

**SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY**

# **Stalinist Imperialism**

**by ERIC HASS**

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## **Stalinist Imperialism**

*By Eric Hass*

Stalinist imperialism discussed and compared to the Nazi-Fascist brand, as well as to the imperialism of the western capitalist democracies.

This pamphlet clears up the "mystery" of Russia's participation in the imperialist competition.

The Russian State is analyzed—and is shown to be the antithesis of the Socialist Republic. The Russian ruling caste is exposed—and is shown to be the deadly enemy of Socialism. Russian nationalism is put under the "microscope" of Marxism—and is shown to be the direct contrary of Socialist internationalism.

The evidence presented is irrefutable. And the indictment against Stalinism and the Russian State is used as a means of outlining the aims of genuine Socialism.

Read this pamphlet. Pass it on. Help expose the phony "Socialist," or "Communist," pretenses of Stalinism. Help forward the real Marxian Socialism of the Socialist Labor Party.

48 pp., postpaid—10 cents

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# STALINIST IMPERIALISM

The Social and Economic Forces  
Behind Russian Expansion

By

ERIC HASS

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# STALINIST IMPERIALISM

The Social and Economic Basis  
of the Russian Revolution

By Leonid Brezhnev

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## I.

### The "Mystery" of Stalinist Expansionism.

Why has Soviet Russia embarked on a far-reaching program of territorial, political and economic expansion? As the imperialist and predatory peace unfolds, and the victorious powers maneuver for advantage and squabble over the spoils of an imperialist war, millions of workers who have heretofore "looked up to Russia" are asking this question. Russia occupies one-sixth of the earth's land surface; she, therefore, has no need of additional *lebensraum* (or living-space) for her growing population. Having abolished private capitalism, it is assumed that she is not under the compulsion to find export markets for surpluses that capitalist Britain and America are under. Moreover, Russia claims to be a Socialist country, hence that she occupies a moral plane above that of her imperialist rivals.

Yet, the fact remains that Russia has adopted an expansionist program. As she was embroiled in an imperialist war, so is she now embroiled in an imperialist peace. The evidence is incontrovertible.

Under a secret Yalta agreement, Russia is to annex the Japanese-owned Kurile Islands and the southern half of Sakhalin. Her treaty with the Chinese Nationalist government, dictated by the Powers at Yalta, virtually restores to her the position held in the Far East by Czarist Russia before the disastrous Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05—a position denounced by Lenin as imperialism.

In the Middle East, despite earlier and commend-



able renunciation of claims in Iran, Russia has joined the game of oil-grab there. She has raised anew Czarist demands for control of the Dardanelles, and citing ancient and forgotten ethnological history, has made an irredentist claim on Turkey for a belt of territory along the Black Sea.

Russia's annexation of parts of what was formerly Finland, and the Baltic States, Bessarabia, East Prussia, and a slice of Poland, is a matter of record. And her political and economic domination of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria, although denied by the tongue-in-cheek Stalinists, is virtually accepted as an accomplished fact by Russia's imperialist rivals. That Russia has also penetrated beyond these states, into Albania and Jugoslavia, will not be denied by candid persons.

Nor are Russian claims restricted to adjacent territory. Arguing that her "strategic needs" do not differ fundamentally from those of imperialist Britain, she now demands African bases in Tripolitania and Eritrea on the Mediterranean and Red Seas.

This by no means exhausts the evidence of Russian expansionism, but it will suffice. To those who believed that once the striking power of Axis Fascism was destroyed, Russia would abandon the practices once justified on grounds of "expediency," and set an example for national moral conduct, her emulation of the capitalist imperialist Powers has been a disillusioning blow. To be sure, she has raised her voice against British intervention in Greece and Indonesia. But the fact that she herself has intervened in Iran and elsewhere has deprived her protest of moral weight. And, instead of exposing the "trusteeship" fraud as a cover-up for colony stealing, she has, by her demand for a "trusteeship" role, become *ipso facto* an accomplice.



## "Capitalist Encirclement" Shibboleth.

There is a stock Stalinist apology for Russian expansionism. It is that Russia is "encircled" by hostile capitalist powers. Thus land-grabbing is justified on military grounds. Marx supplied the answer to this in "The Paris Commune," written seventy-five years ago. He said:

"But, in good faith, is it not altogether an absurdity and an anachronism to make military considerations the principle by which the boundaries of nations are to be fixed? . . . If limits are to be fixed by military interests, there will be no end to claims, because every military line is necessarily faulty, and may be improved by annexing some outlying territory; and, moreover, they can never be fixed finally and fairly, because they always must be imposed by the conqueror upon the conquered [or by a Great Power on a weak neighbor], and consequently carry within them the seed of fresh wars."

The "capitalist encirclement" shibboleth is also greatly weakened by the development of atom bombs, guided missiles and bacterial warfare. These have virtually nullified natural terrain and border fortifications as defensive factors. No one in his senses would argue today that Leningrad is less vulnerable to destruction from the air because the annexation of a few hundred square miles has removed it somewhat from the Finnish frontier.

Discounting the "capitalist encirclement" apology as we must, what explains the "mystery" of Russian expansionism? The answer is that Russian expansionism is a "mystery" *only if one accepts the premise that Russia is a Socialist country, or that she is ruled by Socialist principles.* If she is *not* Socialist, or if she has



abandoned Socialist aspirations—even though she affects to have Socialist aims—there is no “mystery” at all. In the latter case, Russian expansionism is imperialism. And it differs from traditional capitalist imperialism only in that it is cloaked by Socialist pretensions.

The question, then, resolves itself to this: Is Russia a Socialist country? Or, if she has not yet achieved Socialism, is she straining in that direction?

To answer these questions we have merely to apply to Russia the Socialist touchstones. These touchstones are well known. They are the primary principles of Socialism as enunciated by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Moreover, inasmuch as the present political rulers of Soviet Russia accept Marxism as a synonym for Socialism, there can be no question but that a comparison between Marxist principles and the principles which actually operate in Russia form a fair test.

Before enumerating the touchstones, however, we anticipate the objection that Russia is still in the process of transition, and that economic backwardness and historic forces have combined to delay the advent of full-blown Socialism. We reply by pointing out that our purpose is not merely to determine whether or not Russia has achieved the Socialism claimed for her, but also, and more importantly, whether the *trend* of her political and economic system is *toward* Socialism. If she is preparing the democratic, economic and social organs of Socialism; if she is educating the Russian workers for the responsibilities of democratic administration; then it may fairly be said that she passes a test of Socialist standards.



## II.

### The Stalinist State.

The first of the Socialist touchstones concerns the State. As this principle was enunciated by Frederick Engels: With the advent of Socialism "the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of the processes of production. The State is not 'abolished.' *It dies out.*"<sup>1</sup>

The State has not died out in Soviet Russia. For many years its existence was justified, and rightly so, on the ground that State power was necessary to repress the land-owning peasantry and others hostile to the aims of the revolution. "We are conducting a class struggle," Lenin said in 1920, "and our aim is to abolish classes; so long as there still exist two classes, those of peasants and workers, Socialism cannot be realized, and an irreconcilable struggle goes on incessantly. The chief problem now is how under the conditions when one class is carrying on the struggle, to attract the laboring peasantry, to defeat or to neutralize it or crush its resistance with the aid of *a strong government apparatus* [the State] involving all the measures of compulsion."<sup>2</sup>

But it is the boast of the Stalinist regime that such a class division no longer exists in Russia and that there are no longer elements to repress. Why, then, a State? Why a secret police? Why concentration camps? Why the bureaucracy? And why the organs of suppression?

As long ago as 1938, Joseph Stalin acknowledged that the conditions which required "a strong government involving all the measures of compulsion" (the State) had disappeared. He posed the question him-

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<sup>1</sup>All footnotes will be found at back of pamphlet under "References."



self: "Why, then, do we not help our Socialist state to die away? Is it not time we relegated the state to the museum of antiquities?" And he answered it, after much tedious circumlocution, by saying that those who propose letting the State die out "have overlooked the capitalist encirclement and the dangers it entails for the Socialist country."

In other words, the State, which is historically an engine for repressing the *internal* enemies of the class in power, allegedly exists in Russia's specific case to defend against *external* enemies. But to accept this, one would also have to accept the implication that a Socialist government could not mobilize the nation for defense against invaders! This is nonsense. It assumes that a government built on Socialist Industrial Unions—the administrative organ discovered by the American Socialist, Daniel De Leon, and hailed by Lenin as the only contribution to the science of Socialism since Marx—could not organize the nation's military potential. It assumes, in short, that a free people would not organize to defend their freedom without compulsion. This is too eloquently refuted by history to require extensive treatment here.

### *Soviet State Accepted As Permanent.*

The State still exists in Russia. The question now recurs: Is the *trend* in Russia in the direction of its dissolution? Is the attempt being made to prepare the Russian workers for the advent of a government that will be an "administration of things"? The answer to both questions is "No!" On the contrary, as we shall demonstrate in applying other Socialist touchstones, the Soviet State apparatus is being strengthened. Bureaucratic rule, instead of disappearing, is being enlarged



and ramified. The secret police remains. And the Red Army, or the officer caste which runs it, has as a result of the war won enormous political power as well as prestige.

In the schools, through the press, and by means of all the State-controlled organs for "molding public opinion," the Soviet State is extolled as "invincible" and a guardian of the people's happiness. Inferentially, it is accepted as the *final* form of "socialist" administration. Any suggestion to the contrary is denounced as a "leftist deviation." In so far as the bureaucracy and the ubiquitous Communist party are concerned, there is no evidence of any discussion whatsoever concerning the Socialist organs which Marxism holds must supplant the State. Nor is there evidence of any attempt to prepare the Russian workers to assume the responsibilities of democratic administration of industry.

The present masters of the Soviet State, citing the political *forms* of democracy under which the people are permitted to elect party-named candidates to innocuous parliamentary bodies, declare that "The Soviet State is a people's state." (V. Vistinetsky in the *Information Bulletin*, January 29, 1946.) But the term, "people's state," is a contradiction. As Lenin, quoting Engels approvingly in "The Proletarian Revolution," said:

"Since the state is only a temporary institution which is to be made use of in a revolution in order forcibly to suppress the opponents, it is perfectly absurd to talk about a free popular state. [As spokesmen for the Stalinist regime do today.] So long as the proletariat still needs the state, *it is not in the interests of freedom, but in order to suppress its opponents, and when*



*it becomes possible to speak of freedom, the state as such ceases to exist."*

But the State, together with all the organs of coercion and repression, *does* exist in Russia today. Instead of "dying out," the Soviet State gives every evidence of *permanency*, and the masters of the State, every evidence of remaining the masters. Accordingly, brought to the first touchstone, Soviet Russia fails to pass the Socialist test.

### III.

#### **Russia's Ruling Caste.**

In "The State and Revolution," Lenin writes: "It is precisely the conditions of life under capitalism which are the cause, and there is no other, why the officials of our political parties and trade unions are corrupt—or, rather, have the tendency to become corrupt, to become bureaucrats, that is, privileged persons detached from the masses, *and standing above it.*"

Lenin then proceeded to ridicule Karl Kautsky for saying, in effect, that a Socialist society would tolerate bureaucrats and bureaucracy. "That is a grand falsehood," he wrote. "Marx took the example of the Commune [Paris Commune of 1871] to show that under Socialism the workers' employees will cease to be 'bureaucrats' and 'officials'—*especially when election is supplemented by the right of immediate recall; still more, when their pay is brought down to the level of the pay of the average worker; and still more again, when parliamentary institutions are replaced by 'working bodies which both make and apply the laws.'*"

Lenin's Marxist observations constitute a peculiarly appropriate introduction to a chapter which brings



Soviet Russia to the second of the Socialist touchstones, to wit:

*Socialism means the abolition of privileged classes and groups and the establishment of conditions of equal opportunity.*

The Russian Revolution has liquidated the ruling classes of the Czarist era. Through collectivization of land it has either eliminated the landowning peasantry entirely or reduced it to an impotent remnant. Nevertheless, there exists in Russia today a group which, by every standard of logic, is aptly described as privileged. Moreover, through restrictions in educational opportunities and the restoration of inheritance rights, this privileged group is becoming stratified, is becoming, in short, a *ruling caste* in which privilege is tending to become hereditary.

### *The Source of Power.*

The new ruling caste of Soviet Russia is composed of State officials and bureaucrats, military leaders, so-called intellectuals, and the managers and technicians of industry. Its power and privileges do not derive from private ownership of the land and instruments of labor. They derive rather from *control* of these through control of the State.

The land and industry of Russia are State-owned. They are no more owned by the Russian workers than the American navy is owned by the American workers. Moreover—and this is a fact of key significance—Russian industry still has the character of *capital*. Russian labor is wage-labor. Its product takes the form of commodities—articles produced for sale. What the Russian workers produce over and above their wages is surplus value—profit—which, instead of being appro-



priated by private employers, is appropriated by the State.

To grasp the nature of the Russian system and the part played in it by the new ruling caste, one might imagine that the United States Steel Corporation, instead of being owned by private investors, owned itself, i.e., bought up all the outstanding shares out of corporation profits. In these hypothetical circumstances, *ownership*, as it is traditionally understood, would cease to be a factor. Yet the power of the corporation as an engine of exploitation would not diminish or be altered in any way. *And that power would be exercised by the management, by the bureaucratic clique, which controls the corporation's property.* It is unnecessary to add that it would be exercised to exploit the corporation's wage slaves and to promote the fortunes of the managerial bureaucrats.

Soviet Russia is, in a sense, a "self-owned corporation" whose "management" controls a vast aggregation of capital. Theoretically, this State-owned capital is administered in the ultimate interests of the people, and apologists for Stalinism may cite the State's vast expenditures for industrial expansion, etc., from which the workers are expected ultimately to benefit. What the apologists choose to ignore, however, is the fact that the masters of the State, the ruling caste, have vested interests in the status quo; they have compensated themselves on a scale scandalously disproportionate to "the pay of the average worker," which Lenin said the workers' administrators would receive under Socialism.

### *Stalinist Crusade Against Equalitarianism.*

There is no attempt to make a secret of the fact that managers, administrative officials, intellectuals,



and others in positions of authority in Soviet Russia, receive 20, 30, and even 100 and as much as 300 times the minimum wage paid the unskilled workers. Equalitarianism was a principle taken literally at the time of the Revolution. Party and State officials lived modestly, even austerely. Their maximum income was about 400 rubles. The principle was already relaxed, however, when Stalin delivered his speech in June, 1931, attacking *uravnilovka*, or equality of pay, as "alien and detrimental to Socialist production" and a "petty bourgeois deviation." A holy crusade against equalitarianism followed, and to grumble against the disparate incomes of officials was denounced as "counter-revolutionary" and "Trotskyism." The war against *uravnilovka* reached its nadir when Professor Mitin, a government spokesman, declared that "Socialism is inequality."<sup>1</sup> The official textbook on labor law, which was published by the Soviet government just before the recent war, denounces the demand for equality of pay as "the worst enemy of Socialism."<sup>2</sup>

Before the war the average plant manager or chief engineer at an American factory received \$10,000 or \$15,000 a year; the average worker on the assembly lines, \$1,200. But in Soviet Russia the compensation for managers and technicians is even more disproportionate than in America. We cite, as an example (and we take this example from an official Soviet source, viz., *Trud*, January 20, 1936<sup>3</sup>), the wages and salaries paid by a Donetz mine. Sixty of the supervisory workers in this mine received average wages of from 1,000 to 2,500 rubles per month (or up to 30,000 rubles a year). A thousand rank and file miners in the same mine received an average of 125 rubles a month, or 1,500 rubles a year.

When it is considered that the supervisors, or even



the directors, of coal mines are relatively low in the bureaucratic scale, the disparate magnitude of incomes of administrators at the top may be better appreciated. In 1943, the Soviet press hailed the appearance of "the first Socialist [!] millionaire"!<sup>4</sup> He was "Comrade Berdyebekov," director of a State farm in Kazakstan. (Parenthetically, it may be, and has been, argued that Berdyebekov cannot invest his money as private capital in Russia, as he could in countries where private capitalism prevails. True! But why should he when he can enjoy the benefits of ownership without taking the investor's risks?)

### *Ruling Caste Enjoys Many Privileges.*

But monetary income by no means represents all of the material benefits enjoyed by the members of Russia's new ruling caste. In addition, the State provides them with a house, often a sumptuous one, a budget for paying a staff of servants, a car and chauffeur, the privilege of buying at exclusive stores where goods otherwise unobtainable are sold, vacations for themselves and families at exclusive resorts for a nominal fee, free railroad passes, and, in most cases, exemption from paying taxes. The last privilege is granted to all Soviet citizens who are decorated with a medal or order. The bureaucrat who is not so decorated is a rarity indeed.<sup>5</sup>

As scandalous pay differentials are the rule in industry, so are they the rule in the Red Army which has restored Czarist epaulettes together with the absolutism and etiquette that were features of the Czar's army. A buck private in the American Army receives \$50 a month, and a lieutenant approximately four times as much. But a lieutenant in the Red Army receives 100 times as much as a private. His pay is 1,000 rubles a



month; the private's pay, 10 rubles a month. Higher ranks receive correspondingly higher pay.<sup>6</sup> Reg Bishop, a Stalinist apologist, writing in a pamphlet, "Soviet Millionaires," published in 1943 by *Russia Today*, says, "this is no question of class differentiation, but one of sound socialist policy, in line with the general wages policy of the U.S.S.R."

If it were true, as Professor Mitin insists, that "Socialism is inequality," then it would have to be conceded that abundant evidence of "socialism" exists in Russia. But then, if that were true, capitalist America might also lay claim to this "socialist" virtue. The truth is that the "inequality" thesis was, and is, propounded by the Stalinist bureaucracy to justify, in the name of "socialism," its departure from the Socialist principle Lenin hailed as a safeguard against bureaucratism.

As Soviet Russia is *not* Socialist, but has developed rather a political and economic system best described as State Capitalism, *none* of the safeguards against bureaucratism which Lenin enumerated, exist. As the pay of party and State officials, et al., has not been "brought down to the level of the pay of the average worker," neither is election "supplemented by the right of immediate recall." Indeed, *election* is little more than a formality and is limited to parliamentary institutions. The actual administrators of affairs, directors of industry, managers, military leaders, etc., are appointed from above, hence are beholden, not to those below them, but to their superiors. Finally, Russia's elected Soviets are not "working bodies which both make and apply the laws." They merely rubber-stamp the laws introduced by the bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy applies them.

The question now arises: Is it not possible for any Russian worker to rise into the privileged ruling group?



## *The Stratification of Privilege.*

The answer is: Theoretically, yes; practically, no. Certain obstructions have been raised which block the rise of the Russian masses to positions of authority and privilege. The most important of these have to do with restrictions on educational opportunities in the higher branches of learning.

During the first few years after the Revolution the precaution was taken to insure that at least 65 per cent of the students in engineering and technical schools were manual workers or the children of manual workers. (*Pravda*, July 13, 1928). "By this policy of the 'Educational Cadres' (also called the principle of the 'Worker's Nucleus')," Arthur Koestler writes in "The Yogi and the Commissar," "a crowding out of the poor by the rich in the higher schools was effectively prevented. In the decree of September 19, 1932, the 'Worker's Nucleus' principle was tacitly abandoned." From that time on, the proportion of manual workers and their children enrolled in universities and secondary schools dropped steadily.

This development was climaxed in 1940 when, by the decree of October 2 (*Izvestia*, October 3, 1940), tuition fees were raised so sharply as practically to exclude the rank and file of wage workers. For secondary schools they were fixed at from 150 to 200 rubles per year, and for universities at from 300 to 500 rubles. Such fees, being far above the *monthly* income of the majority of Russian workers, caused a mass exodus of students whose parents were in the lower income level, and gave to the ruling caste a practical monopoly on higher education.

It is scarcely necessary to dilate on what this means. As managers, technicians, agricultural specialists, etc.,



are drawn from the institutions of higher learning, the monopoly on education which is now held by the privileged bureaucracy makes its privileges hereditary and stratifies it as the ruling caste.

And to compound this anti-Socialist development, the great mass of Russian boys and girls whose parents cannot pay the exorbitant entrance fees to technical, medical and agricultural schools and universities, are subject to four years of compulsory labor upon leaving primary school. (Decree of October 2, 1940.) "They are given 'vocational training,' lasting from six months to two years," writes Koestler, "and are obliged for a further four years to work wherever directed. The upshot of the whole development is that on the average the children of manual workers and peasants remain manual workers and peasants, whereas the children of the upper strata are automatically put on the road to jobs in the upper strata." The only exceptions are in cases where the children of the poor receive scholarships through exceptionally brilliant scholastic records.

Red Army officers, whose power in the bureaucratic councils of the Soviet State has been enormously enhanced as a result of the war, have also received the privilege of insuring places for their sons in the military caste. Special entrance facilities are given the sons of Red Army officers in the new "Suvarov Military Academies" (named after Prince Suvarov, a Czarist hero whom Catherine the Great used to stifle a Polish uprising). These institutions, established by the decree of August 23, 1943, are officially described as "of the type of the old [Czarist] Cadet Corps."<sup>7</sup>

As educational opportunity has become hereditary in Soviet Russia, so have the privileges enjoyed through accumulated wealth. To insure equality of opportunity the Bolshevik revolution abolished inheritance privi-



leges by the decree of April 27 (April 14, old style), 1918. Only in cases where the property of the deceased did not exceed 10,000 rubles "and in particular if it consists of land, household goods, tools or implements," was it "placed at the temporary disposition of and administration by the husband, wife or relatives. . ."

The Constitution of 1936 invalidated this decree and reestablished the condition of inequality at birth. Today, Stalinist propagandists in western capitalist nations hail the new right of inheritance as a uniquely "socialist" development, despite the fact that it is the traditional means of passing power and privileges to descendants in class-ruled society! Thus, V. Vistinetsky boasts in the *Information Bulletin*, published by the Soviet Embassy in Washington, that "The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. ensures . . . the right to inherit and bequeath personal property." In insuring this right, the Constitution also insures the *privileges* of children born to the upper strata, to the offspring of Soviet millionaire Berdyebekov, for example!

We repeat: *Socialism means the abolition of privileged classes and groups and the establishment of conditions of equal opportunity.*

### *The Stalinist State's "Solicitude" for Motherhood.*

A bulky volume would be required to elaborate the evidence which proves Soviet Russia's failure to pass the test of this Socialist touchstone. State subsidies for child-bearing, once derided in Russia as a feature of Fascism, and one which degrades women to the status of "prize brood mares," is now a feature of the Soviet system. As the bonuses are modest, they offer no incentive to the privileged group, but serve rather to encourage the large-scale reproduction of wage workers and peasants.



The decree<sup>8</sup> providing bonuses to mothers of four children or more (July 8, 1944) is a commentary on Soviet distortion of "socialism." Under it, bachelorhood is made subject to a special tax (Mussolini invented this one!), as is a childless marriage. The tax is reduced for parents having one, two or three children. But mothers who bear five and six children are awarded a "Motherhood Medal"; mothers of seven, eight and nine, the "Order of Glory"; and mothers of ten or more are panegyricized as "Mother Heroines"! On the day after the decree was announced, *Pravda*, ignoring the pioneering of the Fascist countries in child subsidies, brazenly editorialized:

"With us, *for the first time in the history of peoples and countries*, motherhood became a matter of solicitude on the part of the State."

Coincidental with this "solicitude" for the accelerated breeding and reproduction of Russian workers, the divorce laws were altered so drastically as to make of divorce an exclusive privilege of the ruling caste. Lenin declared in 1916 that "One cannot be a democrat and a socialist without immediately demanding full freedom of divorce." The Revolution gave this full freedom to all the Russian people. But the decree of July 8, 1944,<sup>9</sup> abolished it by raising the fee from 50 rubles to from 500 to 2,000 rubles. This sum does not include lawyer's fees which, it is estimated, raise the expense of divorce to about 3,000 rubles, or more than the *average yearly income* of a Soviet worker. What this means in terms of female subjugation is obvious. The Russian woman of the working class, once married, is "tied down to the job of breeding."

We conclude this chapter on a sordid aspect of Soviet society. It is one which proves to all candid per-



sons that beyond peradventure the "socialism" of Russia is a myth, and that all that remains of Socialist aspiration among the bureaucracy is the word. No amount of mummery, or double-talk about Socialism being a "period of transition from capitalism to Communism"<sup>10</sup> can hide the ugly facts or disguise their sinister implications. It is not Socialism to which the masters of the Russian State are straining, but rather to industrial feudalism.

When Stalin proposed a toast<sup>11</sup> at the victory banquet in Moscow, June 26, 1945, to the "little people" — "the cogs in the wheels of our great state apparatus" — there was more truth than poetry in his remark that "they are the people who support us [the generals, marshals and bureaucrats] as the base supports the summit."

#### IV.

### **Industrial Administration— From the Top Down.**

In 1942, Mr. Edgar Snow, the *Saturday Evening Post* correspondent whose books and articles are consistently favorable to the Stalinist regime, visited the Vladimir Ilyitch factory in Moscow. After interviewing Director Pregnesky of the factory, Mr. Snow reported:

Probing for Pregnesky's secret of success [the factory had won first place in munitions production competition for four consecutive months], I asked if he had some kind of workers' advisory council helping him run the plant. "How do you share your responsibility for factory administration?" I asked.

"There is no sharing," he replied. "I am solely responsible here for the operation of the factory. No, there is no workers' advisory council. We find it neither necessary nor desirable. The workers do their jobs and I do mine."



"Do the labor unions have no voice in the direction of your plant?"

"No," he said. "They have other work to do. They cannot interfere with my management in any way."

"But who are your directors? Who fires you if you fail to make the grade?"

"The commissar who appoints me is my board. But he doesn't tell me how to manage the plant either. For that matter, neither does a good board in America interfere with their manager, and that's why you have efficient factory operation there."<sup>1</sup>

Abundant evidence from Soviet sources confirms Director Pregnesky's summary of the bureaucratic, undemocratic nature of Soviet industrial management. This evidence reveals to what degree Soviet Russia fails in the test when brought to the third Socialist touchstone, to wit:

*Socialism means, not only collective ownership of all the means of wealth-production, but also their democratic administration.*

We have already pointed out that the principle of reducing salaries of party and government officials to the level of the average workers' pay—a principle Lenin deemed essential as a safeguard against bureaucratic distortions—was embraced by the Bolshevik leaders in the early years of the Soviet regime, and later abandoned. The Bolshevik leaders, or those who held with Lenin, also embraced—in theory at least—the principle of democratic administration. It was referred to as "workers' control" and the "democracy of producers," and, to a very limited degree, it was put into practice during and immediately after the revolution.

### *De Leon's Influence on Lenin's Thinking.*

What Lenin envisaged was an Industrial Union Government as projected by the American Marxist, Daniel De Leon. A dispatch sent to the New York



*World* by Robert Minor, published February 8, 1919, quotes the Bolshevik leader directly as saying:

“The American Daniel De Leon first formulated the idea of a Soviet Government, which grew up on his idea. Future society will be organized along Soviet lines. There will be Soviet rather than geographical boundaries for nations. Industrial Unionism is the basic thing. That is what we are building.”

This confirmed other reports of Lenin's grasp of the role of the union as the democratic organ of Socialist administration, including a statement before the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labor Party by John Reed (who now lies buried beneath the Kremlin wall), May 4, 1918. Said Reed:

“Premier Lenin is a great admirer of Daniel De Leon, considering him the greatest of modern Socialists—the only one who has added anything to Socialist thought since Marx. . . . It is Lenin's opinion that the Industrial ‘State’ as conceived by De Leon will ultimately have to be the form of government in Russia.”

But De Leon's contribution to the science of Socialism—Industrial Union Administration—has no place for bureaucrats and commissars. Under a Socialist Industrial Union Administration the rule is from the bottom up, not from the top down. It is a system of government that has in it the fullest measure of the primary ingredient of democracy—the direct participation of the masses in the administration of affairs. By electing directors, management committees, and representatives to higher administrative councils, the efficiency and order of a “central directing authority” are combined with a system of self-government, and one which confers on each individual the sense of respon-



sibility indispensable to the full development of free men.

*As the Unions Conceived Their Role.*

In January, 1919, the All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions adopted a resolution in which the gradual merging of the unions and the Soviet organs was forecast. The resolution declared that "it would be a mistake. . . . in the present stage of development of trade unions. . . . for the unions arbitrarily to usurp functions of the state." Ultimately, however, the unions would assume governmental functions. "The whole process of complete fusion of the trade unions with the state organs (the process we call nationalization of the trade unions) must take place as the inevitable result of their joint close and harmonious working *and the preparation by the trade unions of the broad masses of the workers for the task of managing the state machine and all the administrative organs.*"<sup>2</sup>

A. Lozovsky, then a member of the Executive Committee of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, wrote at length on the conversion of the unions from "fighting organizations against capital into organs of socialist construction." The gravity of the work of the unions, he said, would gradually shift to "the sphere of organization and administration." ". . . . the State power of the transition period gradually dies out; for Socialist society is a non-class society and where there are no classes there is no State." He didn't know just when the new organs of Socialist administration would finally supplant the State, "but this is the developing tendency, this is the iron logic of socialist economic construction."<sup>3</sup>

*Emasculation of the Russian Unions.*

As is abundantly clear from Director Pregnesky's



remarks, as quoted by Edgar Snow in the beginning of this chapter, "iron logic" was long ago abandoned. We do not mean by this that the concept of Socialist administration hailed by Lenin as the only contribution "to Socialist thought since Marx" was submerged temporarily, to be revived when order had been brought out of the chaos left by civil war. It was abandoned *completely*, and, apparently, *for all time*.

It is not our purpose here to review the struggle which ensued between the advocates of a "democracy of producers" and the bureaucracy. Nor is it our purpose to weigh the arguments of the latter. Suffice it to say that the struggle ended for all practical purposes with the advent of the N.E.P. (New Economic Policy). Thereafter, the unions were systematically emasculated, shorn of their authority and influence little by little and reduced to mere organs of the bureaucracy. Today, there is not the slightest attempt to prepare the Russian unions to assume administrative responsibilities, nor, indeed, any hint or suggestion that administration of industry is to be their ultimate role.

To the direct question: "Do the labor unions have no voice in the direction of your plant?" Director Pregnesky replied: "No. They have other work to do. They cannot interfere with my management in any way."

What is the "other work" the unions have to do? According to official explanations, the "other work" is of a threefold nature. (1) The unions conduct cultural, educational and recreational activities for their members and families. (2) They "negotiate" and "bargain" with the State-appointed director. (3) They conduct speed-up campaigns and production competitions.

There is, however, still another function that the



unions perform, and one never mentioned except by implication in official Soviet releases. It is that of giving a pseudo-democratic coloration to harsh decrees affecting labor. "Officially," such decrees are said to have been recommended by the unions themselves. Thus, decrees lengthening hours, investing foremen and factory managers with power to discharge workers for being more than 20 minutes late or for "idling," "unsatisfactory output," etc., etc., carry the formal preamble: "In accordance with Suggestions of the All-Union Central Council of the Trade Unions, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. decrees that. . . ."<sup>4</sup>

Suffice to say that rank and file members of the unions first learn of the "recommendations" they have allegedly made through their collective organization, when "the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R." issues them as decrees.

### *The Bureaucrats' Profit Incentive.*

The role of the Russian unions as "bargaining agents" for the workers is best appreciated when it is understood that the managers, directors, etc., have a *direct material interest* in holding wages down and forcing production up. Their disparate incomes do not derive entirely from salaries. A large part of these incomes consists rather of a share in the profits of the business they manage. "Of the income of 24,000 to 36,000 rubles which we mentioned as fairly typical for Russian executives before the war," writes Peter Drucker,<sup>5</sup> "fixed salaries accounted for only 12,000 to 18,000 rubles—that is, for half—the rest was the executive's share in the profits of the business."

Obviously, under this set-up there is a conflict of interests between the workers and the managerial stew-



ards of the State. This conflict is tacitly admitted in the following colloquy reported in the Russian Embassy's *Information Bulletin*, January 10, 1946:

"So your trade union really sometimes fights the boss?" a reporter smiled. "You know what they say abroad."

"That the Soviet trade unions are government agencies that never fight?" smiled Tatiana [Tatiana Zhukova, union official in a Trekhgornaia textile mill]. "Of course our fights differ from those in capitalist lands. Basically, we have the same aim as our director, to increase production and thereby get better wages [wages are paid by piece-work] and a better life. *But in details, our director has plenty of fights, for his chief function is production, while ours is the workers' welfare.*"

Indeed, the Stalinist regime has recently made a truly prodigious effort to convince the Western capitalist powers that the Russian trade unions do not differ essentially from those in Great Britain and the United States. Thus, no less a personage than Vassili Kuznetsov, chairman of the Soviet All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, headed a delegation to the United States in August, 1945, to "explain" Russian unionism to Americans.

"There is little difference between our system and the American system," Kuznetsov said. "Take, for example, a wage case.

"First, a committee of workers in the factory meets with management. If they can't agree, the grievance committee takes over. The grievance committee is made up of equal representatives of labor and management."

If the grievance committee fails to reach an agreement, the case goes to still higher groups. "If the dispute is still not agreed, the All-Union Central Council of the Trade Unions takes the case to the government. *The government decides.*"<sup>6</sup>

And the government is the employer!



## *The Implications of Stalinist Apologies.*

Stalinist spokesmen and apologists, official and unofficial, seem to be completely oblivious of the damning implications of the comparison between Russian and American unions. Yet, it is a fact that the American unions, and unions in all out-and-out capitalist nations, are creatures of the class struggle. They came into being as a result of the conflict of interests between capital and labor and exist to defend workers against the despotism of private employers and their managerial stewards. "There is little difference between our [Russian] system and the American system," argues Kuznetsov. In one sense, at least, there is "little difference." That is in the sense that the employer in Russia is not a private capitalist, but a bureaucratic State. In another sense, however, the "difference" is very great, for, whereas the union in America may reject the employer's terms and strike, the Russian union may not. As Kuznetsov put it, in parrying the question in an interview with newspaper reporters, "it is not for the benefit of our country to change conditions back to thirty years ago, when there were many strikes."<sup>7</sup>

It is interesting to compare the concept of the Russian union's function today with that of twenty-six years ago. Contemporary Stalinist spokesmen explain, with apparent pride, that the unions "negotiate" with management just as unions do in the Western capitalist nations. Yet, in 1920, Lozovsky wrote:

"The Russian trade unions do not 'negotiate' with anybody, they do not demand [an] 'increase' in wages or the introduction of new forms of payment, *but establish all these things themselves.*"<sup>8</sup>

And again:



“These relations between trade unions and a Department of the Soviet Government show that: (1) the state regulation of wages and standardization of labor is the exclusive function of the trade union, (2) in defining the conditions of labor the organs of the Soviet Government—the Commissariats of Labor—carry out in their entirety the instructions of the trade unions.”<sup>9</sup>

*Workers Shouldn't Defend Themselves  
Against Bureaucracy.*

By 1933, however, the conception of the union's functions which held that they included the “regulation of wages” was not only abandoned, but was roundly denounced. Thus, a trade union official wrote:

The proper determination of wages and the regulation of labor demand that the industrial heads and the technical directors be immediately charged with responsibility in this matter. This is also dictated by the necessity of establishing a single authority and ensuring economy in the management of concerns....[The workers] must not defend themselves against their government. That is absolutely wrong. That is supplanting the administrative organs. That is Left opportunistic perversion, the annihilation of individual authority and interference in the administrative department..... (Weinberg, in *Trud*, 8, VII, 1933.)<sup>10</sup>

It is sometimes argued with considerable heat that the Russian unions enforce health and other work regulations, that they encourage cultural activities, and otherwise “defend” and “promote” the workers' interests. Granted. But the point is not that the Russian unions perform no functions which “benefit” the workers; the point is that the unions do *not* perform the administrative role of Socialist organs. On the contrary, as Director Pregnésy's remarks abundantly reveal, administration is from the top down, hence the responsibility of directors and other officials is in an upward direction.

The great Danish critic, Georg Brandes, once wrote:



“Collectivism, deprived of the fundamental principles of fraternity and self-government, is by the very nature of things a liberty-sapping doctrine.” The collectivism of Russia is deprived of these fundamental principles. The workers have not even an advisory voice. Their sole function is to labor and produce under bureaucratic direction. In the words of Director Pregnesky: “The workers do their jobs and I do mine.”

## V.

### **Socialism and the Soviet Myth.**

Facts are stubborn things. No amount of wishful thinking or sentimental yearning can alter them. And the facts concerning the political and economic system of Soviet Russia prove conclusively that Soviet “socialism” is a myth. For the rulers of the Russian State, however, it is an extremely useful myth and one which serves to sanctify any policy the Stalinist hierarchy chooses to adopt to strengthen and perpetuate its arbitrary power. Should a new policy be decided on, the vast party and bureaucratic machines are put into motion. Textbooks are revised or rewritten to accord with the new line. Every organ for “molding public opinion” is wheeled into action. Lecturers by the hundreds deliver canned speeches designed to prepare both the party rank and file and the mass of Russian workers for the change. The whole nation is manipulated like a monster machine from a master switchboard. And, once the “socialist” propriety of the new Stalinist zigzag is firmly established, it becomes a “higher conception” of “the Marx-Leninist philosophy”—to be followed undeviatingly until a still “higher conception” renders it obsolete.



Children may quarrel with the facts; grown men may not. But grown men, if they are ignorant of the fundamental principles of scientific Socialism, or if they are unscrupulous, or have surrendered their minds and consciences to Stalinism's high priest whom they follow blindly in all things, may misunderstand, distort or ignore the facts concerning Soviet Russia. To the overwhelming majority, however, even of those who lack a full comprehension of Socialist science but who, nevertheless, possess an appreciation of elementary freedom, these facts are damning. Recapitulated and summarized, they are:

*The Existence of the State Betrays  
The Existence of Slavery.*

1. Marxian Socialism demands, and inevitably implies, the discarding of the political State. This is a *fundamental* Socialist principle which, to repudiate, is tantamount to repudiating Marx's definition of the State as an instrument of class rule—a definition supported to the hilt by logic and history. Not in all of Marx's writings is there one word which can be construed as reconciling Socialism and the existence of the State. "Where its organizing activity begins, where its proper aim, its soul, emerges," Marx wrote, "there Socialism casts away the political hull."

Instead of "casting away the political hull," the Stalinist regime has strengthened it. For a time it sought to justify the prolongation of State power, and its failure to relegate "the State to the museum of antiquities," on the ground of "capitalist encirclement." This pretext was recently repeated by L. M. Kaganovitch, member of the Communist party political bureau, in an "election" speech at Tashkent. "We must al-



ways remember," he said, "our country continues to be within a capitalist encirclement."<sup>1</sup>

Simultaneously, however, the Russian masses are conditioned to the anti-Marxist doctrine that the State and Socialism are *not* mutually hostile terms, that, indeed, the existence of the State is compatible with Socialism. What is called Stalin's "doctrine of the Socialist state"<sup>2</sup> is exalted as a distinct contribution of "Marx-Lenin philosophy." *Pravda*, in the first of a series of articles on Lenin, described Stalin's State as "a new type of state power, the Soviet power,"<sup>3</sup> and it argued in effect that the Soviet State is without the features Marx found objectionable in earlier forms of State power.

But Marx revealed the State *per se* to be a denial of freedom and the instrument of class rule. "*The existence of the State*," he said, "*is inseparable from the existence of slavery.*" Hence, it follows that the existence of the State in Russia betrays the existence of slavery in Russia.

The Soviet State is a fact. The intense propaganda issuing from the Stalinist regime extolling the Soviet State is a fact. The latter fact, combined with other facts, to wit, Soviet expansionism, the announced plan to "strengthen the Red Army,"<sup>4</sup> the new "Five-Year Plan" announced by Stalin last February 9, and such utterances as that of Politbureau member G. M. Malenkov who said, "We are all servants of the state,"<sup>5</sup> foreshadow eventual and bold acceptance by the Stalinist regime of the Soviet State as the *final* form of "socialism."

*"The Cradle of New Classes."*

2. Marxian Socialism presupposes a classless society. The consummation of the Socialist revolution, wrote Marx and Engels in the "Communist Manifes-



to," will have "swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms, and of classes generally. . . . In place of the old bourgeois society with its classes and class antagonisms we shall have an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."

But Russia has not "swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms, and of classes generally." Moreover, official Soviet propaganda now admits the existence of classes although it still insists, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that none are privileged. Thus, V. Y. Vishinsky, in an article on "The Soviet State and Soviet Democracy," wrote:

"The Soviet system is the cradle of new classes, such as have never before been known in history. Our working class and our collective farmers are in their social nature new classes, *as is also the new Soviet intelligentsia, whose character has been formed by new socialist social relations.*"<sup>6</sup>

This admission in an *official* Soviet publication that the "intelligentsia," by which is apparently meant the party and State bureaucracy and the privileged group generally, constitutes a separate class, is of the deepest significance and betrays to what extent the antagonism of interests has revealed itself in Russian economic life. Ten years ago, when this schism was not so apparent, Stalin argued that the "intelligentsia . . . remains a layer between two classes [workers and peasants], not a class."<sup>7</sup> Now, however, the realities of Soviet life (the disparate incomes of the "intelligentsia," its numerous privileges and the power and authority it exercises) render all such disclaimers absurd and they are abandoned.



Moreover, Stalin himself has acknowledged, perhaps inadvertently, the existence of "rulers" in Russia. In his election speech of February 9, he declared that he considered that "the election campaign is the judgment of the electors on the Communist party *as being the party of the rulers.*" But the existence of rulers inescapably implies the existence of *the ruled!* And Stalin's observation that the Communist party is "the party of the rulers" identifies the rulers as the minority who control the party and the State and who, through control of the State, control Russia's economic life.

Ergo, the existence of a class, or caste system, in Soviet Russia is a fact, an acknowledged fact. It is one which gives the lie to Russia's "socialist" and "democratic" pretensions.

*Socialist Internationalism vs.  
Russian Nationalism.*

3. Marxian Socialism, while proclaiming that "The proletariat of each country must . . . first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie,"<sup>8</sup>—hence, in this sense is national—is internationalist in spirit. It recognizes but two nations—the nation of the capitalists and that of the workers of all lands. And it declares that the interests of the toilers of the world are one. Its motto is the ringing challenge of the "Communist Manifesto": "Workingmen of all countries unite!"

The Stalinist regime has implicitly repudiated Socialist internationalism. While cynically manipulating the Stalinist world movement as an instrument of Soviet foreign policy, it has deliberately fostered national consciousness at home. And it has done this in "the bourgeois sense of the word,"<sup>9</sup> by exhuming Czarist heroes and Czarist pomp and pageantry. Peter the Great, Ivan the Terrible and Catherine the Great have



emerged in the new Soviet textbooks as national heroes together with such blood-stained figures from Russian history as Alexander Nevsky, Alexander V. Suvarov, Mikhail L. Kutozov and Bogdan Khmelnitsky. The "Internationale" has been replaced by a new hymn which is the epitome of Russianism. *Moskovsky Bolshevik*, Moscow organ for the Communist party, said of the new national hymn that it "spells our entire past and the glory of our fathers and grandfathers." By far, most of the "glory" it "spells" belongs to the era of Czarist barbarism.

Every aspect of Soviet life is colored by the narrow nationalist spirit under which the recent war was fought. Even before the war, the famous Red Army oath which began with the words, "I, son of the toiling people," and ended with the pledge to "direct every act and thought to the grand aim of the emancipation of the toilers of the world," was abandoned. The new oath begins, "I, citizen," and ends with a pledge to "defend the fatherland."<sup>10</sup>

Soviet diplomats, once notable for their disdain for fanfare and medieval formalities, are now richly uniformed, and their social affairs excel in lavish extravagance. The Russian masses, who were recently encouraged by Stalin to hope that their rulers will soon concern themselves with "raising the standard of life of the working people,"<sup>11</sup> are incited to cultivate pride in pomp, and to regard Stalin's jewel-studded decorations in much the same way that the Czar's subjects were encouraged to regard the imperial crown—as symbols of national "glory."

Just as the British worker is encouraged to exultation over Britain's imperialist "glory," the Russian worker is incited to pride in Russia's military conquests. "Speaking in Leningrad," reported Brooks Atkinson to



the *New York Times*, February 9, "A. A. Zhdanov [Politbureau member] reminded his listeners that as a result of victory in the war the boundaries of the Soviet state extended from the Kuriles to Koenigsberg."

In the words of *Red Star's* famed correspondent, the intensely nationalist Ilya Ehrenburg, "National consciousness is in the air of our times. The cosmopolitanism of the nineteenth century [by which he means Marxist internationalism] is a thing of the past, the dreamers of time and space have died out."

Russian nationalism is a *fact*, and one over which the whole capitalist world rejoices.

These facts will suffice, not only to dispel the Russian "socialist" myth, but also to explain Russian policy. In its imperialist aspects, this policy does not differ greatly from that of the Czars, and follows the same geographical directions. In so far as it is different, the difference is due more to Russia's economic development than to changes in her political and economic system. Russia now requires markets for the surplus goods her workers produce but which they cannot buy back. The clearing agreements she has recently entered into with several Balkan nations—agreements which give Russia advantages over private capitalist competitors—reveal the importance the Stalinist hierarchy attaches to export trade.

Despite "planning," Russian economic development has been uneven, and the figures set forth by Stalin as the goal for the next "Five-Year Plan" indicate that it will continue to be uneven indefinitely. The dearth of consumer goods exists beside surpluses of cotton, chemicals, coke, iron ore, etc. And the gaunt proletarian way of life beside bureaucratic opulence.



## *No "Mystery" in Russian Expansionism.*

The "mystery" of Soviet expansionism vanishes before the facts of Russia's political and economic system. Simultaneously, the real nature of the conflict now shaping up between Anglo-American capitalism, on the one hand, and Russian State capitalism, on the other, emerges. Like the struggle between the Axis and the "democracies," ideology is used as window-dressing by both sides, but behind this window-dressing is the conflict for economic predominance. It is not Russian "socialism" that Anglo-American capitalism fears and resents. They have examined Russian "socialism" and have found much in it to emulate.<sup>12</sup> What they fear and resent is Soviet economic and imperialist aggressiveness threatening their own economic and imperialist interests.<sup>13</sup>

Above all, the facts concerning Soviet Russia serve as a warning to the American workers. As they reveal Russian "socialism" to be a myth, so they expose Stalinist agents in America as agents of reaction and falsifiers of Marxism. Were the American workers to follow their devious leadership, they, too, would end up the subjects of bureaucratic rulers masquerading as the "intelligentsia." The wages system would continue, as it has in Russia. Instead of having won freedom from economic exploitation, they would have "won" a change of masters. Simultaneously, they would have surrendered the power to resist. Their reduction to the status of industrial serfs would be the ultimate and inevitable consequence of a Stalinist victory.

## *Socialist Democracy Begins with the Revolution.*

Marxian Socialism, not the bogus "socialism" of Stalinism, is the hope of humanity. To achieve it, the



American workers may not look to Russia for guidance—except in so far as the Russian experience serves to illumine pitfalls.

Above all, the American workers must keep power where it is safe for power to be, with the rank and file. In the words of Rosa Luxemburg:

“ . . . socialist democracy is not something which begins only in the promised land after the foundations of socialist economy are created [this was written as a criticism of Bolshevik authoritarianism in Russia; the “foundations of socialist economy” already exist in industrialized America]; it does not come as some sort of Christmas present for the worthy people who, in the interim, have loyally supported a handful of socialist dictators. Socialist democracy begins simultaneously with the beginnings of the destruction of class rule and of the construction of socialism.<sup>14</sup>

But how can Socialist democracy begin with the seizure of power? The Marxian program of the Socialist Labor Party supplies the answer to this question. It calls upon the working class to unite on the political as well as the industrial field. On the political field for the purpose of demanding through the Socialist Labor Party ballot the unconditional surrender of the capitalist class, thus preaching and teaching the revolution, and thereby enabling the recruiting and organizing of the Socialist Industrial Union, the physical force element requisite to enforce the revolution. The Socialist Labor Party does all this because it strikes the posture of holding the ruling class to the civilized method of a peaceful trial of strength. But the goal of the Socialist Labor Party is not to hold power as a party. Its goal is to capture and dismantle the capitalist political State. Once this is accomplished, its mission is fulfilled. It



ceases to exist as a party. Like Samson who pulled down the temple of the Philistines on his own head, and who died in the wreckage, the Socialist Labor Party, in destroying the political State, would, at the same time, destroy the conditions for its own existence. The administrative powers of the nation would be assumed forthwith by the economic organization of the workers, the Socialist Industrial Union.

We have seen how, in Russia, the unions which strove to assume administrative status were emasculated by a political bureaucracy. This development was fatal, not only to the Russian unions, but to Socialist democracy. For Socialist democracy can become a reality only through Socialist Industrial Union Administration, i.e., through control by the workers, of the instruments of labor.

The Socialist Industrial Union serves a twofold role. It represents the workers' power. It constitutes the physical force with which to back up the Socialist ballot and take possession of the industries, railroads, communication system, and all the other productive and distributive facilities of the land. But, once in possession, the Socialist Industrial Union does not, like the political movement, disband. On the contrary, it assumes its permanent function—the direction, administration and operation of industry. In the words of De Leon:

“Industrial Unionism is the Socialist Republic in the making; and the goal once reached, the Industrial Union is the Socialist Republic in operation. Accordingly, the Industrial Union is at once the battering ram with which to pound down the fortress of capitalism, and the successor of the capitalist social structure itself.”



Here is a *workers'* government. Here is a government in which there will be the largest possible measure of that ingredient which Thomas Jefferson once declared to be the essence of democracy, viz., self-government and the direct participation of every individual, not one day a year at an election, but every day. Here is a government under which the wages system is abolished and, with it, money, surplus value and commodity production. Instead of production for sale, as under private and State capitalism, production will be for use. And here is a system in which, through rank and file control, bureaucratic corruption and group privilege are rendered impossible. As it confers the responsibility of self-government, so does it insure the full and free development of every individual. It establishes at long last the conditions for universal affluence and peace. And it brings to fruition the aspiration of men of good will across the ages—human brotherhood.

This, briefly, is the program of the Socialist Labor Party. It is the Marxist and scientific Socialist program for the achievement of economic and social freedom. It is the only program whereby the American workers can build a society which, when brought to the Socialist touchstones, can pass the test.

(*The End.*)



## ADDENDA.

### Industrialism vs. the Bureaucratic State.

There are few things in this world that die as hard as an illusion. And there are few illusions more painful for the classconscious worker to part with than the beguiling belief that Soviet Russia is building Socialism. But facts are also stubborn things, and the facts concerning Stalinist imperialism, the strengthening of Russian Stateism, the rise of a bureaucratic and privileged ruling caste, the recrudescence of the Russian nationalist spirit, the total emasculation of the Red trade unions and their reduction to mere bureaucratic organs, etc., etc.—all these and innumerable other known and authenticated facts brand the “socialist” pretensions of the Russian leaders as a cruel and cynical masquerade.

In the end, the rugged truth always triumphs over illusions. And it is in the measure that the facts about Soviet Russia triumph over the illusions nurtured by wishfulness and two decades of Stalinist propaganda, that the Russian experience will take its proper role in the international struggle for working class emancipation. It will shine, not a star of hope, but as a beacon to warn the proletariat of the bureaucratic shoals.

It is not our purpose here to speculate on “what might have been.” Our purpose, rather, is to illumine the question the Russian experience poses to the American workers, viz.: “How can the workers of *this* nation avert the perils of usurpation and bureaucratic despotism? How must *we* organize to insure that all real



power remain where it is safe for power to be—in the firm and unyielding grip of the rank and file?”

*The State Excludes Rank and File Rule.*

Marx and Engels believed the Paris Commune had adopted “two unfailing remedies” to usurpation. The first of these Engels described as that of filling “all positions of administration, justice, and instruction, through election by universal suffrage, the elected being at all times subject to recall by their constituents.”<sup>1</sup> This remedy was never applied in Russia even though Lenin, in “The State and Revolution,” endorsed it as a safeguard against corruption and bureaucracy.<sup>2</sup>

The second “remedy”—which the Stalinist clique disburdened itself of in 1931, was to pay (in Engels’s words) “for all services, high or low, only the same pay that other workers received.” This, said Engels, would put a check “to all place-hunting and career-making.”

But experience has shown that, where the leaders of a political party rule in the name of the proletariat, the second “remedy” is no “remedy” at all. Moreover, the very principle of worker’s pay for public administrators, etc., may be successfully denounced as “petty-bourgeois deviation” and “alien and detrimental to socialist production,” and the flood-gates opened to bureaucratic greed.

The truth is, *there is no safeguard to usurpation short of an administrative organization that is completely stripped of power to suppress and which is responsible at all times to the rank and file.* How can we create such an administrative organization? Certainly not through a political State. The State, with its courts, police, army, and other organs of suppression and oppression, and with its geographical constituencies, excludes all possibility of rank and file control over public administrators. But, if not through a political State, how is administration to be organized?



## *The Social-Architectural Triumph of the Ages.*

Daniel De Leon, the great American Marxist and "the only one [to quote Lenin], who has added anything to Socialist thought since Marx," supplied the answer to this question. In formulating the principles of Socialist Industrial Unionism, and in illuminating the non-political Industrial Union Government goal—the social-architectural triumph of the ages—De Leon supplied the principles for insuring against usurpation and bureaucracy.

Here is a form of social organization wherein the workers have at all times complete democratic control of the primary source of power—the nation's industries! By replacing the geographical constituencies of political society with the industrial constituencies of Socialism, by electing those who serve in administrative posts from the industries and by making them subject to recall, and—most important of all—by altering the function of government from that of ruling over men to that of directing the nation's production machinery, society raises real and lasting safeguards to a new and vibrant democracy.

What Thomas Jefferson rightly called the "essential ingredient" of democracy—the direct participation of every citizen in his government—is insured in full measure in the Industrial Republic of Labor. All who perform useful labor will have both voice and vote in the administration of affairs. The workers in the shop will elect their foremen and assistant foremen; the workers in the plant their management committees; and the workers in the industry their national councils and their representatives to the All-Industrial Congress which replaces the outmoded political legislature of capitalism.

Nor will this direct participation be limited to election one day a year. The shop branch of the local In-



dustrial Union will provide a perpetual forum for the exercise of the broadest democracy. Like the New England town meetings of 150 years ago, it will be a school of public life and the democratic instrument for developing and kindling the latent genius of the mass. The Socialist Industrial Union, in De Leon's words, "aims at a democratically centralized government, *accompanied by the democratically requisite 'local self-rule.'*"

The Socialist Industrial Government is not something to be erected in a leisurely fashion after the workers have taken power. Even if it were not absolutely necessary for the workers to organize Socialist Industrial Unions to consummate the revolution, i.e., to enforce the Socialist ballot by taking and holding the industries, they would have to be organized *within the shell of capitalism* to provide the framework of Socialist Industrial Administration. Otherwise, the only alternative to anarchy and chaos would be the prolongation of political rule, which is to say, the prolongation of the conditions which breed bureaucracy and invite usurpation.<sup>3</sup>

### *Industrial Unionism, the Basic Thing.*

In commenting on Daniel De Leon's discovery of the industrial form of Socialist society in 1919, Lenin said: "Industrial Unionism is the basic thing. That is what we are building." As we have seen, the building of this "basic thing" was not completed in Soviet Russia. And long before the mass of Russian workers could have the opportunity to grasp its significance and historic role, such unions as were built were reduced to instruments for carrying out the decisions of the ruling bureaucracy.

But Lenin was right. Industrial Unionism *is* the basic thing. The political movement of labor is indispensable. "Without political action [to educate, agi-



tate and organize and to submit the issue of Socialism to the will of the majority], Socialism could never gather the physical forces (the industrially and integrally organized proletariat) for ultimate triumph; without the said physical forces, the day of the political triumph of Socialism would be the day of its defeat.”

*Parties Vanish with the State.*

But the political movement, though vital, is transitory. Its job is finished when the Socialist Industrial Union takes possession. For, whether the political party of labor is in possession of the State machinery, or not (depending on whether the capitalist class attempts to thwart the will of the majority), the State is adjourned *sine die* and its machinery dismantled. It goes into the museum of history to take its place beside other antiquities. And, along with the State, political parties as such, *including the political party of Socialism!* Being formed according to the geographical set-up of political society, its mission having been accomplished, the political party of Socialism will have neither place nor purpose in the Industrial Republic of Free and Emancipated Labor.

The Socialist Industrial Union is *the* thing. To lay its foundation in the enlightenment of the working class, in arousing proletarian classconsciousness, and in exposing the present job-trust unions for what the *Wall Street Journal* once aptly called them—“the bulwark of modern [capitalist] society against Socialism”—should be the earnest endeavor of all who aspire to human freedom and social progress. No effort should be spared to bring home to the American workers the mortal danger inherent in all movements which operate under the leader (English for *fuehrer*) principle. Nor the fact that a working class which can be *led* to freedom, can also be lured into the stockades of totalitarianism or Industrial Feudalism.



It *must* not happen here. It *need* not happen here. The goal of an Industrial Union Government rises like an Alpine Chain above the fury of the storm. It is the social form at last discovered whereby men may apply the principle of self-government in an industrial age. It is the administrative organization dictated by the intricate and complicated structure of industrial production. Once the American workers lift their vision and perceive this stately goal, they will perceive also the means of achieving it. These means exclude the dictatorship of a political party. They are, rather, encompassed by the slogan:

**THE WORKSHOPS TO THE WORKERS!  
THE PRODUCTS TO THE PRODUCERS!  
ALL POWER TO THE SOCIALIST INDUSTRIAL UNION!**



## REFERENCES.

### Chapter II.

<sup>1</sup>"Socialism, Utopian and Scientific."

<sup>2</sup>Speech at the Third All-Russian Trade Union Congress.

### Chapter III.

<sup>1</sup>Peter F. Drucker, in an article extolling the Soviet "incentive pay" system, *Saturday Evening Post*, July 21, 1945.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Cited by Arthur Koestler in "The Yogi and the Commissar."

<sup>4</sup>*New York Times*, July 4, 1943.

<sup>5</sup>Peter F. Drucker, *Saturday Evening Post*, July 21, 1945.

<sup>6</sup>*The Economist*, London, July 3, 1943.

<sup>7</sup>Maurice Hindus, in the *New York Herald Tribune*, May 16, 1944.

<sup>8</sup>*New York Times*, July 10, 1944.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup>"There definitely is the law of value and even surplus labor and lack of equalitarianism in wages in the Soviet Union," writes the Stalinist apologist, William George, in the *Daily Worker*, April 5, 1944. "Does that in any way negate the socialist character of the economy of the Soviets? . . . Any elementary student in a [Communist] Workers School will tell you the essential distinctions between Socialism and Communism. Socialism, Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin teach, is the first phase of Communism."

It is a lie, made up of the whole cloth, that Marx and Engels ever made this alleged distinction. It was an invention of Lenin and was seized upon and inflated into a "Marxist" thesis by Stalin in order to sanctify every violation of Socialist principle, however flagrant. Marx and Engels used "Communism" and "Socialism" interchangeably, as synonyms. For an elaboration of this Stalinist falsification, see "Soviet Russia: Promise or Menace," by Arnold Petersen, Appendix B.

<sup>11</sup>*New York World-Telegram*, June 26, 1945.

### Chapter IV.

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by *Nation's Business*, March, 1943.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted by A. Lozovsky in "Trade Unions in Soviet Russia: Their Development and Present Position." 1920.



<sup>3</sup>Ibid. It is noteworthy that when Lozovsky subsequently repudiated his Marxist views on the role of the trade unions under Socialism, he did so with a vengeance. In his book, "Marx and the Trade Unions," published in 1933, he first damns De Leon with faint praise (calling him "this greatest and most revolutionary leader of prewar American Socialism"), then launches a vicious and stupid attack on De Leon's concept of the union's role as a force to back up the Socialist ballot and as the "embryo of the future Government of the Republic of Labor."

<sup>4</sup>Quoted by Arthur Koestler in "The Yogi and the Commissar."

<sup>5</sup>*Saturday Evening Post*, July 21, 1945.

<sup>6</sup>New York *Herald Tribune*, August 6, 1945.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>"Trade Unions in Soviet Russia."

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Quoted by Meyer in *Politics*, March, 1944.

## Chapter V.

<sup>1</sup>New York *Times*, February 9, 1946.

<sup>2</sup>*Bolshevik*, No. 14, 1945, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup>New York *Times*, April 22, 1945.

<sup>4</sup>G. M. Malenkov, Politbureau member, in an election speech in which he declared: "We must not lose our conquests.... We must consolidate our victory...." (New York *Times*, February 9, 1946.)

<sup>5</sup>Statement before a party conference in March, 1941, quoted by George Denicke, Boris Nicolaevsky and Solomon Schwartz in "New Developments in Postwar Soviet Russia." (*New Leader* supplement, February 23, 1946.)

<sup>6</sup>*Information Bulletin*, Soviet Embassy, Washington, D.C., November 17, 1945.

<sup>7</sup>Quoted by George Denicke, Boris Nicolaevsky and Solomon Schwartz in "New Developments in Postwar Soviet Russia."

<sup>8</sup>"Communist Manifesto," by Marx and Engels.

<sup>9</sup>"Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself the nation, it is, so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word." (Marx and Engels, in the "Communist Manifesto.")

<sup>10</sup>Toronto *Daily Star*, March 16, 1939.

<sup>11</sup>Stalin's election speech, February 9, 1946.

<sup>12</sup>Throughout the war, articles appeared in the capitalist press and periodicals extolling such features of the Soviet system as "incentive pay," compulsory labor, punishment for absenteeism, and the ban on strikes. Captain "Eddie" Rickenbacker, Eric Johnston and other American tycoons who visited Russia were elated by these features, and by the disparate pay received by Russian managers. Editorials praising Russian nationalism were also frequent.

<sup>13</sup>"A new type of Soviet control, joining economic and political advantages, is emerging which makes a substantial extension of multi-lateral trading with those countries impossible." (From a report by the



Colmer Committee to the House of Representatives, February 8, 1946.)

<sup>14</sup>"The Russian Revolution," by Rosa Luxemburg.

## Addenda.

<sup>1</sup>Introduction to the German edition of Karl Marx's "The Paris Commune."

<sup>2</sup>The Soviet Constitution of 1936 provides for the election of deputies to the various soviets, or legislatures, only, and not of administrators or other public officials. It also provides that a deputy "may at any time be recalled by decision of a majority of the electors in the manner prescribed by law." But the real administrators of the Soviet State are immune to this provision which, even in the case of deputies, has never been invoked on the initiative of the electors.

<sup>3</sup>Without the shop organization, and the bona fide union discipline, the transition period from capitalism to Socialism will have to be bridged by DICTATORSHIP. Scratch the man who sniffs wholesale at unionism, and you will find a man with whom, if he is at all a thinker, the advent of Socialism is inseparable from a bloody revolution, with its concomitant, the MAN ON HORSEBACK.—Daniel De Leon (1901).



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