social-Democratic “leadership”. But the German and Austrian experiences with Social-Democracy have taught the world working class a great lesson—the lesson that it must organize for the decisive revolutionary defeat of fascism, both where it is in power and where it is advancing to gain power. The maturing world revolutionary crisis is bringing the working class everywhere into open militant conflicts with the State forces of the bourgeoisie. Every struggle for bread, every struggle for unemployment relief, every strike, every action in defense of workers’ rights—becomes from day to day in the consciousness of the workers more and more the struggle for the way out. The need for unity in struggle is felt elementally by all sections of the working class. The efforts of Social-Democracy to keep the Socialist workers sundered from the Communist workers are becoming, day by day, of less avail. The workers in their further radicalization tend increasingly toward the Party of Communism. The heroism of the illegal Communist Parties of Germany and Austria working *within* those lands among the masses, indomitably, against the fiercest terror, holding their ranks and gaining new forces as leaders of the working class, has aroused the admiration of large sections of Social-Democratic workers who are repudiating in ever greater numbers their scattered erstwhile leadership residing in the emigration centers of Prague and Bruenn.

Social-Democracy, discredited with the masses by having strengthened the hand of the State in bringing about fascism, is compelled now to resort to various maneuvers of penitence. In Germany and Austria, where Social-Democracy has utterly decomposed, mass pressure is increasing for united revolutionary action against the fascist regime. As Social-Democratic workers are increasingly turning away from the Prague and Bruenn émigré leaderships, the influence and the authority of the illegal Communist Parties are visibly growing. No central German or Austrian Social-Democratic

organization exists any longer, while the mass influx of Social-Democratic members into the Communist Party can be gauged by such facts as the following: Two-thirds of the delegates to the Twelfth Congress of the Austrian Communist Party held in September had come over to the Party since the February events; furthermore, as a reflection of that influx, half of the newly-elected Central Committee were former Social-Democratic functionaries who had joined the Communist Party since the February events. The havoc which the dynamics of the present situation is working in German Social-Democracy is evidenced by the presence in it of at least three distinct groupings with three distinct platforms. The Prague emigration center constitutes two of the groups. Group I is openly for incorporation into fascism. In the official organ of the Prague leadership, *Deutsche Freiheit*, for September 12, that group declares:

"The Hitlerian counter-revolution has made an end to the liberal bureaucratic democracy of the Weimar Republic and has with its national ideology set free the forces for a rigorous fully-organized planned economy. . . .

"At the same time, it signifies a new transition epoch into which German capitalism has entered. . . .

"It is progressive capitalism and the clearing away of the debris for socialism; it is a piece of socialism. . . ."

We have in this statement the fullest confirmation of the declaration made by the Communist Party that the role of German Social-Democracy was to lead the working class under the guise of "democracy" into the camp of fascism. Another section of the Prague leadership, the "Lefts", continues in the same central organ to speak in favor of "democracy", of coalition governments, of bourgeois parliamentarism. This group complements the first by endeavoring, with talk of restoring democracy, to prevent the revolutionary overthrow of fascism and capitalism as a whole. The third group, the "revolutionists", pretends to be altogether different from the old Social-Democracy. Realizing the mood of the working class for proletarian, revolutionary struggle; sensing the inroads that are being made by the Communist Parties into the ranks of the workers—these "revolutionists" resort to avowing principles of Communism. They speak of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of revolution, of the United Front; but their real purpose can be seen from such propaganda as "the terrific defeat in Germany which shattered both the erstwhile great working class parties"; the need for a "revolutionary, socialist, united party"; the Communist Party is isolated from the masses because it is "dependent on Moscow, whose foreign section it is and in consequence of which it is utilized as an outpost for the National-Bolshevist policy". The obvious purpose of this

"revolutionary" Social-Democracy is to isolate the revolutionary Party of the German working class from the masses; to check the growing influence of the Communist driving force that is rallying the masses in a United Front of struggle against fascism; and, by speaking of a "revolutionary, socialist, united party", to liquidate the Communist Party, to destroy the growing allegiance of the class-conscious proletariat to the Comintern, and to rehabilitate the shattered party of the Second International. The chicanery of such "revolutionists" is, however, a barometer of the Left-radicalization of the Social-Democratic workers, of their growing sympathy for the program of the Communist Party. It is a barometer of the Machiavellianism to which bankrupt Social-Democracy is compelled to resort in the face of the revolutionization of illegally-functioning Social-Democratic groups in Germany and Austria. These groups, although terming themselves Social-Democratic, are no longer Social-Democracy in the proper sense of the word. They exemplify the Social-Democratic proletarian rank and file and lower functionaryship in the process of liberating themselves from the leadership which has so long held them subject to the forces of reaction. In Austria large sections of the former "Left" opposition merged soon after the February events with the Communist Party. In June, the Red Front, organized after the February events by groups of the former "Left" opposition, likewise united with the Communist Party. The centralized United Front organization of Communists and Revolutionary Socialists engaged on August 1 in anti-war manifestations on a platform that was virtually Leninist. Various Socialist groups, and lower organizations of the Revolutionary Socialists, sent delegates to the recent Congress of the Communist Party.

UNITED FRONT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE U.S.A.

The Left-radicalization of Social-Democratic workers is visible everywhere. In Poland, for instance, the Socialist Party is in ferment; against the dictates of the Central Committee, the Warsaw District Conference, the Lublin District Committee, sub-districts of Lodz and Warsaw City, have declared for the immediate establishment of the United Front. In England, 100,000 workers, responding to the United Front appeal of the Communist Party and the Independent Labor Party, massed on September 9 in a counter-demonstration against fascism, in defiance of urgings by the leadership of the Labor Party and the General Council of Trade Unions not to participate. In the United States, we see alongside of certain indications of growth of the Socialist Party, which reflect the general mass radicalization in the country, a definite process of disintegration. Due to the pressure of the proletarian rank-

and-file members and followers who are genuinely desiring a Socialist program of action, the Oneal-Waldman-Cahan Old Guard was defeated at the last Convention of the party. Norman Thomas tries to canalize the Leftward mood of the rank and file by talking "Left", although in all of his actions he has shown himself to be capitulating to the Old Guard—to wit, on the questions of strike policy, the United Front, and the defense of the Soviet Union. Analogous in some respects to the third group in Germany are some of the leading elements of the Revolutionary Policy Committee who talk in Red phrases but whose spokesmen showed their true colors at the Detroit Convention when they traded away their right to introduce their resolution, and who have since then failed to engage in a single act promoting the United Front. Nevertheless, the position occupied by Thomas and the platform of the R.P.C. are a definite, though distorted, indication of the urge to the Left on the part of the rank-and-file membership and following of the American Socialist Party—an urge that is manifesting itself increasingly in "outlaw" actions for United Front campaigns with the Communists, an urge that represents the growing sympathy of the Social-Democratic workers for the Communist Party.

The most hopeful development in the Socialist Party from the point of view of the United Front is the *organized* movement among considerable sections of the rank and file and local functionaries for immediate United Front action with the Communists. Noteworthy is the United Front development in the South between the Southern District of the Communist Party and the Socialists, as well as the decision of the New Jersey State body of the Socialist Party to endorse the Washington Congress for Unemployment Insurance. When we bear in mind that these actions came immediately after the decision of the Boston meeting of the Socialist Party N.E.C. to reject the United Front on a national scale, their significance as rank-and-file determination to enter into common action with the Communists stands out boldly. We need but look, too, at the activities of such formations as the Committee for Socialist Action for the United Front; at the United Front agreement for anti-fascist actions between the Italian Bureau of the Communist Party and the Italian Federation of the Socialist Party; at the United Front election campaign in Trumbull County, Ohio; at the United Front in connection with the demonstration of the Chicago unemployed on November 24; and at similar developments in parts of Illinois, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, New York State, Maine, and Massachusetts, on various issues—unemployment relief struggles, strikes, the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill (H.R. 2827), the American League Against War and Fascism,

etc. We do not discuss here the vital struggle for the United Front in the trade unions, which is basic for achieving unity of working class action.

PROLETARIAN HEGEMONY INSEPARABLE FROM THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

WHO COMPROMISED WITH THE GERMAN BOURGEOISIE IN 1919?

How does Mr. Corey meet this most important question of the Leftward pressure of the Social-Democratic workers and of the relationship of the proletarian rank and file to the Social-Democratic leadership? The following statement is significant:

"The proletariat must strike ruthlessly when the moment is favorable; otherwise its forces may break apart, temporarily but still disastrously, as capitalism is favored by the institutional weight of its economic, cultural and political domination. For if the proletariat, where the conditions are favorable, does not seize power, if it compromises with capitalism instead of destroying it (as in Germany in 1919), there is an inevitable if temporary renewal and consolidation of capitalist supremacy. The proletariat is susceptible to the lures and wiles of reformism, prone to weaknesses and half measures, hampered by the conservatism of its organizations and their bureaucracy, which avoid and betray revolutionary struggle." (pp. 509-510.)

We frequently hear Social-Democratic leaders defend themselves by countering: How can we act otherwise when the workers hold back? We are, after all, only representatives of the masses and we cannot push forward to revolution when they are ready to compromise. This argument was advanced last year by Otto Wels at the Paris Congress of the Second International. No resistance, said Wels, was possible in 1932 because there was no militancy among the workers.* With such explanations, the treacherous Social-Democratic leadership which delivered the German proletariat into the toils of fascism seeks to whitewash itself. But the very fact that a corrupt purveyor for fascism stands up to explain away his treachery, is in itself proof that he feels the sting of the workers' anger. To save their faces, the betrayers, however, attempt to place the onus on the masses below. And so, the rise of fascism in Germany is to be charged, not to the Severings and the Welses and the Leiparts, but to the working class which, alas, held back the valorous arms of the Social-Democratic stalwarts!

* As reported by the Bundist leader, Heinrich Ehrlich: *The Struggle for Revolutionary Socialism*, New York, 1934, p. 18.

This is essentially the theoretical fare on which Mr. Corey feeds us. In November, 1918, as everyone knows, Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets were set up in Germany. The bourgeois State was overthrown; the working class had seized power. No less an enemy of revolutionary overthrow than Karl Kautsky had to admit:

"In November, 1918, the Revolution was the work of the proletariat alone. The proletariat won so all-powerful a position that the bourgeois elements at first did not dare to attempt any resistance."*

The German proletarian revolution was not only not led by the Social-Democratic leaders, but was effected against their systematic efforts to prevent it. Scheidemann actually admitted this in 1922 in the course of a libel lawsuit in Berlin, declaring: "The imputation that Social-Democracy wanted or prepared the revolution is a ridiculous, stupid lie of our opponents."** Not only did Ebert and other such leaders oppose the dethronement of the bourgeoisie, but even that of the Kaiser.*** It was only through the pressure of the victorious Entente Powers, which threatened to hold up the peace negotiations, that the German Social-Democratic leaders consented to request Wilhelm's abdication—and then, in the hope that

* Author's Introduction to the 3rd Edition of *The Proletarian Revolution*, 1931.

** R. Palme Dutt, who cites this statement in his admirable book, *Fascism and Social Revolution* (pp. 112-113), cites also from the evidence given in a libel suit at Munich in November, 1925, by General Groener, Chief of the German General Staff at the time of the November Revolution:

"On November 10, 1918, I had a telephone conversation with Ebert, and we concluded an alliance to fight Bolshevism and Sovietism and restore law and order. . . .

"Every day between 11 p.m. and 1 a.m. the staff of the High Command talked to Ebert on a special secret telephone. From November 10 our immediate object was to wrest power in Berlin out of the hands of the Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies."

*** Scheidemann makes no secret of this in his memoirs when he speaks of the privy conferences held by Ebert with the last Imperial Chancellor, Prince Max von Baden, according to the Prince's own report. In the course of one of these meetings, the memoirs reveal, the Prince reports having asked the Social-Democratic President: "If I succeed in convincing the Kaiser, shall I have you at my side in the fight against Social Revolution?" Ebert's reply came without hesitation or double meaning: "If the Kaiser does not abdicate, Social Revolution must come. But I don't want it: I hate it like sin." (Philipp Scheidemann: *The Making of New Germany*, Vol. II, p. 224). Elsewhere in the memoirs, the Chancellor is quoted as having declared: "The Revolution is on the eve of success; we can't smash it, but perhaps we can throttle it. . . . If Ebert is introduced to me as the tribune of the people, then we shall have a republic; if it's Liebknecht, Bolshevism; but if the abdicating Kaiser appoints Ebert Chancellor, there is a faint hope for the monarchy. . . ." (*Ibid.*, pp. 253-4).

thereby they would save Germany from becoming a republic.* In 1919, the proletarian revolution was shot down in blood under a **Social-Democratic government, a Social-Democratic government** that compromised with the Junkers, that united with the counter-revolutionary forces of the old order. And Mr. Corey accuses the German working class of having compromised with capitalism!** Can we call this anything but a deliberate exculpation of the Noskes and the Scheidemanns and the Eberts, the compromisers and betrayers, whose hands strangled the revolution and set free the forces of nascent fascism? What matter that Mr. Corey speaks of the proletariat as being "hampered by the conservatism of its organizations and the bureaucracy which avoid and betray revolutionary struggle", when in the same breath he charges it with being "susceptible to the lures and wiles of reformism, prone to weaknesses and half-measures"? If this is the proletariat, what other leadership does it deserve, what other leadership can it bring forth? Indeed, in the ranks of a working class so abject and slavish, a Luxemburg and a Liebknecht have no place, and it is, one might say, a stroke of poetic justice that they are removed from the scene (murdered with the connivance of the "deserved" leaders) as meddlers against the will of this working class "prone to weaknesses and half-measures"!

DELEON AND COREY PROPOSE A SOURCE OF STRENGTH FOR
THE WORKING CLASS

Mr. Corey's account of the role of the German working class in 1919 is traceable to his fundamental misconception of the nature of the proletariat, formulated in the following differentiation between the bourgeoisie in its revolutionary stage and the proletariat:

"The bourgeoisie was a propertied class, the proletariat is not propertied . . . but property was a source of strength to the bourgeoisie, its lack a source of weakness to the proletariat." (p. 507.)

In support of this contention, Mr. Corey adduces a long passage from DeLeon's *Two Pages From Roman History*, which includes:

"Wealth imparts strength, strength self-reliance [. . .] Poverty breeds lack of self-reliance. Material insecurity suggests temporary devices. Sops and lures become captivating baits [. . .] Obviously the difference I have been pointing out between the bourgeois and the present, the proletarian, revolutionary forces shows the bourgeois to have been sound, while the proletarian, incomparably more powerful by its numbers, to be afflicted with a certain weakness

* Scheidemann, *Vorwaerts*, December 6, 1922.

** Note the quotation on p. 52.

under fire, a weakness that, unless the requisite measures of counter action be taken, must inevitably cause the course of history to be materially deflected.”*

This “weakness under fire” becomes for Mr. Corey the fountainhead from which he draws his theory of the revolutionary capacities of the working class. One might ask Mr. Corey: What of the revolutionary annals of the world proletariat? What of the magnificent strength under fire which the workers of the world have shown since first they came forward to do battle for their class rights? What of the Lyons Uprising; the glorious June Days of 1848; the Commune “heaven-stormers of Paris”; the Russian 1905; the October Revolution which transformed a vast empire into a workers’ State; the Soviets in Hungary and Bavaria; the Spartacide rising in Germany; the Canton Commune; the February Days in Austria; the revolutionary struggles in Spain; the magnificent revolutionary tradition of the American working class—Haymarket, the Pullman Strike of ’94, Bloody Homestead, the Ludlow Massacre; the valiant strikes of the steel workers, miners, textile workers, longshoremen; the General Strikes of Seattle, San Francisco; the great General Strike of the textile workers; the heroic struggles of the working class wherever capitalism reigns?—These are wiped out with a penstroke by DeLeon-Corey!

And what is the source of this “weakness under fire”? The proletariat’s lack of property, we are told—in other words, *the very nature* of the proletariat! It is by its propertylessness that the proletariat has its being. And it is its propertylessness, as the *Communist Manifesto* declares, which makes of the proletarians the fundamentally revolutionary class, which gives them, in fact, their historic revolutionary task: “They have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property.” It is because the workers have nothing to lose but their chains that the *Manifesto* proclaims: “Let the ruling class tremble at a Communist revolution.” But according to our “Marxist” and the master he venerates, having nothing to lose reduces the proletarians to weakness.

According to DeLeon-Corey, the strength of the proletariat must logically be derived from property. Its self-reliance must be gained through possession. And since self-reliance and strength mean in the Marxist sense class-consciousness and organization, the

* Note, too, the striking similarity in phrasing between Mr. Corey’s “susceptible to the lures and wiles of reformism, prone to weaknesses and half measures” and DeLeon’s: “The characteristic weakness of the proletariat renders it prone to lures.” (*Two Pages from Roman History*, p. 70.)

working class cannot look for these to its own nature but to an other-class nature which has more than chains to lose.

The abjectness in which DeLeon-Corey beholds the working class is nothing but the petty-bourgeois lack of faith in the capacity of the proletariat to achieve its own liberation. Not only is this "measurement" of working class strength not an evaluation of the proletariat as the subjective factor in the era of proletarian revolution; it is, in the full sense of the expression, a denial of the proletariat as a class for itself. In the very historic moment when *Soviet Power* has become the leading slogan of the world proletariat, the vision of DeLeon-Corey is of a working class thrown back to the helplessness of an auxiliary of the bourgeoisie in the Third Estate.

Why is it that the petty bourgeoisie, resting on property, is not the "gravedigger" of bourgeois domination? Why is it not, like the proletariat, a class for itself, but remains at the stage of a class in itself? The answer lies in its very attribute of property. Because it has, or feels it has, a stake in the land, it is difficult for it to wrest itself free from subjugation to capitalism and to turn its criticism of capitalism into annihilating, revolutionary criticism. Only the proletariat can sharpen its criticism into a weapon of destruction. And only in accepting the revolutionary guidance of the proletariat does the petty bourgeoisie become a force of the revolution.

The strength that DeLeon-Corey feels the working class lacks in its nature is the "strength" with which Bernstein sought to endow it—the "strength" of the "democratization of capital". The invigoration by which he wants to rid the proletariat of its "anemia" is a blood-transfusion from the veins of the petty bourgeoisie. The alliance which he conceives between proletariat and middle class is the adjustment of the proletarian consciousness to the outlook of the petty bourgeoisie.

Mr. Corey's proletariat is prevented by its very nature from rising to the position of leadership. Notwithstanding his statements in one or two places that the middle class must seek the leadership of the proletariat, the latter cannot, through the natural disabilities which Mr. Corey ascribes to it, aspire to the role of hegemony. And where there is no proletarian hegemony there can be no proletarian revolution.

AS TO POWER

SLOGANS AND SHIBBOLETHS

But, Mr. Corey may argue: I speak of the proletariat as the carrier of Socialism; I speak of revolutionary overthrow, the strug-

gle for power; I speak of the dictatorship of the proletariat! But we have had occasion to see how Socialism and Socialism are not alike; how power and power, how dictatorship and dictatorship, even of the proletariat, may mean different things with different proponents. We have seen, for instance, how, due to the pressure of the masses, the Second International at its recent Paris Congress was compelled to put on its agenda the heading, "The Socialist Struggle for Power". On that question, a minority resolution was submitted, representing the views of "Left" groupings in the Second International. That document was the manifesto by which the "better" Social-Democrats, "the new beginnings", sought to rally the Leftward-moving mass membership and following of the Social-Democratic parties. The resolution was signed by the majority of the American delegation to the Congress. On their return, the majority delegates submitted their report to the membership of the American Socialist Party. We are enabled from this report to acquire an insight into the "power" for which these "better" Social-Democrats voted at the Congress. Let the following statement speak for itself:

"While the International has suffered heavy losses elsewhere, it has won an inspiring victory in Spain where the Socialist Party is showing not only that it knows how to win power but also how to hold and conserve it for the workers. The parties of Denmark and Sweden have reached the stage where they must be reckoned with as government forces. It is to be hoped that participation in coalition governments will not work to delay the final and complete triumph of their working classes."*

Woe to the proletariat having such "power" and such "triumphs"! The cry of the workers turned into shibboleth! The very path trodden by German and Austrian Social-Democracy, the course of coalition with the bourgeoisie, of ruling in behalf of the bourgeoisie to stem the revolutionary advance of the working class—this is the promise of "complete triumph" which these "better" Social-Democrats hold out to the proletariat!

And has the slogan, "Dictatorship of the Proletariat", fared better in the hands of these ultra-"Lefts"? The Revolutionary Policy Committee, which, in the present disintegration of Social-Democracy, is most alert to the Left-radicalization of the Social-Democratic masses who are evidencing a movement in the direction of the Communist Party, issued at the beginning of 1934 its celebrated *Appeal to the Membership of the Socialist Party*. In that

* Special Conference, Labor and Socialist International, Report of the American Delegates, Socialist Party of America, Chicago, p. 4.

document which was designed to "revolutionize" the American Socialist Party, under a section entitled "The Road to Power", we find the R.P.C. declaring itself in favor of "the dictatorship of the proletariat". A front-rank leader of the R.P.C., David Felix, was one of the four majority delegates who submitted the above-stated plea for "power"—and, so far as he, the R.P.C. representative, was concerned, "the dictatorship of the proletariat"—*a la* Spain,* Denmark, and Sweden!

FORM AND CONTENT IN THE THEORY OF THE STATE

Or, take the recent declarations of the leading "theoretician" of Austro-Marxism, Max Adler. In October, 1933, Adler wrote in *Der Kampf*, the theoretical organ of Austrian Social-Democracy:

"It is precisely the formal quality of democracy in the class State which makes it all the more necessary to fill its form with a proletarian content and to transform it thus into a fighting weapon of the working class, indeed, even to shape it into a means for the revolutionary transition, into the dictatorship of the proletariat."

In true Two-and-a-Half International manner, this veteran of "Left" speech and Right deed attempts to embrace the dictatorship of the proletariat in order to strangle it. He, the poet laureate of Austro-Marxism who has all along sung odes to "true democracy", has now been compelled to attune himself to the mood of the working class masses for the dictatorship of the proletariat. But what is his "dictatorship of the proletariat"? It is something which comes about after the bourgeois State has been filled with a proletarian content and turned into a weapon to achieve the revolutionary transition! Pour your proletarian strength, your revolutionary urge, into the "formal quality of democracy", and you will have the dictatorship of the proletariat! The old Karl Kautsky masked for the Viennese ball! The bourgeois State form remains, but is filled with a proletarian content! That the political superstructure, the State, is form by virtue of a specific, inalienable content; that the form of the bourgeois State differs *qualitatively* from the form of the proletarian State due to the qualitatively different class content in each of these States—altogether escapes our "Marxist" dean. That the bourgeois State has the self-perpetuating form corresponding to the essence of an exploiting class striving to maintain itself perpetually in power, and that the proletarian State has the form of a revolutionary transition State, a State that is "no longer a State in the proper sense of the word", corresponding to the

* The reference is here, of course, to the Spanish situation shortly after the overthrow of the monarchy, when Spanish Social-Democracy entered the Azana coalition government.

essence of a class that consciously fulfills its historic task of building the classless, Stateless society—these things do not exist in the “dialectics” of Austro-Marxism.

There is something not altogether unrelated between Adler’s conception of form and content and Mr. Corey’s. In his chapter, “The Crisis of the American Dream”, Mr. Corey speaks of “ideals” in these words:

“As the bourgeois revolution thrust its ideals beyond immediate class objectives, so the idea of progress soared beyond its class-economic origins. It released the forces of the human will, created a new approach to the world, made man feel himself capable of mastering his fate. [p. 535] . . . Unlike fascism, which repudiates progress and all its ideals, communism accepts them as historical forces in transition (bourgeois society is the most transitional of all social systems) towards new forms and fulfillments, cleansing them of the elements and limitations identified with class exploitation and property.” (p. 539.)

As with Adler the proletariat must pour its essence into the bourgeois State to make of it an instrument for realizing the dictatorship of the proletariat, so here Communism accepts and “cleanses” of its limitations “progress and all its ideals” (listed in the chapter as Liberty, Democracy, Equality, Mass Well-Being, Opportunity, Education, No Class Stratification, Limited Government, Peace, and Progress)! What, in the theses and resolutions of Social-Democracy, differs essentially from the ideas here presented? If, let us say, we were to substitute in the cited passage the word *social-democracy* for *communism*, can Mr. Corey conscientiously declare that a Bauer, or a Norman Thomas, or, for that matter, an Abe Cahan, would decline to undertake the acceptance and the cleansing? To confer upon Communism the functions of Social-Democracy is to Menshevize Bolshevism.

Mr. Corey’s ideals run like a Hegelian Absolute Idea, ever perfecting themselves, through bourgeois society, through the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the classless society. It is an axiom of Marxism that the dominant ideas of a class society are the ideas of the ruling class, that the mode of production in a given society gives rise to and determines corresponding “social, political and spiritual processes of life”. For Mr. Corey, however, “the bourgeois revolution thrust its ideals beyond immediate class objectives”; thrust them, if the words have any meaning, toward a beyond-capitalist mode of production, to become the ideals of the new revolutionary class, the proletariat. In fact, it would seem, when the parent capitalism, in his fascist fury, disowns them and turns them out of doors, Communism accepts them, cleanses them and rears them “toward

new forms and fulfillments". "Hence the decay of the democratic spirit while the forms and ideal persist. Now the mere ideal is dangerous to capitalism and it is the object of a growing offensive. . . . Even in its incomplete bourgeois form, democracy has enriched the values of civilization, particularly the *possibility* of enriching them still more. Capitalism in decline, not democracy, now revolts against civilization and degrades its value, for it is the revolt against the ideal of a creative democracy of free men and women." (pp. 521-22).

And this in the name of Marxism-Leninism!

What we have here is nothing but a metaphysical, idealistic concept of democracy, civilization, and the entire decalogue of ideals revealed to Mr. Corey in the "American Dream". Should it be necessary to repeat to a Marxist that democracy without class content is a myth, that democracy under capitalism is never anything but bourgeois democracy because the bourgeoisie found in it the most useful form for its dictatorship? Should it be necessary to restate that when monopoly capital resorts to open, terroristic dictatorship, it does not revolt against "the ideal of a creative democracy" but plainly discards bourgeois democracy as a form of rule no longer suited? Had Mr. Corey included the theses of the Communist International or the writings of Joseph Stalin among his hundred and fifty-odd source readings, almost all bourgeois, he would have found that Communism traces no opposition in principle between bourgeois democracy and fascism; that, on the contrary, it analyzes bourgeois democracy to be the matrix in which fascism is engendered; that fascism is nothing but the fascization of bourgeois democracy.

This fetishism of democracy as an ideal-in-itself blinds the workers to the realization of the developing stages of fascism, since it conceals from their eyes the bourgeois sword hidden under the mantle of "democracy". It thus leads, in the policy of Social-Democracy, to collaboration with the bourgeoisie in the very preparation of fascist rule. Fascism does not come about because of the defeat of bourgeois democracy; it comes about because bourgeois democracy has not been defeated by the only force that can defeat it, the proletariat. As Clara Zetkin declared: "Fascism is the punishment of the proletariat for failing to carry on the revolution begun in Russia."

THE NEW FORM OF THE STATE OF THE NEW TYPE

The achievement of new forms and fulfillments that Mr. Corey assigns to Communism can come about through the destruction, and not through the nurturing, of bourgeois democracy. The new form

to be fulfilled is the proletarian form of proletarian rule, *the form of the new type* which the State of the new type, the dictatorship of the proletariat, requires—the Soviet form: Soviet Power.

Soviet Power is the Leninist development and concretization of the Marxian theory of the State. It represents the second, consummate stage in the development of the dictatorship of the proletariat of which the Paris Commune, that had not yet learned the imperativeness of utterly shattering the bourgeois State, was the first. It is the new State apparatus rendered necessary for the dictatorship of a class that, for the first time in history, exercises its power, not to exploit and oppress the toiling masses of city and country, but to lead them, in a revolutionary class alliance, through a qualitatively heightened form of class struggle, to the fulfillment of the tasks of the revolution. Soviet Power, representing the armed force of the toiling people as a whole, closely and firmly connected with the masses as no State before it has been, is the instrument indispensable to the revolution in the task of crushing the counter-revolutionary resistance of the forces of the old order in their efforts to restore themselves to power, and of meeting the interventionist designs of world imperialism. Constituting the most inclusive, direct organizations of all the toilers; facilitating through its basic organizational structures the widest participation of the masses in the work of the proletarian State; stimulating the revolutionary initiative and the fullest creative energy of the masses through fostering in them the Socialist consciousness; Soviet Power guarantees the fullest, most possible, democracy to the toiling population.

Soviet Power is today the central slogan of the Communist Parties of the world. It is the slogan corresponding to the elemental urge of the masses in every colossal struggle as it approaches the proportions of revolution. Soviet Power, first established in Russia by the October Revolution, has since manifested its international nature in land after land whether as achievement or as aspiration. Soviet Power is the form of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry in China. Soviet Republics were established by the proletarian revolutions in Hungary and Bavaria. Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets were set up by the proletarian revolution in Germany in 1918. Soviets rose spontaneously in the course of the revolutionary struggles in Cuban districts. Despite the still relatively lesser organizational strength of the Communists as against that of the Social-Democrats and the anarcho-syndicalists, Soviets held sway in the North of Spain in the recent rising. Soviet Power—the way of Bolshevism—has now become the central living slogan of the proletariat in the entire world in the present fast-maturing revolutionary crisis. Only Soviet Power can be the power of the proletariat.

Only through the Soviet form can dictatorship be the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Herein lies the crux of the entire issue—why Mr. Corey's revolution is no proletarian revolution, why his power is no proletarian power, why his dictatorship is no dictatorship of the proletariat: *He has left out of his program the objective—Soviet Power!*

THE COMMUNIST PARTY—UNIFIER AND LEADER OF THE WORKING CLASS

As his way out is not the way out of the working class, as his "new order" is not the new order of the proletariat, so Mr. Corey's party is not the Party of Bolshevism. We have shown above that the party he has in mind is not the single class vanguard Party of Marxism-Leninism. Notwithstanding the fact that he professes to select Communism rather than Social-Democracy as the leadership of the working class, his Communism is not the Communism of the Communist Party and of the Communist International.

CHANGES, ORTHOGRAPHIC AND OTHERWISE

In discussing the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, he speaks of the necessity of Communist leadership. He declares:

"That is the task of the communist party and its Marxist program, disciplined organization, and awareness of purposes and means, unifying all phases of the proletarian struggle." (p. 567.)

Upon reading this statement, we are struck by what may seem at first glance a typographical error but which, as will be seen, affords a clear insight into Mr. Corey's position. We have reference to the lower-case spelling of *Communist Party*.

Inference deepens into conviction in the light of the following fact: In the Autumn 1932 issue of *The Modern Quarterly*, Mr. Corey has an article entitled "The American Revolution", which is substantially the text of the chapter by the same name in *The Decline of American Capitalism* and contains the passage cited. We reproduce here the text of that passage as it appeared in *The Modern Quarterly* (p. 24) for comparison with its reproduction in Mr. Corey's book. The former version reads:

"That is the task of the Communist Party and its Marxist program, disciplined organization and ideology, unifying all phases of the proletarian struggle."

We note that here the Communist Party was treated as an entity having specific existence and that it was this Party which was given the task of "unifying all phases of the proletarian struggle".

Can it be that the whole matter is chargeable to the printer's devil, or perhaps, in these days of modernism, to orthographic reform? How then shall we explain the following modification—again to be noted in comparing two identical passages, one in the magazine referred to, the other in the book?

In *The Modern Quarterly* for Summer, 1932, Mr. Corey concluded his article entitled "Monopolistic Capitalism and Imperialism" with the following statement:

"The forms of the revolutionary struggle vary, from colonial liberation movements to the direct proletarian struggle for the conquest of the state and intermediate forms determined by the economic setup and the balance of class power; but all forms of the revolutionary struggle are unified by the strategy and tactics of the *Communist International* [italics ours] into one struggle for the annihilation of capitalism and imperialism." (p. 90.)

The same passage reproduced as the concluding sentence of the chapter entitled "Prosperity and Capitalist Decline" in *The Decline of American Capitalism* reads:

"The immediate forms of the struggle vary in time and place, from colonial liberation movements to the direct proletarian struggle for power and intermediate forms determined by the stage of the crisis and the balance of class power; but all forms of the struggle are unified by *international communism* [italics ours] into one offensive for the annihilation of capitalism and imperialism, and for socialism, the only alternative to economic and cultural decline and decay." (p. 488.)

No longer mere orthographic reform. We have here a reform, not of the letter, but of the spirit of the thing—a reform that amounts to a change of heart!

What has occurred since 1932 to engender in Mr. Corey a pluralistic concept of the Communist Party and to cause him to dismiss the Communist International as unifier, by its strategy and tactics, of all forms of the revolutionary struggle?

Can we altogether disregard the striking coincidence of this newly-acquired disposition to pluralize and liquidate, and the decision, reached since those magazine articles were written, of a certain grouping of renegade counter-revolutionists to give up its hollow claim to being a "faction of Communism" and to regroup itself into a "Fourth International"? We have pointed out in the course of this discussion that on a number of fundamental issues, Mr. Corey's theories savor of Trotskyism. It is significant that since the autumn of 1932 he has renounced the program of "unifying the struggle of

the Negro in its racial, *national* and class aspects"* (our italics) for "unifying the struggle of the Negro in its racial and class aspects"**—the position of Trotzkyism (and of Menshevism generally) which denies the national liberation character of the struggle of the Negro people, thus, on the one hand, hushing up the special form of national oppression to which the Negroes are subjected, and, on the other, robbing the American working class of a natural, historical revolutionary ally.

The "communist party" in small letters is obviously a generality designed for the convenience of all claimants to that term, and, by the same token, to give "scope" to the allegiance of the writer. It is not material at this point to specify in which of the camps of spurious "communism" such quest for scope will lead the seeker. In like manner, "international communism" is so much "broader" than the "official" "Stalinist" Communist International! You may, if you desire, "broaden" the thing out to include even the Two-and-a-Half International, should it be re-formed (someone did say at the dismal Second International Congress that it "may have been buried too soon"); and, by the most recent Trotzkyist portents in France, why not also the Second? In short, you may in this manner broaden out your "communism" to include everything—but Communism.

SUMMARY

This is the inevitable outcome of Mr. Corey's failure to base himself fully on the Leninist teachings on imperialism and theory of revolution. This primary failure accounts for his inability to recognize clearly the hegemonic role of the proletariat and the place of the Communist Party as the vanguard Party of the working class. It accounts for his completely ignoring the historic organizational split, and for his accepting traditional Social-Democracy as a party leading the working class through "moderate" ways to Socialism instead of seeing in reformist-socialism the main social pillar of the bourgeoisie. It accounts, hence, for his endeavors to combine with—that is, substitute for—the revolutionary program of Bolshevism, the Menshevik program of "democratic", peaceful "growth into socialism", which means, as recent history has all too clearly shown, growth into fascism. It accounts for his failure to grasp the dialectic connection between the struggles for immediate gains and the Socialist goal, and for his consequent underestimation of these struggles and the basis they supply for unifying the working class for its historic task of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism.

* *The Modern Quarterly*, Autumn, 1932, p. 28.

** *The Decline of American Capitalism*, p. 573.

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